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# An Educating Neighborhood:

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How Neighbors Create “A Village  
That Raises Their Children”

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**T**hroughout North America, one of the most popular mottoes is the African saying, “It takes a village to raise a child.” Hardly anyone disagrees with its premise. However, there are very few neighborhoods that actually engage in this practice. Instead, child-raising is thought to be largely the domain of families and schools. A village, however, is much more than family or school. In fact, a village holds many more educational resources than either families or schools.

The educational resources of the village include the knowledge of neighborhood residents, the clubs, groups and associations that are citizen-based learning environments and the local institutions (businesses, not for profits and government bodies). Each provides incredible learning opportunities. It is these neighborhood educational assets that are activated in a village that raises its children.

In most communities, these invaluable village resources are unused and disconnected from the lives of young people. Nonetheless, there is a forgotten history of village child raising in neighborhoods across North America. In our neighborhood research we have discovered this history by asking people over fifty years of age to describe their experiences in their neighborhood when they were children. Most of these people respond in a similar fashion. They remember how various people on the block taught them all kinds of things from singing to stamp collecting to bicycle repair to history. They also remember how the people on the block expected them to “behave” and would immediately tell them and their parents if they stepped over the neighborhood boundaries. Finally, they speak of their sense that they were the children of all the people on the block or neighborhood or small town.

When we ask people under the age of 40 to tell us about their childhood neighborhood experiences, we rarely hear the story told by their seniors. Instead their story is about school, youth groups (from Boy Scouts to gangs) and programs. Their neighbors have vanished from the stories.

It appears that in one to two generations, many villages have lost their power to raise their children. Neighborhood functions have largely been transferred to schools. This transfer is reflected in the fact that in the last generation, schools have been asked to take responsibility for the health, safety, food, recreation, behavior, moral values and entrepreneurial development of young people. (For a chronicle of the new functions assigned to schools since 1900, see attached Exhibit 1.)

Viewed from the school perspective, this transfer of neighborhood functions has created teachers who often feel overwhelmed by all of these new responsibilities. Indeed, this transfer of neighborhood functions to the classroom has so distorted the teacher's role that she or he is diminished in the capacity to teach those things for which they were prepared – the basic educational curriculum.

The resolution of this dysfunctional school-neighborhood relationship depends upon identifying and mobilizing the educational capacities of the residents, associations and institutions in the neighborhood. Surprisingly, every neighborhood is rich in these educational resources. However, very few communities are organized to identify and connect these resources to the young people.

To create a modern village with the capacity to raise children, a neighborhood must first be able to identify the three basic teaching resources in the neighborhood—the residents' knowledge, the educational opportunities provided by local voluntary clubs, groups and associations and the learning that can be provided by local institutions (profit, not-for-profit and government).

These three learning resources are the neighborhood capital that can be invested in the local young people.

### **The Knowledge of Local Residents**

The first universally available educational asset is the knowledge local residents have that they are willing to teach young people.

We have been engaged in research assisting people in local neighborhoods to identify the local teaching knowledge. One example of this knowledge was documented in a low-income African-American neighborhood in Chicago. Organizers from the local neighborhood organization initially met with seventeen residents residing on three local blocks. They asked the residents what they knew well enough to teach local young people and whether they would be willing to do

that teaching without pay. The following table demonstrates the teaching knowledge that these residents were willing to freely share with their village young people.

### Teaching Knowledge of 17 Residents of 3 Blocks in Chicago's Woodlawn Neighborhood

<p>Entrepreneurship Job Creation Job training Marketing Strategic planning Physical fitness Basic accounting Economics How to review a credit report Credit quality Banking Dietician Grammar Organizing events English Public speaking Presentational etiquette Journalism for beginners</p>	<p>Home Schooling Basic etiquette Breastfeeding techniques for first-time moms First Aid Hygiene Self-esteem Life skills for youth Knitting Computer technology Mathematics Skating How to be a good neighbor Real estate Reading comprehension Sewing Handcrafting Cooking</p>
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It is notable that these neighbors can teach some traditional school topics, but of even more significance, they can teach many more subjects that would not usually be taught in the school. This includes topics such as vocational skills, moral values, presentation skills, health initiatives, constructive relationships, financial and economic skills, self-esteem, recreation etc. In “teaching” these kinds of subjects, the neighborhood is recovering its function as child raiser. As a result, the school is relieved of functions and is better able to teach its unique knowledge and the youth have a much broader and more useful education.



In the Woodlawn neighborhood where the seventeen residents provided this teaching information, the neighborhood association runs an after-school “youth at risk” program. The 40 young people involved in the program are sent to the neighborhood association by the school because they “create disturbances, don’t learn, or won’t learn.” The probability is very high that most of these teenagers will be dropping out of school.

From a school perspective these youth are viewed as “unlearners.” The neighborhood organization took the topics that seventeen neighbors were willing to teach and presented them to the “youth at risk,” asking which of the topics they would seriously like to learn. The table on the following page indicates the responses the teenagers gave regarding subject they want to learn.

TOPIC OF INTEREST	NUMBER OF STUDENTS	MALES	FEMALES
COOKING	23	12	11
BANKING	14	6	8
COMPUTER TECHNOLOGY	13	8	5
HOW TO START A BUSINESS	12	7	5
PAINTING	11	6	5
REAL ESTATE/BUSINESS	11	7	4
SKATING	11	5	6
TYPING	11	7	4
BLACK HISTORY	9	5	4
PHYSICAL FITNESS	9	3	6
ENGLISH	8	5	3
MATHEMATICS	8	5	3
PARENTING	8	3	5
READING	6	4	2
CARPENTRY	5	3	2
FIRST AID	5	0	5
GRAMMAR	5	3	2
LIFE STYLES FOR YOUTH	5	3	2
MARKETING	5	2	3
BASIC ACCOUNTING	4	1	3
HOW TO HAVE FAITH	4	1	3
JOURNALISM FOR BEGINNERS	4	2	2
READING A CREDIT REPORT	4	2	2
READING COMPREHESION	4	3	1
SEWING	4	1	3
ETIQUETTE	3	0	3
GARDENING	3	1	2
PUBLIC SPEAKING	3	0	3
SELF-ESTEEM	3	2	1
WORLGE HISTORY	3	2	1
GOOD NEIGHBORING	2	1	1
DICTION	1	0	1
GEOGRAPHY	1	1	0
KNITTING	1	0	1
PLUMBING	1	0	1
SHEET METAL	1	1	0

It is notable that these “at risk teens” highest priority is learning that would assist them in getting jobs. Since these youth are very likely to drop out and be jobless, connecting them to the village’s vocational learning opportunities is an important opportunity for changing life futures. Without this connection, many of these “youth at risk” will begin appearing on lists of unemployed gang members whose probable future is incarceration.

### **The Neighborhood Associations**

The second educational asset in neighborhoods are the clubs, groups, organizations and associations to which the local residents belong. These are usually smaller face-to-face groups where the members do the work and they are not paid.

We have done research with local neighborhood groups helping them to identify their local associations. There are always many more than local people realize. One example is the town of Spring Green, Wisconsin with a population of 1,600. A team of residents was recently able to identify 82 associations and to interview the leaders of the 60 associations listed below:

### **60 of the 82 Associations With Names in the Town of Spring Green Wisconsin, Population 1,600 (2013)**

4PeteSake  
American Legion Post 253  
Badgerland Girl Scout Troop 2669  
Bloomin' Buddies Garden Club  
Cub Scout Pack # 38 Spring Green  
Bunco Babes  
Christ Lutheran Church  
Community Theater Association (Gard)  
Concerned Citizens of the River Valley  
Cornerstone Church of Spring Green  
Driftless Area Book Club  
FFA Organization (at River Valley High School)  
Friends of Governor Dodge State Park  
Friends of the Lower Wisconsin Riverway (FLOW)  
Friends of the Spring Green Community Library  
Green Squared Building Association  
Greenway Manor Volunteers  
Habitat for Humanity, Lower Wisconsin River  
Knights of Columbus

Knitters at Nina's  
Kops for Kids  
Mew Haven, Inc.  
Miracles on Hoof  
Mostly Mondays Poetry Society  
Older & Wiser Land Stewards (OWLS)  
Pineland Association  
River Valley Area Community Choir  
River Valley Boosters Association (athletics)  
River Valley Mom's Group  
River Valley Music Boosters  
River Valley Players  
River Valley Soccer Association  
River Valley Stitchers  
River Valley Youth Football Club  
Rural Musicians Forum  
River Valley High School Alumni Band  
River Valley High School Madrigal Choir & Jazz Vocal Group  
River Valley High School Senior Service Learning Class  
Skills USA (at River Valley High School)  
Solstice Jazz Band  
Spring Green Area Arts Coalition  
Spring Green Area Chamber of Commerce  
Spring Green Area EMT District  
Spring Green Area Fire Protection District  
Spring Green Area Historical Society  
Spring Green Arts & Crafts Fair Committee  
Spring Green Cemetery Association  
Spring Green Community Church  
Spring Green Community Food Pantry  
Spring Green Dog Park  
Spring Green Dolphins  
Spring Green Farmers Market  
Spring Green Film Club  
Spring Green Golf Club, Inc.  
Spring Green Lions Club  
Spring Green Literary Festival  
Spring Green Senior Citizens Club  
Stitch 'n Bitch  
Unity Chapel, Inc.  
Wyoming Valley School Cultural Arts Center

This list demonstrates the diversity of neighborhood, civic, vocational, environmental and social interests. The study found that the chairpersons identified “learning” as the most common reason that people join these associations. They are not only topical learning opportunities, but they also provide invaluable social relationships that build trust—both qualities that every youth would learn to their advantage if they were connected to one or more associations.

The 60 associational leaders were given a list of various kinds of neighborhood improvement functions that are often fulfilled by local associations. They were asked whether their association was engaged in any of these activities. If they answered “no,” they were asked whether or not they thought their group would engage in the activity if asked. The following table indicates their responses:

Activity	Yes, Already Involved	Not Involved, Willing	Probably Willing	Probably Not	Uncertain
Welcome Newcomer	15	21	7	17	1
Beautification	14	8	25	0	3 slight, 1 possibility
Park & Recreation	14	12	7	22	1 possibility
Youth	34	4	8	14	0
Disabilities	22	16	6	17	0
Seniors	30	10	4	11	1 consider it
Homeless/Hungry	24	8	6	18	2
Natural Disasters	18	12	6	21	1
Arts & Culture	34	4	1	13	5
Families	30	8	3	18	0
Health, Phy. & Mental	28	7	4	20	1 maybe
ESL	0	6	6	47	1,1 maybe
Family/Child Abuse	7	12	6	33	2,1 maybe
Youth At Risk	12	10	4	30	2
Environment	17	10	5	23	2
History & Heritage	17	14	6	18	1 might
Recruit Teenagers	15	13	6	16	0

Of particular significance is the fact that 34 groups say they are now involved with youth while 12 indicate that they would probably become involved if asked.

When asked whether they are involved with “youth at risk,” 12 groups report that they are while 14 more say they are probably willing if asked. 19 groups say they are probably willing to recruit teens as members.

This data indicates that many associations are in some way involved with young people and that many more could be engaged if they were asked. This makes clear the largely unrecognized contributions and possibilities of local associations as teaching/learning venues.

Special note should be made of the experience of youth agencies that emphasizes the importance of young people being connected with adults in order to develop their vocational, civic and moral values. Local associations are the most readily available opportunities for young people to establish adult relationships in a productive setting where they can develop their gifts and capacities as citizens.

### **Local Institutions**

The third neighborhood educational resource is the local institutions-- businesses, not for profits and government institutions that include libraries, parks, schools, museums, etc. These local institutions have been widely recognized as learning resources by universities and high schools that have community service programs. These programs place students with these various institutions in order to broaden their knowledge beyond traditional school topics. These kinds of student-institutional relationships have many benefits including specific vocational knowledge, relationships with productive adults, networking opportunities, understanding norms of a workplace, creative and entrepreneurial experiences and activities that build self esteem.

In addition to these institutional community service relationships, students can also be connected to adults who are performing significant productive activities. An example would be students who are paired with the mayor and elected council people, directors of government departments, hospital administrators, foundation staff, police officials and entrepreneurs of all kinds. These experiences, in addition to providing individualized learning opportunities, can bring positive youthful creativity and energy into the community while increasing the commitment of young people to their neighborhood and its civic life.

## **Activating an Educating Neighborhood**

Activating these three kinds of learning resources can create an “educating neighborhood”—a place where all of the learning assets of individuals, associations, and institutions are identified and mobilized to produce a village that raises its children.

There are at least three steps that could lead to creating a civic group with the capacity to facilitate a village that raises its children.

### **Step One | “Partners in Education”—A New Kind of Civic Organization**

An organization for carrying forward the vision of an “educating neighborhood” includes as many educating partners as possible. These partners can include representatives from neighborhood associations, other interested local associations, churches, business and the chamber of commerce, local foundations, libraries and government. Each is a member of civil society with multiple learning assets.

This group is committed to identifying and investing the knowledge capital of the community. Each member is an organizer of the initiative and a learning resource. They are “Partners In Education.”

### **Step Two | Identifying the Neighborhood’s Educational Resources**

An initial goal of the “Partners In Education” is to make visible the invisible learning resources of the community and to determine the willingness of those resources to take on a role as neighborhood educator, e.g., members of a village that raises its children.

This “visibility” could include identifying: 1) the teaching knowledge of residents in the neighborhood; 2) the associations in the neighborhood and their willingness to become an educational resource and 3) the array of institutions and their willingness to join in the educating process. This undertaking can be done by the partners, sometimes in cooperation with local colleges and agencies.

While thus far we have focused on the role of adults teaching young people, it is equally important that this “visibility” initiative also seek to understand the skills, abilities and interests that young people are prepared to contribute to

neighborhood life. In this sense, people of all ages become educating assets—everyone a teacher and everyone a learner.

When this “map” of the abundant educational resources is made public, it usually leads to a new vision of the neighborhood, its strengths and its educating possibilities.

### **Step Three | Connecting the Educational Resources.**

Once the Partnership has identified the vast array of educational resources, the next step is developing methods that connect them to young people. This function could be performed by a staff of the Neighborhood Education Partnership. It could be a volunteer function of the partners themselves. The task is to weave young people into the fabric of the adult community so that they can learn and also become contributors to the neighborhood’s life. This is a connective function that identifies the learning aspirations of the young people and matches them with the rich pool of learning opportunities.

In summary, creating a village that raises its children occurs when a civic group of community assets identifies the local learning capital and institutes a process that connects youth to that capital.

### **The Multiple Benefits of This New Partnership in Education:**

#### ***Youth***

- A major new opportunity structure for young people, because the Partnership’s connections create many new educational and vocational opportunities.
- New adult-youth relationships based on productive activities. These relationships close the gap between young people and adults – a key to dealing with many youth problems.
- Providing a practical reason for youth to stay in the community because they are early on involved in many relationships and opportunities that make the neighborhood or small town an attractive place to stay.
- As young people are connected to the neighborhood assets and feel their abilities are respected, their combined contributions to the neighborhood are a major new source of energy and creativity.



### **Schools**

- As the community takes on new responsibilities for child raising, the teacher is able to teach what she or he was educated to teach. They are no longer distracted by trying to fulfill community functions.
- As youth are engaging as proactive members of the community, the negative behaviors in school decrease. Teens are no longer “useless” people frustrated by their isolated role in a youth culture.

### **Neighborhood**

- The “asset map” created by the Partnership enables a new and powerful vision of who neighbors are and what they have to build a strong “village.”
- The fact that most people are identified as teachers by the partnership creates a new sense of self worth. When we can say we are a “Teaching Town,” we have a community-building sense of power, productivity and mutual responsibility.
- As we contribute our assets to the youth, and they share theirs, we begin to see a culture shift from consumer, client and competitor to neighbor, citizen, and contributor to the common good.

### **Conclusion**

For those who are interested in initiating a local group that can organize an educating neighborhood strategy, a sample guide follows. See Exhibit 2.

## Functions Added to Public Schools

(Excerpt from: *Schools Cannot Do It Alone*, by Jamie Vollmer, Enlightenment Press, 2010)

From **1900 to 1910**, we shifted to our public schools responsibilities related to:

- Nutrition
- Immunization
- Health (Activities in the health arena multiply every year.)

From **1910-1930**, we added:

- Physical education (including organized athletics)
- The Practical Arts/Domestic Science/Home economics (including sewing and cooking)
- Vocational education (including industrial agricultural education)
- Mandated school transportation

In the **1940's**, we added:

- Business education (including typing, shorthand, and bookkeeping)
- Art and music
- Speech and drama
- Half-day kindergarten
- School lunch programs (We take this for granted today, but it was a huge step to shift to the schools the job of feeding America's children one third of their daily meals.)

In the **1950's**, we added:

- Expanded science and math education
- Safety education
- Driver's education
- Expanded music and art education
- Stronger foreign language requirements
- Sex education (Topics continue to escalate.)

In the **1960's**, we added:

- Advanced Placement programs
- Head Start
- Title I
- Adult education
- Consumer education (resources, rights and responsibilities)
- Career education (options and entry level skill requirements)
- Peace, leisure, and recreation education [Loved those sixties.]

In the **1970's**, the breakup of the American family accelerated, and we added:

- Drug and alcohol abuse education

## EXHIBIT 1

- Parenting education (techniques and tools for healthy parenting)
- Behavior adjustment classes (including classroom and communication skills)
- Character education
- Special education (mandated by federal government)
- Title IX programs (greatly expanded athletic programs for girls)
- Environmental education
- Women's studies
- African-American heritage education
- School breakfast programs (Now some schools feed America's children two-thirds of their daily meals throughout the school year and all summer. Sadly, these are the only decent meals some children receive.)

In the **1980's** the floodgates opened, and we added:

- Keyboarding and computer education
- Global education
- Multicultural/Ethnic education
- Nonsexist education
- English-as-a-second- language and bilingual education
- Teen pregnancy awareness
- Hispanic heritage education
- Early childhood education
- Jump Start, Early Start, Even Start, and Prime Start
- Full-day kindergarten
- Preschool programs for children at risk
- After-school programs for children of working parents
- Alternative education in all its forms
- Stranger/danger education
- Antismoking education
- Sexual abuse prevention education
- Expanded health and psychological services
- Child abuse monitoring (a legal requirement for all teachers)

In the **1990's**, we added:

- Conflict resolution and peer mediation
- HIV/AIDS education
- CPR training
- Death education
- America 2000 initiatives (Republican)
- Inclusion
- Expanded computer and internet education
- Distance learning
- Tech Prep and School to Work programs
- Technical Adequacy Assessment

## EXHIBIT 1

- Post-secondary enrollment options
- Concurrent enrollment options
- Goals 2000 initiatives (Democrat)
- Expanded Talented and Gifted opportunities
- At risk and dropout prevention
- Homeless education (including causes and effects on children)
- Gang education (urban centers)
- Service learning
- Bus safety, bicycle safety, gun safety, and water safety education

In the **first decade of the twenty-first century**, we have added:

- No Child Left Behind (Republican)
- Bully prevention
- Anti-harassment policies (gender, race, religion, or national origin)
- Expanded early childcare and wrap around programs
- Elevator and escalator safety instruction
- Body Mass Index evaluation (obesity monitoring)
- Organ donor education and awareness programs
- Personal financial literacy
- Entrepreneurial and innovation skills development
- Media literacy development
- Contextual learning skill development
- Health and wellness programs
- Race to the Top (Democrat)

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# A Guide For Precipitating

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## An Educating

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# Neighborhood Partnership

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There are **three** primary neighborhood assets that provide educational opportunities. They are:

- **The knowledge and skills of the local residents**
- **The special knowledge of people in local clubs, organizations and associations—groups where the members do the work and they are not paid.**
- **The work of the local for-profit, not-for-profit and government institutions.**

An Educating Neighborhood is organized to use all three assets as learning resources. This guide outlines one approach to identifying and engaging key actors from each of these sectors in creating an Educating Neighborhood Partnership.

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**The first step** is for the initiating team members to personally explore the educating potential of each of these assets. As a result, they will be able to talk persuasively with others about joining an Educating Partnership.

### **Exploring Individual Assets**

Every resident has special knowledge that they can share/teach. For example, in one neighborhood of 500 households in Edmonton, Canada, some of the residents said they had knowledge or skills they would share with neighbors and the young people. Here's the list of the knowledge and skills they are willing to share:

#### **Do you have knowledge you would share with or teach your neighbors?**

Antiques	Current events	Guns	Edmonton Oilers
Architecture	Dog training and care	Healthcare	Edmonton Eskimos
Art	The environment	Hiking	Photography
Antique cars	Fishing	History	Poetry
Animal health	Family life	Home design	Poverty
Bible	Football	Human rights	Refugee support
Book club	Languages	Landscaping	Small business
Car club	Gender issues	Fitness training	Education systems
Politics	Genealogy	Children's health and development	Philosophy/theology
Gardening	Golf	Music appreciation	Travel
Computers/IT	Grand-parenting	Nutrition	World religions
Cooking			

### Are there skills you would share with neighbors?

Animal health	Dog training	Developmental	Personal
Animal care	Dog care	disabilities	organization
Antiques	Dog walking	Highlands history	Outdoor education
Appliance repair	Drawing	or culture	Parenting
Architecture	Giving rides to	House painting	Pastoral care
Art design	seniors	Interior design	Photography
Arts management	Drywall	Drums	Baking
Babysitting	Neighborhood	Knitting	Pool maintenance
Baking	patrol	Labor relations	Project
Bridge	Editing	Landscaping	management
Building maintenance	Electrical	Lawn care	Public speaking
Canning	Event organizing	Life skills	Seniors care
Career path	Face painting	Literacy	Sexual exploitation
Carpentry	Financial planning	Bicycle care	Sound tech
Casino	Fitness	Board coach	Auto appraisal
Catering	French translation	Mental illness care	Speech therapy
Children's programs	Fundraising	Business mentoring	Stained glass
Community resources	Landscape design	Youth mentoring	Tax help
Computer/tech skills	Gardening	Lawn mowing	Travel advisor
Construction	Senior care	Negotiation	Victim assistance
Cooking	Graphic design	Commissioner of	Video production
Wood carving	Grief counseling	Oaths	Vintage cars
Data input	Guitar	Occupational	Woodworking
Yard design	Handyman	therapy	Yard maintenance

As initiators of the Partnership you can begin by having a brief conversation with at least four people you don't know well. Ask them what knowledge they have that they would be willing to teach or share with the young people and/or adults in the neighborhood. Finally ask the names of associations they belong to (or participate in). To make clear what you mean by associations, you can share the following list of typical types of associations neighbors are involved in:

## EXHIBIT 2

### 1. Addiction Prevention and Recovery Groups

- Drug Ministry/Testimonial Group for Addicts
- Campaign for a Drug Free Neighborhood
- High School Substance Abuse Committee

### 2. Advisory Community Support Groups (friends of...)

- Friends of the Library
- Neighborhood Park Advisory Council
- Hospital Advisory Group

### 3. Animal Care Groups

- Cat Owners' Association
- Humane Society

### 4. Anti Crime Groups

- Children's Safe Haven Neighborhood Group
- Police Neighborhood Watch
- Senior Safety Groups

### 5. Block Clubs

- Condominium Owners' Association
- Building Council
- Tenant Club

### 6. Business Organizations/Support Groups

- Jaycees
- Local Chamber of Commerce
- Economic Development Council
- Local Restaurant Association

### 7. Charitable Groups and Drives

- Local Hospital Auxiliary
- Local United Way
- United Negro College Fund Drive

### 8. Civic Events Groups

- Local Parade Planning Committee
- Arts and Crafts Fair
- July 4<sup>th</sup> Carnival Committee
- Health Fair Committee

### 9. Cultural Groups

- Community Choir
- Drama Club
- Dance Organization
- High School Band

### 10. Disability /Special Needs Groups

- Special Olympics Planning Committee
- Local American Lung Association
- Local Americans with Disabilities Association

### 11. Education Groups

- Local School Council
- Local Book Clubs
- Parent Teacher Association
- Literacy Council
- Tutoring Groups

### 12. Elderly Groups

- Hospital Seniors Club
- Westside Seniors Club
- Church Seniors Club
- Senior Craft Club

### 13. Environmental Groups

- Neighborhood Recycling Club
- Sierra Club
- Adopt-a-Stream
- Bike Path Committee
- Clean Air Committee
- Pollution Council
- Save the Park Committee

### 14. Family Support Groups

- Teen Parent Organization
- Foster Parents' Support Group
- Parent Alliance Group

### 15. Health Advocacy & Fitness Groups

- Weight Watchers
- TOPS
- Neighborhood Health Council
- Traffic Safety Organization
- Child Injury Prevention Group
- Yoga Club
- YMCA/YWCA Fitness Groups
- Anti-violence Group
- Senior Fitness Club

### 16. Heritage Groups

- Black Empowerment Group
- Norwegian Society
- Neighborhood Historical Society
- African American Heritage Association

### 17. Hobby and Collectors Groups

- Coin Collector Association
- Stamp Collector Association
- Arts & Crafts Club
- Garden Club of Neighbors
- Sewing Club
- Antique Collectors



## EXHIBIT 2

### **18. Men's Groups**

- Fraternal Orders
- Church Men's Organizations
- Men's Sports Organizations
- Fraternities

### **19. Mentoring Groups**

- After School Mentors
- Peer Mentoring Groups
- Church Mentoring Groups
- Big Brothers, Big Sisters
- Rights of Passage Organizations

### **20. Mutual Support Groups**

- La Leche League
- Disease Support Groups (cancer, etc)
- Parent-to-Parent Groups
- Family-to-Family Groups

### **21. Neighborhood Improvement Groups**

- The Neighborhood Garden Club
- Council of Block Clubs
- Neighborhood Anti-Crime Council
- Neighborhood Clean-up Campaign

### **22. Political Organizations**

- Democratic Club
- Republican Club

### **23. Recreation Groups**

- Kite-flying Club
- Bowling Leagues
- Basketball Leagues
- BodyBuilders Club
- Little League
- Motorcycle Clubs

### **24. Religious Groups**

- Churches
- Mosques
- Synagogues
- Men's Religious Groups
- Women's Religious Groups
- Youth Religious Groups

### **25. Service Clubs**

- Zonta
- Optimist
- Rotary Clubs
- Lions Clubs
- Kiwanis Clubs

### **26. Social Groups**

- Bingo Club
- Card Playing Club
- Social Activity Club
- Dance Clubs

### **27. Social Cause/Advocacy Issue Groups**

- Get Out the Vote Council
- Peace Club
- Hunger Organizations
- Vigil Against Violence
- Community Action Council
- Social Outreach Ministry
- Soup Kitchen Group

### **28. Union Groups**

- Industrial (UAW)
- Craft Unions (Plumbing Council)

### **29. Veteran's Groups**

- Veterans of Foreign Wars (VFW)
- Women's Veterans Organizations

### **30. Women's Groups**

- Sororal Organizations
- Women's Sports Groups
- Women's Auxiliary
- Mothers Board
- Eastern Star

### **31. Youth Groups**

- After School Group
- 4-H
- Girl and Boy Scouts
- Junior Achievement
- Campfire Girls
- Boys and Girls Clubs
- Explorers Club
- Teen Leadership Club

When you have completed these interviews, you will have a good idea of the educating possibilities available from the first asset – the knowledge of local residents.

### **Exploring Associations**

Now that you have learned about the first asset, the knowledge of individuals, you can explore the second asset – the local associations. There are three sources of names of local associations. The first is the groups identified by the four people you interviewed regarding their knowledge. The second is the associations you personally know. The third source is the list of associations you shared during your individual interview. If possible, pick at least 4 different kinds of associations and arrange a brief conversation with the chair of each group.

In your conversation, learn what kinds of activities the group is engaged in. Then ask whether a teenager could learn from and contribute to any or all of these activities. Then ask whether their group would be willing to have one or two interested teens join them in their activities and, in some cases, become a member.

This information provides you with the knowledge of how associations can become educating resources.

### **Exploring Institutions**

By “institutions,” we mean the kinds of neighborhood assets where the members are paid to participate – unlike associations where members are not paid. The three kinds of institutions are businesses, not-for-profit organizations and government.

Focus on those institutions located in the neighborhood. If you don’t already have specific knowledge about the local institutions, you can contact the local Chamber of Commerce for a list of businesses. The local United Way is a good source of information about local not-for-profits. And the municipal government can identify governmental entities and programs. Pick two institutions from each of the three categories and arrange a conversation with a person in a leadership position.

In these interviews, ask what the leader thinks a teenager could learn from participating in some aspect of their organization. Here it may be useful to indicate

that you are not looking for a job. Instead, you're interested in learning opportunities.

After learning opportunities are identified, ask whether the institution would be willing to have a local teenager(s) join them to learn what they know. These institutional interviews give you specific knowledge of some of the educating potential of local institutions.

### **Creating an “Educational Map”**

Having completed conversations with these three kinds of educating resources, you should have a written list of learning opportunities throughout the neighborhood. The following is an example of such a list:

#### **Individuals interviewed and asked what they are willing to teach young people?**

##### **Associational leaders who identified topics young people could learn by**

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<b>Susan Smythe</b>	<b>Riccardo Gonzalez</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Basic cooking</li> <li>• Painting pictures</li> <li>• Reading comprehension</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• English</li> <li>• Carpentry and wood work</li> <li>• Self esteem</li> <li>• Physical fitness</li> </ul>
<b>Peter Reynolds</b>	<b>Laura Penny</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Real estate business</li> <li>• How to start a business</li> <li>• Marketing</li> <li>• Basic accounting</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Journalism for beginners</li> <li>• Typing</li> <li>• Local history</li> <li>• Gardening</li> </ul>

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##### **participating with their group**

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##### **Chamber of Commerce – Sarah Beck, Executive Secretary**

- A young person could help in the design of a marketing plan and publicity materials. Could also participate in chamber meetings, meet other business owners and connect with those where there is mutual interest.

##### **Community Theater Association – Steve Brodsky**

- A young person could join us and learn acting, lighting, set design and help with marketing.

##### **Riverway Conservation Council – Charles Dolphy**

- A young person could learn about water purity, river plant and fish
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ecology, methods for educating the public and how to lobby legislators.

**Community EMT Team**

- A young person could learn teamwork, basic medical care, ambulance and helicopter procedures, emergency readiness planning and public education.
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**Institutional leaders who identified learning opportunities for young people participating with their business, not-for-profit or governmental units**

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*Government*

**City Government – Mayor Charles Crosby**

- Young people connected to council members and mayor could learn how decisions are made by government, what departments do, what professions are involved. They could learn what citizens want from government and the resources we have. They could learn about leadership in action.

*Business*

**Smith, Levitt and Kruse law firm – William Smith**

- A student connected to this firm could learn what lawyers do and how they do it. They could assist in information gathering and observe court proceedings. They could also learn about public speaking, advocacy and negotiation.

**Hometown News – Cynthia Majewski, Editor**

- A student could learn writing and reporting skills, information gathering techniques, newspaper layout and advertising. Could also learn about difference between news and editorial writing.

**Steenberg Motorcycle Repair – Jack Steenberg**

- A student joining us here could learn about engines, welding, metal work, tools. Also cycle safety and how to price your work.

*Not-For-Profits*

**Mercy Hospital – Timothy Brookmeyer, Administrator**

- The hospital has hundreds of different learning possibilities from administration to medical care to preventative education. Connections could include intake, emergency room, pharmacy, restaurant, public relations, accounting, and on and on.
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As a result of the interviews collecting this information, you will have established new relationships throughout the neighborhood with people who learn that you see them as educators. And finally, you may have been able to identify from among the people with whom you talk, residents who are interested in becoming a participant in the Partnerships for an Educating Community.

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**The second step** is for the initiating team to identify a core group of local people who would be interested in becoming Partners in creating an Educating Neighborhood Organization that would involve key individuals, associations, and institutions. The group's purpose would be to:

- **Identify in the neighborhood as many willing teaching assets as possible**
- **Create a process that would connect neighborhood youth to these assets**
- **Provide support and continuity to the effort in the future.**

The founding Partners could be 5 to 10 people, or more if it seems appropriate. The key is that these people include representation from all three assets. Be careful not to have the participants largely from institutions.

The Partners could be drawn from the people you have interviewed, people you know in the neighborhood or people that knowledgeable neighborhood people recommend.

Rather than initially calling a meeting of the people you have identified, meet with each one individually. The purpose of this conversation is two-fold. The first purpose is for you to share the information you gathered from the individual-associational-institutional interview. It might be useful to have a one or two page description of the teaching resources you found. Providing this information gives people a “reality check” on what assets are available. It shows that there is a real possibility to become “a village that raises a child.”

The second purpose is to make clear the goal of the group and to see if you can gain agreement from the person to participate in the founding organization. Then, when you convene the group, the people you invite will have crossed the threshold of whether they will do this and will be prepared to discuss **how** to do it.

As you talk with people it may be useful to describe to them the advantages of a partnership. The following is a list of some of the advantages to youth and the community when local residents are part of an Educating Community.

**Advantages of these youth-community learning opportunities are that young people can:**

1. Learn many valuable subjects that aren't taught in school.
2. Learn about many vocational opportunities of which they were not aware.
3. Learn about how their neighborhood or town works by seeing the local institutions from the inside out.
4. Establish important relationships with adults performing productive roles.
5. Gain a new commitment to their community because of their experience and new relationships in the productive life of the community. For communities losing their young people, these new relationships can be the magnet that keeps young people in town or draws them back after higher education.

All five of these relationships provide young people an apprenticeship in being a member of a productive community. They can become much more responsible because they have responsibility and are not just students.

**For the adults in the community there are important advantages growing out of an active Educating Community Partnership:**

1. The community will be more productive because the energy, enthusiasm and insights of young people will be added to the life of the neighborhood.

2. “Youth problems” will diminish because many isolated young people will feel the respect and self worth of being productive citizens.
3. The future viability of the community will be enhanced because of the increased commitment of young people to their town/neighborhood. They will have experiences that “teach” them that they are valued citizens rather than just students being prepared to leave the area.
4. The adult community will be activated as “teachers” creating a new identity for the town. The residents can say with pride, “we are a village that raises our children.”

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**The third step** is to convene a meeting of the people you have engaged and begin to have a conversation about the vision of the community as teacher. And then, to begin a discussion of how to identify the teaching assets. Who can explore individuals? Who associations? Who institutions? Who could assist us in this process? Who do we know who would like to join us in this effort? If we need a staff person, who might that be? How can we find funds to support the Partnership?

After having discussed these kinds of implementing questions, the form of the Partnership and its continuity is in the hands of the members. Basically, they have two functions:

1. Identify the learning opportunities based on the knowledge of local residents, the activities of local clubs, groups and associations and the activities of local institutions, i.e. government businesses and not-for-profit groups.
2. Connect young people to these learning opportunities.

## Conclusion

This process is **one way** to proceed. It is experience based. However, in your situation, the best way forward is your way, based on your experience and insights. Therefore, adapt, revise, truncate or expand in any way that seems appropriate to you.

Finally, there is one widely accepted belief that gains wide support for a Partnership. That belief is that “It takes a village to raise a child.” At the same time, there is widespread local recognition that neighborhoods and small towns have lost their child raising capacities. This widespread sense of a loss of connection between the neighborhood people and their youth is a central motive for engaging people in an Educating Neighborhood Partnership.