

Practice Insights



ABCD:
Asset Based Community
Development

About IACD

IACD is the only global network for professional community development practitioners. We support development agencies and practitioners to build the capacity of communities to realise greater social and economic equality, environmental protection and political democracy.

What do we do?

IACD links people to each other. We facilitate learning and practice exchange, both virtually and face-to-face. We work with partners to deliver regional, national and international events, study visits and conferences. We document the work that our members are doing around the world by collecting case studies, tools and materials on community development, and sharing these through our website, publications and ebulletins. We carry out research projects, drawing on international experience.

IACD aims to give its members a voice at the global level, advocating for community development principles and practice in international forums and consultations. IACD has consultative status with the UN and its agencies.

Contributing articles

Our international *Practice Insights* publications are issued three times a year, each one focusing on a particular theme of relevance to community development. If you would like further information or to contribute to future editions, please contact membership@iacdglobal.org. Alternatively, IACD members are welcome at any time to contribute news items, research, case studies or other materials to our members' Facebook site and to the IACD website.

Join us

For full details and to join, go to www.iacdglobal.org/join-us.

Benefits of membership include:

- Daily Facebook News posts about community and international development;
- Access to the Global Community Development Exchange resource bank on the IACD website;
- Opportunities to participate in Practice Exchange study visits;
- Discounted rates at IACD conferences;
- Discounted subscriptions to the Community Development Journal;
- Opportunities to share your work and experiences with a global audience, through our website, Facebook sites and other publications;
- Members also have the opportunity to nominate to serve on the IACD Board of Directors. Our next Annual General Meeting will take place in June 2021 in Kenya.

www.iacdglobal.org

The views expressed in this publication are primarily those of the respective authors and not necessarily those of IACD.

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From the Editors

Welcome to the ABCD edition of Practice Insights

Asset Based Community-led Development (ABCD) is a globally adopted approach that recognises and builds on the strengths, gifts, talents and resources of individuals and communities to create strong, inclusive and sustainable communities. It is a powerful approach to community engagement and development that focuses on abilities and potential, rather than problems and deficits by discovering the resources that are already present in a community.

One of the most powerful resource are the individual and community stories!

Michelle and I are, foremost, grassroots ABCD practitioners who also deliver training workshops and community gatherings around the world so we hear a lot of stories! This guided our "call for stories" as we firmly believe that "stories stick like glue" so we would like to firstly share our own story about how we came to be collecting the ABCD stories you will find in this edition.

On March 1st, 2020, Michelle and I arrived back in Australia from the UK after 5 weeks of ABCD work to find the supermarket shelves being cleared of toilet paper and an ever-growing rumour

of the COVID-19 virus spreading around the world. All of our upcoming work was either postponed or cancelled and people were feeling scared.

We needed to anchor ourselves and develop some supportive structures and we needed to support the global communities we knew and loved who needed a platform to speak their anxieties and offer an emergent space to explore what else was possible.

So, for the next 4 months we hosted thousands of people through our "Days Starting with T" teaching and learning

series, which offered dozens of 20 min guest speakers followed by a half hour open discussion and embarked on updating our free Participatory Community Building Guidebook. We heard so many stories of hope, loss, love and connection in what became a mutually beneficial space full of caring, celebration, sharing and the kindness of strangers, who became friends.

During these months, we also put out a call to our ABCD colleagues around the world and made the suggestion to co-organising the first ABCD online (un)Conference and were amazed with the amount of generous energy and support which came flooding back. Our co-design process was based on the principles of ABCD and we managed to pull off the almost unimaginable task of hosting 2.5 thousand registrations, across 22 countries and 39 sessions, over 48 hours in July 2020 for the inaugural "Assets & Strengths Based (un)Conference: co-creating our stories of hope & action".

We became increasingly aware of the global ABCD stories which are addressing and supporting systemic change and

sustainable development and how deeply the values of ABCD support communities to realise their full potential and become powerful advocates of their own vision, actions and decision making. As quoted on the ABCD Institute's website,

"The ABCD Institute supports a large and growing movement for sustainable community development. We believe that possibility, power, and promise exist in every community. Asset-based community development begins with the gifts of people and their capacity to organize to create the world they want to see."

Founded by community researchers and enthusiasts John McKnight and Jody P. Kretzmann, ABCD is at the centre of a large and growing global movement that considers local assets (people, local organisations, place, stories, history) as the primary building blocks of sustainable community development and values the local to address challenges and we wanted to share these stories. Discovering community strengths is a powerful and productive way to address challenges and issues and realise a collective vision, guided by the following values:

- Start small
- Building relationships for mutual support
- Nurture citizen-led action
- Work for equity and justice
- Believe in possibility
- Lead by stepping back
- Include everyone

Within this edition, we hope readers will discover how asset-based community development addresses many of the systemic challenges of our time by building and strengthening relationships and creating the space for opportunities to emerge.

We hope you will thoroughly enjoy this edition of Practice Insights and immerse yourselves in stories of hope and community action!

Yours in Community,

Statistical overview of ABCD (un)Conference

Stats at a Glance

- 39 sessions
- 48 hours
- 22 Host countries
- 2575 session registrations
- 1259 unique participants



Michelle Dunscombe



Dee Brooks

Dee Brooks & Michelle Dunscombe, Jeder Institute Members, ABCD Institute Stewards, ABCD Asia Pacific Facilitators, IACD Oceania Directors
dee@jeder.com.au
michelle@jeder.com.au

References:

To listen to the recordings of the T Series and the (un)Conference: www.youtube.com/c/JederAu/ featured
 The (un)Conference website: www.theunconference.net
 ABCD Institute Values: <https://resources.depaul.edu/abcd-institute/about/Pages/Values.aspx>
 Participatory Community Building Guidebook: www.jeder.com.au/art-of-participatory-community-building/

Graphic Harvest of the ABCD (un)Conference by Fiona Miller, Jeder Institute



Two Kinds of Community Organizing: Advocacy Organizing and Neighborhood Organizing

John McKnight

While President Obama was campaigning, he made the words “community organizing” famous as he told about his youthful days as an “organizer” in Chicago. That experience in a low-income neighborhood taught him more, he said, than anything he had ever done.

I was one of those involved in his training. He was a thoughtful, wise and balanced young man. What he learned was a kind of neighborhood organizing that was developed by Saul Alinsky. The method is described in Alinsky’s classic book, *Reveille for Radicals*.

Basically, the method involved an organizer like Barack getting to know what issues local people and their leaders were most concerned about — failure to pick up garbage, a bad school, job discrimination, things like that. Based on that knowledge, the organizer would bring neighbors together in a new “power organization” that could deal with the issues.

The way the organizer taught local people to deal with the issues was by confronting the leaders of the responsible institutions, i. e. the garbage collection department, the school principal, the discriminating employer. These confrontations were typically demonstrations, picketing, invading offices and holding large meetings to put the institutional leader on the spot. The strength of the organization was measured by the power of the group to force their adversary to meet their demands.

I did some of this kind of organizing as a young man. It is a very important method of dealing with all kinds of injustice. It pulls people together around their mutual anger. However, it has some important limits.

First, it’s hard for people to keep focused on anger over the long term. The hot coals inevitably die down and the organization can become nearly dormant until a new issue emerges.

A second limit is more important. Usually unrecognized is the fact that these “power organizations” are basically consumer groups. Their focus on outside institutional adversaries has as the goal the delivering of good and fair consumer services — regular garbage pickup, effective teaching, good employment. In each case, the neighborhood is not a producer.

Instead, the group is an advocate pressuring an institution to produce what the neighbors want to consume.

This method is ineffective, however, if the neighborhood issue to be dealt with has to be produced by the neighbors themselves and not an outside institution. This is often the case when the “issue” is improving health, safety and the environment — and raising children. For these and some other issues, there is no one to march on, no place to protest. Instead, neighbors are necessarily the creators and the problem solvers. If we don’t “produce” a solution or a social invention, there is no one who can do it for us. We can’t buy good health, a safe clean neighborhood or a village to raise our children. Instead we must use our gifts, skills and capacities to create the answers to these concerns.

The basic method for neighbors creating these answers is to connect themselves in new ways. It is these ways that we describe in our book, *The Abundant Community*. They are the ways of the other kind of organizing that is not based on anger.

Perhaps it would clarify the two ways of community organizing if we called the Alinsky way “advocacy organizing.” The second way is actually “neighborhood



ABCD Institute co-founders, John McKnight and Jody P. Kretzmann at the ABCD Festival in Blackpool, England, 2015

organizing” — often creating a neighborhood in a place where people lived in houses, isolated from each other.

At best, we should be locally organized to do both things — advocate and build a neighborhood. The two ways are not in conflict because each addresses a different goal. They are like two different tools. Each is useful but neither can do the job of the other. And the job of a neighborhood organizer is to connect rather than confront, to create rather than demonstrate.

Are you a neighborhood organizer? **Tell us the story** of your work in the neighborhood.

Would you like to be a neighborhood organizer? **Let us know** and we will put you in touch with people who are pioneering a neighborhood way.

John L. McKnight, cofounder and Board member ABCD Institute. John McKnight jlmbcd@aol.com www.johnmcknight.org

ABCD: In a Nutshell

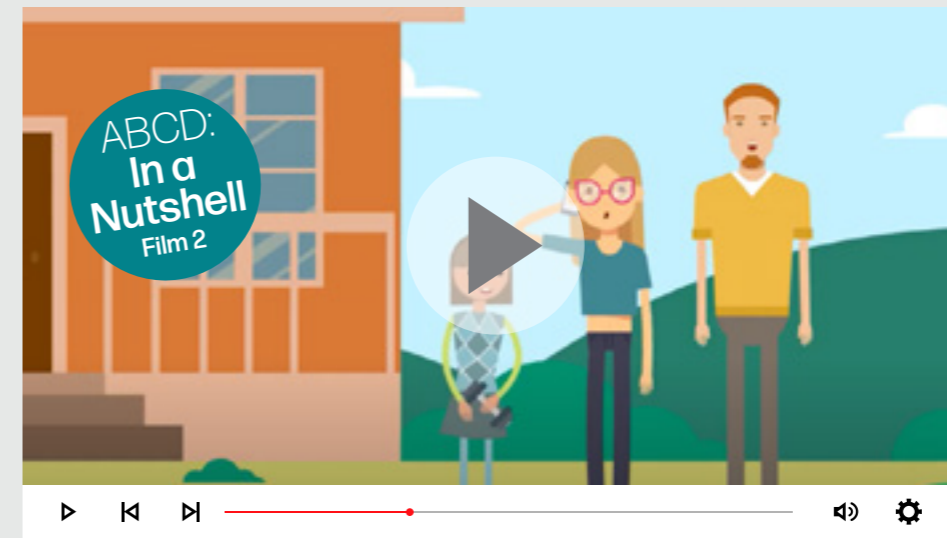
Alan Blackshaw

My aim is to focus on an aspect of Community Development work and explain it in simple terms. My approach to Asset Based Community Development owes much to the work of the ABCD Institute, its resources and the guidance provided by its faculty members. Look out for six short films created by Herding Together throughout the issue.



Asset Based Community Development (ABCD): In a Nutshell

ABCD is an incredibly powerful tool to create community led change. This short video provides an overview of ABCD.



Social Capital: The Glue That Binds Us Together

Social Capital, an unusual term. It isn’t about money, but something much more valuable. It is about the relationships, trust and networks we develop as we interact with others. It creates strong, safe and resilient communities.



Herding Together has a range of online courses available covering Community Development, Team Building and Planning. These are available at www.herding-together.teachable.com



Alan Blackshaw is the founder of Herding Together. He is a community builder working from an Assets Based Community Development (ABCD) perspective. He has spent his career working to serve and build community. He has experience as an educator, public servant, disability support worker, local government officer and in community development – both as a frontline worker and as a manager of a team of community development workers. He has over 30 years experience in working with the community, the last 16 in local government. He has experience in building community from the grassroots up. He is now continuing to serve the community by working to create strong communities and organisations.

He holds a Bachelor of Social Sciences and a Masters Regional and Community Development. At the core of his practice are social justice principles.

Alan Blackshaw, Founder Organisation: Herding Together, Email: alan@herdingtogether.com

Portraits of Participation: An engagement project with tribal youth in Kerala, India

Banalata Sen and Jinto Augustine

We used a dream building activity as our asset-based approach to engage with the often hard-to-engage youth. The insights gained helped us rethink our objectives and co-develop a project with the youth that was both engaging and a learning experience for future community engagements.

“No one has asked us what we want,” said 17-year old Ajitha as we completed our dream building activity with the tribal youth of Vengapally panchayat in Wayanad district of Kerala, India. Ajitha belongs to the Paniya community, the largest and most marginalized indigenous (tribal) community in Wayanad district. It was one of the communities hardest hit by the hundred-year flood that devastated millions of lives across the state in August 2018. With high rates of school dropout, substance abuse, domestic violence, and poverty, tribal communities are caught in multiple vulnerability traps from which they are unable to break free. As natural disasters across the subcontinent become more frequent and severe with the changing climate, the vulnerability of communities like the Paniyas continues to grow. They will need access to information, understanding and knowledge of their rights, and the ability to take part in decision making to reduce their vulnerability. I (Sen) was approached to work with the Paniya community to strengthen their health resilience after the flood. To be invited to do community health work in the strongest public health system in the country was a dream come true. To do it among rolling hills of tea plantations – icing on the cake.

Dream building is Step 1 in the Constellation’s Community Life Competence Process (CLCP) 1. The CLCP ethos – when communities take ownership of their challenges, they take action to overcome them; ownership drives action and leads to sustainable change. We used their SALT (Stimulate, Appreciate, Learn, Transfer) approach to appreciative engagement².

We conducted the dream building activity to engage with thirty male and female youth, ranging in age from 14 to 24 years old, in Vengapally and Pulpally panchayats. While sharing their dreams, the youth discovered their common aspirations that included “start a tuition center”, “help my community”, “look after my family”, “finish my training in tailoring”, “get a good job,” “create an internet facility in my community,” “a good road”, “a new study center.” And we also learned about their strengths, aspirations, and concerns. The dream building exercise, which is an ingenious alternative to the traditional needs-assessment, enabled us to recognize that the community needs were not aligned with our objectives and we needed to revise our approach. The Paniyas are resilient, they have been

dealing with adversities for generations. They know how to bounce back. Our new objective was to help the youth recognize, strengthen, and own their sense of agency and capacity to take action – their **competence**. This was an ‘aha’ moment.

Historical marginalization of the Paniyas has created a culture of mistrust of outsiders. Gaining the trust of the youth was our first challenge. To create a sense of ownership, we identified two females from each community to serve as the youth leaders. They scheduled and organized the community meetings and served as community liaisons. One of our early observations was that the adolescent boys and young men were not keen on participating in the project. To gain their trust and engage their

Youth leader Sreeja conducts a WSH workshop in her community.



Photo Credit: Jinto Augustine



Photo Credit: Jinto Augustine

At the community meeting, youth review and select photos for reflection as the facilitators look on

interest, we conducted community-building activities in both the communities. The dream building exercises had revealed some of their desires for their community – in Vengapally it was cleaning up the community; in Pulpally, it was renovating an existing study centre³. In consultation with the community adults, the youth made plans to undertake the community-building projects. These youth-owned and youth-led activities helped them recognize their ability to solve problems and boosted their self-confidence.

To help the youth recognize their skills and passions, to enhance community engagement, to increase awareness of community resources, and to foster self-efficacy, we used Photovoice⁴, a participatory tool that is known to contribute to enhance understanding of community assets and needs and to build empowerment. Youth from each community were provided cameras. A photography workshop was followed by a month of experimentation with their

“We remember your words during your first visit to our colony – if you are interested we will support you as much as we can. But we didn’t take your words seriously at that time. But you returned and repeated the same words. Then we decided to be with you and engage in your initiatives.”

Vengapally youth

new cameras. It was rewarding to witness their enthusiasm and excitement. The attendance at the biweekly meetings that were conducted to review and discuss the photographs using the SHOWED method⁵ started to go up. Youth identified the themes that emerged from the photographs. Over the course of next three months, we observed an increase in camaraderie among the youth,

improvement in the quality and content of their photos, and an increase in substantive reflection about their community. The dramatic change in their confidence was very rewarding for the project team. The photos revealed that the youth had been very observant in capturing the strengths and concerns of their community and life. Their photographs captured the beauty of their natural surroundings; community traditions, including those that are being lost; women and their myriad roles; inadequate housing and employment opportunities, alcoholism, and food insecurity.

Despite Kerala’s strong health system and initiatives to support indigenous health, the Paniyas are reluctant to access the system. To strengthen their ability to address some of their basic health concerns, we conducted workshops on topics of Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WSH), psychosocial wellbeing, and disaster preparedness, which the youth leaders attended. They

returned and shared the knowledge with their communities.

“Before this program, we were very shy and fearful. Now we can speak in front of people and feel confident to talk to others. Our confidence is increasing,” noted Sreeja, after conducting an awareness session on health and hygiene in her colony.

Two exhibitions were held in the community to showcase the work of the youth. Exhibitions were attended by the parents, community members, general public, and panchayat officials. Overcoming their fear of public speaking, the youth discussed the issues depicted in the photographs with the audience.

This was a remarkable achievement for the very shy youth of six months ago; a feat that did not go unnoticed by the attendees. The chief guest at Pulpally's event, the Panchayat President canceled an ongoing panchayat meeting and invited all officials to attend the exhibition. Close to four hundred people attended the two events. It was the first time that the outside community got a glimpse into Paniya life through Paniya eyes.

“These types of initiatives are important to engage and empower the tribal youth and ease their entry into mainstream society,” – Chief Guest

To evaluate the objectives of our initiative, we posed three questions to the youth and their parents: 1) What changes are you seeing in yourself? 2) What changes are you seeing in the community? 3) How will you sustain this change - in yourself and in the community? The youth reported an increase in self-confidence, and in learning new skills, loss of fear of speaking to outsiders, desire to do better in school and to help others and an increase in community cohesiveness; they said they would sustain the change by seeking opportunities for growth, attending local body meetings, learning about their rights, conducting similar programs in other communities, and speaking confidently to outsiders. The parents noted an increased confidence and discipline among the youth in the two villages, decreased fear of attending programs outside the community, increased interest in studying and job seeking, and increased interaction with others. Noteworthy was the change in parents' attitudes towards the children – they had an increased respect for their children's abilities.

“This is the first time such a unique program was conducted in our community. We can see changes in our children, and we will provide support to them in the future.” – Tribal Chief, Pulpally

We attribute the success of our project to recognizing that the community needs were not aligned with our objectives; and adapting our approach accordingly. Regular and frequent visits, undertaking the community improvement initiatives helped us gain the trust of the youth,

without which this partnership would not have been possible.

Though the project has ended, local team members are in touch with the youth and continue to guide them. Ideally, we would like to return to the community after a few years and evaluate the long-term impacts of the change we observed.

Acknowledgement: This project was supported by the Delhi-based NGO SEEDS (seedsindia.org). The project would not have been possible without the dedication and commitment of the field team led by Mr. Jinto, and supported by Ms. Krishna, and Ms. Shimna.

Banalata Sen, PhD, MPH, Global Health Consultant, Public Health Fellow at SEEDS India, bonosen@gmail.com

Jinto Augustine, MSW, PGDSRD, Program Officer, Arshabharath, jintoarshabarath@gmail.com

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Panchayat official viewing the photos taken by the youth at the community exhibition.

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Discussions take place the first Friday of every month via Zoom - register using the Eventbrite link emailed to all members

Changing practice in adult social care

Carena Sharpley

As a member of the Adult Social Care team, I was invited to take part in a secondment opportunity to join an innovative community building project in Gloucester. Community Building offers a unique approach to supporting communities to thrive through connecting up community strengths and assets. Rather than seeing a place for its problems and deficits, we are invited to look for the abundance of gifts and talents that lie, often unearthed in a community.

For me, this process started in Elmbridge where I initially mapped all the physical assets in the area by visiting Churches, Community Centers, Doctors surgeries, Green spaces and even crossed the main road over to Longlevens where I found the Library, Village hall and more community spaces. In these places I met parents and grandparents with their little ones, ladies that knit for charities, dog walkers, Crafters, ladies and gents that had run community luncheons and coffee mornings (before covid19).

These relationships enabled me to be introduced to even more residents, who had a vast range of interests and passions, but most importantly cared deeply about the place they lived.

Whilst being out in the Elmbridge community, I got talking to a couple of residents who approached me wanting to do some exercise to music on the green near to their home in Willowleaze. This exercise project was their dream, and they were prepared to do the work

that goes with it to set it up. The two of them came door knocking with me, inviting other neighbours living near the green to join them. We soon had a group of people willing to get involved, many of whom had long term health conditions, although that never featured in our initial conversations.

The group held their vision for hosting the sessions outdoors for as long as the weather would allow. In using the green open space other neighbours would see them and might chose to join in, which was indeed what happened. The group chose their own fitness instructor who met their needs, through funding they secured from Active Gloucestershire.

Group members enjoyed meeting together, so after their fitness sessions they also started to meet at the Elmscroft Community Café for a drink afterwards. It was during these informal conversations even more connections and friendships could be made.

Community Building enables you to meet a whole range of people with different interests and skills. Through conversations in the community it became apparent that there were many older people who struggled with IT during the summer lockdown. Many older residents had been advised by their children to use a smartphone so they could video call each other, but without the necessarily skills or confidence many people turned down the opportunity. In Elmbridge I managed to connect a few of these older residents to form an informal IT club. One lady had resisted having a smartphone as she was happy with her old phone. After a couple of sessions, she has requested an iPhone from her family and now receives video calls from her children. This little group are now teaching each other about online shopping and surfing the internet supported by volunteers from the Elmscroft Community Centre. Through connecting people around shared interests and passions, people can made



Nesta - The Innovation Foundation

How asset-based community development is helping Gloucester City Council build a radically different relationship with residents.

The film was produced by Nesta
www.nesta.org.uk



new friends, acquiring new skills and take part in activities that enable them to lead healthier and happier lives. These activities often cost very little to get started and maintain, but they need someone to help connect things up. You only discover people's interests by meeting them where they are, dropping any agenda or targets and having

authentic conversations that put the individual first.

I feel very privileged to be allowed to walk beside residents, building the capacity of the community and supporting individuals to take action on things that matter to them where they live.

Mrs Carena Sharpley, Community Builder, Gloucester Community Building Collective, Carena@gloscommunitybuilding.co.uk

Community Luncheon Club and an Outdoor Exercise Class at on the community green



Theory of Change in Practice - Willowleaze

In practice...

Inputs: Community Builder meets residents at Willowleaze in Elmbridge who share that they want to keep fit.



Secondary Outputs:

As a result of inviting neighbours they discover other opportunities to bring people together, including an IT group.

Learning Outcomes:

Community Builders meet people in unusual places in the community. One conversation can lead to diversity outcomes.

Impact:

Improved health outcomes for individuals, reductions in loneliness and isolation, improved use of public spaces.

Outputs

Residents apply for £1000 to run outdoor fitness sessions on Willowleaze green.



Jim: An ABCD Story

A short video to show Asset Based Community Development (ABCD) in action. Follow Jim as he negotiates how his community is viewed from the outside and how he views his community. See why it is a strong community and how the assets of the community are mobilised for change and growth. A brief introduction to ABCD. Video created by Herding Together

Does ABCD do justice to systems and structures?

Brianne Peters, Alison Mathie and Gord Cunningham

The Coady Institute facilitates leadership education programs and action research partnerships for citizen-led development in Canada and around the world.

At an ABCD Festival in Blackpool in 2015, having taken stock of ABCD practice around the world, we raised the question “ABCD to what end?”, concluding that the motivation for the uptake of ABCD (and consequently its practice) required some scrutiny. For example, we were concerned that some organizations, including state institutions, saw ABCD as a way to disinvest in communities, as if the discovery of community strengths and capacities made external support redundant. To the contrary, in our experience, when a community identifies its own strengths and assets and mobilises these for change, this is precisely the time for outside organisations to invest. Investing in what communities are already doing for themselves strengthens citizen action and local ownership and helps sustain positive change over time.

In healthy internal debates at the Coady Institute, we also heard concerns that ABCD could be used as a force for social conservatism rather than transformation, protecting rather than shaking up the status quo. In response, we have taken pains to be clear about the ends as well as the means of ABCD practice, aligning ourselves with those initiatives that open doors for systemic social change, showing the complementarity of rights-based and asset-based thinking.

Along with our collaborating partners (graduates of our programs, community groups, NGOs, local governments, and sometimes private sector actors), we actively and intentionally reconcile our commitment to social justice and human rights with our conviction that the strengths and assets of people in communities have been undervalued, weakening the potential for citizens to engage as active partners in social change.

What does this look like in practice?

These are some of the simple but strategic ways in which an ABCD approach can shift the ground on which structural injustice sits:

We have taken pains to be clear about the ends as well as the means of ABCD practice, aligning ourselves with those initiatives that open doors for systemic social change, showing the complementarity of rights-based and asset-based thinking.

Rights as assets: Asset mapping exercises can look at human rights, civic responsibilities, and entitlements as specific categories of assets for action planning. This process often leads to the co-production of services and joint decision-making about investment allocations.

- With a mapping exercise, a community organiser in the Philippines illustrates the importance of voting rights as assets to be leveraged for change, especially when local organising raises consciousness about local authority resources and programs, and accountability for delivering them.
- A community organiser in Kenya helps community members carry out ABCD research on local institutions (government agencies, NGOs, and local businesses as institutional assets) to find out about facilities they can use, and services or grants they are eligible for (and had never been informed about).

- A palliative care doctor in Vietnam maps and connects local associations and religious groups to create community-based organizations that can provide support for patients with a variety of terminal illnesses. Public institutions invest in local community care by knitting together health services and voluntary associations.
- Indigenous activists in Western Canada identify successful court rulings for land use as natural and political assets in an ABCD process. These precedents lay out actionable legal options for land-based opportunities or challenges.
- In South Africa, community organizers use progressive post-Apartheid policies and constitutional reforms to advocate for the right to participate in local government planning processes.

Assets for Rights (indirectly or eventually): An ABCD approach can be a precondition, “necessary though not sufficient,” for securing rights (whether they are named as such) in contexts where civic space is restricted, and rights-based action carries risks.

- Farmers in Ethiopia pool their knowledge to trace trading deals and relationships to see how they can combine their expertise to extract better prices for their produce. In the process, they secure political recognition, visibility, and voice.
- A community worker in the Dominican Republic helps squatters working in the city garbage dump to map the streets and houses they built for themselves, so the area is included in official city maps and they are entitled to services (H. Rosing, personal communication, January 5, 2021).
- Indigenous organizations incorporate local traditional values and assets into United Nations rights frameworks, making these instruments more

- In Coady education programs, participants underscore the overlooked importance of communities acting together to achieve small changes. These actions build momentum and agency and can be a precursor to taking on more complex systemic issues – when the time is right.
- In Kenya, ABCD facilitators use ABCD to “shine the light” on the strengths of the “most marginalized,” challenging negative perceptions and attitudes. Over time, this increased recognition, for women in particular, has shifted local power dynamics and resulted in an elevation in status and the realization of rights.
- Indigenous graduates use ABCD as a decolonizing practice to draw recognition for their historical and present-day contributions, as well as the systemic injustices they experience. This approach has reshaped the interventionist approaches of Settler institutions.

For us, ABCD combines different forms of active citizenship where people bring about change at their own pace, on their own terms. Structural change may not be the starting point, but the collective agency built through identifying and mobilizing local assets (what some call “horizontal citizenship”) is often also deployed to advocate for change in local policies and institutions (“vertical citizenship”). In contexts where political space for exerting vertical citizenship is limited, ABCD can provide an alternative

For us, ABCD combines different forms of active citizenship where people bring about change at their own pace, on their own terms.

strategy for building the collective agency necessary for citizens to exert their power when there is an opening. Communities using an ABCD approach do in fact need investment from the outside, but let it be responsive rather than directive, with citizen-led action offering fertile ground for that investment to grow and build local ownership of the community development process.

For more information, see www.coady.stfx.ca

Brianne Peters, Program Teaching Staff
Alison Mathie, Former Associate Director of Research and Publications
Gord Cunningham, Executive Director
Coady Institute, St. Francis Xavier University, Antigonish, Nova Scotia, Canada
bpeters@stfx.ca

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Self-help groups map assets and markets for local products in Ethiopia

Asset Based Community Development in the UK: an opinion piece

Charlie McConnell

Let me first say what I like about the many proponents of ABCD whom I know. It is their passion. They deeply believe in an approach that builds upon the assets and strengths all communities have, however poor and disadvantaged. In the early 2000s when I was CEO of the Carnegie foundation, I wanted to find out more about ABCD and decided to fund over 50 local projects to examine the ABCD approach in practice. This led to the IACD/Carnegie report *Appreciating Assets*¹. It is still a good read. So, my critique of ABCD is not from someone unsympathetic towards some of its thinking.

When I first got involved in community development in the early 1970s, conservative politicians argued that poor and disadvantaged communities suffered from what were called cycles of deprivation and cultures of poverty. Put simply these 'theories' argued that poor people bred poor people, along with anti-social behaviour and welfare dependency. In other words, it was the behaviour or 'deficits' of the poor that were the main causes of their poverty. Such thinking circulated widely in a number of countries at the time. Some of its advocates even argued for the sterilisation of the poor in order to break this generational cycle, along with parental education programs to 'train' them to bring their kids up better, to be less dependent upon welfare and to reduce anti-social behaviour. In the UK, where I was working at this time, the government department with lead responsibility for community development was the Home Office. Its primary concerns lay with race relations and crime prevention. These 'deficit' theories were highly pervasive, promoted by much of the media and accepted by the majority of public opinion. But were they correct?

Most social science research at the time was highly critical of deficit theories as just not standing up to the research

evidence. They concluded that the main causes of poverty and other deprivations, were structural inequality. In other words, it was due to the unequal distribution of income and wealth in society, to structural inequality. If you were born poor, you had less money, died earlier, had lower educational opportunities, faced a higher likelihood of unemployment, worse health levels, poorer quality housing and more polluted environments to grow up and live in. These problems compounded each other and were linked. In addition to structural inequality, disadvantaged people were also more likely to be faced with systemic discrimination by public authorities such as welfare officials and the police, and by private creditors such as the banks, who discriminated towards poor communities by 'red lining' the residents and forcing poorer people to turn to loan sharks at high interest rates, in order to borrow money to live.

Politicians and community development agencies and practitioners on the Left supported the evidence for structural and systemic causes of people's poverty and wider disadvantage. They argued that community development programs should focus upon the positive discrimination of professional technical assistance, assets and resources towards such communities and upon systems reform including for example anti-discrimination training and community planning. Community development programs and practice should be concerned not with notions that poor and disadvantaged people had personal deficits, but that they had very real challenges facing them. Only by providing organizational and educational support, together with money and other resources would such communities be able to compete within an unequal and in some cases oppressive society.

This thinking lay behind some of the more Left leaning local authorities in the UK, such as Strathclyde Regional Council in

Scotland. This local authority established the largest public sector community development program in Europe. Rather than 'blaming the victim' for supposed personal behavioural deficits, community development teams, embracing a number of disciplines aimed to support them to tackle many of the disadvantages they faced, by providing organizational, educational and technical support and inward investment to encourage social and economic development.

From the 1970s we found more NGOs and INGOS advocating social justice approaches and concerned about human rights abuses, race and gender discrimination and global inequality. And across community development scholarship, in particular the Community Development Journal published by Oxford University Press, and professional community development training there was a noticeable rejection of deficit models. I was a community development educator working in a Higher Education Institute in the late 1970s and chair of the Scottish Community Work Training Forum, which embraced all community development lecturers in the country at that time. All from my recollection promoted structural and systemic reform models and rejected deficit theories.

By the 1980s neo con (new conservative) ideologies gained ground however. This time conservatives laid the blame for many of the world's ills at the door of social democratic redistributive welfare policies and the social reforms and cultural changes in the 1960s and 70s. Once in power, as in the USA and UK, neo-con governments cut budgets for central and local government funded community development programs and grants to NGOs and INGOS calling for greater socio-economic equality. They reasserted the personal deficit and welfare dependency model or denied poverty existed at all, merely criminal behaviour by anti-social groups, thus their call to invest in more police.

It was at this time, that the ABCD movement took off. ABCD advocates also rejected any return to a deficit, 'blame the victim' ideology. They believed that by focussing upon the strengths and assets all disadvantaged communities had, many of their problems could be solved without additional assets and capital being brought in. In other words, in the context of contracting government support for community development, ABCD proponents were arguing for a return to self-help in order to reduce dependency upon outside agencies.

It is difficult here to place the ABCD movement ideologically. They are strongly against labelling disadvantaged communities as being deficit in some way. Rather they believe that by working with people to identify their strengths and local assets within their community, huge changes for the better can be realized. And in some cases, albeit generally modest in scale, they were. But by not also arguing the social justice case for the need for additional resources and capital investment, they were failing to challenge the neo con argument that less money needed to be spent on tackling poverty and related disadvantages, because it would merely continue a culture of dependency. It let resource and power holders off the redistributive hook. And I would urge that its proponents acknowledged the need to include additional technical support, resources and capital investment in the mix.

ABCD advocates are also generally ambivalent about the need to employ professional community development practitioners or for long term community

development programs to regenerate disadvantaged areas or support disadvantaged communities of identity. Rather they tend to support the proliferation of freelance ABCD consultants who parachute into a community to run training workshops for local people. Many of the techniques designed by ABCD trainers are excellent. And their use has grown. Community development practitioners should adapt the best of ABCD, but this approach is not sufficient. Practitioners also need to have and use wider competences, as highlighted in the International Standards for Community Development Practice, published by IACD in 2018².

ABCD techniques can be useful in practice, and remind all who work in community development never to patronise or underestimate the strengths poor and disadvantaged communities can have. Far from being personally deficit, poorer and more disadvantaged communities, such as racial minorities have to be hugely entrepreneurial in order to survive on such low incomes and in the face of daily discrimination. Indeed, such communities often contain stronger levels of social capital, extended family and neighbour support than more economically advantaged middle-class communities. Acknowledging people's strengths and social capital is not however an end in itself. Really effective community development work needs technical expert support, funds and other capital assets brought into such communities, if we are to scale up their capacity to secure a fairer cut of the cake and to tackle the very real day to day problems they face more effectively and sustainably.



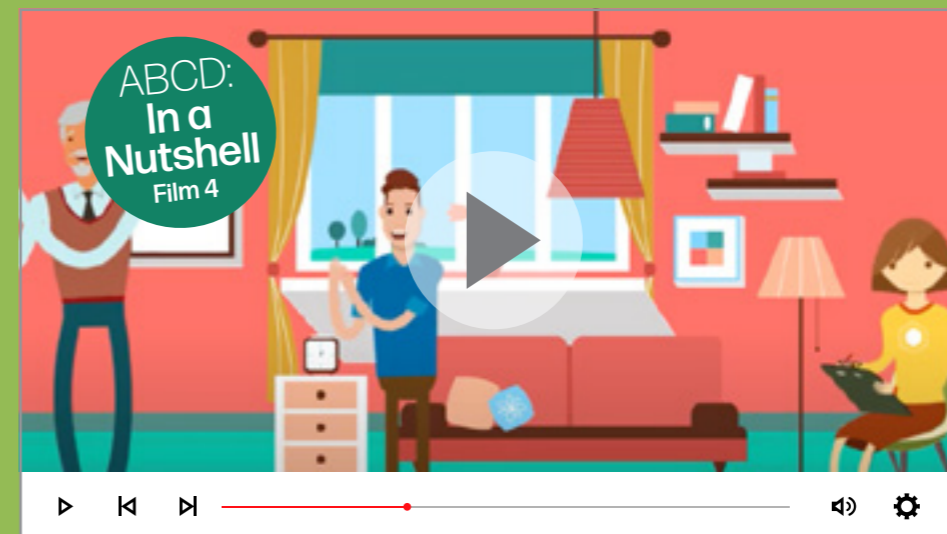
K. Braithwaite, I. Burkett and T. O'leary, *Appreciating Assets* (2011) IACD/ Carnegie UK Trust

Community development practitioners must be eclectic in their use of different approaches as appropriate to the challenges different communities are faced with, whether this be climate change, the pandemic and global recession or the wider Sustainable Development Goals Agenda.

Charlie McConnell is a former President of IACD.

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Asset Mapping: What is It?

This short video describes the process involved in Asset Mapping and aims to remove some of the confusion people may find with this simple tool in community building.

My thinking around Asset Mapping has come through the practice of ABCD, discussions with other practitioners and learnings from the resources provided by the ABCD Institute

ABCD Poetry by Crystal Arnold

Regenerating Community with the Offers and Needs Market

*A hive of bees shared their dances of plenty.
Vibrating bodies showed
where to find pollen,
which flowers would bring pleasure and joy.*

*The grange hall was buzzing with people
doing a dance called community
on a Sunday night that may have otherwise
been spent feeling lonely.*

*We created an opportunity for the
heart of humanity to come forth.
There were riveting moments of need, such as
the single mom with a three-month-old-infant
snuggling her bosom,
making a plea for housing,
so she can live with all three children together.*

*Have you ever been to an event
where homeless and financially wealthy people
come together at a table as equals?
Everyone, regardless of financial status,
is human, offering and needing.*

*Our humanity flows beneath
divisions of class or race.
Beyond labels of victim and savior,
we find authentic connection.*

*This was a renaissance
of sacred reciprocity.
People were generously sharing their wealth.
This was no charity event.
Resources were flowing
into passionate hearts
burning with purpose.
Both vulnerable and strong
sparked genuine care.
We created space for synchronicity.*

*Regenerative culture
emerges from the dark and fertile ground
of a collapsing society.
Like cucumber planted in compost,
our roots grow deep
as we reach for the sky.
We need trellising,
the scaffolding of support systems
that will bear the weight
of the valuable food we offer.*

*Too many of our community's treasures
are laying fallow,
rotting in seclusion.
When we share our offers and needs
as equals, a new world emerges.
With curiosity and tenacity,
people are connecting,
with joy, heart-to-heart.*

The Pleasure of Collaboration

*Collaboration evokes
the pleasure of belonging.
This resonant field
between you and me
will birth galaxies
we cannot imagine alone.*

*Our relationship is
karmic and fresh,
familiar and emergent.*

*Our love is captivating and liberating.
Our pleasure is shared in silence
and in the hubbub of a crowd.*

*Our chemistry is
alluring and yet spacious,
electric and grounded.
Our visions are bold and
our presence magnetic.
We inspire, illuminate, and activate.*

*Vocational arousal is our birthright.
We are turned on
by the power of heartfelt co-creation.*

*We are intimate,
enjoying naked moments
whether on stage or in prayer,
speaking or listening.
We reveal dreams and wounds.*

*I offer gifts, and you receive me,
amplifying my radiance.
Savoring the juicy
desire to be of service together.*

*We are hungry for life.
We need each other.
You touch my soul
and nourish my heart.*

*Crystal Arnold, Director of Education,
Post Growth Institute, E: crystal@postgrowth.org
www.offersandneeds.com and www.postgrowth.org*



John Hector's Chowder Dilemma

Dwayne MacEachern

*In 2004, I was in a café where I saw
John Hector, a senior, sitting alone.
I asked if I could join him and he happily
agreed. We chatted. He told me he only
made it to grade 4 in school, worked in
the woods most of his life, and he was
the last of his family line.*

*We both ordered the chowder and
they arrived at the same time. John,
at that point in his early 80s, fumbled
with the tiny butter package before
passing it to me to open for him. I did.
Next, he picked up the milk for his tea
and held it out to me. I said, "Look at
this, John" and used my fork to poke
four little holes in the top of the milk
package, then turned it upside down
and squeezed the milk into his tea.
He laughed.*

*Then he looked at the crackers. Then
he looked at his fork. Crackers. Fork.
Crackers. Fork. He then picked up the
fork and ripped open the plastic
wrapping and put the crackers in his
chowder himself. The lesson he taught
me was to never underestimate any
person's ability to learn, and adapt,
new ideas.*

*Dwayne MacEachern, ABCD Podcaster
at CommunityFromWithin.com,
communityfromwithin@gmail.com*

John Hector MacInnis of Judique, Nova Scotia



Photo Credit: Virginia MacIsaac



The Gifts that Keep Giving: Head, Heart and Hands

The Gifts of the Head, Heart and Hands is a simple but incredibly effective tool in uncovering gifts, talents, skills, interests, knowledge and passion.



Image credit: Wildstyle Photography

Community Development and Anti-Racism work

Mike Mather

Micro:

Broadway United Methodist Church in Indianapolis was the recipient of a grant for anti-poverty work in their predominantly African-American neighborhood. Broadway is a predominantly white organization.

The Learning Tree (a neighborhood organization) which is a collection of neighbors centered around the work of the neighbors in the community had also applied for the exact same thing as Broadway applied for and they were turned down.

Broadway took its grant and split it 50/50 with The Learning Tree. Before the money was distributed the funder called Broadway and asked to meet with the people who would be the beneficiaries of the grant.

They called me (I was the pastor at the time) and I asked them what they wanted to do in the meeting. They said they wanted the film an interview with

the recipients. I asked what they wanted to ask. They said: "We are going to ask them how they are going to be helped by this." I told them that I would not get them in contact with the people they wanted to interview. When they asked why not, I explained to them (in the same way the grant application had) that our neighbors were going to be our teachers with this grant and we were looking forward to learning what worked and didn't work in anti-poverty work, but they were in charge. They asked me what questions I would approve of asking. I asked them how many questions they were going to ask. They said five. So I gave them five asset-based questions.

They agreed that those were the questions they would ask and they would not ask the questions they had represented to me at the beginning. I gave them contacts.

The next day I got a call from the Learning Tree mad as hell. When the interviewers showed up they didn't ask

any of the questions they told me they would. They only asked how these low-income, low-wealth folks would be helped by Broadway. Definitely the wrong question. And it would not have happened if the people they were interviewing were not African-American. They could only see them as needy.

I wrote an e-mail to the person in charge of the philanthropy who had the conversation with me and had agreed to the questions about how people were teaching us. I said that what she did was racist.

Early the next morning I got a call from the person at the philanthropy and they were mad as hell that I had said they were racist (what I actually said was what she had done was racist - but I understand this was a difficult distinction for them to make).

I asked why they hadn't asked the questions they agreed to ask and though she had been there she said it was the camera person's first job and he



had not asked the questions. She was there and she didn't stop it. She kept throwing the camera person under the bus. She demanded that I apologize for saying that she was racist. Again, that was not what was said. And I said "I'm sorry but I won't apologize for what I wrote to you."

I figured that was the last we would ever hear of this. I figured we weren't getting the money. Four months later they sent us the money.

Four months after that one of the (white) city officials who sits on the board of the philanthropy came to talk with one of the leaders of the Learning Tree. She told the head of the Learning Tree that if he expected to ever get support again from their philanthropy he needed to disavow me and the comment that I had made about their actions being racist. They specifically told the head of the Learning Tree (a black guy) that he needed to apologize for what I (a white guy) said.

He was stunned. The person said to him: calling a white person a racist is like calling a black person the "n" word. She said that to him several times. He pointed out that they had not supported him, they had in fact turned down their grant that Broadway was the one who split their grant with the Learning Tree.

This led to many more conversations including with the former lieutenant governor of the state of Indiana which

ended up serving us very well. But it was a tough time.

Macro:

The Macro case study is about the same organization 'The Learning Tree' and how by throwing parties and inviting the white power structure of the city to come and party with folks in the hood, friendships (anti-racism work in and of itself) was beginning to be built.

After several years of parties in the hood. Leaders from the city who came to the parties began hiring neighbors they met and gotten to know through these parties. It put money in the hands of people in the neighborhood. Around 2 million over the last year and a half. Not 2 million dollars in services - two million dollars in money in the hands of the people who live in the four block radius

of the neighborhood in which The Learning Tree is centered. There is no office. Only people's homes.

Because of those friendships the head of the Central Indiana Community Foundation hired the neighbors to work with people in predominantly black and brown neighborhoods around the city to build up what is best.

It has been and continues to be hard work. The Philanthropy hired what they called "ambassadors" in every neighborhood in the city. These are on the ground black folks (except in the white neighborhoods) who know their neighbors and know their giftedness. This has begun to have an effect on public policy in the city, on mass incarceration, on education, and on health. It is extraordinary.





Image credit: Wildstyle Photography

ABCD & First Nations: building on our strengths, creativity and culture

Corrina McGregor, David Portillo, Jodi Sampson, Michelle Dunscombe & Dee Brooks



made under the terms of reference under Articles 1, 2 and 3.

ABCD definition supports Article 3 Oritetanga (Equality) whereby 'everyone is involved, contributes and empowered to make decisions and act. In terms of the treaty that translates to equal rights as citizens of this country. In my experience ABCD is a framework that captures a kaupapa (customary) Māori CD approach.

David: ABCD circle work/discovering the gift immediately upends colonizing practices where indigenous people had had to sit and receive instruction and acculturation tips from the dominant culture. It is always shocking to me to discover the many indigenous communities that have never been asked questions or been asked to share their gifts before.

ABCD's recent amendment to their doxology (e.g., removing the "citizen" language) is most welcome.

Jodi: ABCD brings a Community together to share the true stories with the spirit of truth telling & reconciliation. ABCD moves beyond traditional community development practices that can be deficit based and done to the community.

Michelle: The essence of Asset Based Community Development in valuing local skills, knowledge and resources, and supporting connection and relationship building within communities, reindigenises community development.

Deadly ABCD aims to:

- Be co-designed with Australian Indigenous Elders, communities, and organisations using an evidence-based community development approach.

For the past few years, Michelle and Dee from the Jeder Institute, along with Jodi Sampson have been developing Deadly ABCD, an Australian based approach to ABCD which interweaves First Nation Australian Indigenous culture, values and knowledge with global asset based community-led development practices and processes.

During the last year, Michelle and Dee have been hosting an online discussion group about ABCD and First Nations work around the globe and asked five community development practitioners to respond to the following questions and share their reflections on the launch of Deadly ABCD in partnership with KPMG.

How does ABCD respond to decolonising community development?

Corrina: In Aotearoa (New Zealand) the historical founding document for relationships between Indigenous Māori and the Crown is Te Tiriti o Waitangi. The content of the document has provisions



And then within the ABCD Institute:

We in the ABCD Institute are looking at ourselves and our procedures clearly with this as well. A few years ago, one of the faculty member (a black guy) got a call from the Institute that a group from the Eastern Pennsylvania Conference of the United Methodist Church (UMC) was trying to reach him to talk about doing some training in community development. Another faculty member (a white guy) was invited to participate in the call, as the Institute was starting its own training programs. During the conversation with the UMC representative, the white faculty member assumed that the representative from the UMC would want to work directly with the Institute's training structure and stated that the way to go was to work with the ABCD Institute. As far as I know the faculty of color never heard from these folks at UMC again.

Michael Mather, Pastor, First UMC of Boulder, Colorado, USA, Master of Divinity from Drew University Theological School, mmather@fumcboulder.org



Does ABCD strengthen &/or align with your cultural practices?

Corrina: ABCD reflects Māori tikanga (practice/custom) imbued in Te Ao Māori (worldview) values such as whanaungatanga (establishing and strengthening relationships), tino rangatiratanga (self-determination), and Mana motuhake (self-governance).

David: Yes, especially as practiced by you both (Michelle and Dee), by folks who have added a racial equity lens to Mike Green's foundational work here in Denver, and children of ABCD like Neighborhood Connections in Cleveland, OH.

Jodi: ABCD has the ability to restore cultural practices & values from a decolonized perspective because ABCD can allow First Nations Communities to "DREAM AGAIN"! Communities can align, strengthen & restore what has "ALWAYS BEEN"

Michelle: Absolutely. ABCD provides tools to support us to reimagine what's possible and encourage collective action to address the "wicked problems" by acknowledging the strengths, gifts and assets of people and communities. It reinforces community self-determination and honours local decision-making processes.

Deadly ABCD aims to:

- Blend cultural awareness, traditional practices and community development to support self and collective efficacy in Australian Indigenous communities.

What does government need to listen to about asset-based approaches to community work?

Corrina: Excellent examples of a government listening to their people by practicing an ABCD approach with or without being advised such as when Aotearoa (New Zealand government) made early and hard decisions

demonstrating leadership to tackle Covid-19. Government were determined to minimize the impact on all fronts. Constant updates and clear communication with their citizens resulted in weaving a whole nation together in a unique and, dare I say it, ABCD kind of way. They also adopted the expression 'the team of 5 million' relying on the strengths of the people to trust in their leadership.

This practice produces collectiveness that unites people and this approach is not dissimilar to professional practitioners using an ABCD approach.

Māori Mana whenua, Iwi and hapu (tribal groups) applied a Kaupapa Māori (Māori CD practice) approach to protect their most vulnerable people by setting up checkpoints on the edges of their tribal borders. Indigenous Māori suffered heavily impacted by 1918 influenza flu, with approximately 2500 deaths. This served as a motivator to enforce protection of their people. During the lockdown period local Police coordinated and connected with these check points alongside Māori kaitiaki (guardians). The opportunity to educate and inform travellers moving around under lock down conditions was prioritised to protect their local community.

Community Development was practised as a part of our traditional culture, and long before European arrived to the shores of Aotearoa (New Zealand).

David: Government thinks it's job is to sell the community on what it has already decided to do by pretending to have listening campaigns. Government staff still does not trust that there is anything to learn from a community person, because the community person appears to lack the specialized skills and training of the government staff. Until Government begins to have positive experiences that invert this relationship, it will not see ABCD as a practice that is in its self-interest.

Jodi: The truth telling of the original creation of each Community (values, vision for the future, what's acceptable & what's not).

Michelle: An ABCD approach would provide sustainable, community led initiatives rather than funding outside organisations to deliver "One size fits all Projects or Programs" to fix a community. Local communities have the answers and with freedom to explore local solutions and support for local capacity building initiatives, they can have powerful impacts on community cohesion and local economic opportunities.

Deadly ABCD aims to:

- Encourage a whole of government approach to effective strengths-based practice including local, state and federal.

How can ABCD inform government approaches to community well-being and policy?

Corrina: In Aotearoa (New Zealand) the office of Māori Crown relations has developed a capability framework for Public Service document 'Organisational Capability Component' (OCC). It aims to support a significant culture change across the public service to position the public service to support the Māori Crown relationship. That narrative aligns with this country's founding document Te Tiriti o Waitangi (The Treaty of Waitangi).

A cultural change to public service can use a strengths based approach by Māori staff and organisational leadership collaborating and partnering in an inclusive and transparent way to achieve expectations laid out in the capability document

David: Mike Green has taught us it is best to begin in one place (working with a person who has power in Government, in this case), rather than try to attempt to change/convert the whole system at once. Right now, Mike and others are working with a semi-governmental institution (a county housing authority), beginning in one (new) building to try ABCD practices. The successes and challenges of this work in one place were only made possible by "permission" from a powerful person above and radical experimentation/prototyping on the ground. The effects of this prototype are beginning to affect how hiring is done across the organization, how constituents are engaged before designing a new building, how peer to

peer relationship affect how elders are kept safe from covid in one building but not in all the others, how sick families are cared for in isolation, but through a supported network, etc.

The prototype becomes attractive across the organization, but always comes with a backlash which must be confronted. Some government staff transform. Some leave. The work is compelling, and sometimes daunting when a government agency -after a successful prototype - tries to completely scale ABCD practices quickly, and throughout the agency. Mike says it can "begin anywhere, and go anywhere".

Jodi: If the Government wants to engage and make a difference with our mob, then they also need to be proactive by freeing-up mechanisms of support (verbal, process & in person) that the Government ALL levels have. Become timely to eliminate or inflict more trauma or INSTITUTIONALISED RACISM. Reduce red tape and stop making false promises.

Michelle: Governments should walk alongside community with cultural competence, deeply listen to Elders and community, start with a question rather than an answer, and adopt a codesign process to develop policies that impact Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people. An Asset Based approach to community development would assist governments to reframe the way they approach communities, shift power to a community led approach and create the conditions for community empowerment.

Deadly ABCD aims to:

- Provide robust accountability and evaluation by utilising a participatory framework.

Final thoughts:

Corrina: I am indigenous that practises Community Development for 18 years. I've had the pleasure of honing my community development skills and expanding my knowledge through my Māori worldview.

Currently, I work within a diverse and multi-culture customer base of which 37% identify themselves as indigenous Māori. Given the diverse peoples that I am privileged to work alongside it has motivated me to develop a hybrid model that takes the intersecting qualities of both worlds (mainstream and Indigenous Māori practises) and merging them together. This hybrid approach supersedes colonial practice as I weave

in



my Māoritanga - (cultural methods, processes and knowledge).

Thus I embody Article 3 of the Treaty of Waitangi into my mahi (business as usual work) and use ABCD approach as a structured framework to guide my practice. The whakatauki (quote) is "what's good for indigenous Māori, is good for everyone"

David: Don't have the government embark on an "asset map" under any circumstance, as that will be the end-all of the ABCD experiment, resulting in a glossy report that may stay on a few government official's shelves until the dust hides the binding. Better to "do" and begin, rather than to ponder what could be and think at scale so early that it is impossible to begin.

Jodi: Deadly ABCD is the vehicle to unlock the story, communicate with mob the key principles of ABCD in black fulla language and will help address the trans and inter generational traumas causing the mental health and social deficiency status of mob.

Michelle: Traditional knowledge is an asset to our country and the work we do with the community should embrace this knowledge to create local solutions.

Summary

ABCD is relationship driven and builds on the strengths and assets of individuals and communities to address complex, trans-generational challenges

by acknowledging the local wisdom and experience of community members and elders. ABCD is a strengths focused approach which helps to identify and connect the skills, talents and passions of individuals with local networks and resources instead of approaching deficiencies and needs.

Corrina McGregor, Aotearoa (New Zealand)

David Portillo, Strengthening Neighborhoods Officer, The Denver Foundation (USA)

Jodi Sampson, Managing Director, Jodi Sampson Services (Australia)

Michelle Dunscombe and Dee Brooks, Jedar Institute (Australia)

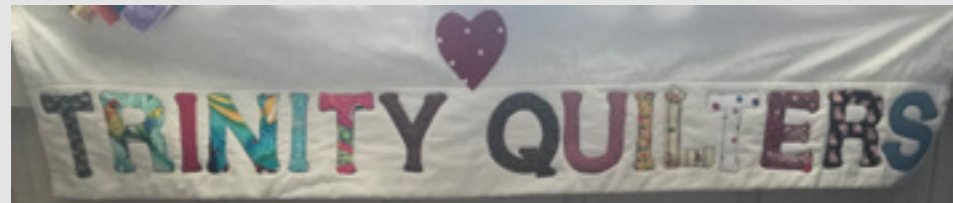
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Community Quilting: Building Community One “Square” at a Time

Deb Wisniewski

Washington Island is a small Wisconsin community of about 700 full-time residents located on an island in Lake Michigan. People get involved in this small community in a wide variety of ways. One of the best-known ways is by showing up for the Quilting Group.



Stop by Trinity Lutheran Church on Washington Island on most Tuesday mornings and you'll find a hive of activity. A group of 6-15 quilters meets each week to make quilts together. Many years ago, the group started meeting to create “comfort quilts”, as well as quilts for Lutheran World Relief. The beautiful “comfort quilts” are shared on the island with anyone going through a challenging time, such as a hospitalization, a death in the family, a new baby. The sturdy, simpler quilts created for Lutheran World Relief are sent around the world and used for a wide variety of purposes, from bedding to keeping animals warm to creating roofs on rough homes.

Today's quilters continue the tradition of creating these quilts but have also added some special quilting projects along the way. Quilts are often made for special causes, such as a silent auction fundraiser for the church's women's group, or to raise funds for a local family experiencing financial or health hardships. A more recently added project involves making backpacks for school children on the island and filling them with donated school supplies.

Perhaps the most notable, on-going project is the creation of the annual “graduation quilts”. In the early to mid 1990s, one of the quilters, Nancy Thiele, and her husband, Al, participated in a Mission Builders project in the community of Neillsville, Wisconsin. During that project, Nancy learned that the church there created quilts as a gift for each graduating student who was a member of their church. Considering that

Washington Island has the smallest K-12 school district in the state of Wisconsin – approximately 70-75 students, with 1-6 students graduating in any given year – Nancy returned home and suggested that their quilting group create quilts for every graduating senior in their community. A new tradition was born!

Each year, the quilting group makes around 200 quilts, as well as numerous other projects. The love of quilting pulled this group together. The love of community has led them down this path of creating beautiful quilts, backpacks, and masks that are given away as gifts of the heart.

An individualized graduation quilt is created for each specific senior. On the wall of the quilting room is a chalk board, listing the names of the graduates, their favorite colors, favorite themes (e.g., horse lover), and anything else that might personalize their quilt (e.g., his parents have his baby blanket or grandpa's blue jeans to contribute). Specific quilters are designated to design and organize each quilt, while the actual quilting is done by a mix of members. The presentation of the quilts has become a beloved and highly anticipated part of the graduation celebration. When asked if she was looking forward to graduating,

one senior replied that she was really looking forward to seeing her quilt!

You may be wondering where the money comes from to purchase all the equipment and supplies for these projects. The truth is that almost all of it is donated. They currently have eight sewing machines that have been added to the quilting room. Repairing the machines, creating special quilting tables, building storage shelves, and more are all done by volunteers. The cloth, batting, and even the thread are all donated. Some Tuesdays feel like Christmas when the quilters come to quilt and find bags of donated items sitting in the quilting room!

Since the start of the pandemic, the quilting room is a lot quieter but that doesn't mean that nothing is happening. Indeed, all the usual quilts – including the graduation quilts – are still being lovingly created, mostly at the homes of individual quilters who happen to have “an abundance of fabric”. In addition to the usual quilts, they've also taken on the making of masks to help protect people during the COVID pandemic. At last count, approximately 6000 masks have been created. Some of these have been shared with other communities, but masks are made available free of charge to anyone who lives on or visits the island, through the grocery store and other businesses.

Each year, the quilting group makes around 200 quilts, as well as numerous other projects. The love of quilting pulled this group together. The love of community has led them down this path of creating beautiful quilts, backpacks, and masks that are given away as gifts of the heart.

Deb Wisniewski, MSSW, Director/Connector, Sharing Common Ground; Faculty, ABCD Institute, scgwis@gmail.com



Stories of ABCD: The My Story Project

Sandra Muratti

"I have gained a lot of wisdom out of the process. Sharing my story through song has been an awesome experience and I think this is just the start. I am going to keep writing songs about my life, my experiences and what matters to me."

Luke Beavis

deliver their desired outcomes. Participants had a sense of ownership and control which promoted empowerment, individual growth, community capacity and could foster inclusive attitudinal change in the wider community.

The MY STORY project was built on the strengths, talents and resources of individuals and key stakeholders. Mentors were interviewed by City staff to determine their assets, capacity and skills. If successful, they were then matched with community members who had complementary skills and interests.

The program ran over 12 weeks from early June through to late September. Seven community leaders from a broad range of creative disciplines volunteered their time over 12 weeks to mentor the participants. They shared their professional skills, experience, leadership and many laughs along the way. They often received as much as they gave.

Mentors met virtually once a fortnight with small groups of participants to provide individual support, develop skills and encourage confidence. They also encouraged participants to see themselves as leaders, and to engage in other areas of the community once the project was completed.

"It has been a privilege to be part of the MY STORY Project. To be part of something where for so long, I felt nothing. You have lifted me up with compliments and grace. I am so pleased to be alive and part of the human race."

Claire Carroll

During the pandemic, these weekly workshops provided some respite from the isolation many people were experiencing.

Key findings

The COVID-19 pandemic brought about enormous challenges for most communities around the world. Many people living with disability and mental health challenges experienced a sense of disconnection, and this was heightened during the pandemic.

One of our aims was to create a solid, inclusive and sustainable culture. Throughout the 12 weeks of the program, we found the group organically developed a sense of trust, comradeship and kinship.

Being able to provide a platform for people to remain connected during a time of social isolation and disruption was one of the key outcomes of the project. It demonstrated that culture and community don't stop because of limitations, rather it gives rise to new ways of existing, connecting and creating in trying times.

Participants overwhelmingly expressed an increase in confidence and a profound sense of validation. Many have gone on to apply for grants, leadership programs, awards and to participate in a variety of community initiatives. For many, this program has been transformational.

What are the core abcd values of the project?

The MY STORY Project principals that aligned with ABCD core values include:

- Linking people to each other.
- Individual leadership development.
- Building the capacity of communities to realise greater social change.
- Facilitation of learning and practice, both virtually and face-to-face.
- Giving people a voice.

The key community members involved

- City of Greater Geelong
- Community members with a lived

Most of us can remember being told a story by a family member, teacher or friend. It was a special time when everything stopped, and we were invited to go on a journey. Storytelling opens us to a world where things change, a shift in consciousness occurs, we become still, centred and connected. It is a simple and beautiful way to build empathy, understanding and connection.

Background

The MY STORY Project was designed in 2020 as part of the City of Greater Geelong's commitment to supporting equity and accessibility for people with disability and mental health challenges across the Geelong region.

The aim was to provide an opportunity for people from the region who have a lived experience of disability and mental health challenges to develop their storytelling skills through a 12-week mentorship program.

It provided an opportunity for professional writers, artists and storytellers to mentor participants and share their skills and expertise.

To ensure the project was inclusive and accessible to all, participants were given the opportunity to tell their story

in their own way. Stories were told through words, paintings, photography, music, sound, and movement.

Expressions of interest were broadly advertised via press and social media to engage people as storytellers or to volunteer as mentors. The response was extensive, with the City receiving interest from community members, stakeholders, disability organisations and schools.

The result was a multi-media collection of stories from 119 people aged between 15 and 82, seven mentors, and five community stakeholders. Our community worked together to create a collective voice that shared a unique vision and insight into living with the experience of disability and mental health challenges.

What abcd tools were used? How was the project planned

We believe everyone has a role to play in creating social change. The aim of the project was to mobilise facilitators to support others to achieve social impact through the creative practice and provide platform for connection and communication for people who may have experienced significantly higher rates of isolation during 2020.

It was important that the project was guided by the participants. They told us what they wanted to do and how they wanted to do it. This was a community owned project. This was their story.

The community worked together to provide the necessary tools and solutions in a safe and creative environment so that participants could

Photo Andrew Mackinnon



Photo Andrew Mackinnon

"It has been so special to be part of the MY STORY Project community. This was a big step to give myself permission to open up. I learnt that creativity can be expressed through so many mediums and with this supportive community I felt less afraid to share."

Rachael Thompson

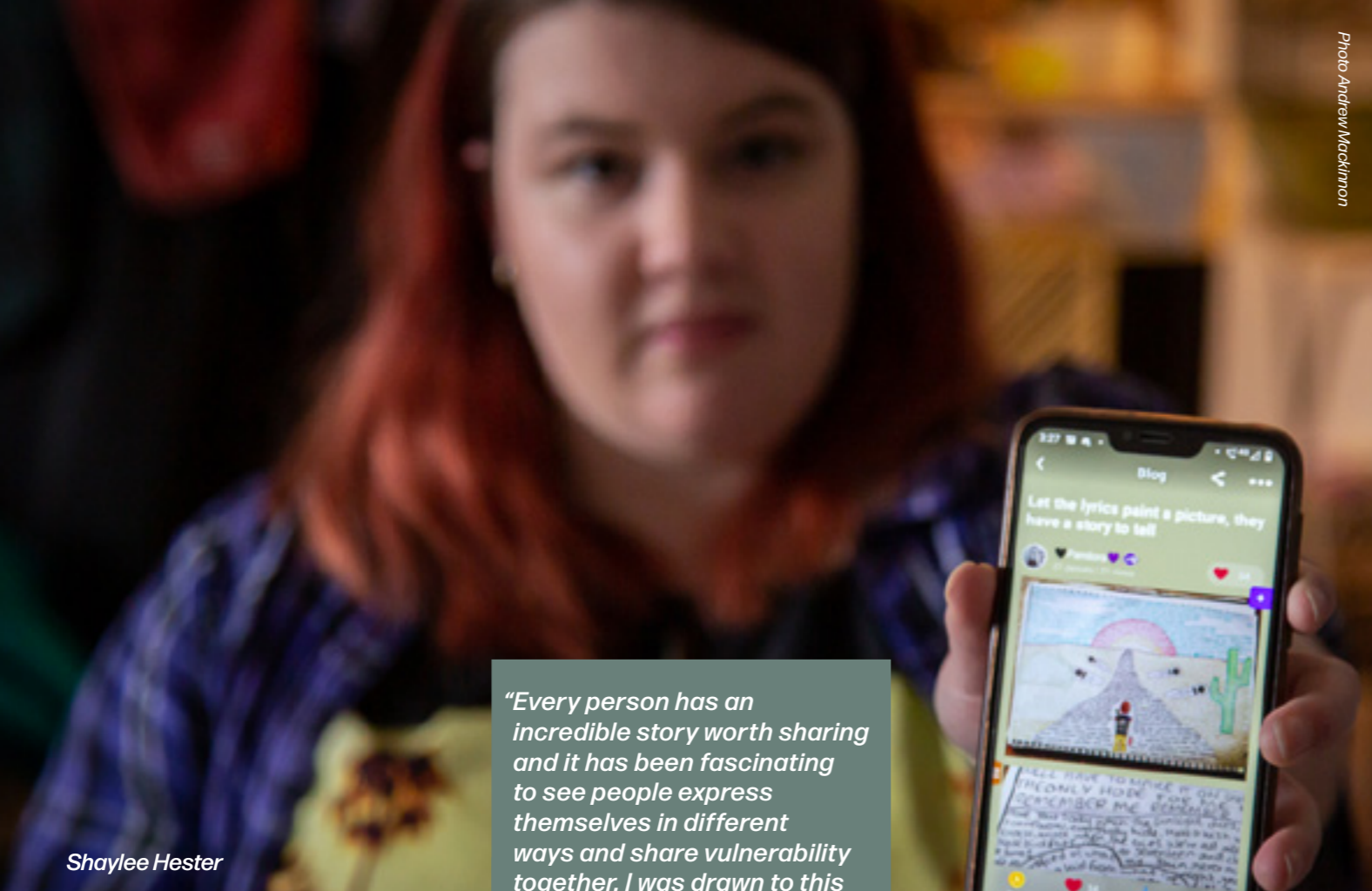


Photo Andrew Mackinnon

“Every person has an incredible story worth sharing and it has been fascinating to see people express themselves in different ways and share vulnerability together. I was drawn to this project because it scared me to show vulnerability and I thought I was not creative. I have learnt so much from all the incredible people involved and I will cherish this experience forever.”

Rachael Thompson

Shaylee Hester

experience of disability or mental health challenges.

- Key stakeholders: ArtGusto, Back to Back Theatre, James Street Gallery, genU and Nelson Park School Senior Campus

What worked well, what are the strengths of the project?

The MY STORY Project was inclusive of all people and all abilities. Participants were able to use a broad range of mediums as an avenue for self-expression. This meant that people who had challenges with verbal communication or cognition were given an alternative method to communicate and therefore remained engaged and included.

The program was open to anyone regardless of their experience, work status, ethnicity, age, or sexual identification. This created a community of diverse individuals that was rich, and multi-layered. Diversity enhances creativity, problem solving and provides opportunity for different perspectives, discoveries and innovations. It also allows people to learn from each other in a way they may not have previously experienced.

Challenges

- Some participants were unable to attend the set times for online

workshops due to other commitments, so we established individual meeting times for them to ensure they felt included.

- Some participants were not able to attend online workshops due to lack of support during COVID-19 restrictions, so we maintained phone and email contact and advocated for additional support for them.

Future plans

The City is planning to expand the MY STORY project in 2021 and to follow through with our original intention of creating an interactive exhibition through a series of installations that include VR, sound, theatre and film.

Audiences will be invited to directly engage with the storyteller’s lived experience of disability and mental health challenges with the aim to bridge

the gap of understanding and create a more memorable and meaningful experience.

Overall synopsis

The MY STORY Project was one of the City of Greater Geelong’s key events in its annual celebration of Inclusion Week and International Day of People with Disability 2020.

The MYSTORY Project is a program for people living, working or studying in the Geelong region. Outside Geelong, other innovative programs, including Write-ability and ArtAbility, also provide people with a lived experience of disability and mental health challenges the opportunity to express their stories through art.

The Project was designed and implemented in 2020 as part of the City’s commitment to work towards supporting equity and accessibility for people with disability and mental health challenges in the region.

It was an opportunity for people with a lived experience of disability and mental health challenges to find their own voice and tell their own story in their own way.

Sandra Muratti, Senior Community Development Officer, Connected Communities, City of Greater Geelong, smuratti@geelongcity.vic.gov.au

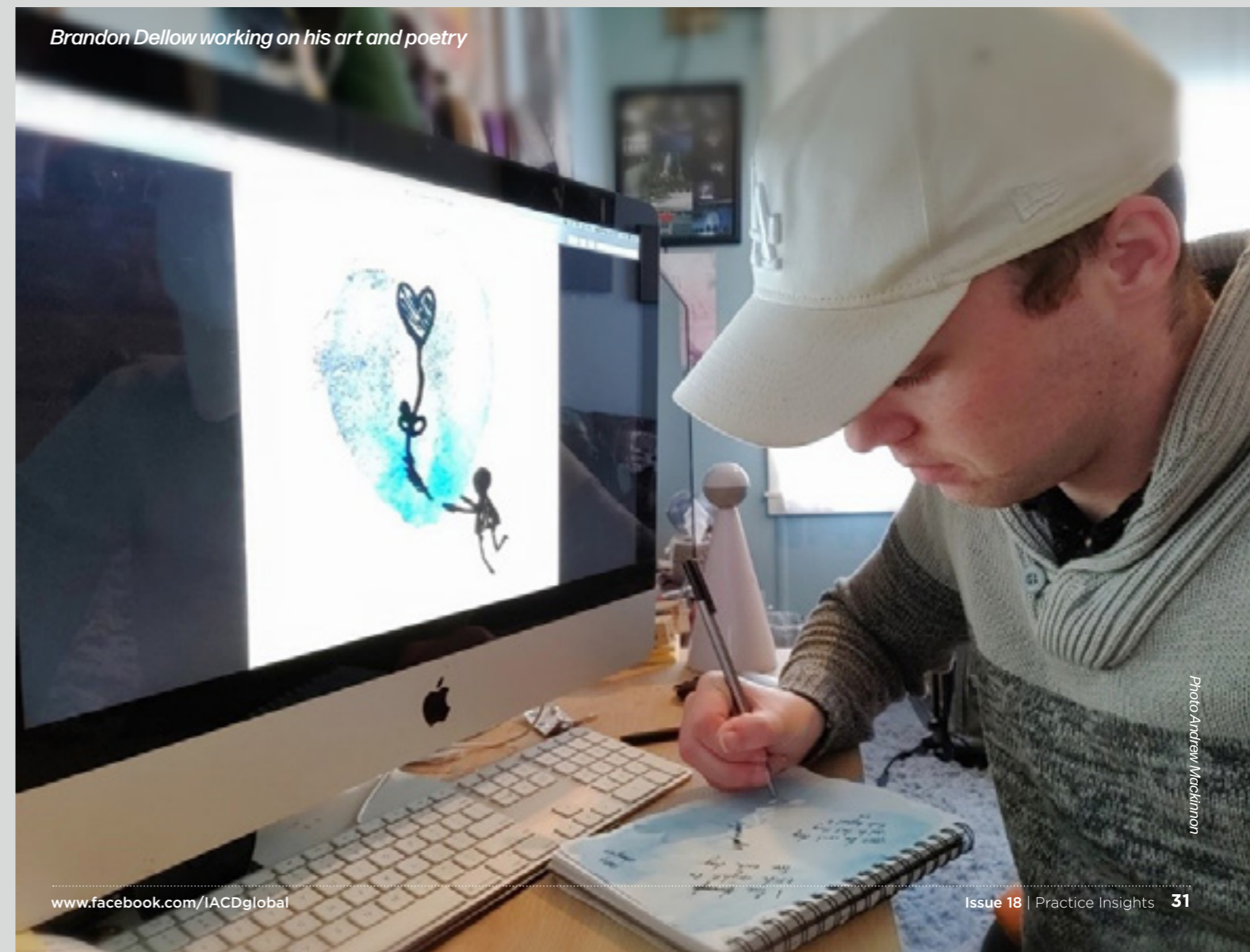


Photo Andrew Mackinnon

“The MY STORY project was an opportunity to share my story, decrease stigma of mental health and inspire others. But it ended up being so much more. This project helped me to heal and come to a deeper level of love and acceptance of myself, I learned to trust myself, my journey and my friends.”

Nicole Scott

Brodie Shaw



Brandon Dellow working on his art and poetry

Photo Andrew Mackinnon



Ancient words revisited

Janine Ward

Go to the people

Live with them, learn from them, Love them.

Start with what they know, Build with what they have. But with the best leaders,

When the work is done, the task accomplished, The people will say,

“We have done this ourselves”.

I first came across these words in the 1980s while completing my studies in Social Work. My parents had bought me the set of three volumes called “Training for Transformation – a handbook for community workers”, which at that stage I treated as my community bible.

I found the writings of Paulo Freire exciting and challenging, particularly as we in South Africa were grappling with apartheid and trying to find ways of mobilizing ourselves and ridding our country of this hateful system. The quote above spoke to me of mutual trust and respect, a belief in the capacity of community and a willingness to work alongside others to enable them to find their own way. Working in a rural setting with a community of people who had been displaced during the development of the sugar industry in the Swaziland lowveld, I felt stirred by the power in these words, and decided to adopt this philosophy in my work.

Just as the message in these words moved me, the age of the words astounded me. People have guessed that these words were spoken by Mahatma Gandhi, Mother Teresa, Nelson Mandela or Martin Luther King – all of whom are great enough individuals who would probably endorse such a message.

The fact is that these are the words of the Chinese philosopher, Lao Tzu, who lived in the 6th Century BC. My first thought as this fact hit home was “we have known for so long how to honour and work with people in communities – **why do we keep making such fundamental mistakes?**”

I will now attempt to describe how I tried, in my small way, to follow the words of Lao Tzu and to engage with the community of people living in Mafucula in an asset-based citizen-driven way.

Case Study: MAFUCULA, Swaziland

In a quiet rural valley situated behind a mountain range lives a community of people uprooted from their original home some 30km away, to make way for a sugar plantation. Promises of compensation, water, electricity, a new school, clinic and jobs had been made at the time of the enforced removal – but these empty words had come to nothing.

Families lived crammed into tiny asbestos huts – the only compensation they ever saw. These huts were unbearably hot in the summer and freezing cold in the winter. Those who could started building their own additional accommodation and used the asbestos huts as a kitchen.

A temporary asbestos school building had been erected, but many of these



walls were leaning over and the roof sheets let in rain – desks and books lay torn and damaged in pools of water on the bare earth in the classrooms.

One little shop built by a resident serviced the whole community, and people waited every day for the sight of the bread delivery van making its way along the dirt road into the area, leaving a trail of dust hanging in the air.

Those men who were fortunate enough to secure employment at the sugar plantation came home at weekends, but many men were unemployed and tried to grow cotton in the unforgiving soil made hard by the low rainfall. The annual cotton crop for the average family fetched a meagre R1,200 (less than \$100)..... little comfort for the weeks and months spent weeding and labouring in the hot fields.

Go to the people... often means accessing hard-to-reach communities

The river crossing into the village was impassable in a normal car after heavy rains, and the village would be temporarily cut off. On such days, I would leave my car at the river, take off my shoes and walk through the water. Because the crossing was out of sight from the primary school, the headmaster would often send the biggest boys to ‘rescue’ me if he saw me coming down the road and not re-appearing from the river crossing.

The key about going to the people is that those living in a community with poor access have no option when they have to travel to and from their homes. External

helpers often choose their visits to suit good weather conditions, rather than going when it suits the community residents.

**Nutritionists take care to plan
To do their surveys
when they can
Be sure the weather’s
fine and dry,
The harvest in, food intake high.**

**Then students seeking PhDs
Believe that everyone agrees
That rains don’t do
for rural study
- suits get wet and
shoes get muddy**

**The international experts’
flights Have other seasons;
winter nights
In London, Washington
and Rome
Are what drive them,
in flocks, from home**

**And northern academics too
Are seasonal in their
global view
For they are found in
third world nations
Mainly during long vacations.**

This could be seen as a cynical and harsh view, but the sentiments expressed in this poem by Robert Chambers reflect the often biased view of outsiders coming to assess communities on their terms²

Fransinah was a dear, but troubled soul, whose brother owned the local village shop. Every few months she would go to the mental hospital for an injection and come back very quiet.

She followed me wherever I went in Mafucula, and one day she called me to say she had found a place for me to live. She had made me this little “house” with the bricks that we were making from clay to build a community centre!

Often the most important meetings are the tedious ones where many people turn up to discuss a new activity or a difficult challenge. It is during these meetings – held more than once to be effective – that one sees who the real leaders in a community are and where the real interest and commitment are for community affairs. During these meetings you learn from the people.

Loving the people means accepting the structures that exist and being respectful of them. The chief of Mafucula did not pay much attention to the activities we carried out, but every so often I would get a message that he wanted to know what was happening – I would ask for an audience with him, and update him. Dealing with funders can also have its challenges, but finding a way to work together is necessary.

Start with what they know

As a requirement for my social work degree, I had to work in a community setting and run a development project. My entry point was to meet with the village health motivators and hear from them what I might be able to assist with. These health motivators had been



Fence-making Table. Alternative technology equipment used for an early income generating project

trained by the department of health, to visit homesteads and teach families about boiling their water, breast-feeding, spacing their families and growing vegetables.

One of their frustrations was that they had to convince families to build pit latrines – but they themselves did not understand the reason behind the “VIP (ventilated improved pit)” design. The men in particular were not interested in digging holes for something which they did not understand and which the health motivators could not convincingly explain! One of the first things I did was have a workshop with the health motivators to explain the logic behind the VIP latrines – this built up their confidence and enabled them to make proper use of the knowledge which they

already had. We built a VIP latrine at the community centre and this validated their role in the community as health motivators.

Build with what they have...

Two young unemployed men, Justice and Elliott, expressed an interest in making bricks and wire fencing to sell to local families. With advice and a brick-making press from an appropriate technology company in Swaziland, Justice and Elliott were eager to start, but they needed a place to store the equipment and cement. Elliott said all he needed was one bag of cement – he would do the rest. He collected stones and branches and made this simple shed frame. He wanted to test the clay bricks so he made the walls out of a

Justice (left) and Elliott (right)



combination of bricks, and empty beer cans filled with sand. This really was a case of building with what they had!

(This building still stands in Mafucula and now runs as a little business that cuts hair, charges mobile phone batteries and mends shoes)

This storeroom is an example of achieving a “low hanging fruit” in a short space of time. Elliott and Justice were excited to get their brick-making and wire fence activities going, and putting a storeroom up was relatively easy to do with what they had available in the community.

Another activity that involved more time and input was the fixing of the river crossing into Mafucula. This was something that all the residents had long wanted to do, but had not had the equipment or the pipes. One of the residents who worked at the local sugar mill had arranged to get some old concrete water pipes donated for the

river crossing. He also persuaded the sugar mill to grade the road prior to building a crossing. With little else, the community got started, laying the concrete pipes in the river bed and packing stones on top, collected by the residents and transported by one of the Mafucula farmers.

The day before all the stones were ready to be tied down and secured in place using the wire fencing made by Justice and Elliott, the area experienced over 100mm of rainfall overnight – all the stones were washed downstream and the community residents were devastated! The chief made an urgent call for everyone to assist in completing the crossing – residents spent all the next day walking along the riverbank to retrieve all the stones. The river crossing was completed by nightfall, much to everyone’s relief.

But with the best leaders, when the work is done, the task accomplished, the people will say, “We have done it ourselves”

Another activity Justice and Elliott started was a conservation club. They received training from the national conservation organisation and started a small club with the Mafucula school children, building simple rainwater-collection tanks and growing food gardens. They entered the national conservation club competition – and won! In this picture they are receiving

their certificate at the national prize-giving event in Mbabane (capital city of Swaziland).

These two young men also later went for training in water-tank construction and spring protection, and came back to offer this service in Mafucula, calling themselves “Maziya & Khumalo Ltd”.

Because of the remoteness of Mafucula from the nearest small town with shops, the residents wanted to make a small business incubation centre, where local residents would be able to run small enterprises to serve the community. With a grant from an external funder, several young men in Mafucula were trained in construction and they built six small units, as well as a toilet block, and with a loan from King Mswati III’s Enterprise Fund, many small businesses were started in the community .

After about 7 years, the area suffered a devastating drought – many cattle died and the chief approached me to say that the children in his area were going to die. By now the activities in Mafucula were known in the sugar plantation. I approached the General Manager’s wife and together we launched an appeal for funding and volunteers to help run an emergency feeding scheme for the children under five. The response was very encouraging, and together with a team of mothers in the village, a 3-day-a-week feeding scheme was launched, providing a hot meal for the under-5’s as well as multi-vitamin syrup, fortified milk powder and peanut butter for those who were found to be malnourished (all children were weighed and measured each month).

Technical help from the SAFAD team. With help from SAFAD UK students and the local sugar Mill, the community fixed the entrance 1988



Training young Mafucula residents in construction. The building of the micro-enterprise centre involved training young Mafucula residents in construction skills

As the feeding scheme became known, local businesses came to the party, and donated cooking oil, sugar, beans and other items for food parcels. The feeding scheme lasted for 14 months during the worst of the drought – over 20,000 meals were cooked and served at the community centre, and not a single child died. Food parcels for families were distributed at Christmas time, and later, as and when sufficient donations came in. Almost all the other project activities ceased during this time, as all efforts were concentrated on keeping families alive and saving the little children in particular.

By now an NGO (“Vulamehlo2”) had been established to coordinate all the village project activities, and I had secured funding from an overseas donor.

Justice, Elliot, Margaret and Jane were employed in their roles as community project staff, and I was also able to employ three qualified development officers to assist with expanding the development activities in the area.

By 1998 when I left Swaziland (12 years after first starting to work in Mafucula), an independent development committee had been established comprising village residents, which coordinated the enterprise centre and the original community projects. Two pre-schools had been built, one at each end of the valley, four boreholes had been sunk, all eight rooms in the enterprise centre were rented out to local small business entrepreneurs and many other business loans were issued to local residents running small businesses from their homes, small business training had been provided, two grinding mills had been set up, and the river crossing had been secured. Two years after I left, the nearest sugar plantation provided pumped water into the valley and trained the local farmers to grow sugarcane to feed the sugar mill.

The original brick-and-beer can storeroom (in the background, left) – now operating as “Cedumona Ten City Saloon” and offering battery charging, haircuts and shoe repairs.

Janine Ward, BA (Social Work), ABCD Practitioner & Facilitator, S.P.A.C.E., jwinspace@gmail.com

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How Covid-19 inspired new directions and a community-led project; with parents and children at the centre

Kylie Murphy

In one sweeping motion, COVID19 changed the way community functions. Great upheaval presents opportunities to overcome and adapt to new circumstances, in a Covid-19 world there are new and exciting ways to connect with community.



Group discussion on Welcome to community baby bag

For the community of Child & Family Centre, Chigwell, Tasmania, the opportunity became apparent when a group of parents who knew first-hand the feeling of disconnection from community at a time when they needed the warmth of community around them. Together parents shared their experience and created a community-led project, a Welcome to community baby bag, representing warmth of community.

On any given Monday morning, you will find the bumping space of Child & Family Centre Chigwell, Tasmania, filled with laughter, parental information, storytelling and singing. These are the beautiful dulcet tones of Baby Playgroup rich in community spirit, shared learning, support and joy.

By the end of March 2020, Baby playgroup was required to stop due to

Covid-19 lockdowns. Staff at the Child & Family Centre Chigwell investigated new mediums for continuing connection and support. Baby playgroup online group was established and on a Monday morning we held a Facebook live Baby playgroup. We chose to keep the format of the live sessions similar to the place-based sessions with a;

- good morning song welcoming families
- a discussion topic
- craft and activity ideas utilising items that could be readily found within a home environment
- a story either a book, a told story or a felt board story
- singing
- our goodbye song

Families interacted by sending photos to the group, watching the live session with their children or completing activities.

After each live session resources and the recording of the live session would be uploaded to the Baby playgroup online group.

With the easing of Covid-19 restrictions in July, Baby playgroup resumed back to the place-based format. Reaching out to community at this point was crucial as we needed to be sure, to do it in an authentic way. We reached out to community utilising our community assets, through social media, we used Child Health and Parenting Service (CHaPS) co-located within the Child & Family Centre Chigwell and our community networks to re-establish and bring in new community members.

Baby playgroup is relationship centred and rich in real conversations with our awe-inspiring group of parents who shared thoughts from their own

experience of disconnection from community as they moved into a new unknown parenting destination during Covid-19. Circle time is a safe space for our parents to have these conversations it's a gift not only for them but to all, as it was here that our community-led project; Welcome to community baby bags was born, a gift of connection, support, fun and friendship.

As a group we explored what is the purpose, what would be of assistance for parents, parent and couple supportive information, activities we could explore to be included, a gift that could be universal across a child's early years and community resources. Over several weeks we shared our idea to obtain feedback and collective growth for the initiative; with our partners, the Child & Family Centre Chigwell's Advisory Body and staff, CHaPS, we spoke with multiple community members, connected service providers and Local Council.

Harnessing and utilising our assets in this way and at this point improved and increased co-creation, for our community-led project. The entire community of Chigwell was involved in the Welcome to community baby bags; Council donated Boomerang Bags, made by local residents; CHaPS assisted to distributed bags; parents ensured useful information was included; and, a parent of the Child & Family Centre even offered her marketing skills.

At this point we were contacted by Country Women's Association Tasmania with the offer of items that could be added to our Welcome to community Baby Bags; baby socks, rubber ducks, varies clothing items, baby blankets and knitted baby jackets. Baby Playgroup parents were so thrilled to see their idea come to life before their eyes and to see the support from community and services.

Making such headway brought us to the point of finalising what information and resources that would be included; a welcome to community poem, parenting links, self-care ideas, early years information, dad's resource flyer, songs for fun, soothing and routines, a list of books to read with your baby, local community services, Child & Family Centre Chigwell flyers, programs on offer within local community, Launch into Learning information, Country Women's Association Tasmania gift and an egg shaker that will encourage many happy hours of singing and making beautiful memories.

Welcome to community baby bags started as an idea from our Baby



Baby bag giving



Welcome to community baby bags photo

playgroup parents due to the lack of support, they felt during Covid-19 restrictions and lockdown. The greatest feature of this community-led project is the partnership with parents in the development and the depth of insight they imparted and the support from community and services. Moving forward we will be making our own material boomerang bags, so the project is sustainable, we are going to reuse unwanted material and community members are extremely keen to take

part with the sewing of the bags.

Our Welcome to community baby bags have now been lovingly given to 20 families with 8-week-old babies and each time a bag is given to a family we share the story of how this gift was developed and the friendship it is given in.

Kylie Murphy, Community Inclusion Worker, Child and Family Centre Chigwell – Department of Education, kylie.murphy@education.tas.gov.au

Picture This: A Govan Childhood

Carla Malseed

What better way to get an understanding of an area than through images, and particularly images captured by those who know Govan best – the families that live there.

Picture This was born out of a desire to develop a better understanding of what growing up in Govan looked like for the children that live there, while also providing an opportunity for us to get to know the local community and them to know us.

In late 2018, we recruited 12 families to take part in the project. This was done through local organisations including, but not limited to, Govan HELP and Plantation Productions. Each family was given a camera and asked to take pictures of what childhood in Govan looked like to them. They were asked to take 20 pictures a month for three months, and we checked in with them

every month to see how they were doing. Nine of the families finished the project.

By April 2019 we had collected hundreds of photographs and what a story they told! Too often when people think about Govan they mention high levels of poverty, dwindling industry, or crime but these pictures showed that for many children Govan could be a great place to grow up. The images show children and families going about their daily lives against the backdrop of Govan. They include visits to the park, grocery shops at Asda or Lidl, attending community events such as Govan Loves Christmas, and families marking special occasions.



Each family who took part in the project was invited to take part in a small interview at the end to get their reflections. During these interviews, parents spoke fondly of Govan and described the strong sense of community in the area. They talked about knowing their neighbours, the benefits of having a park so close by and having great transport links to other parts of the city.



Children and families got really into taking fun pictures



We loved seeing so many families celebrating special occasions

In July of the same year we held an exhibition of the photos at Govan and Linthouse Parish Church and we asked those who attended what they learned about Govan from the pictures. People said:

“There is a great sense of community”

“That even though people think Govan is a ‘deprived’ area, there’s lots of happiness”

“People know how to have fun”.



Elderpark was a firm favourite with the families who took part in the project

We believed that these pictures told an important story about childhood in Govan that should be heard by as many people as possible. To do this, the pictures were made into a book which launched in March 2020 with accompanying forewords from Sir Alex Ferguson and Nicola Sturgeon MSP, First Minister of Scotland.

The book is a celebration of Govan and the children that grow up there. The pages are filled with children playing in parks, learning at Govan schools, and exploring their local community. These images will not represent childhood for every child in Govan, and they do not claim to, but they do show that for many

children there can be lots of benefits to growing up in Govan.

Of course, around this time things changed – for families in Govan and for us all. The pandemic meant that all of us experienced significant change. We therefore asked five of the original photo diaries participants to take part in a month-long extension of the project capturing what a Govan Childhood looked like under lockdown. This second set of pictures showed that while some things stayed the same – especially time in the park – a lot had changed. We received lots of pictures of families spending time online, children learning at home and birthdays that were just a bit different to usual.

Throughout both parts of the project, we have continued our work with families and the community in Govan. We know that Govan is a strong, welcoming and resilient community and that by working together, with the community, we can make sure Govan is a great place to grow up for all children.

Carla Malseed, Local Campaigns Manager, NSPCC
Carla.Malseed@NSPCC.org.uk



Alley adjacent to elementary school, before Westwood Unidos



Alley adjacent to elementary school, after WU community clean-up and transformation

Through Westwood Unidos, residents' gifts, dreams and talents drove neighborhood change

Rachel Dahlke

Westwood Unidos was a successful example of organizing residents to achieve health equity in a historically disinvested, working-class, predominantly Latino neighborhood.

Formed in 2012 in Denver, Colorado, Westwood Unidos (WU) utilized an Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) community organizing approach with seed funding from The Denver Foundation, the Urban Land Conservancy and LiveWell Colorado. Mike Green, a Denver Foundation consultant and the author of *When People Care Enough to Act* helped guide the work.

The Westwood neighborhood shared characteristics of many marginalized, disinvested communities in US cities. To confront the challenges, WU sought to discover and build on the assets of the community rather than focusing on only its needs. As a way of discovering the neighborhood's assets, Westwood Unidos conducted a listening campaign to find out what residents and organizations cared most about and wanted to work on together.

WU's first director was a white woman who lived outside the community, Rachel

Dahlke. She hired three Latinx, female residents as Community Connectors, a critically important role of listening, organizing and empowering the neighborhood. The Community Connectors and Director conducted over 225 listening conversations in the first three months. Through the conversations, WU identified the skills and resources that existed in the community and, most importantly, gained its trust. With this knowledge, Westwood Unidos' built "from the inside out," facilitating the leadership of local residents on the projects they themselves had prioritized.

Residents expressed concern about the widespread dumping of trash in alleys, the prevalent graffiti and the overabundance of liquor stores. Residents wanted streets transformed from auto-oriented to walkable, and they wanted a recreation center and safe parks. Many residents also said that they had a skill, such as Zumba or drawing, which they would like to teach to others.

Several organizations shared their desire to work in the Westwood community, but did not know what to do or how to find residents to partner with. With WU's help to connect them with resident partners, these organizations eagerly signed up to co-chair action teams, and provided staff time, training and funding.

Westwood Unidos was deliberate in including both residents and organizations at the table because, as Mike Green explained, "Organizations working without resident voice lack relevance. Residents working without organizations often lack structure and resources."

Westwood Unidos' values - Democratic, resident-centered, listening for what to do, uniting, and transparent - guided the work and were communicated upfront to all who sought to partner.

Residents learned to lead meetings, recruit other neighbors to become involved, to do research, conduct

planning, and to meet with elected officials and government staff, and they put these skills into practice regularly.

The Westwood neighborhood was 80% Hispanic. Approximately half the Hispanic population was monolingual Spanish-speaking immigrants and the other half were monolingual English-speaking US citizens. Meetings were held in Spanish, and an interpreter provided simultaneous interpretation to English. Many participants said that prior to joining Westwood Unidos, they had felt isolated, disenfranchised and frightened, and Westwood Unidos helped them overcome their fear and feel like they belonged.

The Westwood Unidos action teams worked on the issues prioritized by residents. Each was co-chaired by a Community Connector and an organizational partner. The Built Environment action team supported walking and biking, public transportation and housing. The following was achieved between 2012 - 2017:

1. An abandoned and blighted building was demolished and replaced with a Futsal Court.
2. A city bus route was reinstated within the neighborhood
3. All residents displaced when a mobile home park was redeveloped received compensation and relocation, no matter their legal status.
4. \$14 million was allocated to redevelop the main street to improve walkability and build two plazas.

The Safety Action Team held monthly neighborhood clean-ups, hosted youth activities and advocated for parks and recreation amenities in the community. Norma Brambila, the Community Connector who co-chaired the Safety

Action Team, was a powerful community organizer whose deep commitment and vision for her neighborhood enabled her to engage hundreds of people to build power and achieve ambitious community goals. The following was achieved between 2012- 2017.

1. Multiple blighted, dangerous alleys were redeveloped into safe walkways to school and became sources of community pride.
2. One neighborhood park was restored and upgraded and a brand-new park designed according to residents' input.
3. Residents successfully advocated for a \$37 million recreation center to be built, and \$3.5 million was allocated to youth nature programs.
4. Defeated three new liquor stores were prevented from opening in the neighborhood.

The Learning Center Action Team connected residents and provided training for instructors who wanted to teach classes with community locations,

Westwood Unidos instructors receive a donation of yoga mats at La Casita



such as school gyms. Due to the overwhelming demand for programming and lack of reliable locations, the Westwood Unidos instructors redeveloped an abandoned building which became La Casita Community House, an Educational Center where residents teach other residents. Hundreds of residents participate each month. Classes offered have included English, Peruvian Dance, Music for adults and kids, GED, Ballet, Folkloric Dance, Computer, Cardio-aerobics, Personal Improvement, Alanon, Alateen, Make-Up, Nails, Spanish, Zumba, and Counseling, such as help signing up for food stamps. Classes are offered at affordable prices and 100% of the class income goes to the instructor. At the same time, the teachers themselves gain skills in starting their own small business.

Westwood Unidos' success was due to the trusting relationships with residents and organizational partners. It was very important to hire Community Connectors who were demographically and culturally representative of the community, build on their existing



Westwood Unidos leaders celebrate the grand opening of the redeveloped Westwood Park

relationships and form new relationships with a common foundation of being neighbors and from similar cultures and backgrounds. As a result of the Community Connectors being monolingual Spanish-speaking, most Westwood Unidos leaders were monolingual Spanish speaking immigrants as well.

Another key was recruiting like-minded organizational partners to help provide resources, structure and support which would have not been possible without them. Each organization contributed immeasurably to the work. The following is a small sampling. Extreme Community Makeover worked with Community Connector Norma Brambila to lead community clean-ups, alley transformations and Safety Action Team meetings. BuCu West helped the community design a plan for the redevelopment of the main street and co-chaired the Built Environment Meetings. The Trust for Public Land acquired land for the neighborhood's first new park in 30 years, facilitated the design of a re-developed park and greenway and designed an alleyway toolkit to redevelop blighted alleys to community gathering spaces. The Urban Land Conservancy provided funding and technical assistance for neighborhood planning and acquired and redeveloped land for community-benefitting redevelopment. The office of City Councilman Paul Lopez spearheaded the new park, championed the recreation center and partnered to prevent new liquor stores. 9to5 Colorado supported the community organizing for a new bus

route and affordable housing. The City and County of Denver provided funding and partnered for economic development, street improvements, graffiti removal, new parks and more.

By listening deeply, forming relationships and creating action teams of residents and organizations working together, Westwood Unidos became a powerful coalition led by residents that improved health, physical activity, safety, the economy and quality of life.

In retrospect, an area of missed opportunity for Westwood Unidos was serving people from more backgrounds. Other races of people in the community included white, African American, Asian and Native American. Westwood Unidos could have created a more diverse coalition by organizing these communities more intentionally, such as hiring Community Connectors representative of these communities and offering interpretation in Vietnamese during meetings.

As the initiative grew, some tensions between organizations arose. This is natural in an environment with limited funding and much overlap in organizational activities, in which there is no clear boundary where one organization's influence stops and the

other's begins. Westwood Unidos was able to do the most when the organizations on the leadership team were involved and active in the action teams. As that participation dwindled over time and partners began to focus on their own activities as opposed to contributing their energy and resources to the group, more siloed efforts arose and led to competition for funding and distrust. To avoid this, it would have been helpful to have regular conversations about expectations for leadership team members and to codify them in the by-laws. The purpose of the conversations would be to achieve clarity about how organizations will collaborate, fundraise and communicate the work externally so that each organization, and most importantly the residents, received proper credit and ability to claim the work externally.

Building an organization around the hopes, dreams and motivations of a community's residents can create long-lasting, transformational change. Prior to the formation of Westwood Unidos, Westwood was a neglected, disinvested neighborhood in which residents were not organized. By listening deeply, forming relationships and creating action teams of residents and organizations working together, Westwood Unidos became a powerful coalition led by residents that improved health, physical activity, safety, the economy and quality of life.

Rachel Cleaves Dahlke, MURP, Founder, Westwood Unidos, rachel@rachedahlkeconsulting.com

Building relationships before you need them

Richard Holmes



Since 2012, Gloucester has been applying 'Asset Based Community Development' (ABCD) as a means of growing community resilience. This approach centres on connecting neighbours around actions on things that are important to them. In doing so, people form new relationships with those they live closest too. Often these relationships grow into friendships, so when we encounter rough periods in our lives it's our neighbours who are on hand to help out.

ABCD is a way of building relationships before we need them. At the start of this year, little did any of us expect that we would need our neighbours as much as we have in 2020.

In the early months of 2020, news spread of how other countries were responding to a new virus, with residents being forced to stay at home. For many of us at the time the severity of the situation was unclear, but if it was to affect the UK, we would need people to help each other.

Gloucester City Council had been developing its practice in ABCD for many years, and had recently established Gloucester Community Building Collective, an independent community interest company with a core purpose of connecting residents and growing community capacity.

This made it well-placed to play a leading role in the COVID-19 community response. In anticipation of lockdown measures, the organisation produced guidance for residents to help each other,

In the early months of 2020, news spread of how other countries were responding to a new virus, with residents being forced to stay at home. For many of us at the time the severity of the situation was unclear, but if it was to affect the UK, we would need people to help each other.

The Gloucester Community Building Collective



with a contact card that could be posted with offers of support. With the help of the city's elected councillors, community activists and local organisations, we pulled together to print and deliver 57,000 leaflets to every house in the city before the Government announced a national lockdown.

This network of elected members and community leaders then helped to mobilise over 500 Street Champions across the city, who became points of contact for their streets. Often requests for help came directly to these Street Champions. However, for those who didn't have that relationship, Gloucestershire County Council established a Help Hub, a central point



John and Dino at the Museum helping sort the 300 weekly packs ready for delivery.

Art Packs given out to 300 groups across Gloucester: Primary, Teenagers, Older People.

In order to build back better from this pandemic, we need to invest in communities: not just by funding short term projects with predefined outcomes, but by investing in community resilience, connecting residents and enabling them to co-create solutions.



where people could both ask for help and offer it, often facilitating reciprocal relationships.

Street Champions found that not only could they assist with food and medicine deliveries, but they were also able to provide feedback on local issues, which meant organisations could respond more effectively. This included providing 'bags of play' for vulnerable families, supplied by Play Gloucestershire, and 'arts and creative' packs, supplied by Gloucester Culture Trust to keep people engaged. What made this network of Street Champions and community leaders

effective was that time and resources were placed into building relationships before they were needed. People had built trust, which had laid the foundations for collaboration rather than competition. Whilst the situation was uncertain, there was safety in the relationships, which allowed new ideas to come forward.

In order to build back better from this pandemic, we need to invest in communities: not just by funding short term projects with predefined outcomes, but by investing in community resilience, connecting residents and enabling them to co-create solutions. For councils and

other organisations this will require building trust and learning how to 'step back', whilst not walking away. We have to continue to learn how to discern when our help is needed, and when we need to stand on the side lines in order for the community to build its own capacity. This is much harder than many of us are prepared to acknowledge.

Richard Holmes, Executive Director of the Gloucester Community Building Collective,
rich@gloscommunitybuilding.co.uk

Hillside Court Richmond, Virginia

Wendy McCaig and Lindsay Gullatte-Lee

In 2011, parents in Hillside Court locked their children inside to protect them from rampant gun violence. Today the neighborhood is bustling with activities for citizens of all ages because a group of concerned citizens choose to take back their streets. Hillside Court is a public housing complex located on the southside of Richmond, Virginia with an average household income of under \$10,000 per year.

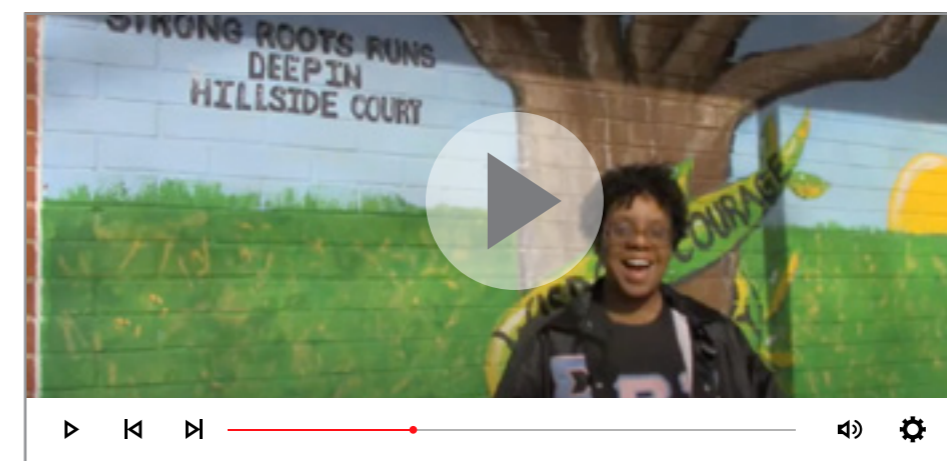
After a series of murders in the community, Embrace Communities hosted a gathering of concerned citizens and that led to an asset-based community-driven development effort with an initial focus of protecting children.

Over the next three years, this small band of concerned citizens reopened their neighborhood recreation center and launched 9 resident-led initiatives including a family support team, mobile

food pantry, a cheerleading squad, a football team, a men's support group, a senior support team, monthly community-wide celebrations, a computer lab, and a clothing closet. You can learn more about their development effort in the video below.

Eventually the residents formed an association called the Hillside Court Partnership (HCP.) HCP seeks to strengthen the Hillside from the inside out by offering residents an opportunity to use their gifts, talents and passions to create a safe and healthy environment for all Hillside residents. You can learn more about Hillside Court Partnership on their Facebook Page: www.facebook.com/FriendsofHillsideCourt.

Wendy McCaig, Embrace Communities, Executive Director
wendy@embracecommunities.org
www.embracecommunities.org



Resident leader Lindsay Gullatte-Lee, AKA The Feisty Poet, wrote this poem about her experience as a Hillside leader

Richmond, Va is where I chose to reside

When I left my former life behind I just needed a change of scenery

And Hillside Court was where that happened to be

It was a time when I was at my lowest

And left everything and everyone I needed the most

It was a journey I was forced to take A decision that was hard to make

Single Again with three girls to raise Searching day after day for a good job that paid

Each passing day grew more depressing

All lifetime experiences serve as a lesson

But in the midst of a storm

Out came many Blessings

A knock at the door would change everything

But at the time I didnt know what these new changes would bring

Enter in this bubbly woman full of hope, excitement and opportunities up her sleeves

Who opened up so many doors for my family and me

If it weren't for her ABCD program who knows where we would be

She was an angel in disguise by the name of Wendy

Because of her I tapped into my gifts, what I could offer the world

With her help we got Youth programs started for boys and girls

I began to like who I looked in the mirror to see

It was at this time I was able to find ME

I encourage more to get involved in this program

It's a life changer

And It All started

Because I opened the door for a stranger

< You can hear more from Lindsay in this video documenting her journey from a sceptical unengaged resident to a key leader in this development effort.

Wild Coast asset based community development (ABCD) pilot project

Ms Andile Maphumulo & Mrs Amelia Visagie

The socio-economic impacts of any infrastructure project usually reach far and wide. New developments bring about opportunities, growth and inclusion; a new road even more so. Roads can lead us to reach our dreams. Successful community development programmes open a room for stakeholders to co-create solutions that reduces problems and increase growth opportunities.



Zutari gave feedback to SANRAL in Port Elizabeth, South Africa, for the first phase of the asset based community development (ABCD) project.

Zutari formerly known as Aurecon was appointed with Royal Mndawe Holdings (ROMH), as consortiums to provide construction services for the N2 Wild Coast Toll Highway Section 20 between the Lingeni Intersection (km 15.40) and the Msikaba Bridge (km 33.02). This new road will have a significant impact on local tourism and enterprise development, with more people having access to this breathtaking part of the country. It will cut through one of the most beautiful and unspoilt areas of South Africa, and will allow travellers to drive along a beautiful highway, all the way from the Mozambique border to Cape Town.

The Wild Coast is a beautiful and a very special place, it is the home of the amaMpondo, a nation with a proud and rich culture, who settled in this area more than 400 years ago. The amaMpondo communities have colourful histories, with many stories and indigenous crafts that have remained throughout the centuries.

We at the Zutari Consortium consider ourselves fortunate to be part of the team who is assisting SANRAL in leaving a lasting legacy for 14 villages along this section of the road. Part of this legacy involves embracing the impacted communities, and leveraging their

talents and dreams to build a prosperous future.

Zutari conducted research in the villages impacted. The findings showed that the communities are proud of the beauty and richness of their environment and culture. They believe their uniqueness and rich stories will attract a lot of tourists. It also revealed that the communities are experiencing high poverty and unemployment rates, with limited opportunities for young people to earn a living. The data showed that there are existing assets within the communities that have the potential to drive local economic development and growth. To assist community members to make the most of the opportunities that the new road development will bring, SANRAL together with the Zutari Consortium, embarked on an asset based community development (ABCD) journey.

The ABCD approach involved a process of building the capacity of recruited local youth in terms of implementing ABCD, and their presentation skills, their motivations, their business acumen, life skills and understanding of money.

The recruited youth was then tasked to provide support and training to their own community members residing in the Wild Coast area to drive social mobilisation so that everybody involved can build their own capacity to create economic livelihoods and to not depend on private institutions or government stakeholders for survival.

Job losses have become a reality in South Africa and affect thousands of



Community champions being introduced to the community

These champions conducted more than 2,600 surveys on the assets that the community have and coordinated 14 workshops in the respective communities to confirm and validate the survey information.

individuals. If approached correctly, and in line with United Nations Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), key assets could contribute to the development of a rich tourism experience, as well as provide food security and employment for community members. We feel honoured to have witnessed so much change in the lives of the people in the Wild Coast area of the Eastern Cape.

After completing the first phase of the ABCD project, a consolidated business plan was compiled to be shared with various partners and funders who might be interested in investing in some key identified community-driven projects.

This however, was not the end of the first phase of the project. The team prepared a feedback session for SANRAL which was no ordinary presentation. The presentation was a showcase extravaganza that used exciting story telling and a larger than life visual display of the actual road map with paintings of assets that were discovered through the asset mapping and survey process done by the community.

The Zutari team is looking forward to enrolling for the second phase of the project which will include two business development centres where experts can mentor and coach community members who want to take their community driven initiatives and micro-enterprises to the next level.

These centres will effectively become the localised support function for economic development and will be owned and operated by local youth entrepreneurs from the respective villages. They will immediately set in motion an extensive job creation process.

This was a wonderful team effort between the Zutari Communication and Stakeholder Engagement Team and the Transport Team.

The potential that new infrastructure developments bring should never be underestimated. This is an exciting time for the communities and SANRAL, as

this partnership will realise extensive impact on both the micro- and macro economies of South Africa.

Andile Maphumulo, Senior Consultant: Communication and Stakeholder Engagement,
Andile.Maphumulo@zutari.com

Amelia Visagie, Associate Communication and Stakeholder Engagement,
Amelia.Visagie@zutari.com



Phase 1 of the project being introduced in the community

ABCD: By the Community, For the Community

Jacqueline Smith

Paganhill Community Group's (PCG) ABCD journey started in 2017 when a group of residents talked about what we could do in Paganhill that would give the area a lift. We also hoped that, eventually, the anti-social problems locally could be improved if people got to know each other better and so a Street Party was agreed on. To start the process a few of us spent time gathering opinions outside our local Tesco Express. Some 15 people joined us and over 200 people came to the Party.

We formed a committee after the Summer fayre and agreed that any resident who wished to come along to monthly meetings could participate. We agreed to focus on what is 'Strong in our Community, not what is Wrong' and developed a Mission statement and aims to support this. Our aims include:

1. Facilitation of spaces that improve the local environment
2. Promotion and provision of community events
3. Developing partnerships with third parties that can improve the economic, social and physical wellbeing of the residents of Paganhill
4. Any other activities that the directors believe will improve and develop community cohesion.

People wanted a place to meet and talk but we have no local cafes so we started a cafe in our local hall one afternoon a

'I am a shy person but found that the more I joined in the more I enjoyed talking with people, the more I spoke to people the more my confidence grew. I greeted people as they came in. I sat near the main doors doing crafts. I learnt card making from another resident and have become good at it, selling my cards to help fund raise for the community. I found I was good with children and helped them with crafts in the cafe. The cafe is a lifeline'

Mel Wilkins

week, giving people the opportunity to get to know each other. We created a welcoming and inclusive place which eventually meant that people who came to the cafe welcomed new people too. We start from an asset viewpoint - our residents are assets because they all have something to offer our community. We have found that people came to view the cafe as an important part of their week and their involvement grew and their ownership of the space strengthened.

The cafe became home to many other organisations who offered support and advice to people in our community. Including Barnwood Trust who gave us ABCD Training. These services were often already working with local people which meant travelling was reduced and savings made when budgets were already tight. All the people representing these organisations became part of the friendly atmosphere of the cafe; meeting and talking to each other as well as providing a valued service. This increased the trust in these services as well, allowing more people to feel safe to use them.

In 2019 we were the only ABCD project from England who presented at the Popeldag in the Netherlands. A great experience to meet with other groups. When we returned from that trip we learnt we were shortlisted for the Stroud community award. We won the award and were proud to show our certificate in the cafe.

In that same year our local PCSO suggested we get together with the local councils, Town and District, who work in the area to meet and address the anti-social elements that were a constant problem in our area. We formed a group which later became known as Transform. Thus helping to fulfill one of our aims in representing the views and concerns of our residents.

In 2020 our journey took us on another route. The cafe was closed but our desire to offer food during Covid linked us to another project in our Town, The Long Table, started by celebrity chef Tom Herbert in 2018. Run by a team of enthusiastic and innovative people who started the 'Freezer of Love' during Lockdown. At the start of 2021 Longtable and PCG starred in Countryfile, the programme showed how the projects work together to offer this great service to our communities: Locally grown vegetables and produce, often donated or end of line (preventing food waste) creating healthy and favorite meals at the Longtable, frozen and brought out to our 'Freezer of Love'



Sally-Anne Wherry, Nurse and Jacqueline Smith, Director/Chairperson believe that learning about the ABCD approach fitted in well with my previous work and experience: It is a way of being.

in the community. Offered on a "Pay as you Can" basis.

We are continuing to create links in our community, with our schools, for example, who helped our Food Hub by decorating our Xmas hampers. Our local Veterans Group is involved, a permaculture garden group has started and other local projects that support and help people. New members bring new ideas so we are always open to evolving and creating new projects.

Covid has been a challenge for many reasons; people needed help or wanted to offer help, we had to create systems that offered safety for everyone, gave boundaries and rules. Within these guidelines we can grow and learn together for the benefit of our

community. We are still finding the balance between community and organisation in these guidelines and policies, but together we will work at that. It's not a perfect system, perhaps it's not meant to be, it will grow and change with the members involved.

Before PCG started residents often expressed worry or concern about anti-social behaviour, issues around drugs and not feeling safe to go out at night. Through the work of our group and our relationship with our services we are being heard and the problems reducing. During covid we have had a further 50 plus volunteers join us and develop a fantastic Food Hub where anybody, whatever their pocket can get food. We plan to open our new cafe once covid allows and our pockets

'It's great to know you are there, it gives me peace of mind and reassurance in case I need you. I would encourage others to get to know you for their peace of mind.'

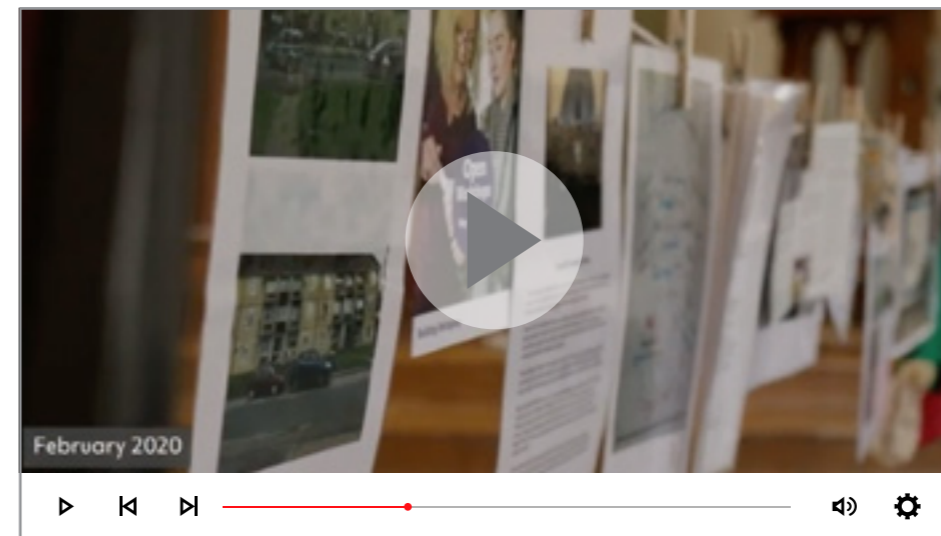
Resident

dictate. In 4 years we have come a long way. We are Neighbours helping neighbours.

Jacqueline Smith, Director, Paganhill Community Group CIC, Founder member. jsmith@paganhill.org.uk



Active members of the PCG Food Hub from left to right - Claire Connell (Coordinator) Jennie saunders, Heidi Wicks (Coordinator) Pammie Hose, Veronica Black (Centre front)



Paganhill Community Group - Who are we?

Watch our film, kindly made by Barnwood Trust, illustrating the path we have taken to get to our current set up.



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**Community Development:
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ABCD Institute: <https://resources.depaul.edu/abcd-institute/Pages/default.aspx>

ABCD in Action: <https://abcdinaction.org>

ABCD Asia Pacific: <http://jeder.com.au/abcdasiapacific/>

ABCD Canada: <http://www.deepeningcommunity.org/abcd-canada-home>

Abundant Community: <https://www.abundantcommunity.com>

John McKnight (personal website): <https://johnmcknight.org>

Coady Institute: <https://coady.stfx.ca>

Tamarack Institute: <https://www.tamarackcommunity.ca>

Jeder Institute: <https://www.jeder.com.au>

Neighbor Power: <http://www.neighborpower.org>

Bank of IDEAS: <https://bankofideas.com.au>

Nurture Development: <https://www.nurturedevelopment.org>

Sustaining Community: <https://sustainingcommunity.wordpress.com>

Community Minds: <https://www.communityminds.org.au>

Catalyse: <https://www.catalyse.co.nz>

Embrace Communities: <https://embracecommunities.org>

Inspiring Communities: <https://inspiringcommunities.org.nz>

ABCD: In a Nutshell
Film 6

Joe's Story - Learning Conversations

Communities can be activated for change and action when people listen to what is important for the community and step back and let the community lead.



IACD's Practice Insights magazine, sharing practice and research about community development from around the world.



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