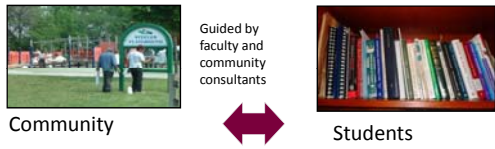



Health in the Hubs Phase II:
Bridging Research (**Book Smarts**) with Neighbourhood
Wisdom (**Street Smarts**) in a Campus-Community
Partnership with Students, Residents, and Faculty
Ruta Valaitis, RN PhD
Olive Wahoush, RN PhD
Nancy Murray, RN PhD (Candidate)
CHNC
May 15th 2012
Toronto, ON

Phase 2:
Street Smarts ↔ Books Smarts



Community Guided by faculty and community consultants Students



Support

Hamilton Community Foundation Grant to evaluate this phase II

- Over \$19,000 in funding from HCF's Community Health and Education Research (CHER) fund awarded for Phase 2 evaluation
- School of Nursing supported Local Planning Teams (LPTs) for contributions to student learning
 - LPTs supported community resident consultant honourariums to attend student classes at Perkins Centre and in community

Goals of Phase II



We will learn how:

- communities make effective use of research information in a community-based development and implementation project;
- universities can construct effective partnerships with communities; and
- community experience informs academic research and education.

Community resident consultants:

- **Hired** from each Local Planning Team (LPT) funded by the McMaster School of Nursing
- Developed **information gathering strategies**
- Adjusted **language** for Phase I survey
- Brought considerable **knowledge** about their neighbourhoods and **strong networks** to facilitate gathering of opinion
- Demonstrated **commitment** beyond paid role



Roles

- **Students**
 - Explore research and best practices
 - Target dissemination to academic and community audiences
- **Community Consultants**
 - Provide input on their neighbourhood context, clarify the issue and advise on dissemination
- **Faculty**
 - Facilitate relationships, partnership, and learning



PHASE II
Street Smarts ↔ Books Smarts

- Course development
 - Nursing-led course development: Partnering with Hamilton Neighbourhoods for Health
- Interdisciplinary groups of students (n=12)
 - variety of disciplines enrolled (Social Work, Nursing, Psychology, Biochemistry, Sociology, BHSc, etc.)
- Local Planning Team (LPTs) - committed to work with faculty and students and to identify consultant from LPT
- Three Groups - School of Nursing faculty, community developer, community resident consultants and groups of 4 students partnered with each Local Planning Team (LPT)
- Students gathered research to support action on Phase I priority health issues

Full citation of paper; open access link if available	Agnes, F. A. W. (2011). Vancouver's restoration of identity and growth project: an exploration and evaluation of the generational and gender benefits and challenges. Manuscript submitted for publication, Department of Criminology, Simon Fraser University, Burnaby, British Columbia.	<p>Assignment: Literature reviews conducted</p> <p>Examples of extractions of data from relevant papers</p>
Year of publication	2011	
Location/country where study was conducted	Vancouver, Canada	<p>Critical appraisal of research methods (type of research methodology used, comment on appropriateness of type, rigor of the research)</p> <p>can lead to issues in determining causal effect. Participants were sourced through referrals, which could lead to bias results. Also, some participants were not available, which could also bias the results. There was a small sample size, although the level of detail various backgrounds of the participants gave a broader level of diversity. There is a possibility that participants would be defensive about the program, but the researcher found otherwise. Subjects were anonymous which enabled increased honesty. The researcher relied on the participants to provide success rate statistics due to the qualitative approach. Men and women were not interviewed. The qualitative interview approach allowed for elaboration and many different topics to be approached, was necessary in studying the efficacy of the program.</p> <p>Limitations</p> <p>This study is limited in its application to South Sherman, as it would be difficult to find mentors and set up a referral system for participants, funding would be required, which means that there must be a theoretical framework and governing body established, which would take time.</p> <p>Relevance to South Sherman Neighbourhood context</p> <p>Although this program would require funding and involvement of art mentors on a semi-permanent basis, it is likely one of the best approaches available, as it targets graffiti perpetrators at the root. A similar restorative justice program would take longer to implement, and would have to be integrated into the justice system. However, it would fully include the youth population in the community and help the channeling of oral energy ("the need to be heard") into constructive community building.</p>
Type of paper (e.g. review, primary study, report, best practice document)	Primary research investigation	
Description of target population	Developers, coordinators, and facilitators of the Spaced Program	
Sample size where relevant	2 people	
Description of intervention	Three semi-structured qualitative interviews of select participants	
Key results	<p>Developers, coordinators investigate the target program and theories conducted in person either through meetings or through the program. Some participants can help them step in:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Relationships: anonymous • Relationships: increased and on phone • Possibilities of businesses • Speaking with <p>Adult mentors are hard to find. Presenting</p>	

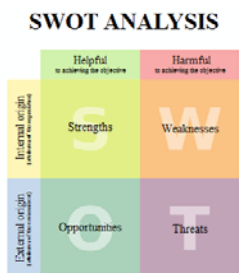
Tailored Dissemination of Results

HEALTH IN THE HUBS: A Student Perspective

Health in the Hubs is a student-led initiative that aims to improve the health and well-being of the community. It focuses on providing resources and support to those who are most vulnerable, such as the elderly, the disabled, and the homeless. The initiative is run by a group of students who are passionate about social justice and community development. They have organized various activities, including health fairs, workshops, and support groups. The initiative has been successful in raising awareness of health issues and providing much-needed support to the community. It is a testament to the power of student-led initiatives to make a positive impact on the world.

Phase 2 Evaluation Research Questions

1. What are the **strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats (SWOT) Analysis** of the Street Smarts↔Book Smarts initiative?



Phase 2 Evaluation Research Questions

2. **ENGAGEMENT**
What are **partners' perceptions**:
 - > their personal perception,
 - > community planning team's,
 - > University's, and
 - > other partners' engagement in the Street Smarts↔Book Smarts initiative?



Phase 2 Evaluation Research Questions

3. **IMPACT**
What do partners perceive to be the **impact** of this participatory, evidence-informed community development and implementation partnership initiative?



Methods



Focus Groups

- Students
- Local Planning team (LPT) members and community consultants
- Faculty

Partnership Self Assessment Tool

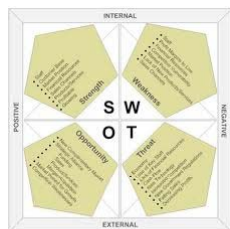
- Synergy
- Financial support
- Leadership
- Decision-making
- Satisfaction
- Benefits versus drawbacks

Data Collected

Dec. 2011- Jan. 2012

- Focus group participants
 - 9 Students (75%)
 - 4 Faculty (100%)
 - 18 Community members (56%)





Qualitative Data

SWOT PRELIMINARY RESULTS

Strengths



- **Learning approaches** used
 - Engagement **IN** and **WITH** the community
 - Non-traditional learning
 - Mutual learning occurred
 - Experiential learning
 - Authentic learning (real life)
- **Dissemination strategies** themselves (Pipeline walk, personalized messages to neighbours, quality of presentations, and ability to engage community in dissemination)

Strengths



- Quality of the **research** regarding community issues
- **Positive qualities of students** (youthfulness; diversity of backgrounds; fresh new and creative ideas)
- **Multifaceted approach** to problem-solving and movement towards solutions

Strengths



- Values and positive **attitudes** of all players (commitment, willingness to learn from each other, and valuing of contributions of everyone)
- **Skills expertise and experience** of **all** in 'teacher role' (community consultants, faculty, community developer, community members)

One student explained it this way

...the biggest surprise was the process of it all. The fact that we got to step out of the university bubble and have class downtown and work with the community and be invited to all their meetings. I think they were really accepting and they were really warm for embracing us and the whole process of it all That's not what you usually expect to receive from most of your other projects at the university. **The partnership of it all.**

Weaknesses



- **More orientation** regarding community project and course expectations needed for all players
 - Student's understanding of roles and expectations were vague
 - Community unclear about students' role in community
 - Students needed more guidance and feedback throughout from community members
- **Communication** challenges between community and students and among community members

Weaknesses



- **Time related challenges**
 - 3 months too short for community development project (takes long time to get a good understanding)
 - Limited time for students with faculty
 - Scheduling meetings for course and community meetings problematic
- **Challenge for students to develop meaningful relationship** with communities
 - Takes time; lack of exposure

Weaknesses



- Lack of human and fiscal **resources** to move community issues forward
 - Effort from community lacking at times
 - Lack of consistent funding for community
 - Costs for advertising/ communications with community

Action – Whose job is it?



A community member explained

It's not really fair to the students. They come up with all these ideas, they put all this work into it and then we just let it hang there for years to come. I think we need to act on it as a community group and start taking our own... **taking it into our own hands to put some action and put some of those ideas to work**

Valuing community experience



A student shared the following ...

One of the things I really valued and enjoyed about this course was that it gave us the ability to step outside the McMaster University and it gave us an opportunity to **connect with the greater Hamilton community**. I found that so many of the people I know who go to McMaster, they go to school as just kind of one place that they stop at for four years. They stay in the Westdale McMaster bubble So, I found it was a really great opportunity for us, **as students, to kind of give back to the community**, to the city that's helped us... helping to facilitate our future lives, careers and ... and our education. So, I found that was a great opportunity.

Opportunities



- **Career direction** influenced by course
- Opportunity to **experience community development** rather than from lectures or texts
- Opportunities related to students' research **dissemination** events
 - Brought out new community members
 - Warm community acceptance and interest

Career impact



One student explained

I felt one of the benefits was the **networking process**, especially with residents and people who work for [name of organization]. It also **inspired me to actually go out** and not be afraid to look in to visit **different organizations** and possibly **apply for jobs** I've met people in the community and some of the other residents and things like that, where I've actually been able to **talk, to kind of inspired me to look in different areas** and kind of select areas down to epidemiology and agriculture. That was one of the good opportunities I **find in directing my career into (area of work)**.

Threats



- Threat of making **limited progress** in the project
 - Lack of continuity of course
 - Results not happening quickly enough
 - Fear of disappointing community
- **Sustainability concerns**
 - Need community members to be motivated to work in next steps
 - Fear that expectations are too high for community
 - Fear of piecemeal funding
 - Lack of power from grass roots initiatives
- Lack of **recognition/ obscurity** of the project
 - Need to communicate to City government to ensure link to City plans

Challenge of sustainability



One individual explained the challenge of sustainability this way

One of the challenges is by using students in a very impressive third year course we had some excellent work turned out by some motivated students who are now done their course and they're no longer involved in the project and **they're moving on**. So, **all of the momentum, passion, moral impetus [...] that went into all of that work is now gone and needs to be rebuilt** amongst people other than people who are already involved in the Health in the Hubs project.

It's about action



One faculty member explained

So, beyond the community consultants I think there was a heightened awareness of everyone who sits at those local planning teams that, you know, this is not about study, **this is about action** and we want some explicit instructions that are actually going to help us in our particular goal. Actually one individual said as much:
 "We've been studied already. We know what the issues are. We know our neighbourhood. **Tell us what we can do to actually make some real changes**"

Impact / Outcomes



- Impact on Neighbourhoods
 - **Too soon** to say if intervention is making community a better place to live, work, and raise a family
 - Intervention moved neighbourhood **projects forward**
 - Increased **valuing** of community university **relationships**
 - **Brought people together** around community issues

Impact / Outcomes



- Impact on University
 - Consistent with **McMaster University President's** 'Forward with Integrity' message – including promoting **community engagement**
 - School of Nursing Charter – at the time of this evaluation had **not yet** shared with rest of university
 - **Students** engaged **beyond the walls** of the university
 - **Community appreciating university** reaching out

University Impact



A community member explains it this way

...but one thing that I really am touched by is that **McMaster university is doing a really wonderful job of reaching out into the community** and... and ... and that the **students are not in isolation and living in ivory castles**. They've been able to see practicalities, 'cause what you learn at university or school, wherever, is not necessarily applicable to when you get into real life and so this becomes a really great learning experience for them. But I think for we as neighbours as well.

Future Work



- Further analysis to be completed by end of June 2012
- Presentations to be shared with:
 - Local Planning Teams
 - President's Taskforce on Community Engagement
 - Conferences
 - City of Hamilton Staff
 - Etc...

Ongoing Work



- Development of health promotion activities in and around the Perkins Centre
- **Crown Point:** Building connections with Public Health to address community safety issues.
- **McQuesten:** Working on Community Kitchen and discussion in community about what aspects of Food Security they want to move forward on.
- **South Sherman, Crown Point and McQuesten** developing capacity for joint proposal writing.

It's about...



- Using a **citizen-centric approach** to working with neighbourhoods
- **Building community** – university relationships based on strengths and assets
- Process of **learning together**
- Not about meeting a need - but **working alongside the community** to identify and build on assets.
- **Not** reliant on volunteerism- citizens & university.

It's about...



- Who has ownership of the work?
Accompanying the community on their journey
- **Building networks**
- **Building capacity**
- This work has legs and is **ongoing**; it has set a foundation and needs to be sustainable

Questions?



- Contact re Phase I
 - Dyanne Semogas semogas@mcmaster.ca
 - Steven Rolfe rolfe@mcmaster.ca

- Contact re Phase II
 - Ruta Valaitis valaitis@mcmaster.ca
 - Olive Wahoush wahousho@mcmaster.ca
 - Nancy Murray nmurray@mcmaster.ca
