

Town Hall Meeting



You Can Make a Difference for the Youth of our Community!

Report

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Table of Contents

Background	1
Compilation of ideas	2
Quantitative summary of all ideas	3
External developmental asset summary of prioritized ideas	4
Internal developmental asset summary of prioritized ideas	5
Qualitative summary of prioritized ideas	6
Qualitative summary of all ideas	8
Recommendations	9

Data

Themes of Strength for the City of Kettering Town Hall Meetings April 26, May 10 and 13, 2004	10
Town Hall Meeting Ideas from Kettering Community on April 26, 2004	14
Town Hall Meeting Ideas from Kettering Middle School on May 10, 2004	23
Town Hall Meeting Ideas from Kettering-Fairmont High School on May 13, 2004	29

Appendix

Town Hall Meeting Agenda April 26, 2004	35
Town Hall Meeting Facilitator Guide	36
40 Developmental Assets	39
The Five Action Strategies	40

Background

This Post-Town Hall Meeting Report documents a community-wide brainstorming of ideas on what steps we can take individually, organizationally and across the community so that all of our kids have the best chance to succeed.

What began as a Healthy Youth Initiative, the process of establishing a network of resources to promote a healthy community – where all young people can grow and succeed – continues to build momentum throughout Kettering:

January 1999	City of Kettering City Council and Kettering City School Board of Education held a joint strategic planning meeting to identify priority areas of community concern.
January 1999	Healthy Youth Task Force was formed. Community, school and city officials meet quarterly.
May 1999	First Annual Youth Summit held with 250 people present.
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July 2001	City of Kettering hires a full-time Youth Development Coordinator to coordinate all the after-
	school programming, school and community liaisons and Kettering STAND.
November 2002	Task Force recommends forming a city-wide youth advisory board appointed by City Council and
	Board of Education.
January 2003	Kettering STAND reorganizes and becomes the Kettering Youth Council.
March 2003	Youth Summit conducted. Record attendance of 350+ youth.

From January to March of 2004 a series of round table discussions hosted various sector specific participants from youth ministry, PTO/PTA/schools, social service groups, scouts, businesses, sports affiliates, and youth. Each round table was introduced to the Healthy Youth Initiative and the 40 Developmental Assets Search Institute has identified as the building blocks of healthy development that help young people grow up healthy, caring and responsible. Each sector specific round table shared their perceptions of Kettering's strengths, issues and next steps needed in the community. From the perceptions shared in the round tables, certain themes for discussion emerged:

Activities, Places and Transportation Age Appropriate Activities Family and Parenting Health and Safety Media School System and Community Support

On April 26, 2004 a Town Hall Meeting was held at Van Buren Middle School from 6-9 P.M. The goal was to get participants from all sectors and across the community together sharing lots of ideas on what specific steps we can take individually, organizationally and across the community so that all of our kids have the best chance to succeed. Due to the limited number of students in attendance that evening, two subsequent mini-Town Hall Meetings were held. Kettering Middle School hosted six social studies class meetings with Larry Miller and Kettering-Fairmont High School hosted six government class meetings with David Fisher.

Compilation of ideas

In addition to a brief program presentation, two primary outcomes for all three Town Hall Meetings were sought. First, to personalize and reinforce the themes of strength that emerged from the various sector specific round tables:

> Community Facilities Family Oriented Involved Community of Volunteers Involved Governmental, School and Community Leaders Multiple Churches Positive Youth Activities (outside of school) Schools and School Activities Social Services Resources Variety of Restaurants and Businesses

Large blank posters titled with each theme of strength were used as an opening activity. Participants were asked to simply walk around and write comments on any/all of the strengths shared which impacted them personally.

Second, to generate as many specific ideas to implement individually, organizationally and across the community surrounding the themes for discussion which emerged from the various sector specific round tables:

Activities, Places and Transportation Age Appropriate Activities Family and Parenting Health and Safety Media School System and Community Support

This was done in small groups of eight to twelve participants. Each person was asked to write and share one idea on a 3 x 5 card. Cards were color-coded (white = individual ideas, yellow = organization ideas, blue = community ideas, green = "wild card" ideas). As cards were shared discussion took place and more ideas were subsequently generated. Group facilitators supported the process by simply making sure each idea shared was captured on a card and occasionally pointing out patterns related to colors, number of cards and themes.

Everyone was then asked to examine all of the ideas shared in their small group and pick "the one card" that they felt strongly about and believed important enough to either make happen themselves or encourage others to do so. All small groups were then combined and collectively facilitated in a prioritizing "35 Activity" to create a ranking of ideas picked.

Quantitative summary of all ideas

Following all three versions of the Town Hall Meeting, 767 idea cards were generated in total with 257 "picked up and prioritized." A few summary numbers:

Community Town Hall Meeting 04/26/2004 (90-115 mostly adult participants with 316 ideas shared and 76 prioritized)

79 Individual idea cards with 18 picked up to prioritize via our "35 Activity"
103 Organization idea cards with 27 picked up to prioritize via our "35 Activity"
105 Community-wide idea cards with 22 picked up to prioritize via our "35 Activity"
29 "Wild card" ideas with 9 picked up to prioritize via our "35 Activity"

Kettering Middle School Town Hall Meeting 05/10/2004 (92 Eighth Grade Students with 225 ideas shared and 90 prioritized)

31 Individual idea cards with 8 picked up to prioritize via our "35 Activity"
93 Organization idea cards with 47 picked up to prioritize via our "35 Activity"
79 Community-wide idea cards with 29 picked up to prioritize via our "35 Activity"
22 "Wild card" ideas with 6 picked up to prioritize via our "35 Activity"

Kettering-Fairmont High School Town Hall Meeting 05/13/2004 (99 Junior and Senior Students with 226 ideas shared and 91 prioritized)

36 Individual idea cards with 10 picked up to prioritize via our "35 Activity"
68 Organization idea cards with 32 picked up to prioritize via our "35 Activity"
82 Community-wide idea cards with 32 picked up to prioritize via our "35 Activity"
40 "Wild card" ideas with 17 picked up to prioritize via our "35 Activity"

A few interesting items to note:

A greater percentage of organizational ideas were "picked up and prioritized" than community or individual ideas.

More community-wide and organization ideas were shared than individual ideas.

Many of the community-wide and organization ideas shared have individual potential as well.

The next two pages present a tallying of each prioritized idea as it relates to the 40 Developmental Assets:

Family support	Family life provides high levels of love and support.
Positive family communication	Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate
	positively, and young person is willing to seek advice and
	counsel from parent(s).
Other adult relationships	Young person receives support from three or more
	nonparent adults.
Caring neighborhood	Young person experiences caring neighbors.
Caring school climate	School provides a caring, encouraging environment.
Parent involvement in	Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person
schooling	succeed in school.
Community values youth	Young person perceives that adults in the community
	value youth.
Youth as resources	Young people are given useful roles in the community.
Service to others	Young person serves in the community one hour or more
	per week.
Safety	Young person feels safe at home, at school, and in the
	neighborhood.
Family boundaries	Family has clear rules and consequences, and monitors
 -	the young person's whereabouts.
School boundaries	School provides clear rules and consequences.
Neighborhood boundaries	Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young
	people's behavior.
Adult role models	Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible
	behavior.
Positive peer influence	Young person's best friends model responsible behavior.
High expectations	Both parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person
 	to do well.
Creative activities	Young person spends three or more hours per week in
	lessons
Youth programs	Young person spends three or more hours per week in
	sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in
	community organizations.
Religious community	Young person spends one hour or more per week in
- ·	activities in a religious institution.
Time at home	Young person is out with friends "with nothing special to
	do" two or fewer nights per week.

External developmental asset summary of prioritized ideas

Internal developmental asset summary of prioritized ideas

	Achievement motivation	Young person is motivated to do well in school.	
	School engagement	Young person is actively engaged in learning.	
Homework		Young person reports doing at least one hour of	
		homework every school day.	
	Bonding to school	Young person cares about her or his school.	
	Reading for pleasure	Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per	
		week.	
	Caring	Young person places high value on helping other people.	
		and reducing hunger and poverty.	
	Integrity	Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or	
	his beliefs.		
	Honesty	Young person "tells the truth even when it is not easy."	
	Responsibility	Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility.	
	Restraint	Young person believes it is important not to be sexually	
		active or to use alcohol or other drugs.	
	Planning and decision making	Young person knows how to plan ahead and make	
		choices.	
	Interpersonal competence	Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship	
		skills.	
	Cultural competence Young person has knowledge of and com		
		of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds.	
	Resistance skills	Young person can resist negative peer pressure and	
		dangerous situations.	
	Peaceful conflict resolution	Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.	
	Personal power Young person feels he or she has control over "things the second over the second over "things the second over "things t		
		happen to me."	
	Self-esteem	Young person reports having a high self-esteem.	
	Sense of purpose	Young person reports that "my life has a purpose."	
	Positive view of personal	Young person is optimistic about her or his personal	
	future	future.	

Note: This developmental asset summary of prioritized ideas simply represents what external and internal building blocks were related to the prioritized ideas only. Some ideas did not "fit" directly, so they were not counted here.

For more information about the 40 Developmental Assets go to pages 39-40 and http://www.search-institute.org

Qualitative summary of prioritized ideas

The "prioritized cards" clustered around the following areas of ideas:

Community services ideas	Parents/parenting/family ideas	Transportation ideas
Cross-collaboration/communication ideas	Places for youth ideas	Volunteering/mentoring ideas
Media ideas	Programs/activities for youth ideas	Youth employment/money ideas
Neighborhood ideas	School-related ideas	Other ideas

Given 257 total "prioritized cards" here is a ranked order by the number of ideas and the corresponding percentages:

64 Places for youth ideas 25%
34 School-related ideas 13%
29 Programs/activities for youth ideas 11%
23 Youth employment/money ideas 9%
21 Transportation ideas 8%
20 Community services ideas 7%
18 Volunteering/mentoring ideas 7%
14 Neighborhood ideas 5%
13 Cross-collaboration/communication ideas 5%
10 Parents/parenting/family ideas 4%
6 Media ideas 2%
5 Other ideas 2%

In terms of rating the value of the ideas (out of 35 total possible points) here's the average score for each cluster:

20.27 Cross-collaboration/communication ideas 5%
20.05 Community services ideas 7%
19.45 Parents/parenting/family ideas 4%
19.23 Youth employment/money ideas 9%
18.45 Transportation ideas 8%
18.27 Places for youth ideas 25%
18.25 Neighborhood ideas 5%
17.82 School-related ideas 13%
17.74 Programs/activities for youth ideas 11%
16.91 Volunteering/mentoring ideas 7%
16.16 Media ideas 2%
15.00 Other ideas 2%

A few of interesting items to note:

One out of every four prioritized ideas was regarding a "place for youth." It should be noted that 24 of these 64 ideas shared commented about improving what Kettering already has. Another 24 mentioned limited access to (i.e. Rec. Center on one side of town) existing "places for youth" – which could also be considered a transportation issue. Only 14 ideas specifically mentioned building something new. Two suggested city-wide internet access via WiFi.

Some ideas overlapped in their focus. An example would be "Summer camps for kids, with high-school students volunteering to work as mentors to younger kids." Rather than paying them, you could credit a community-wide debit card that could be used to pay for services at the Rec. Center and/or for discounts at area businesses who agree to offer a student discount.

"Community services" ideas included five cards related to a community-wide, every school, every neighborhood, recycling program – some even mentioning a rebate idea. Another ten mentioned additional/cleaner public restroom facilities, water fountains, bike racks, public benches, and more neighborhood/wider sidewalks. [Wider sidewalks so that a couple friends could walk side-by-side and talk while they walk vs. single-filing-it to where they want to go.]

Given that more community-wide and organization ideas were shared than individual ideas, there seems to be an attitude that "someone else should do something" vs. "you want *me* to do something?"

It is encouraging that more people picked up an organization idea card to prioritize than either community or individual cards. This perhaps implies people would welcome more organizational improvements, collaboration and involvement in giving all kids in Kettering a better chance to succeed.

Qualitative summary of all ideas

While the "prioritized cards" clustered around certain areas of focus, there were also some "hotspots" or trends of ideas that emerged from all the data:

Neighborhood support/focus on youth

- Block parties, neighborhood watch groups
- Get to know kids and parents in neighborhood

Transportation realities for youth

- RTA issues including perceived safety and access to routes/schedules. No after school late bus run.
- Wider sidewalks/more sidewalks
- Bike trails and lanes and more bike racks with benches

Places for youth/access to/acceptance to/perceptions of

- Using what we have already to a greater extent
- Cross town realities of location (i.e. Rec. Center)
- Public rest rooms (more and cleaner)

Youth employment issues/money realities

- Special photo ID cards that would double as debit cards as well as enabling special discounts for students at local businesses (much like a college campus)
- Internship/Co-op job availability for kids 13 to 16 years of age
- Too many "things to do" cost money

Cross-collaboration/communication between organizations serving youth/resources

• Conflicting efforts duplicating program offerings while separately struggling to do the same thing

Parenting

- Create parent partners where a successful parent can partner with struggling parents and single parents
- Increased availability to parenting programs/assistance

Schedules/Time

- Sports/Activities too "all-consuming" some too late at night during the school week
- Multiple opportunities to participate in different activities sometimes squelched by incompatible schedules

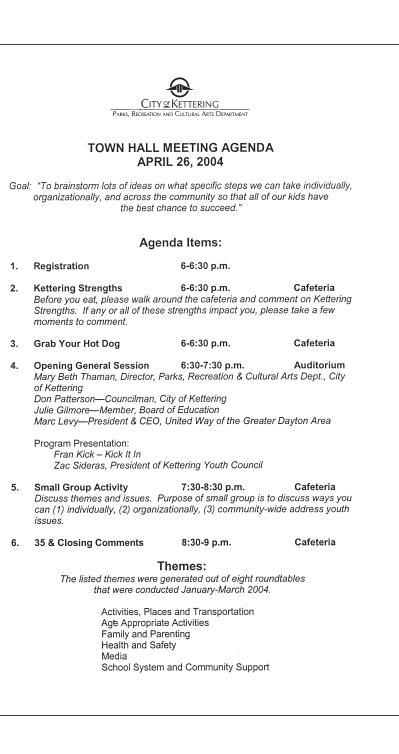
Volunteering/Mentoring/Cross-Generational Connections

- Big Brother/Big Sister
- In-school and out-of-school volunteering coordinated via web site searchable by interests and time

Recommendations

Based on the perceived strengths shared, issues raised, and ideas generated throughout the planning, facilitating, and evaluation of this "Town Hall Meeting" process, here are a number of recommendations to consider:

- 1. Continue to engage and involve the entire Kettering community in implementing these and future ideas. Both via the "Town Hall Meeting" forum as well as the high school and middle school government and social studies classes.
- 2. Bring more people "in on the process" by sharing a more strategically prioritized framework of focused effort based on the 40 Developmental Asset Model of youth development. Take the sector specific ideas generated up to this point and bring them back into each sector and generate even more, sector specific, neighborhood applied, family based, personalized efforts. Make them meaningful and measurable at a more local, sector, neighborhood, family and individualized level. Coordinate efforts across the community whenever possible.
- 3. Using the *Search Institute Profiles of Student Life: Attitudes and Behaviors* and the *Me and My World Survey*, establish a more research-backed baseline for all students in Kettering (public, private and even homeschooled) 4th 12th grades.
- 4. Create an increased awareness within the community about the 40 Developmental Assets. Build upon the survey findings with other data collected from various community sources as well.
- 5. Bring more collective collaboration across the community by utilizing existing organizations to network efforts. One example would be the Kettering Student Assistance Program with Peggy Holton.
- 6. Using the joint efforts of the Healthy Youth Advisory Board and the Kettering Youth Council, continue to expand and dovetail community efforts, resources, services and programs. Bringing more collaboration between organizations within Kettering will bring more support behind many of the ideas shared both youth and adult.
- 7. Increasingly publicize available resources and programs to individuals and organizations (especially via influential leaders and participants within organizations) so that "maximizing what's already in place" takes precedence over "recreating the wheel."
- 8. Cross-pollinate as many ideas with available resources in the community so that support and collective effort maximize growth and impact across the sectors and beyond. Create an online resource directory for community.
- 9. Reinforce relationships with other significant people and organizations outside the community at a countywide and even statewide level. Share information and continue to look beyond Kettering borders to neighboring communities for appropriate collaboration.
- 10. Create sector specific and organizational specific versions of this report in various Executive Summaries, Newsletters, web sites and other communication methods so that these ideas don't just sit on the pages of this report. Add pertinent references for further information and resources people can use to help them implement these ideas in their own lives, families, neighborhoods, organizations, sectors and across the City of Kettering.





You Can Make a Difference for the Youth of our Community!

Thank you for helping us facilitate this portion of our Town Hall Meeting! Creating ideas during this big brainstorm will be fun and fruitful. We will be continuing to create quite a "crescendo of influence" in Kettering with youth and by youth given what will be shared tonight – "Planting seeds" individually, organizationally, and across the community.

Inside this envelope you'll find 3 x 5 cards. The cards are color coded as follows:

White = Individual ideas

Yellow = Organization ideas

Blue = Community ideas

In addition we have a "wild card" neon green in color for any/all other ideas which either don't specifically relate to the themes presented (see below) or the areas of individual, organization, and community-wide implementation.

Set up group in a circle-like setting around table so everyone can see and hear each other.

Simply introduce yourself by name and thank everyone for attending this event.

Explain the goal for our time together: "To brainstorm lots of ideas on what specific steps we can take individually, organizationally, and across the community so that all of our kids have the best chance to succeed."

Introduction

We would like to build on the various themes that emerged during the different sector round tables... Sectors • Businesses • PTO/PTA/Schools Scouts Seniors • Sports Affiliates • Youth • Youth Ministers Themes These occurred prior to this Town Hall Meeting and identified the following themes... • Activities, Places and Transportation Age Appropriate Activities • Family and Parenting · Health and Safety Media • School System and Community Support

Of course, anything and everything will be allowed. Again, this is brainstorming so let the ideas be shared in an open, nonjudgmental atmosphere.

Introduce Your Neighbor – "Let's pair up with the person next to you and interview them for 60 seconds to find out their name and how they might represent multiple sectors (i.e. they're a parent, have kids in school at _____, work at a business in town, go to church at _____, etc.)" (Put sector sheet on the table)

If there's an odd number at your table, you play this game to make it even. If not, just introduce yourself as an example as to how *you* represent the different sectors.

"Pay attention, because in two minutes we're going to give you one minute to introduce 'your neighbor' to the rest of the group."

Then go around the group giving each person one minute to introduce their neighbor.

Politely remind people "this is brainstorming – so please no Yes, buts..."
If you notice an idea is shared and yet they didn't write it down, you write it down and add it to the table saying something like "that's a good idea. I want to make sure we share that one on a card!"
Make sure everyone at least gets their first card shared with the group and on the table
As cards are added, point out interesting trends like "I noticed we have more blue cards than..." or "What about some of the other themes? We seem to spend lots of time on..."
To spur more related ideas, you might ask "How could that idea be shared for individuals" or "How would organizations be able to use that same idea?"

Help

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Tips

1. Pass out three cards (one of each color) to every person in the group.

(Put three pre-written cards on the table) Explain again the goal for our time together: "To brainstorm lots of ideas on what specific steps we can take individually, organizationally, and across the community so that all of our kids have the best chance to succeed."

(Put theme sheet on the table) "We would like to build on the themes of issues that emerged during the various sector round tables so that we can generate ideas related to the challenges and issues facing our youth today."

(Put "wild cards" on table) Let them know that "of course, anything and everything will be allowed. This is brainstorming so let the ideas be shared in an open, nonjudgmental atmosphere. If you have an idea that doesn't directly relate to a theme, feel free to write it on a neon green card."

Please assure the group that "spelling, grammar won't count, we just want ideas that people can read (so penmanship counts a little bit)."

2. "Pick one of your three cards to put an idea on, doesn't matter which one. Let's take a couple minutes to do that on our own." (Watch for people who struggle to do this, ask "who needs another minute?") Perhaps ask if there are any questions, etc.

"Turn to your neighbor who introduced you and share your idea with them and let them share their idea with you. Check each other on theme and focus (individual, organizational, community-wide)."

3. Invite someone to share their idea with the entire group placing the card on the table when they do. Open it up for anyone to piggyback on that same idea perhaps. Keep sharing and piggybacking ideas.

4. Look at cards and notice any duplicates and make the connection, clip them together.

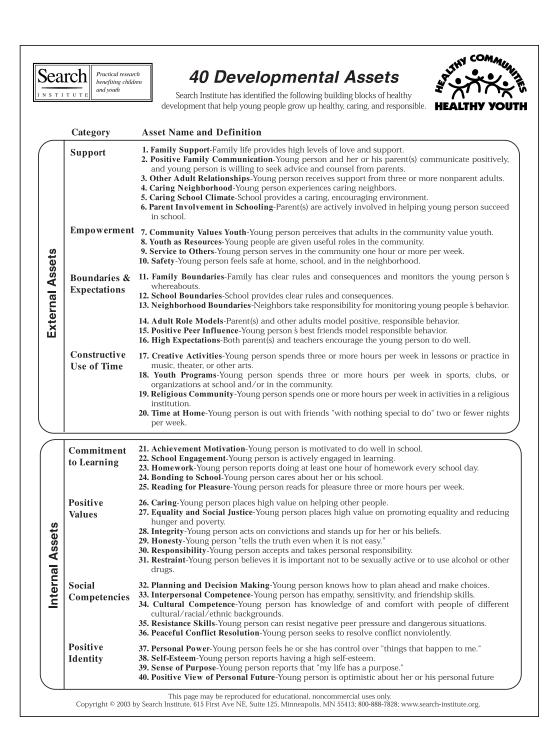
5. Invite everyone to pick the one card (or clipped cards) that they feel strongly about and believe important enough to make happen themselves or encourage others to do so.

(The cards they leave behind need to be picked up and put into the envelope.)

Ask everyone to "Please take your card with you for our closing session and thank you for sharing so many ideas!"

Please wrap-up your small group by 8:30 p.m. for our "35 Activity" and closing comments.

Index Card Activity





The Five Action Strategies



Five Action Strategies for Transforming Communities and Society:

Creating a World Where All Young People Are Valued and Thrive

Engage Adults

Engage adults from all walks of life to develop sustained, strength-building relationships with children and adolescents, both within families and in neighborhoods.

Mobilize Young People

Mobilize young people to use their power as asset builders and change agents.

Activate Sectors

Activate all sectors of the community—such as schools, congregations, youth, businesses, human services, and health-care organizations—to create an asset-building culture and to contribute fully to young people's healthy development.

Invigorate Programs

Invigorate, expand, and enhance programs to become more asset rich and to be available to and accessed by all children and youth.

Influence Civic Decisions

Influence decision makers and opinion leaders to leverage financial, media, and policy resources in support of this positive transformation of communities and society.

