

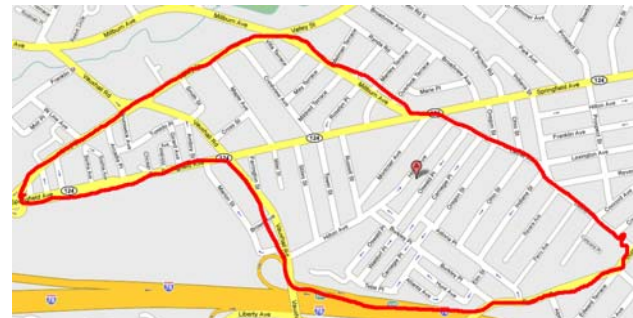
Jewish Family Service of Central New Jersey NORC Collaboration



Presentation at the
NORC Annual Conference
March 22 – 24, 2009
Baltimore, MD

Jewish Family Service of Central New Jersey NORC

- ❑ Our NORC is based in Union County, New Jersey
- ❑ Specifically, the Elmora section of Elizabeth and the Vauxhall section of Union Township
- ❑ Our project is called LINKS – Living In Neighborhoods Kind to Seniors
- ❑ The project began in August, 2008
- ❑ Our team consists of a social worker, nurse, arts therapist, social work intern and project manager



LINKS: Our Communities

- ❑ The geographic areas for both LINKS are densely populated.
- ❑ They are approximately one square mile each.
- ❑ Based on the Census, there are 3,000 adults 60+ in Elmora and 900 adults 60+ in Vauxhall.
- ❑ There are 3 synagogues, 12 Churches, one library, 3 elementary schools in Elmora
- ❑ There are 7 Churches, one library and one elementary school in Vauxhall.
- ❑ There are many businesses in and bordering the community.
- ❑ The community consists of one and two family homes as well as apartment buildings.

LINKS: Our Communities

- Selected demographics, based on the Census, for our communities are as follows:

	<u>Elmora</u> CT 321	<u>CT 319</u>	<u>Vauxhall</u> CT 328
Race			
White	65%	41%	17%
African American	1%	9%	72%
Latino	22%	34%	3%
Median Income (for all HH)	\$62K	\$28K	\$43K
Home Ownership			
Own	81%	13%	61%

LINKS Collaboration: How Did We Begin Community Mapping

- ❑ **Our first effort was to develop a community map. The purpose was three-fold:**

- To get to know the resources within the community
 - To meet people in the community
 - Publicize the project

- ❑ **How we Mapped:**

- We obtained an aerial map of our two communities
 - Went in teams and walked every block of our communities
 - Were joined by other staff and volunteers from Union County College
 - Noted the type of housing, religious institutions, businesses, schools, libraries, other service providers, etc. on the map
 - Spoke to people who were out – residents, letter carriers, construction workers, etc.



LINKS Collaboration: Engagement

- ❑ Initiated discussions with religious leaders, libraries, service providers, apartment building managers and local government as well as our initial grant supporters.
- ❑ Spoke with existing Jewish Family Service contacts in these communities.
- ❑ Provided workshops to existing senior groups to supplement their program. Seniors had a choice of several options (e.g. Tai Chi). Also, went to senior programs to introduce LINKS and answer questions.
- ❑ Engaged senior groups around our needs assessment survey. Distributed our survey to 26 locations in our community.



LINKS Collaboration: Focus Groups

- ❑ ***Invited a broad range of people*** from the community to attend a community meeting to discuss issues impacting older adults.
- ❑ ***Held one focus group in each community***, with a total of 42 participants.
- ❑ ***Focus group attendees*** included residents, caregivers, service providers, elected officials, local government, religious and educational leaders as well as business owners.
- ❑ ***The focus group provided a forum for concerned individuals*** to voice their issues and an opportunity to network and share information.
- ❑ ***Each focus group generated a list of approximately 60 issues*** which impact older adults. The issues were in 5 areas: Transportation, Health and Wellness, Quality of Life, Housing and Living Alone Issues.
- ❑ ***Focus Group Feedback:*** 70% of the attendees requested to become part of the Advisory Board; 100% of attendees rated the discussion as excellent or good. Over 50% of the attendees rated the interaction as the best part of the meeting and 100% of attendees met someone new.



LINKS Collaboration: Results

□ **Advisory Board**

- Two active Advisory Boards, with a total of 32 members, met in March and will continue to meet on a monthly basis. Each Advisory Board meets in their own community.
- Prioritized the list of 60 issues and are focusing on Board priorities.
- Partnering with Advisory Board members and other community members to address the issues. Currently working to launch a Health Education program at a local recreation center, partnering with our local hospital, city government, residents and elected official.

□ **Outreach**

- As a result of mapping, community discussions and focus groups, we identified over 100 potential partners and had in-person contact with 78 through January, 2009.
- Continuing to work with existing partners and develop new partners as we address our issues.

□ **Service**

- Regularly receive calls from community members for our assistance or to collaborate around an issue.
- Provided 25 group sessions with 310 participants, since the beginning of the project.
- In the process of rolling out several new services with our communities. They are: supplying adaptive equipment, providing handyman services, additional transportation to strengthen residents independence and volunteer services to enhance civic engagement opportunities.

LINKS Collaboration: Top 10 Lessons Learned

1. **Develop a Plan:** Maximize use of time and resources to achieve long range goals. Include small measurable steps that lead to many successes along the way and can be an early warning system if the project is off-schedule.
2. **Be positive:** The approach is one of strength, not deficits.
3. **Trust is difficult to build:** It doesn't happen overnight. You need to meet and speak with people repeatedly. Also, if you are not successful in making a connection initially, try again at a later time.
4. **Communication is key:** We work within a complex environment and getting the message out can be as important as the message itself. Focus on communication channels.
5. **People value networking opportunities:** Provide opportunities to discuss issues of importance with groups at all levels of relationships.
6. **It never hurts to ask:** Don't assume you know the answer. Reach out because you never know where it will lead.
7. **Engage people around an Activity:** Incorporate a task, as part of your initial discussions with community groups.
8. **Share your Expertise:** Demonstrate your value and the value of the project to your partners.
9. **Live up to your commitments:** Don't overpromise and deliver on all your commitments, big or small. Be realistic.
10. **Leverage your partners:** Existing partners can help you to attract new partners. The more you integrate your project in the community, the more you will make your project a desirable partner.

LINKS Collaboration: Next Steps

- ❑ As LINKS matures, partnerships will evolve and strengthen. We will monitor partnerships for effectiveness.
- ❑ Continually assess priorities of the community.
- ❑ Build upon the programs and services that are in place.
- ❑ Expand our circle of partners.
- ❑ Evaluate the project at the end of the first year of operation.
- ❑ Develop plan for Year 2.