Operationalizing a Community Supports for Work Strategy

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COMMUNITY SUPPORTS FOR WORK

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?



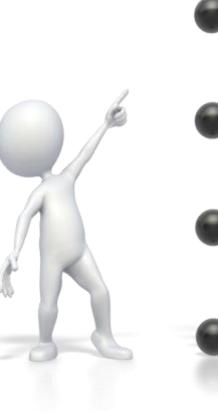
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- Supporting a resident gardening club
- Organizing a "Latchkey kid" program in the development
- Sponsoring a 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament
- Advertising availability of in-home daycare providers
- Organizing "Back to School" events for kids of working 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



- "Joining" social networks within the development
- Resident to resident







How Can Sites Promote a CSW Strategy?

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

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!

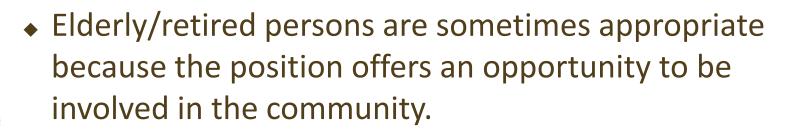


Selecting the Coaches



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.



Managing the Coaches



- 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



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



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Additional CSW Considerations

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

