
NEIGHBORS *FOR* BETTER NEIGHBORHOODS

RESIDENT-LED

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There are certain things that only residents, in association with one another and the assets around them, can do. Asset-based Community Development (ABCD) is focused on this domain of change. From this inside-out, citizen-led perspective, socio-political, cultural, environmental and economic change efforts, are viewed through the lens of the following questions.

ABCD ENGAGEMENT QUESTIONS:

- What is it that residents in communities are best placed to do together?
- What is it that residents can best do, with some outside help?
- What is it that communities need outside agencies to do for them?

PROCESS OF ABCD ENGAGEMENT:

The sequence in which the above questions are asked is critical. If you are a helping practitioner using ABCD principles and practices, you would start by inviting residents to ask of each other: “what can we do best for ourselves and each other?” (a version of the first of the three questions above).

THE IMPACT OF ABCD ENGAGEMENT:

By engaging with that question people are enabled to identify, connect and mobilize what they have, to make change happen. That puts them in the driving seat of change. They take the lead by using what they have, to secure what they need. In this way, residents also assume a powerful lead in directing outside helpers in how best they can be helpful. Since, until residents know what they have which is local and within their control, they cannot know what they need from outside (what is not local and not within their control).

SUSTAINABLE CHANGE:

An asset-based perspective works with the belief that enduring change only happens bottom up; when local people discover they have invaluable capacities and can create and build power by coming together to enact and embody the common good. The resident-led principle explore how residents can make change by starting with what is local and within their community control before inviting external support.