



Diagram of Community Weaving Framework © 2006

Community Weaving is a transformative community building approach that weaves an interconnected network of responsible and responsive citizens who coordinate efforts with formal systems to create thriving communities. This grass roots community mobilization strategy is implemented by Community Weavers who have the tools, materials and technology to engage citizens to start their own Family Support Networks in schools, churches, corporations, organizations and associations where they pool resources, organize activities and spearhead community improvement initiatives. Community Weavers recruit Good Neighbors who pool resources and interact with one another. Those who want to serve in a leadership role and participate in service learning activities are trained as Family Advocates and provide direct support services to those requesting assistance. All FSN volunteers are recognized as leaders, role-models and change agents in their communities. They are an interwoven web of support that augments service delivery systems and enhances supports to families. Community agencies tap the human and tangible resources of the FSN to enhance services to clients and reciprocate by providing specialized training to FSN volunteers to increase their skills and abilities.

Implementation of this transformative community building methodology varies depending on the readiness of the institutions in the community to collaborate with this grass roots initiative. Existing coalitions can implement the Community Weaving model and train volunteers and staff as Community Weavers from diverse sectors of the community. At the grass roots level, neighbors can begin by pooling resources, listing social and recreational activities, organizing workshops using a web-based technology on the Family Support Network website. They can also link up with their neighbors and share resources using the FSN Resource Treasury. Data is collected to determine the impact the FSN has had on community which is measured by the number of new registrations, social interactions, service learning opportunities, social activities, community service projects and contributions made by FSN volunteers. Community Weaving increases protective factors and resiliency through family bonding, connectedness to community, participation in problem-solving, and promoting self-sufficiency. It is a cost effective approach for engaging citizens in community revitalization and democracy.

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