

The Road to Collective Impact



Presentation to the Joint Community
Mapping and Planning Meeting
May 16, 2011

Background

- Economic downturn
- Changing demographics
- Increasing complexity
- Working harder and faster but not seeming to get where we want to go!
- Desire for greater impact

Figuring “it” out

- Emergent themes
- Information gathering/research
- Paying attention
- Taking advantage of opportunities

Thomas Homer Dixon



- There are no simple fixes to complex problems.
- “Complex problems require complex solutions.”

John Ott



- “When human beings gather in groups, a depth of awareness and insight, a transcendent knowing, becomes available to us that, if accessed, can lead to profound action. We call this transcendent knowing collective wisdom.”

Brenda Zimmerman



Image from Brenda Zimmerman's CCI Presentation

**Time is too short
and things are too
bad for pessimism.**

Dee Hock

Brenda Zimmerman



Despair to Intention

How can I make a difference in this complex system?

“Hope is not the conviction that something will turn out well, but the certainty that something makes sense, regardless of how it turns out.”

-

Valclav Havel

Mark Chamberlain



- We need people with the same aspirations, goals and values.
- We need to abandon blame.
- There are huge costs to doing nothing.
- **We need to start acting on what we know!**

Mark Chamberlain



- If children are hungry they can't learn
- What more knowledge do we need to understand that if a child isn't fed, they are hungry!
- **What more do we need to know!**

Anne Kubisch



- “The Bottom Line”
 - **The bad news:** Community change efforts have not (yet) transformed poor communities
 - **The reality:** We can’t reduce poverty and promote equity without community-based efforts
 - **The good news:** We have learned so much about how to do this work and already can see the difference when lessons are applied”

Two streams of work

- Galvanizing the social service sector
- Galvanizing the community

Galvanizing the sector

- What do we have – a complex and ever growing web of networks, associations, initiatives, collaboratives, coalitions, partnerships, agencies and programs
- And no clearinghouse or gatekeeper.....



Exploring.....

- Network weaving
- Action learning projects
 - ◆ Head Start
- Nurture existing innovation
 - ◆ Partners For Kids, OBSD
 - ◆ Early Years Alignment Project
 - ◆ REACH Edmonton

Galvanize community

- More difficult, but gaining momentum
- Spreading the word and growing interest
- Mark Chamberlain event

Collective impact

Five conditions that lead to powerful results:

- ◆ a common agenda;
- ◆ Shared measurement systems;
- ◆ Mutually reinforcing activities;
- ◆ Continuous communication; and
- ◆ Backbone support organizations.

Collective impact (Kania and Kramer)

Four principles or practices:

- ◆ Take responsibility for assembling the elements of a solution;
- ◆ Create a movement for change;
- ◆ Include solutions from outside the non-profit sector;
- ◆ Use actionable knowledge to influence behaviour and improve performance

Next steps

- Continue engagement
- Increase the input
- strive for collective wisdom and collective impact
- Figure out the network and weave it
- Action learning projects
- Create the space, the safe place for meaningful conversations
- Pay attention! Move to action!

Two stories....

- Wengari Maathai
- Jerry Sternin