Using Visual Data to Engage Stakeholders in a Community Assessment of a Place-based Initiative – Participatory Photography

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Presenter Disclosures
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1) The following personal financial relationships with commercial interests relevant to this presentation existed during the past 12 months:

No relationships to disclose.

Where are we assessing?

Questions focused on three aspects of community:

Social Environment
Does the community have access to services and programs for children 0-5 and their families?
Where do people go to for support and advice?
Who are leaders in our community?

Service Environment
Do we have access to parks, jobs, books and fresh produce?

Economic & Built Environment

**What are the main methods & activities?**

Using common questions & standardized approach:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Methods</th>
<th>Who Participated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Focus Groups</td>
<td>Parents, residents and service providers (at least 3 per community)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Asset Mapping</td>
<td>Parents, residents and service providers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Interviews</td>
<td>Community leaders (10-12 per community)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participatory Photography</td>
<td>Parents and community residents (3-5 parents as researchers)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Survey</td>
<td>Organizations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Sources</td>
<td>Census, LAC DPH, CDE, etc.</td>
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</tbody>
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**Participatory Photography**

- A method that enables participants to tell their stories through images they capture.
- Promotes dialogue about personal & community issues through discussion of their photographs.

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**What is participatory photography?**

- For this project—Participants asked to reflect upon and record community assets and concerns.
- Why did we select this approach?
  - Because it increases community program buy-in and fosters social action.
Approach to Participatory Photography

- 3 – 4 group meetings with participants in a span of 3-4 weeks
- Partnered with community organizations to recruit participants
- 3 – 5 participants selected from each community to participate
- Goals of the meetings:
  - Provide an overview of the process
  - Review and select pictures
  - Design the community posters

Structure of Participatory Photography

- Goals of the 1st meeting:
  - Best Start LA Overview
  - Purpose of participatory photography
  - Set ground rules
  - Distribute cameras and forms
  - Discussion questions and themes

Structure of Participatory Photography

- Goals of 2nd meeting:
  - Select pictures
  - Discuss meaningfulness of each image
- Goals of 3rd meeting:
  - Select pictures and stories for poster
- Planned Dissemination:
  - Participants share pictures, stories, and process at community meetings
  - Posters documenting and celebrating the project (in progress)
How did participatory photography address the community assessment framework?

Sample questions that participants addressed:

- Where in your community do you and other families with children 0–5 go for services and programs?
- Where do you and other families in your community go to for support?
- Do you and your family feel welcome and safe in your community?
- Social Environment
- Economic & Built Environment

Participatory Photography Strengths and Challenges

Strengths of the approach:
- Developed relationships and trust
- Practiced group decision making
- Increased ability to critically think about their environment*
- Increased self confidence and self advocacy
- An engaging process where parents learned new skills

Challenges of the approach:
- The developing of relationships and trust takes time
- Personal use of cameras
- Lack of understanding of technology and waivers
- Community can easily digress form theme/purpose of pictures
What Stage are Communities in Now?

- FSLA Best Start reports have been shared with the community and used in the community plans
  - Community plans have been developed and approved
  - Community plans are how the whole process is supposed to be implemented
- Community Planning Committees have been established
- FSLA and communities trying to process how to implement the community plans

THANK YOU!!!

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