

Jackson Collaborative Network

Community Engagement Toolkit

In this publication Community Engagement Team (CET) is providing the Jackson Collaborative Network with a toolkit to aid in authentic community engagement. Our hope is that the Network will use this toolkit to help authentically engage populations of interest to create change agents to improve the lived experiences of members of our community.

[Community Engagement Strategies: One-Pager Quick Read](#) pg. 2

If you read only one item in this toolkit this is the one to read, easy to read lists of what to do and what not to do when going out to authentically engage community members.

[Community Engagement Strategies: Lessons Learned](#) pg. 3-6

The Community Engagement Team (CET) spent over a year learning about the most effective engagement strategies as well as learning about strategies that can be quite ineffective. These learnings have come from both local and national examples and can be found in this portion of the toolkit.

[Community Engagement Personal Asset Mapping Tool](#) pg. 7-8

This tool helps identify areas where individuals in agencies, groups and organizations have skill sets that can help better engage community members. Filling out this inventory can help groups learn more about each other and learn who may make good teams for different needs of the group. It can also help leaders know who to call on when new needs arise.

[Elevator Pitch to Authentic Engagement](#) pg. 9-10

This tool will help groups move from elevator pitch to authentic relationships with community members. Using this tool and a little bit of practice, organizations and workgroups can move from informing the community on the work they are doing to building relationships with the community members they wish to serve.

[Collective Impact Forum Community Engagement Resources](#) pg. 11-12

Collective Impact Forum is a valuable resource when working in a Collective Impact model to achieve Systems Change and has many resources around Community Engagement. The Community Engagement Team spent some time weeding through the available resources and came up with a list of what we feel are some of the most valuable resources for Community Engagement.

[Feedback Please!](#)

After working through the Toolkit please take a few minutes to give your feedback by participating in a short [survey](#).

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Community Engagement Strategies

One-Pager Quick Read

What we know to be effective engagement strategies:

- ✓ Listen
- ✓ Be open to what you might hear
- ✓ Be willing to be uncomfortable
- ✓ Be intentional in who you are reaching out to and why
- ✓ Focus on building trust in relationships
- ✓ Prepare to spend more individualized and small group time with those you are working with
- ✓ Ask people what they need
- ✓ Find natural leaders in the community
- ✓ Let people know they are needed/valued
- ✓ Help people realize their power
- ✓ Go to where people are comfortable/already gathering. DON'T ask them to come to you
- ✓ Consider changing language to gatherings instead of meetings
- ✓ Be available outside of regular business hours
- ✓ All communication should be ACE (Adverse Childhood Experience) Trauma informed
- ✓ Have meeting attendees introduce themselves by name and point of interest

What we know to NOT be effective engagement strategies:

- ✓ Relying solely on fliers to communicate messages, programs and events.
- ✓ Inviting community members to meetings where they may feel unwelcome.
- ✓ Getting to know only one or two community members and relying on them alone to be the voice of the community guiding your work.
- ✓ Reaching out to community members only when you need something from them.
- ✓ Showing up to community events with clipboards, surveys and fliers.

“We need, in every community, a group of angelic troublemakers.”
–Bayard Rustin

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In this publication CET is providing the Jackson Collaborative Network with a reference tool to aid in authentic community engagement. Our hope is that the Network will use this tool to help authentically engage populations of interest to create change agents to improve the lived experiences of members of our community.

Additionally... six local groups were selected to participate as Learning Community Partners. These groups received grant funding to engage authentically with a variety of populations throughout the community. The Learning Partner teams meet regularly throughout 2019 to learn from each other as well as for CET to learn from each of them. Stay tuned to see how these novel engagement approaches add to our rich body of knowledge on authentic community engagement.



Key Criteria for Authentic Engagement:

- People trying to solve complex issues, the focus is on collaboration and social inclusion.
- The community determines local priorities with a broad range of people participating.
- Engagement process creates vision, achieves results and creates change.
- Balance between community engagement process and creating actionable work.

“There is no power for change greater than a community discovering what it cares about.”

Margaret J. Wheatley

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National Engagement Models

Community Engagement Strategies: Lessons Learned

NUKA Model

The Nuka Model focuses on wellness in the context of history & beliefs. Health success is based on self-efficacy (confidence in one's own abilities). The health system & community works in partnership to achieve wellness through health & related services. The population is in control of the choices & decisions and the system is always in a continuous improvement cycle that is guided by the community <https://www.southcentralfoundation.com/nuka-system-of-care/>

Memorial Health System (MHS), Broward County Florida

MHS focuses on strong community engagement capacity and addressing upstream factors rather than fixing what is broken downstream. MHS found the natural leaders in the community who know the strengths & struggles citizens face. MHS is supported by those with power, money and influence who provide those resources and step aside to let communities do the work to best meet their own needs. Strong focus on asking....What do you need?

Neighbor Up! Cleveland, Oh

Gatherings (not meetings) to engage residents from various neighborhoods to embrace differences. Small successes (ripples of joy) are shared. Informal networking occurs, referred to as bumping & sparking. Every attendee gets a membership card with a self-identified skills list. All are encouraged to come with ideas not a soap-box. Gathering consists of "practices",

short exercise to practice values, share ideas & resources & practice leadership development. No mandatory attendance, attend when there is a need. *Marketplace* at each gathering (30-60 seconds to make a request, offer or declaration)

<http://neighborupcle.org/>

Greater Good Studios (GGS)

GGS uses human centered design with the goal of improving quality of life. This group teaches organizations to do business differently, to value the expertise of those served. Ask...How can we best serve you? How can WE make a change together. Focus is on what's working (ex. Kids that stay in school rather than those that drop out) & employ those strategies to build systems for success. Look at data differently, focusing on the positive. NO SURVEYS, instead behavior is observed in its natural context. Active engagement to build buy in. <http://greatergoodstudio.com/>

Financial Independence Initiative (FII)

FII provides technology to strengthen social networks, access resources & support one another in achieving mobility. FII trusts & invests directly in low-income populations as well as seeks direct from families. The premise is to remove barriers & enable families to lead their own change. Families are "forced" to figure it out=build a skill set & empower selves for progressive future. This approach has been shown to enhance sustainability; rather than someone from the outside "swooping" in to tell someone how to fix their issue, the family is educated on re-

sources and engaging on their own behalf. Employees of sponsoring organizations who help/try to fix individual's issues without allowing the individual to be self-sufficient are fired. Initiative payments for success are distributed to families. FII uses success stories to change policies & practices that are barriers to success in a variety of community organizations. Results have included increased monthly/annual income, decreased reliance on governmental assistance, better grades, increased # of retirement investments, growth in entrepreneurship, increased home equity. <https://www.fii.org/>

Authentic Community Engagement



An intentional process of building relationships in the community that will empower residents to inform, co-design and partner on implementation of solutions.

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Local Engagement Models

King Center

- * Engage in initial contact by partnering with a familiar face. The goal is to decrease the stress level of the population you wish to engage with. You are a stranger and have not yet built a trusting relationship.
- * Meet people at established meeting places. Example salons, church, gatherings within the community
- * Personal phone call to explain specific information on the purpose, what is expected of participant & what information will be requested at the meeting. Social media works well AFTER relationship begins.
- * Direct communication with parents & children
- * Grandparents tend to be a good resource for reaching youth, active senior group willing to engage.
- * Don't engage only when YOU need something, ongoing engagement wins trust.
- * Collaboration is a two-way street. Historically many individuals have felt used. Be flexible in your efforts, you need to work harder than those you are trying to engage.

Jackson Citizens Advisory Council

- * #NoNeighborLeftBehind
- * Multiple organizations, students of city schools & community members participate
- * Direct feedback from the residents who live & work in the city
- * Regular presence at local government meetings (City Council)
- * Focus on equity
- * Focus on positive outcomes (small wins)
- * Identify root causes for a variety of issues identified by community. Work toward system change identified by these root causes.

Teen Pregnancy Initiative

- * Direct engagement with youth
- * Regular meetings of Youth Advisory Council
- * Social media & text messaging
- * "Vocal" teens/those willing distribute information & reach other teens. Many of these based on own lived experience
- * All strategies/ideas/programs are reviewed by TPPIs teen group for approval prior to implementation

Great Start Collaborative

- Work to ensure Jackson County children are born healthy, developmentally on track, ready to succeed when entering school, and are reading proficiently by the end of third grade. Quality child-care and preschool for everyone
- * Social media/email
 - * Stipend for meeting attendance
 - * Child care, food and transportation provided
 - * Meeting times to accommodate school and families

Partnership Park

Participants from each local church (4), police (1), local business (2), residents (5), private (2), nonprofit (2) Created in 2000 Started with neighbors banding together with the support of local nonprofits, churches and businesses for the benefit of a 20sq block area

- * Safety
- * New home construction & improved rental properties
- * Community gardens
- * Youth Build-low income young people learn construction skills & to become community leaders
- * Communities Empowering Youth-address the capacity building needs to tackle gang violence, youth violence and child abuse & neglect

Over time grant funding has become a challenge & irregular attendance by members has led to committees that are not fully effective. Additionally, because of the economic recession the membership & Park population in general has decreased

Jackson Collaborative Network Network Common Values & Action Planning



Network Common Values:
Equity
Authentic Engagement
Continuous Learning

When action planning to address root causes in the community it is crucial to keep authentic community engagement at the center of all steps of creating an action plan. From analyzing the data to tracking progress and then when starting the process over again. Those most impacted should be at the center of each step and the process should be on going until root causes are corrected. The visual helps show just how important it is to keep engagement at the center of action planning and as part of each step.

Interconnectedness of the Network Common Values

One element of ensuring that we are practicing equity is by ensuring that community members are helping identify the root causes in the community as well as helping design and implement the needed changes. By involving those most impacted in all levels of the work and making adaptations and changes as needed we are practicing continuous learning. When able to do both of the above we are authentically engaging the community and therefore implementing all of our common values.

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Community Engagement Personal Asset Mapping Tool

Name: _____ Date: _____

Contact Email: _____ Phone: _____

Age Category (circle one): 20-30 31-40 41-50 51-60 60+

Gender Identity: _____ Gender Pronouns: _____

Race / Ethnicity: _____ Religious Affiliation: _____

Languages: _____ Special Needs: _____

This tool helps identify areas where individuals in agencies, groups and organizations have skill sets that can help better engage community members. Filling out this inventory can help groups learn more about each other and learn who may make good teams for different needs of the group. It can also help leaders know who to call on when new needs arise.

Identify the level of your skills, abilities, interests and strengths, where possible give more information.

Skills / Abilities/ Interests / Strengths	Strong	Medium	Low	Willing to Learn
Social Media (Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, etc.)				
Communications via Email and Texting				
Public Speaking				
Computer Skills (creating documents, flyers, etc.)				
Community Connections (list below)				
Asking for Donations				
Organizer / Determine Tasks to Be Done				
Task Doer / Worker Bee				
Marketing & Public Relations				
Enjoy Working with Children / Families				
Experience Mentoring				

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 Community Engagement Personal Asset Mapping Tool cont.

Identify the level of your skills, abilities, interests and strengths, where possible give more information.

Skills / Abilities/ Interests / Strengths	Strong	Medium	Low	Willing to Learn
Comfortable Attending Community Events and Meeting New People				
Comfortable Being the Other in the Room				
Event Planning Experience (list)				
Good Understanding of Equity				
Comfortable Sharing with Others what Equity Means				
Comfortable Being the Voice for Equity at the Table				
Comfortable Building Relationships with New People in the Community				
Enjoying Getting to Know New People				

Hobbies, Skills, Interests Not Listed Above:

Other information you would like to share:

Share why this work is important to you and why it resonates with you:

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Community Engagement Tool
Elevator Pitch to Authentic Engagement

Elevator Pitch → **Conversation Starter** → **Authentic Engagement**

1. Know the work being done by your agency, group or organization well.
2. Work with your partners to create an impactful Elevator Pitch.
3. Use Elevator Pitch information to help start conversations with community members.
4. Use conversations to start building relationships with community members.

What is an Elevator Pitch?

A short description of an agency or group that explains the working being done in a way that the listener can understand in a short period of time.

Parts of an Elevator Pitch:

- The work being done
- Who the working being done is for
- Why it's needed
- How the work will get done
- What is needed to get the work done
- How it may benefit the person listening

Sample Elevator Pitch:

Hello, My name is Jane Doe, and I would like to tell you about our Memory Café located right here in Jackson. If your loved one is experiencing memory loss due to Alzheimer's or dementia, the Café is a great place to be. You can listen to music, do a little dancing, play games, socialize and both of you can take a break from your regular routine. The Memory Café is a free and comfortable space where you can connect with others, share concerns; and learn about valuable resources while enjoying a fantastic meal.

Pointers to keep in mind:

- * Smile
- * You must be familiar with what you are trying to promote, own it, believe it!
- * Try to stick to no more than 4-6 sentences
- * Give it attitude, energy and enthusiasm
- * Let others see what's in it for them
- * Once your speech is done, give the listener time to ask questions

Shifting from Elevator Pitch to Conversation Starter

- Keep all the information from the Pitch in mind
- Listen for opportunities to share the information, even on your off / personal time
- Start conversations with openers like, "I overheard you talking about..." or "Can I tell you about a group working on..."
- Ask questions of the person to learn more about their needs
- Sympathize with what you hear, reflect what you're hearing back to the person

Elevator Pitch to Authentic Engagement

Elevator Pitch → Conversation Starter → Authentic Engagement

Sample Conversation:

- *Hello, I couldn't help but hear you speaking about your mother who was recently diagnosed with Alzheimer's, that is so hard, my father was diagnosed with dementia a couple of years ago. Have you been able to find resources to help with your mother's needs?*
- *It sounds like you're struggling with finding a safe social setting for your mother to relax and enjoy some time with others. Have you heard of Memory Café?*
- *The Memory Café is a free resource that offers comfortable space to connect with others, enjoy a great meal and learn about other available resources. Do you think this could be a helpful resource for your family?*
- *It sounds like transportation and time could be barriers for you and your mother to benefit from Memory Café. Would you be interested in help solving these issues so that you can get your mother to the Café?*
- *Great! I would love to help connect you with someone who can help you. We are looking for some help and input to help others who are experiencing some of the same problems that it sounds like you are dealing with. Would you be willing to work with us on better ways to make our resources available to everyone?*
- *That's wonderful! Thank You! What is the best way to connect with you?*

Pointers to keep in mind:

- * Be warm, kind and open to listening to more information than you're looking for
- * Be sincere and give the person your full attention
- * If the conversation goes off topic stay engaged
- * Treat the individual like someone you are interested in and want to get to know better not like a client you are trying to serve

Shifting from Conversation to Authentic Engagement Relationships:

- Follow through on your commitments to make contact when and how you said you would.
- Try again even if you don't make connection the first few times.
- Show interest in the person, asking how they are doing, trying to find out more about them, share about yourself when appropriate (much like making a new friend).
- Use their input to make improvements and changes, then check back in to see if you got it right.
- Learn, make changes as needed and empower individuals to be a part of implementation.
- Spend time with your new contact in their environments, attend events when invited.
- Meet and build relationships with friends and loved ones of your new contact.

Work with your team to create an Elevator Pitch.

Practice your Elevator Pitch and Conversations through role play with your team.

Go Forth and Engage!

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Collective Impact Forum Community Engagement Resources

[Collective Impact Forum](#) is a valuable resource when working in a Collective Impact model to achieve Systems Change and has many resources around Community Engagement. When first visiting the website the number of resources can seem numerous and overwhelming. The Community Engagement Team spent some time weeding through the available resources and came up with a list of what we feel are some of the most valuable resources for Community Engagement.

As an introduction, the Community Engagement Team feels that having a good understanding of what Collective Impact is and how it works is important. This [Getting Started in Collective Impact](#) explanation with a video is a helpful resource and has several helpful links included. If you have little or no knowledge of Collective Impact the Community Engagement Team suggests you start with this first.

Collective Impact Forum Community Engagement Resources:

- [Community Engagement Matters Now More Than Ever:](#)

“The Collective Impact Forum & Results for America present a panel discussion to celebrate the release of “Community Engagement Matters (Now More Than Ever),” an article co-authored by Melody Barnes and Paul Schmitz, published in the Spring issue of the *Stanford Social Innovation Review*. The article features original research that highlights the importance of engaging community when implementing data-driven, evidence-based approaches and provides a framework for how to do so effectively.”

- [Building a Community Engagement Strategy:](#)

“In this virtual coffee chat, Paul Schmitz, Collective Impact Forum senior advisor and CEO of Leading Inside Out, shares a series of new tools for planning community engagement to be more purposeful, equitable, transparent, and strategic so that community residents are true partners for achieving impact.”

- [Community Engagement Toolkit:](#)

“The Community Engagement Toolkit shares a series of tools for planning community engagement to be more purposeful, equitable, transparent, and strategic so that community members are true partners for achieving impact.”

- [Putting Community into Community Engagement:](#)

An article originally posted on Huffington post this essay makes some good points about how we approach community engagement and has a link to a very resourceful Blog with more helpful essays.

- [It’s About the Community:](#)

Collective impact efforts are often discussed in terms of organizations or sectors, such as business, nonprofit, government, and philanthropy. What is often left out of the discussion is the community itself, even though it is a critical factor in the long-term success of collective impact initiatives. The community includes the individuals, families, networks, and organizations who will be affected by the initiative and who participate in it, but who are not usually considered to have active leadership roles in creating community solutions. It includes, for example, people directly affected by the problem, as well as social service organizations that may not be initially represented on steering committees or working groups.

[Collective Impact Forum Links](#)

Below are the links to the resources from Collective Impact Forum, provided in case the hyperlinks do not work or if you are viewing this as a printed document.

Collective Impact Forum:

<https://www.collectiveimpactforum.org/>

Getting Started in Collective Impact:

<https://www.collectiveimpactforum.org/getting-started>

Community Engagement Matters Now More Than Ever:

<https://www.collectiveimpactforum.org/resources/community-engagement-matters-now-more-ever>

Building a Community Engagement Strategy:

<https://www.collectiveimpactforum.org/resources/building-community-engagement-strategy>

Community Engagement Tool Kit:

<https://www.collectiveimpactforum.org/resources/community-engagement-toolkit>

Putting Community into Community Engagement:

<https://www.collectiveimpactforum.org/blogs/1616/putting-community-community-engagement>

It's About the Community:

<https://www.collectiveimpactforum.org/resources/its-about-community-why-community-engagement-and-process-matter-collective-impact>

Once you have worked your way through these suggested resources, the Community Engagement Team suggests taking the time to look through more resources on Collective Impact Forum, as it contains many useful resources that cover many topics about Collective Impact and community work.