



JOIN THE WELLNESS MOVEMENT

FUNDY WELLNESS FORUM

MARCH 24, 2012 IN SAINT JOHN, N.B.

A total of 148 people attended the Fundy forum. They broke into small groups to discuss which strengths, weaknesses and challenges to prioritize in order to achieve wellness in the Fundy region in four target environments, i.e. in school, in the community, in the workplace, and in the home. The following table is a summary of the points raised by the participants in each group.

COMMUNITY

ASSETS AND STRENGTHS

- Government leadership
- Networking
- Natural environment
- Space layout
- Infrastructure
- Community members
- Community services (to keep informed, socialize, help one another, and move)
- Collaboration with businesses
- School initiatives
- Contribution of professionals

GAPS AND CHALLENGES

- Poverty
- Physical constraints
- Loss of drive in minority language communities
- Lack of resources (financial, human, and infrastructure; for initiatives with target clients)
- Lack of awareness about wellness, collaboration and mutual aid, physical and cultural activities, accessibility problems, negative attitude, leadership

PRIORITY ACTIONS

- Lack of shared paths
- Funding and grants
- Funding accessibility
- Poverty
- Access to an intelligent drug plan

HOME

ASSETS AND STRENGTHS

- Physical environment
- Infrastructure
- Social environment
- Community resources
- Mothers
- Personal health practices
- Family resources that contribute to health
- Professional resources

GAPS AND CHALLENGES

- Poverty
- Mentality of the communities
- Families
- Transportation
- Infrastructure
- Knowledge of services and resources
- Access to services
- Lack of volunteers
- Lack of information

PRIORITY ACTIONS

- Fixed income
- Information
- Knowledge of resources and services
- Finding personal motivation

SCHOOL

ASSETS AND STRENGTHS

Inside the school

- Program
- Education curriculum
- Staff involvement
- Training by specialized resources

Outside the school

- Numerous partnerships
- Subscribe to the philosophy of community schools

GAPS AND CHALLENGES

Inside the school

- Inequality
- Lack of mentors
- Lack of resources
- Policies and rules

Outside the school

- Lack and sharing of resources
- Mobilization of parents
- Isolation

PRIORITY ACTIONS

- Engage parents and provide them with information
- Review public policies
- Reduce waiting times for specialized services

WORKPLACE

ASSETS AND STRENGTHS

- Policies and rules in place
- Administrative policies
- Programs and practices implemented
- Facilitated access to activities and resources

GAPS AND CHALLENGES

- Funding
- Stress
- Time
- Employee rights
- Leadership
- Employee mistrust
- Employer-employee relations

PRIORITY ACTIONS

- Leadership
- Understanding employee rights
- Stress and mental health

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

It is healthy and reassuring to know that while each of these environments is distinct, it is not considered an entity that is disconnected from the larger environment in which it is located. Hence, the “school” extends beyond the school itself to include the community and even the region in which it is located. Likewise, when the participants discussed the “community” environment, several connections were made between school and government, and not just municipal government. As for the “workplace” environment, connections were also made between resources offered in the community, such as access to health and wellness services. The “home” environment comprises several elements that are unique to the communities in which it is located. The borders shared by these various environments offer plenty of opportunities for partnerships, pooling of resources, and mutual aid.

It is also interesting to note the similarities and commonalities between the assets and limitations identified by the participants for the respective environments.

ASSETS IN COMMON

Hence, whether they are identified as “staff members” at school, “community members” in the community, or “mothers” at home, people are assets for these environments. Likewise, whether they are called “programs” in schools and in the workplace, “community services” in the community, or “professional resources” in the home, the services found in these environments are seen as assets.

LIMITATIONS IN COMMON

While they are seen as assets and strengths in their environments, people are at the heart of a challenge or a common shortage in each of the environments observed. In the schools, the mobilization of parents was identified as a weakness; in the community, it was a lack of leaders; in the workplace, it was employer-employee relations; and in the home, it was families.

The participants discussed and worked together on the challenges they felt were priorities. They also suggested possible solutions to pursue, covering several elements needing work.

It is up to the various wellness networks to adapt this information and use it to improve wellness in their part of the country.

