

Community Mapping

Purpose:

- To understand how you can map your own community
- To review examples of mapping
- To understand how community mapping can be used to create positive changes

Time: 1 hour

Materials:

- Easel paper
 - Masking tape
 - Markers
 - Table space to draw on
 - Laptop (with GoogleEarth)
 - Screen
 - LCD projector
 - Internet connection
- ❖ *Facilitators: Draw on an easel paper a community that you are familiar with (i.e. work or home).*

Instructions:

- Take a few minutes to introduce and describe a neighborhood around your home or work. Ask the group the following:
 - How was it trying to visualize the area that was described?
 - What would have been helpful?
- Bring out the prepared drawing. Review the drawing. Ask the group how seeing the information was different from hearing it.
- Share that the participants will now have a chance to draw their own community map and share with the rest of the group.
- **Group activity:**
 - Divide up the participants into groups of 3-4 people each. Make that each group has one community that they are all familiar with (i.e. home, school, hang out neighborhood). If necessary, ask the youth coordinator or leader to split them up accordingly.
 - Hand out colorful markers and easel paper to each group and make sure they have sufficient table space to draw on.
 - Explain to participants that they should draw what's in their community, including streets, stores, schools, parks, homes and places where they hang out.
 - Have each group present their map back to the larger group.
 - Facilitate discussion: After each group presents, comment on specific themes. Examples:
 - Gentrification: If there are new homes or transit systems being built somewhere, what used to be there? Where did they go?

- Economy: What kinds of stores do the youth go to buy snacks? (Liquor stores? Markets?) Are the businesses flourishing or abandoned?
 - Recreation: Are there parks or recreation centers that youth feel safe or comfortable attending after school? Why or why not?
 - Transportation: How do the youth get around? Is public transportation reliable/affordable? Are their communities safe to walk around at before/after school or at night?
- Regroup participants back to their seats. Explain that this exercise demonstrated “community mapping” – a map of what is in your community, through their own eyes.
 - Introduce to the group that they can create positive community change through the following examples:
 - 1) To show a lot of information on a small amount of space
 - Mapquest
 - Google Earth (show on laptop). Demonstrate the program with a few addresses they suggest.
 - 2) A way to be taken more seriously
 - Show Figueroa Corridor map: The development of an entertainment, hotel, and retail complex next to the Staples Center in downtown Los Angeles. Organizers created a poster-sized map of the neighborhood surrounding the area, showing unfair ownership patterns and development "hot spots" that left out the community. Community groups successfully negotiated a landmark community benefits package from the developer which included investments in affordable housing and parks, a local hiring requirement, and even parking provisions for residents, a first for a low-income neighborhood.
 - 3) Shows that you are smart, know how to create data and have important information about your community
 - Los Angeles County Tobacco Retailer maps. Show and describe maps.
 - Answer any questions.