Building On Strengths

Asset Based Community Development Principles in Academic Libraries

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Overview

What is ABCD?

How does this apply to libraries?

Let’s try it out!

Questions and thoughts?
Before we start...

Is anyone familiar with ABCD?

Ever participated in an asset mapping exercise?

Strengths Finder?
What is ABCD?

McKnight & Kretzmann

https://resources.depaul.edu/abcd-institute/about/founders/Pages/default.aspx
Asset-based community development (ABCD) is a methodology for the sustainable development of communities based on the strengths and potentials of the community.
Steps of ABCD

1. assessing existing assets
2. organizing around issues that motivate and inspire action
3. determining actions with intent to move forward
4. identifying + linking micro-assets to the macro-environment
5. using the identified assets for development
6. empowering the community
ABCD’s Guiding Principles

- Everyone has gifts
- Relationships build community
- Citizens at the center
- Leaders involve everyone
- People DO care
- Listening > telling
- Ask, ask, ask, ask
- Inside out organization
- Institutions as servants
How we’ve used it at CIA
Questions?
“Communities can only be built by focusing on the strengths and capacities of the citizens who call that community home. Those who have escaped the lures of deficiency, therefore, have been drawing up a new map based on old truths, an ‘Assets Map’... At the center of the map, and of the community building process, lie the ‘gift’ of individual residents, their knowledge, skills, resources, values, and commitments.”

John Kretzmann, 1997
(Two of) ABCD’s tools

- Personal Capacity Inventory
- Community Asset Mapping

There are other tools, like time shares, but they’re not as relevant to our work.
Personal Capacity Inventory
Personal Capacity Inventory
aka “Gifts of the Head, Hands & Heart”

**Head**
- Knowledge
- Information

**Hands**
- Practical skills
- Talents

**Heart**
- Passion
- Listening
Activity #1

Personal Capacity Inventory
aka “Gifts of the Head, Hands & Heart”

List out YOUR gifts in each category on the sheet.
What are your assets?
Discover everyone’s gifts & passions

Connect people with the same passions to act collectively

Ask them to share their gifts
Community Assets

- People
- Physical structures or places
- Community services
- Businesses
- Institutions
- Associations
Why?

- Understand your community
- Better understand community needs
- Identify possible partners and funding
- Empowering for community members
Mapping is the most common way that groups identify community assets.

Asset maps can take many forms...
Activity #2

Asset mapping as a group
How can we connect these assets to move our libraries forward?
Better libraries

Your community member’s personal assets

Your community’s assets

Strong community based projects
Questions?
Thank you!
For more information...

Asset-Based Community Development Institute (ABCD)
https://resources.depaul.edu/abcd-institute/Pages/default.aspx

Building communities from the inside out: a path toward finding and mobilizing a community’s assets. Kretzmann & McKnight. 1993.