

ABC'S SUMMARY REPORT

PHASE 1: Exploring the literature, learning from other asset builders, and planning next steps

Compiled by Marcie D. McKay, M.A. on behalf of the Education & Prevention Working Group of the Community Partnership on Drug Abuse

January 2007

This report contains the *Community Partnership on Drug Abuse's* plans to implement a collaborative community-based intervention in Cape Breton, known as *ABC'S – Asset Building in Communities and Schools*. This community intervention is supported by the vast amount of literature on the positive outcomes of developmental assets, protective factors, and health promotion in reducing drug use and abuse among youth.

WHO WE ARE:

In March of 2004, community leaders formed the *Community Partnership on Prescription Drug Abuse* (the name was later changed to *Community Partnership on Drug Abuse*). The *Partnership* was developed to work collaboratively to address the harmful impact of the abuse of drugs in the community using interventions based on evidence and research.

In addition to the Steering Committee, the *Partnership* has a Research Sub-Committee and three Working Groups. The Working Groups on Treatment; Community Safety; and Education & Prevention review information and make recommendations to the Steering Committee for action on local, provincial or federal policies and practices that affect the misuse of drugs in our communities. They also recommend areas in which more evidence or research is required and work with local researchers to develop this knowledge

The members of the *Partnership* represented on the Steering Committee include:

- Cape Breton District Health Authority
- CBDHA Medical Staff
- Cape Breton Regional Police Services
- Cape Breton University
- Royal Canadian Mounted Police
- Cape Breton Victoria Regional School Board

- Nova Scotia Department of Justice
- Nova Scotia Department of Community Services
- Nova Scotia College of Pharmacists
- Nova Scotia Community College, Marconi Campus
- Unamaki

In addition, the Working Groups on Treatment, Community Safety and Education & Prevention, and the Research Sub-Committee also have representatives from:

- Addiction Services
- AIDS Coalition of Cape Breton
- Department of Education
- Federal Prosecution Services
- Children's Aid Society of Cape Breton
- Public Health Services
- Local Committees on Drug Awareness
- Cape Breton Health Research Centre
- Youth, in the form of a Youth Liaison
- Community members

To learn more about the *Partnership* visit: <http://www.cbu.ca/wellness/cpda/>.

This summary report was written to highlight a recent research and planning endeavor of the Education & Prevention Working group of the *Partnership*.

To provide structure to the *ABC'S* collaborative project, and to bring together diverse disciplines and citizens, a subcommittee of the *Partnership* has been formed that includes Susan Plath (Coordinator of the *Community Partnership*), Cathy Viva (Cape Breton Victoria Regional School Board), Larry Maxwell (Public Health Services), Karen Shea (Addiction Services), Joy MacInnis (retired school teacher and community representative), Debbie Brennick (nurse and Cape Breton University instructor), Marcie McKay (researcher, clinical therapist, and youth group facilitator), and Katherine Covell (Director of CBU Children's Rights Centre and Professor of Psychology, CBU).

Our asset-based project is entitled *ABC's - Asset Building in Communities and Schools*. The project has four phases: 1) conduct a literature review of developmental assets and positive youth development (complete), 2) collect baseline data by surveying youth assets, attitudes, and behaviors; assess community readiness; and inventory existing resources, 3) plan, design, and implement a community-based collaborative intervention involving youth, families, schools, and key stakeholders, and 4) conduct ongoing evaluations and sustainable actions. We are presently seeking funding for the second phase of our initiative which, once complete, will allow for the development of an evidence-based intervention.

To successfully prevent and reduce substance use in our community, it is necessary to understand the factors that may protect youth from using drugs.

The developmental asset framework provides skills, competencies, values, and behaviors that youth need to have in order to thrive. Measuring Cape Breton youth's assets and implementing an asset-based intervention will allow us to create healthy and supportive communities in which our youth may grow up.

PRESENT STATUS OF YOUNG PEOPLE

"The measure of a society's health is how well it takes care of the youngest generation. By this standard, we fail."
(Benson, 1997)

Over the past 150 years, adults have become increasingly segregated from non-familial adolescents (Zeldin & Topitzes, 2002) and many youth are growing up without the presence of caring, responsible, and productive adults. This lack of interaction between youth and community adults fuels negative attitudes, beliefs, behaviors, and isolation (Jarrett, Sullivan, & Watkins, 2005).

This is evident in Cape Breton where youth have been pointed to as perpetrators of drug use, vandalism, and other antisocial acts. The local media and many citizens often describe young people as 'out of control,' usually blaming government policies and laws such as the *Youth Criminal Justice Act* for causing youth to act as they do while largely ignoring community and familial factors. In reality, as shown by research studies conducted in Cape Breton (Covell, 2004; GPI Atlantic, 2003; McKay, 2006; McKay & Kokocki, 2006), youth feel left out of decision-making, stereotyped, disrespected by and treated differently from adults, and have few constructive places to call their own and keep them engaged. They have also been found to be clinically depressed at above average levels (Bailey, 2006) and at risk for committing suicide (Cape Breton Post, March 2, 2005).

Covell (2004) found that Cape Breton youth are greatly affected by the negative media attention paid to their communities. In 2003-2004, Cape Breton was the subject of a media frenzy on prescription drug abuse and headlines such as the following flooded the local and national newspapers frequently: "We've had kids as young as 12 found with it" (Richer, 2003), and "they call it Cottonland...kids are dying every week" (Toughill, 2004). A study during this time period revealed that youth had low community pride, felt shame, and expressed a lack of voice in building solutions to local problems (Covell, 2004).

Therefore, it may be said that Cape Breton youth are growing up in what can be considered a socially toxic environment. Garbarino (1995) explains that a socially toxic environment occurs when "the social world of children, the social context in which they grow up, has become poisonous to their development" (p. 4).

Evident social toxins in Cape Breton include lack of employment opportunities, high unemployment from a loss of industry and natural resources (i.e., 16.2% - Service Canada's Labour Market Review, 2004), poverty, outmigration to Western provinces (7.6% decline since 1996; 3,121 youth outmigrated between 1996 and 2001 – Census Canada, 2001), few productive after-school programs and youth services, negative media attention, crime, and attitudes of hopelessness such as the need to leave the island to succeed.

As well, Cape Bretoners face a higher incidence of chronic illness, disability, cancer, and lung disease when compared to the national average (GPI Atlantic, 2003). From the findings of the above studies, and statistics regarding Cape Breton, it is clear that our youth face many social toxins as well as large inequalities in being considered citizens deserving of taking part in community solution building and decision-making.

Our *ABC'S* initiative has a goal of moving beyond focusing on negative risk factors to looking at the strengths, or developmental assets, that Cape Breton youth may hold. By building assets in our youth, we may be able to effectively address issues such as drug use/abuse.

Drug use trends

According to Covell (2004), an important predictor of substance abuse in adolescence is whether or not adolescents anticipate a positive future. As D'Emidio-Caston and Brown (1998) have stated, the abuse of substances among adolescents is primarily among those with little vision for the future.

During the 1990's, Canadian adolescents' attitudes toward drug use became increasingly positive (Canadian National Longitudinal Study; Haans & Hotton, 2004). Changing behaviors and attitudes among 12 to 15 year olds were evident in higher usage rates of alcohol and marijuana, and in the non-medical use of prescription drugs (Haans & Hotton, 2004). Covell (2004) examined the findings of various provincial student drug use surveys and found that alcohol is the most used substance among Canadian adolescents, followed by marijuana. In addition, there continues to be an increase in the use of harder drugs (e.g. cocaine) and in the non-medical use of prescription drugs. Furthermore, Covell (2004) found a downward trend in the age at which drug use first begins.

Evidence-based interventions

Covell, in her 2004 Cape Breton youth drug use study recommended three fundamental characteristics of effective programming for the prevention of drug use/abuse among adolescents: 1) taking a developmental approach, 2) adopting only evidence-based programs and policies, and 3) incorporating a multi-domain strategy. What effective programs have in common is their focus on reaching children at a young age and improving youth's social skills, problem solving skills,

academic performance, and sense of belonging to school and community (Arthur & Blitz, 2000).

According to D'Emidio-Caston and Brown (1998), programs that do not focus on building developmental assets and resilience in children and youth are not effective in preventing substance abuse. It is essential that drug abuse programs do not occur in isolation. Programs that target and involve the community are significantly more effective in reducing drug use than school-based only programs (Pentz et al., 1996).

Asset-building is an approach that aligns itself with “what works” in evidence-based prevention.

What works?

The goal of the *Search Institute* is to promote asset rich relationships and environments for young people. What would this ideal community look like?

According to Peter Benson and the *Search Institute*, a community rich in assets would provide:

- daily support and care to young people by one or more parents/adults
- relationships with non-parent adults in the community
- neighborhoods where everyone knows, listens to, protects, and gets involved with one another
- developmentally appropriate clubs, teams, and organizations led by trained and responsible adults
- child friendly public spaces
- affirmation and encouragement
- intergenerational relationships
- opportunities for community involvement and service
- boundaries, values, high expectations, consistent reinforcement of norms
- role models
- healthy peer groups
- caring schools, organizations, businesses, and churches

Barriers

A number of barriers prevent this utopian community, as presented above, from taking shape. Current societal barriers include: age segregation, inconsistency in or lack of boundaries for young people, negative messages, mistrust, fragmented and under funded social services, and changing family structure. As well, individualism and privacy tend to be valued and promoted over community, shared vision, and commitment to others. Covell (2004) discusses adult-youth relationship barriers in detail. Covell reports that adults often respond by designing laws and interventions that stop youth from doing things rather than promoting positive community involvement (Skinner, 2002). Adults may complain

to police, police often ask youth to move along, residents alarm their homes, and communities implement curfews (Covell, 2004). What message does this send to young people?

WHAT ARE ASSETS?

When looking for approaches to prevent and reduce drug use among adolescents, numerous interventions, projects, and actions can be found. However, due to the complexity of drug usage, it is necessary to search for practices that are effective and evidence-based. One such approach that has shown success over the past decade is known as asset building. Asset building can be aimed at individuals and families in the form of *developmental assets*, or at whole communities as in *asset-based community development*. This report will focus on both approaches to enhancing assets.

When one thinks of assets, money, stocks, bonds and other investments come to mind. An asset is traditionally defined as “an item of value owned; a quality, condition, or entity that serves as an advantage, support, resource, or source of strength” (Dorfman, 1998). However, assets are more than objects and should also include people and relationships. Assets can also be skills, values, resources, knowledge, and commitments. Assets are not just items owned but rather a philosophy of sharing resources and strengths. Assets can shape the development of individuals - young and old, as well as families, institutions, and policy (e.g., health, education, family, and employment policies).

DEVELOPMENTAL ASSETS

The developmental assets framework was introduced by the *Search Institute* in 1990. Asset building grew from an initiative called *HCHY* – Healthy Communities, Healthy Youth in Minnesota. This was an initiative of the *Search Institute* in the late 1980’s (Griffin-Wiesner, 2005). Formed in 1993, *Children First* was the first community-wide initiative organized to build the developmental assets identified by the Search Institute (Roehlkepartain, 1999). Asset building has ‘caught on’ and as of 2003 there were approximately 600 developmental assets initiatives across Canada and the United States (Fisher, 2003).

Developmental assets are social and psychological strengths that promote healthy outcomes for children and adolescents (Lerner & Benson, 2003). An asset-based approach to healthy development promotes strengths rather than focusing on problems and deficits. For illustrative purposes asset promotion and risk reduction are contrasted below.

Table taken from pg. 35 (Lerner & Benson, 2003):

	Deficit Reduction	Asset Promotion
Goal	Reduce deficits, risks, and health compromising behavior	Promote or enhance developmental assets
Target	Vulnerable children and youth	All children and adolescents
Strategies	Expansion of social services and treatment systems, early intervention, and prevention programs targeted at high risk behaviors	Mobilization of all citizens and socializing systems to act on a shared vision for positive human development
Actors/Leaders	Professionals take the lead; citizens support	Citizens take the lead; professionals support

The assets framework contains developmental processes, experiences, skills, relationships, values, and resources known to promote short-term and long term well-being of children and youth (Scales & Leffert, 1999; Thrive!, 2004). They are essential building blocks for successful growth and development (Roehlkepartain, 1999).

This framework provides a complete picture of positive youth development. Promoting the developmental assets framework may lead to a shared vision of what youth need to succeed and what actions are required to meet these needs.

The developmental assets approach is part of the vision of positive youth development. Positive youth development represents a move away from the deficit-based programs, focusing solely on prevention and treatment, that were common in the 1980's (e.g., drug abuse, STDs, pregnancy) (Restuccia & Bundy, 2003). The 1990's saw a paradigm shift in youth development with programs focusing on promoting developmental needs of youth and exploring topics such as resiliency. Positive youth development asks how young people thrive despite adversity, what experiences are shared by those who thrive, and how can those experiences be made more available to all youth (Restuccia & Bundy, 2003). This approach focuses on protective factors and aims to promote caring relationships, high and clear expectations, and opportunities for participation and contribution for youth. A primary question of positive youth development is, "What do we want every young person to know, to feel, and to be able to do upon emerging from adolescence?" (Pittman, Irby, & Ferber, 2001). The underlying philosophy of positive youth development is that "problem free is not fully prepared." Preventing problem behaviors is not enough. Positive youth development, and one of its components, developmental assets, represent a move away from the medical model approach to youth development which understands youth health only as the absence of a symptom, pathology, or risk behavior (Benson, 2002). The psychosocial outcomes of positive youth development are valuable and are known as the 5C's: developing competence,

confidence, character, connections, and caring/compassion (Lerner, Taylor & von Eye, 2002; Pittman, Irby, & Ferber, 2001). Models of positive youth development include mentoring programs, drop-in centres, arts programs, community service projects, and academic support programs. Although positive youth development has caught on and thrived in youth-focused nonprofit organizations, it has not been as successful to date in larger public systems such as education and justice (Benson & Pittman, 2001).

The *Search Institute*, over the past decade, has developed a model of 40 developmental assets - 20 external and 20 internal assets that represent healthy youth development. The formation of the 40 assets was based on prevention, promotion, and resiliency research (See appendix A for a complete list of the 40 assets). Therefore, developmental assets are empirical and evidence-based (Oman et al., 2004).

The 20 external assets are grouped into four categories: 1) support, 2) empowerment, 3) boundaries and expectations, and 4) constructive use of time. The 20 internal assets are also divided into four categories: 1) commitment to learning, 2) positive values, 3) social competencies, and 4) positive identity. Each category is explained in greater detail below.

Support assets: Young people require care, affection, love, and encouragement from the people in their lives. They need to feel that people are there for them unconditionally. They need to spend time in places that are warm, caring, safe, and accepting. Youth also need adults in their lives other than parents and family members. Having adults of varying ages, cultures, genders, and skill levels to mentor and support youth is essential to their development. However, research has shown that youth do not feel supported by adult community members, and instead feel stereotyped, isolated, and left out of community decision-making. Youth need to feel supported at all ecological levels they interact with - family, school, neighborhood, and government.

Empowerment assets: Empowerment is extremely important for adolescents. Youth need to be valued by their community and be provided opportunities to contribute. To become civically active, a young person must feel safe and secure. When youth feel valued they are more likely to take healthy risks and take on new challenges. Community involvement is important because it allows youth to understand and brainstorm issues facing themselves and society. Youth development researchers, Yates and Youniss (1996), found that community service projects enable youth to consider questions of a political and moral nature, their lives in relation to others, and their role in bringing about change in society. How the wider community views youth is an important consideration in asset-building initiatives. Unfortunately, the *Search Institute* has found that only 20% of youth feel valued by their community and only 24% of youth report being seen as resources (Roehlkepartain, 1999). We found similar perceptions held by

youth in our own Cape Breton communities. As a consequence, we must consider how to go about making young people feel valued as citizens.

Some ideas put forth by asset builders to build empowerment assets include encouraging youth to write letters to the editor and to companies to express concerns, to attend local meetings and take part in problem-solving and decision-making, and identify meaningful ways for young people to participate in and volunteer with organizations and workplaces. To foster empowerment, accomplishments and contributions need be celebrated. Have the press focus on what is positive and working by covering stories on youth who lead and volunteer in positive ways.

Boundaries assets: Boundaries assets are not meant to be seen in terms of punishment, but instead as teaching tools (Roehlkepartain, 1999). Boundaries represent what is admirable, appropriate, and worthwhile in family, school, peer, and neighborhood interactions (Roehlkepartain, 1999). Setting clear limits and expectations is paramount. Youth are likely to follow boundaries modeled by adult role models and mentors.

Search Institute has found that school boundaries sharply decrease from grade 6-12, from 70% of youth to only 34% of youth reporting school related boundaries. Overall, girls report having more of the boundaries assets (Roehlkepartain, 1999).

Boundaries can be negotiated as youth age. There needs to be consistent boundaries and related consequences of not following boundaries in schools, neighborhoods, and organizations so youth know what to expect and how to act appropriately in such settings. Rather than telling children what to do, Roehlkepartain (1999) recommends telling a story with a lesson.

The *Search Institute* recommends following the four C's of boundaries:

1. *clear* – be clear about what is expected of youth.
2. *concise* – shorter explanations are better and remembered more easily.
3. *creative* – cleverly stated boundaries and expectations may be easier to follow.
4. *consistent* – be consistent in upholding rules and boundaries.

Constructive use of time assets: These assets are important for young people to be able to learn new skills and connect to a variety of people. Ideas include scheduling quality time at home, creating a neighborhood sports team, and holding regular activities in a local park. Another idea to build constructive use of time assets is to survey your community to see how many programs exist for youth and promote what is available. Also, ask youth why they may not be using what's available in order to make improvements and remove/reduce barriers to joining. Ask youth where they feel welcome, safe, and have positive adult supervision. Support these places and activities, and develop more like them.

Commitment to learning assets: Girls are more likely than boys to report having the commitment to learning assets (Roehlkepartain, 1999). Eighth graders typically report the lowest number of commitment to learning assets (Roehlkepartain, 1999).

Ideas shared by asset builders across North America include setting up tutoring and homework centers where neighbors with particular areas of expertise can tutor young people, holding neighborhood book swaps, and organizing reading programs at local schools where adults can read with youth and older youth can read with younger youth.

Positive values assets: Youth need to develop a strong value-base to guide their choices and enhance self-awareness (Roehlkepartain, 1999). Positive values include caring, equality, social justice, integrity, honesty, responsibility, and restraint. Youth are more likely to develop positive values when they have adults around them, especially parents, who model positive values. To gain positive values, youth must be provided with the opportunity to be responsible. Having opinions sought also leads to the development of positive values. Of all of the values, integrity, honesty, and responsibility are the most reported by youth, while restraint is the least (Roehlkepartain, 1999).

Ideas to help instill positive values include sharing stories about when it was hard to tell the truth and how it felt after you did, discussing values that are apparent in favorite movies, books, and TV shows, and writing letters with youth to politicians regarding how issues of concern in the community reflect particular values. Other ideas include having children write thank-you notes to show appreciation, having students bake cookies for shelters, discussing issues of equality and social justice on a regular basis, and asking neighborhood youth to be caring, honest, and responsible and reminding them why it is important to act this way.

Social competencies assets: Youth need to learn and practice skills that will help them make healthy choices, build relationships, and succeed. Skills such as planning, decision-making, empathy, cultural competence, resistance skills, and conflict resolution are essential. Girls report having more social competencies assets (Roehlkepartain, 1999). The lowest reported social competence assets are decision-making at 29% and cultural competence at 35% (Roehlkepartain, 1999).

Suggestions offered by asset builders include helping children practice coping skills in difficult situations, seeking out opportunities to meet with people from other cultures, and planning and celebrating cultural events and customs.

Positive identity assets: These assets include feeling good about oneself and having a positive outlook of one's future. Personal power, self-esteem, sense of purpose, and optimism come into play. Boys are more likely than girls to report self esteem and sense of purpose (Roehlkepartain, 1999). Having a positive

view of personal future is the most reported positive identity asset, while the lowest reported asset is personal power or control of what happens to oneself (Roehlkepartain, 1999).

Ideas put forth by asset builders are as follows: have children identify positive role models to emulate, and feature brief biographies of local youth in your organization's newsletter or community newspaper.

Overall, across all asset categories, the most commonly reported asset is "having a positive view of personal future" with 70% of youth holding this asset. On the other hand, the least reported asset at 19% is "having creative activities to take part in" (Roehlkepartain, 1999). This illustrates the need to build safe places for young people to go and build skills, and to create opportunities to participate within their communities.

The more assets a youth has, the greater the chance the youth has of overcoming adversity and risk factors. Unfortunately, the *Search Institute* has found that the average adolescent has fewer than half of the 40 developmental assets thought to be essential for well-being (Scales & Leffert, 1999). This finding is based on surveying over 100,000 students in grades 6-12 (Roehlkepartain, 1999). This demonstrates a need to build communities that are positive, skill-building, caring, supportive, and safe for youth to grow up in.

When assets have been measured in the youth population, it has been consistently found that approximately 15% of youth have 0-10 assets, 41% have 11-20, 35% have 21-30, and 9% have 31-40 assets (Mannes, Roehlkepartain, & Benson, 2005). As youth age, assets tend to decrease. For example, in grade 6, youth have on average 23.1 assets, while in grade 12 they have 18.3. There are slight differences found by gender and location. Females on average have 20.7 assets while males have 17.8; urban and suburban youth have 19.4 assets, while rural youth (towns with population under 2,500) have 19.2 (Search Institute, 2002).

The asset-building approach is unique in that it is designed to be used with all youth, not just those at risk or already 'in trouble.' Even those youth who may appear to be successful and resilient can and will benefit from enhanced skills, resources, and supports in their lives. Therefore, a developmental assets approach represents a shift from reactive to proactive responses.

The developmental assets framework is community-building in nature. It calls for an ecological network of families, neighbors, businesses, schools, health and social service organizations, and intergenerational groups to enhance and create positive youth development projects. Therefore, asset building shifts responsibility to the local level and promotes 'bottom-up' and 'grass-roots' approaches to community building.

The asset building approach recognizes that young people need adults to be involved with them, and this requires adults other than parents or family members. Store owners, community members, neighbors, politicians, and school officials who are connected to youth and care about youth have been associated with positive outcomes among youth. Such individuals would certainly see the benefits in learning about the developmental assets approach (Scales et al., 2001). The assets framework emphasizes aspects of socialization that are significant in adolescent development – family interaction, peer support, and school involvement (Oman et al., 2004).

Developmental assets are consistent with international declarations that protect children such as the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* (Lerner & Benson, 2003). Both the developmental assets framework and the *UN Convention on the Rights of the Child* promote actions that ask adults to provide, protect, and participate in helping children to thrive.

The developmental assets approach is not a program, but rather a philosophy that guides our interactions with young people and the actions we may take on their behalf. “Asset building is about deciding to make changes in your own life that put young people first” (Roehlkepartain, 1999).

Although each community adds its own personal touch and creativity to enhancing developmental assets, the *Search Institute* voices six principles of asset building:

1. All children need assets.
2. Everyone can build assets.
3. Asset building is an ongoing process.
4. Relationships are key.
5. Delivering consistent messages is crucial.
6. Duplication and repetitions are necessary.

Asset building brings young people’s strengths to the forefront. Society tends to look at children pathologically and ask “what’s wrong?” We need to look at “what’s right” (Search Institute, 1999).

ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

As mentioned previously, assets can also be applied directly at the community level and are not only relevant to individual development.

Asset-based community development works from a principle that a community can be built or rebuilt by focusing on the strengths and capacities of its citizens and organizations (Dewar, 1997). Communities cannot be improved and strengthened by focusing solely on needs, problems, and deficiencies – but

rather with locating the assets, skills, and capacities of citizens, professionals, places, and institutions (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993).

A major component in asset-based community development is to map one's community. Institutions in the community (e.g., schools, hospitals, human service organizations, parks, libraries) and the resources that are part of each of these institutions (e.g., people, spaces, equipment, budgets) need to be identified.

A stronger and self-reliant community can be created by mobilizing its strengths (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993). People need to be aware of what their community has to offer in order to plan effective interventions, make the most of existing resources, and understand needs and gaps in service infrastructure and delivery (Dorfman, 1998). Endless assets can be found in the community such as those found in youth, the elderly, parents, volunteers, professionals, citizens' associations, churches, artists, media, schools, businesses, cultural associations, disabled individuals, persons on social assistance, retirees, universities/colleges, parks, libraries, police, and hospitals. Even abandoned and vacant spaces (e.g., vacant lots, vacant buildings, underutilized space) can be turned into physical resources such as playgrounds, neighborhood cultural centres, community gardens, family housing units, museums, and theatres.

Homan (2004), recommends investigating community capital to uncover possible assets. According to Homan communities are rich in capital and many types of capital exist such as: 1) Environmental capital– the natural features or resources of an area; 2) Physical capital – the aspects added to a natural environment by humans – roads, buildings, infrastructure; 3) Economic capital – financial wealth and having the means to produce and exchange things of monetary value; 4) Human capital – the skills, talents, and health of citizens; 5) Political capital – policy setting, enforcement, and law making; 6) Information capital - the generation, accumulation, storage, retrieval, and exchange of data, information, and knowledge; and 7) Social capital – community norms, interrelationships, trust, collaborative action, and community consciousness.

It is recommended by community developers that asset-based projects make use of community members and involve them in as many components of an intervention, project, or program as possible. This is suggested because citizens are more likely to be involved in the ongoing activities and upkeep of community-based projects if asked to help design the project and monitor its processes and outcomes. Furthermore, projects that involve citizens directly in their design are more likely to meet community needs, foster positive outcomes, and result in longer lasting improvements (Kretzmann & McKnight, 1993).

What has become clear from the literature on assets and community development is that healthy communities tend to produce healthy individuals. Homan (2004) was quoted as stating, "A community must be seen as any living organism that requires energy and nutrients to grow." We must begin to look at

the resources and strengths we have in Cape Breton and foster growth in our community, as we would in our children, to truly feel and experience the benefits of asset-building.

Although the asset-building approach is positive, resistance to change is often common in asset-based community development. It is human nature to be cautious of new ideas and approaches. Fisher (2003) highlights the different categories that community members may be part of – 1) innovators, 2) early adopters, 3) early majority, 4) late majority, and 5) laggards. According to Fisher, *innovators* make up 2.5% of the population and are those who are ready for change. They often seek out change, embrace new ideas, and are described as years ahead of their time. *Early adopters* make up 13.5% of the population. They are willing to try something new, even if it hasn't been fully tested or implemented, and are enthusiastic about new ideas. *Early majority* make up 34% of the population. These people are a bit apprehensive at first, but once they see that a new idea is working they are likely to willingly come on board. *Late majority* make up another 34% of the population. This group of individuals is often oblivious to changes occurring around them and may take years to discover what is happening. When they see that a project or idea is working and has been adopted by a number of others, they too will accept it. Finally, *laggards* make up 16% of the population. Such individuals will never come on board and tend to resist change and new ways of thinking. It can take up to four years to get the first four groupings on board (Fisher, 2003).

Researchers, such as Wittman (1999), state that the “stages of change” theory can be applied to understand community readiness for asset building. This theory explains that we all decide to make changes and take action based on what stage we are at in our understanding of whether a problem exists and our belief in the benefits and detriments of taking action. According to the stages of change theory, a person can be at various stages in the cycle of change:

“**Precontemplation** is the stage at which there is no intention to change behavior in the foreseeable future. Many individuals in this stage are unaware or underaware of their problems. **Contemplation** is the stage in which people are aware that a problem exists and are seriously thinking about overcoming it but have not yet made a commitment to take action. **Action** is the stage in which individuals modify their behavior, experiences, or environment in order to overcome their problems. Action involves the most overt behavioral changes and requires considerable commitment of time and energy. **Maintenance** is the stage in which people work to prevent relapse and consolidate the gains attained during action” (definition taken from <http://www.uri.edu/research/cprc/TTM/StagesOfChange.htm>).

When applied specifically to asset-building, the possible stages of change would be as follows:

1. *Precontemplation* – here people are unaware of the important role they can play in young people's lives. They are also in denial that a problem exists and that a change needs to happen in their community.

2. *Contemplation* - at this stage people consider whether asset building has a place in their lives. They weigh the costs and benefits.
3. *Action* - if people decide that asset building is 'worth it' they will do something to build assets. They will attend meetings, talk with others, join committees, spread the word, etc.
4. *Maintenance* – at this stage citizens reinforce, repeat, and strengthen actions until they become habit. Asset building becomes a way of life.

In order to transform communities into asset building places, the *Search Institute* has identified five action strategies to follow (Roehlkepartain, 2005):

1. *Engage adults*
2. *Mobilize young people*
3. *Activate sectors* – schools, youth organizations, human services, health facilities, businesses, congregations
4. *Invigorate programs* to become more asset rich and available and accessible to children/youth, or create your own asset based initiative
5. *Influence civic decisions* by influencing decision makers and leaders to provide financial, media, and policy support to transform communities

As demonstrated in the paragraphs above, there exists many theories and strategies to mobilize communities to take action. Yet, according to Homan (2004), a major crisis or upheaval in what's normal is often needed to encourage change and action. He says, "A crisis can lead to community action because a whole system is thrown from equilibrium." This is true for Cape Breton where the *Community Partnership on Drug Abuse* was formed in response to public upset over death and crime caused by prescription drug abuse.

Community change takes time. Some of the major challenges in mobilizing citizens in a community to be asset-builders are that we live in a society that doesn't expect adults to take responsibility for other people's children, and we are increasingly becoming less communal in nature.

THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ASSETS AND PROBLEM BEHAVIORS SUCH AS DRUG USAGE

The synthesis of developmental assets is based on prevention, promotion, protection, and resiliency research. The power of developmental assets is two-fold. They: 1) promote positive behaviors and attitudes, and 2) help protect young people from risk behaviors such as drug use. When young people have more of the developmental assets in their lives, they are more likely to make positive choices and engage in thriving behaviors. The presence of more assets also means youth will be less likely to engage in a wide range of high-risk behaviors and dangerous decision-making such as to use alcohol, binge drink, smoke, use illicit drugs, drink and drive, ride with someone who is intoxicated, have sexual intercourse at an early age, shoplift, vandalize, get into trouble with police, hit someone, hurt someone, use a weapon, carry a weapon for protection,

participate in group fighting, threaten to harm someone, skip school, gamble, develop eating disorders, become depressed, and attempt suicide (Benson, 1997; Roehlkepartain, 1999).

Assets lead to powerful and positive outcomes in youth and the reduction of risk factors because they promote thriving behaviors. Thriving indicators include succeeding in school, helping others, valuing diversity, maintaining good health, displaying leadership characteristics, resisting danger, delaying gratification, and overcoming adversity (Roehlkepartain, 1999). Such factors can reduce the likelihood of engaging in a variety of unhealthy behaviors, including drug and alcohol use and abuse in adolescence.

Assets are powerful predictors of risk behaviors. Mannes, Roehlkepartain, and Benson (2005) found assets to be better predictors of risk than demographic factors. They found that experiencing fewer than 10 assets was up to 5 times as powerful in predicting high-risk behaviors as poverty.

Based on numerous studies throughout North American using developmental assets surveys, it has been consistently found that youth who have 31 or more of the 40 assets have been found to get involved with only one dangerous behavior, whereas those with 10 or fewer assets are likely to get involved with approximately 10 of the dangerous behaviors such as those highlighted above (Roehlkepartain, 1999).

Similarly, Oman et al. (2004) found that youth who possessed all of the developmental assets were 4.44 times more likely to report nonuse of alcohol and 5.41 times as likely to report nonuse of drugs.

Locally, a developmental assets study was completed with a small sample of youth in Louisbourg, Nova Scotia. Lindsey Bussey, a psychology thesis student in 2005, sampled 57 students in grades 5-9. She surveyed 30 females and 27 males. Although a small sample was used, she found a pattern similar to larger studies – adolescents with a greater number of assets had fewer risk taking behaviors such as drug and alcohol use, trouble with the law, and violence.

According to the Search Institute (2004), having numerous developmental assets increases the odds of preventing substance use among youth of different racial/ethnic backgrounds, genders, socio-economic status, grade levels, and community types. Additionally, developmental assets have been shown to play a role in delaying the onset of drug and alcohol use (Search Institute, 2004). This is an important finding because research states that the earlier people initiate drug use, the greater their risk is for later abuse and addiction.

Although all categories of assets have been associated with reduced alcohol and drug use, the assets categories said to make the largest difference in preventing

alcohol and drug use are the 'boundaries and expectations assets' and the 'support assets' (Search Institute, 2004).

Combinations of assets are more important than any single asset in preventing alcohol and drug use (Oman et al., 2004). Consequently, interventions designed to promote multiple assets will be more effective than those focusing on single or few assets. The table below demonstrates the collective power of assets. A greater number of assets have been shown to reduce problem behaviors associated with addiction.

Table taken from page 148 (Benson, Leffert, Scales, & Blyth, 1998). Statistics are from the United States and based on data collected in 1996 -1997.

	Percentage of youth involved in risk-taking behavior			
	If 0-10 assets	If 11-20 assets	If 21-30 assets	31-40 assets
Used alcohol three or more times in the past month or got drunk once or more in the past 2 weeks	53	30	11	3
Smokes one or more cigarettes every day	45	21	6	1
Used illicit drugs three or more times in the past year	42	19	6	1
Has driven after drinking or ridden with a drinking driver three or more times in the past year	42	24	10	4
Has gambled three or more times in the past year	34	23	13	6

Assets work to prevent and reduce drug use because they strengthen positive peer, family, and neighborhood influences. Such influences and relationships have proven essential in understanding drug usage patterns among youth (Oman et al., 2004). Moreover, the National Longitudinal Study of Adolescent Health (1997) reported that youth connectedness to multiple support networks serves as an important protective factor in reducing mental health problems, violence, sexually transmitted infections, and substance use (Benson, Leffert, Scales, & Blyth, 1998).

METHODS TO BE USED

As previously outlined, our ABC'S project will have a number of phases. Now that existing scholarly and community-based literature has been reviewed, our group will be measuring developmental assets in various Cape Breton communities. After we have a greater understanding of the current

developmental status of our youth, we will plan, design, and implement an intervention that is evidence-based and community building in nature. Our planned methods are delineated in greater detail below.

Instruments: We will collect baseline data on Cape Breton youth's developmental assets using a scale that has been widely used and published, and is valid and reliable. The Search Institute's *Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors* survey will be used with students in grades 7 to 12. This survey measures youth's developmental assets as well as thriving indicators and risk taking behaviors. It contains 156 items.

Population: 50% of the total school population in three "geographic" families of schools in Cape Breton (n = 2286 students) will be surveyed. Students in New Waterford, Sydney Mines, and Sydney River/Coxheath/Westmount will be surveyed. Our intent is to survey grades 7-12 in order to determine developmental trends and understand specific age group's assets and needs.

Strategies: Once baseline data is collected and analyzed, we will invite and engage youth, families, schools, neighborhoods, organizations, and businesses to take action on the results. We plan to design and implement a collaborative intervention in one Cape Breton community. At this time, our ABC'S subcommittee is considering Sydney Mines, Nova Scotia as the site for our intervention.

1. Conduct a needs-assessment

Asset-based interventions work to enhance community resources and reduce deficits. Fisher, Imm, Chinman, and Wandersman (2006) recommend carrying out a *needs assessment* to understand community readiness, gaps, and assets. Questions to ask in the planning stage of an intervention are listed below:

1. What are the needs, risks, resources, and conditions to address?
2. What are your goals and desired outcomes?
3. How will you achieve your goals effectively?
4. How does your work fit with existing programs and community-wide initiatives?
5. What capacities will you need to implement your program or asset-building initiative?
6. What is your plan?
7. How will you assess the quality of implementation?
8. How will you determine if the program or asset-building initiative is working?
9. If the initiative is successful how will it be sustained?

2. Map community assets

Dorfman (1998) lists numerous techniques for identifying and utilizing community assets. These include:

- Identifying potential community assets by asking citizens, “Is there any one thing that instantly springs to mind when the name of your community is uttered?”
- Listing people such as community members, leaders, and professionals and what each may have to offer, and then determining how each person’s skills can be used at the community level.
- Matching community assets to community needs. One such way is to have a “skills bank” where people list their skills and where skills can be sought by others. For instance, one citizen may look for someone who is good at gardening and in return may offer child sitting.
- Determining what institutions, organizations, businesses, clubs, and leagues have to offer. For example, a church may be able to offer free meeting space, while a grocery store may have large kitchen/baking facilities. Schools offer a wealth of resources – classrooms, technology, large gyms, and outdoor spaces.

3. *Learn from and utilize social marketing*

According to Fisher (2003), a social marketing and communications strategy is an important component to any asset-building initiative. Social marketing is an approach that combines business and psychology to "sell" ideas, attitudes and behaviors to “consumers.” Some marketing techniques recommended by other asset builders that we may use in our own project include:

- Develop a recognizable logo
- Publish a quarterly newsletter
- Provide workshops to various target audiences
- Create a website to share information, promote activities, and post for volunteers
- Promote activities and events
- Reach target audiences through appropriate messaging

The *Community Partnership on Drug Abuse* has completed the first phase of a social marketing project and an important finding was that any messages used ought to strengthen sense of community and build assets and not just warn community members of deficits and risks (McKay & Kokocki, 2006).

An example of a message recommended in the McKay and Kokocki study is, “Drug use is everyone’s loss. Gain by being part of the solution.” Messages aimed at engaging and mobilizing communities to take ownership of issues such as drug use are key. Many citizens feel that issues don’t affect them if they are not personally experiencing a problem. The ‘but my kids are ok’ syndrome must be addressed. Asset-based messages will be designed to provide citizens with

hope and solid actions they can take to enhance the lives of many in their community.

4. *Strengthen intergenerational connections*

Intergenerational programs are important because intergenerational interactions are becoming rarer in today's society (Bressler, Henkin, & Adler, no date provided). Intergenerational interactions need to be enhanced due to their being a greater number of senior citizens. Our society is getting older because of aging baby boomers and enhanced health care and medical intervention. Additionally, high divorce rates, increased single-parent families, and geographic mobility have changed the social make-up of our communities. As a result of such changes, seniors and youth both have unmet needs. Youth may have few non-familial adults to interact with, senior citizens often feel isolated, and many families lack support in caregiving for both children and aging parents. Intergenerational programs can bridge such gaps by meeting unmet needs. Examples of intergenerational asset-building projects include: reading programs, storytelling programs, exercise groups, child care, computer lessons, music lessons, cooking classes, respite programs, and mentoring programs. Congregations are also intergenerational and diverse. This makes them an important resource in asset building (Betz & Roehlkepartain, 2000). In all of these mentioned intergenerational programs, the young can lead the old and vice versa. Important learning and skill building take place and isolation, stereotypes, and fears can be laid to rest. Intergenerational programs enhance sense of belonging for youth and sense of safety for the elderly.

5. *Enhance parent involvement and education*

Asset-building needs to be encouraged to take place in the home, not just in schools and communities. Asset workshops and discussion groups for parents have been techniques used and recommended by other asset-builders.

Lerner and Benson (2003) provide the following actions to assist parents in building assets in their children:

1. *love and connect* – unconditional love is important as is spending quality time together.
2. *monitor and observe* – parents can monitor their child's moods, needs, emotions, and behaviors.
3. *guide and limit* – set appropriate rules and boundaries but also let children make healthy mistakes and try new things to foster learning and independence.
4. *model and consult* – role modeling appropriate behaviors and interactions is essential. Consulting with other parents teaches new techniques, increases support networks, and can give parents more confidence as caregivers.

5. *provide for and advocate on behalf of* – children and youth require physical, social, emotional, and financial provisions. To improve conditions, sometimes we have to advocate for the rights of children.

A message used to reach parents through assets was highlighted in Lerner and Benson's (2003) book: "You can't control their world but you can add and subtract from it."

6. *Reach and network with the educational system*

As highlighted in the video "You have to live it: Building developmental assets in school communities," students were responsible for ordering teacher supplies (by networking with teachers and supply companies), delivering the items to the respective teachers, and keeping track of their school's supply budget. Other successes in asset rich schools were cooperative learning, mentoring programs (e.g., older student to younger student, community member to student), peer tutoring, reading buddy programs, community band programs that bring together senior citizens and students, student organized conferences on developmental assets, and student involvement in the development of school policy. Students enrolled in asset building schools expressed that their self-esteem had improved and that they love coming to school, while administrators shared that their discipline logs became obsolete.

Evidence and research demonstrate that asset building in schools reduces school violence and drug use and increases academic achievement, motivation, and sense of purpose. Students feel as though they belong because they are responsible for school decision-making and problem-solving. Schools that use asset building have been described as fostering, warm, and welcoming, whereas teachers who are asset builders have high expectations and never give up on young people (Search Institute, 1999).

Locally, we can learn from schools across North America that have made asset building part of their school ethos. Some of the first steps we plan on taking include having meetings with school board administration, delivering teacher workshops on assets, and working closely with student leaders, clubs, and teams to incorporate asset strategies and organize asset events. We will be sharing the evidence and research on how asset building improves the school environment and enriches learning.

It must be noted that many teachers are already 'living and breathing assets' by utilizing democratic teaching strategies and children's rights based curricula. However, delivering workshops to share the assets philosophy can only strengthen such approaches and give these teachers confidence to continue intentionally with what they are already doing.

We will not be promoting another “program” in schools, but instead offering a positive way of looking at children and youth and what they need to flourish.

It makes sense to promote the developmental assets approach in schools because this is the place children spend a great portion of their time. It is crucial that this environment be healthy.

7. Liaise with existing youth clubs, sports, and youth serving organizations

We hope to meet with and inform the adult staff and peer mentors of programs where youth spend a great deal of their time. Asset workshops will be delivered to such settings, and youth organizations will be included in the planning and deliverance of community events. See appendix B for a listing of youth focused services in the Cape Breton Regional Municipality.

8. Build an intervention that is consistent with positive youth development and involves citizens, professionals, and leaders familiar with, or willing to learn more about, this approach

According to Restuccia & Bundy (2003), positive youth development practitioners work to promote a sense of physical and emotional safety, recognize the successes of all children, create a culture of young people supporting each other, ensure that ground rules are designed as a collaborative process between youth and adults, and encourage relationship building. They offer continuous and genuine praise, enforce clear rules, resolve conflicts peacefully, and foster meaningful youth participation by providing opportunity for youth to practice and develop leadership skills. Adults who practice positive youth development understand that youth need to have the opportunity to choose from a range of activities and to be involved in the planning of any activities. The activities chosen need to be based on youth interests, values, and passion. Young people are often looking for a sense of purpose. So, there needs to be opportunity for youth to interact with community members and become involved in community issues. Intergenerational interaction is important because youth often need assistance to understand the greatest needs of their community, to brainstorm solutions, and to take action to achieve those goals. Successful positive youth development practitioners realize that it is important to “get out of the building.” If a project never leaves its facility, participants will only build attachment to the building rather than to their neighborhood or community. Skill building is a very important component of positive youth development. Promising practices include incorporating the interests of young people into the activities, teaching in multiple learning styles to recognize multiple intelligences, and using cooperative instructional styles. Finally, positive youth development practitioners do not see themselves as leaders or organizers. They are mentors and facilitators, and a resource for the youth (Haiven, 2004).

9. Learn from examples of asset projects and from asset building champions across North America

When reading through the numerous books, newsletters, and journal articles on developmental assets, many examples of asset-building were shared – some great and some small, but all meaningful and beneficial. Some of these examples are listed below. We can model and learn from these ideas as we work to create our own asset building initiatives.

In Alberta, the RCMP issue tickets for good behavior (Wiesner, 2005).

In Anchorage, AK hotels provide asset materials in hotel rooms, youth sit on the municipal council, and the police department hands out asset booklets to troubled families.

In Georgetown, TX, utility workers are trained in asset-building and their service trucks display a “safe place” logo so young people needing help will know where to go.

In Newark, OH, a judge has introduced 600 youth offenders to asset building and paired them with community mentors. Also in Newark, employees in certain companies are paid 1 hour per week to mentor children in elementary schools.

In Kodiak, AK, public health nurses introduce new parents to developmental assets while babies get their check-ups and examinations.

In Mesa, AZ, graffiti artists have turned their vandalism into expressions of art and culture by being provided with spaces and supplies.

In Iowa, 20 high school students created a theatre presentation to address drug use and self-esteem.

In St. Charles, MN, ESL students are mentored by community adults to contribute to columns in the local newspaper.

In Chattanooga, TN, neighborhood groups were formed that meet regularly to brainstorm ideas such as having annual holiday celebrations and summer picnics. Neighbors now watch out for one another so that no one feels isolated especially the elderly, sick, and newcomers.

In Boston, MA, teens from diverse communities got together and lobbied for the transit authority to extend bus/train hours so students could participate in and get home from extracurricular activities.

In Warren County, PA, youth and adults collaborate to create public works of art.

In Otsego County, NY, a coalition known as *Leatherstocking's Promise - The Alliance For Youth, Inc.* was formed. It was formed in response to high drinking rates among youth and numerous drinking and driving injuries and deaths. They have successfully brought together over 50 partners. They have committee members responsible for organizing initiatives to strengthen the various developmental assets. For instance, one group member may be “chair of safe places”, while another may be “chair of caring adults” (For more information visit: <http://www.leatherstockingspromise.org>).

*Note: If not otherwise indicated, examples listed above were found in Roehlkepartain (1999).

Closer to home, asset building initiatives have taken place in Dartmouth, NS, and Miramichi, NB. In Dartmouth North, a group, *Knowledge is Power*, was formed in response to negative media that focused on youth in the area. Residents realized that something positive had to be done. In June 2004, they surveyed youth in grades 4-12 using *Search Institute* survey measures. Youth in grades 4-6 had about 25 of the 40 assets, while youth in grades 7-12 had about 16 of the 40 assets. They delivered workshops to any interested groups and individuals on developmental assets, created a community newspaper that was free and positive in nature (i.e. North Dartmouth ECHO), and encouraged the local library to order asset materials for citizens to read. Additionally, new police officers in North Dartmouth get a half day workshop on developmental assets, assets have been incorporated into school improvement plans, and students have been hired through grants to organize asset-based community events. Our ABC'S subcommittee was fortunate to view a presentation delivered by Karl Nightingale in the fall of 2006. Karl was a key player in the Dartmouth North asset building initiative. In Miramichi, a group known as *Partners for a Drug Free Miramichi* was formed in 2005. In March 2005, the group surveyed 3200 young people from grades 6-12 using *Search Institute's Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors* survey. They found that on average their youth had 17.3 of 40 assets. In order to improve the situation of youth in their community, they engaged in planning three actions: 1) community awareness, 2) targeting youth serving organizations, and 3) youth engagement. To increase community awareness, the Miramichi group has held community forums, delivered parent workshops, and organized displays at community locations such as the hospital. They have also written columns in the local newspaper known as “Asset Corner.” To reach youth-serving organizations, they offered and delivered training sessions on developmental assets. To meet the need for youth engagement, they formed a youth advisory committee as part of city council. Their work is ongoing and our own committee will hear more from the Miramichi group when representatives from their group deliver a presentation to our working group in February 2007.

Many ideas for asset building exist and have proven successful across various age groups. Asset building can begin at birth with parent education on developmental assets, or by community members showing parents support by offering to run errands for them or by baby-sitting. With young children, assets could be fostered in a neighborhood by community adults attending school

events and by talking to children about books, music, movies, and news. Parents could write notes to individuals who have made a difference in their child's life and refer to developmental assets in their note. This helps to spread the word to janitors, bus drivers, teachers, coaches, grounds supervisors, and cafeteria workers. Family members can build assets by saying one encouraging thing to someone in their household every day. With teenagers, find ways to connect with them through sports and music. Invite teens to help build community assets and advocate alongside them for their causes. To asset build in organizations such as workplaces and schools, post the 40 assets on a fridge or wall to educate others and create awareness. Encourage management in workplaces to develop policies that support asset building such as youth internships, or employee-youth mentoring and reading programs. In neighborhoods, treat youth with the same respect you would adults (Roehlkepartain, 1999).

WHO WILL BENEFIT FROM ASSET-BUILDING?

The benefits of asset-building are far-reaching. Benefits can be seen in all ecological levels of society from the individual all the way up to policy development in government. Positive outcomes can be quantitative in nature such as seen in the relationship between fewer problem behaviors and a greater number of assets, or when an individual's social network increases because he or she gets to know more people in the community. Outcomes can also be qualitative in nature, such as feeling a sense of community or being empowered to take action.

Some of the benefits of asset-building we expect for target groups in Cape Breton include:

Youth – Youth will benefit because they will be able to share the risk factors and assets they experience through survey completion. They will also be the focus of any intervention planning and will be involved in its design, implementation, and evaluation. As a result, their participation and community involvement will most likely increase. They will, most likely, then feel less isolated, feel more connected, and may engage in fewer destructive behaviors. Scales, Benson, Leffert, and Blyth (2000) found that the benefits of enhanced developmental assets are numerous for youth and include spending more time in youth programs, having greater cultural competence, increasing personal power and self-esteem, enhancing decision-making and planning skills, creating motivation to achieve, and feeling valued by the community and connected to family.

Families – Parents and caregivers will learn which assets young people have and which they need to build on or enhance. They will also learn about parenting techniques that are consistent with the developmental assets framework.

Senior Citizens – Senior Citizens will become less isolated as they are invited to create and take part in activities. They will be provided opportunities to socialize with young people and share stories, skills, and concerns, while acting as mentors.

Schools – Schools will be in a better position to realign policies and programs to match the needs and assets that were identified in the youth asset surveys. The asset approach compliments existing school-based initiatives and can be easily integrated into ongoing school improvement plans.

Neighborhoods – Neighborhoods will be the site for any intervention planning that occurs as a result of the asset survey findings. Community members will be invited to voice their concerns and be part of intervention design. Sense of community will, most likely be increased as well as sense of control over neighborhood occurrences. Additionally, adults who begin to work more closely with youth will see changes in their own skill base, attitudes, and sense of efficacy (Tolman & Pittman, 2001).

Community Organizations – Community organizations, such as Addiction Services, will be better able to understand the current risks facing youth as well as the resources or assets youth possess. When organizations learn about development assets, a greater value is placed on the inclusion and representation of youth, and agencies may be more likely to reach out to the community in diverse ways. This will result in client-focused services.

Researchers – Researchers will benefit from having Cape Breton asset data available, as well as new opportunities for knowledge sharing and evidence-based intervention planning.

Government – Asset survey findings and outcomes of asset based interventions will assist government in child-focused policy development, service creation/improvement, and may guide in funding community infrastructure.

Like-minded coalitions that may exist provincially, nationally, and internationally will have new data available and may learn best practices as our own planning group goes through the phases of asset-building.

EVALUATING OUR EFFORTS

Our ABC'S subcommittee will be part of designing and implementing an asset-based intervention in Cape Breton. Many strategies will be used to build assets and we will rely heavily on evidence-based findings and practices. Yet, in order to understand how and if our efforts are working and ways to strengthen our practices, ongoing evaluations will be necessary.

According to Dewar (1997), there are two streams of evaluation available to researchers – “scientific” and “appropriate” or community-based. Scientific evaluations aim to establish cause and effect relationships, whereas appropriate evaluations work best for community-based projects. The latter type of evaluation seeks to understand how things work (i.e., process), what has changed as the result of a project (i.e., outcomes), and what might be done next (i.e., goals).

Scientific approaches steer clear of anecdotal reports and stories and require facts, baseline data from which to compare, and control groups to measure for significant effects. On the other hand, in community evaluations so many variables and factors exist that it can be difficult to determine what actually caused a desired outcome. Communities cannot be broken down and studied as many physical and biological processes can be, and communities cannot be controlled and/or manipulated like lab-housed experiments.

Community projects require different types of evaluations because they can lead to a number of outcomes. For instance, an intervention project may indeed reduce yearly instances of crime such as vandalism, but may also bring together neighbors, expand social networks, identify local issues, and develop collaborative action plans. Appropriate evaluations seek to uncover all outcomes, no matter how small. The overall goal of community evaluations is to improve and strengthen conditions, whereas scientific evaluations seek to prove, inform, and judge.

Finally, scientific and community evaluations differ because few community building projects remain constant long enough to be studied scientifically.

An evaluation of a community intervention should be *process*, *goals*, and *outcomes* based. That is, a three-pronged evaluation needs to be used if at all possible. *Process* questions would ask how the idea for the project came about, how it developed, how people came together, how the project presents itself (i.e., mission, goals, values), how it is received by others, which local assets were identified, and how individuals’ skills and assets were found and mobilized. A *goal-based* evaluation would ask if a project’s goals were met and explore why or why not, which components of an initiative are of the greatest value and interest to others, and if there are any elements that may be added to the project to strengthen it. *Outcome* related questions would ask what has occurred or changed as a result of the project, what has declined, increased, or improved, and how has community morale changed.

Additional evaluation questions put forth by Dewar (1997) for community-based projects include:

- 1) What do participants consider inspiring about the project?
- 2) What keeps participants involved?
- 3) What were some of the important barriers and challenges?
- 4) How did you get people involved and keep them involved?

5) Are the results seen as sustainable? Why or why not?

Dewar (1997) states that, for an evaluation to be successful, a group must be honest about shortcomings because this builds credibility and adds to the usefulness of an evaluation. As well, participants must feel safe to share and address what is and is not working. Residents involved in a community project can also be part of conducting an evaluation, if at all possible. Most importantly, strong baseline data is essential in community evaluations. It is useful to have a starting point from which to gauge progress.

CONCLUDING THOUGHTS

Because children comprise approximately 30% of the global population, Moore and Lippman (2005) express that “understanding exactly what leads children to grow into confident, caring, and responsible adults is an issue that needs to be at the forefront of every nation’s agenda.” Additionally, Lerner, Fisher, and Weinberg (2000) call for a “science of and for the people” – that is, research that intentionally leads to improving the lives of individuals, families, communities, and society. We fully support such statements, and as a result are actively learning more about developmental assets to align our actions with these values and goals.

Recently, in a June 2006 report, the *Health Council of Canada* put forth 10 key ingredients that make programs work for children and youth. These ingredients are:

- Act early (e.g. early intervention and prevention programming)
- Involve family
- Involve youth
- Integrate policy and practice
- Make programs accessible and equitable
- Adapt programs to meet community needs
- Modify programs based on what works
- Maintain political commitment and sustain good programs

Asset building is consistent with these 10 essential components of successful child and youth programs put forth by the *Health Council of Canada*. This gives us confidence that building developmental assets is an appropriate approach to improving conditions for children and youth in our own community.

Based on survey results from across 213 North American communities, it was determined that 40% of youth report they have a caring neighborhood, 24% report they have a caring school climate, and 26% report they have positive family communication (Roehlkepartain, 1999). There is much work to be done at all of the ecological levels of family, school, neighborhood, and community in enabling our children to thrive.

Words written by the Association of Alaska School Boards and the Department of Health and Social Services (1998) resonate strongly after reading numerous scholarly articles, books, and guidebooks on developmental assets and community asset development:

“Imagine living in a community where all young people:

Feel loved and supported by their families and neighbors with many positive, caring places to be;

Know what is expected of them – what actions are acceptable and not acceptable- and see adults set good examples;

Spend time in creative activities, both in and away from home;

Believe that education and life-long learning are important;

Have strong values that guide their actions;

Have skills to make healthy choices and have good relationships; and

Feel strong, worthwhile, and connected to some purpose and promise in life.”

Our goal is to help youth feel and experience each of the items presented above and to consecutively strengthen *all* community factions. By following the developmental asset building framework and learning from asset-based community development, perhaps we will be closer to reaching this ambition.

REFERENCES

- Arthur, M.W., & Blitz, C. (2000). Bridging the gap between science and practice in substance abuse prevention through needs assessment and strategic community planning. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 28 (3), 241-155.
- Association of Alaska School Boards and the Department of Health and Social Services. (1998). *Helping kids succeed – Alaskan style*. Anchorage, Alaska.
- Bailey, J. (2006). *Depression, daily hassles, and stressful life events as factors in drug use*. Psychology undergrad thesis. Cape Breton University.
- Benson, P. (1997). *All kids are our kids: What communities must do to raise caring and responsible children and adolescents*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Benson, P. (2002). Adolescent development in social and community context: A program of research. In Lerner, R.M., Taylor, C.S., & von Eye, A., *New directions for youth development* (pp. 123-147). San Francisco CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Benson, P., Leffert, N., Scales, P., Blyth, D. (1998). Beyond the 'village' rhetoric: Creating healthy communities for children and adolescents. *Applied Developmental Science*, 2 (3), 138-159.
- Benson, P. & Pittman, K. (2001). Introduction: Moving the youth development message – Turning a vague idea into a moral imperative. In Benson & Pittman, (Eds.). *Trends in youth development: Visions, realities, and challenges*. Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Betz, A., & Roehlkepartain, J.L. (2000). *Networking congregations for asset building*. Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute.
- Bressler, J., Henkin, N., & Adler, M. (date unknown). *Connecting generations, strengthening communities: A toolkit for intergenerational program planners*. Philadelphia, PA: Temple University, Center for Intergenerational Learning.
- Census Canada*. (2001). Population and dwelling counts and population rank, for Canada, Provinces and Territories, and urban areas, 2001. Available via: <http://www12.statcan.ca/english/census01/products/standard/popdwell/Table-UA-P.cfm?PR=12>
- Covell, K. (2004). *Adolescents and drug use in Cape Breton: A focus on risk factors and prevention*. Cape Breton, NS: Children's Rights Centre.
- Dewar, T. (1997). *A guide to evaluating asset-based community development: Lessons, challenges, and opportunities*. Northwestern University: The Asset-Based Community Development Institute, Institute for Policy Research.
- D'Emidio-Caston, M. & Brown, J.H. (1998). The other side of the story. Student narratives on the California Drug Alcohol and Tobacco Education Programs. *Evaluation Review*, 22 (1), 95-117.

- Dorfman, D. (1998). *Mapping community assets workbook. Strengthening Community Education: The basis for sustainable renewal*. Portland, Oregon: Northwest Regional Educational Lab.
- Fisher, D. (2003). *Assets in action: A handbook for making communities better places to grow up*. Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute.
- Fisher, D., Imm, P., Chinman, M., & Wandersman, A. (2006). *Getting to outcomes with developmental assets: Ten steps to measuring success in youth programs and communities*. Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute.
- Garbarino, J. (1995). *Raising children in a socially toxic environment*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass Publishers.
- Genuine Progress Index (GPI) Atlantic. (June 6, 2003). *Measuring community well-being and development*. JAG Presentation.
- Griffin-Wiesner, J. (2005). *The journey of community change: A how-to guide for healthy communities healthy youth initiatives*. Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute.
- Haans, D. & Hotton, T. (2004). Alcohol and drug use in early adolescence. *Health Reports*, 15 (3) 9-26.
- Haiven, J. (2004, January 3). Action teams empower youth in communities. *The Halifax Herald* (pagination unavailable, accessed online).
- Homan, M. (2004). *Promoting community change: Making it happen in the real world*. Thomson Canada.
- Jarrett, R. L., Sullivan, P. J., Warkins, N. D. (2005). Developing social capital through participation in organized youth programs: Qualitative insights from three programs. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 33 (1), 41-55.
- Kretzmann, J.P. & McKnight, J.L. (1993). *Building communities from the inside out: A path toward finding and mobilizing a community's assets*. Northwestern University: The Asset-Based Community Development Institute, Institute for Policy Research.
- Lerner, R., Fisher, C.B., & Weinberg, R.A. (2000). Toward a science for and of the people: Promoting civil society through the application of developmental science. *Child Development*, 71, 11-20.
- Lerner, R., Taylor, C. S., & von Eye, A. (2002). *New directions for youth development*. San Francisco CA: Jossey-Bass.
- Lerner, R. & Benson, P. (Eds.) (2003). *Developmental assets and asset-building communities: Implications for research, policy, and practice*. New York: Kluwer Academic/Plenum Publishers.

- Mannes, M., Roehlkepartain, E.C., & Benson, P.L. (2005). Unleashing the power of community to strengthen the well-being of children, youth, and families: An asset-building approach. *Child Welfare, 84* (2), 233-250.
- McKay, M. (2006, June). *Longing to be heard: Examining sense of community and participation through the voices of youth*. MA thesis, Wilfrid Laurier University.
- McKay, M., & Kokocki, K. (2006, July). *Developing a social marketing campaign for drug prevention in Cape Breton. Phase I: Market segmentation*. Report written for the *Cape Breton Community Partnership on Drug Abuse*.
- Moore, K.A., & Lippman, L. (Eds) (2005). *What do children need to flourish? Conceptualizing and measuring indicators of positive development*. New York: Springer Science.
- Oman, R., Vesely, S., Aspy, C., McLeroy, K., Rodine, S., & Marshall, L. (2004). The Potential Protective Effect of Youth Assets on Adolescent Alcohol and Drug Use. *American Journal of Public Health, 94* (8), 1425-1430.
- Pentz, M.A., Bonnie, R.J. & Shopland, D.R. (1996). Integrating supply and demand reduction strategies for drug abuse prevention. *American Behavioral Scientist, 39*, (7), 897-910.
- Pittman, K., Irby, M. & Ferber, T. (2001). Unfinished business: Further reflections on a decade of promoting youth development. In Benson & Pittman, (Eds.). *Trends in youth development: Visions, realities, and challenges*. Boston: Kluwer Academic Publishers.
- Restuccia, D., & Bundy, A. (2003). *Positive youth development: A literature review*. Providence, RI: Rhode Island KIDS COUNT.
- Richer, S. (2003, Monday March 10). Hillbilly heroin hits Cape Breton. *Globe & Mail*, p. A1.
- Roehlkepartain, J.L. (1999). *Taking asset building personally: An action and reflection workbook*. Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute.
- Roehlkepartain, J.L. (2005). *The asset activist's toolkit: Handouts and practical resources for putting assets into action*. Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute.
- Scales, P., & Leffert, N. (1999). *Developmental assets: A synthesis of the scientific research on adolescent development*. Minneapolis: The Search Institute.
- Scales, P., Benson, P., Leffert, N., & Blyth, D. (2000). Contribution of developmental assets to the prediction of thriving among adolescents. *Applied Developmental Science, 4* (1), 27-46.

- Scales, P., Benson, P., Roehlkepartain, E. C., Hintz, N.R., Sullivan, T.K., & Mannes, M. (2001). The role of neighborhood and community in building developmental assets for children and youth: A national study of social norms among American adults. *Journal of Community Psychology, 29* (6), 703-727.
- Search Institute. (1999). *You have to live it: Building developmental assets in school communities* (Video).
- Search Institute. (2002). *The asset approach: 40 elements of healthy development*. (Handout).
- Search Institute. (2004). Tapping the power of community: Building assets to strengthen substance abuse prevention. *Insights & Evidence, 2* (1). 1-14.
- Service Canada. (2004). Labour Market Review, 2004: Cape Breton. Government of Canada. Available via:
<http://www1.servicecanada.gc.ca/asp/gateway.asp?hr=/en/ns/lmi/Reviews2003/cb2003.shtml&hs=ns0>
- Skinner, A. (2002). Community and neighborhood strategies in work with young people at risk. In A. Dearling and A. Skinner (Eds) *Making a Difference* (pp. 4-15) London: Russell House Publishing.
- Thrive! (2004). *Search Institute profiles of student life: Attitudes and behaviors*. Waterloo: Thrive! The Canadian Centre For Positive Youth Development.
- Tolman, J., & Pittman, K. (2001). Youth acts, community impacts: Stories of youth engagement with real results. *The Community and Youth Development Series, 7*, 1-91.
- Toughill, K. (2004, Saturday April 24) New kind of plague. *Toronto Star*.
- Wittman, B. (1999). *Taking asset building personally: A guide for planning and facilitating study groups*. Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute
- Yates, M. & Youniss, J. (1996). A developmental perspective on community service in adolescence. *Social Development, 5* (1), 85-111.
- Zeldin, S., & Topitzes, D. (2002). Neighborhood experiences, community connection, and positive beliefs about adolescents among urban adults and youth. *Journal of Community Psychology, 30* (6), 647-669.

APPENDIX A:**40 Developmental Assets**

Search Institute of Minneapolis, Minnesota, U.S.A., has identified the following building blocks of healthy development that help all young people grow up healthy, caring and responsible.

External Assets

Support - Young people need to experience support, care, and love from their families and many others. They need organizations and institutions that provide positive, supportive environments.

Empowerment - Young people need to be valued by their community and have opportunities to contribute to others. For this to occur, they must be safe and feel secure.

Boundaries and Expectations - Young people need to know what is expected of them and whether activities and behaviors are “in bounds” or “out of bounds.”

Constructive Use of Time - Young people need constructive, enriching opportunities for growth through creative activities, youth programs, congregational involvement, and quality time at home.

Internal Assets

Commitment to Learning - Young people need to develop a lifelong commitment to education and learning.

Positive Values - Youth need to develop strong values that guide their choices.

Social Competencies - Young people need skills and competencies that equip them to make positive choices, to build relationships, and to succeed in life.

Positive Identity - Young people need a strong sense of their own power, purpose, worth, and promise.

Support

1. **Family Support** – Family life provides high levels of love and support.
2. **Positive Family Communication** – Young person and his or her parent(s) communicate positively, and your person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parents.
3. **Other Adult Relationships** – Young person receives support from three or more non-parent adults.
4. **Caring Neighborhood** – Young person experiences caring neighbors.
5. **Caring School Climate** – School provides a caring, encouraging environment.
6. **Parent Involvement in Schooling** – Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.

Empowerment

7. **Community Values Youth** – Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.
8. **Youth as Resources** – Young person is given useful roles in the community.
9. **Service to Others** – Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week.
10. **Safety** – Young person feels safe at home, school and in the neighborhood.

Boundaries and Expectations

11. **Family Boundaries** – Family has clear rules and consequences and monitors the young person’s whereabouts.
12. **School Boundaries** – School provides clear rules and consequences.
13. **Neighborhood Boundaries** – Neighbors take responsibilities for monitoring young people’s behavior.
14. **Adult Role Models** – Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.
15. **Positive Peer Influence** – Young person’s best friends model responsible behavior.
16. **High Expectations** – Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.

Constructive Use of Time

17. **Creative Activities** – Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater or other arts.
18. **Youth Programs** – Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs or organizations at school and/or in the community.
19. **Religious Community** – Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution.
20. **Time at Home** – Young person is out with friends “with nothing special to do” two or fewer nights per week.

Commitment to Learning

21. **Achievement Motivation** – Young person is motivated to do well in school.
22. **School Engagement** – Young person is actively engaged in learning.
23. **Homework** – Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day.
24. **Bonding to School** – Young person cares about his or her school.
25. **Reading for Pleasure** – Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.

Positive Values

26. **Caring** – Young person places high value on helping other people.
27. **Equality and Social Justice** – Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty.
28. **Integrity** – Young person acts on convictions and stands up for his or her beliefs.
29. **Honesty** – Young person “tells the truth even when it is not easy.”
30. **Responsibility** – Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility.
31. **Restraint** – Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.

Social Competencies

32. **Planning and Decision Making** – Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices.
33. **Interpersonal Competence** – Young person has empathy, sensitivity and friendship skills.
34. **Cultural Competence** – Young person has knowledge of and comfort with

people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds.

35. **Resistance Skills** – Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.
36. **Peaceful Conflict Resolution** – Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.

Positive Identity

37. **Personal Power** – Young person feels he or she has control over “things that happen to me.”
38. **Self-Esteem** – Young person reports having a high self-esteem.
39. **Sense of Purpose** – Young person reports, “my life has purpose.”
40. **Positive View of Personal Future** – Young person is optimistic about his or her personal future.

Copyright © 1997, 2006 by Search Institute, Minneapolis, MN; www.search-institute.org. All Rights Reserved.

APPENDIX B: CBRM Child/Family/Youth Services

Name	Website(s)	Contact Information	About
Addiction Services	http://www.cbqasha.com – Cape Breton branch of Addiction Services Nova Scotia	Addiction Services Cape Breton District Health Authority 235 Townsend St. Sydney, NS B1P 5E7 Tel: 563-2590	Addiction Services provides confidential comprehensive prevention, education and treatment services to individuals, families and communities affected by substance abuse and/or gambling. The website has a complete list of services offered. They have an Adolescent team of therapists and outreach workers.
Big Brothers/ Big Sisters of Cape Breton County	www.sharealittlemagic.ca	106 Townsend St., Sydney, NS B1P 5E1 Tel: 564-5437	Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Cape Breton County provides mature adult friendships to boys and girls coming from single parent families. Through extensive screening procedures, volunteers are matched with children aged 6-16 who share similar interests and hobbies. The relationship is carefully monitored by the professional staff.
CAP sites	http://www.cbri.ca/inter.net/capsites.html	For a complete listing of all contact information for the CAP sites in Cape Breton, visit the website listed, or call the Sydney CAP site at the McConnell Library: Tel: 562-3161	CAP sites offer internet access, computer access, and often hold computer information sessions, for people to learn how to operate computers, or specific computer programs. There are CAP sites located in: Bras dor, Dominion, Donkin, East Bay, Eskasoni, Florence, Glace Bay, Louisbourg, Main-a-dieu, New Waterford, North Sydney, Point Edward, Port Morien, Reserve Mines, Sydney, Sydney Mines, Baddeck, Bay St. Lawrence, Boularderie, Ingonish, Iona, Middle River, Neil's Harbour, North Shore, and St. Anns.
Cape Breton Centre for Sexual Health	http://www.capebreton.pafc.info/	150 Bentinck St., PO Box 1598 Sydney, NS B1P 6R8 Tel: 539-5158	The Cape Breton Centre for Sexual Health is a pro-choice, youth-positive organization that promotes positive and healthy sexuality throughout life. They have many educational

			programs and services, involving areas like human sexuality, and counselling on parenting and teen pregnancy.
Cape Breton Regional Police – Youth Division & Community Liaison Officers (CLO's: school-based officers)	N/A	TEL: 563-5151 Graham Smith – Youth Division Five CLO's - one each at Glace Bay High, Sydney Academy, Memorial High, SPEC, and BEC. Call each listed school and ask to speak to the liaison officer.	
Cape Breton University Sexual Diversity Centre	N/A	Cape Breton University Tel: 563-1481 Email: sdc@cbusu.com (Monday to Friday 9 – 4 pm) Call or drop by	This Centre provides a welcoming environment for GLBTQ people and their Allies. They also deliver Anti-Heterosexism/Homophobia Workshops.
Cape Breton Victoria Regional School Board	http://www.cbv.ns.ca/	275 George Street, Sydney, NS, B1P 1J7 Tel: 564-8293	Public schools in various communities from grades P-12
Cape Breton Youth Resource Center	N/A	571 Esplanade St., Sydney, NS B1P 1B4 Tel: 564-0032	The Cape Breton Youth Resource Center is a safe place for youth to gather and spend time with their peers.
Child and Adolescent Services	N/A	Cape Breton Regional Hospital 1482 George St., Sydney, NS B1P 1P3 Tel: 567-7731	Child and Adolescent Services provides many services for young people, including mental health services, and social work services.
Children's Aid Society of Cape Breton	www.nsnet.org/cascbv/	Sydney 360 Prince St., Sydney, NS B1P 5L1	Children's Aid Society of CB provides a wide range of child welfare services to families including adoption services, child placement services, child

		<p>Tel: 563-3400/563-3300 <i>Glace Bay</i> Senator's Place 633 Main St., Glace Bay, NS B1A 4K9</p> <p>Tel: 842-4010</p> <p><i>North Sydney</i> 184 Commercial St., North Sydney, NS B2A 3Y7</p> <p>Tel: 794-5100</p> <p><i>Group Home for Girls and Boys, Sydney</i></p>	<p>protection services, foster home programs, and single mother programs. The website features a full list of services as well as important contact information for various services.</p>
Children's Rights Centre, Cape Breton University	http://discovery.uccb.ns.ca/children/	<p>Room CC249 Cape Breton University P.O. Box 5300, Sydney, NS, B1P 6L2</p> <p>Tel: 563-1440</p> <p>Email: childrens_rights@capebretonu.ca</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - conducts research on children's rights and children's issues; - furthers public knowledge and education about children's rights; - monitors the implementation of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child in Canada; - provides workshops on children's rights and children's rights education; - responds to public inquiries about children's rights
Community and Family Services	www.salvationarmy.ca	<p>152 Victoria Road, Sydney, NS Mailing: P.O. Box 902, Stn. A, B1P 6J4</p> <p>Tel: 562-5442</p>	<p>Community and Family Services office is run by the Salvation Army and operates a food bank on Tuesday and Thursday mornings. They also assist with clothing and small household items.</p>
Community Cares Youth Outreach	N/A	<p>7 Notre Dame St., Sydney Mines, NS B1V 2R5</p> <p>Tel: 544-0049</p>	<p>Community Cares Youth Outreach is a program in Sydney Mines dedicated to keeping youth safe and out of trouble. Call the contact number for more information.</p>
Community	www.cbu.ca/wellness/c	Contact: Susan	A partnership of professionals

Partnership on Drug Abuse	pda	Plath, Coordinator Tel: 563-1895	and citizens that work together to reduce the harms associated with drug use at the community level. This group regularly holds information sessions at different community locations.
EPIC-IDEA (Educational Program Innovation Charity- Insight, Diversity, Empowerment, Advancement)Charity Society	N/A	North Sydney, NS Tel: 794-7225 Email: epic@ns.sympatico.ca	EPIC-IDEA is a registered charity, which focuses on the needs of disadvantaged learners (youth or adult).
Family Place Resource Center	N/A	<i>Sydney</i> 106 Townsend St., Sydney, NS B1P 5E1 Tel: 562-5616	The Family Place Resource Center provides many services for families, including child care and a child care support network, parenting classes, cooking classes, prenatal classes, and breast-feeding support, among others. Call the number listed for a full list of services provided.
Family Service of Eastern Nova Scotia	www.fsens.ns.ca	<i>Family Service of Sydney- Head Office</i> 164 Charlotte St., Suite 200 Sydney, NS B1P 1C3 Tel: 539-6868 <i>Family Service of Glace Bay</i> 9 Minto St., Glace Bay, NS B1A 5B2 Tel: 849-4772	Family Service of Eastern Nova Scotia provides many various services to promote harmonious families, including programming, workshops, and counselling for individuals (men, women, adolescents, children) or couples, as well as Anger Management, Stress Management, Life After Loss, Self Esteem, Systematic Training for Effective Parenting, etc. The website provides a full list of services, contact information, frequently asked questions and more.
4 - H clubs	http://www.gov.ns.ca/nsaf/4h/	303-320 Esplanade, Sydney, NS, B1P 7B9 Tel: 563-2001	A nation wide program dedicated to the development of young people to help them become responsible members of society. For rural young people between the ages of 9 to 21. Their motto is "Learn to do by doing."

Glace Bay Youth Action Committee (YAC)	Website is being created	Wednesday evenings St. Anne's Hall, Main Street, Glace Bay, NS Tel: 565-5594 or 578-8752 for more information	Youth ages 12 to 18 are invited to meet on Wednesday evenings from 7-9 pm at St. Anne's Hall in Glace Bay. Youth play games, sports, and engage in drama and community building action planning.
Harvest House Outreach	http://www.hhoutreach.org/index.html	<i>Glace Bay</i> Location: 610 Main Street, Glace Bay, NS, B1A 5V2 Tel: 842-5433 http://www.hhgb.org/ <i>North Sydney</i> Location: 242 Commercial Street, North Sydney, NS, B2A 3M1 Tel: 794-7011	Harvest House is a non-denominational Christian outreach centre that offers temporary housing, addiction support, employment skills, and drop-in support.
Island Community Justice Society	http://www.islandcommunityjustice.com/	Provincial Building 360 Prince St., Suite 13 Sydney, NS B1P 5L1 Tel: 563-2596	Provide a community based restorative justice service which brings together the victim, youth, and community to resolve conflict arising from an incident of criminal harm.
JCI Cape Breton	http://www.cbjuniorchamber.com/home.htm	338 Charlotte Street, Sydney NS, B1P 1C8 Tel: 539-7635 Email: info@cbjuniorchamber.com	Contribute to the advancement of the Cape Breton and global community by providing the opportunity for young people to develop the leadership skills, social responsibility, entrepreneurship and fellowship necessary to create positive change.
Membertou Youth Center	N/A	34 Maillard, St., Sydney, NS Tel: 539-4513	This youth center, located in Membertou, is a safe place for youth to go and interact with their peers.
Methadone Maintenance Program	http://www.cbgasha.com	Tel: 563-2043	Methadone Maintenance Therapy is a program designed to treat clients who are dependent on opiates. The goal

			of the program is to reduce the harms associated with opiate abuse while providing access to counselling and primary healthcare.
Mi'Kmaq Youth Mentoring Program	N/A	117 Membertou St., Membertou, NS B1S 2M9 Tel: 539-5117	The Mi'Kmaq Youth Mentoring Program provides mentoring to Native youth in the Membertou area of Sydney. Call the number listed for more information.
Mi'Kmaq Lodge	http://www.mikmawlodge.ca	Tel: 379-2267	A residential program that houses 15 persons on 35 day cycles. This is a program for Native persons.
Native Alcohol and Drug Counselling Association (NADACA)	http://nadaca.ca/wsn/page8.html	Tel: 379-2262	The Native Alcohol and Drug Counselling Association provides counselling services to Native persons suffering from an addiction to alcohol or drugs.
Native Counsel of Nova Scotia Youth Counsel	N/A	12 Kennel Lane South Bar, NS B1N 3J2 Tel: 539-9638	The Native Counsel of Nova Scotia helps Native persons with various necessities like housing, education, and language. The NCNS is divided into zones, with Cape Breton falling into Zone 6.
Network for Children and Youth	http://www.ncyens.org/Home.html	338 Charlotte Street , Sydney, NS, B1P 1C8 Tel: 563-3708	The Network is a formalized partnership of 40+ agencies in Eastern Nova Scotia who have a mandate to either deliver services, educate, or fund services for children, youth, and their families. The Network links these governmental, non-governmental, and community-based agencies for collective planning around child and youth issues.
Nova Scotia Public Health Services	http://publichealth.ns.ca/	<i>Sydney (Administration Office) Public Health Services 235 Townsend St., 2nd Floor Sydney, NS B1P 5E7 Tel: 563-2400 New Waterford</i>	

		<p><i>Public Health Services</i> New Waterford Consolidated Hospital P.O. Box 26 New Waterford NS B1H 3Z5</p> <p>Tel: 862-2204</p> <p><i>Sydney Mines Public Health Services</i> 7 Fraser Ave., Sydney Mines, NS B1V 2B8</p> <p>Tel: 736-6245</p> <p><i>Glace Bay Public Health Services</i> 633 Main St., 2nd Floor Glace Bay, NS B1A 4X9</p> <p>Tel: 842-4050</p>	
PFLAG Sydney	N/A	<p>Contacts can be reached at any of these three numbers: 563-1389 563-1481 563-1443</p> <p>Email: sydneysns@pflagcanada.ca</p>	For parents, families and friends of lesbians and gays. Provides support and education on issues of sexual orientation and gender identity.
Royal Canadian Sea Cadets	www.cadets.ca	<p>North Sydney, NS</p> <p>Tel: h 794-1110</p>	The Royal Canadian Sea Cadets is a program for youth that promotes citizenship, physical fitness, self-discipline, skills, and friendship between youth. For more information, call the number listed.
Southend Community Centre	N/A	<p>28 Hillview St., Sydney</p>	Island Martial Arts, Little Dragon Tae Kwon Do Club and summer camps for kids.

Whitney Pier Youth Club	http://www.whitneypier.youthclub.ca/home.php	111 West St., Sydney, NS B1N 1S2 Tel: 567-0240	The Whitney Pier Youth Club is a safe place for youth to gather and enjoy the company of their fellow youth. They offer a number of skill building programs.
Women's Centre, Cape Breton University	N/A	Cape Breton University, Student Union Building Tel: 563-1471	This Centre offers a safe space for women to receive counselling and support. Condoms and pregnancy tests are available. A small library containing information books and videos is onsite.
YMCA of Cape Breton	http://www.cbymca.com/default.php	399 Charlotte Street Sydney, NS, B1P 6J3 Tel: 562-YMCA Email: info@cbymca.com	
YMCA of Cape Breton Career & Employment Resource Centres	http://www.cbymca.com/section.php?id=6	<i>Sydney, NS:</i> 399 Charlotte Street Sydney, NS, B1P 6J3 Tel: 564-9151 Email: employment@cbymca.com <i>Glace Bay, NS:</i> 106 Reserve Street Glace Bay, NS, B1A 4W5 Tel: 849-5500	Provides career counselling, resume writing, job searches, internet access, photocopying and faxing.
Youth Detention Facility	N/A	Tel: 842-4052	Part of the provincial justice system. Offer anger management programs to youth.
Youth Health Centres	N/A	<i>Sydney</i> 48 Terrace St., Sydney, NS B1P 2L4	Each Youth Health Centre deals with all aspects of health for those 12 years to 20 years of age. A nurse staffs the site and a doctor is available one day per

		<p>Tel: 567-1056</p> <p><i>Glace Bay</i> 201 Reserve St., Glace Bay, NS B1A 4W3</p> <p>Tel: 842-1612</p> <p><i>New Waterford</i> 667 Eighth St., New Waterford, NS, B1H 3T4</p> <p>Tel: 862-9670</p> <p><i>North Sydney</i> 80 Memorial Dr, North Sydney, NS</p> <p>Tel: 544-1424</p>	<p>week for appointments. There are Youth Health Centres located in Sydney, Glace Bay, New Waterford, and North Sydney.</p>
Youth Peers Program	N/A	<p>266 Whitney Ave., Ashby Complex, Sydney, NS</p> <p>Tel: 539-8228</p>	<p>Youth PEERS (Promoting Esteem & Encouraging Re-entry Support), is a program for high-risk young offenders and youth aged 12-18 in Sydney. The current program uses one-to-one tutoring, theatre, music and visual arts.</p>

Other youth serving organizations to network with:

- AIDS COALITION, SHARP NEEDLE EXCHANGE AND THE HIV TESTING SITE
- CADETS (sea, air, army)
- CHURCHES & THEIR ASSOCIATED YOUTH GROUPS
- ESKASONI COMMUNITY HEALTH CENTRE
- ESKASONI YOUTH ACTION IN THE COMMUNITY ON HEALTH AND TOBACCO (YACHT)
- GIRL GUIDES & SCOUTS CANADA
- INTENSIVE COMMUNITY BASED TREATMENT TEAM (ICBTT)
- INTERAGENCY ON FAMILY VIOLENCE
- LITTLE LEAGUE
- MINOR HOCKEY
- MUSIC, ART, DRAMA, MARTIAL ART PROGRAMS
- PARENTS PEACE PROGRAM (contact Blair Hill, Family Place Resource Centre)
- PEER EDUCATORS
- POLICE BOYS AND GIRLS CLUBS
- SCHOOL CLUBS AND SPORTS
- SOCCER CAPE BRETON
- TRANSITION HOUSE
- YOUTH LAWYERS, LEGAL AID, AND DEPARTMENT OF JUSTICE