

#THINGS2CONSIDER

Community Youth Resource Mapping

Community youth resource mapping is a process that identifies what resources and opportunities are available to youth in a community. Mapping also identifies current community needs. This can be done by canvassing resources within the community at local agencies, organizations, businesses, and other establishments to determine what is offered and at what capacity. When community resource mapping is youth-driven, the resulting map reflects both the resources available and the resources that youth choose to access and utilize.

YOUTH PARTICIPATION

Youth need to be a meaningful part of the process. Youth participation can be encouraged in a variety of ways: 1) Partnering with a youth-driven program. 2) Soliciting youth ideas and feedback during planning and implementation. 3) Ensuring youth are educated about the mapping process. 4) Offering an incentive [or stipend](#) to show the value of youth's time. 5) Investing in building youth's skill sets.

JUST ASK YOUTH!

The easiest way to determine where to start in your resource mapping is with youth who have firsthand knowledge, an understanding of issues in their communities, and are a resource for identifying strategies to improve services and supports. Youth are able to give valuable insight into what is needed to guide change.

Questions to ask youth about resources:

- Which resources in the community do youth use?
- What do youth use each resource for?
- How do youth find out about these resources?

- What changes or improvements are needed?
- What resources do youth in the community still need? What is missing?

In partnership with supportive adults, the direction for a community youth resource mapping project that reflects the needs of youth in the community can be determined.

WHAT ARE RESOURCES?

Community resource mapping captures a wide variety of community assets, including:

- Formal services (mental health counseling, housing assistance, physical health care services).
- Community supports (wellness centers, performance arts space).
- Community activities (spoken-word events, wellness walks, after-school clubs).
- And more! What do youth in your community access?

THE MAPPING PROCESS

There are several steps to resource mapping, and youth can lead the way in each stage.

1. Define the community/neighborhood area.
2. Define the scope of resources to be included.
3. Identify needs within the community.
4. Craft survey questions.
5. Map the community.
6. Support data entry and analysis.
7. Design the layout or format in which resources are presented.
8. Input discovered resources into existing resource directories.
9. Present and disseminate findings.
10. Advocate for increased supports to meet youths' needs.

Engagement in community resource mapping provides youth with opportunities to develop skills in leadership, effective communication, problem solving, and exploration of cultural diversity.

Youth mapping results in a valuable resource for your community, created by youth and for youth. This will improve linkages of youth to formal services, community programs, employment, educational services, and recreational activities. Youth mapping gives adults the chance to see youth as assets and community builders. This partnership between youth and adults builds long-term relationships that are mutually beneficial for us all.

RESOURCES TO SUPPORT YOUR MAPPING EFFORTS

Promising Youth Development Strategies: Community Youth Mapping, from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)

https://pdf.usaid.gov/pdf_docs/pnadz225.pdf

Community YouthMapping, from FHI 360

<https://www.fhi360.org/expertise/community-youthmapping>

Community YouthMapping: Are You on the Map? From the National Center on Secondary Education and Transition (NCSET)

http://www.ncset.org/teleconferences/transcripts/2004_02.asp



words by

VERLESE PENDER