

Short Guide to ABCD - The art of asking the right questions

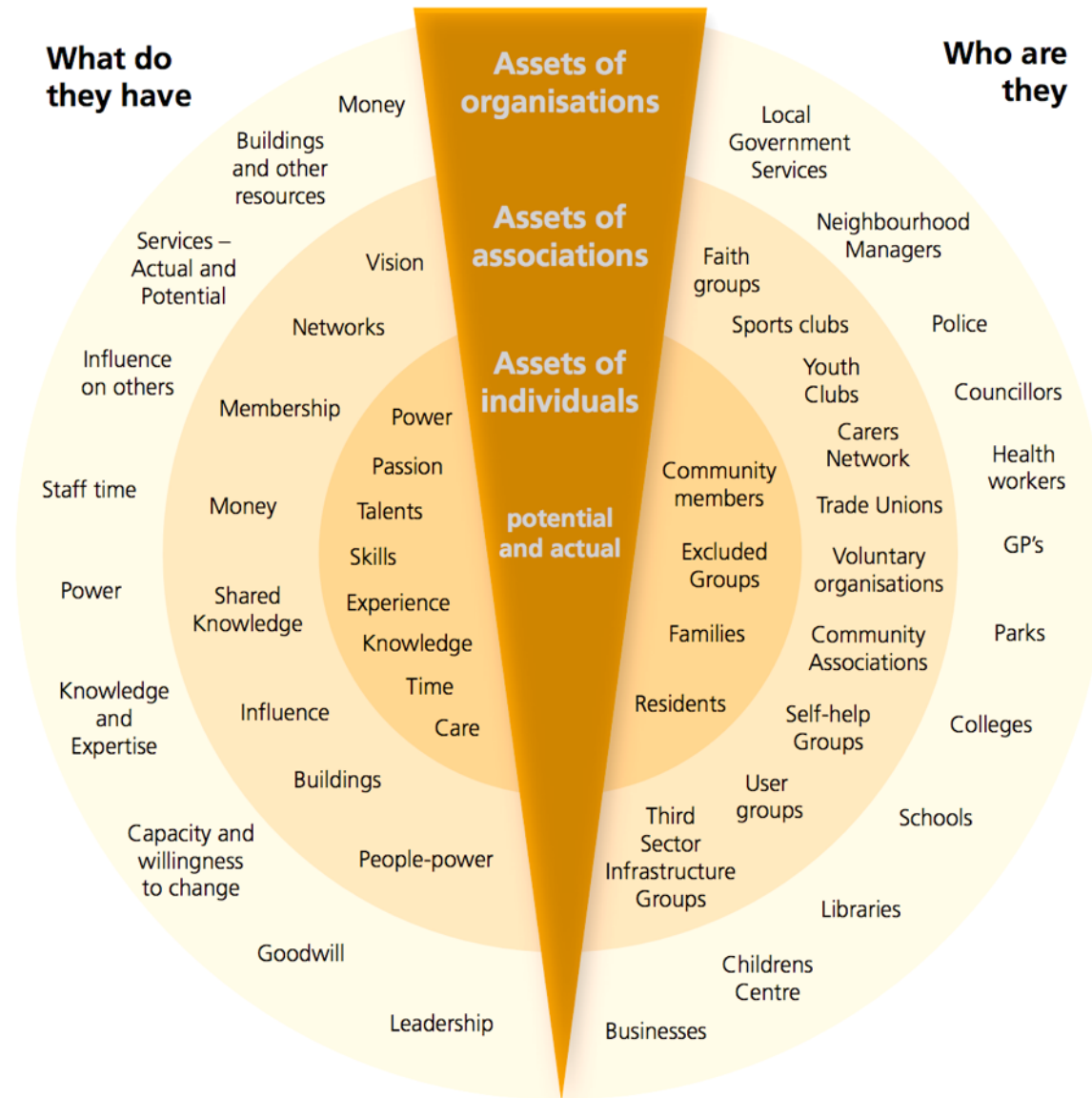
ASSET-BASED COMMUNITY DEVELOPMENT & SBCB: THEORY	
DEFICIT-BASED	ASSET-BASED
Problems	Possibilities
Blame	Shared ownership
What's missing	What's there
Scarcity	Abundance
Risks	Courageous leadership
Needs	Strengths, capacities, assets
Control-outside in	Lead by stepping back
Top-down	Inside-out
Do to	Citizen-led
Passive receivers	Do with, enabling to do
Programmes are the answer	Active producer & co-producers

CAN'T DO!

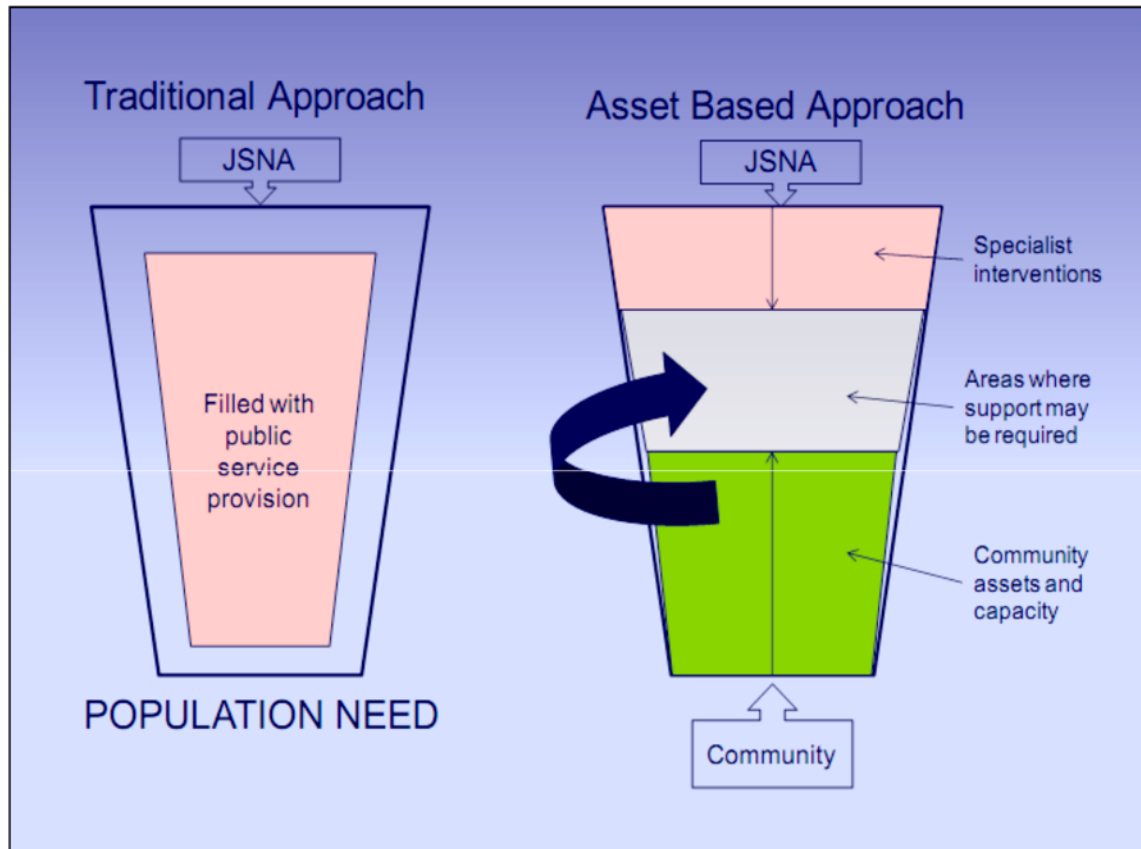
CAN DO!

The new paradigm for Effective Community Impact — Asset-Based		
	NEEDS/DEFICIT-BASED	ASSET-BASED
Purpose	Changing community through increased services	Changing community through citizen involvement
Method	Institutional reform	Citizen-centered production
Accountability	Leaders are professional staff, accountable to institutional stakeholders	Leaders are widening circles of volunteer citizens. Accountable to the community
Significance of assets	Assets are system inputs. Asset Mapping is data collection	Assets are relationships to be discovered and connected. Asset mapping is self-realisation and leadership development
Production resource	Money is the key resource. Falls apart without money	Relationships are the key resource. Falls apart when money becomes the focus
Operating challenge	How do we get citizens involved?	How do we channel and build on all this citizen participation?
System dynamic	Tends to spread itself thinner over time	Tends to snowball over time
Evaluation	Success is service outcomes, measured mostly by institutional stakeholders	Success is capacity, measured mostly by relationships

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Community Assets - what are they?

- The skills of local residents
- The power of local associations
- The resources of public, private and non-profit institutions
- The physical and economic resources of local places
- The stories of our lives and of evolving community

Strength-Based Bill of Rights for Youth in the Juvenile Justice System

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. I have the right to be viewed as a person capable of changing, growing and becoming positively connected to my community no matter what types of delinquent behaviour I have committed. | 10. I have a right to surpass any treatment goals which have been set too low for me, or to have treatment goals which are different than those generally applied to all youth in the juvenile justice system. |
| 2. I have the right to be viewed and treated as more than a statistic, stereotype, risk score, diagnosis, label or pathology unit. I have a right to a future free of institutional or systems involvement and to services which most centrally and positively focus on my successful transition from institutions. | 11. I have the right to exercise my developmental tasks as an adolescent; to try out new identities; to learn to be accountable and say I'm sorry for the harm I've caused others – all of which is made even more difficult if I'm labelled a "bad kid." |
| 3. I have a right to contribute things I am good at and other strengths in all assessment and diagnostic processes. | 12. I have a right to be served by professionals who view youth positively, and understand that motivating me is related to successfully accessing my strengths. |
| 4. I have a right to have my resistance viewed as a message that the wrong approach may be being used with me. | 13. I have a right to have my family involved in my experience in the juvenile justice system in a way that acknowledges and supports our strengths as well as needs. |
| 5. I have the right to learn from my mistakes and to have support to learn that mistakes don't mean failure. I have the right to view past maladaptive or antisocial behaviours as a lack of skills that I can acquire to change my life for the better. | 14. I have a right to stay connected to my family no matter what types of challenges we face. |
| 6. I have the right to experience success and to have support connecting previous successes to future goals. | 15. I have a right to participation in the selection of services that build on my strengths. |
| 7. I have the right to have my culture included as a strength and services which honour and respect my cultural beliefs. | 16. I have the right to service providers who coordinate their efforts and who share a united philosophy that the key to my success is through my strengths. |
| 8. I have the right to be viewed and treated as a redeemable resource and a potential leader and success of the future. | 17. I have the right to be assured that all written and oral, formal and informal communications about me include my strengths as well as needs. |
| 9. I have the right to have my gender issues recognised as a source of strength in my identity. | |

Useful Questions for Strength-based conversations

There are three key questions within any effective learning conversation which move in that direction (Green, Moore & O'Brien, 2007):

1. What do you care about enough to act on?
2. What do you have to offer?
3. What will it take for you to join in action with others who share your interests?

Strength-based Learning Conversations

The work of the Resilience Research Centre¹ offers an interesting perspective on conducting strength-based learning conversations in their broadest context. Their work documents the complexity of young people's lives when growing up in adverse circumstances¹.

The Resilience Research Centre (RRC) brings together leaders in the field of resilience research from different disciplines and cultural backgrounds. Partners across six continents employ methodologically diverse approaches to the study of how children, youth and families cope with many different kinds of adversity. The RRC's focus is the study of the social and physical ecologies that make resilience more likely to occur. The Centre have designed what they refer to as nine "catalyst" questions aimed at prompting the development of resiliency and engagement in such young people, and understanding positive deviance¹.

The nine catalyst questions are:

1. What would I need to know to grow up well here?
2. How do you describe people who grow up well here despite the many problems they face?
3. What does it mean to you, to your family, and to your community, when bad things happen?
4. What does it mean to you, to your family, and to your community, when bad things happen ?

¹Positive Deviance (PD) is an approach to personal, organisational and cultural change based on the idea that every community or group of people performing a similar function has certain individuals (the "Positive Deviants") whose special attitudes, practices/ strategies/ behaviours enable them to function more effectively than others with the exact same resources and conditions often in spite of significant adversity

5. What kinds of things are most challenging for you growing up here?
6. What do you do when you face difficulties in your life?
7. What does being healthy mean to you and others in your family and community?
8. What do you do, and others you know do, to keep healthy, mentally, physically, emotionally, spiritually?
9. Can you share with me a story about another child who grew up well in this community despite facing many challenges?
10. Can you share a story about how you have managed to overcome challenges you face personally, in your family, or outside your home in your community?

Key Motivators to Action

Strength-based conversations recognise that there are three key motivators to action:

1. What we want to see happen (our dreams for the future) and are prepared to move towards.
2. What we do not want to see happen (our concerns for the future) and are prepared to move away from.
3. What we are willing to contribute (our strengths/capacities) to move towards our dreams and in addressing our concerns.

Five Principles of ABCD - ABCD is:

1. Relationship Driven
2. Asset Based
3. Place based
4. Citizen driven
5. Inclusion