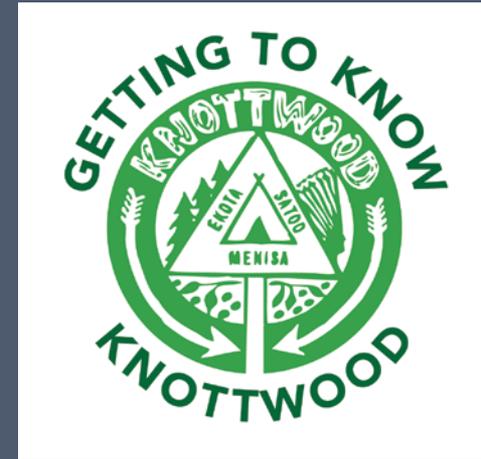


GETTING TO KNOW KNOTTWOOD



CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITY THROUGH CONVERSATION

A Partnership Approach to Community Engagement

Funded by REACH Edmonton and supported by Knottwood Community League and The United Way of the Alberta Capital Region, MAPS, OPTIONS, SAGE and Edmonton Seniors Coordinating Council.

Presentation by Shireen Mears, Project Coordinator,
Clarence Nelson, Knottwood Community League and
Larry Brockman, OPTIONS Sexual Health Association

Why ‘*Getting to Know Knottwood*’?

- United Way Affinity Group discussion about community engagement
 - **Larry Brockman, OPTIONS Sexual Health Association**
- Need to do something here in Knottwood!
 - **Clarence Nelson, Knottwood Community League (KCL)**

What is 'Community Engagement'?

- *The actions that agencies take to enable them to consult, involve, listen and respond to communities through ongoing relationships and dialogue. Communities participate with other partners to develop solutions, shape and design policies and programs, and services. Communities are involved in shared decision making.*
 - Urban Forum and NAVCA, March 2009.

Project Phases (Sept. 2011 – Jan. 2012)

- Introduction – Project Team formed
- Background and History
- Key Question Development
- A Series of Community Conversations
 - Variety of methods used
- Report Produced
 - Recommendations
 - Project Monitoring and Evaluation – separate report

Knottwood Background

- Comprised of three neighbourhood areas Menisa, Ekota and Satoo
- Development first began in Ekota in 1973
- Population total: 8,830 (2009 Census)
- Three public elementary schools and 1 junior high school, and 1 joint Catholic elementary/junior high school
- Two Churches – Anglican and Evangelical
- Limited retail consisting of a few strip malls
- Knottwood Community League formed in 1977

Key Questions

- Provide a framework to give conversations meaning
- Key question examples:
 - *What are your three favourite things about Knottwood?*
 - *What does the term 'community' mean to you?*
 - *Are you 'involved' in your community?*
 - *Do you know your neighbours?*

Community Conversations

- Questionnaire Developed for use at KCL Events and emailed to members for self-completion
 - **Completed 34 surveys**
- Key Informant and Resident Interviews
 - Identification – who should we speak to?
 - Semi-structured interviews face-to-face, 1 – 3 hours duration
 - **Completed 21 interviews**
- New Interest Group Formed
 - Knottwood Tots – informal playgroup for parents/carers and their children
 - October 28 – December 20, 2011 – evaluation period
 - **14 adult participants, 21 children**

Community Conversations cont.

- Focus Groups
 - Group brainstorming and activities based upon key questions
 - Interactive and an opportunity for community engagement
 - **30 people participated**
- Getting to REALLY Know Knottwood Door-to-Door Blitz
 - Project Team volunteers on foot completing questionnaire
 - **40 households completed questionnaires**

Community Conversations cont.

- Community Engagement Event
 - *Rise and Shine Knottwood* – FREE brunch and indoor/outdoor entertainment
 - Share findings and celebrate with community
 - **64 people attended this event (likely more).**
- Overall **210** people participated in ***Getting to Know Knottwood*** between September 2011 and January 2012.

Project Publicity

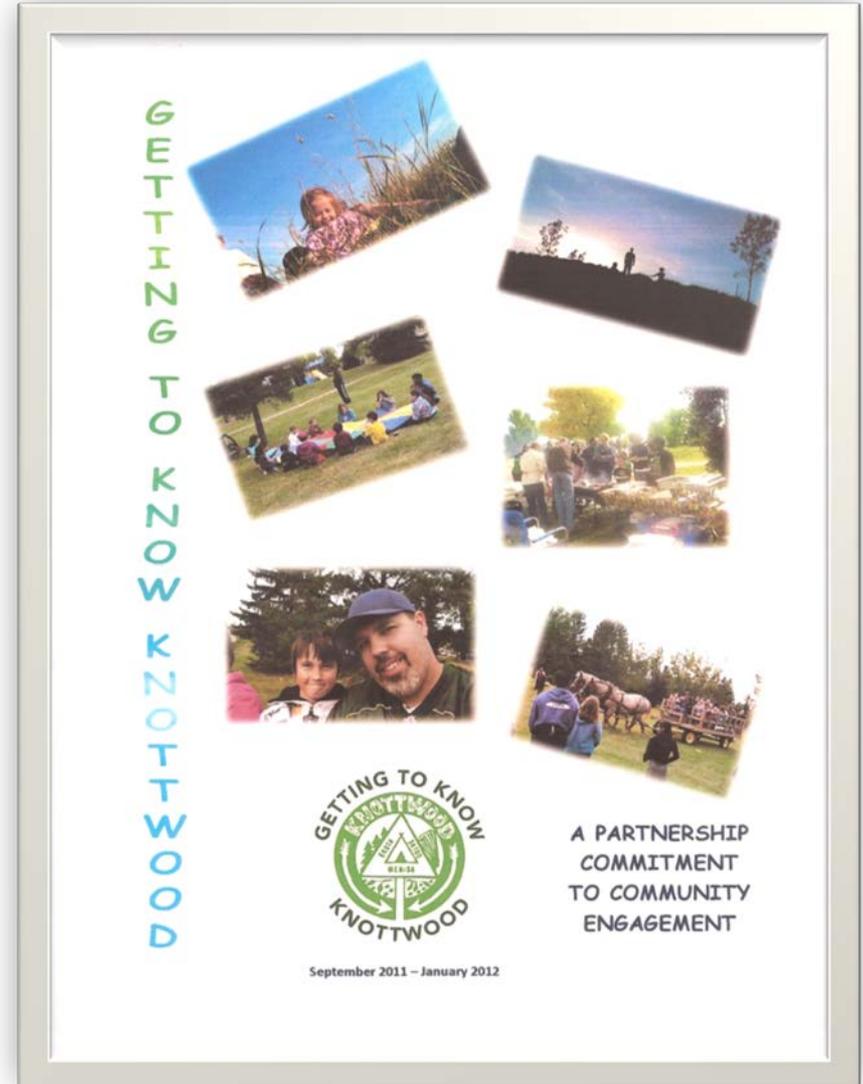


- Millwoods Newsletter – monthly newspaper article
- Facebook updates
- Special Newsletter
- Flyers
- Invitations to Rise and Shine event to all KCL members and project participants
- Knottwood Playschool

Getting to Know Knottwood Report

Report Sections

1. What do we Think About Community
2. What makes a 'Healthy' Community
3. These are a few of our Favourite Things (About Knottwood)
4. Community Involvement and Participation
5. Do we Know our Neighbours
6. Diversity
7. Volunteer Spirit
8. Community Concerns
9. Activities and Programs – What People Want to do in Knottwood
10. Communication and Information

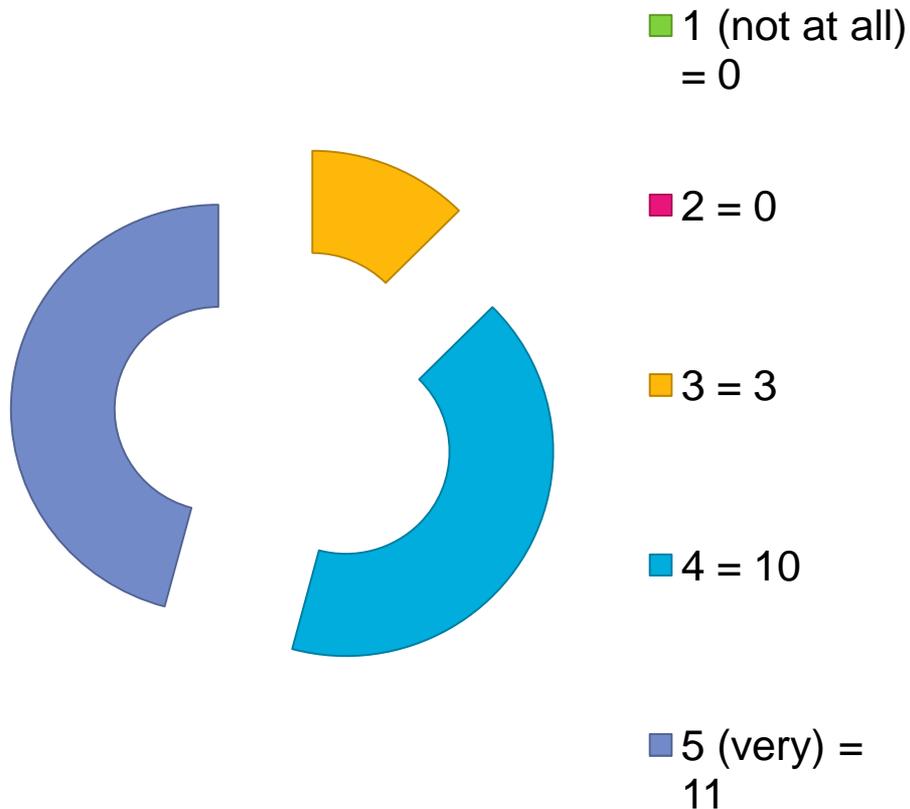


Report Summary - Community

- A community is defined by the people within it – social context of community
 - Concept of care also contributes to a sense of community
- Community is in transition – aging population
 - Provision needs to be targeted at not just families
- *“A healthy and vibrant community is ... where people appreciate each other and where they live.”*
- Health of community associated with the activities which are carried out or provided by its inhabitants.

Report Summary - Involvement

On a scale of 1-5, how important is it to be involved in your community ?



- People recognize it is important to be involved in community
- However, **less than half** believe they are currently involved
- Most cite 'work' for lack of involvement
- Need to look at how voluntary work can be more flexible and appealing.
- Personal requests work!

Report Summary - Neighbours

- Participants closely linked their definitions of community with people and relationships – including knowing our neighbours.
- 94% of participants responded that they knew their neighbours.
- People within the community of Knottwood should be encouraged to get to know one another and build relationships with neighbours.
- This is an easy way in which people can not only develop friendships, but can also help to define Knottwood as a safer place where people care for one another.

Report Summary - Diversity

- Agencies should strive to be as inclusive as possible. Although this seems obvious, it can be overlooked easily.
- Ensure needs within the community are met and helps for people to feel welcome.
- Physical disabilities (especially mobility issues) should also be given special attention
- When a new community hall is built (if/when?), consideration should be given to accessibility.

Report Summary - Volunteering

- Enabling people within the community to participate by volunteering is one way to improve community engagement
- It is important volunteering opportunities are created and promoted within Knottwood.
- Where it is feasible ways to reward volunteers should be developed.
- KCL and others should strive to be welcoming so that people can be confident in finding a place they will be made to feel comfortable.

Report Summary - Concerns

What are your main concerns about your community?



■ None = 14

■ Crime and community safety concerns = 10

■ State of road repair = 9

■ Lack of local community events and activities = 6

■ Anti-social behaviours and activities = 5

■ Traffic = 4

■ Apathy towards community involvement = 3

■ Lack of respect by youth = 2

■ All other (singular responses) = 4

Report Summary – Activities and Programs

- Participants in this project were given the opportunity to provide ideas for events, activities, and programs in Knottwood.
- Responses were categorized in 11 headings.
 - Including:
 - adult activities, youth programming, educational opportunities, arts activities and potential future capital infrastructure projects, including the development of a new community hall for Knottwood.

Report Summary - Communication

- Recommendations include:
- A sub-committee for communications to be created by KCL which is linked to membership and volunteering.
- Door-to-door KCL membership drives to be combined with information campaigns on an annual basis.
- Email monthly newsletters (already prepared for Mill Woods Newsletter) to members and make website easier to administrate.
- *'Getting to Know Knottwood'* should be seen as a 'commitment to community engagement'
- KCL should consider appointing a part-time paid member of staff to act as a central contact and information point within Knottwood.

Monitoring and Evaluation

- Project Coordinator retained to carry out work
- Separate Monitoring and Evaluation Report completed
- 28 project participants completed feedback forms
- Monitoring and Evaluation looked at process evaluation as well as project outputs and outcomes

Project Participants

	Number of Key Informants Interviewed:	Number of Focus Group Participants:	Number of 'Further' Community Members:
Original Target (included in funding bid):	10	50	75
Actual:	21	30	173

Project Outcomes

ORIGINAL PROJECT OUTCOMES (included in funding bid)	PROJECT ACHIEVEMENTS AGAINST ORIGINAL OUTCOMES
KCL has a plan for developing and sustaining an engaged community	The Project Team and KCL board approved the final project reports including recommendations in February , 2012. A template has been created and an 'Action Planning Workshop' is planned.
Increased citizen participation	<u>Two new board members</u> have been recruited as a direct result of this project. Two further community members have stated they are planning to join the KCL board this spring. It is felt by project team members that this is a tremendous achievement given the short timescale.
Participants are more aware of community strengths and needs	Participants are aware of the type of support needed to make the community thrive. The majority of people asked are willing to attend or participate in a community event <u>and</u> help or volunteer in their community.
Participants have a greater understanding of the value of their	The majority of participants stated they would be willing to take part or to be directly involved in the running of a group/activity. This shows an awareness of their role in the community and the importance of being engaged.

Moving Forward

- United Way Affinity Group Partners to meet to discuss future involvement
- KCL to have an 'Away Day' to populate draft action plan based upon recommendations
- KCL Activities and Programs for 2012-13 incorporate new ideas
- Getting to Know Knottwood is a standing agenda item at KCL board meetings
- Getting to Know Knottwood has brought community engagement to the fore of KCL's thinking and future planning

Some Lessons

- The 'community conversation approach' brought its own issues
- Knottwood in terms of experience of community engagement started from a very low baseline
- Project timescale very short to tackle such a large concept
- Time of year not ideal
- Project Team (partnership) would have benefitted from an Memorandum of Understanding from the beginning

Parents as Champions Project

- Early Years Continuum Project – Success by Six® initiative hosted by the United Way and funded by Alberta Education – Funded from April 2012 – March 2013

Goals:

- 1) Families and children have access to a comprehensive range of early learning and care services in their communities and
- 2) Children have opportunities to build a strong foundation of learning and development prior to beginning school
- Knottwood site = A parent-led approach to accessing early years services and supports
- Family Resource Fair - June 16, 2012 – Agencies are welcome to join us!

PARENTS AS CHAMPIONS
An Early Years Continuum
Project in Knottwood

Are you the parent or main caregiver for a child aged 0 - 6?

- Are you interested in finding out more about getting your child ready for starting school?
- Do you want to learn more about what services and supports for early years are available in your community?
- Do you have ideas about how services and programs for your child could be improved in your area?
- Do you have questions about the development of your child and don't know who to ask?
- Do you want to meet other parents in the 'same boat' as you?

Parents as Champions Get-Together!

Our first meeting will take place on **Tuesday, May 29, 2012, from 7 p.m. – 8:30 p.m.** at Knottwood Comm. League Hall. Children are welcome, but childcare will not be provided. Please call or email for more info.

If you answered 'YES' to any of the questions above, the **PARENTS AS CHAMPIONS** Project wants to hear from you!

PARENTS AS CHAMPIONS is a new project based in the Millwoods community of Knottwood which seeks to look at the 'early years' through the eyes of local parents. We believe in the **collective power of parents** working together to ensure their children have the best possible start in life and are ready for school. This project will work with both parents and service providers to tackle challenges facing parents and carers of children aged 0 - 6.

PARENTS AS CHAMPIONS will bring parents together on a monthly basis to discuss issues, share knowledge and information, and speak openly with service providers.

Contact:
Shireen Mears - Project Coordinator
Parents as Champions in Knottwood
Ph: 780 468-2274
Cell: 780 224-9251
smears@knottwood.org

GETTING TO KNOW EARLY YEARS KNOTTWOOD

This Early Years Continuum Project is hosted by Knottwood Community League and funded by Alberta Education through the United Way Alberta Capital Region.

Because parents are the first and most important teachers in a child's life and at no time is this more important than in the early years.

Contact:

For more information or a PDF of the reports:



Shireen Mears, Community Engager

Phone: 780 468-2274 or 780 224-9251

Email: engage@knottwood.org