



Manitoba Addictions Awareness Week

Community Asset Mapping - Addressing Community Issues

When addressing community issues it is all too easy to focus on what is not available and the things we can't access. We seldom look around and recognize that we have community assets that can help. Once your community/school/workplace has identified an issue, you can put those assets to work!

Here is an example of how to use the asset mapping process to address the issue of Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder. First, gather committed stakeholders for a **COMMUNITY ASSET MAPPING** meeting, these may include: a school administrator, a foster parent, an early childhood educator, an addiction worker, police constable, the public health nurse or pre-natal educator, youth leaders, etc. After discussing the issue of FASD as it relates to each individual, invite those present to participate in a process to identify community assets and create a "map" of how to best use those assets. This will ensure that key stakeholders are part of the plans and that the focus will be on the strengths of the community - rather than gaps or weaknesses.

The Community Asset Mapping process goes like this:

- Brainstorm all the assets in the community that could make a difference in addressing FASD issues. Remember, all ideas need to be considered and recorded on a flip chart. **An asset is a person, thing or place.** Example guiding question - What asset can help deal with FASD issues?
- As the assets are identified, discuss **activity ideas** that the group could accomplish (outcomes) in partnership with the community assets being listed.
- Examine the ideas and invite the group to comment on them. Distribute 3 coloured dot stickers to those present. Invite the participants to put a sticker beside the 3 ideas that they think have the highest priority. The 3 ideas with the most dot stickers beside them on the flip chart become the group's objectives.
 - **An objective** is a tangible result that you wish to accomplish. It should have an outcome that you can all see and/or demonstrate.
 - Allow discussion to ensure that all can buy into the 3 identified objectives.
- On a flipchart, record the heading **FASD Community ASSET MAP** and objectives (see below).
- Begin planning activities for the 3 objectives
 - **Activities** are the actions that you wish to accomplish.
 - **Identify:**
 - ✓ Task(s) required to carry out the activities,
 - ✓ Deadline dates,
 - ✓ ASSETS you wish to partner with,
 - ✓ A way of evaluating the success of the activity.

For each objective, complete the activities list, set deadlines, identify willing partners and develop a method of evaluation. Meet with the people responsible for the assets listed (if they are not present at the initial meeting) and invite them to be part of the plan. Give them an opportunity to alter the plan to make it fit for them. Review and fine-tune your plan until the group is satisfied it's achievable.

Set future meeting dates and times to review and plan out activities and tasks as described in the Community Asset Map. **Be patient, keep focussed, and the results will begin to show!**

FASD COMMUNITY ASSET MAP

OBJECTIVE	ACTIVITIES / TASKS	DEADLINE DATE	ASSET TO PARTNER WITH	ACTIVITY ASSESSMENT
Increase knowledge and skill base of teacher aids	Identify community-based information/resources/courses. Inform school divisions.	May 2009	Public Health Nurses, Addictions Workers, Special Needs Teachers	Increased learning and classroom success among FASD students