

Community Needs Assessment and Information Resources

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Workshop Overview

- **What is community needs assessment?**
- **Why Assess? Defining Needs and Plans**
- **Types of Assessment Methods**
- **Information Gathering Process**
- **Grant Application Considerations**
- **Advocacy Considerations**
- **Finding Data and Turning it into Information**

What is Community Needs Assessment?

A community needs assessment is the process of systematically collecting, analyzing and using information to:

- educate and mobilize communities
- develop priorities
- gather resources
- plan actions to impact your target population, neighborhood or community

Assessing Provides a Basis for Planning

Identify assets, service gaps, needs, trends and priorities to advocate for change or provide a service, across the county or within an identified at-risk neighborhood or population.

Reasons for Assessments

- Get a snapshot of current conditions
- Define gaps in service to target
- Anticipate future changes
- Increase awareness of issues
- Gather data for planning or grants or advocacy

Why Plan?

- Define population in need of services, geographic areas at risk, capacity-building needs of service providers
- Ensure responsive investments in programming and capacity-building
- Facilitate community access to information and results
- Provide framework for moving from ideas to results
- Advocate for improvement
- Sustainability

Defining Needs

What happened in the past?

vs.

What do you need in the future?

Needs Assessments are based on the assumption that groups of people have needs that are not being met or addressed adequately. NAs seek to uncover unmet needs, both recognized and latent.

Assess Needs from Multiple Perspectives

Need is the gap between what a situation is and what it should be

- Normative Need (defined by experts in the field)
- Perceived Need (as seen by those experiencing the need)
- Expressed Need (as seen by those who seek out the services)
- Relative Need (needs and resources in one geographic area or population compared with needs and resources in another)

Community Assessment

Community is any group sharing something in common (locale, interest, experience)

Things to find out:

- geographic boundaries
- history
- key people and leaders
- demographics
- expenses and income
- morale and involvement issues
- key allies and rivals

Community Assessment

Gather planning information on:

- Demographics
- Needs
- Attitudes
- Priorities
- Capacity
- Prevalence

It is helpful to collect and compare local, regional, and national data. Note trends.

No Need to Reinvent the Wheel!

- For purposes of expanding services, developing new initiatives, or advocating for change utilize what is already out there
- Collaborative and other groups can provide access to such resources

Who Does Community Assessments?

- Health Departments
- University and College Departments
- Head Start
- Community Action Associations
- Public Schools
- Local Government
- Literacy Councils
- Mental Health Providers

Selection of Available Local Assessments

Community Health Needs Assessments:

- Florida Department of Health for Miami-Dade County (2013)
- Nicklaus Children's Hospital Child and Adolescent (2015)

Health Council of South Florida Report Card (2010)

Healthy Start Coalition of Miami-Dade Needs Assessment (2011)

The Children's Trust

- Child Health and Well-Being: Parent Survey (2007)
- Child Well-Being Indicators (2008)

Analyzing Community Problems

Examples: arson, child abuse, crime, domestic violence, drugs, elder care, emergency services, ethnic conflict, graffiti, health, housing, hunger, inequality, jobs, noise, poverty, racism, safety, schools, sexism, teen pregnancy, transportation, vandalism

Criteria for defining a community problem:

- Frequency
- Duration
- Scope or range
- Severity
- Legality
- Perception

Analyzing increases understanding of barriers, resources, and needed action steps

Capacity Assessment

- Historically, assessment has focused on the deficits in a community, but Capacity Assessment is equally useful
- Strength-based: focus on formal and informal resources already present in a community that can be used to improve quality of community life
- Asset identification and mapping of groups, persons, places, businesses, YOU

Involvement of All Stakeholders

All give input; All benefit

- Service population
- Service providers
- Community leaders
- Faith community
- Government entities
- Business leaders
- Community residents
- Local coalitions and community groups

Assessment Methods

- Public forums and listening sessions
- Focus groups
- Interviews
- Surveys
- SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats)
- Service Utilization Data (including use, access, satisfaction)
- U.S. Census Data
- Indicator-level Data (trend analysis)
- Previous assessments

How do You Select Your Method?

- Data collection considerations:
 - Size of community/area
 - Available time and money
 - Respondent burden
- Primary vs. Secondary Data
- Culturally appropriate
- Qualitative vs. quantitative
- Complement existing data

Public Forums & Listening Sessions

- Well-publicized public meetings
- Citizens from diverse backgrounds discuss important issues in a facilitated forum
- Transcript used for subsequent planning
- Allow time for topics such as:
 - Issues and concerns
 - Barriers and resistance
 - Community resources
 - Recommended solutions
- Record discussion
- Conclude with summary and action plan
- Prepare summary to mail participants

Focus Groups

- Small-group discussion (6-12 people) guided by a trained leader to learn more about opinions on a designated topic and guide future action
- Qualitative method complements survey data
- When?
 - Considering introduction of new program/service
 - Depth of opinion, finer shades than surveys allow
 - Questions cannot easily be asked on survey
- Who? Representative groups of various stakeholders (service population, providers, residents)
 - Group interaction often stimulates new thoughts among members

Focus Groups

- Find good group leader and recorder
- Decide about incentives and accessible schedule and location
- Pose specific questions and encourage discussion of ideas and responses
- Example Questions:
 - What are your thoughts about X?
 - What's going well? What's not going well?
 - What kinds of things would you like to see happen?
- Summarize what you think you've heard and ask if group agrees
- Analyze results for patterns, common themes, new questions, conclusions
- Provide feedback to group members

Interviews

- A conversation with a purpose. Use when need info. about perceptions of activities in the community, or for in-depth info. on a topic from an expert.
- Decide carefully who to interview...who are the “key stakeholders or informants”?
- Types: face-to-face, phone, focus groups
- Conducting an interview:
 - Select professional, objective interviewer
 - Practice first!
 - Small talk, be natural
 - Listen
 - Stay focused on goal
 - Use prompts that encourage informative and specific responses (avoid “yes/no”)
 - Respect

Using Surveys

Purpose: Collecting information to represent the views of a larger group of interest regarding needs, concerns, interests, satisfaction

Steps:

- Identify Survey Goals/Purpose
- Sampling: Who and How Many?
- Time Frame
- Content: Key Demographics and Issues
- Method: Written vs. Oral (direct mail, interview, phone, drop box, etc.)
- Draft, Test, Revise Questions: Use Open and Close-Ended Formats (multiple choice, Likert)
- Administration, Response Rates, Incentives
- Tabulate and Interpret Results

Grant Applications

NOT helpful

- Data about the number of people you serve, the number of people who are on your waiting list, the number of activities you conduct each year.
- Data that represents geographic areas larger than the area you are targeting (like STD rates for Florida when you are only going to do STD screenings in Miami Beach)

Helpful

- Data from external sources that point to the size of the problem in the community where you are proposing to work
- Data that represents the specific neighborhood(s) where you are working.

Grant Applications

NOT helpful

- Raw numbers that describe the problem in your area.
- Only numbers that represent the geographic area where you work without any comparison data.

Helpful

- Raw numbers AND percentages that show the proportion of the total population in your area that is affected by the problem.
- Comparison data from the national level and other geographic levels of interest to the funder.

Grant Applications

NOT helpful

- Data that is not relevant to the problem (like high school drop out rates when you are going to be providing pre school educational development services).
- Data that are old (like 1990 Census data on race).

Helpful

- Data that scientific research has demonstrated is related to the problem you are addressing (like data about pregnancy-related deaths when you are going to be providing prenatal care).
- The most recent available data from the chosen data source (like 2010 Census or 2015 American Community Survey data on race).

Grant Applications

NOT helpful

- Data from newspapers, magazines, and TV news programs – sources that are not in the business of distributing reliable data. (Newspapers, for example, are in the business of selling newspapers, of course.)
- All the data you've ever found that relates somewhat to the problem. We call this a "data dump."

Helpful

- Data from reputable sources such as government agencies, national associations, and peer-reviewed journals.
- Data carefully selected and narrowed down from the entire list of all the data you found and presented in a targeted, compelling, concise problem statement.

Grant Application Needs Statement

- A case study: Ida Bell proves the need for lead poisoning education in her neighborhood (www.gnocdc.org/cases/lead/index.html)
- Identifying the need
- Researching the issue (Google)
- Building on local organizations
- Learning more about grants
- Gathering data
- Thinking like a funder: Need, compared to what?
- Final draft of a Needs Statement

Advocacy Considerations

- Know the issue (both sides) – learn as much about your issue as possible and have all the statistics available, both at your fingertips and on the tip of your tongue
- Be gracious, respectful and professional
- Be focused – address only one issue at a time; too much information can confuse the message and dilute the point
- Make a personal connection if possible
- Tell the truth
- Know how others stand on the issue
- Acknowledge when more information is needed - and be willing to seek it out and provide it

Data Resources

Let's go surfing!

Some of our favorite websites for data are:

- KidStats and Maps (maps.thechildrenstrust.org)
- U.S. Census and American Factfinder (factfinder.census.gov)
- FIHealthCharts (flhealthcharts.com)

See the Data Resource List for additional websites

Evaluation: Revisiting the Community Assessment

- Assessment process does not end, but has short and long-term results
- Benchmarking and Trending
- Foundation is the logic model/theory of change and past assessment results
- Purpose is continuous update information to ensure appropriate interventions, funding and inform policy
- Review and analyze both process and outcome results...Use it!

Key Reference Materials

Much of the material for this presentation was borrowed from several excellent sources, including:

- Chapter 3: Assessing Community Needs and Resources of the Community Tool Box, a service of the Work Group for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas
[http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/chapter_1003.htm]
- a presentation by Gail McGovern for the Infopeople Project
[<http://www.infopeople.org/training/past/2007/needs>] supported by the U.S. Institute of Museum and Library Services
- articles by Allison Plyer and web content from the Greater New Orleans Community Data Center [<http://www.datacenterresearch.org>]
- Chapter 6. The Art of Persuasion: Getting the Support of Opinion Leaders and Policy Makers, from Advocates for Youth
[<http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/publications/advocate/chapter6.htm>]

Miami-Dade County Community Data Resources

as of 7/31/2017



Neighborhood Data

U.S. Census data is easily available at the ZIP code and “census designated place” levels and **American Community Survey** data is offered for various ethnic, race and ancestry groups as well as at various geographic levels from the largest cities (Miami, Hialeah, Miami Beach, and Miami Gardens) to county-wide, state and national. (<https://factfinder.census.gov>)

Policy Map is an easy-to-use online mapping tool with data on demographics, real estate, health, jobs and more in communities across the US. Has free, public access to indicators as well as subscription options. (<https://www.policymap.com/>)

MySidewalk makes spatial data simple and useful. That's done by providing thousands of answers to common community questions, visualizing patterns and predicting change in your community with data. This data tool is designed to help users access and share answers about their community as quickly as possible – regardless of technical or data expertise. There is a free trial period and a subscription fee thereafter. (<http://mySidewalk.com>)

How to **find census tract data on the internet** - A census tract is a small statistical subdivision of a county. Census tract data allows a user to find population and housing statistics about a specific part of an urban area. This is particularly important when you want information about part of a city; a single community may be composed of several census tracts. (<http://library.csun.edu/Guides/GovPubs-Census/TractBlock>)

LocalData offers a toolkit for communities to collect and manage place-based data. LocalData empowers communities to collect data with new tools. Smartphone and paper-based surveys, simple online management and instant visualization will let you use data without an expert. Nonprofits, cities, and community groups can use data to support environmental and political campaigns, mapping local assets, fundraising, and more. (<http://localdata.com/>)

Miami-Dade County Planning Department compilation of census information, reports on selected neighborhoods, and maps. (<http://www.miamidade.gov/business/economic-demographic-profiles.asp>)

Miami-Dade County GIS Maps & Apps is a portal to various mapping websites and tools including address search, crime mapping, community services, land information, downtown transportation, property search and map galleries. (<http://www.miamidade.gov/technology/gis-maps-and-apps.asp>)

Website links to Miami-Dade County (including cities) maintained by University of Florida, contains links to various municipal and county information; however, last updated in September 2011 (<http://www.uflib.ufl.edu/fehdl/counties/miamidade.html#homepage>)

Federal Financial Institutions Examination Council (FFIEC) allows the user to enter a street address to find neighborhood income, housing, and population information. (<https://geomap.ffiec.gov/FFIECGeocMap/GeocodeMap1.aspx>)

Children and Youth

Putting the Pieces Together for Our Children: A Child Well-Being Report of Community Indicators in Miami-Dade County 2008 compiles and reports trends and comparisons across 37 selected indicator areas within the domains of Community and Family

Characteristics; Child Health and Healthcare; Child Safety; Early Childhood Education and Development; Youth Behavior and Development; and Education and School Engagement. The report focuses on Miami-Dade children and offers a look at data trends over time, comparisons with state and national figures, and disparities observed across geography, race/ethnicity and gender. (<https://www.thechildrenstrust.org/research/reports/29-tct/research/235-community-indicators-of-child-well-being>)

Child Health and Well-Being in Miami-Dade County: 2007 Parent Survey Results summarizes the results of a comprehensive telephone survey conducted during the spring of 2007 with 1,915 parents of children throughout Miami-Dade County. The survey results are representative of all children under 18 living in households in Miami-Dade County; they provide data on child health and well-being and permit analysis by geographic area, age range and race/ethnicity of our children. (<http://www.thechildrenstrust.org/parent-survey-child-well-being>)

KidStats and Maps - The Children's Trust's Indicators and Mapping Website offers maps and charts of data at the ZIP code level on population and family characteristics, health care and child health, child safety, education and school engagement, youth behavior and development, and early childhood and development, as well as comparisons with state and national data. (<http://maps.thechildrenstrust.org>)

Florida Department of Children and Families - **DCFDashboard** offers performance measures for Florida's child welfare protection agency by district (Miami-Dade County). (<http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/performance/dashboard/>)

The Federal Interagency Forum on Child and Family Statistics' primary mission is to enhance and improve consistency in data collection and reporting on children and families. **America's Children in Brief: Key National Indicators of Well-Being, 2017** is a compendium of indicators—drawn from the most reliable official statistics—illustrative of both the promises and the difficulties confronting our Nation's young people. The report presents 38 key indicators on important aspects of children's lives. (<http://www.childstats.gov/americaschildren/index.asp>)

ChildTrends web site contains a wide variety of reports and publications, of specific interest would be the research briefs (<http://www.childtrends.org/our-research/>). Also available is the ChildTrends databank offering national trends and research on over 100 key indicators of child and youth well-being (<http://www.childtrends.org/databank/>)

KIDS COUNT - Annie E. Casey Foundation's Community-Level Information on Kids (CLIKS) - County and state-level indicators of child well-being that can be compared and mapped (<http://datacenter.kidscount.org/>).

Diversity Data Kids is a comprehensive information system to monitor the state of wellbeing, diversity, opportunity and equity for U.S. children. It has a dedicated focus on race and ethnicity, equity and the importance of geography. An interactive tool for selecting and visualizing indicators of child well-being and opportunity available at the State, County and large City level. (<http://diversitydatakids.org>)

Health and Safety

Healthy Start Coalition of Miami-Dade County (HSCMD) promotes the health of pregnant women, infants and children through the analysis of trends in maternal and child health data and facilitates efforts aimed at developing strategies to improve maternal and child health outcomes through the compilation, review, and sharing of data on select maternal, infant and child health indicators. (<http://www.hscmd.org/NeedsAssessment.asp>)

Miami-Dade County Injury Surveillance System (MDCISS) obtains relevant, accurate and timely information on the magnitude of fatal and nonfatal injuries that occur to Miami-Dade residents. MDCISS provides data and maps that can be used to facilitate injury prevention programs and measure their effectiveness. (<http://miamidade.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/wellness-programs/injury-and-violence-prevention/injury-surveillance-publications.html>)

Youth Risk Behavior Survey results for Miami-Dade County for senior and middle public school youth in 2015 and earlier years is summarized at (<http://oer.dadeschools.net/YRBS/YRBS.asp>); for national comparisons, as well as the most recent 2015 survey results available in searchable form, go to (<http://www.cdc.gov/HealthyYouth/yrbs/index.htm>).

Health Council of South Florida has a number of publications with health-specific indicators (<http://www.healthcouncil.org/objective-reliable-community-health-da>). Also available through Health Council of South Florida is Miami Matters, an easy to understand tool on health, environmental and other quality of life indicators in Miami-Dade County. (<http://www.miamidadematters.org/>)

Florida Health Charts provides easy access to health-specific and related indicators for Florida counties and in some instances ZIP codes and census tracts. (<http://www.flhealthcharts.com>)

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention **National Center for Health Statistics** is the Nation's principal health statistics agency. It compiles statistical information to guide actions and policies to improve the health of people (<http://www.cdc.gov/nchs/>)

International classification of diseases (aka ICD-10) is a list of disease codes which is helpful when using health data (<http://www.who.int/classifications/apps/icd/icd10online/>)

The **Baker Act Reporting Center** publishes county-level information on involuntary Baker Act exams as well as exams of youth and elders. (<http://bakeract.fmhi.usf.edu/>)

Education

Miami-Dade County Public Schools Office of Assessment, Research and Data Analysis provides school-level and district data on graduation rates, school profiles, school performance grades, and climate surveys. (<http://oada.dadeschools.net/>)

Florida Department of Education's **Education Information and Accountability Services** - Data Publications and Reports offers information about Florida public schools' non-promotions, trends in discipline, and many other topics as well as school district profiles. (<http://www.fldoe.org/accountability/data-sys/edu-info-accountability-services/pk-12-public-school-data-pubs-reports/index.shtml>)

Florida PK-20 Education Information Portal connects people with reports and statistical information about pre-kindergarten to grade 12, college, career and adult education and employment outcomes for Florida students, staff and schools. The portal provides access to interactive reports for overall and demographic information in a variety of formats including graphs, tables, maps and custom reports on a variety of education-related data. (<https://edstats.fldoe.org/SASPortal/public>)

Crime

Miami-Dade County Juvenile Services Department (JSD) is a centralized processing, referral and evaluation center for all juveniles arrested in Miami-Dade County. JSD has reports on types of crimes, sex, age, arresting agency, cases created, multiple arrests and more. (<http://www.miamidade.gov/jsd/research.asp>)

Florida Department of Juvenile Justice Delinquency Profile examines Florida's juvenile justice system at several points: Intake, Detention, Judicial/Non-Judicial Handling, Referrals to Court-Diversion programs, Juvenile Probation, Commitment, and Transfers to the Adult Court System, as well as offers data by ZIP code, age, race/ethnicity and gender (<http://www.djj.state.fl.us/research/delinquency-data/delinquency-profile>)

Florida Department of Law Enforcement Statistical Analysis Center provides crime reports by county for various categories including domestic violence, sex offenses, drugs, violent and firearm crimes (<http://www.fdle.state.fl.us/cms/FSAC/FSAC-Home.aspx>)

Other Data Resources

The **Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey** is a collaborative effort between the Florida departments of Health, Education, Children and Families, Juvenile Justice, and the Governor's Office of Drug Control. It is based on the "Communities That Care" survey, assessing risk and protective factors for substance abuse, in addition to substance abuse prevalence. The survey was first administered to Florida's middle and high school students during the 1999-2000 school year, and is repeated in the spring, annually. (<http://www.dcf.state.fl.us/mentalhealth/publications/fysas/>)

The **Labor Market Statistics** (LMS) library contains files for download from various statistical programs, including: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW); Current Employment Statistics (CES); Employment Projections (EP); Local Area Unemployment Statistics (LAUS); Occupational Employment Statistics and Wages (OES); press releases; census; unemployment claims; and publications. (<http://www.floridajobs.org/labor-market-information/data-center>)

Florida Department of Children and Families **refugee and entrant arrivals** statistical report (<http://www.myflfamilies.com/service-programs/refugee-services/statistics-florida>)

Map the Meal Gap from Feeding America is a detailed analysis of **food insecurity** for every county and congressional district in the United States, and the only study that provides local-level estimates of food insecurity across the country. A summary of the 2016 Map the Meal Gap findings (2014 data) is available separately for children and for all people. (<http://map.feedingamerica.org/county/2014/overall/Florida>). The U.S. Conference of Mayors' Status Report of **Hunger and Homelessness** in America's Cities Reports (<http://www.mayors.org/publications/>)

Miami Affordability Project (MAP) is an interactive online tool that provides data about **Miami-Dade's affordable housing** and community development. (<http://comte.ccs.miami.edu/housing/map>)

Miami Homes For All, Inc. conducts the youth **homeless census for Miami-Dade County**, and they partner with Miami-Dade County Homeless Trust and Miami Coalition for the Homeless to conduct the point-in-time homeless count across all ages each January. (<http://www.miamihomesforall.org/past-icount-results.html> and <http://www.homelesstrust.org/library/homeless-census-comparison-2016-2017.pdf>)