



READY BY 21 WEBINAR- THE READY BY 21 TOOLKIT: TOOLS FOR BUILDING BETTER PARTNERSHIPS & DESIGNING BOLDER STRATEGIES

In December, the Forum for Youth Investment hosted a webinar entitled The Ready by 21 Toolkit: Tools for Building Better Partnerships & Designing Bolder Strategies. The webinar featured Karen Pittman, Co-Founder, President and CEO of the Forum for Youth Investment, who provided a sampling of Ready by 21 Tools and ways that they can be used to assist communities with building broader partnerships, setting bigger goals, using better data for decision-making, and forming bolder strategies.

Karen first discussed the importance of forming broader partnerships and what this entails: getting all stakeholders engaged, ensuring that coalitions and networks operating efficiently, and forming a single group of committed stakeholders providing leadership. A tool to help frame and assess how well a community is doing the above is the Stakeholder Wheel, which provides leaders with a user-friendly visual to map the engagement of their members and track any changes over time. An example of how the Stakeholder Wheel was used in the Georgetown Divide community of California was explored.

Karen then provided an overview of the importance of setting bigger goals. This happens when a community sets clear goals for outcomes grounded in what we know about child and youth development, identifies improvement goals for essential supports that focus both on quantity and quality, and chooses marketable goals that can be understood and accepted by all. One Ready by 21 tool that can be applied to this work is a dashboard. A dashboard is a two dimensional way of looking at a range of goal setting factors, such as age, outcomes, quality, and systems, in a comprehensive, 'big picture' view. Examples from Illinois and Kentucky were shared.

The third concept that was shared during the webinar was better data and decision-making, which is exhibited when key community bodies are using effective planning processes, when they have a goal of using data focused on child and youth outcomes rather than systems, and when decisions are informed by research and experience. Tools that support this work include Program Landscape Mapping, Mapping Resources, and using Youth Outcome Data. Program Landscape Mapping is a tool that assists communities with getting a picture of the services, supports, and opportunities available in the community. Mapping Resources provides an overview of the flow of funding in a community and how they can be reframed around a youth outcomes point of view. Finally, Youth Outcomes data tools put an intentional focus on data that is directly related to how well or poorly youth are doing, as opposed to systems-based data. One example of this is the Gallup Student Poll which surveys youth directly about their hope, well-being and engagement in school.

Finally, the fourth area of the Ready by 21 tools reviewed during the webinar focused on bolder strategies. Bolder strategies are exhibited when decision making bodies have the capacity to coordinate efforts to improve capacity and



reach, when funders execute decisions against a shared plan, advocacy and awareness building is unified, and youth and families are included intentionally in decision-making. All of the above tools contribute to reaching this goal. The Maryland Action Agenda was shared as an example of a community that has engaged in all aspects of Ready by 21 planning and is currently executing a plan that exhibits bolder strategies.

Additional Resources

- <http://forumfyi.org/node/405>

A link to the Maryland Action Agenda, an example of bolder strategies.

- <http://forumfyi.org/node/617>

A link to another example of a Stakeholder Wheel from Grand Rapids, MI, a tool for building broader partnerships.

- <http://www.gallupstudentpoll.com/home.aspx>

This is an overview of the web-based Gallup Student Poll, which measures students' hope, well-being and engagement in school. It is currently being offered free to school districts across the country.

- <http://forumfyi.org/content/adding-it-brochure-rationale-and-guide-mapping-public-resources-children-youth-families>

These publications provide an overview and guide to what a Child, Youth, and Family resource map can do, and how a community can benefit from one.

Q & A

Rick Poole: We are starting a joint style committee where every member represents a group. So all people have some ownership. Is this the direction that you are talking about?

Yes. Joint ownership is very important. One of the standards of Broader Partnerships focuses on ensuring that all stakeholders are fully engaged. This is evidenced by a sense of urgency to improve conditions and outcomes; a commitment of human and financial resources; interest/experience in working in collaboration with others; and a commitment to 'big picture' goals that are beyond their immediate interests.

Marnie Annese: what is the time period over which the dashboard is completed? Is it a point in time assessment or can it be over the course of a year or more?

The dashboard can be used in both ways. For example, a community may decide they would like to get a sense of public opinion on how well youth are doing. This might be a one-time assessment that is presented in dashboard

form. However, the dashboard is an ideal tool for tracking progress over time, since it provides a sense of changes in the 'big picture' in an easy to comprehend straightforward visual.

Peg Crowe: On the dashboard, how do I know what the colors represent?

In our dashboards, green represents 'doing well;' yellow represents 'needs improvement;' and red represents 'doing poorly.' However, each community can decide the criteria for each category that fits their needs.

Amy Engelman: where do these communities get their asset/engagement/strengths indicators?

They get their information from a variety of sources. One of our technical partners, Child Trends, is currently working on a guide to selecting indicators so that will be available as a future publication. As we said the Gallup Student Poll is a free opportunity to learn more about students' hope, well-being, and engagement in school. One of our other partners, the Search Institute, also offers surveys that provide information regarding assets in the communities.

Maria Fernandez: Is there a sample copy of the Program Landscape Map survey on your website?

Yes. The Program Landscape Map survey is available through this link:

- <http://forumfyi.org/content/ready-21-webinar-landscape-mapping-summary-and-resources>

Amy Engelman: If they presented to the Children's Cabinet, who was the RB21 coalition made up of? And what was the relationship for them to get the Cabinet to adopt it?

Here is an overview of the process and who was involved with the work. The list of the participants on the ready by 21 planning team is on page 2 of the pdf.

- <http://forumfyi.org/node/405>
- <http://forumfyi.org/files/MD%20Action%20Agenda%20FINAL.pdf>

Peg Crowe: Does Ready by 21 have people that can facilitate a community wide assessment?

Elizabeth-Ann Lasley: Do you collaborate trainings through Minneapolis connections?

For information on consultants or trainings, please contact Ian Faigley directly at ian@forumfyi.org.