

SDF Community Inclusion Initiative - Community of Practice

Topic 8: Community Building

1. What is community development?



Community development is:

- Addressing a common issue
- Owned by the community
- Led locally and collaborative
- Experimental and opportunistic
- Focussed on objectives

Community development:

- involves community members taking collective action
- communities identify and create solutions to common problems
- assumes communities have strengths and assets that can form part of the solution.



Community development is NOT:

- service delivery (but services can participate in community development)
- social work
- advocacy on behalf of individuals
- tokenistic or just a "feel good" exercise

Community Building program Practice Guide – DHHS (Vic)



What does this mean for people with disability?

From a medical to a social inclusion model

Institutional Approach

- Person as patient
- Segregated settings
- Meet basic needs

Deinstitutional approach

- Person as client
- Community based specialist services
- Build skills and competencies

Community inclusion approach

- Person as citizen
- Homes, communities and neighbourhoods
- Create enabling, inclusive communities



Think inclusive;
design universal

Citizenhood: a person is actively involved as a valued member of their local community
(JFA Purple Orange)



Discuss

- How does your organisation support people to be valued members of their local community?



2. Building community connections: whose job is it?



People with disability

- Know your rights and responsibilities as a citizen
- Identify your strengths and interests
- Share your passions and ideas
- Connect with others and collaborate
- Advocate for yourself and for community change

Families, Carers and Friends

- Support people to self advocate
- Listen to people and share their stories with them
- Look for opportunities and connections
- Help people make connections
- Advocate and lobby others for change

Share ideas and experiences



Collaborate



What can Support Workers do?

- Facilitate and empower people to self advocate
- Listen and get to know the people you support
- Help people envision a better life for themselves
- Network with like-minded people to initiate change
- Be creative and opportunistic
- Think personal: what role do you play in your community?
- Create opportunities for people you support to have random encounters
- Use your unique perspective in your organisation and share your experiences
- Don't give up – true participation and community building takes time and effort to facilitate and sustain
- Be generous – share ideas and practice with others

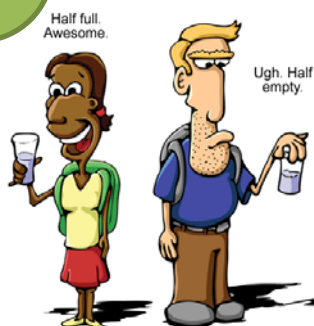
What can Disability Organisations do?

- Send clear message about role of community development in your org
- Develop a clear plan to decentralise services and use community settings
- Know your organisation's strengths, gaps and opportunities
- Listen to service users & families and solve problems through co-design
- Support leaders and champions in your organisation
- Connect with local businesses, volunteer organisations and mainstream services in your community
- Develop strong local knowledge including community strengths and weaknesses
- Share information and educate others on ways to increase inclusion
- Establish formal agreements with community organisations
- Lobby for community infrastructure changes

What can the community do?

- Recognise people with disability as an important part of your community
- Look around your own environment for ways to improve accessibility
- It's not just ramps! Think accessible information and communication too
- Consider ways to increase employment of people with disability in your own workplace
- Consider opportunities for people with disability to participate in leisure activities
- Use contracts to require inclusive practices
- Embrace universal design and accessibility approaches in all that you do – start small and see the rewards!
- Volunteer **and** support people with disability who want to volunteer

Focus on strengths



Discussion question

- What community development activities is your organisation involved in?
- What other actions can we all take? Whose responsibility is it?
- What actions are the most important?

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3. Who benefits from community development? EVERYONE!

More accessible communities

Encourages change in societal beliefs about disability

People with disability feel empowered and valued

Increase in personal wellbeing

Increase in social connections and relationships

Communities which celebrate diversity and rights

Increased return for the whole community on investments

Reduced dependence on specialist supports

Integrated planning with other services increases accessibility and returns



Flow on benefits of universal approaches:

- parents with prams
- people with mobility requirements
- people with low literacy levels

4. Community development under the NDIS

- People supported to 'participate in and contribute to social and economic life to the extent of their ability.' (NDIS principles)
- Focus on individual funding packages
- Dedicated **Information, Linkages and Capacity Building (ILC)** and **Local Area Coordination (LAC)** funded supports that facilitate a bridge to community

ILC activity streams:

1. Information, linkages and referrals

2. Community building for mainstream services

3. Community awareness and capacity building

4. Individual capacity building

5. Local Area Coordination



Local Area Coordination (LAC)

- develops relationships between NDIS, people with disability, families, carers and the community
 - connects across all streams of ILC
 - works with individuals to enhance supports
- works with communities and mainstream services to promote and facilitate community inclusion
- services 'hard to reach individuals and communities'
- Explores alternative options to funding or limit to low cost one off supports
 - supports people to build new networks

For more information visit the NDIS Community page: <http://www.ndis.gov.au/community>

5. Community building through participation

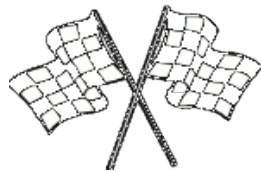
Examples from our Community of Practice

Volunteering at a local business was being made more difficult due to the poor state of the footpath. The person made a photograph book of the problem and presented it to local council. They were subsequently invited on to the local disability advisory group.

The local ProAm golf day used to raise funds for our organisation as a charity. Now they ask us to do the catering which we run as a business



The local go-karting business agreed to put in a hoist for one person who wanted to go go-karting. It is now used by others who hadn't previously been able to get into the carts



People from our service volunteer for a local charity and the tourist bureau for a long time. A short movie was made where the agencies spoke about the valuable contribution made by the people. The movie is now shown at the local theatre as a trailer for every film



A couple of people who were interested in surfing had lessons and then after some time joined the local surf club. They volunteer at an international surfing championship which has international coverage



A person who loved dogs wanted to volunteer at the animal rescue service but this was unsuitable as the dogs were traumatised. Local networks were used to connect with a boarding kennel and the person now walks the dogs three days a week and is socialising with the owners



A person was seen as a nuisance for sitting outside the local supermarket. The service worked with the supermarket manager and the person was supported to busk. He is now seen as a valued entertainer

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Discussion question

- How have the people you supported to participate in the community helped to develop positive attitudes?

6. Sharing ideas and practice

SUCCESS FACTORS

These quotes were made by our Community of Practice reflecting on community building

Persistence: “A young person wanted to volunteer at a local shop so started visiting with a support worker who helped facilitate communication. Initially the business owner was not engaging or very supportive but after a few casual visits something just clicked and now the person is a regular volunteer.”

Confidence building and ongoing support: “A person with an interest in photography was supported to go to the local camera club. Over time the person became more confident and the members more engaging. When the support worker was unable to attend the person was encouraged to go on their own with an ‘escape plan’ if they felt uncomfortable. The person has now joined the club and is posting photographs on social media. The disability service checks in from time to time to make sure everything is still working well for the person and the club.”

Time and adaptability: “Recognise that it takes time for relationships to build between community members and people with disability. The first thing a person tries may not be successful for a range of reasons but that means we try something else, until we find the right fit for everyone.”

Planning: “Factor in sufficient planning time to think creatively about how a person’s goals can be reached. This helps to think of everything that is required including contingency plans in case things don’t go as expected.”

Mutual benefit: “For the relationship to work, it must be a ‘win-win’ for the person and the community organisation or business. There must be positive outcomes for both.”

Formal Agreements: “We developed formal agreements with other agencies to ensure their messages are accessible to the full community.”

Network: “Use the networks of staff, the board and families. It is much easier getting into an organisation if you have a personal contact.”

Ownership: “Multiple departments within the organisation have responsibility for community development initiatives. This makes us responsible to each other and also minimises the risk of work ceasing if one person leaves.”

Think beyond your own boundaries: “A photograph resource was developed with many different options for employment, training and recreation. One young person chose boxing and regularly attends at a local centre. No-one would ever have thought of that as an option.”

Transition: Plan transition time that is individualised to the person and the works for the group or organising they are joining. Maintain support staff until the person and the group are confident.”

Support the support staff: “Staff often say the community is not ready but often we find it is the staff who are not ready for a range of reasons: concern there may be a behavioural incident which the staff member isn’t confident to manage; lack of confidence on how to facilitate conversations between the person and members of the community; and sometimes, the extra work involved to ‘work differently’ from historical practice. We provide lots of support to the staff to help them change.”

Community Development: resources and further reading

- *Are we there yet?* A planning tool and checklist for building community connections: [Link](#)
- Community Building Program guidelines (Victoria) [Link](#)
- Community Tool Box: Building and Sustaining Relationships: [Link](#)
- *What is Asset Based Community Development* - Kral (1989): [Link](#)
- Leveraging Networks and Building Social Capital – UnitingCare Community Options (Practical Design Fund): [Link](#)
- Model of Citizenship Support – JFA Purple Orange (2013): [Link](#)
- Queensland Government, *Community Capacity Building Toolkit for Rural and Regional Communities*: [Link](#)
- QCOS, Community Door: Collaboration <http://communitydoor.org.au/collaboration>
- United Nations 2008 Creating an Inclusive Society: Practical Strategies to Promote Social Integration: [Link](#)
- *Building Community Capacity: Case Studies and Resources* - Think Local Act Personal: [Link](#)
- Strengthening Partnerships Tools & Resources - Vichealth, 2014: [Link](#)
- Partnering Guides (VCOS 2008): [Link](#)
- ‘Making the invisible visible’: TEDx talk by DeAmon Harges on Asset Based Community Development: [Link](#)

We want to hear from you about community inclusion. Tell us what you think about these resources or any of the issues raised. What do you agree with? What have we missed? Get in touch with James Bannister on james.bannister@NDS.org.au