



40 Days of Nonviolence: Building the Beloved Community

From Community Assessment to Community Action

"Each time a person uses his or her capacity, the community is stronger and the person more powerful. That is why strong communities are basically places where the capacities of local residents are identified, valued, and used."

—John P. Kretzman and John L. McKnight

Community assessment involves identifying both the strengths and weaknesses of a community. When done well, the process uncovers community assets and builds connections between those who provide service and those who need them. Assessment is a first and critical step in any community action plan.

Adult / General

- **The Community Toolbox Troubleshooting Guide**
<http://ctb.ku.edu/en/solveproblem/>
This guide can be helpful in solving problems and dilemmas that are common with doing community work. Back out to their main website at <http://ctb.ku.edu/en/solveproblem/> for an incredible wealth of community development resources
- **Cultural Competence in a Multicultural World**
http://ctb.ku.edu/tools/en/chapter_1027.htm
This is a comprehensive guide to understanding cultural diversity as part of the work of community building.
- **Charting a Course: Assessing a Community's Strengths and Needs**
<http://nationalserviceresources.org/nsrclibrary/?action=detail&item=R0283>
Helps communities develop their own community assessment strategies to improve the content, timeliness, targeting, and coordination of services, and track the effectiveness of their actions over time.
- **Know Your Community: A Step-by-Step Guide to Community Needs and Resources Assessment**
<http://nationalserviceresources.org/nsrclibrary/?action=detail&item=R0668>
This guide explains how to complete a comprehensive community assessment. It takes an asset-oriented rather than deficiency-oriented approach, considering individuals, citizen's groups, organizations, and government resources as elements that contribute to community.
- **Building Communities from the Inside Out: A Path Toward Finding and Mobilizing a Community's Assets**
<http://nationalserviceresources.org/nsrclibrary/?action=detail&item=m0026>
This book can help you locate the assets, skills, and capabilities of residents, citizen associations, and local institutions in communities.
- **Resources on Community Engagement and Strengthening from The Resource Center**
http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/resources/online_pubs/index.php#community
This webpage includes a collection of radio shows and downloadable documents on community engagement topics.



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Effective Practices

Proven techniques and real-life examples of what other projects have done in the area of community assessment

- **Assessing community needs before planning a service project**
http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/epicenter/practices/index.php?ep_action=view&ep_id=4610
- **Collaborating to develop service programming to address community needs**
http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/epicenter/practices/index.php?ep_action=view&ep_id=857
- **Deciding on the right volunteer project for your program**
http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/epicenter/practices/index.php?ep_action=view&ep_id=4654
- **Improving neighborhoods with web-based community mapping**
http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/epicenter/practices/index.php?ep_action=view&ep_id=1032
- **Locating community needs data**
http://www.nationalserviceresources.org/epicenter/practices/index.php?ep_action=view&ep_id=389
- **Helping America's Youth**
www.helpingamericasyouth.gov
Developed by a team of ten federal agencies, this web site provides users with strategies, tools and resources for building partnerships to address local youth issues. Of particular note is the *Community Guide to Helping Americas Youth* which contains a national database of research-based program models and an interactive tool for capturing and mapping community resources.
- **First Steps in Evaluation: Basic Tools for Asset-Building Initiatives**
<http://nationalserviceresources.org/nsrclibrary/?action=detail&item=W1735>
This workbook includes seven essential goals for community-based asset-building, healthy community rating sheet, youth assessment of asset-building programs, and assessment of asset-building strategies.

Youth

- **YMCA Resource Mapping & Community Action Guide: Assessing & Strengthening Communities through Service-Learning**
http://www.servicelearning.org/library/lib_cat/index.php?library_id=6897
This guide helps young people and adults work together to assess community resources and then plan and implement service-learning projects that strengthen those resources and leverage young people's participation in civic life.
- **Youth Power Guide: How to Make Your Community Better**
<http://nationalserviceresources.org/nsrclibrary/?action=detail&item=C1367>
This manual is designed to help youth improve their communities. Sections include team community assessment, and choosing and planning community projects. It provides advice for adult coordinators of youth groups.