



THE ANNIE E. CASEY FOUNDATION

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT TO IMPROVE YOUTH WELL-BEING

Recruiting Leaders to Launch
Your Initiative

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The Annie E. Casey Foundation is a private philanthropy that creates a brighter future for the nation's children and youth by developing solutions to strengthen families, build paths to economic opportunity and transform struggling communities into safer and healthier places to live, work and grow.

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LAYING THE FOUNDATION

If you could do one thing to improve life for the young people in your community, what would it be? If you asked others, would they probably give a similar answer? You have likely already realized the power of a clear, compelling vision and a unified, collective voice for making change. Whether you work alone or as part of an organization, you can bring about change faster with a coalition of people who are influential in a wide range of community sectors. This guide lays out steps for forming that coalition.

THE IMPORTANCE OF VISION

This guide (in a different form) grew out of a vision that became the Annie E. Casey's Evidence2Success[®] framework. Although its goals might be similar to yours, you do not have to implement the framework to use this guide. In fact, the Evidence2Success Tool Kit contains several tools or products that might be of use to you, and we invite you to browse the tool kit and try out pieces that might be helpful.

WHAT IS THIS GUIDE ABOUT?

This guide is intended to help you ensure that the primary elements are in place to successfully start a new initiative in your community. It will help you:

- engage stakeholders and recruit the right people for your coalition;
- determine your community's readiness for a successful community prevention effort; and
- address any outstanding issues that might be a barrier to readiness.

WHO IS THIS GUIDE FOR?

This guide is for community champions like you. The champion's role includes:

- identifying individuals and groups to engage;
- introducing the initiative to a broad range of community leaders;
- assessing the community's readiness for the initiative;
- developing an action plan to address outstanding issues that would prevent a successful beginning; and
- identifying and reaching out to people who would likely be effective members of a leadership group, board, committee or workgroup.

INVOLVING STAKEHOLDERS

A stakeholder is a person with an important interest in something. Every community has many stakeholders: people who live, learn, work, play or worship in the community. Stakeholders belong to a number of sectors, and many stakeholders are part of more than one sector. Each sector has different spheres of influence and different interests. The places where those interests overlap are where the most effective, long-lasting alliances are formed. Community residents are sometimes hesitant to work with agencies or public systems because they might believe their interests are at cross purposes with the interests of the public systems. This is not necessarily true. In collaborative change efforts, it is important to organize and involve the community members and service providers who have a stake in the community, especially when the healthy development of young people is affected. Residents and service providers are vital to the success of the effort. We urge you to keep the channels of dialogue open. You might find considerable overlapping interests.

Opening a dialogue requires considerable preparation. This kind of work involves changing the way a community and its neighborhoods address norms, values and behaviors and how it allocates resources — all of which takes time and effort.

STEP 1: CONDUCT STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS

Because of their roles in the community, stakeholders are likely to have unique qualifications for contributing to the initiative in a number of ways. Identifying stakeholders who share your vision and carefully matching stakeholders with roles can generate a great deal of synergy. Stakeholder analysis means identifying:

1. Individuals who would be effective members of the coalition's leadership group if there is one.
2. Allies with special skills who might not join the coalition as members, but who can help:
 - a. get the word out about your initiative;
 - b. engage the broader community at important times; and
 - c. connect families, children and youth to the services or supports you are seeking to put in place.

ACTIVITY: IDENTIFYING STAKEHOLDERS

Brainstorm to identify leaders in your community to engage.

Think about the skills, connections and abilities each person might bring to the coalition and the role each person or organization might serve. (Some of the most likely roles include coalition member, workgroup or committee member or ally with special skills. See the "Key Roles for Stakeholders" section on page 5 for more information.)

Then determine how best to involve them:

- Complete the stakeholder analysis and recruitment worksheet (see Appendix 2).
- List anyone whose commitment is so critical that moving forward without them would endanger a successful collaborative initiative.
- For each person you've listed, identify what role(s) they could play and how your initiative aligns with their interests.
- Assign someone to contact each individual. For each stakeholder, select a contact who will have a connection or some influence with the stakeholder.

3. Leaders who are connected to other community initiatives that are aligned and compatible with yours. These leaders might or might not explicitly engage with your initiative (either now or in the future). Still, having a dialogue about the fit between your initiative and theirs is an important part of early stakeholder engagement. (See Appendix 1.)

KEY STAKEHOLDER CATEGORIES

A true community collaborative engages people who live, learn, work, play and worship in the community. The people who lead the effort in the community need to represent all or most of these categories, and we urge you to include youth as part of the resident leaders:



Resident Leaders: People who live in the community or have historically lived there,¹ especially people who are served by the public agencies you might engage. Experience suggests looking for residents with broad networks within the community, especially those others depend on to get things done.

Civic Leaders: Elected officials, school officials (superintendents, school board members or principals), law enforcement, the heads of community associations and others involved in the civic life of the community.

Direct Service Providers: Leaders of nonprofit organizations serving the community; school staff (teachers, guidance counselors and support professionals); and local staff of state, city or county agencies that deliver services in or to the community (for example, social services or public health staff).

Business Leaders: People who operate businesses located in the community that serve or employ community residents. Also, people considering opening businesses in the community. These people may own their own businesses or manage the local stores of larger chains. They may also belong to business associations within the community, such as the local chamber of commerce.

Faith Leaders: This includes clergy (for example, pastors, rabbis and imams), as well as lay leaders within faith communities.

A key goal that you should consider adopting is to engage community stakeholders to work together with public agency partners to target public resources for your initiative. It is important to identify stakeholders who not only represent the leadership categories above but also understand and have worked with public agencies and systems that might fund your efforts. For example, if you are starting a youth-serving

¹Concerns about gentrification and displacement underlie the need to serve people who have traditionally lived within the community. For this reason, our definition of community includes traditional residents who have been displaced.

initiative and considering resident leaders, it might be valuable to approach individuals who are already sitting on community or service-planning boards, participating in Head Start advisory committees or otherwise already thinking about how to target services to community needs. Similarly, when engaging business sector leaders, look to those who are already engaged in the community through United Way or other partnerships that engage business in community change efforts.

It is crucial to engage stakeholders who represent the community in terms of race, class and culture.

KEY ROLES FOR STAKEHOLDERS

It's helpful to identify possible roles for potential stakeholders before making the first contact. Key roles include:

Leadership Group or Steering Committee Member: Generally speaking, a strong leadership group member:

- will spend 5–10 hours a month on the work;
- is committed to the core concepts of your initiative;
- is a well-respected leader in the community;
- is experienced in collaborative decision making; and
- has experience working with public agencies.

Workgroup Member: If your coalition decides to form committees or workgroups, special expertise might be required, for example, in finance, outreach or data.

Allies With Special Skills: At times, the partnerships and workgroups may need the assistance of people with specific skills. These allies may choose to help on a particular task or for a set length of time. These allies may eventually decide to become full partnership members, or they may choose to serve on a work group or simply agree to help when needed. Allies may be particularly helpful in certain areas, such as outreach, data, or fiscal planning.

You may already have started a list of community leaders to approach or initiatives that may be aligned or compatible with yours. This is a great starting point for stakeholders to contact.

STEP 2: HOLD STAKEHOLDER CONVERSATIONS

In step 1, you developed a list of stakeholders and decided who should contact each person on the list. Now it's time to move forward and hold conversations with these stakeholders.

Each stakeholder conversation has three goals:

1. Inform the stakeholder about your initiative and engage him or her.

2. Assess whether the stakeholder can or wants to participate.
3. Learn about the community's readiness for your initiative.

Specifically, these conversations will give you information about:

- organizations you would want to be represented on your leadership group (if you have one) or would want to partner with your initiative;
- individuals who would be interested in joining your initiative or its leadership group;
- other roles they might play;
- community needs or concerns that your initiative would address;
- perceived barriers to your initiative in the community;
- ideas for engaging other stakeholders;
- community initiatives that might compete with or take energy away from yours; and
- details that might tip an undecided stakeholder in favor of joining.

To prepare for stakeholder conversations:

1. Read this entire guide and note how the stakeholder conversations feed into the readiness assessment in Appendix 4, starting on page 22.
2. Make sure the three goals for each stakeholder conversation, listed above, are clear to you. Keep them in mind as you write talking points about your initiative and prepare for the conversation.
3. Review the script (with your talking points inserted), questionnaire and worksheet in Appendix 3 and highlighted in the sidebar on this page.
4. Practice holding a conversation with someone who knows nothing about your initiative. Use the sample script, your talking points and the readiness assessment questionnaire in Appendix 4. Ask for feedback.
5. Plan how you will conduct the conversations. For example, it may be more effective to meet with two or three stakeholders together in a group rather than individually. In other cases, an individual discussion may be more suitable.

TOOLS FOR CONVERSATIONS WITH STAKEHOLDERS

Appendix 3 includes sample scripting to start you off with these stakeholder dialogues, a questionnaire and a capture worksheet to summarize results from the individual stakeholder conversations.

You will need to create talking points about your initiative and its goals and methods to insert into the script.

Time Frame: Try to complete all the stakeholder conversations within a four-week period. A short time frame helps build momentum and buzz. Bring interested individuals in quickly to capitalize on their enthusiasm.

Summarizing the Conversations: Appendix 3 contains a worksheet to record notes and impressions from each stakeholder conversation. Fill one out as soon as possible after the conversation, while your memory is still fresh. Later, compile the information from completed sheets to record the strength of interest for each stakeholder contacted. The completed stakeholder analysis and recruitment worksheet in Appendix 2 will help you and other champions understand the overall interest and engagement resulting from outreach to stakeholders.

STEP 3: DEVELOP A ROSTER OF CANDIDATES FOR YOUR LEADERSHIP TEAM

As you review the compiled results of these stakeholder conversations, you will develop a final list of proposed coalition members. If people on your list have not expressed a willingness to join your initiative, follow up with them to make sure they are not interested. Talk over the list with other members, noting:

- which stakeholder category they represent (resident, civic, direct service, business or faith);
- why they are being recommended as a partnership member;
- what their level of interest in the work is; and
- their potential role(s).

Send an invitation to those you want to add to the coalition.

COMPLETING A READINESS ASSESSMENT

At this point, you are probably very excited about starting your initiative and might feel ready to begin implementation right away. Some of your coalition members might be eager to dive in immediately. Yet a premature beginning can lead to roadblocks, and the effort can lose momentum, which is difficult to regain. For that reason, it is vital to assess readiness conscientiously and objectively.

To determine readiness, you should complete a readiness assessment to identify issues that support implementation, that need to be worked on before implementation and that might block implementation. In step 1 (below), explore readiness with individuals during the stakeholder conversations. In step 2, draw some conclusions about the neighborhood based on those conversations. This will give you the broad outline for a plan to work on issues that need to be addressed.

STEP 1: EXPLORE COMMUNITY MEMBERS' OPINIONS ON READINESS DURING STAKEHOLDER CONVERSATIONS

As outlined above, the team referred to the readiness questionnaire during the stakeholder conversations. The information they gathered will help inform the readiness discussion held in the next step. Use the stakeholder questionnaire in Appendix 3, starting on page 18.

STEP 2: CHAMPIONS MEET TO DISCUSS THE COMMUNITY'S READINESS TO IMPLEMENT THE INITIATIVE

After the stakeholder conversations have been completed, the champions will come back together to summarize discussions about readiness. During this conversation, you will draw from the champions' sense of their community, as well as what you've heard from the stakeholder conversations, to identify community strengths and any work that needs to be done before implementing your initiative.

TOPICS FOR READINESS ASSESSMENT

Aligning Priorities: Your community's children are its highest priority and are probably at the heart of your vision. Preventing problems and improving outcomes might also be part of your vision. At the outset, it is important to determine the degree to which the community's desires for its children matches your vision.

Questions to explore in this discussion:

CATEGORIES OF READINESS ASSESSMENT QUESTIONS

Readiness questions fall into the following major categories:

- Aligning Priorities
- Working Together
- Using the Best Information Available
- Investing Smarter for Greater Returns
- Creating Lasting Change
- Reviewing Other Readiness Issues

A readiness assessment questionnaire, with questions to answer in each category, is provided in Appendix 4, starting on page 22.

Use the readiness assessment questionnaire during stakeholder conversations to explore the community's answers to these questions.

- How much agreement is there on the youth well-being issues to be addressed?
- Is there community support or a mandate for prevention as an appropriate response to concerns about the well-being of children and youth?

Working Together: To work together effectively, partnerships are critical to stimulating and sustaining change efforts in the community and the public agencies that serve it. This is why a broad, multisector coalition is needed. When resident leaders and other community members partner with city and county stakeholders to develop and carry out a community action plan, success is much more likely than when members of any one sector work alone. Outreach and engagement are necessary. At times, broader outreach to the community will be essential to gauge community members' agreement with your leadership group's priorities and to encourage broad participation.

Questions to explore in this discussion:

- How well do community leaders, public agencies and service organizations collaborate in this community?
- What are the existing collaboratives in the community and how might they align with, or impede, your initiative?
- How productive is the coordination among existing initiatives and planning efforts?
- How much commitment is there to ensuring equity in access, availability and appropriateness of services to all racial and ethnic groups?
- Is there infrastructure that can be catalyzed for outreach and engagement efforts (for example, existing community forums with broad participation, newsletters or distribution networks)?
- Are there existing community institutions that are effective at reaching out to and engaging the core stakeholder groups?
- Is there a commitment to sharing information and expanding engagement beyond the core decision-making group?

Using the Best Information Available: Whenever possible, decisions should be based on data. This might mean local data obtained through high-quality surveys, or it might mean programs that have been scientifically validated through peer-reviewed literature using randomized controlled trials. Local data should be reviewed by a diverse team that includes residents, parents and youth. Community members' perceptions provide critical perspectives that must be taken into account.

Questions to explore in this discussion:

- Is there school district support for youth surveys, especially youth surveys that include data on risk and protective factors?
- Is there a strong partner with expertise in analyzing data who can support local data capacity?

- How much experience and history does the community have in using local data for decision making and planning?
- What is the comfort level with using data and making it understandable to those who do not have a data background?
- How strong is the community's commitment to using data for decision making?
- How experienced is the community with implementing effective prevention programs?
- Is there an understanding of the concept of evidence-based programs and fidelity in implementation?
- What is the level of belief in the community that there are effective prevention programs available to address the issues facing the community's children and youth?

Investing Smarter for Greater Returns: The tool kit's strategic financing tools can be used to help generate sustainable funding. Redirecting a percentage of investments from costly or less effective programs to proven prevention programs can produce savings and reduce the number of children who need treatment in later years.

Questions to explore in this discussion:

- Is there potential commitment to exploring how local services and funding streams can be aligned to local risk and protective factors?
- Is there potential commitment to leveraging local time, talent, resources and dollars to support shared priorities?
- What is the level of interest from local philanthropies to provide resources?

Creating Lasting Change: It is not enough to deliver evidence-based (tested, effective or proven) programs at scale, even when the programs have been specifically selected to address the community's highest priorities. These programs must be implemented according to their guidelines to be effective. Implementation and results must be monitored to make course corrections, if necessary. This requires a shift in thinking for communities, as well as public agencies that implement the programs. To encourage this shift, it is important to learn the capacities that are already present in the community and the capacities that need to be built up. For example, it is helpful at this early stage to understand how well community service providers are prepared to deliver these types of programs, and what the public understands and feels about research-based programs.

Questions to explore in this discussion:

- Have the local community and service providers had experience with proven programs? Do they have skills and strengths to use or build on?
- What skills need to be built?

- Are service providers willing to adjust their way of doing business to implement proven programs with fidelity?
- Has the community had negative experiences with research or research-based programs?
- Are community residents or service providers strongly committed to specific, nonproven programs that are currently being used? If so, how might these stakeholders be persuaded to shift investments to proven programs?

Reviewing Other Readiness Issues: There may be other obstacles to organizing the community and conducting prevention planning and action. Their nature and severity will vary across communities. It is important to identify these issues, even if they cannot all be addressed at this time.

For example:

- The community is experiencing rapid cultural and other changes due to mobility or gentrification.
- There is skepticism that positive change can happen.
- A controversial city election will occur in six months, and there will be no decisions about prevention planning until the election results are known.
- Recent incidents in the news — unrelated to health and safety, youth and families or prevention — currently dominate the headlines and people’s attention. Any organizing efforts will have to compete with these issues.
- There is a sense of mistrust and separateness in the community over issues of race and ethnicity. Community members are not always willing to commit to community-wide efforts.

STEP 3: COMMUNITY CHAMPIONS DEVELOP A PLAN TO ADDRESS READINESS ISSUES

Based on this assessment, a specific action plan should be developed to address key readiness issues that might be barriers to successfully starting the work. The readiness planning tool in Appendix 5 supports this task. The tool should be filled out by several champions, incorporating input from a variety of stakeholders, to ensure the inclusion of a diverse group of viewpoints. Share the draft assessment with other members of the community to see if they agree with the issues, strategies and actions recommended.

CONGRATULATIONS!

If you’ve followed all the steps in this guide, then you have established a strong base for your coalition’s work. You are on the way to making lasting change for the well-being of your community’s children and youth. Keep your attention on the goal and core strategies as others join the effort. Congratulations on forming a strong partnership!

APPENDIX 1: EXISTING INITIATIVES ALIGNMENT WORKSHEET

To avoid turf battles, you need to have and be able to communicate a clear understanding of how your initiative will fit within the landscape of existing initiatives and work within the community or neighborhood. In some cases, there will be synergy with the existing work. Other initiatives may be incompatible.

The next page has a chart for mapping the existing initiatives and work in the community. The chart can be used to capture a rating for each initiative using the following rubric:

- **Aligned and Compatible:** These are initiatives that are clearly aligned with your mission, goals and philosophy. Your initiative will help support others in meeting their mission and goals. Similarly, the existing work, investment and infrastructure for these initiatives can contribute to your success as well.
- **Not Aligned and Compatible:** These are initiatives that are sufficiently different from yours for both to be implemented in the community without drawing attention, resources or momentum from the other.
- **Aligned and Not Compatible:** These are initiatives that share aspects of mission, goals and philosophy with yours, but, because of structure, personalities, resource constraints or other issues, it will be challenging to implement both initiatives together without drawing attention or energy from one or the other.
- **Not Aligned and Not Compatible:** These are initiatives that have fundamentally different goals, philosophy and mission from your initiative. In addition, the structure, personalities, resource constraints or other issues would make it challenging to implement both initiatives without drawing attention or energy from one or the other.

You should designate someone to make an initial pass at filling out this chart prior to reaching out to leadership from other initiatives. It will help whoever is doing the outreach to prepare and develop arguments both for how the two efforts can fit together and to foresee some of the concerns that may be raised and expressed in the conversations. Ideally, the conversations are geared toward not only assessing the possible fit with other initiatives but also identifying creative solutions that will help to build compatibility between your initiative and the existing work. The chart should be updated once the outreach conversations are completed.

APPENDIX 2: STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS AND RECRUITMENT WORKSHEET

This worksheet is used to keep track of the stakeholders to approach about your initiative. The stakeholder categories in the left column track whether you are contacting individuals in each of the five sectors of community leadership (resident, civic, direct service, business and faith) or the leader of an existing initiative. An individual may fit into more than one category. For example, a civic leader may also be a business leader. Examples of each category are provided here:

- **Resident:** parents, youth, PTA, Head Start Advisory, others
- **Civic:** elected officials, community development associations, community action organizations, school board or principals, community law enforcement, philanthropies, United Way
- **Direct Service:** social services, justice system, youth service organizations, public health staff, school staff
- **Business:** local business owners, media, economic development, Chamber of Commerce
- **Faith:** clergy, lay leaders, diverse faith groups, others
- **Initiative:** leaders from complementary initiatives working on behalf of local children, youth and families

Potential role: Use the potential role column to track whether the stakeholder would be appropriate as a:

- Member of the leadership group if you have one
- Member of the coalition
- Workgroup member
- An ally in one of the categories of allies (outreach, data, program or fiscal)

Note that individuals may be appropriate for more than one role.

Key interests: Use this column to track how this stakeholder's key interests align with your initiative and how it might benefit them and their organization or agency.

Is this person essential to success? Note in this column if this is a person whose commitment is so critical that moving forward without it would endanger a successful collaborative initiative.

Who will reach out to this person? Use this column to track who will be reaching out to this stakeholder. This will be a contact who has some connection or influence with the stakeholder and who may be the most successful in finding time to introduce the stakeholder to the initiative and explain its benefits.

By when? Use this column to track the outreach timeline.

Strength of interest: After you've made contact, use the strength of interest column to estimate the stakeholder's interest in the initiative (with 1 being strong and 10 being weak). Also, compare this information with the strength of interest rating on the stakeholder recommendation form in Appendix 3.

STAKEHOLDER ANALYSIS AND RECRUITMENT WORKSHEET

	NAME	POTENTIAL ROLE*	KEY INTERESTS	IS THIS PERSON ESSENTIAL TO SUCCESS?	WHO WILL REACH OUT TO THIS PERSON?	BY WHEN?	STRENGTH OF INTEREST (1-10)
RESIDENT							
CIVIC							
DIRECT SERVICE							
BUSINESS							
FAITH							
INITIATIVE							

*Coalition leader or member, workgroup member or ally with special skills (outreach, data, program or fiscal)

APPENDIX 3: INITIAL OUTREACH PACKET — TOOLS FOR STAKEHOLDER CONVERSATIONS

- Sample scripts
- Stakeholder conversation worksheet and questionnaire
- Stakeholder recommendation form

SAMPLE SCRIPTS

STAKEHOLDER PHONE INTRODUCTION AND MEETING INVITATION

Hi, this is [your name], and I'm calling to find out whether you would be interested in joining a partnership to support our initiative here in [community]. [Name of your initiative] is led by [organization] to promote children's health and development by [specific actions you plan to take]. We're currently recruiting leaders who live, learn, work, play and worship in the community to form a leadership group or steering committee. Would you be willing to meet with me [when] for [how long] to learn more about [name of your initiative] and how you can get involved?

STAKEHOLDER CONVERSATION

Thank you for meeting with me today to discuss the opportunities our new initiative creates for helping children and youth in our community. I'm hoping this conversation will give you a little background about [name of your initiative], what you think needs to be in place for us to achieve our goals and whether you would consider joining a group or committee to lead this initiative in [community].

Do you have any questions about what we'll cover in our conversation today? I'll be taking notes throughout our conversation so that I don't lose the insights you share. Feel free to stop me and ask questions at any time and let me know if there's something in particular that you don't want me to write in my notes.

Description of [Name of your initiative]

[Describe your initiative, what you hope to achieve and how you hope to achieve it.]

STAKEHOLDER CONVERSATION WORKSHEET AND QUESTIONNAIRE

Be sure to fill out both the worksheet and the questionnaire for each stakeholder conversation.

Name of stakeholder: _____

Date of conversation: _____

Based on what you've heard, what benefits do you think this initiative offers?

What are some of the community needs or concerns that you think this initiative addresses?

COMMUNITY STAKEHOLDER QUESTIONNAIRE

We're currently recruiting leaders who live, learn, work, play and worship in the community to form a leadership group or steering committee.

How are you connected to this community (resident, civic, direct service, business, faith)?

(May already have this information — if so, no need to ask.)

How have you been involved in current or previous initiatives to improve youth well-being?

(May already have this information — if so, no need to ask.)

What other initiatives to improve youth well-being are currently going on in the community?

How do you see those initiatives fitting with what you've heard about [name of your initiative]?

Can you think of other individuals or organizations we should talk to about joining [name of your initiative] or other ways of partnering with [name of your initiative]?

What do you think is most compelling or promising about [name of your initiative]?

How would you like to be involved in [name of your initiative]?

- Leadership group or steering committee member
- Workgroup or standing committee member
- Ally with special skills — outreach, data, program or fiscal

Comments:

What training and support do you expect the leadership group to need?

What might prevent [name of your initiative] from being successful here?

STAKEHOLDER RECOMMENDATION FORM

To be completed privately, after the conversation.

Stakeholder category this person represents: _____ (resident, civic, direct service, business, faith)

Potential role on leadership group: _____ (e.g., leadership team member, workgroup member or ally with special skills — outreach, data, program or fiscal)

ABOUT THIS STAKEHOLDER:

RATING
(10=HIGH, 1=LOW)

Power and authority in own agency (if from an agency or organization)

Has influence in the community/organization

Willingness to champion [name of your initiative] in the neighborhood/community

Experience collaborating with public agencies

Experience with collaborative decision making

Experience with data-driven decision making

Philosophical alignment with [name of your initiative]

Strength of interest in [name of your initiative]

Recommendations regarding participation in the initiative:

OTHER COMMENTS

APPENDIX 4: READINESS ASSESSMENT QUESTIONNAIRE

READINESS COMPONENT	WE NEED TO WORK ON THIS BEFORE STARTING	WE CAN WORK ON THIS AS THE INITIATIVE MOVES FORWARD	WE'RE STRONG ON THIS
ALIGNING PRIORITIES: IMPROVED YOUTH WELL-BEING			
Is there agreement on the youth well-being issues to be addressed?			
Is there community support for prevention?			
WORKING TOGETHER			
Do leaders collaborate in this community?			
Are there existing collaborative planning efforts? Will they engage with [name of your initiative]?			
Are there racial, ethnic, cultural or class issues that need to be addressed for the work to move forward?			
Are there existing outreach infrastructures that [name of your initiative] could use?			
Have we engaged community organizations with a history of effective broad outreach?			
Is there a commitment to broad engagement?			
USING THE BEST INFORMATION AVAILABLE			
Are local schools involved and do they support administering a youth survey focusing on risk and protection (if there isn't one in place already)?			
Is there a strong partner with data expertise to help interpret local data or to support local data capacity?			
Is there experience and history using local data for decision making and planning?			
Is there a comfort with translating data so the information is understandable to those who do not have a data background?			
Is there a commitment to using data for decision making?			
INVESTING SMARTER FOR GREATER RETURNS			
Is there a commitment to looking at how local resources and services can be aligned to your work?			

Is there a commitment to leverage local time, talent, resources and dollars to support this work?

Have local funders been involved?

CREATING LASTING CHANGE

How experienced is the community with implementing effective programs?

Is there an understanding of core concepts, such as ensuring fidelity and what is meant by proven programs?

Is there a fundamental belief that prevention programs can help in addressing the issues facing the community's children and youth?

Are there negative experiences or skepticism of research or research-based programs?

Are community residents or service providers strongly committed to specific programs?

OTHER READINESS ISSUES
