

17 Neighborhood Activities That Lead to Building a Neighborhood Culture

The Stewards of the Asset-Based Community Development Institute indicated that the development of a neighborhood culture is the new frontier for ABCD work. The following list is a result of their understanding of culture building activities that reach beyond the implementation of programs. The activities below do not each stand alone. They are the threads that together create a community fabric from which a culture will emerge.

What do your neighbors do together that creates an enduring culture?

1. Recognizing Significant Life Events

- A. When someone dies? How does the block join in mourning and memorializing the person and their neighborhood contributions?
- B. When a baby is born into the neighborhood? How does the block join in recognizing and celebrating?

2. Raising Children

- A. How do families in the neighborhood play together? (Street games, organized sports, music, dance, barbecues, etc.)
- B. How do you identify and use the capacities and abilities of neighborhood young people?
- C. When children graduate from elementary, high school or college?
- D. What does the neighborhood do to facilitate young people learning from the knowledge of the adult residents?

3. Helping Your Neighbors

- A. How do the neighbors encourage a tradition of local sharing? (Sharing food, equipment, child support, advice etc.)
- B. To grow food locally?

4. Using Special Skills and Capacities of Neighbors

- A. How does the neighborhood identify the capacities that each neighbor has to contribute to neighborhood improvement?
- B. How do you identify and involve the connectors on your block?

5. Strengthening the Neighborhood

- A. What do the neighbors do together for fun?
- B. What are the activities that have increased neighbors' sense of community and experience of belonging?

6. Creating a Neighborhood Identity

- A. How did your neighbors identify the geographic space that they feel is the boundary where they are responsible for the well-being of people who live there?
- B. How have your neighbors developed a tradition of greeting and talking to each other when meeting on the street or across yards?

7. Insuring Inclusiveness

- A. How does your neighborhood welcome new people?
- B. How has your neighborhood found ways to recognize and celebrate the differences among themselves? (Race, ethnicity, nationality, identity, gender, orientation etc.).
- C. How do new neighbors learn about the community culture and how they can participate?