

COMMUNITY SOLUTIONS PLAN

User Guide and Call For Action (Plan Development and Implementation)

2/16/11

BACKGROUND AND PLAN DEVELOPMENT

A 2004 community needs assessment conducted by WSU Tri-Cities for United Way of Benton and Franklin Counties revealed that Benton and Franklin Counties needs better linkages and coordination among local health and human service providers. The Community Leaders Summit was held in October 2006 at which time the foundation for Community Solutions was established. United Way was asked by community leaders and donors to facilitate this process. The first cut of the Community Solutions Plan was developed in 2007 through a wide-scale community planning process involving 200 community leaders and residents in the bi-county area with the purpose of improving community conditions and people's lives.

Health and human services affect every individual in Benton and Franklin Counties. Progress towards achieving the Plan's outcomes and ultimately realizing the vision can only occur through comprehensive community engagement and participation by all.

THE PLAN

The Community Solutions Plan is outlined in the form of a strategy map and was developed by starting at the top with the identification of the vision and major outcomes and then working downward with identification of the essential community processes, behaviors and actions that need to be in place. The Plan is implemented from the bottom upward, realizing that strong community processes, behaviors and actions are essential for achievement of the outcomes and ultimately the Community Solutions vision.

VISION: Improve people's lives by creating lasting change in community conditions.

1. **Kids Matter Value Statement:** We value a community where all infants, children, and teens are nurtured physically and mentally and are provided with opportunities to succeed in school, develop functional life skills, are safe from harm, and reach their maximum potential.
2. **Families Matter Value Statement:** We value a community where all individuals and families have opportunities for education and life-long learning, remain self-sufficient, access needed community resources to meet healthcare and basic needs, have support for healthy lifestyles, and live in a safe environment.
3. **Community Matters Value Statement:** We value a community that is unified through community life, maximizes and shares resources and information, promotes volunteerism and civic involvement, embraces diversity, education, health and wellness, and is a safe place to live.

OUTCOMES: What needs to be accomplished to ultimately achieve the Community Solutions vision?

1. **Education:** People will have access to and benefit from early education, high school graduation, basic skills training, post-high school education and life-long learning.
 - a. Increase the number and percentage of children ready for kindergarten.
 - b. Increase the number and percentage of people who graduate from high school.
 - c. Increase the skills and competencies of adults.
2. **Health:** People will live healthy lives through emphasis on prevention, as well as access to needed healthcare.
 - a. Increase the number and percentage of people who practice preventative healthcare.
 - b. Decrease the number and percentage of people treated for preventable diseases.
 - c. Increase the number and percentage of people who have access to quality, affordable and timely healthcare.
3. **Safety:** People will be safe in their homes, schools and neighborhoods, and live in a community free of abuse, neglect, violence, and crime.
 - a. Decrease the number and percentage of neglect and abuse incidents.
 - b. Decrease the number and percentage of violent crimes against people.
 - c. Increase neighborhood safety.

4. Self Sufficiency: People will have access to basic needs such as food and housing, and individuals who are able to work are self-sufficient through gainful employment with livable wages and other assets.
 - a. Increase the number and percentage of people who reside in stable and affordable housing.
 - b. Increase the number and percentage of people who are financially self-sufficient.
 - c. Increase the number and percentage of people who consume adequate and nutritious food.

COMMUNITY PROCESSES: What essential processes must the community excel at to achieve the outcomes and ultimately the vision?

To deliver the Plan’s outcomes, the community must excel at four community processes:

1. Regional Planning – Emphasis on Prevention and Root Causes
Addressing the underlying causes of our community’s health and human service problems is critical. Two hundred community leaders, representing a broad cross-section of the bi-county region, periodically convene to assess local issues and identify community solutions that will create lasting changes in community conditions and improve people’s lives.
 - a. Expand and refine the Community Solutions Plan
 - b. Engage a broad segment of the community for Community Solutions planning and implementation.
 - c. Increase service recipient input.
2. Resources Structured for Effectiveness and Efficiency
It is essential that financial and non-financial resources be identified and leveraged in a manner that results in increased effectiveness and efficiency in the delivery of health and human services. More significant impact can then occur in responding to unmet and emerging needs, as well as addressing the wide-array of issues that currently exist.
 - a. Increase the dollar amount saved among the organizations of Community Solutions team members and Blue Ribbon Advisors as a result of partnerships formed for the achievement of a Community Solutions outcome.
 - b. Increase the dollar amount leveraged among the organizations of Community Solutions team members and Blue Ribbon Advisors as a result of partnerships formed for the achievement of a Community Solutions outcome.
3. Formation of Partnerships and Strategic Alliances
New and emerging community-wide alliances and partnerships between organizations, programs, government entities, policy makers, etc. should be formed when appropriate. Strategic alliances foster cooperation, increase benefits to recipients and avoid duplication and unnecessary competition.
 - a. Increase the number of partnerships and strategic alliances among organizations.
4. Availability/Awareness of Community Resources
Community resources must be available and accessible to all individuals through a highly coordinated health and human services system in which community organizations collaborate and communicate so that limited resources are used effectively and efficiently.
 - a. Increase usage of 2-1-1 and other information resources designed to increase community awareness of services available.

Strong community processes will result in an increased likelihood that the community will deliver on the intended outcomes and realize the Community Solutions vision.

COMMUNITY BEHAVIORS AND ACTIONS: What needs to be changed or strengthened to achieve the community processes above?

To support the essential processes, key behaviors and actions must occur:

1. Education about Local Needs
Education among community organizations, businesses, government, persons needing services, volunteers and all other stakeholders regarding local needs and issues is critical to promoting understanding and compassion.
 - a. Increase awareness of the community challenges in relation to the four Community Solutions outcome areas.

- b. Increase the number of advocates or spokespersons for Community Solutions.
2. Wide-Scale Collaboration and Mobilization
 Collaborative approaches are crucial to the success and sustainability of community change efforts because they reduce duplication of services, provide integrated services, help achieve program outcomes and decrease costs. Efforts should be made to pool resources, embrace best practices and proven success, while encouraging ingenuity and innovation to address unmet needs.
 - a. Mobilize the community to support special initiatives (i.e. Our Babies Can't Wait, Prepared by 20).
3. Communication and Coordination among Service Providers
 Multiple forms of communication among services providers are needed and should be developed to insure cooperation, effective and efficient planning and implementation of selected strategies and to avoid duplication.
 - a. Increase communication and coordination among service providers in Benton and Franklin Counties.
 - b. Increase the work scope or depth of communications that Community Solutions team member service providers and Blue Ribbon Advisor service providers have with other service providers.
4. Diversity and Inclusiveness
 The community values diversity as an asset and must seek to fully integrate and engage all groups in creating and supporting inclusion and initiatives. No human resource should be untapped or wasted because of prejudice based on race, age, gender, religion, disability and sexual orientation.
 - a. Increase the number and percentage of minority groups who are in leadership positions, as staff or board members of organizations.
5. Promotion of Community Involvement
 All people should be inspired and have the opportunity to participate and share their talents in the vast abundance and variety of community services.
 - a. Increase the number of volunteers and hours of service.

Effective community behaviors and actions will result in strong community processes, which will in turn result in the community solutions outcomes and the vision being achieved.

IMPLEMENTATION

Health and human services affect every individual in Benton and Franklin Counties and the entire community must accept responsibility for addressing these needs. Progress towards achieving the outcomes and ultimately realizing the vision can only occur through full involvement and participation by everyone. The following are examples of actions that each of us can do:

- Study the Community Solutions Plan and supporting material;
- Share this information with family members, friends, co-workers, other associates;
- Use this information as basis for personal or group decision-making, action and commitment;
- Use this information in planning for the next year and for the next 10 years;
- Get involved in your neighborhood and the community;

COMMUNITY INFORMATION

All forms of media are utilized at regular intervals to inform and engage the community regarding efforts being made in achieving the objectives and long-term outcomes in the Community Solutions Plan.

EVALUATION AND MODIFICATION

Community Solutions Team Members meet monthly and Blue Ribbon Advisors meet periodically to review the work being accomplished and discuss future plans. The Community Solutions Plan will be modified as needed to maintain relevance and effectiveness.