

Operationalizing a Community Supports for Work Strategy

Jobs-Plus Grantee Training Conference

March 22-24, 2016

Washington, DC

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COMMUNITY SUPPORTS FOR WORK

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■ Community Supports for Work is a process – not a series of events

- A set of strategies that build a *culture of work* within a community
- Reduce social isolation, build new social networks
- Organize residents so they support one another



■ Success Strategies

- ◆ Involve residents in designing and implementing CSW activities
- ◆ Know your community, connect residents to resources, eliminate barriers to work
- ◆ Continuously engage with residents

Is it CSW . . . or something else?



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- Supporting a resident gardening club 
- Organizing a “Latchkey kid” program in the development 
- Sponsoring a 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament 
- Advertising availability of in-home daycare providers 
- Organizing “Back to School” events for kids of working parents 
- Publicizing car pools to the local industrial park 
- Organizing a resident Clean-up project 
- Co-locating public services in the development 
- Creation of a monthly Jobs-Plus newsletter 

4 Basic CSW Strategies

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- “Joining” social networks within the development
- Resident to resident
- Residents to external networks
- Mutual aid among residents

How Can Sites Promote a CSW Strategy?

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- **All components must be working in sync**
 - ◆ Strong employment services generate excitement
 - ◆ Strong financial incentives add to motivation
 - ◆ “Bad news spreads faster than good news!”
- **Relationship building**
 - ◆ Responsive to resident needs and wants
 - ◆ Welcoming environment in the office
 - ◆ Build a connection to the residents
- **Effective Use of Community Coaches**
 - ◆ “Don’t abdicate CSW to the Coaches”



The Role of the Community Coach

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■ Considerations

- ◆ Full-time or part-time; one coach or many coaches?
- ◆ Permanent hire or rotated (“on-ramp”) position?
- ◆ WHO is this person within the development?



■ Defining and supervising the role

- ◆ Defining clear responsibilities, goals and deliverables
- ◆ Messaging: “What are they saying and how are they saying it?”
- ◆ Assessing performance: CSW can be measured!

■ CSW is a Team effort

- ◆ By all means market the brand – but don’t forget to market the message!

Selecting the Coaches



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Finding a good Coach isn't a Slam Dunk!

- ◆ The development might offer a limited pool of candidates
- ◆ Employed residents probably too busy
- ◆ Need to screen out the ill-educated, those with drug problems, and those who otherwise aren't good role models or appropriate "faces" of the community.
- ◆ Elderly/retired persons are sometimes appropriate because the position offers an opportunity to be involved in the community.

Managing the Coaches



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- When tried as a *resident-led* component, the focus sometimes switched to conflicts with the PHA having nothing to do with employment
- Coaches should be supervised and managed by program staff
- Having staff responsible increases the likelihood that CSW is treated seriously
- Compensation for coaches was essential

Importance of Training



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A learning curve to becoming a good coach

- Ensuring they provided accurate information
- Current information about real job openings
- Prepare them for potential conflict situations
- Ensure cultural sensitivity in multi-ethnic communities

Additional CSW Considerations

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- Use of social media
 - ◆ Facebook advertising
 - ◆ Twitter, Instagram, etc.
- Use of Incentives
- Anticipate high turnover
- Ensure their safety in all parts of the development