A Kellogg Foundation Publication

Network Update

Third Annual Families and Neighborhoods Network Update

[The programming area, Families, Neighborhoods and Community Development has since been renamed to Social and Economic Community Development.]

Welcome

Welcome to the Third Annual *Families and Neighborhoods Network Update*. In this edition, which focuses on Family Development, you'll find plenty of relevant, interesting news, as well as diversity and spirituality in the context of family development.

As always, we strive to provide information and resources regarding human service efforts that support families and neighborhoods. The selection of information and articles for this issue of the Network Update was based on issues raised by the seven Comprehensive Community-Based Models (CCBMs).

Among the highlights of this issue is an article by Dr. Susan Stern and Cassandra Clay, professors at Boston University School of Social Work. In their article, titled "Supporting Children and Families in a Caring Community," they challenge our thinking about family development, while guiding practitioners, policymakers, fund providers, and grassroots community-based organizations into the next century.

Also in this issue, you'll find two annotated bibliographies that explore community-based, family-centered strategies for integrating education and human services. These bibliographies also present practical ways to design policies that reflect the importance of the family in the development of children and society. As an additional resource, you'll also find a directory of federally funded resource centers and clearinghouses that compile information on child and family welfare, health, and education issues.

This issue of the Network Update also offers a personal glimpse of the seven W.K. Kellogg Foundation-funded family development sites. Each of the sites was asked to share its definition of family development, and to specify how that definition translates into services or opportunities for families. Staff members at the seven sites also were asked to discuss their philosophies about family development and how that philosophy differs from a mainstream view. Their thought-provoking answers are just a few pages away.

Finally, in this issue, we'll report your responses to our evaluation efforts. As you'll recall, we asked for input on what was working and what was not working with the Network Update. For those of you who did not have an opportunity to respond previously, you'll get another chance this time around.

In the meantime, browse through the pages that follow, take notes, skip around, mull things over. In short: enjoy!

Supporting Children and Families in a Caring Community

The family is the first, and most important, context for human development and, as a result, family relations have a profound influence on the well-being of all its members. Although individuals provide and need support from families throughout their lives, the family is especially important in the development of children. Parents play a critical role in family functioning and have primary responsibility for their children's development. However, parenting is a difficult and challenging endeavor and a number of stress factors can disrupt parenting with negative consequences for child behavior. If we look at families without considering the context, we run the risk of labeling them as "multi-problem" rather than "multi-stressed" and blaming parents rather than supporting them.

In this article, we will first outline characteristics of effective parenting and family functioning. Second, we present some dimensions of family enrichment - elements of family life that nourish and sustain its members. Third, we examine some of the stresses families experience that disrupt effective parenting and family functioning. Our recommendations for practice consider how neighborhoods and communities can support parents in their parenting roles and enhance child and family functioning. Just as it takes a "whole village to raise a child," the village also needs to support the family.

Characteristics of Effective Parenting and Family Functioning

- **Parent-child attachment and family warmth** are primary factors in healthy child development. When referring to a parent, we mean an adult or adults who have primary caretaking responsibility for a child. This can be a biological parent(s), step-parents, a mother and grandmother together, same sex partners raising a child together, or other family configurations.

- Close parent-child relationships increase family cohesion and allow for active involvement in children's and adolescents' lives. Children living in families that lack emotional warmth, and who have not developed a strong bond with at least one parent or primary caretaker, are at an increased risk for problems, ranging from school failure to juvenile delinquency. For parents or other caretakers, a strong bond provides a foundation for the enormous investment of time, energy, and resources that parenting requires.

- **Parental involvement in children's lives** provides opportunities for parents to attend to and encourage social, academic, and achievement-related behaviors, and to model the good communication, coping, and problem-solving skills that are characteristic of supportive and effective families. When parents are involved in their children's education, they can foster learning and buffer against the development of problems. Involvement also sets the stage for parents to monitor and respond to unacceptable behavior.

- **Clear and consistent expectations, rules, and consequences are critical for the socialization of children.** They help parents teach their children the standards of appropriate behavior they believe are important. Rules provide both structure and safety for children, whether these rules are about crossing the street safely, coming directly home from school, or prohibiting substance use. Although children may initially rally against parent discipline for breaking rules, fair, appropriate, and consistent consequences can help decrease the likelihood of problem behavior; such discipline also can be reassuring to children in that it helps to make their lives more predictable. We recognize, however, that environmental influences can be powerful deterrents to parental authority. Nevertheless, age-appropriate rules and consequences are not only a parent responsibility, but also a sign of parental caring and concern.

- **Parent monitoring and supervision** refers to the parent's awareness of the child's activities, whereabouts, and friends. Parents need to monitor their children's behavior to both reinforce appropriate behavior and to provide consequences for inappropriate behavior. There is evidence that monitoring school performance by just talking to children about school on a regular basis is critical in preventing problems such as antisocial and delinquent behavior.

- **In healthy families, members are able to communicate openly and clearly with a range of emotional expression.** Family members are able to really listen to others and are assured that they can also be heard.

- **Effective communication sets the stage for problem solving whereby family members learn to cope successfully with both major and minor problems of everyday life.** The ability to problem solve requires compromise and negotiation based on an attitude of trust and "good faith," rather than a competitive "win-lose" stance.

- **Although contemporary families are quite diverse in the ways they are structured, families need to be organized in a way that provides stability, structure, and sustenance to children.** The boundary around a family system, however its membership is defined, gives it form. A semipermeable boundary enables families to be flexible to allow for changing role definitions and entrances and exits into the family through life-cycle transitions, such as the birth of children, divorce and remarriage, and death. Family organization needs to be flexible enough to respond to external and internal demands on the system. Environmental stress factors, such as poverty and oppression, can stress family structures, diminishing the ability of the adults to function effectively in the parental role. While requiring organizational flexibility, families also must provide stability and a predictable, safe environment to support and nurture its members.

- **In healthy families, individuals have a sense of connectedness and commitment that has been referred to as cohesion.** It is more than just a mere sense of boundary around the family; it is a sense of shared experience, belonging, and of seeing the family in terms of "we." This is best demonstrated by the sense of responsibility family members have for each other and their loyalty to one another, including sometimes sacrificing their personal interests for the interests of the family. Well-functioning cohesive families simultaneously allow for the autonomy of their members and encourage individual differences and individuation throughout the life cycle. Nowhere has the concept of individuation been more misunderstood than in the culture of adolescence where it is seen as the primary task. This myth persists despite research over the last decade that suggests that adolescent individuation and separation must also be understood in the context of relationship and connectedness.

Dimensions of Family Enrichment

- **Sense of identity.** The sense of identity usually evolves from the integration of personal, family, and cultural values. The values give a sense of meaning to its members. Families usually experience the sense of identity as sustaining.

- **Sense of connectedness.** Connectedness is that which binds individuals to each other. It is the social fabric of a community as well as a family. The sense of responsibility and loyalty one feels for family extends to the feelings individuals have for being a part of a community, including the willingness to subordinate their personal interests for the benefit of the community.

- **Spirituality** encompasses a belief system that explains the source of values, purposefulness, coping strategies, and affirmation. It can be experienced through formal religious affiliation, through cultural rituals such as tribal ceremonies, or in a variety of personal observances.

- **Rituals and traditions** are activities that emerge from cultural or spiritual sources and provide the family with a sense of stability and way of celebrating cultural/religious values and important events and passages. They are especially important in acknowledging intergenerational links and affirming the family's survival.

- **Balance between work and family life** is necessary to maintain and protect leisure time and family activities in the face of family and external demands. This is especially important as mounting expectations from the work world and the need for economic security make the balancing act harder. For low-income families, the demands may be even greater in this area, while the resources and support are fewer.

- **Humor.** The ability to find humor enriches family life and can help family members gain perspective. In humor, one benefits from discovering irony and contradictions. While not designed to put a happy face on deprivation or oppression, humor traditionally serves as an important antidote to sadness and resignation. Humor also energizes and is a vehicle for family lore.

- **Efficacy.** The sense that one can do something about one's plight is a powerful source of strength and self-preservation for individuals and families. Efficacy is an antidote to resignation and a sense that one's condition is sealed.

Family Stressors

- **Families experiencing poverty and economic hardship,** including job instability and income loss, are unlikely to have their basic needs met and face an increased likelihood of negative life events and a decrease in access to resources. Under such stress, research has shown that parents become more irritable, resulting in rejecting behavior and punitive and inconsistent discipline, with negative outcomes for children.

- **Stressful events,** whether these are major life events or the accumulation of daily hassles associated with living, are also related to increased parental irritability and problems in parenting. In fact, on days when a mother experiences an unpleasant contact with others, there is a direct relationship with the way she responds to her child.

- **Problems in parent mental health and functioning affect children both directly and through their disrupting effect on parenting behavior.** For example, depressed parents may be more negative and hostile in their parenting, and they are less able to monitor and discipline their children appropriately. Substance abuse may affect parenting in similar ways, reducing the parent-child bond and increasing irritable and harsh parenting. A substance-abusing parent is less predictable and less able to ensure child safety. The role reversal that can occur, whereby the child becomes the caretaker of the parent, places unsuitable stress on children and may leave them without needed parenting.

- **Crisis neighborhoods.** Living in neighborhoods that have been victimized by high concentrations of crime, poverty, limited institutional resources, and residential and commercial instability presents severe challenges to parenting, particularly child supervision. These distressed neighborhoods have difficulty supporting effective family functioning as enormous demands are made on limited community resources, and the associated instability diminishes the capacity for families to develop networks for support or connections to institutions. Furthermore, both children and parents living in communities in crisis are often traumatized, resulting in numbness or hypervigilance as responses to the myriad of problems they experience.

- **Social isolation.** Families that are disconnected from extended family, friendships, informal community networks, or more formal community institutions are more likely to feel alone in the family development process. Socially isolated families are less likely to have any experience or success in brokering interpersonal or institutional relationships. Socially isolated parents tend to be less involved with their children and less nurturing.

- **Oppression** can interfere both with the family's ability to access resources and with the emotional well-being of the family. Oppression saps emotional energy from families and leaves families drained and alienated. The feeling of hopelessness that accompanies oppression is often followed by feelings of helplessness that further disempower already disenfranchised families and youth.

Recommendations for Practice

- Although attention to cultural, racial, and ethnic diversity is usually included as one recommendation for practice consideration, we want to emphasize it even further; it is a basic principle that applies to each of the following recommendations. All of our practices should both affirm and support family diversity and uniqueness.

- Because parent-child attachment and involvement contribute to child well-being, interventions that foster and encourage family involvement with children are essential. Practitioners and community institutions should be challenged to create opportunities that promote family involvement. These might include neighborhood or school-based drop-in family centers, church or synagogue programs that bring families together, and community projects that promote working together such as a neighborhood cleanup day, or violence prevention project.

- Monitoring youth and providing consequences for behavior is critically important in youth development, but is a particular challenge for contemporary working parents.

- Supervision becomes especially important at adolescence, exactly when it becomes more challenging to monitor child behavior. Monitoring may be effective even when it is done by an absent parent, via phone contact or notes. Extended family, neighbors, and community support can be essential resources needed for child supervision. The after-school hours are particularly problematic, and community residents and institutions are encouraged to support after-school programming, safe places to do homework and hang out, after-school jobs, and other activities. Just the relationship with a responsible, monitoring adult can provide the supervision necessary to keep children out of trouble. In one project, adults on the block, such as shopkeepers, organized to monitor children on their way home from school, including asking how they had done in school and reinforcing their achievements.

- Parent training and parent education can enhance family and child well-being, but the challenge is to find more creative and effective ways to disseminate what we do know about child-parent interactions that lead to healthy child development. Effective education should recognize and support the diversity in family structure, family culture, and parenting practices. Efforts to provide accessible and nonstigmatizing education through existing community structures should be encouraged.

- Interventions that foster support, such as network facilitation, life and social skills building, and support groups can improve parenting and decrease social isolation. In addition to basic parenting skills, these groups can focus on problem solving and coping skills for dealing with the variety of stress factors that impinge upon families and disrupt parenting.

- Self-help and professional-led groups can support parenting. Natural helpers in the community should be seen as critical resources and involved in planned change efforts wherever possible.

- Groups that teach children and adolescents specific skills for coping with stress - such as anger management, violence prevention, and substance abuse - are more effective in reducing problem behavior than groups that focus on general life and social skills. These groups may have increased value, though, if they can be extended into the family and neighborhood context. For example, parents and teens first can meet separately in peer groups to learn and practice skills and then be brought together to brainstorm ways in which they can mutually support each other's efforts.

- Because crisis neighborhoods have difficulty supporting family functioning, empowering families by helping them to influence their neighborhood collectively strengthens both neighborhood environments and parents' support networks.

- This may include supporting them through a needs-assessment process as residents determine priorities for change in their own communities and identify already existing strengths in the community. Developing neighborhood-based partnerships between direct-service practitioners and community organizers, and between professionals and parents, is seen as a crucial component for strengthening neighborhoods *[See Lee Staples' article, "Change is the Necessary Outcome of Empowerment," Network Update, 1 (1)]*.

- Children and families in need of services often find seeking such services a confusing and stressful experience. Developing a coherent integrated system of service delivery requires fundamental change in the way services are currently provided and funded. Successful models of service delivery that reduce barriers to resources need to be identified and disseminated to policymakers and funding sources. In the meantime, agencies need to seek out ways to collaborate to increase access to services. Support for case management is one way to help families broker fragmented service systems.

- Families are in need of a variety of services, from support to crisis intervention. In terms of support, our neighborhoods and society need to recognize family strengths and promote adults' capacity to parent effectively by providing basic resources to all families. All families need support because parenting is a demanding and difficult task!

- Basic supports include economic opportunities that provide jobs and sufficient income to provide for a family, adequate housing, flexible work environments that support parenting needs, child care, access to medical care, and transportation to needed services. Practitioners and grassroots organizers must be involved in fighting for these supports - from exercising their individual responsibility as citizens to vote, to using community groups and professional organizations to educate policymakers and lobby for legislation that protects and supports children and families.

- Some families need special supports to nurture and protect their children. Ideally these supports would be put in place early to help maintain family functioning and prevent crisis. However, we must recognize that there will always be a need for crisis intervention. In crisis situations, intervention models should be flexible enough to respond to families quickly and in a variety of settings. On the one hand, crisis intervention may be viewed as responding to an immediate crisis; on the other hand, a crisis often represents a chronic unresolved problem. As we move from a traditional, one-session-a-week treatment model to briefer, and sometimes more intense, treatment models, we may be missing opportunities to better fit treatment to families' actual needs. For example, some families may require intense early intervention with intermittent booster sessions through the child-raising years.

- Our emphasis on early supports for families suggests that we need to identify prevention programs with demonstrated success at enhancing child and family functioning and advocate for their continued funding. Since all programs cannot be funded, given the competing demand for resources, we need to be clear about how best to achieve desired outcomes.

- In partnership with the media, those of us concerned with families and children should support efforts to create and retain quality programming that models ways in which children and families cope effectively in today's world. At the same time, we should encourage television networks to decrease programming that promotes aggression and violence. We also can educate the media to help them focus on family strengths, diversity, and complexity, and on showcasing effective programs for supporting child and family development.

- Based on research from many different fields, we know something about parenting that promotes healthy child development. We also have data on the effectiveness of a variety of interventions for child and family difficulties. Unfortunately, this information does not always guide our practice. We need to find effective ways to disseminate this information to practitioners, policymakers, and funders. Where the data does exist, it should inform and influence decision-making and actual practice. Planned change in this arena will require: systematic program evaluations; funders to ask tough questions about efficacy as well as cost-effectiveness; and incentives for change agents to collaborate rather than compete with one another.

The enhancement of child and family well-being requires collaboration and coordination at all levels of service delivery and policymaking and an unflinching, long-term commitment at all levels of our government. Although each individual in society can make a difference in a child's and family's life, only fundamental changes in our individually oriented society will help us turn the phrase "It takes a village to raise a child" into a reality.

Bibliography

Portions of this article were based on research reported in Stern, S.B. and Smith, C.A. (in press). "Family processes and delinquency in an ecological context." *Social Service Review*. Some of the characteristics of healthy family functioning are further described in Walsh, F. (1993). *Normal Family Processes*. NY: Guilford.

For further reading on empowering communities, see Staples, L. in *Network Update*, 1 (1).

Bios

Susan Stern, Ph.D., M.S.W., is an Associate Professor and Director of the Family Therapy Certificate Program at Boston University School of Social Work. She has extensive practice and administrative experience in child and family mental health agencies. Her current research focuses on the effects of economic hardship, living in a distressed neighborhood, and social isolation and stress on families and children. She also has developed a family anger management treatment program and conducted research evaluating its effectiveness in reducing parent-adolescent conflict.

Cassandra Clay, M.Ed., M.S.W., is a Clinical Associate Professor at Boston University School of Social Work. She has a clinical practice with individuals and families. She is a trainer in the area of culturally responsible practice and is the coproducer of a videotape program titled "Teaching About Practice and Diversity: Content and Process in the Classroom and the Field." Her current projects include participation as a faculty fellow in a Kellogg Foundation-funded Social and Economic Community Development Initiative in Boston.

Comments from Patricia Mulready: The Spiritual Journey

Patricia Mulready is a pediatrician who focuses on spirituality as a means of prevention. In a working piece titled "Roadmap for the Spiritual Journey," Ms. Mulready shares her thoughts on spirituality and prevention.

Spirituality and religion are not the same in my mind. To me, spirituality is the essence of all religions. This is how I define spirituality:

Spirituality:

- is a personal meaning to life; it makes one want to get up in the morning; it provides the strength to go on living;
- is a feeling of interconnectedness with other people, other species, and all of creation;
- sees the goodness in life and attracts it;
- recognizes that each person, including oneself, is important and valued but is not the center of the universe;
- recognizes that each person has a role to play in the unfolding of the universe; it is not chance that he or she is living at this time; if she or he does not choose to use his or her talents, no one will fulfill this role; and
- is a choice of belief in a Supreme Being (God).

To me, the place to start seeking spiritual growth is inward, not outward (Start With Me). I have found that as a person seeks the inner being, the highest self, a solid foundation is being formed for continued growth.

The first step on the journey is Self-Knowledge - knowledge of strengths, weaknesses, talents, beliefs, values, feelings, patterns of relating to others and to the world, old sounds, old heroics, etc. This is where a solid foundation must be laid so that spirituality is based on the strength that comes from fearlessly facing the baggage and the treasures that we are bringing with us (Address Past Issues). It gives us choice about what to put to rest (Forgiveness) and what to keep (Acceptance).

The process of self-examination and reflection on the results, if done without flagellation, leads to Self-Appreciation for things we like about ourselves - for our ingenuity in creating survival strategies, for the courage to update how we choose to perceive the universe. It eventually goes beyond affirmations to a solid core sense of appreciation with all the fibers of our being.

By understanding that "I am someone valuable," we will refuse to allow abuse in our lives, whether it is perpetuated by ourselves or by others. We will begin to avoid abusive situations and seek healthier companions, activities, and thoughts (Refusal to Accept Abuse).

From the place of Self-Knowledge and Self-Appreciation, we begin to know at a deep level that we can trust ourselves (Intuition). And from this place of trust in ourselves, we can begin to trust others so that we share our inner beings. We are also clear on whom not to trust since not everyone has chosen to follow the spiritual path (Trust).

Through trial and error in our interactions in the world, each piece of feedback and correction strengthens who we are and gives rise to a sense of Self-Power. This is not power over others; it is the uniting of conscious mind and unconscious mind so that they work in harmony to protect us. It brings us what we seek and creates a solidity of self.

As we feel strong, capable, protected, and powerful, it becomes easier to let down the defenses we learned (Less Protective). When we view the world from a less defensive position, we are willing to take more risks. Without our blinders on, we are able to see more opportunities to move us toward reaching what we desire in life (See More Opportunities). The more we reach out, the more good things come into our lives, sometimes with effort, sometimes effortlessly (Attract My Good).

Not only do we attract more good opportunities, we also attract more people who are on the same wavelength. We let others see more of our inner beings, which makes it easier to interact and relate. Relationships become more satisfying and rewarding (More Interconnecting Relationships).

With interesting opportunities, satisfying relationships, and a strong sense of self, the reason for our being becomes clearer. Life holds meaning. A clear mission may present itself when our energies become focused (Life is More Meaningful).

At any step along the journey, if one is inclined toward a Supreme Being, that presence may come into one's life. The final step on the roadmap is a Deeper Spirituality leading back to me. The process begins over again, but at a deeper level and with different lengths of time spent on each step. The same or different issues may be addressed, but from a deeper and often different perspective.

We Are Listening

Readers of the *Network Update* generally view it as a valuable resource, according to the results of last winter's reader survey of the newsletter for Family and Neighborhood Cluster projects.

According to polling data, most readers of the newsletter count on the *Network Update* to provide information about programs in other communities, funding resources, and program contacts. In addition, they look to the newsletter to provide inspiration, "how to" information, and food for thought.

Editors wanted to obtain meaningful feedback to improve the newsletter, and to ensure that it contains information that is useful to readers. Although the results of the first survey have been tabulated, the process will continue through the next two issues with follow-up surveys asking for more input and spotlighting specific sections of the newsletter.

Between 800 and 900 people receive the newsletter and many of these people responded to the last survey. Already some of the suggestions are being considered. For example, editors will be expanding the list of contact numbers, focusing on practices, and providing timely information to readers -- such as explaining the implications of federal policy changes on programs for families and neighborhoods.

Survey results reveal:

- Readers find the Reference Desk very helpful. This section may be expanded to aid readers in securing funding for their work.
- Readers appreciate information on innovations in family/community partnerships. Many readers commented that learning about what other groups are doing helps them understand model programs and focus on the big picture.
- Readers also like the "how to" articles and articles that provide food for thought by highlighting new and innovative ideas.

- Readers found the overall content of the newsletter useful. As one reader noted: "The information is so in tune with what we do. I always find inspiration to keep at it."
- Yet another reader liked the discussion of real issues, including suggestions about where to start, what questions to ask, and what models to refer to and use.
- Readers also value the emphasis on community, rather than agency, solutions.
- Several readers commented on the tone of the newsletter. "It feels like a personal touch to the Foundation. Keeps me up-to-date on your priorities as well as 'new faces,'" one reader wrote.

When asked what changes would make the newsletter more useful, readers weren't shy about making these suggestions:

- Provide information on grant money resources for research.
- Print information on how long projects remain on Kellogg funding, and how to gain money for self-sufficiency.
- Include more articles on small/rural town projects.
- Show examples of collaboration pitfalls and how programs resolved them. Start a troubleshooter column.
- Work on diversifying the staff, because women make up 88 percent.
- Include information in each issue on how men can have a positive impact on children and are adversely affected by rape and abortion.
- Include contact names and phone numbers so that readers can use the newsletter to network and collaborate with other agencies.

The newsletter is now published two times a year and most readers wanted the newsletter to continue publishing on that schedule. Several, however, suggested that it should be distributed four times a year.

How much would people pay to receive it? The responses ranged from 25 cents to $50. Most wanted it to remain free or wanted to pay $10 to $15 per year.

One reader said the newsletter was not useful and should never be published. After careful consideration, the editors have decided not to take this reader's advice. You will note we have again included an evaluation tool. Please share your thoughts with us.

In the Spotlight: Families and Neighborhoods Comprehensive Community-Based Models

This issue's "In the Spotlight," features a dialogue with three representatives from the Families and Neighborhoods Comprehensive Community-Based Models (CCBMs). Joining us in our conversations are the Reverend Eddie Edwards, Cindy Graham, and Milton Pelcher.

Rev. Edwards is the President of Joy of Jesus, Inc., whose organization has an 18-year history of positively influencing urban youth, families, and their environment by providing coordinated programs and promoting community awareness.

Ms. Graham is the Executive Director of the Family Institute. The Institute is a community-based organization that provides comprehensive supports for families, all within a service-delivery format that emphasizes the profound community impact of neighbor reaching out to neighbor.

Mr. Pelcher is Project Director of the Seventh Generation Program. The program, based at the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Reservation, represents an approach that values the cultural, spiritual development and the intergenerational connection between families and of the greater community. While largely serving Native Americans, its doors also are open to community members of any ethnicity. In separate interviews, each provided answers to three questions.

How is what your agency does different from traditional approaches to human service delivery?

> **Mr. Pelcher:** We emphasize the traditional cultural aspects in our programming by using traditional guidelines such as the seasons. The program's intergenerational interaction and people's gatherings help the people regain a sense of community. Our purpose is to help us all rediscover cultural values and morals that need to be revisited. While many of the beliefs used are Native American, we pay respect to other beliefs and cultures.

> We are a part of the tribal council, but our programs are cosponsored within and outside the reservation. Programs include cultural sharing and workshops to bring back traditional skills - such as pottery and basket-making - to build community and enhance traditional values.

> **Ms. Graham:** Oh, we are very different. We are asset-focused from the beginning by recognizing strengths and helping build upon those to better the lives of families. Most current service delivery recognizes existing strengths, but still focuses on fixing the negative parts of people's lives. The Family Institute was envisioned by a neighborhood minister who sought to strengthen families. The founder went door-to-door to seek ideas on what people saw as problems and ideas for solutions. The chief concerns were child care and parenting. We provide child care on a sliding scale and support strong parenting.

> Another unique quality is that we not only support our community through soliciting ideas for solutions, but we place a high priority on hiring and training within the community. Almost all of our staff not only are concerned about our community, but also live within the community. Most service delivery agencies hire people who live outside the community.

> **Rev. Edwards:** The difference in our agency is that we provide a comprehensive approach to needs and concerns of the community. We are doing it in a way to challenge those participating to give it their all. Those on the front line must show caring concern, not that this is just a job and a source of income. They must have a commitment to helping the families to succeed. This way they help clients use discipline in their lives and can then share in the celebration when their families succeed. The providers nurture with dignity by accepting, not belittling but uplifting.

Welfare reform is a hot issue. If you were asked to provide guidance on specific innovative approaches to reforming welfare, what would they be?

> **Mr. Pelcher:** I would emphasize the need to recognize the treaties to native peoples. Reservations are and must be recognized as sovereign states, independent of the U.S. government.

Ms. Graham: I would use the Family Institute design. Services could be strengthened by having multiple services provided at one site. Also, foster community involvement and strength by prioritizing hiring and training from within the community. We provide child care that is affordable and that is prioritized to help families in job training, education, and transition from welfare to independence. We foster community involvement by requiring eight hours of volunteer time, which can be fulfilled in a variety of ways. People can read to children, baby-sit, or work on homework on our computers.

As welfare is reformed, a buffer must be instituted as support. A new community development model could be used that incorporates funders' money with community involvement through salaries and contracts. We are even venturing into for-profit enterprises. One of the ideas the Neighborhood Association currently is working on is a grocery store. We look at the total environment, which includes the economic aspects, and use partnerships with large companies. We find that the volunteer hours are as helpful as the money given by those companies.

Rev. Edwards: A new structure is needed. Without a new structure, people in need will continue to survive, but probably by more illegal means. I suggest that community churches can be that new structure. I suggest this because they already are established within communities. They must provide for people - not with the attitude of giving forever, but with the goal of promoting independence and interdependency. Government can help in this partnership by providing opportunities such as money, work, and safety within the community and schools. The churches have concern that the government will dump all of the problems on churches, instead of recognizing the need and benefits of a partnership. The church is a catalyst of the partnership between the private and public. As this partnership builds, the need for money will diminish.

What do you see as some of the most important concerns facing families and neighborhoods today? What concrete steps can we take as practitioners, organizations, policymakers, and human beings to counter some of these concerns?

Mr. Pelcher: People associated with the Seventh Generation are becoming more aware of the importance of self-identity. We also need to build respect for each other. We practitioners have the job of finding ways to empower people and help them to know themselves and their culture. One way we can do this is by re-introducing traditions and ceremonies. Our tribal histories are replete with mainstream efforts to break down tribal traditions and ceremonies. Until recently, children were taken out of their families and sent to boarding schools where they forgot or were taught to deny and hate the traditional culture and ways. We are trying to re-teach what was lost by focusing on all generations, teaching parenting, and recognizing extended families.

Ms. Graham: I would say the changing climate of federal funding. Whether money is received through block grants or given directly to agencies, the voices and perspectives of the individuals are not heard. This leads to funding without representation.

Those of us in traditional settings must ask: How are we a part of the problem?

We need to create partnerships between private businesses and nonprofits that don't just interact through money, but that also incorporate time and knowledge.

The key to strong neighborhoods and families is to begin at that very level - the families and neighborhoods. The services must sit back and take instruction from the clients and respect their nontraditional knowledge. They are the experts in how to solve problems in their lives.

Rev. Edwards: Like many communities, we see youth as a concern, because some youth are not being guided; they are becoming destructive and contribute to the deterioration of our neighborhoods. We must move beyond the symptoms of crime and drugs to be effective. We feel it is essential to properly nurture and help children develop, because of posterity. They are our future. Strong children will become strong leaders. It is our job to move beyond the 'here and now' and give morals and standards to youth. Our effectiveness can be measured by how our youth are coming up.

We can positively affect youth by mobilizing our churches and engaging in after- and pre-school programs that promote entrepreneurial and social skills. We will be effective if we can give something to the youth, such as recreation, through which we will build esteem, responsibility, and positive community involvement.

Project Snapshots

These snapshots focus on how these models define family development.

GREATER CLEVELAND NEIGHBORHOOD CENTERS, Cleveland, Ohio

Family Center Approach

The goal of the Greater Cleveland Neighborhood Centers Association's (NCA) Family/Neighborhood Leadership Initiative is "to establish an integrated, family-focused service delivery system at the neighborhood level that will empower families, strengthen neighborhoods, and increase access to service and supports."

The family center model is circular: families are at the center;

the neighborhood and its institutions form the next ring; and

the community and its resources compose the outer ring. The model emphasizes:

- the identification of family, neighborhood, and community assets;
- the flow and organization of services and resources to the families in their neighborhoods; and
- the capacity of families to actively make changes in their lives, their neighborhoods, and the institutions and service systems that affect them.

This new approach to families and communities can be understood by comparing it to the old, yet dominant, approach. The old approach uses a pyramid model, with policymakers and funders at the top, providing resources to professionals and agencies in the middle. They in turn might design and execute programs for specific needs among recipients, clients, or patients at the bottom of the pyramid.

In contrast, the starting point of the new approach is not needs or problems, but capacities - including the values, relationships, and interests of people and institutions. The new approach organizes the assets of the community rather than filling the deficiencies of the clients. The context is communal or social rather than isolated or individual. Its outcomes are measured in the building of dynamic communities, which provide services to help individuals cope with their needs.

There are four dimensions to the new approach:

1) **It is relational.** It sees the person as not just having relationships, but being molded by them. Thus it focuses on creating, restoring, and strengthening relationships.

2) **It is reciprocal.** It sees the person as more than a client or recipient; each person is an active customer or stakeholder who is able to contribute. It sets expectations that all participants must give something in time, talent, or treasure.

3) **It is integral.** It sees the person as a dynamic whole, not fragmented into parts - physical, psychological, mental, spiritual, and social characteristics, each with separate needs but part of the whole person. Our approach integrates services and activities, and treats the whole person in the whole family in the whole community.

4) **It is institutional.** It sees people as living, acting, and developing in institutions, and it works through those institutions while attempting to improve them and promote personal growth.

Basic Assumptions of the Family Center Approach

- Families are groups of people who identify themselves as such, and who are committed to a continuing relationship that nurtures, supports, and educates children and other family members.
- Families are the basic agents of socialization. They are vital to the development and well-being of their members and of the community.
- All families have strengths. They also all experience stress and change. Families need information and support before serious problems emerge. Making families prove their inadequacy in order to receive assistance is damaging and demeaning.
- A variety of cultural norms and family configurations can promote the healthy development of children and adults.
- Family members are interdependent, and the family system affects each member; therefore, the family must be treated as a unit. Multiple agencies involved with the same family should coordinate and integrate their efforts.
- Families and communities are interdependent. Families, their personal networks and institutions make up the community; at the same time, community conditions affect family functioning. What hurts one hurts the other, and what strengthens one strengthens the other.
- Families and communities are strengthened by mutual help, cooperation, and joint action to solve community problems and expand community resources.

The family approach represented here provides a strategy for development of comprehensive and integrated services for families in their own neighborhoods. It emphasizes primary prevention and development of family and community capacity.

Here's what one Neighborhood Leadership, Cleveland graduate says about the program:

"As an active member of the Glenville Neighborhood, I was asked to be part of the Neighborhood Leadership training. At the end of the course, I realized the central theme or goal of this program was to tap into the potential resources in our communities.

"This reminded me of the theory of electricity I learned while training for maintenance and repair at the Westside Institute of Technology. We all used many terms for the word 'electricity,' like 'juice,' 'power,' or 'lights,' but in class the instructor used 'potential' (an unused power source).

"In every community, there are people who make up organizations, families and businesses. Every unused part of our community is a source of potential, just as every outlet or plug in a house can be used to run the different appliances - (okay, yes, even video games) - that make a house a home.

"As people who rely on neighborhood centers, we need to tap into the potential of the people in our communities. Because of other training I have received through Neighborhood Leadership, Cleveland, I have realized that the work I've been doing is important. I've enjoyed being with the other people in our class.

It confirmed that I'm not standing alone.

"Before Neighborhood Leadership, Cleveland, I felt burned out. But because of the training and networking, I am encouraged and energized. Our neighborhoods are only as strong as the use of resources. We've only had a taste of what we can be and do if we tap into the potential."

- Lamont Richardson I, 40, a self-employed, single parent of two teenage boys

Since the fall of 1994, 49 community leaders representing 10 NCA agencies have graduated from the Neighborhood Leadership, Cleveland program. These graduates meet on a monthly basis to exchange information about their community activities and participate in issue seminars that they have requested.

Conclusion

According to Robert Bellah, individualism has overwhelmed the great American tradition of volunteerism in the community. This has led to privatization that in turn creates civic loneliness - a society without community, a social order that is merely the sum of the opinions, interests, and behaviors of private parties. It's a society that people merely live through, without true control of or responsibility for their institutions, starting with family and neighborhood. Bellah seeks transformation of society and culture through speech and action at the local level - a new citizens' movement in the tradition of John Dewy and Jane Addams.

Another observer, Jim Sleeper, describes the plight of black and white people in New York (though it could be Boston, Cleveland, or any other metropolitan area). He describes the failure of the white liberal agenda of integration, social services, and legal aid; the failure of a reactive militancy to achieve power; and white and black middle-class flight and the resulting decay of neighborhoods and the city. He points to a way of transcending racial politics in the Bronx, where communities are engaged in common issues, and community fabric is rewoven through citizen education.

Cleveland is a community divided economically, politically, racially, and spiritually. The transformation of Cleveland into a functioning community must take all of these dimensions into account. Neighborhood centers and settlements, positioned individually in neighborhoods and collectively as an association, form a foundation for that change. A long-term commitment to family and neighborhood leadership education across Greater Cleveland through local neighborhood institutions will help restore the language and tradition of participatory democracy; transcend the divisions of race and economy; restore the conditions that support family life and power; and spiritually, economically, and politically renew the public realm while recreating the just city.

For more information: Greater Cleveland Neighborhood Centers Association (NCA), Cleveland, OH, USA.

THE FAMILY INSTITUTE, Kalamazoo, Michigan

The Family Institute's approach to family development provides comprehensive prevention services for the young family with children up to age six. The Family Institute is a nonprofit, community-based organization that aims to break the poverty cycle of families in need. It identifies population groups that need assistance and seeks programs and services to meet their needs. The Family Institute seeks to be recognized throughout the community as the leader in providing parenting and child-care programs and services to families in need, and for integrating these and other community services, such as job-skill training, to meet the needs of families.

Because the family is the basic unit for strong communities and neighborhoods, family development encompasses more than the meeting of individual social needs; it also includes the family's other relationships to the community (e.g., economic, spiritual, etc.). In addition, "family development" itself is defined by the family.

At the Family Institute, for instance, the services that are offered are based on the results of a door-to-door survey of community residents, as well as input from the Institute's Consumer Planning Group, parents in need of child care, and Family Institute staff. The services that those groups have requested most frequently are affordable child care and parenting education.

The effectiveness of the educational component is measured through pre- and post-tests, and recently earned the Family Institute its first-ever parenting contract with the Department of Social Services in Kalamazoo. Child care (Educare) is reserved primarily for families with parent-figures who are in school, in job training, or who are employed on an ongoing basis. The program allows for close monitoring of families as they pursue their goals.

The Family Institute treats families as consumers -- that is, needs are prioritized by the families, or "consumers," and not by the professionals. Professional involvement takes a secondary role in directing family goals and outcomes. Why is this important? Because personal investment is created when the individual or family takes ownership. The role of professionals then becomes a supportive one, rather than one of intervention. Adjusting to such a role can be difficult for professionals, who are used to being seen as "the experts."

Traditional service orientation needed to be changed, though, because comprehensive services to the whole family require different skills. With the newer approach, support-service providers see families in terms of their strengths, not their weaknesses. Support providers start, then, with the cooperation of the family. Otherwise, when the service agenda is determined by professionals based on their own assessment of a family's needs, families tend to resist outside support.

Other service providers have been somewhat threatened by this approach. For example, the Family Institute includes past parenting graduates as cofacilitators in its parenting classes; for traditional service providers, it is difficult to envision a client -- who frequently is without formal credentials -- in a leadership role. Eventually, traditional service providers do come to see the benefit of this more-inclusive approach, but it is a painful process because the professional's role is changing from that of an "expert/authority" to that of a partner who shares authority.

To facilitate a spirit of partnership and cooperation, the Family Institute works hard to provide a homelike atmosphere. Quality in customer service is emphasized, and hiring from and training within the neighborhood surrounding the Family Institute is a strong priority. Including parents as cofacilitators in educational programming recognizes the expertise of parents and is well received by class participants.

The Family Institute also works hard to keep staff members and volunteers trained and up-to-date, and to offer services that meet specific needs in the community. For example, the Institute currently is the only provider of an "Effective Black Parenting" class in Kalamazoo. Until the class was offered, parenting was not viewed from a cultural perspective. In addition, a separate class for male parents was formed to meet an identified need. Child-care staff members also are trained in the High Scope Perry Pre-School process, infant CPR, and a variety of other topics, and all volunteers go through an extensive orientation to the Family Institute before providing volunteer services.

Another area in which traditional services have been weak is prevention. Even when traditional approaches do address issues of prevention, they often lack sensitivity to cultural and ethnic differences. Also, traditional services gauge families from a financial-asset perspective; they can't see beyond that parameter. Although the Family Institute emphasizes young families with children up to age six, services are provided to the family however it is defined. The Institute also maintains relationships with other providers to make sure clients have access to the entire spectrum of services.

Despite its effectiveness, the Family Institute remains concerned about restrictive eligibility requirements for program services by federal and state funders. Frequently, these criteria hurt the very population that the service was designed to help, as do intervention strategies limited to social needs. The family unit also has economic, educational, and spiritual needs that must be addressed.

Most traditional services insist that coordination is the answer to service fragmentation. Although coordination is needed, there also must be intensive work with traditional providers to change their perceptions of the families they work with.

We need a critical assessment of social service providers. Many services have been in existence for years without measurement of their activity. New ideas and strategies are difficult to launch, and they are frequently eliminated by the existing service network.

Funders must encourage risk-taking. A community assessment that includes non-agency perspectives should be done to establish a baseline. Goals with measurable objectives need to be established. If measurable progress is made, longer-term funding should result. This will increase accountability and spark creativity.

For more information: The Family Institute, Kalamazoo, MI, USA

JOY OF JESUS, INC., Detroit, Michigan

Family development means helping the family become fully functional. The development process involves assessing family strengths and creating services and programs that empower the family to move progressively toward that goal. Programs are developed to address both individual and collective family issues.

Critical elements in successful family development include assessing family strengths and needs, developing mutual trust between service provider and service recipients, and gaining a high level of self-esteem, awareness, and self-sufficiency.

The effectiveness of family development efforts is measured through the progress made in achieving various, specific goals. The monitoring process is accomplished through regular feedback and client meetings.

Our basic family development philosophy is: "a hand up, not a handout." Merely providing services is considered a handout; it doesn't address the reason the service was needed in the first place.

Our goal is to place the family in a position where it has no need of services, where it becomes self-sufficient. That level of empowerment suggests the need to determine the root cause of dependency and eliminate it. A spiritual restoration process is fundamental to eliminating any root cause; we help reestablish a strong spiritual foundation, which leads to a new sense of empowerment and hope.

Our workload and staffing does not allow for adequate time away from the job for extensive training. Therefore, we use annual organizational meetings and various correspondence models. Here are specific examples of training sources that we participate in:

- The annual meeting of the Michigan National Association for the Education of Young Children (MNAEYC) provides various training opportunities.
- The University of Wisconsin-Stout provides a correspondence course called "Professional Development of Early Childhood Educators," which contains several modules on family development.
- Periodic parenting programs utilize outside speakers to train staff as well as families (e.g., Systematic Training for Effective Parenting, or STEP).
- Various reading materials and publications of significance (e.g., parent magazines) are shared with staff.

Unfortunately, most funders still envision the family in the traditional sense - mother, child, and father. This image persists in spite of rising statistics on teenage pregnancy and the devastation of drug abuse, particularly in the black community. If we face these facts, we see that dealing with the nontraditional family is the greatest challenge in family development. Nontraditional families consist primarily of single moms, and grandparents who are raising grandchildren because of substance abuse or another dysfunction on the part of the parents.

With regard to the latter group of nontraditional families, we participated in a pilot program with Wayne State University this year that focused on grandparents who are raising their grandchildren. It is too early to provide specific results, but improvement is needed in the recruitment and participant-interview process. Also, the program needs to be extended.

In dealing with single moms, the barriers are a bit more complicated. The situation might involve an absentee father or "significant other" who, for whatever reason, has not assumed the role of father. In such cases, we deal with tremendous stress and strain on the mother, particularly if that mother is required to work and care for the child without assistance.

Examples of other barriers include absence of a male role model, lack of transportation, and lack of a social outlet for moms to relieve the stress and pressures of life. There are other barriers as well.

Institutional barriers are a part of everyday life. Nothing is easy; the bureaucracy and the current systems are roadblocks that cause more stress for those without a support system. The most common example is the Department of Social Services; authorization for payments is often delayed, as are the payments themselves. We are at the mercy of the system and the worker's attitude.

Another barrier is the parents themselves. After working a full day, parents are reluctant to participate in evening sessions of any kind. As a result, evening programs generally have fairly low attendance.

In the face of these barriers, we feel that our comprehensive programs are an asset. We can provide child care, job training, and family counseling under the same service umbrellas. Our service components work together to do a thorough job of meeting each family's needs.

Specifically, we are very satisfied with the High Scope program and the active learning modules, which allow direct, hands-on experiences with people, objects, ideas, and events. We also are satisfied with the effectiveness of Genograms as a tool for strengthening individuals and families.

Still, we are in dire need of equipment and supplies in our New Child Development Center. Lack of funding means lack of playground materials and innovative equipment for the children. It also means that our children don't have access to computers and other equipment essential to an up-to-date learning environment.

For more information regarding Joy of Jesus, Inc., please contact Rev. Eddie Edwards, Joy of Jesus, Inc., 12255 Camden, Detroit, MI 49017-4058, (313) 839-4747.

Rochester Family Resource Network, Rochester, New York

Our centers are most concerned with growth and development of families with children up to five years of age. We promote an intergenerational approach that encourages optimal development for each family member. Family development is incorporated into our core programs, by promoting the voluntary involvement of parents as partners, and building upon family and individual strengths. We do not currently measure the results of family development efforts.

We work with the whole family, up to three generations, at grassroots (e.g., neighborhood or other accessible) locations. Neighborhood involvement provides social supports that reduce isolation and help parents grow in their role as their children's first teacher. This approach enables families to gather tools to manage their own lives, particularly since we do not case-manage. Families find our services easier to get acquainted with - perhaps more so than with those of larger organizations.

The most helpful approaches in working with families are small and informal parent discussion groups, and a combination of information plus support and peer-to-peer opportunities. Support groups such as Father's Night, Skip Generations, Yams, or any group in which members have something in common work very well. We plan to build on these successes with staff and volunteer training in family development.

Unfortunately, there is little information and training in family development which addresses the complex issues currently faced by families. Our birth-to-five focus limits long-term support of families. Some funding barriers limit us, too.

Our main concern regarding barriers to family development is getting funders to embrace the holistic concept of family development rather than targeting pieces of a family. Funders also can help us define realistic outcomes for evaluating our programs.

For more information: Rochester Family Resource Network, Rochester, NY, USA

Rural Cumberland Resources, Crossville, Tennessee

Rural Cumberland Resources (RCR) has never formally defined family development, but we have an ecologic social model that encompasses the concept. The model is composed of a number of concentric circles, the innermost being the individual, and the next ring, the family. Using Mazlow's hierarchy of needs within this perspective, you obtain a family development model.

We each perceive ourselves as the center of our experience of the universe. Because we are born dependent on others and persist in this need for survival and well-being, we reach out to our environment for support. The family, however defined, has traditionally been the primary source of that support for children. Although the nature of what is needed may change over time, the family remains a person's primary source for survival and well-being.

The chances for survival and well-being improve when the family is more adept at providing functional support (see Mazlow). When families are unable to do so, then more distant socioecologic circles of support, such as state custody or community mentoring programs, must fill the gap. If even minimal support is unavailable to the individual, then survival and well-being are jeopardized.

This translates into services and opportunities. Communities can ensure that families have the capacity and tools to provide the kind of support individual family members need. Family members have contact with formal supports only a small fraction of the time, but they are immersed in their families most of the time. For example, a school readiness program will have improved outcomes if instead of a volunteer reading to a child once a week, the volunteer coaches the parent to read to the child every day.

The critical elements are the same elements we've been addressing from the beginning: respect for the family, cultural sensitivity, capacity-building, partnerships, timing, goals set by the family, opportunities to practice new skills, and others.

With the socioecologic model, we can easily understand that the measure of family development can be based on individual outcomes relative to survival and well-being. However, the outcomes of each family member must be measured to form a comprehensive family development evaluation.

We do measure family development this way. For example, when we determine whether an infant is within normal developmental ranges, we are actually measuring whether the family is interacting and nurturing this child sufficiently. Neglected children do not thrive and develop normally. When we measure a second-grade student's improved attendance record, what we are also measuring are family attitudes about school attendance and commitment to education - values critical to survival and well-being in the 21st century.

The socioecologic perspective that Carl Dunst and others have developed gained much acceptance during the past 10 years. It suggests that every person, and every institution (and assumably all of creation) influences the individual positively or negatively. Those individuals with the most support from their environment have the greatest chance of survival and well-being within the limitations of their genetics. Negative supports, influences, and attitudes, such as oppression, exist as well.

This kind of model is important because it reflects reality. If we want to improve the chances of an individual's survival and well-being - whether a child, a youth, or an adult - we need to improve those supports available to the person on a daily basis.

This perspective requires us and our partners to work with a wide diversity of services that address lifelong developmental needs of the individual and family. We cannot just work with those who are providing services for early childhood development. We need to work with public housing for shelter needs, we need to work with geriatric respite care for the grandfather with Alzheimer's, and we need to work with adult basic education to get the mother a General Education Diploma (GED).

Applying time to the socioecologic model provides a critical perspective. The traditional sociologic perspective depersonalizes the individual and limits his or her consideration to the present moment. We need to approach our work realizing that people change over time. We need to consider the person's developmental challenges from cradle to grave. Our focus, then, is to provide an environment in which the person can realize his or her potential. What the person does in life is not our business, but giving each person equal opportunity to grow is our mission. To accomplish this, we expose our staff and volunteers to as much training as is possible in all aspects of human development.

Because RCR is not an "agency" in the institutional sense, we have been successful in involving whole families in supporting each other and their neighbors. Agencies' funding methods underscore stereotypes - single AFDC mothers, seniors over 55, English as a Second Language (ESL) young adults, etc. We have had some success leveraging these programs into a package of support for families. Other times, the categories are so narrowly and absurdly defined that real needs go unmet; for example, the state of Tennessee does not provide support for cognitively limited adults with children.

An example of how we work with the whole family is our Better Beginnings program. It involves home visits to pregnant adolescents and teen parents. The home visitor meets with the teen as well as with the teen's mother, siblings, and grandmothers. In times of crisis, the home visitor encourages the teen to seek support from other family members. It really is not profound work, but it does encourage people to depend upon each other rather than on arbitrary social services.

Continuity of services through stable, long-term funding, and a sufficient network of lifelong developmental supports are two major concerns. So many good programs end or are compromised because of changing streams of funding. Also, the number of developmental supports available to families and youth in most communities is very sparse. Whole populations have virtually no supports, such as cognitively limited parents with children. Often a family "outgrows" one of the programs, and there is no means of transition to self-reliance.

We all need to put aside politics and be challenged to put together programs that work for families. More policymakers need to understand the challenges facing families and communities.

For more information: Rural Cumberland Resources, Crossville, TN, USA

The Seventh Generation Program, The Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan

For the Seventh Generation Project, family development means reinforcement of the traditional extended family model. A major thrust in programming involves an intergenerational approach to providing services. Traditional ceremonies and behaviors have been critical to traditional family development.

In American Indian communities, family development carries a strong implication for the extended family. The definition of American Indian extended families goes beyond the vertical extended family (e.g., grandparents, parents, and children) to the horizontal extended family, which includes aunts, uncles, and cousins.

Since this model of family reinforces what is considered traditional from the American Indian perspective, it is congruent with the Seventh Generation Project goal of reinstilling traditional values into the community. The intergenerational approach to programming underscores services that are provided on an experience/developmental basis. Using a developmental approach alone would not be as effective as an intergenerational approach.

An intergenerational effort has worked best to reinforce traditional extended family values. For instance, an approach using traditional American Indian values has worked well with at-risk youth, while placing an emphasis on how their efforts will benefit the community.

However, the Seventh Generation's intergenerational approach to programming works with fathers, grandparents, and other family members while reinforcing traditional Nishnabe values.

Family development is strongly related to traditional values. Spirituality is the foundation upon which tradition and values rest. The Seventh Generation Project provides opportunities for non-Indians to understand and appreciate Indian culture, contributing to diversity. For Indians, diversity often implies intertribal differences rather than the more common definition of racial diversity.

For more information: The Seventh Generation Program, The Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe, Mt. Pleasant, MI

Family Services Agency, Inc., Gaithersburg, Maryland

Family Services Agency, Inc., defines family development in the broadest terms, taking many factors into consideration. Some of those factors reflect basic needs such as food, shelter, clothing, employment, physical health, parenting, money management, language acquisition for those who don't speak English, and general problem-solving ability. In other words, we do a psychosocial assessment and measure people's level of functioning. We also take cultural differences into consideration. Naturally, the focus of any intervention is to improve a family's level of functioning. Because Linkages is a collaborative program that utilizes the resources of public and private nonprofit agencies, we can address all areas of need and provide appropriate services.

Our philosophy of family development reflects a social work viewpoint, i.e., family development is multi-dimensional; a family's needs and strengths are interrelated; any intervention also must be multi-dimensional, interrelated, and occur over time; societal factors impinge upon families for good or for ill, and families respond to these factors.

The predominant practice is based on a view that is more narrow in focus, geared to quick solutions, and tends to see pathology as residing in the individuals and families rather than in society. Part of our work involves educating other providers and other community groups on our philosophy and how it influences our work.

A "systems" approach has been most helpful for families and individuals (both adults and children) in those families. Most of the staff members have been trained by their individual agencies, and more than half have social work or human services backgrounds.

The challenges of working in this area are many. One specific challenge is recognizing the interventions which have immediate effects, such as feeding a family, and those which have effects that are more difficult to measure, such as improved parenting skills. One of the barriers to working with our population is that many people are among the "working poor." Often, one or both parents work two or three jobs and are not available to receive our services regardless of our extensive hours. Single parents have similar difficulties, and for single parents who are also among the working poor, the problems are compounded.

Our immediate concern is loss of funding, particularly with the reorganization of the Montgomery County government, which affects all human service delivery programs. These changes may eventually work to the advantage of private nonprofits, but it is too soon to tell. Changes in United Way funding have also affected us negatively; Family Services cannot continue to support its piece of Linkages to Learning. Charging for services that are now free is an option that is under consideration. Whether a policy will be in place soon enough to help us maintain our service delivery is not certain.

For more information: Family Services Agency, Inc., Gaithersburg, MD

Sprituality Committe Update

This brief Spirituality Committee Update was submitted by Paul Vander Velde, Program Associate to the Families for Kids initiative. Paul is the facilitator for the Spirituality Committee meetings.

The Families and Neighborhoods Spirituality Committee was formed as a result of discussions by participants at the Cleveland Networking Conference in 1994. Representatives from each of the Families and Neighborhoods' comprehensive sites met to discuss what spirituality meant in the context of developing comprehensive, community-based organizations. As a result of the discussion, we decided that spirituality was not the equivalent of religion; nonetheless, we anticipated that religious organizations would participate in the life of the community and have an active role in making improvements.

Currently, the spirituality committee is drafting a short paper that defines spirituality in the context of neighborhoods and communities, and that provides some initial insight as to how one can recognize a spiritually active community. The paper will be published in March of 1996.

The Reference Desk

This directory includes information about federally-funded resource centers and clearinghouses that compile information on child and family welfare, health, and education issues of interest to states and communities. For a complete listing, please write the

> W.K. Kellogg Foundation
> Attention Family, Neighborhood, and Community Development,
> One Michigan Avenue East,
> Battle Creek, MI 49017.
> National Resource Centers for Child Welfare Services

Many federal resource centers offer technical support in setting up programs, training, and related services for caregiving agencies. The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services maintains the following national centers for assistance in managing child welfare services. (Please write us for a complete listing.)

National Child Abuse Clinical Resource Center
Denver, CO

**National Child Welfare Resource Center for Management
and Administration**
University of Southern Maine
Portland, ME

National Legal Center for Child Welfare Services
American Bar Association
Washington, DC

National Resource Center for Family-Based Services
School of Social Work
University of Iowa
Iowa City, IA

National Resource Center for Youth Services
University of Oklahoma
Tulsa, OK

National Resource Center on Homelessness and Mental Illness
Policy Research Associates
Delmar, NY

**ARCH National Resource Center for the Crisis Nursery
and Respite Care Programs**
Chapel Hill, NC

Berkeley Child Welfare Research Center
Family Welfare Research Group
Berkeley, CA

National Abandoned Infants Assistance Resource Center
Family Welfare Research Group
Berkeley, CA

National Foster Care Resource Center
Institute for the Study of Children and Families
Eastern Michigan University
Ypsilanti, MI

National Resource Center for Family Support Programs
Family Resource Coalition
200 South Michigan Avenue, Suite 1600
Chicago, IL 60604
(312) 341-0900
FAX: (312) 341-9361

The Maternal and Child Health Bureau, and Bureau of Health Resources Development, both in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, support national resource centers to provide information and assistance concerning various aspects of the building of service delivery systems.

They incorporate the concept of family-centered, community-based coordinated care. The centers include the following:

National Adolescent Health Resource Center
Minneapolis, MN

National Center for Networking Community-Based Services
Georgetown University
Child Development Center
Washington, DC

National Center for Policy Coordination in Maternal and Child Health
Institute for Child Health Policy
Gainesville, FL

National Center for Youth with Disabilities
University of Minnesota
Minneapolis, MN

National Parent Resource Center
(Collaboration Among Parents and Professionals Project)
Federation for Children with Special Needs
Boston, MA

Parents Helping Parents, Inc.
535 Race Street, Suite 140
San Jose, CA 95126

CSAP National Resource Center for the Prevention of Perinatal Abuse of Alcohol and Other Drugs
Fairfax, VA

National Information Center for Children and Youth and Disabilities
Washington, DC

Health and Justice
Health and Human Services and Juvenile Justice Clearinghouses

The U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the U.S. Department of Justice operate the following clearinghouses as national distribution points for public educational materials, research literature, and specialized program information:

CDC National AIDS Clearinghouse
Rockville, MD

Housing and Urban Development (HUD)
Drug Information and Strategy Clearinghouse
Rockville, MD

Juvenile Justice Clearinghouse
Rockville, MD

National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information
Rockville, MD

National Institute of Mental Health
Information Resources and Inquiries Branch
Rockville, MD

Women's Bureau Work and Family Clearinghouse
U.S. Department of Labor
Washington, DC

Continuing the Dialog on Diversity

Our burning question during the past three years has been "how can comprehensive community-based efforts best address diversity?" To answer that question, we had to talk among ourselves, define terms, challenge our thinking, and commit to explicitly examining these issues as part of our cluster evaluation project. So we began at the beginning. We started with a conversation among ourselves - ourselves being the staff of the seven projects and the staff at the W.K. Kellogg Foundation. We agreed to look within ourselves, our organizations, and our communities. An inward look at the organizational structures is formally being addressed by the cluster evaluation project. A final report will be available in 1998. Formally, the inward look at the personal level was started earlier this year. With the help of two very skilled facilitators, we started a dialogue among ourselves and recognized just how difficult that inward look can be. It can be challenging to our very assumptions about what's right and wrong. It was difficult to disentangle ourselves from the roles that we assume when we go to work or volunteer and the values that form the basis for our actions and behaviors. We relearned that diversity, as an experience, is a very personal one. Diversity to us meant the many ways in which we, as a society, mark our differences - gender, race, ability, culture/ethnicity, and socioeconomic class among the most prominent.

In our conversations we truly challenged each other in our understanding of how power and oppression play a role in these issues of diversity. What we found through that dialogue is that, because these discussions delve deep into our very core as human beings, the dialogue must be nurtured by a commitment to subscribe to the following guidelines:

- **From the outset, agree to disagree.** Our individual life experiences with diversity have led us to many different conclusions and interpretations of reality. To nurture dialogue, the best we can do is to understand that we cannot agree on everything. An option, too, is to "try on" ideas, other people's views and opinions.

- **Take a self-focus and share from a personal point of view.** We learn from each other's experiences, irrespective of how we are different; we do share the common human condition of needing to learn about the world and how others view it. That is how we affirm who we are, and one of the ways we use to see options for change. By taking a self-focus we can use those "gut" feelings to show us where we need to focus our attention.

- **Agree not to blame or attack each other for views expressed.** When it comes to this dialogue, blaming and attacking is unproductive. We need to hold each other accountable, but blaming and attacking have the opposite effect of promoting accountability. Rather than promote dialogue it shuts it down!

- **Protect the confidentiality of shared feelings or experiences.** Because meaningful dialogue must build on trust, it is critical this be a shared commitment to safeguard others' feelings and expressed opinions.

These guidelines seem quite evident as essential conditions for any civil public discussion. Yet what we see in many settings is just how difficult it is to subscribe to only one of these! Frequently our public dialogues break down because we accuse, verbally attack, and blame each other. During our meeting this past year, we thought that setting some ground rules for how these conversations can take place is a good place to start. Our neighborhoods and communities cannot afford to wait till the year 2020 or until we have all the answers before we can have these conversations about diversity.

We had intended this issue of our newsletter to be a public forum for our dialogue about how diversity issues are addressed in these seven models. By inviting you to participate, we have begun that journey. In this issue, you can engage in our first step toward having this newsletter be a public dialogue by reading and responding to us. Future issues will provide concrete sharing of experiences and lessons learned about how these comprehensive community-based efforts address cultural diversity. In the meantime, we encourage you to contact the projects directly and begin your conversation with them. Because this public conversation needs to be held with many more people than those of us in these models, we are asking that any of you who wish to join us write to us. We welcome your comments, your ideas, and your experiences. Tell us which strategies worked. Which didn't?

Progress and growth only happen where there is courage. These seven efforts to make a difference in over 50 neighborhoods in this country have taken the meaning of courage to its highest level by examining their practices and their behavior.

Guillermina

Cluster Evaluation

Families and Neighborhoods Comprehensive Community-Based Models (CCBMs)

The Evaluation Team at the Center on Work and Family, Boston University, is in the second year of conducting the Cluster Evaluation of the seven Families and Neighborhoods Comprehensive Community-Based Models (CCBMs). The purpose of the Cluster Evaluation is to expand our understanding about the impact of these models upon the well-being of families and neighborhoods. The following concrete measures of progress were determined:

- Strengthened Families
- Improved Parenting Skills
- Improved Socioeconomic Well-Being
- Strengthened Communities and Neighborhoods
- Increased Community Involvement
- Expanded Partnerships
- Strengthened Relationships Among Families, Communities, and Neighborhoods
- Increased Leadership Skills
- Increased Agency Accessibility

The seven sites have agreed to forward evaluation information to the Center on Work and Family on a quarterly basis. The Center on Work and Family uses this information to prepare a series of six trend reports. Each trend report focuses on one of the six outcome indicators associated with the Cluster Evaluation.

Bibliographies

Bibliographies

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Annotated Bibliography

1. *The Path of Most Resistance: Reflections on Lessons Learned from New Futures*. The Annie E. Casey Foundation, 701 Paul Street, Baltimore, MD 21202. (410) 547-6600.

This Foundation Report is put out by the Annie E. Casey Foundation, a supporter of at-risk youth. The report summarizes the experiences and wisdom acquired during the Casey Foundation's five-year New Futures Program, a multi-site initiative aimed at reforming public policies and improving services provided to children. The project involved five cities, each receiving between $7.4 million and $12.5 million to implement an overhaul of their children's services.

Lessons Learned rightly notes a need to remedy expensive, narrowly organized children's services that act only as a bandage for large social problems. Through New Futures, the Casey Foundation sought to bring about services that would be flexible, community-based, and address social ills in a comprehensive fashion.

The report highlights an ambitious, visionary project that sought to radically transform service systems through support of community initiatives that fostered interagency ties, enabled city governments to relocate funds, and promoted a decision-making process that was racially, socially, economically, and politically inclusive. The report is realistic and offers a refreshingly honest perspective on the do's and don'ts of revolutionizing social services.

2. Melaville, Atelia I.; Blank, Martin J.; and Asayesh, Gelareh. *Together we can: A guide to crafting community-based family-centered strategies for integrating education and human services.*

This pro-family guide offers a rationale and tools for reconstructing service systems. The report outlines some effective service integration characteristics -- such as being school-linked, rooted within and planned for a specific community, closely connected to state government, data driven, and financially pragmatic. Successful initiatives empower the entire community and balance the political and technical dimensions of systems change. The authors caution that reconstructing service delivery prototypes should be considered a means toward service integration and not its end.

The authors discuss the stages in a collaborative process: bringing the participants together, building trust and ownership, developing a strategic plan, followed by implementation, replication, and system change. A checklist helps chart progress.

To obtain a copy, write to:

> U.S. Department of Education,
> Office of Educational Research and Improvement and
> U.S. Department of Health and Human Services,
> Office of the Assistant Secretary for Planning and Evaluation.
> Distributed by U.S. Department of Education, OERI.
> Attn.: Susan Talley, 400 Maryland Avenue, SW,
> Washington, DC 20202; (202) 219-2129

3. Chynoweth, Judith K.; and Dyer, Barbara. (1991). *Strengthening families: A guide for state policy-making.*

This guide, based on the experience of ten states, offers a practical approach to policy design that reflects the importance of the family in the development of children and society. It moves away from traditional, categorical, symptomatic design toward a focus on realistic and logical assessments of and outcomes for families.

The authors first suggest setting the context in which these policy decisions should be made. They emphasize the importance of examining basic issues surrounding the family, such as its definition and problems it might face. Policy strategists must document and assess these problems and then use the data to set goals and outcome-oriented objectives for both families and service systems. The authors use several state development strategies as guiding principles, stressing meanwhile that each state must recognize its own particular needs. Performance and policy accountability systems are vital to guiding this type of policy, and they help when used as management tools. The authors suggest ways to gain support for this type of policy initiative.

To obtain a copy, write to:

> Council of Governor's Policy Advisors,
> 400 N. Capitol Street, Suite 390,
> Washington, DC 20001; (202) 624-5386.