Building Community Capacity to Work with Youth in the Juvenile Justice System

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JDAI National Conference
Houston, TX
April 25, 2012 at 3:15 PM
Workshop Outline

- Why Build Community Capacity?
- Promising Practices in Community Capacity Building
- Barriers to Community Capacity Building
- Strategies for Community Capacity Building
Question: what is the ultimate goal of our juvenile justice reform efforts?

Effective and Efficient Practice
- Reduce Detention
- Reduce Violations
- Improve Outcomes
- Improve Services
- Improve Compliance
- Interagency Coordination
- Efficient Budgets
- Happier Personnel

Good Services & Accountability for Youth
- Effective Programs
- Targeted Interventions
- Appropriate Sanctions & Rewards
- More Successful Completions
- Less Recidivism

Help Young People & Make the World a Better Place
- We want youth to behave well
- We want safe communities
- We want to see youth become into healthy, productive, responsible adults
Why Build Community Capacity?

- Getting juvenile justice back into the DNA of the local community leads to:
  - Support for young people long after their formal juvenile justice involvement ends
  - Preventative measures taken *before* young people have formal juvenile justice involvement
  - Support for entire families, including siblings
  - A much broader cross-section of the community (CBOs, faith-based organizations, businesses, etc.) taking responsibility for young people.
Why Build Community Capacity?

- If the Ultimate Goal is Healthy Youth and Safe Communities… then Community Partnerships are a **MUST**
- System-Focused Efforts Alone will not get us where we need to go
- Community Capacity Building is Juvenile Justice Reform!
Why Build Community Capacity?

- **Benefits for Communities**
  - Community Capacity Building Restores the Ability of Community Members to Effectively Engage Youth
  - Community Capacity Building Leads to Safer Neighborhoods
  - Community Capacity Building Restores Youth as Community Assets
  - Community Capacity Building Efforts Bring Resources into Under-Resources Communities
Why Build Community Capacity?

Benefits for Juvenile Justice Agencies

- Community Capacity Building Provides Systems New and Valuable Insights, Information, Perspectives and Relationships that Only Community Stakeholders Can Provide

- Community Capacity Building Injects and Develops a Heightened Sense of Urgency to Confront Major Issues

- Community Capacity Building Begins to Shift the Paradigm from “Community as Recipient of Justice Services” to “Community as Partner in Visioning What Justice Is, Defining how Justice is delivered and Determining what Impact it is Having on People’s Lives
Promising Practices in Community Capacity Building

- **South Bronx Community Connections**

  - **Target Population**: youth ages 13 – 15 arrested for low to mid-level offenses; eligible for pre-court diversion
  - **Geographic Area**: South Bronx
  - **Community Partners**: CCFY + 3 Grassroots Faith & Community Organizations
  - **Services**: Community Coaching, Neighborhood Improvement Projects, Family Strengthening (SFP), Youth Development Programming
  - **Key Finding**: 75% of youth staying active in programming after completion of court mandate
Promising Practices in Community Capacity Building

- **Asbury Park Community Intervention Coaching Project**
  - Utilize data to identify the target population and develop strategic community based intervention.
  - Community Coaches work with youth on probation who are having serious difficulty meeting the standards of their probation.
  - County grant identified; RFP written; strategic outreach to inform organizations in the target neighborhood (very important!).
  - Must build a collaborative to implement the program and make any necessary adjustments as well as monitor utilization and effectiveness.
Promising Practices in Community Capacity Building

- **ARCHES**: Building Community Capacity to Provide Transformative Mentoring: a case study in progress...
  - Conceptualizing the Model
    - Face to face conversations with community based organizations
  - Issuing the RFA
    - Targeted community outreach
  - The Selection Process
    - Assessing organizational “readiness” to engage in transformative mentoring
  - Building a Learning Community
    - Getting help
    - Teachers & Learners
What Community Partnerships Offer

- In every community there are neighborhood faith and community organizations that are rich in providing:
  - Networks of Pro-Social, Caring Adults
  - “Credible Messengers”
  - Youth Development Programming
  - Employment/Internship Opportunities
  - Relational Supports for the Entire Family

- If this is the case, why aren’t there more system-community partnerships for youth in the juvenile justice system?
Barriers to Community Capacity Building

- The Engagement Gap

- Lack of resources to support community capacity building
- System stakeholders don’t easily see the benefits of investing in community capacity building
- Frustration with the time and effort involved
- Underlying feeling or belief that the resources should go towards system capacity building
- When partnering with neighborhood organizations to build community capacity, system stakeholders default into the role of looking for failure
Effective Strategies for Building Community Capacity

- **Engaging Community Members**
  - Engaging Community Members requires a strategic approach and will take some additional work.
  - Utilize community members’ knowledge to identify community resources in target neighborhoods.
  - Identify monetary resources including grants and fee-for-service contracts with the understanding that additional support will be needed.
  - Identify skills development including training and consultation.
System Barriers to Partnerships

• **Bureaucratic Culture:**
  - Lack of vision and imagination
  - Learned Indifference (often masking sense of powerlessness)
  - Distrust/disdain for young people and communities being impacted (often masking fear)
  - Inadequate skill and experience
  - Politics: lack of bold leadership
Effective Strategies for Building Community Capacity

- **What system stakeholders can do to build community capacity**
  - Make a commitment to increase and enhance community engagement
  - Ask for help
  - Re-introduce yourself to the communities you serve
  - Expand outreach beyond current network of “usual suspects”
  - Seek and identify opportunities for formal and informal partnerships
  - Create vehicle/avenue to receive and utilize community voice
  - Go local
Community Barriers to Partnerships

- The Skills/Resources Gap

  - Lack of Juvenile Justice System Knowledge
  - Lack of Court Reporting Experience
  - Lack of Knowledge of Specific Program Interventions
  - Lack of Funding and Organizational Capacity
Effective Strategies for Building Community Capacity

- **What communities** need to build their capacity to serve youth in the juvenile justice system
  - Understanding the Juvenile Justice System
  - Matching Program Services to Risk/Needs
  - Monitoring, Documentation, and Reporting
  - Using Evidence-Based and Promising Practices
  - Ongoing Training & Technical Assistance
CCFY’s ATI Training Institute
Effective Strategies for Community Capacity Building

- Funding Considerations

  - Sustainable Community Partnerships are not Free
  - The Benefits Far Outweigh the Costs
  - The Cost of a Pilot Community Capacity Building Project
The Community Coach Model

Lead Agency coordinates intake, assessment, reporting, service delivery

CBO

CBOs/FBOs provide youth development activities, community coaches

FBO

Project Coordinator provides administrative and case management support

Community Coach

Coaches work 10-15 hours per week at $10-15 per hour

Each Coach works with 3-5 youth at any given time

Community Coach

Community Coach
Contact Information

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