COMMUNITY SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS



🖊 Chapter Objectives:

- Develop The Community Assessment, Purpose and Definition
- Building a Community Assessment Team
- Understand Various Ways to Collect
 Community Information
- Primary and Secondary Data Collection
- Develop The Community Profile
- Develop Ways to Get Community Input
 and Determine Priorities

Activities:

- Community Assessment Flow Chart
- Community Assessment Worksheet
- Community Assessment Timeline
- Identifying the Stakeholders Summary and Framing/Positioning
- Youth School and Community Photo Mapping

📐 Tools:

- Overview of the Community Assessment
 Process
- Collecting Information: Primary and Secondary Data and Maps
- Methods to Get Community Input: Town Halls, Focus Groups, Surveys, Interviews
- Tricks and Techniques of the Survey Masters
- Resources and Basic Computer Tools
- Secondary Data Guide

COMMUNITY SCHOOL PARTNERSHIPS

Understanding Your Community

Before the group designs a course of action it must take time to do a thorough assessment of the community. A thorough assessment will help make sure you really know the true situation. An assessment will make sure you **SHARE** an understanding of what different members of the community find important. You should identify the needs that children and families have. Also identify the strengths and assets within families, systems, and the whole community. A focus on strengths will help accomplish two things:

- 1. Identify what resources the community currently has.
- 2. Help parents/guardians, children and other community members to see themselves as people with assets rather than as fundamentally deficient.

If you skip this step, you will make plans based on unexamined assumptions. The plan will have no solid ground in the reality of a community. It could overlook opportunities. The plan's results might not even benefit the community.

Community assessment

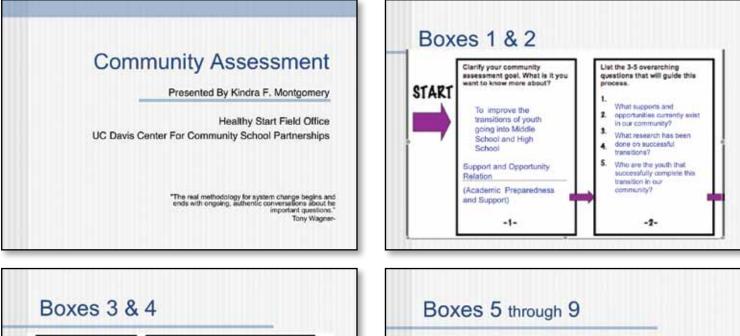
A community assessment describes a small area in detail. Community assessments take stock of the resources, interests and needs of a specified area. They pay special attention to a community's assets. "Community assets" means the strengths each individual brings to the community. It also means the economic, social, political, educational and faith-based resources available. Plans that emerge will respond to what the group learns. The assessment will help your group:

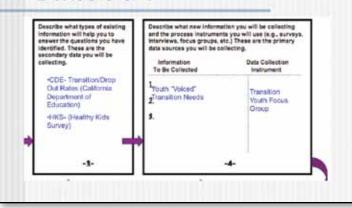
- Understand the environments and issues that youth face.
- Locate strengths and areas of opportunities.
- Create a road map of resources that already exist.
- Prioritize issues.
- Empower people to design plans and put them into action.
- It will provide persuasive evidence for services you need.
- It will set the benchmarks against which you can measure change.
- It will build the commitment of stakeholders.
- Empower school community partners to design plans and put them into action.

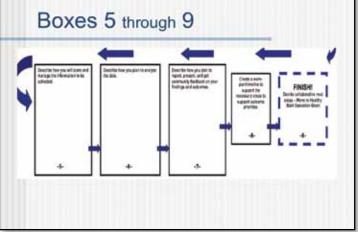
Scope of the Assessment

If your community has not had a comprehensive community assessment within the past five or ten years, you should do a broad, comprehensive assessment. This means you will examine all factors in the community. A broad and comprehensive community assessment will cover:

- Family socioeconomics.
- Educational attainment.
- Health and wellbeing.
- Housing and the physical neighborhood.
- Employment and job training.
- Home, school and community safety.
- Community resources and assets, and so on.



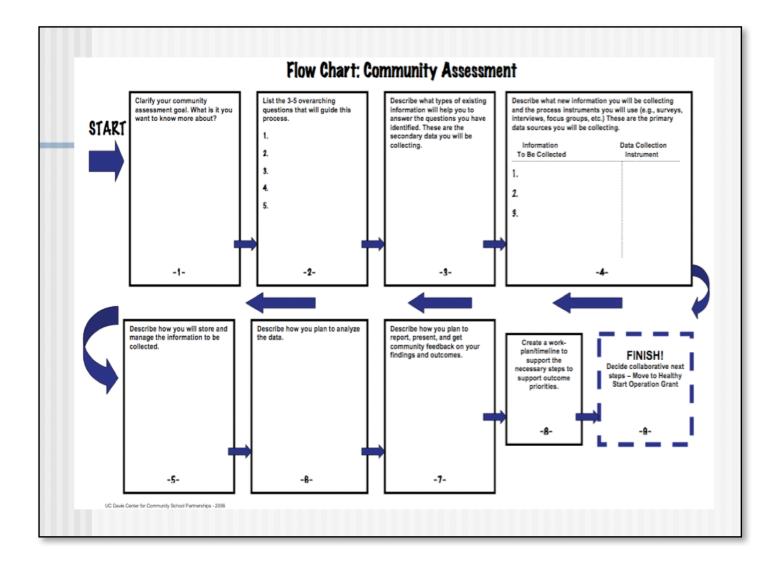




Materials from this section have been excerpted from: Planning Packet (1998) HSFO Clearinghouse, [0032], UC Davis, School of Education. Community Assessment Field Notes: A Tool for Getting to know Your Community's Children and Their Families. Keith R. Prior, HSFO, UC Davis, School of Education.

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Community	Assessment	Action	Planning	Worksheet
Coalition Na	me:			

Coolition Coordinator	7710						
Coalition Coordinator:	Title: Email:						
Mailing Address:	Email:						
Mailing Address:Fa							
F1K/16Fa	A						
Community Geographic Bo							
Community Geographic Bo	bundanes:						
Coalition's Priority Vision	coalition's Priority Vision and Purpose:						
•	•						
	Strategies: Describe the steps						
List All Members Of Your	you have taken up to this point to	Describe your plans for					
Coalition (Name, Title,	identify existing supports and	collecting, analyzing, and	Resources:				
Organization):	opportunities for youth	reporting data:	Nubburgub.	Measures of Success:			
organization).	opportainaes for youar	reporting data.		medaules of Success.			
Adult Coalition Members:	Community Mapping:	Describe your plans for collecting data:	In-Kind Services	Short Term Measures:			
			Assessment/Evaluator				
			Resources:				
			•				
			•				
-		-		•			
	What supports and opportunities do you perceive to be your communities		Technical Assistance				
	greatest assets?		Sources:				
	•	Describe your plans for analyzing data:	•	Intermediate Measures:			
				•			
•	•		•				
				•			
•	•	•	•				
•	•	•	•	•			
	What supports and opportunities appear						
Youth Coalition Members:	to be lacking?	Describe your plans for reporting data:	Coalition Needs:	Long Term Measures:			
	•	•		•			
	:		:				
•				-			
			Other:				
Assessment Team Members:			•				
•			•				
•			•				
•			•				

EXAMPLE: COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT TIMELINE FOR: _____

What is going to happen, when will it happen, who will be responsible

Community Assessment Planning Steps And Major Deliverables	August 2006	September 2006 Community Resource Assessment Due Sep 29th	October 2006	November 2006	December 2006	January 2007	February 2007 Community Profile Due February 28 th	March 2007 Implementation Plan Due March 23 rd	Person(s) Responsible
 Identify existing supports and opportunities. 									
2. Clarify your assessment goal.									
 Develop 3-5 overarching questions and 3-5 specific questions for each overarching question. 									
 Identify existing data from secondary sources and the research literature. 									
Identify new information (primary data) that will help you answer the questions you developed.									
 Identify/develop data collection instruments you will use to collect new information, and identify from whom you will collect this information. 									
Develop a process to store and manage the data to be collected.									
 Describe how you plan to report, present, and get community feedback on your findings. 									
9. Collect the data.									
10. Submit Community Profile to Sierra Health Foundation									
11. Identify strategies for meeting long-term outcomes.									
12. Submit implementation plan to Sierra Health Foundation.									

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Identifying the stakeholders

This worksheet was created to assist you and your collaborative as you identify who the various stakeholders are in your community, and the level of relationship you have with them. Please take the time to honestly assess the impact of your relationship with each of the following. *In filling out this worksheet remember to think about local diversity and stakeholders – across race, ethnicity, language, socio-economic status, gender, religion, geography, etc.

Potential Stakeholder	Stakeholders Fully Involved Strong ally and engaged, collaborative partner. Communication is frequent.	Somewhat Involved Limited role in your efforts. Communication is sporadic.	Somewhat Uninvolved Generally supportive of your efforts. Communication is rare.	Uninvolved No sustained interaction.
Child Welfare				
Community Partners (e.g. non-profits, grassroots organizations advocacy groups, ethnic/neighborhood networks, etc.)				
Faith Based Organizations				
Families				
For-Profit Business				
Health System				
Housing				
Juvenile Justice				
Law Enforcement				
Libraries				

	Identifying the stakeholders (continued)						
Potential Stakeholder	Stakeholders Fully Involved Strong ally and engaged, collaborative partner. Communication is frequent.	Somewhat Involved Limited role in your efforts. Communication is sporadic.	Somewhat Uninvolved Generally supportive of your efforts. Communication is rare.	Uninvolved No sustained interaction.			
Media							
Parks and Recreation							
City/ Regional Government							
School System							
Transportation							
Vocational System							
Youth							
Other:							
Other:							

Identify the stakeholders summary Based on your assessment, please collectively organize the various stakeholders into their respective categories.					
	Stakeholders Fully Involved Strong ally and engaged, collaborative partner. Communication and information is exchanged very frequently.	Somewhat Involved Supportive of your efforts on a limited basis. Communication and information is exchanged once in a while.	Somewhat Uninvolved Supportive of your efforts on a limited basis. Communication and information is exchanged rarely.	Uninvolved No contact or interaction and collaboration at all. Communication and cross knowledge is never experienced.	
Stakeholder(s):					
The impact that this collection of stakeholders has on community-school partnerships is:					
Priority Level of collaborating with these stakeholders is critical, high, medium, or low					
The person or program I need to now contact to inform them is:					

Framing & Positioning

This worksheet will help you position your organization/school to further advance community-school efforts with high priority partners. Please take the time to identify the following.

Stakeholder identified as "critical" or "high" priority that is uninvolved or somewhat uninvolved in your community- school partnership	
What do you think are some of this stakeholder's most important interests, services and resources?	Interest: Interest: Interest:
How might you describe or frame your Community- School Partnership to this stakeholder?	Our Community-School Partnership works to
What information are you collecting that will support your work together? How will you share this information with your potential stakeholder(s)	
What are the action step(s) to pursue collaboration with this stakeholder?	Action #1:
	Action #2:
What is the timeframe for this action step?	Timeframe (For Action #1):
	Timeframe (For Action #2):

Youth School and Community Photo Mapping Activity

Purpose

The Youth Photo Mapping activity allows young people to visually report on their community by physically walking through it and taking photos. This activity is an excellent tool to engage young people in critically examining the structural or 'built' aspects of their community. **Logistics:** Time: 2 Hours **Materials:** Cameras and film (use disposable or digital cameras if available); Copies of the Community Investigator Sheet, pens and clipboards.

Instructions

Explain the activity:

- Explain to the participants that they are school and community investigators.
- As community investigators, they must retrieve important information about their school and surrounding community. They are to share their perceptions of the school and community by taking pictures.
- Ask the participants to think about the type of photographs and information they would want to share with others.

Offer a quick workshop on how to operate a camera:

- Give participants a camera, film, and very basic instructions on how to operate the camera. Make sure the film or disk is loaded properly.
- DO NOT give detailed instructions on photography, as this will interfere with their creative process.

Ask them to consider the following questions:

- Where are the favorite places in your school and community where you and your friends feel welcome and safe?
- Where are the places where you are not welcome, or where you do not feel safe?

After Taking the Pictures - Instructions

- Develop the photographs. Ideally use a same day or one-hour photo service, or display digital photos on screen.
- Give each participant a note card and ask them to take five minutes to write down:
- What was most remarkable in their photo-session and why?
- Their age and gender on the back of the note card, if they agree.
- Ask the participants to present their photos to the others and to talk about what they contain, and why they were taken.
- Review the photographs. Talk about what you would like to do with the photos and what you have learned from the activity.

Wrap Up

- As a follow up, the young people may decide to share their perspectives with the community. Displaying the photos can allow adults in the community to see through the eyes of their young people.
- The photos can also be the basis for youth-led presentations to city councils or school boards.

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Community investigator sheet

Name:	age	gender	
Location of photo:			
Choose one descriptive word for this picture:			
What makes this place safe or un-safe / youth frie	ndly or un-friendly? How do you fe	eel about this space?	
What do you like or dislike about this physical spa	ace or social scene?		

Overview of the community assessment process				
 Form the Community Assessment Team The team should consist of a range of people who have a stake in the community. Community residents, parents/guardians, families. School administrators, faculty and staff. City/county agency representatives. School-age children/youth. Community-based service providers, including the faith-based communities. Local business owners 	 2. Team Assignment Information about the school's students: The school district collects and maintains this information. This team will want to request a file that contains the academic performance, attendance, demographic and other program information about all of the students. You should ask for disaggregate information. You need to collect the following types of information for each student: Ethnicity Age Home language Grade in school Migrant status Free and reduced price lunch classification Grade point average Standardized test scores Attendance Limited English Proficient (LEP) or English Language Learner (ELL) status Other Information A second team gathers census information about the community. A third team should look to the local health department for health data. A fourth team should examine the information about employment and unemployment—the labor market for the community.			

Overview of the community assessment process

3. Community Assets

A look at a community's assets or strengths distinguishes your work from a standard needs assessment. A needs assessment takes a deficit approach. A community assessment looks at the community's assets as well as its needs.

- Human Assets. "Human assets" include: strong sense of family in a tightlyknit cultural or language community; the presence of large numbers of extended families; families with long-term ties to the community; residents who own and operate neighborhood businesses; residents employed at social service agencies, faith-based congregations, and other communitybased organizations.
- Physical Assets. "Physical assets" means the physical aspects of the community. Examples: schools, parks, transportation systems, other public facilities, and elements that help define the community such as freeways, rivers, etc.
- Economic Assets. "Economic assets" means features of the community that make up the local economy. Examples: businesses, informal exchange or barter systems, farmer's markets, grants, and the local market.

4. Collect Information

Use that already exists about the community to examine what others have already observed. The Children Now County Data Book contains the simplest and most complete source of information. The publishers update the information every two years. You can download the entire document from the Children Now web site: http://www.childrennow.org

Remember that this county-level information does not represent your community. Your community may have very different needs and strengths than the countywide indicators show.

The assessment should also:

- Pay attention to the significant differences between people from the same region. For example, even though they all come from Southeast Asia, Hmong, Laotian, Cambodian and Vietnamese people have very different languages and cultures.
- Make clear distinctions between immigrants of first, second, or third generations.
- Recognize that women and men who share a racial or ethnic background may or may not live in similar economic and social circumstances.

Overview of the community assessment process

5. Assemble the Community Profile

Make a profile of the community that highlights its assets and shows the challenges that exist. The community profile should resemble a snapshot that communicates to all members of the community and addresses these challenges.

Elements of Your Snapshot

A complete snapshot will include, among other things:

- Statistics about your community, especially those that compare your community to the county and to the state. These might take the form of a graph comparing rates.
- Map of resources and community assets.
- Comparisons of your community over time, showing trends.
- Use graphs instead of tables where possible.
- Write simply and directly. Avoid using jargon or acronyms.
- Translate the snapshot into the appropriate languages.

6. Present the Profile to the Community

Take the profile to residents, businesses, community organizations, and churches. In your outreach efforts:

- Give participants feedback on, and publicly acknowledge, their contributions. Do this often. It will encourage participants to provide their feedback and contributions. It will also provide them a sense of safety.
- Show participants that their input leads to real changes.
- Remember that youth have as much to contribute as adults do.
- Create space for participants (both youth and adults) to become leaders and spokespersons.

7. Get Community Input to Set Priorities

The best community assessment process uses two or more of these methods to get community input on the assessment. Each of these methods requires more than just holding meetings, sending out survey questionnaires or interviewing a group of people. For example: you might start with a town hall meeting and conclude with a community survey.

Or you might start with focus groups and proceed to a community survey. You should use some combinations of methods and avoid other methods. For example, you should not end this step with focus groups.

Focus groups help bring clarity to the several important topics identified in the community snapshot. They do not help create a general statement of the community's response to the assessment. Those who oppose your efforts, or those who seek to advance their own solutions for the community, will question your results if you do not use the right method to gather input.

8. Community Determines Outcomes

Set specific, clear and measurable results for the community. These results must join the information gathered, the profile itself, and the response of the community.

Collecting information

Community Assessment: A community assessment is a community planning process with the desired outcome of generating a common understanding about community-scale resources. Community assessments are based on a positive and inclusive approach to inventorying the existing resources, interests and needs of a specified neighborhood or community. Emerging strategies are responsive to a local vision and build upon local resources and capacities.

- **Data:** Distinct pieces of information. Data can exist in a variety of forms -- as numbers or text on pieces of paper, as bits and bytes stored in electronic memory, or as facts stored in a person's mind.
- **Primary Data:** Information that is obtained directly from first-hand sources by means of surveys, observation or experimentation.
- Secondary Data: Information already gathered.

Mapping

In order to collect useful information about your community you must first define your community, neighborhood, and its boundaries. Map your community so that you know its boundaries and what exists within it.

Three Types of Maps

1. Street Maps:

Use street and road maps as you start your assessment. The local Chamber of Commerce or automobile club has good maps. You can also find maps on the Internet.

2. Plat Maps or Property Maps:

Plat maps or property maps offer an even better option. With these you can color in the areas that have community assets. You can color code things like housing, businesses and government. You can get plat maps from the city or county planning department for your community.

3. Geographic Information Systems (GIS):

Some maps come out of computer-based "geographic information systems", or GIS. These allow you to code areas of a map for special values. For example:

- Some GIS maps show the blocks that have the lowest crime rates; the safest parts of a community.
- Other GIS maps show census tracts color-coded by the number or percent of welfare recipients. People use these maps to plan public transportation routes.

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Example: Street Map

Washington USD Elementary Schools

Median Household Income and Spanish-speaking Population



Example: Plat Map



Figure 4. Place map as used by students to describe their least favourite places in their school

Example: GIS Map

Denair Mariposa Mono 395 6 Delhi Winton Mariposa / Bishop Oakhurst 9 Newman Merced Planada 10 Le Grand 41 Inyo Gustine Big Pine Chowchilla Madera Los Banos Merced (395 Friant Dos Palos Madera Fresno Firebaugh Biola Clovis T Independence 180 Mendota Kerman - Calwa Sanger Squaw Valley Easton Parlier Orange Cove San Joaquin 198 Selma Orosi Traver Dinuba San Benito Lanare Laton Armona Goshen Ivanhoe Woodlake Fular (198) Lemoore Huron Stratford Tulare Lindsay Coalinga Strathmore San Lucas Corcoran Tipton Springville San Ardo Monterey Avenal Kettleman City From First 5 Galifornia - www.ccfc.ca.gov 0 🗖 -Ó Major cities Not Significantly Higher Rate Freeways and highways 0-4 Teenage Births County Boundaries County Names Teenage Birth Hot Spots Significantly Higher Rate

Fresno County Teen Birth Rate Map

Methods to Get Community Input • Town Hall Meetings • Surveys • Focus Groups • Interviews				
At town hall meetings you can discuss the community snapshot and begin selecting community outcomes when two things are true:	You may prefer to use focus group meetings instead of town hall meetings when:			
1. The community is small enough that a large percent of the community can attend a town hall meeting. This will most likely occur in rural areas or in urban settings where the community assessment covers a neighborhood of about 25 city blocks.	 You have numerous issues to discuss. You can hold several focus group meetings on different topics. The community has a large geographic area, as in rural communities that 			
 Outreach to the community effectively draws from all segments of the community: students, parents/guardians of students, other adults, older people, local business owners, staff and representatives of community- based organizations. 	may have more than one center of civic activity. Focus groups can help you obtain detailed information about a particular topic or issue. Focus groups can help both to gather data and to make choices from among a variety of ideas.			
 If your community meets the conditions set out above and you elect to use this method, you will need to: Make sure your team has skills to carry out the meeting. Organize: reach out to the community often and through different methods. Carry out the town hall meeting. Collect information about who participates in order to determine the effectiveness of your outreach efforts. Report back to the community assessment team on the results of the town 	You must take care to recruit the right people for each focus group. You will want to choose people with respected knowledge of the topic, but who also listen to the perspectives of others. You will want to include different perspectives on the topic at hand. Most of the participants should learn something or discover something from the process. Focus groups often produce errors in many of the same ways surveys do. In some instances these errors in method permit people to discredit their use.			

Methods to Get Community Input

Surveys

In the approach to community assessment outlined here, we have tried to discourage people form employing surveys in their community assessments. We have done this because:

- 1. Well-designed surveys require great skill to craft.
- 2. Most people wildly underestimate the amount of time, energy and resources it takes to do a good survey.
- 3. We know that programs designed from assessments based solely on community perceptions do not meet community needs.
- 4. It is exceedingly difficult to control the sources of error in surveys.
- 5. If not done well, a survey's methodology and results can discredit it to those decision makers who resist community-designed initiatives.

However, surveys can help find out which issues from the community snapshot people find most important. The survey fills a unique role in this design for a community assessment. The survey does not ask respondents to report on their behavior or needs. It asks respondents to consider the summary of the community profile and to select from among the various issues identified in this profile, the most important ones to address.

Interviews

By itself, this method of getting community has some risks. The typical interview subject will overstate the magnitude of most problems in the community. Interviews can fill in or supplement the ideas and opinions of those individuals who cannot attend to the other methods. You must select the right "key individuals." These may include:

- People who have lived in the community longest.
- Agreed-upon community leaders.
- Heads of community-based organizations. Prominent leaders of the adults and children.
- Longtime business owners.
- Elders of faith-based congregations such as churches, synagogues, mosques and temples.
- Officials of local governmental agencies.

Surveys involve as much time as surveys, and maybe even more. Plan to spend about five and one-quarter hours of work in transcribing, coding and analyzing the interviews for every hour you spend actually conducting the interviews.

Tricks and Techniques	Tricks and Techniques of the Survey Masters					
Survey Research is available at: http://faculty.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/PA765/survey.htm Popular online survey tools:	Good intentions alone do not motivate people to complete a survey. People need to think they will benefit from completing it. A raffle may increase response rates. When a person completes the survey,					
http://zoomerang.com/ http://www.surveymonkey.com/	you enter them into a raffle for school supplies or other appropriate reward. This can increase survey return rates by 50%. Next, plan on numerous follow-up inquiries. These take time but they do increase the return rates.					
 Team Exercise For your community, think of a survey designed to do three things: 1. It reports on what the community assessment team discovered about the community. 2. It shows comparisons to the larger geographic areas to educate the community about where the local community stands in relation to other. 	Finally, engage the students as researchers in the survey. This works particularly well in the upper elementary and middle school grades. When students act as researchers, students take on responsibility and play an active role.					
community about where the local community stands in relation to other areas.3. It asks the survey respondent to make choices, not by voting yes or no, but by setting priorities.	They often end up doing more than just delivering the survey. They can get involved in looking at the survey data and studying what it means for them and their community school.					

Resources and Basic Computer Tools					
Town Hall Meetings	Focus Groups				
The Navajo Indian Town Hall is available at: http://www.indianaffairs.state.az.us/arizona_indian_town_hall.asp	The Use and Misuse of Focus Groups by Jakob Nielson, 1997, is available at: http://www.useit.com/papers/focusgroups.html				
Arizona Town Hall, Inc. "Key Elements of the Arizona Town Hall Process."	Focus Group Research http://faculty.chass.ncsu.edu/garson/PA765/focusgroups.htm				

Basic Computer Tools

- Excel, the spreadsheet program, for making tables and graphs.
- FileMaker Pro is a database program that is easy to use and can help make survey tabulations and analysis easier and more error-free.
- Some kinds of statistical analysis programs can take information from Excel and FileMaker Pro and do analyses of the information gathered. These all have the particularly useful ability to create graphs of the information you are analyzing. They are also far more powerful than either spreadsheets or database programs in the analysis of information.
- For the more experienced computer user, a GIS or geographic information system can allow you to map your community and its assets.

For more sophisticated information management and analysis with a spreadsheet program, look at: Statistics with Microsoft Excel, by Beverly J. Dretzke & Kennth A. Heilman, Prentice Hall, Upper Saddle River, NJ, 1998

Example Secondary Data Guide		
Secondary Data	Type of Data	Location
California Healthy Kids Survey	Youth on Youth Development	http://www.wested.org/pub/docs/hks_centers.html
Community Service Planning Council (CSPC)	Community Needs & Services	http://www.communitycouncil.org/level-2/data-and-reports.html
Neighborhood Knowledge California (NKCA)	Census Mapping	http://www.nkca.ucla.edu
U.S. Census Bureau	Census Mapping	www.census.gov
Kids Count	Census Mapping	http://www.aecf.org/kidscount/
Children NOW	County Level Children Well-Being	www.childrennow.org
California Department of Education (CDE)	Education	http://inet2.cde.ca.gov/dataresourceguide/
California Afterschool Network	School-age Care	http://www.afterschoolnetwork.org/
Child Welfare Research Center	Health/Child-Welfare	http://cssr.berkeley.edu/CWSCMSreports/
California First Five	Teen Pregnancy Data Census Mapping	http://63.192.169.198/CCFCGIS3/index.asp http://www.ccfc.ca.gov/
The W. Haywood Burns Institute	Crime & Juvenile Justice	http://www.burnsinstitute.org/
California Department of Justice	Crime & Juvenile Justice	http://ag.ca.gov/cjsc/index.htm
Local	Local Information	Sacramento Sheriff Department: http://www.sacsheriff.com/info/yearly_stats.cfm Sacramento Police Department: http://www.sacpd.org/templates/stats-info.html