

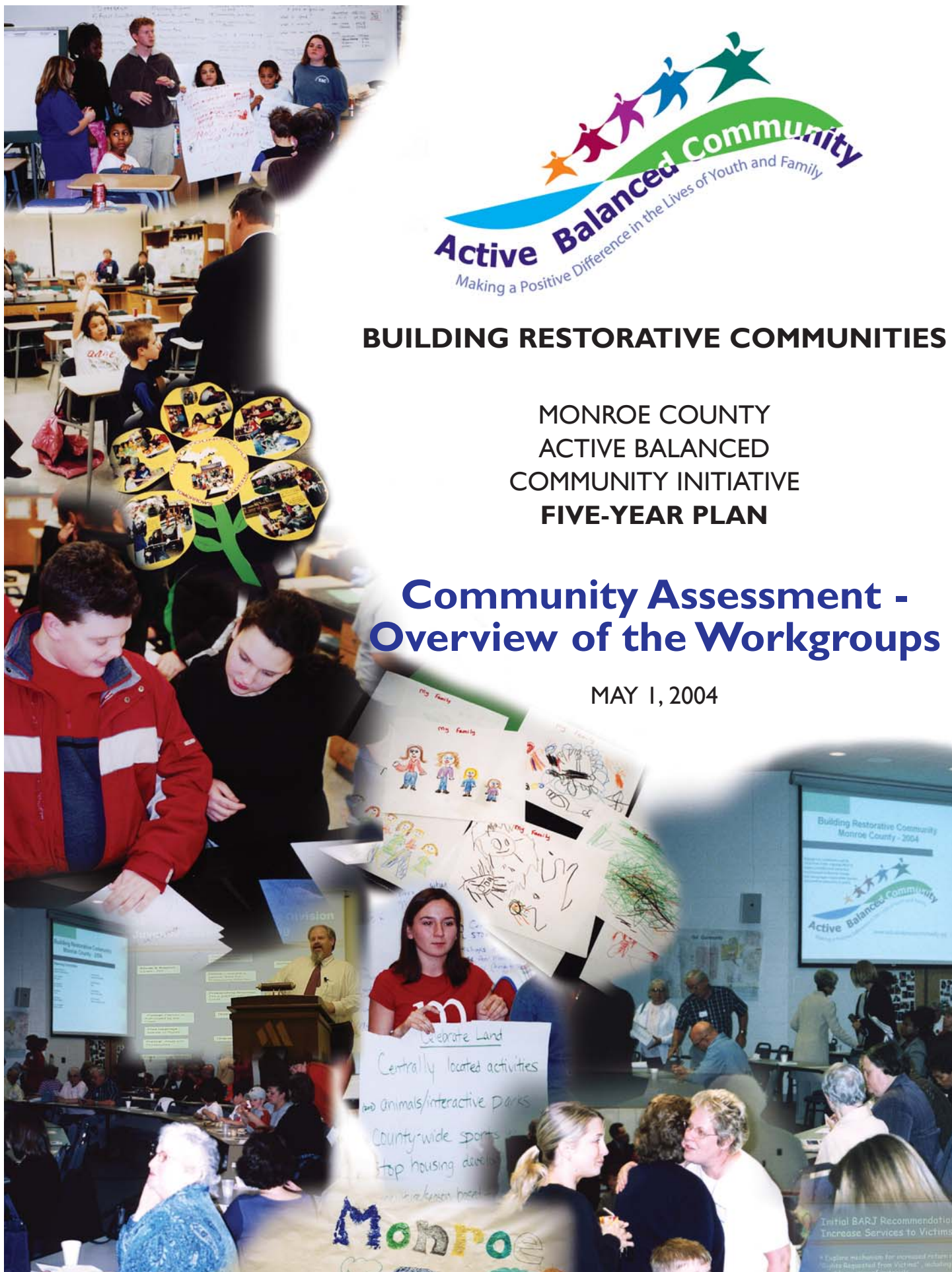


BUILDING RESTORATIVE COMMUNITIES

MONROE COUNTY
ACTIVE BALANCED
COMMUNITY INITIATIVE
FIVE-YEAR PLAN

Community Assessment - Overview of the Workgroups

MAY 1, 2004



Community Assessment - Overview of the Workgroups

The Active Balanced Community Initiative plan is the product of a comprehensive process to prevent, reduce and control juvenile violence and crime by addressing the needs of youth and families in the community.

The process was conducted through the efforts of the Monroe County Family Court, Human Services Collaborative Network, the Monroe County Juvenile Justice Planning Forum (renamed Active Balanced Community) and the United Way of Monroe County with the approval of the Monroe County Board of Commissioners in response to a national grant through the Michigan Bureau of Juvenile Justice and the Family Independence Agency. Training and technical assistance was provided through the Bureau of Juvenile Justice in support of the local effort. The Community Planning Team was lead by co- chairs Judge Pamela Moskwa of Monroe County Family Court and Michael Hoydic Executive Director of the United Way of Monroe County supported by Building Restorative Communities Co-site Coordinators Doug Redding of the ISD and Charlie Mahoney of Four-M Associates and evaluator Mark Creekmore of Community Service Systems, Inc.. Five workgroups - Data Collection and Analysis, Juvenile Justice System Analysis, Resource Assessment, Youth and Outreach/Media/Communication - and a Steering Committee worked for 10 months to complete the plan.

Summary of Workgroups and Recommendations

DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS WORKGROUP

TASKS

The primary tasks of the Data Collection and Analysis Workgroup were to:

- (1) Develop a statistical and demographic data profile of the community;
- (2) Conduct an analysis of data sources and accessibility; and
- (3) Analyze the data to identify priorities and key issues to be addressed by other workgroups.

PROCESS

- Identify data sources and collect data for:
 - Baseline community profile,
 - Risk factors indicators,
 - Problem behavior indicators, and the
 - Juvenile Justice System.
- Review/analyze collected data and protective factors.
- Prioritize risk factors to be addressed by the community.
- Format data collection results and share with other workgroups.
- Identify key issues, barriers and technical assistance needs related to data collection and analysis.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Identify and collect baseline data needed for ongoing county needs assessment for risk factors.
- Complete baseline on identified needs assessment for each area by collecting primary, secondary and additional data as needed or requested.
- Establish an annually updated repository for collection, maintenance and analysis.
- Identify additional data resources for satisfactory analysis.
- Provide agencies that are concerned with child well-being with continuous, accurate and timely data for multiple usages.
- Ask respective agencies to report useful data for grant proposals, policy impact statements, reports and publication purposes.

RESOURCE ASSESSMENT WORKGROUP

TASKS

The primary tasks for the Resource Assessment Workgroup were to:

- (1) Conduct inventory and assessment of programs and services for children and families in Monroe County;
- (2) Identify gaps in services and supports for Monroe County;
- (3) Prioritize needs for services and supports for Monroe County; and
- (4) Identify recommendations for the BRC Steering Committee based upon prioritized recommendations.

PROCESS

- Conduct Community Resource Assessment Program Survey.
- Conduct additional Informal Community Gaps Assessment.
- Review data and prioritize community needs in services and supports.
- Establish goals, objectives, and action steps based on the prioritized information.
- Make recommendations to the BRC Steering Committee.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Improve access and awareness to available services and support for children and families.
- Fill the gaps in services and support in:
 - Transportation -- Respite Care -- Foster Care -- Universal preschool/childcare
 - Parenting education -- Affordable housing -- Dental -- Person specific counseling for juveniles
 - Substance abuse treatment (inpatient/outpatient).

JUVENILE JUSTICE ANALYSIS WORKGROUP

TASKS

The primary tasks of the Juvenile Justice Analysis Workgroup were to:

- (1) Map the current juvenile justice system to include restorative processes and practices;
- (2) Identify critical decision points and document the current decision-making processes used;
- (3) Conduct focus groups with victims and offenders; and
- (4) Understand and address minority overrepresentation and gender sensitive issues.

This workgroup analyzed the processes by which youth are placed or moved through the system, and by which victims and community members participate in the system.

PROCESS

- Develop a juvenile justice flowchart.
- Identify all decision points along the juvenile justice system flowchart.
- Collect and analyze data on which youth are at each decision making point within the Juvenile Justice System and how they move through the system.
- Determine the referral, case management, and service delivery options.
- Using your juvenile justice system flowchart, identify when, where and how the following occur:
 - Victim involvement,
 - Offender accountability to victims and the community, and
 - Reparation/restitution for victims and the community.
- Identify obstacles in client tracking, case flow, and integrated case management systems.
- Examine how decisions are made and how risk assessment and classification systems are used.
- Review minority overrepresentation and gender issues.
- Identify opportunities for victim and community engagement and graduated sanctions.
- Conduct and analyze the results of focus groups with juvenile offenders and victims of juvenile crime.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Increase services to victims to enhance their involvement in the juvenile justice process.
- Continue BARJ training opportunities and skill development to law enforcement and other justice service components, and to the public-at-large.
- Expand BRC/BARJ principles within the system through the development of alternative programming as well as increased volunteer and service activities.

YOUTH WORKGROUP

TASKS

The primary task of the Youth Workgroup was to create a picture of growing up in Monroe County by:

- (1) Describing its geography, communities, people, recreational opportunities, businesses and other points of interest;
- (2) Identifying things that make Monroe County a good place to live;
- (3) Identifying things that cause concern;
- (4) Identifying things that would make it a better place to grow up; and
- (5) Providing a written report.

The BRC process required a diverse youth workgroup representing the youth of the county for the BRC effort.

PROCESS

- Identify existing youth group leaders in order to reach out to youth.
- Ask each of these leaders to involve their youth group in a project that will create a picture of growing up in Monroe County; establish due date for projects.
- Invite each participating youth group to attend a general meeting (send a representative of their group or whole group) to review all projects and develop overall picture of growing up in Monroe County.
- Prepare summary of growing up in Monroe County as a written report for the planning process.
- Participate in the community introduction of the completed plan.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Increase attention on understanding culture and diversity.
- Focus on keeping teens off the streets.
- Expand sports activities - especially out of school.
- Should be more youth centers - accessible and affordable.
- Make safer neighborhoods.

OUTREACH/MEDIA/COMMUNICATION WORKGROUP

TASKS

The primary tasks of the Outreach/Media/Communication Workgroup were to:

- (1) Engage community leaders and stakeholders including youth in the process;
- (2) Assist Steering Committee with ongoing mobilization;
- (3) Develop a public awareness campaign for the greater community regarding the planning team efforts and the implementation of the plan;
- (4) Conduct and analyze the BARJ readiness survey provided by the Technical Assistance Team;
- (5) Engage community leaders and assist the Steering Committee with mobilization; and
- (6) Work with the other workgroups to prepare and disseminate all public information pieces and press releases; and proof and prepare for final production all official documents and other communications with the public.

PROCESS

- Develop project logo, vision and mission in conjunction with the Steering Committee.
- Develop public awareness campaign for the planning efforts and for the implementation phase:
 - Website
 - Newsletters
 - Speakers Bureau
 - Public events
 - PSA's
 - Media interface including press releases.
- Conduct and analyze BARJ readiness survey.
- Prepare and disseminate the final product(s) and any additional products developed during implementation.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Establish on-going point of responsibility for coordinating the proactive communication/public awareness activities during the implementation.
- Maintain website for information dissemination to public.
- Executive Summary and Final Report be published in CD format and as part of the website.
- A one/two page summary brochure be designed and printed for general distribution.

STEERING COMMITTEE

TASKS

The primary tasks of the Steering Committee in conjunction with the co-site coordinators were to:

- (1) Mobilize the planning team;
- (2) Review and recommend changes to State and local laws and policies related to the County's ability to implement a Restorative Community;
- (3) Monitor the planning team's work;
- (4) Hire and oversee the evaluator;
- (5) Create the final five-year strategic plan report with a set of recommendations, specific goals and outcomes to measure success and a proposed timeline for implementation of the recommendations; and
- (6) Develop the application for continued funding.

PROCESS

- Review and prioritize issues and recommendations provided by the workgroups.
- Identify key baseline measures for recommendations.
- Establish an implementation framework for monitoring the implementation activities.
- Develop and publish, assisted by the Outreach/Media/Communication Workgroup, a five year strategic plan.
- Develop a list of on-going issues and barriers to be addressed.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Facilitate the development of county-wide system building policies and practices to make a positive difference in the lives of youth and families.
- Fully implement the principles of BARJ
- Create awareness of need for system change at all levels and work to remove barriers to allow recommendations to be successful.
- Upgrade technology to support the network of services in Monroe County which include support for the 2-1-1 information and volunteer referral system.
- Monitor and coordinate the implementation of, and future financial support for, the recommendations.

Each of these five workgroups used the Building Restorative Communities Model tasks to produce recommendations that were shared with the Steering Committee for use in the final Five-Year Plan document. Detailed information on the findings and recommendations for each workgroup is in the specific workgroup summary section of the Five-Year Plan document.