

Asset  
Based  
Community  
Development

*A Guide for Neighborhood, Area,  
and District Coordinators, City and  
Community Action Councils*

Sponsored by:

United Way of Davis County, Davis County Community of Promise,  
Family Connection Center and Utah Issues

## What Is Community

Alexis de Tocqueville, the French Count, upon visiting America, found communities formed around an uncustomary social invention, small groups of common citizens coming together to form organizations that solve problems. He noted the following characteristics unique to America,

1. They were groups of citizens who decided they had the power to identify the problem.
2. They decided they had the power to solve the problem.
3. They often decided they would themselves, become the key actors in implementing the solutions.

de Tocqueville recognized these citizen associations being formed were a uniquely powerful instrument being created in America, the foundation stones of American communities.

Every single person has capacities, abilities, and gifts, and the quality of an individual life in part depends on the extent to which these capacities are used, abilities expressed, and gifts given. Just as individual lives are enhanced by the opportunity to give, communities are made stronger when residents use their full potential by directing their capacities toward the well-being of the neighborhood.

~Dr. John McKnight

“Treat people as if they were what they ought to be and you help them become what they are capable of being”

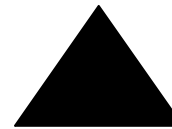
~Goethe

## ABCD Concept

Agencies have never been able to solve all of society’s problems. Communities cannot be built or rebuilt focusing solely on needs, problems, and deficiencies. Community building starts with the process of locating the assets, skills, and capacities of residents in each neighborhood, citizen’s associations, and local institutions such as churches, schools, and city government.

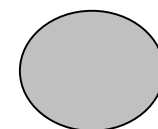
### Two Approaches to Problem Solving

Traditionally



Institutions & Agencies  
Needs  
Hierarchy, Control  
“Programs are the answer”

ABCD



Associations & Citizens  
Assets  
Consensus, Relationship Building  
“People are the answer”

### Examples:

\*A group of neighbors created a cooperatively operated childcare program. The childcare association relies on non paid volunteer time and has survived because of the attractiveness of small-scale, near-home, well-run, child care.

\*Seniors are involved in the Visiting Important Persons program sponsored by a local church in which they visit less mobile elderly and try to assist with any practical problems. Seniors are trained to be able to provide CPR, to recognize drug abuse, to give first aid and to help with practical daily matters like budgeting, food selection, and preparation. The oldest participant is an 82 year old woman.

## Community Building Plan

Community building is an ongoing process where members of a community share skills and experiences that strengthen/develop themselves and the community.

### Come Prepared To:

- Identify your neighborhood’s strengths.
- Identify specific problems you would like to see addressed.
- Identify possible solutions.
- Be constructive and take some responsibility for helping to implement solutions.

### A Neighborhood Coordinator Is:

- Concerned and cares about his/her neighborhood.
- Willing to knock on doors to meet neighbors.
- Willing to bring neighbors together to develop solutions to problems and develop resources.
- Willing to inform neighbors about special programs and activities.

### Empowering Neighborhoods To:

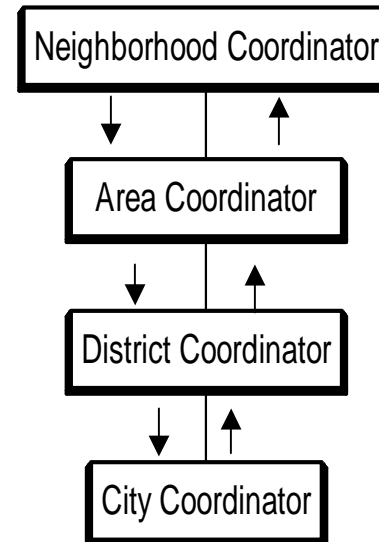
- Promote Emergency and Disaster Preparedness and CERT Training (Community Emergency Response Team).
- Organize Neighborhood Watch.
- Community resource person and be the liaison to help families find assistance.
- Promote neighborhood socials and meetings to discuss issues.
- Utilize resources in the neighborhood by conducting an asset inventory.

### Neighborhood Assets Include:

- The skills of local residents
- The power of local associations (a group of volunteers that pursue a common goal. Ex: PTA, Church groups, Scouts, Bowling leagues, Senior Citizen groups.
- The resources of public, private, and non-profit institutions.
- The physical and economic resources of local places.

## Organization Chart

*Community building depends on a belief in the capacity of local people, and mobilizing these capacities to produce concrete outcomes.*



**Please fill in the following:**

Your neighborhood Location No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Your Area Location No. \_\_\_\_\_  
 Your District Name \_\_\_\_\_

Neighborhood Coordinator  
 Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Area Coordinator  
 Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

District Coordinator  
 Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

City Coordinator  
 Name: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

1. A volunteer neighborhood coordinator is chosen by neighbors.
2. A volunteer area coordinator is chosen to represent 20 defined neighborhood areas.
3. A volunteer district coordinator is chosen to represent 5-12 areas within a district.

4. A representative is chosen on a city level to assist with coordinating and empowering neighborhoods.

## Coordinators Duties

### Neighborhood Coordinator

- Survey families regarding family size, ages, occupations, training, skills, emergency equipment, resources, etc.
- Work with 10-15 families within a neighborhood.
- Receive instructions and trainings from district and area volunteers.
- Hold periodic meetings and socials with families.
- Be a program and agency resource in the neighborhood.
- Assist with the help of families in prioritizing neighborhood needs.

### Area Coordinator

- Help map neighborhood streets.
- Identify individual to host meeting (can be current neighborhood coordinator or designated facilitator).
- Be a communication link with the neighborhood coordinators (such as dispersing flyers, etc.).
- Be a liaison with district coordinator.
- Assist with training neighborhood coordinators as needed.

### District Coordinator

- Work with each area coordinator.
- Hold meetings as necessary to disperse information and conduct trainings.
- Be a liaison with the City Coordinator.

### City Coordinator (Selected by City Administration)

- Provide coordination with Community Action Council.
- Meet with District Coordinator as needed.
- Assist with training and distribution of materials.



## Community Action Councils

### **Mission Statement** **( Layton Community Action Council)**

To sponsor and promote programs and activities which provide our youth with caring adults, safe places to learn and grow, a healthy start, marketable job skills, and opportunities for service.

The Layton Community Action council is a non-profit, volunteer organization consisting of representatives from the community including Layton citizens, the Layton City Council, the Layton City Police Department, the Layton Youth Council, local churches, businesses and schools. The L.C.A.C. coordinate and facilitates a broad range of volunteer community efforts to monitor and prevent crime in our neighborhoods, provide safe places for our children to learn and grow, receive marketable job skills, a healthy start, and opportunities to give back to the community through service.

To begin in your area, a vision should be established for each neighborhood by residents and city staff, in which residents identify the priorities that are most important to them. By focusing on the assets available in each neighborhood, you are in essence

*“Building Communities From The Inside Out”*

reclaiming your neighborhood and helping the triangles take a step back.

The following cities have similar efforts underway:

- Bountiful Community Service Council
- Clearfield Neighbor to Neighbor Program
- Woods Cross Community of Promise

