

North Brevard Coalition Of Human Services

Human Services Gap Analysis Report

(North) Brevard County, Florida

May 2009

“Connecting Partners to Build a Better Community”



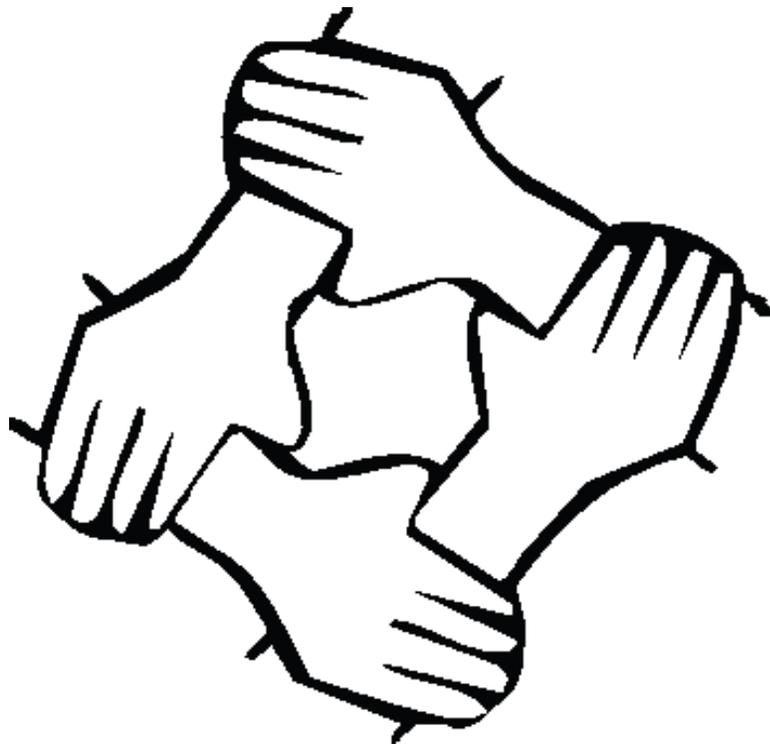
**A Reference Document for Community Leaders in Government,
Business, Human Services and Faith-Based Organizations**

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A Partnership of:





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North Brevard Coalition of Human Services



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I. Executive Summary

The North Brevard Coalition of Human Services (NBCHS) is a consortium of over one hundred community and faith-based organizations. Through the Gap Analysis Project (GAP), local community leaders assisted the Coalition in identifying gaps in community human service needs and strengthening community relationships to better leverage existing resources of government, not-for-profit service providers, faith-based organizations and businesses within the North Brevard community to address needs in a coordinated, holistic manner. This report is the culmination of a collaborative planning effort led by NBCHS, a Project Coordinator and a Steering Committee of community leaders.

A needs analysis study conducted by Titusville's Brevard Community College (BCC) yielded 2237 survey responses and identified the top four needs as:

- Youth services and centers
- Health services and facilities
- Crime awareness
- Substance-abuse treatment

Focus groups, comprised of providers and users of services, were convened for each of the four priority areas. From these discussions, substance-abuse treatment was identified as exhibiting the greatest gap in services.

An Action Plan has been proposed, and is included as Section V of this report.

Attached appendices include NBCHS Officers and Membership, Project Steering Committee, Workgroups, BCC's Needs Analysis Survey, Focus Group Report, Supporting References for Faith-Based Christian Community Development and Acknowledgments.

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II. Introduction

The North Brevard Coalition of Human Services, (NBCHS), founded in 1994, is an unincorporated association of over one hundred community and faith-based organizations. NBCHS's mission is education, coordination, and facilitation of community transformation through partnerships of community organizations. Together, the member organizations have found ways to assist many families and individuals who would otherwise have trouble meeting basic human needs including food, clothing, and shelter.

The Coalition's vision is to educate the community and individual organizations about existing services, to facilitate partnerships among federal, state, and local governmental entities, not-for-profit agencies, and faith-based communities and to identify and develop services to meet the community's unmet needs. The Coalition's motto is "providing a hand up, not a hand out."

The concept of this gap analysis began in Oct 2006 when NBCHS officers observed an increase in people seeking services in the North Brevard area. Preliminary analysis indicated that the 20% of the population actively served by NBCHS members was absorbing 80% of the resources. NBCHS leaders saw a need for a cooperative effort among service providers to develop a strategic plan so that:

- the right person
- would receive the right service
- at the right time
- for the right reason.

Furthermore, member agencies budgetary constraints increased the urgency to maximize the leveraging of existing resources and to identify and eliminate duplication of effort in delivery of services.

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Concurrently, Indian River City United Methodist Church (IRCUMC) located in Titusville, had begun to investigate community needs with a goal of establishing three community development outreach centers by 2010. A partnership was developed to proceed with NBCHS's Gap Analysis Project under the leadership of IRCUMC's Director of Accepting Ministries, Jennifer Taylor. "Connecting Partners to Build a Better Community" was adopted as a vision statement for the project.

Preliminary desired outcomes were to:

- Identify gaps in meeting local human service needs;
- Develop and implement a methodology to capture data that will be useful to Coalition members and other agencies for program analysis and development;
- Attract additional collaborators, particularly in the faith-based and business communities;
- Expand the existing inter-organizational referral system and database of needs and resources;
- Involve executive decision-makers and community leaders in the NBCHS planning and networking process.
- Conceptualize a holistic community development pilot project to address identified needs and become a model to be replicated.

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III. Methodology

On March 14, 2007 a Steering Committee of twelve community leaders (Appendix B) comprising a diverse representation of the community at large met for the first time to address gathering information and directing the efforts of this Gap Analysis Project, so that the findings of the study would be beneficial to leaders in all types of organizations as they determine how best to allocate their internal resources. Workgroups were established to review previous community surveys and to assist with community awareness of the project (Appendix C).

In July of 2007, a SWOT analysis (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) was conducted by Gina Wilson Beckles, Ph.D., President and CEO of the Beckles Group, Inc. The goal was to identify the capacity of NBCHS to enhance the quality of life within the North Brevard community. The findings validated what was believed by Coalition leaders that:

- a. The Coalition's strength is its collaborative network among the human services community;
- b. A major weakness is the lack of involvement of decision makers/executive leadership from member agencies to facilitate the development of cooperative strategies of the Coalition;
- c. A secondary weakness is the lack of resources, i.e. funding, staffing, volunteers to facilitate the desired level of communication and coordination;
- d. There is opportunity to increase partnerships between the faith-based and business communities and to address some of the weaknesses identified (SWOT available upon request)

During the summer of 2007, area faith-based partners had begun site visits and earnest research into holistic community development models. Three representatives of the faith-based community embarked upon a site visit to Jackson, Mississippi, to explore the efforts of Reverend John Perkins, founder of the Christian Community Development

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Association (CCDA). A process established by CCDA for partnering among social services, businesses, and faith-based communities has produced positive redevelopment of their rural, economically depressed, racially-divided community, one neighborhood at a time. As of 2007, over 700 communities have implemented the CCDA principles, with success stories documented at <http://www.jmpf.org/content/about/history/>.

Other models of community development reviewed and considered by the committee included those of Congressman James Meeks in South Chicago and Bishop Vaughn McLaughlin of the Potter's House Christian Fellowship in Jacksonville, Florida. The executive director of Love Inc. of Melbourne, Florida, Rev. Dan Walker shared Love Inc.'s model of advocacy and accountability at a local meeting of pastors and other members of the North Brevard faith community.

Multiple meetings have been held within the local faith-based community, facilitated by Pastors Arthur Blatch, Christian Life Center of Titusville and Jim Govatos, IRUMC, with a goal to build geographic and racial relationships across the community.

In the summer of 2007, community assets were mapped in both the faith-based and business communities, to be added to the existing NBCHS directory. Data was gathered from local businesses through the Titusville Area Chamber of Commerce (TAC) and through local churches. A community website for more information and a directory of services, maintained on a monthly basis, is <http://www.nbbd.com/npr/nbchs/index.htm>.

Through the fall of 2007 and the summer of 2008, a weekly TV talk show "The Connection," was produced and aired on the City of Titusville public channel. The show was developed by NBCHS to educate the community-at-large about the Coalition, its member agencies, and the Gap Analysis process.

During fall 2007, a survey developed and administered by Brevard Community College (BCC) was made available online and in hard copy. Local churches and organizations shared a web address where participants could take the survey on-line.

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BCC, the City of Titusville, IRCUMC and TAC each had links on their web pages for citizens to take the survey. Administration of the survey culminated on Christmas Day during an annual NBCHS community event held for more than 300 individuals, "Project E.A.T.". The initial goal was 2,000 surveys, and a total of 2,237 surveys were obtained and analyzed.

A detailed analysis of the survey (Appendix D) was performed by BCC's Office of Institutional Effectiveness. The analysis identified the top ten needs in North Brevard. The methodology adopted for development of a GAP strategic plan was to focus on the top four needs.

In April 2008 four topical focus groups, based on the survey's top four findings, were led by Kristen Bakke, President-CEO of L.E.A.D. Brevard, with providers and users of services jointly participating. Analysis of the focus group discussions led to the conclusion that the greatest gap in available services was in the category of substance-abuse treatment.

Consistent with guidance from the Steering Committee, GAP leaders interviewed area providers in the fields of substance-abuse treatment and at-risk youth, for the purpose of developing a pilot project to address the highest priority needs and the greatest gap.

Subsequent meetings of the GAP steering committee and project leaders resulted in development of an Action Plan, presented in Section V.

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IV. Outcomes and Conclusions

The Gap Analysis Project began with an examination of the capacity of NBCHS to act as an agent of change in the North Brevard community. Findings of the analysis emphasized the Coalition's strength as an established network and identified a need for increased involvement of executive decision-makers in the NBCHS collaborative process. The study recommended greater involvement of the faith-based and business communities, and saw the need to obtain increased funding and administrative staffing to facilitate Coalition initiatives.

State, county, and local leaders' comments support the process established by CCDA to stabilize and rebuild our communities. (Appendix F). By strengthening partnerships within our community we can produce a preventive model for dealing with at-risk youth and substance-abuse, using interventions that address life and family destroying behaviors to decrease the need for later services and treatment. The cycle of poverty (which may include lack of education, minimum skills, lack of health services, delinquent youth, substance-abuse, crime, and other factors) should be addressed through a coordinated focus of resources and holistic delivery of services by the human services community.

This theory is based partially on the 2002 Strategic Plan of Together in Partnerships (TIP), a collaboration of community agencies throughout Brevard County that work to prevent delinquency and improve the health and well being of children. TIP specifically focuses on the issues of substance-abuse, delinquency, teen pregnancy, school dropout, and violence, and identifies family management as the number one problem for children and families within Brevard. Family management problems have been shown to increase the risk of substance-abuse, delinquency, teen pregnancy, school dropout, and violence. TIP has recognized NBCHS in their 2009 Strategic Plan as a being a resource for sharing information about available programs and resources for family management issues.

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A request for funding to initiate a pilot project was submitted to the Space Coast Area Network (SCAN) Legislative Forum in October 2008, and subsequent meetings were held with incoming and returning elected officials at the city, county, state, and recommending to our city, county, state, and federal governments that this report be used as a baseline document when updating social/human services initiatives and/or community planning documents pertaining to North Brevard. Although the project was not funded, it ranked highly in the list of applications considered.

Opportunities exist, in partnership with the Titusville Chamber of Commerce, to educate local businesses regarding services available to employees who may be in need. Employee assistance will aid in better job retention. Relevant services that are provided by the business community also should be considered for addition to the NBCHS resource directory and website. There are many services provided by businesses that citizens are not aware, e.g., credit repair, first home buyers programs and financial education assistance.

We intend that NBCHS shall strengthen a partnership with the faith-based community to expand our established network and to better utilize community resources.

Faith-based leaders are dedicated to working toward building a better community in North Brevard, as referenced in IRCUMC's January 2009 newsletter by Sr. Pastor, Jim Govatos, who states, "We recognize the urgency required to protect and build up our youth. To this end, we are willing to partner with government agencies and businesses in North Brevard to build a better future for our youth. In some instances, we will be able to work closely with other agencies." He adds, "We believe a large component of our current situation involves a breakdown of spiritual strength in the community and requires a distinctly spiritual response. I will personally be approaching pastors within my sphere of influence with ideas about how to respond to this crisis. We will continue to reach out to our world. The pastors with whom I meet have recognized a need to help people in transition during the upcoming layoffs from Kennedy Space Center. Consequently, we and others have formed the Joseph Fund, which will store up resources to help people in those times of difficulty."

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V. Action Plan

The members of the NBCHS have served in a grass-root, front-line capacity for many years, with a mission to improve the quality of life for families and individuals in need. Through the actions recommended here, it is believed that a more strategic and practical approach can be implemented. This plan identifies a pathway to a more cohesive, focused linkage among existing organizations by building new partnerships and strengthening the capacity of the North Brevard Coalition of Human Services (NBCHS). The Coalition further believes that until the support from the decision makers are in alignment with the theory found at the front-line level, a “better community” will not exist. No one thing or effort will address this complex issue; it will take our community’s coordinated efforts focused around the saving grace of Truth which can only change lives, not good works.

The following action steps are recommended for implementation by NBCHS to address gaps within the North Brevard community and to serve as a model to be shared.

- Building NBCHS capacity:
 1. Form an Advisory Committee, as a successor to the GAP steering committee, of diverse executive level community leaders to provide strategic direction and guidance.
 2. Strengthen the mechanisms for recruiting, training and using volunteers in the administration of NBCHS activities.
 3. Update the Coalition’s directory to include data collected from the faith-based and business communities in the GAP asset mapping process; promote the website as a database of human services resources available to the North Brevard community, and; promote the 211 Brevard crisis intervention and information hotline.

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4. Formalize a strategy to periodically update the Coalition's needs database as recommended by BCC's Data and Research Department. Through partnership with BCC, It is planned that the GAP will be updated approximately every three to five years with a new citizen survey.
 5. Seek appropriations and grant funding to further Coalition initiatives.
- Building and strengthening partnerships to address priority needs:
 1. Promote coordination in the delivery of all youth services provided in North Brevard; North Brevard Parks & Recreation and/or Brevard County School Board are recommended as facilitators for this process.
 2. Continue to partner with the faith-based community to provide human services. Educate and train partnering churches about the resources available through other human service and government agencies.
 3. Establish, with NBCHS as facilitator, a sub-coalition of medical service providers for the purpose of collaboration and enhanced communication regarding access to health and wellness services, including Medicaid, Medicare and Florida Kids Care.
 4. Partner with the Titusville Area Chamber of Commerce to educate local businesses regarding services available to employees who may be in need. Relevant services that are provided by the business community should be considered for addition to the NBCHS resource directory and website.
 5. Create a pilot program that concentrates on youth services/centers and substance-abuse treatment (the greatest need and the greatest gap from the GAP results) with a holistic approach that exemplifies building and sustaining partnerships, to be completed within a two-year period. This would include members from the human service, faith-based and business communities.

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NBCHS Officers and Membership

Officers:

Chair: Robynne Hester, VITAS Innovative Hospice Care
Vice-Chair: Barbara Borman, First United Methodist Church
Secretary: Julie Canada, Parrish Medical Center
Treasurer: Terri Goodman, State Attorney 18th Judicial District

Members:

- AARP Foundation, Senior Community Services Employment Program
- Agency for Health Care Administration
- AHF/Positive Healthcare Pharmacy
- Air Mobile Ministries
- Apostolic Ministries
- Atlantic Inclusive Academy
- Bethlehem Baptist Church
- [B.E.T.A.](#) (Birth Education Training, Acceptance) of Titusville, Inc
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Brevard, Inc
- Boys and Girls Club of Central Florida, Mims Branch
- [Brevard Alzheimer's Foundation](#)
- Brevard Community College/Titusville
- Brevard County Health Department
- Brevard County Community Action Team
- Brevard County Sheriff's Office
- Brevard Job Link
- Brevard Senior Nutrition Program, Meals on Wheels
- Catch of Brevard
- Catholic Charities
- Center for Drug Free Living
- Children's Home Society of Florida
- Christ Aid Ministry For Family Restoration
- Christ Community Church
- Christian Life Center of Titusville
- Circles of Care
- Comforts of Home Care Associates, Inc
- Community Care Programs /Community Services Council
- Community Legal Services of Mid-Florida-Tax Aid
- Con Jesu
- Connected by 25 Brevard
- Consumer Credit Counseling Service
- Crosswinds Youth Services, Inc
- Department of Children and Families
- Department of Children and Families Substance-abuse and Mental Health Program
- Department of Juvenile Justice
- Disabled American Veterans
- Division of Blind Services
- Early Learning Coalition of Brevard
- East Coast Contract Industries
- [Easter Seals of Florida, Inc](#)
- Even Start Family Literacy
- Family Counseling Center of Brevard In
- First Baptist Church of Port St. John



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APPENDIX A

- First Haitian Baptist of Melbourne
- First United Methodist Church of Port St. John
- First United Methodist Church of Titusville
- Florida Division of vocational Rehabilitation
- Food With Care, Inc
- Frances S. Walker Halfway House
- Goodwill Self Sufficiency Job Center
- Great Commission Fellowship
- Greater Works Christian Center Inc
- Guardian AD Litem Program
- Habitat for Humanity of Brevard County
- Harry T. Moore Neighborhood Services Center
- H.A.R.T., Home Action Restoration to Transition
- Healthy Start
- [Hidden Potentials, Inc.](#)
- Hope Community Fellowship
- Horsesisters & Associates, Inc.-HEAT
- [Hospice of St. Francis, Inc.](#)
- Housing Authority of Brevard County
- Housing Authority of Brevard County, Community Services Programs
- Housing Authority of Brevard County, Section 8 Housing Assistance Payment Program
- Housing Authority, Cocoa
- Housing Authority, Melbourne
- Housing Authority, Titusville
- [Housing Enhancement For Lower Income-H.E.L.P](#)
- Impact Center
- Indian River City United Methodist Church
- Integrity House Recovery Program
- Kidspace Community Program
- Liberty Lodge
- Links of Hope, Inc
- [Literacy Alliance](#)
- Missions Thrift Store (An Outreach Ministry of First Baptist Church of P.S.J)
- National Veterans Homeless Support
- [North Brevard Charities Sharing Center](#)
- [North Brevard Senior Center](#)
- Park Avenue Baptist Church & Park Avenue Christian Academy
- Parrish Community Medical Clinic
- PREVENT of Brevard, Inc
- [Prison Book Project](#)
- Redeemer Presbyterian Church
- ResCare Home Care/Calvary Chapel of Melbourne
- Retired and Senior Volunteer Program
- Salvation Army
- School Board of Brevard
- Shekinah Street Ministries
- Source of Safety
- [Space Coast Center for Independent Living](#)
- [State Attorney 18th Circuit](#)
- Stepping Stone Fellowship
- St Katherine Greek Orthodox Church
- Titusville Fire and Emergency Services
- [Titusville Police Athletic League](#)
- Titusville Police Department
- United Way of Brevard County
- [VITAS](#) Innovative Hospice Care
- Volunteer Brevard
- Walk-About-Ministry
- Waypoint Recovery
- WIN (When In Need)
- WIN/VET Program
- Work First Plus (Human Services Associates, Inc.

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APPENDIX C

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Gap Analysis - Workgroup Leaders 2007

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APPENDIX D

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**BCC REPORT
Begin With Pg. #18**

End With Pg. #65

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Focus Group Report July 7, 2008

Purpose of the Project/ Context for the Project

Outcome goal is to create a final report for the North Brevard Coalition of Human Services (NBCHS) that offers human resource providers in northern Brevard County a strategic tool for decisions regarding service delivery for citizens/clients in North Brevard County. The concept embraces the faith based community; the social services providers and ultimately the business community. A NBCHS steering committee of 12 members is the primary group guiding the Gap Analysis Project, led by Ms. Robynne Hester, Chair-Person and Mrs. Jennifer Taylor, Gap Analysis Project Coordinator. Contractors include: Brevard Community College (survey) and a series of focus groups conducted to add value and confirmation of results to the survey comments and initial gap analysis.

Timeline

Received the preliminary summary of the Citizen's Survey from Brevard Community College Department of Institutional Research end of February 2008.

Steering Committee Meeting on February 27, 2008. Received and e-mailed final report the first week in April.

North Brevard Coalition of Human Services (NBCHS) Citizen's survey analysis for the Gap Analysis Project to identify gaps in human service delivery to citizens in North Brevard County, FL.

Focus Groups were held to qualify the findings in order to identify the "gaps" in human/social services for North Brevard with data used as a component of the final report of process and findings.

Methodology

Data collection for groups was limited to personal comments reactions to questions and personal observations and opinions, captured verbatim and recorded by Mrs. Terri Gray of Reporting Specialists, Inc. Verbatim reports of each focus group have been provided to the Gap Analysis Project Coordinator as a supplement to this report.



North Brevard Coalition of Human Services



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Based on the initial survey respondent comments and analysis of survey the top four priorities outlined in order of priority were established as:

- # 1 Youth Services & Youth Centers
- #2 Health Services and facilities
- #3 Crime Awareness and
- #4 Substance Abuse

A sample of the organizations/institutions considered as an appropriate representatives & range for each group follows as an effort to share the basic premise for invitation. Additionally, issues of confidentiality were addressed and focus groups were designed to be respectful of confidential issues and persons.

Youth Services

Crosswinds Youth Services
YMCA
Faith based youth services providers
Prevent! Of Brevard
Boy/Girl Scouts
Brevard Public Schools
Department of Juvenile Justice

Health Services

Parrish Medical Center
Assisted Living/Nursing Homes/Home Health
Hospice
Alzheimer's care providers
Major physician practices

Crime Awareness

State Attorney's Offices
Law enforcement
Court system representatives

Substance-abuse

Center for Drug Free Living
Providers of substance-abuse treatment facilities
Law enforcement



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The Focus Group schedule follows:

All sessions were conducted at the Titusville Public Library as a central and well known/accessible location.

Monday, May 19, 2008	4:30 - 6:00 p.m.	Health Care Services & Facilities
Tuesday, May 20, 2008	4:15 - 5:45 p.m.	Youth Services and Centers
Wednesday, May 21, 2008	4:30 - 6:00 p.m.	Substance-abuse
Thursday, May 22, 2008	9:00 -10:30 a.m.	Crime Awareness

Description of Participants

For each focus group (one for each of the four priorities outlined above) it was determined that a mix of service providers and 'clients' would be invited to participate. Members of the steering committee were also invited to attend as observers and encouraged to attend a focus group that was different from their personal/professional area of expertise/knowledge.

A response system was established for invited participants to indicate their plans to attend or regrets; walk in participants and those who had not had an opportunity to respond to the original invitation were also welcomed at the focus group setting.

Specific demographic information and other characteristics of participants was not captured for the records; general observations include that participants lived/worked in North Brevard; obtain services in North Brevard; gender and age diversity was appropriate; other diversity characteristics were limited by factors not in control of the leadership and there was a good balance of providers and clients in each group. Youth group may be been underrepresented by youth (teens).

Statement of limitations of data collection includes number of participants for each group; limits on number of focus groups conducted (one per issue area) and personal opinions vs. fact based research.





Main Findings

Key points from each focus group follow in the order that focus groups were conducted; no priority order is assigned to list of comments; however, those in bold face were noted more frequently and/or with greater emphasis.

Health Care

Professionalism of delivery of health care services was noted as a positive; compliments to Parrish Medical Center in particular;

New medical talent in north Brevard; specialty physician recruiting would appear to be making successful progress from a consumer point of view;

Access to resources;

A directory of services/resources? Several comments and points made of a (printed?) directory that was available as a resource in the past;

Awareness of resources as a key issue; for example comments made that there was an abundance of health care services available in North Brevard, but finding out how to access those resources was a challenge and personal persistence was needed to locate resources (examples in particular based on participants of in home health care and Alzheimer's care);

Health insurance issues and the cost of same; Affordability of care;

Elderly populations increase in Florida, in Brevard and in North Brevard outlines a greater need for in-home care options, which may also reduce costs for a family vs. nursing home or assisted living care;

Issue of 'family'... Many participants aware of issue that persons in need of care do not have immediate family in the north Brevard area and therefore those family members are not available as caregivers.

Youth Services

Awareness of available youth resources; A "disconnect" in the database of services – for those seeking information about resources and "territorial – ism" among providers of youth activities; (for example, calling one resource may provide information about that particular service but may not be helpful in terms of next steps or referrals to other alternatives or other services/resources that may be available.)

Cost of some programs is prohibitive for some families; particularly those with multiple children as the cost is a multiplier for those families;

Participants expressed a need for "fun" activities for youth to "keep them out of trouble";





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Mentoring as a possible solution to youth needs (the business community was mentioned as a source for mentors);

A need was expressed for “support structures” for youth, families and/or both; Transportation, lack of public transportation, lack of personal transportation of families with limited income;

Utilization of Brevard's 211 as an information resource and connector;
Utilization of the TV channel at schools, internet and TV in general for awareness as options to increase awareness of services and options available;
Option of a Youth Services Resource Fair to showcase availability and opportunities for youth was popular with participants;
Suggestions included others to bring to the table in conversation toward solutions include retired population; parents and teachers, business community.

Substance-abuse

Insufficient number of (women’s) recovery programs; women with children; also for teens;

Public awareness lacking as to what and how to secure services; insufficient number of available (detox beds) when located;

Use of media to increase awareness and community/civic concern;
Dental care needed for this population;
Assistance needed includes transportation; (no driver’s license) dental care; financial assistance; credit issues; after care programs;
Local neighborhoods not supportive of additional housing, transitional housing, halfway houses, etc. for those in need; “sober houses” that are really just inexpensive rentals...conditional use permits issue;
Lack of referral network among providers;
A family needs help too; counseling, etc.;

Need for awareness and exposure of problem and solutions;

Options for addressing solutions included engaging law enforcement (referrals vs. arrest), elected officials could help (changing conditional use permits system/zoning), Court system (Treatment as an option vs. jail).

Crime Awareness

Neighborhood level awareness and perception/awareness of crime depends in part on which neighborhood you live in (high crime vs. more affluent);





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Town hall discussions and forums; reach people with information;

Lack of citizen involvement; neighborhood watch programs used as an example of previous citizen involvement;

People don't know their neighbors...community involvement (lack of time expressed as a key factor in this lack of involvement);

Connection (personal connections to each other and to law enforcement officials/personnel);

Societal issues of trust, personal involvement, shift in values;

What can we/I do to be accountable, responsible?

Involve parents; involve the faith community;

Suggestions for including at the table of conversations around solutions - Sheriff's department, city officials, school system, business community, local workforce development board.

Conclusions and Implications of Data for Decision-Making

Since focus groups were in most cases attended by less than the 12-15 the project coordinator had planned for and since also in most cases the participant base was weighted toward providers, conclusions are based on information provided by and limited by those participating and those of the facilitator acting as report author. The author would offer that a key implication of using this data set for decisions would need to include supporting documentation from previous data collection methods and the need to preview the 'solution' with a number of persons who may be affected by any change as a result of the implementation of such a solution.

Recommendations

Overall perception is that the efforts of the North Brevard Coalition for Human Services and the Gap Analysis Project are being well received by the community in this focus group data group and that the project will be supported by those groups.

Overall, the author recommends that the priority order, based in part on a personal analysis of the NBCHS ability to address and implement solutions remain in the original order for the first two and reverses the second two – the new priority list would therefore be: #1 Youth, #2, Health, #3 Substance-abuse and #4 Crime awareness. Rationale follows:





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Youth and Health services issues appear to be in good working order; the challenges are awareness and access – areas that NBCHS may be able to address. Increasing public awareness of available resources and encouraging linkage of services, through the media, printed pieces and/or web based media may be accomplished and offer short term gains. Affordability of insurance, the increase in the uninsured population and cost of care are areas that are not as readily addressed at the local level.

Substance-abuse issue area appeared to have more service gaps, particularly for females in need, than either the youth or health care groups; posing a potential for NBCHS to have early success by highlighting the need and seeking community based solutions. This issue area also has an awareness component and some of the same options outlined above may be useful; local elected officials may be the place to open discussions on zoning and conditional use permitting that appear to be barriers to at least one of the solutions.

Crime awareness may be determined to be the fourth priority for these suggested reasons; the simple variable of one's location and socioeconomic status highly affects the perception of this issue; NBCHS may not be positioned to address "**Societal issues of trust, personal involvement, shift in values**" that are such a larger piece of this issue area and by addressing existing issues with youth and substance-abuse, there may be reduction in crime related issues as there is generally a connection between them. Another potential solution that may offer an avenue to address this quickly and then slip to #4 is to partner with local law enforcement to produce a public forum to hear citizen concerns and allow the ownership of the issue to be held with those citizens with the most concerns and the appropriate law enforcement agencies.

Appendix [to Focus Group Report]

1. Focus Group Questions
2. Letter of Invitation to participate in focus group





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North Brevard Coalition of Human Services Focus Groups Questions

What is already in place to address stated concerns?

What are the top 2 things we could do today (near term) to address priority items?

What can't be done locally?

Are there ways to combine the scarce resources of any two or more similar initiatives into one that may be more efficient?

What information do you need to do take the next steps? From whom do you need it? When do you need it? How often do you need it? What is the best way to get this information?

What is the biggest obstacle to accomplishing/moving toward our priorities?

How do we best share what we have learned with those who most need to know?

Who else needs to be part of this process?

Are there ways to combine the scarce resources of any two or more similar initiatives into one, stronger and more efficient?

How do we best share what we have learned with those who most need to know?



North Brevard Coalition of Human Services



APPENDIX E

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Focus Group Invitation

May 1, 2008

Dear _____:

On Monday, May 19, 2008 from 4:30 – 6:00 p.m. at the Titusville Public Library, the North Brevard Coalition of Human Services, a volunteer organization of 80+ human/social service providers, will be hosting a focus group on the topic of Health Care Services and Facilities. This focus group has been developed for the purpose of providing further details to a citizen's survey that was done in the fall of 2007 with the assistance of BCC – Titusville campus students and the college's Department of Institutional Research. We are taking the top four identified community needs and providing focus groups on each of these four topics in order to qualify the type of gaps in service.

You or your designee is invited to attend the meeting and participate in the focus group because of your experience in key health care services or facilities in North Brevard. With your assistance the focus groups will include both consumers and providers. Due to privacy laws we are asking for you to extend an invitation for us to five of the clients you have served. Their input is also vital.

Ms. Kristin Bakke, President/CEO of LEAD Brevard, will be the facilitator for the focus group.

Findings from this group will be integrated into the final report for the Coalition's Gap Analysis of Human Services for North Brevard. All information shared during the focus group will be maintained in aggregate and not attributed to any individual. Each person who attends will be asked to sign a statement of Confidentiality.

Please respond by Thursday, May 15, 2008 via phone or e-mail to Jennifer Taylor, Project Coordinator, the following:

Phone 321-544-0147

Email – NBCHS94@yahoo.com

Sincerely,

Robynne Hester
Chairperson
North Brevard Coalition of Human Services

NBCHS

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Christian Community Development Supporting References

The GAP Action Plan recommends increased partnering of the faith-based community with other human service providers to address the human service needs of the North Brevard community.

Reverend Jim Govatos, Sr. Pastor, Indian River City United Methodist Church, further states “a large component of our current situation involves a breakdown of spiritual strength in the community and requires a distinctly spiritual response.” The local Faith-Base Community supports Reverend John Perkins’ Model of Christian community development to produce positive redevelopment of our rural, economically depressed, racially-divided community, one neighborhood at a time.

Below are excerpts of national and local reports supporting the findings of the Gap Analysis Project.

FAITH-BASED COUNSELING TRENDS:

Problems noted include family issues of marriage and divorce, self mutilation and suicide in youth, confusion over purpose in life and lack of motivation in youth and adults, drug abuse in youth and adults, families split because of some form of abuse by one parent, children’s problems because of divorced parents, ongoing conflicts with divorced spouses that affect adults and children, financial anxiety, depression, sexual addiction, rape victims.

YOUTH & SUBSTANCE-ABUSE:

A. Florida Family Policy Council,

<http://www.flfamily.org/ffpcnew3.php?alertid=301> “New Survey Shows Fewer Problems at Home and at School for Children With Intact Married Families That Worship Weekly “

(ORLANDO, FL) - A [new study](#) released [December 16, 2008] by the Florida Family Policy Council finds that children have fewer problems at school and home

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when they live with both biological parents and frequently attend religious services. Drs. Nicholas Zill and Philip Fletcher co-authored the new study which analyzes data from the National Survey of Children's Health.

Among their remarkable findings: children in this group are *five times less likely to repeat a grade*, less likely to have behavior problems at home and school, and are more likely to be cooperative and understanding of others' feelings. Parents of these children report less stress, healthier parent-child relationships, and fewer concerns about their children's achievement. These differences hold up even after controlling for family income and poverty, low parent education levels, and race and ethnicity.

"With the economic crisis that we find ourselves in, it is time to stop pretending that the breakdown of the family does not have detrimental effects on every area of society from generation to generation," said John Stemberger, president and general counsel of the Florida Family Policy Council.

- B. "We recognize the urgency required to protect and build up our youth. To this end, we are willing to partner with government agencies and businesses in North Brevard to build a better future for our youth. In some instances, we will be able to work closely with other agencies. However, we believe a large component of our current situation involves a breakdown of spiritual strength in the community and requires a distinctly spiritual response. I will personally be approaching pastors within my sphere of influence with ideas about how to respond to this crisis, as well as continue to work with St. James AME and The Christian Life Center of Titusville on our Timothy Academy plans."





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C. Judge Jack Griesbaum, Dependency Court, Brevard County, from a presentation given at the Brevard Interfaith Coalition First Annual Conference, October, 2008:

Substance-abuse is clearly the #1 issue that faces many communities, including our own.

Remember when our society revolved around the family structure. Why has it so deteriorated? The drug abuse problem's cause is primarily from dysfunctional families. Most of these parents are parents with severe drug issues; the "good" parents have simply lost control of their kids by not being parents, or when they do wake up it is too late. In essence, the family structure has deteriorated, and there is too much expectation that government has all the answers. Remember, when government gets involved we all pay a price. This emanates from the arrest for crimes that the drug addict commits, to the children that are removed (foster care) as a result of the parent-addict's abuse or danger to the children due to drug abuse, to the attempted rehab of the parent-addict in the criminal court or juvenile dependency/delinquency court.

You must also know that most addicts must truly hit bottom before they are ready to clean up their act. Many just go through the motion of completing their residential programs (more than 2 or 3), only to start the cycle over again by relapsing when back with the old crowd a month or so after the facility certified that they were clean.

As I noted earlier, money will always be an issue. Our current facilities are struggling to stay afloat in these tough times. There have been very tough budget cuts or elimination of grants for many programs. Community support is necessary, the support and participation of the faith based groups are essential and that of government entities, if the tide is to effect change by changing the culture within our community so that "family" regains its importance once again.

Judge Griesbaum also commented that "six to eight months after [a child] being in a structured Christian environment he sees major [positive] changes in the child's behavior.





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D. Brevard County Sheriff Jack Parker from a panel presentation given at the Brevard Interfaith Coalition First Annual Conference, October 2008:

Drug treatment facilities in Brevard are inadequate; jail is the only option. There are a good model of alternatives in St. Lucie, Broward, Orange and Dade Counties to address high risk children and keep them out of jail.

Six months to one year is needed to rehabilitate a youth from their previous life. Teen Challenge, a national organization with a local presence, has good success rate long term with this process.

Statistics prove that high risk children who attend church on a consistent basis turn from risky behaviors and away from a life of crime to become functioning/contributing members of our society.

CRIME:

A. Lieutenant Cleyton Bray, North Sector Patrol, in “The Titusville Police Department Shield”, December 21, 2008, page 6.

“Although overall, we enjoy a safe community in Titusville, like many others, we have had some violent incidents. The biggest common denominator: drugs! “

B. Roland Martin, syndicated columnist, Florida Today “Reining in crime” Dec 11, 2008,

“Encourage churches to take their message to the streets. During the civil rights movement, in a number of Southern towns, black men who were deacons at their churches took up arms and patrolled their communities at night. They worked diligently to keep members of the Ku Klux Klan [KKK] from wreaking terror in their neighborhoods.





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Today, the KKK has been replaced by gangs and other thugs who are just as brazen in their disrespect for people and the law. In many inner-city neighborhoods, you can find a church on every street corner. Those churches must encourage their members to be as bold outside the church as they are inside.

Fighting crime today is not a one-way street. There is no way police can do it alone. When residents work with police to take back our streets, we can do more good through nonviolent means than we ever could do with armed resistance.”

C. J. D. Gallop, “Slaying Toll at 22 This Year”, article in Florida Today, Dec 17, 2008.

“Cocoa resident Oliver Muhammad, a longtime community activist, said the answer to homicide, whether the numbers are up or down, rests with parents, spiritual leaders and residents. In recent months, activists such as Muhammad have taken to the streets, praying and trying to address the human dimension behind the statistics detailing murder and other violent crimes. The police patrols are a start, they said but more has to be done to reach pockets of a generation whose senses are often dulled by violent images, video games and a culture where guns have become a means to an end.

‘It’s bigger than law enforcement. This is a moral issue, a spiritual issue,’ said Muhammad. ‘It’s not about guns, even though there might be easier access. But it involves the attitudes of the people that have those guns. Unfortunately, violence has become a natural part of the reality for some.’”





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ECONOMIC DISTURBANCE:

A. IRCUMC's Sr. Pastor, Jim Govatos.

The Faith-Based Community, Reverend Jim Govatos, Sr. Pastor, Indian River City United Methodist Church, further states,

“We will continue to reach out to our world. The pastors with whom I meet have recognized a need to help people in transition during the upcoming layoffs from Kennedy Space Center. Consequently, we have formed the Joseph Fund, which will store up resources to help people in those times of difficulty....”

A. Spacecoast Business, “Local Business Leaders Weigh In; What’s Been the Most Significant Event in Brevard County in 2008 and Why?”, December 2008, pg. 63.

Lisa Rice, President, Brevard Workforce Development Board states, “I can think of two business events that have been significant [recently] in Brevard. First would be the decline in the housing market which had residual downward effects in several supportive industries around the start of 2008, specifically real estate, finance and banking, retail sales and construction-related businesses. For workforce development, we can connect many lines of economic disturbance back to this event and to the second event: the overall economic downturn. These economic disruptions are tied to the higher unemployment rates as local businesses reduce their workforce. Additionally, those businesses that are growing are reluctant to grow too quickly because of economic instability.”





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Acknowledgments

The Gap Analysis Project represents the culmination of a collaborative effort among human service agencies, local businesses, and the faith-based community of (North) Brevard County. With a spirit of cooperation, each of the community stakeholders shared different viewpoints and ideas, all of which were heard and acknowledged.

The agencies and individuals who were involved include

- Gina Wilson Beckles, Ph.D., President and CEO of the Beckles Group, Inc. for conducting the SWOT analysis of NBCHS's capacity (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats)
- Steering Committee members (Appendix A) representing the City of Titusville, Community Services Council, Brevard County School Board, Parrish Medical Center, Christian Life Center of Titusville, Brevard Workforce Development Board, Florida Department of Children and Family, Brevard Community College (BCC), Brevard County Housing & Human Services, Space Coast Area Transit Authority, State Attorney's Office, and Titusville Area Chamber of Commerce. Their commitment, leadership, and direction throughout this process has been invaluable.
- Brevard Community College: Dr. Ethel Newman, Titusville Campus Provost; Frank Billings, Vice President of Institutional Effectiveness and Strategic Management; and Sharyn Hurst, Director of Institutional Research, for the development, administration and analysis of the citizen survey.
- BCC's Fall 2007 Community Involvement Class, led by Professor Robin Campbell, for the administration of surveys throughout the North Brevard community.





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