

# **Evidence-Based Practices to Promote Health**

RPN Quarterly Meeting  
11 February 2015

# Bringing Best Practices to Housing Redevelopment to Promote Health

- Initiative funded by the Kresge Foundation and hosted by the Richmond Promise Neighborhood (RPN) Health and Wellness Results-Based Action Team
- ***Objective:*** To promote the health of East End residents throughout the proposed housing redevelopment process.

# Bringing Best Practices to Housing Redevelopment to Promote Health: Activities

Local service providers and other stakeholders convene to affect service delivery in the East End by:

- Reviewing evidence-based practices
- Making recommendations for health-promoting services
- Presenting these recommendations to local funders, residents, and key players in the redevelopment process

# The Informed Neighbors Corps (INC)

A core group of Creighton Court residents brought together by RPN and CSH in order to increase *transparency and clear communication* during the redevelopment.



Image: courtesy of Albert Walker

# The Informed Neighbors Corps (INC)

The goals of the Informed Neighbors are twofold:

- To increase **transparency** during redevelopment from The Community Builders, the City of Richmond, and Richmond Redevelopment and Housing Authority
- To promote **resident leadership** during redevelopment

The Informed Neighbors serve as critical **liaisons** between the service providers involved in the “Best Practices” initiative and the rest of Creighton Court.

# The Informed Neighbors Corps (INC): Activities



- Completed **housing negotiation** and **advocacy trainings** with RPN Leadership Academy.
- Generated & prioritized **community questions and concerns** about redevelopment, and developed an **FAQ sheet** for residents that addressed these concerns.
- Planned & conducted two **door-to-door information campaigns**.
- Organized a resident-led **neighborhood meeting** on redevelopment.
- Consulting with service providers to evaluate & prioritize **evidence-based practices** to promote health.
- Hosing monthly **Chat 'n Chews**

# Community Concerns Surrounding Redevelopment



# **Substance Abuse**

# Substance abuse in the East End

- High rates of substance abuse, particularly the **illegal use of prescription drugs**
- Substance abuse can prevent individuals from functioning well in school or the workplace, and can have consequences for short- and long-term physical and mental health.
- Consistent and confidential access to mental health and substance abuse services is in short supply, particularly for adults and parents.



# Substance abuse and redevelopment

- Residents with substance abuse problems may have difficulty organizing themselves to relocate and maintaining steady employment.
- The high prevalence of substance abuse in the East End is exacerbated by the **lack of services and support for adults battling addiction.**

# Evidence-Based Practice: Celebrating Families

- A 16-week curriculum for families battling drug/alcohol abuse
- The model **integrates recovery into daily family life** and concurrently teaches **healthy parenting skills**.
- Hallmarks of the model include:
  - *A safe place* for children & parents to talk.
  - Facilitation of *trust* through bonding with consistent *role models*.
  - Helping participants realize their *self-awareness & self-worth*.
  - *Education* about the effects of chemical dependency on families.

# Potential service partnerships

- **Alcoholics Anonymous** at Richmond Community Hospital.
- The **Strengthening Families Model** in Richmond has similarities to Celebrating Families.
- Examples of other local organizations providing substance abuse prevention and recovery services to **youth** include: Challenge Discovery Projects, RBHA
- Examples of local organizations providing substance abuse recovery services to **adults** include: The Healing Place, The Daily Planet, RBHA

# **Trauma Informed Community Building**

# Trauma informed community building

- Residents in low-income and public housing are more prone to experiencing post-traumatic stress disorder and/or ***cumulative trauma*** as a result of daily stressors from violence, concentrated poverty, as well as historic structural conditions of racism and disenfranchisement.
- In the East End, **mistrust and skepticism** exists surrounding the redevelopment process.
- Stress from an unstable housing situation can exacerbate the aforementioned traumas and take a profound toll on residents' emotional well-being.

# Trauma informed community building

The TICB model addresses five challenges that trauma-impacted communities face during transformation efforts:

- 1. Lack of trust and social cohesion**
- 2. Lack of stability, reliability, and consistency**
- 3. Disempowerment and lack of a sense of community ownership**
- 4. Inability to vision the future**
- 5. Breadth and depth of community needs**

# Trauma Informed Community Building

## TRAUMA INFORMED COMMUNITY BUILDING

### TICB

- De-escalates chaos and stress
- Fosters resiliency
- Strengthens social connections
- Recognizes trauma

Increased readiness

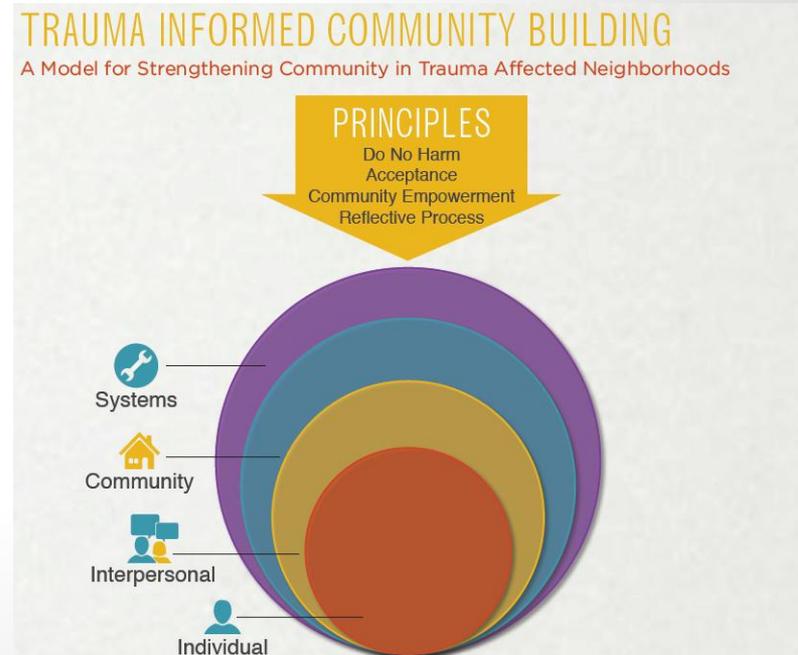
### OUTCOMES

- Foundation and support for effective delivery of programs and services
- Creates conditions for long-term community and individual change

# Trauma informed community building

To address the challenges and reach these outcomes, TICB incorporates four principles:

1. Do no harm
2. Acceptance
3. Community Empowerment
4. Reflective Process



# **Invisible Residents**

# “Invisible” Residents

- Existing tenants open their homes, under the table and for indefinite lengths of time, to families or individuals who may not have anywhere else to live.
- These “invisible” residents do not appear on housing leases or any other legal documents.
- It is unknown how many people are affected.
- These individuals are at risk because they will not be eligible for relocation services.

# **“Invisible” Residents and Redevelopment**

- Housing first (e.g. Pathways)
- Rapid Re-Housing addresses the primary obstacles homeless households face

# Pathways to Housing

- Provides permanent supportive housing immediately -- without requiring pre-existing psychiatric treatment or sobriety -- and then offers supportive treatment services in mental & physical health, substance abuse, education, and employment
- Scattered-site apartments rented from private landlords in buildings that are just a regular part of the neighborhood.
- Clients pay 30% of income toward rent; Pathways pays the difference.
- Each site has a housing department with staff who find and secure appropriate apartment units, and who also undertake apartment inspections, maintenance issues, and communication with landlords



# Pathways to Housing

Over 22 years a variety of studies conducted in different cities found that Pathways to Housing programs have a significant, positive impact on their target populations. Research shows that **the cost of providing a home and support services** to someone who is homeless and has a mental illness is **significantly less than the expense of cycling in and out of emergency rooms, shelters, psychiatric hospitals, and jails.**

# Existing services in Richmond

- **Virginia Supportive Housing:** A Place to Start (APTS) is a regional program for individuals experiencing chronic homelessness and serious mental illness. APTS immediately houses these individuals, then allows them to participate in services. They have partnered with the Daily Planet and have so far provided long-term housing for about 100 people.
- **Housing advocate:** Sponsored by Office of Community Wealth Building and the Richmond Health District, housing advocates are independent of RRHA and aim to increase transparency, free communication, and full disclosure for residents. There is currently one housing advocate in the Health Resource Center at Creighton.
- **Other potential partners** include: The Daily Planet, CARITAS, The Healing Place

# **Break Out!**

Substance Abuse

Trauma Informed Community Building

Invisible Residents