

Miami Children's Initiative

(formerly known as the Magic City Children's Zone)

Strategies and Recommendations

Developed by Community Workgroups
To be Incorporated into the Community's Strategic Plan

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Major Themes from the Workgroups' Discussions

Eleven Planning Team Workgroups have been meeting regularly since mid-May, and their recommended themes and strategies to be included in the community plan are found in summary form in this document. Their discussions were enriched by a number of focus groups with residents of all ages. The themes that are emerging are familiar to residents:

- **Strong parenting:** Primary caregiver and child has a social support network (informal and formal). Support, education and mentoring for parents and other adults (including grandparents) raising children so they are able to provide their children with developmental strengths, educational achievement. Strong adult role models as children grow from infancy to adulthood. Primary caregiver demonstrates nurturing and effective parenting. Child has positive relationship with primary caregiver. Child's home environment is safe and stable. Supports are available to address lack of support systems for parents and adult supervision at home.
- **Parents and children/youth remain engaged and actively involved in stimulating educational environments from pre-school to successful high school completion.** Primary caregiver is engaged in child's learning and education. Child is engaged in stimulating learning activities and environments. Schools and community resources support children and youth to be successful through critical transition points in their educational journey--pre-school to kindergarten, elementary school to middle school, middle to high school, and preparing for a successful transition from high school to work, training or higher education. Expanding opportunities for youth to participate in arts and cultural activities to enhance their learning achievement. Provision of high quality advanced placement educational programs within the schools serving our children. Expand quality academic preparation for youth to enter the job market successfully.
- **Early and adequate health care from prenatal through adulthood:** Mother receives early, adequate prenatal and well woman care. Children are born healthy and thrive through age 1. Primary caregiver is knowledgeable of child development and milestones. Mother and child's health needs are addressed. Children and their parents with chronic health issues such as diabetes, hypertension and asthma maintain their health at high levels.
- **Creating a balanced approach to community safety with restorative justice for youth:** Creating a strong crime reduction approach to reduce the violence that negatively affects life in the community, with such programs as Neighborhood Crime Watch. Community Policing. Support for victims of domestic violence and other crimes. Restorative justice interventions to reduce juvenile crime. Safety for seniors in their own homes.
- **Improved economic resources and affordable housing:** Revitalize economic development and incentives for businesses to locate or expand their businesses within the target area, thereby increasing jobs within the zone for youth, parents and older adults. Community services to support homeownership. A focus on building communities, neighborhood beautification, shopping and amenities, not just physical building improvements.

The Miami Children's Initiative is an opportunity for Liberty City residents, community programs, faith-based initiatives and businesses to come together and design a vibrant neighborhood that will support all its children as they grow into successful adults. The challenge in the months ahead is to tap the wisdom and experience of community leaders, including young, emerging voices, to develop strategies for transformational change over the next decade. How do the successes over 20 years in Harlem translate into Miami's unique culture, and Liberty City's proud history? How can government work as a partner with community leaders, philanthropists and entrepreneurs? What works to engage residents to improve their lives and improve their children's future? What should be done in the first two years? In five years?

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Adult Education, Training & Jobs Workgroup

Strategies and Recommendations

1. Implement Career Pathways for Liberty City Youth (age 16-18)

- a. Every 16 year old child attending school in Liberty City will have a "career pathway" plan to achieve their academic goals and engage them in career planning.
- b. Needs assessment for family supports or wrap around services, financial aid, transportation, etc.
- c. The workgroup envisions the whole community (MCI targeted community) working together to ensure that these students will be able to access resources (including education, vocational training, enhanced educational support, life skills training) and other family supports they need to achieve their career pathway.

2. Enhance/Expand Greater Miami Service Corps Services for 18-23 Year Old Liberty City Youth

- a. Every 18-23 year old in Liberty City who has not completed high school or obtained a GED by the age of 18 will have the opportunity to access remedial education, job training, vocational support, internships/community service opportunities as well as job placements through an expansion of the Greater Miami Service Corps.
- b. The GMSC could either establish an outstation **within the zone** to serve Liberty City youth and young adults, or
- c. Receive additional resources to expand the programming available at their 28th street facility to meet the educational and vocational needs of Liberty City youth.
- d. Enhance existing GMSC programming to add a family component, which might offer language/literacy classes for parents and individualized plans to help the parents obtain employment/achieve their education and employment goals.

3. Promote Economic Development/Entrepreneurism to Develop the Next Generation of Leaders in Business, Government and the Nonprofit Sector

- a. Develop incentives for job development or business expansion within the MCI zone and create entrepreneurship programs (mentoring) for young professionals who will become the next generation of leaders in Liberty City's public, private and nonprofit sectors.
- b. Create a Professional Network for Young Black Professionals.

4. Increase Access to Job Training and Job Development for Youth/Young Adults in Liberty City

- a. Ensure that young people are registered properly in the Employ Florida Job Bank (documenting their education, skills and career interests) as well as their residence within the DTA.

Recommended Target Populations for the Adult Education, Training & Jobs Workgroup:

- **Tier 1: 16-18 Year Old Youth (Possibly Even Younger)** who are STILL IN SCHOOL but need to create transition plans, and may need additional supports to support their completion of high school, college preparation,

and/or vocational education. Need to have a plan of action to be able to access Scholarships and Financial Aid.

- **Tier 2: 18-23 Year Youth/Young Adults who are OUT OF SCHOOL** and require a great deal of remediation and vocational support in order to complete their high school education, FCATs, GEDs and work toward employment.

Challenges	Strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Local Economy/lack of jobs/lack of investment in Liberty City. ▪ More mom and pop businesses—not big businesses. ▪ Low Educational Attainment in Liberty City. ▪ Brain Drain: Few young people from Liberty City who get a college education (or go into the military) and do well for themselves actually come back to Liberty City to establish businesses. Many young people migrate OUT of Liberty City--and even out of South Florida—to Atlanta, Georgia or other communities. Their parents want to leave too. ▪ Difficult to establish a new business in Liberty City (example of Louisiana style restaurant). ▪ Politics/Who You Know plays a major role in how people get job opportunities in Miami Dade County. ▪ Students lack funds for Tuition Assistance/Financial Aid to go on to college or vocational programs. ▪ Transportation. ▪ Family Issues, such as taking care of other children in the family, or domestic violence, teen pregnancy, substance abuse, homelessness, have an impact on academic success and future careers. ▪ Guidance Counseling/Career Counseling offered to students is fragmented, in the sense that the Career Counselor would not know (or become involved in) the family issues which might be a factor in the student’s progress. Those matters would be delegated to a case manager or some other “social services” entity. Both need to be addressed. ▪ Students do not learn to speak Spanish or Creole as part of their education (starting early as possible in the schools). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Miami Dade County Public Schools Adult Education and Vocational Programs (Dorsey Skills Center and Jackson High School). ▪ Greater Miami Service Corps, which is a few blocks outside the zone, provides remedial education programming to help 18-23 year olds from Liberty City who need support to complete their GED, and pass the FCAT examination. GMSC exposes youth to different career options and helps participants obtain job placements. GMSC provides stipends to youth for participating in their community service programs. In addition, GMSC operates a ONE-STOP for South Florida Workforce, as well as a Youth Opportunity Center, Americorps, and the Youth Build program which places youth in construction jobs and provides ▪ Miami Dade County Public Schools’ has Career Specialists and Guidance Counselors. ▪ Children within the Exceptional Student Education programs receive “Individualized Developmental Plans” which could be a model for the “career pathways” approach needed for the 16-18 year olds targeted by the Adult Education workgroup. 9th Graders are already being asked to choose a career pathway. ▪ 79th Street Corridor Initiative brings young adults into the local business community.

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Arts & Culture

Strategies and Recommendations

1. Create greater awareness of visual & performing arts: dance, music, theater, sculpture, 2-dimensional art, literary art, film/media/multimedia/web-based art, etiquette, architecture, and landscaping art. All activities should be geared to strengthen individual skills (social, internal – e.g., self esteem, etc.).
2. Ensure that art is used as a tool for education- must be integrated as part of general education.
 - a. Include a historical component related to contributions by African-Americans, and particularly those from the area. An essential part of the arts is connecting to the pride of community and being part of the next change.
 - b. Include workforce development, developing skills in specific artistic fields; include supporting careers (such as tuning pianos, stage setting, etc.).
 - c. Add diversity – expose children to other forms of music, art.
 - d. Make it fun and creative: “M-D Chamber Life the Game.”
 - e. “Liberty City Idol” – a healthy competition among residents.
 - f. 75% of effort should be focused in Liberty City and the rest “field trips”: cross pollination.
 - g. Places that serve Liberty City kids and are not in Liberty City should be included (Dash and Miami Dade College High School) or any school with Art as an enrichment.
3. Make art visible and relevant to each family – it is not a luxury, it is an essential component – families need to see art as essential to them.
4. Use “products” to generate funding – e.g., a “gratitude system” in which proceeds from the sale of art goes back to program or to other art entities.
5. Identify specialized services and have them share with others (“expert” visiting concept).
6. Invite to Liberty City those who “made it” – no one is a prophet in his/her own land and often other communities recognize talents. These people may feel left out from Liberty City.
7. Marketing (social) campaign around the whole initiative is necessary targeting various audiences:
 - a. Outreach to the community to educate them about projects.
 - b. Families: Get the right message to families about the importance of art; how it enhances learning, improves social skills, and helps families express themselves.
 - c. Businesses: Educate them about the project and encourage them to support activities, including offering their facilities for meeting places and venues to display. Idea of giving kids exposure as well as bringing arts into the community gives more exposure to “World Art”. Gives a complete spectrum.
 - d. Focus on the importance of arts, using success stories (e.g., schools that have implemented arts and improved ratings).

Challenges	Strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Funding threats from government sources and reduced philanthropic giving. ▪ Attitudes of parents and community that arts are not essential to the education of youth. ▪ Competition for youth’s time between arts and athletic opportunities. ▪ Making art and cultural programs a more visible force in community life. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ African Heritage Cultural Center. ▪ Arts for Learning. ▪ DASH High School (Arts magnet). ▪ Haitian Heritage Museum. ▪ Haitian Cultural Center. ▪ Rich cultural traditions from Caribbean communities have extensive art, dance and other cultural expressions.

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Community Safety

Strategies and Recommendations

1. Replicate/expand Best Practice programs including:
 - a. **TIP Program**
 - 1). The State Attorney's Office Truancy Intervention Program (TIP) was a partnership between the Dade County State Attorney's Office (SAO) and Miami-Dade County Public Schools (M-DCPS), aimed at reducing juvenile crime in Miami-Dade County as well as getting students to attend school on a consistent basis (75% of the students in the program attended school on a regular basis).
 - 2). TIP combined early intervention with prosecutorial enforcement of Florida's Compulsory Education Laws.
 - 3). During its conception, TIP became the primary instrument for early prediction of violence, delinquency, poor academic achievement, and family dysfunctions in a student's life.
 - 4). TIP utilized a comprehensive and multi-disciplinary team approach for providing meaningful intervention through schools, social service agencies, and legal entities.
 - b. **Kingian Nonviolence Model**
 - 1). Non-violence Philosophy – This principle should be taught in the schools and community and be mandatory for youth who commit crimes.
 - 2). Build skills to assist in managing conflicts on an interpersonal level. The course helps in minimizing and preventing collective violence, and provides analytical skills that are useful to prevent the escalation of community conflicts.
 - c. **Gun Buy-Back Program to take guns off the streets.**
 - d. **Community Beautification Project (i.e. Buy-a-Tree)**
 - 1). Beautifies the community and helps to protect targeted areas from future deterioration.
 - 2). Conveys ownership and care of neighborhoods making them less likely to be vulnerable to crime.
 - 3). Serves as a focus for community organizing.
 - 4). Create opportunities for Community groups to work with law enforcement, public works, parks and recreation and private sector to clean up public areas and abandoned lots. Could result in reclaiming a public space for neighborhood use, establishing new green space, or marking neighborhood boundaries.
 - e. **Balance and Restorative Justice - transform the Current Juvenile Justice System Into a More Restorative Model** - Juvenile justice professionals have the power to transform juvenile justice into a more balanced and restorative justice system. By developing new roles, setting new priorities, and redirecting resources, juvenile justice professionals can:
 - 1). Make needed services available for victims of crime.
 - 2). Give victims opportunities for involvement and input.
 - 3). Actively involve community members, including individual crime victims and offenders, in making decisions and carrying out plans for resolving issues and restoring the community.

- 4). Build connections among community members.
- 5). Give juvenile offenders the opportunity and encouragement to take responsibility for their behavior.
- 6). Actively involve juvenile offenders in repairing the harm they caused.
- 7). Increase juvenile offenders' skills and abilities. Program would include:
 - i. Victim-Offender Mediation and, " or "victim-offender reconciliation."
 - ii. Family Group Conferencing
 - iii. Peacemaking Circles
 - iv. Financial Restitution to Victims
 - v. Personal Services to Victims
 - vi. Community Service
 - vii. Written or Verbal Apology to Victims and Other Affected Persons
 - viii. Victim or Community Impact Panels
 - ix. Community or Neighborhood Impact Statements
 - x. Victim Empathy Groups or Classes

f. SHO SIBS Program

- 1). Targets young siblings of Serious Habitual Offenders, a group that shares the risk factors of their older siblings and is at the highest risk of entering the juvenile justice system.

2. All implemented program model (s) must:

- a. Include Private Support – Need to decrease dependence on government support and bring it back to the community. Funding should come from the community businesses, non-profits, organizations, churches, and individuals. Government support is not guaranteed as evidenced by this economical climate.
- b. Identify and engage Community's Natural Leaders (i.e. engage the "Big Momma's" of the community ...their presence is known and respected within the community).
- c. Address the general attitude of crime – for a portion of the community, crime is normalized; mindset is to respond to violence with violence. Have to address anti-social behavior and the belief that crime is okay.
- d. Look at environmental impacts- must understand and attack the root causes- look at why things happen. Change must be systemic.
- e. Start early – with middle school.
- f. Must use System of Care Approach – one comprehensive and collaborative effort.
- g. Build on existing community strengths and assets including Belafonte Tacolcy Center; NFL Youth Center, African Heritage Cultural Arts Center, Joseph Caleb Center.

3. Recommended geographic target area:

NW 7th Avenue on the East; NW 27th Avenue on the West; NW 46th Street on the South; NW 71st Street on the North

- a. Encompasses a large segment of zip code 33147 which has the highest juvenile crime rate within the Liberty City community (612 arrests in 2008).
- b. Includes several community assets including Joseph Caleb Center (multi-purpose including government services); Jessie Trice Community Health Center (health); Belafonte Tacolcy (youth development); Hosanna Community Baptist Church (faith, youth development, and parenting); African Heritage Cultural Arts Center (arts and culture); several elementary, middle and high schools, including the restorative justice program at Brownsville Middle School.
- c. Mixed use area including public housing, rental and homeowners.

Challenges	Strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Police don't respond to calls for burglary and various crimes other than homicide. This results in crimes occurring more frequently and over time witnesses tend to stop calling the police. ▪ There is also a concern that anonymous calls to the police are not always anonymous. This results in decreased participation by community members to support crime fighting efforts. ▪ Lack of knowledge/information- community often doesn't know what services are available. ▪ Lack of services within the community. For example, HIV/AIDS services are severely lacking in these areas. Even if HIV/AIDS services are available outside of the community, there is a lack of transportation services for residents to access these services. ▪ Community doesn't know what community resources are available and often when they do, have difficult accessing services. ▪ There is no affordable healthcare or medical insurance. Additionally, the main healthcare center on 62nd St. closed down. Similar centers have also closed due to lack of funding. ▪ Medicaid does not cover dental treatment. Three university medical treatment centers (FIU, Nova, and UM) are not accessible to Liberty City residents. ▪ Child care/ parenting services are lacking in Liberty City. ▪ Very little support for young moms. Young girls who cannot take care of their children are losing custody to DCF. Further, while attempting to regain custody of their children, the required parenting classes are not available in the community. ▪ The late night corner stores breed criminal activity. While these stores are open, there is increased liquor consumption, gambling, etc. which contributes to criminal behavior. Perhaps there needs to be a limitation on the sale of alcohol after a certain hour or the stores should be required to close at a certain time. ▪ Drug Activity – sell and use. ▪ Domestic Violence. ▪ Children raising themselves- lack of parenting involvement, guidance and supervision. ▪ Lack of recreational activities for children. Children are forced to play in the streets. The current parks are used for criminal activity- need pools, community centers, basketball courts, football fields, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ As a result of the shootings in Overtown and numerous discussions with the residents, the city has increased police presence in areas with high rates of crime. ▪ Community is highly resilient- potential to build on strength of the community is there. ▪ There's high interest in the community to improve safety issues – youth and adults are motivated to get involved. ▪ Resources – have the resources – but not focused on the segments of the community that needs it the most- dwindling resources should be more targeted. ▪ Physical Assets – African Heritage Cultural Arts Center, YMCA, Belafonte Tacolcy, YET center – All these organizations can be optimized and utilized more. ▪ Strong grassroots organizations – go to their place of operations – work within their terms. ▪ Public housing still has a strong sense of community that many other communities have lost- bond that exist (negative aspect- people don't snitch). ▪ Rich history...athletics, politics, tap into Alumna – find ways to get youth connected to potential role models. ▪ Strategic Location- close proximity to Miami Beach, airport, seaport, downtown. ▪ "Community Neighborhood Watch" also helps to foster relationships among neighbors.

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Early Development and Care of Children

Strategies and Recommendations

1. Major emphasis on supporting child care centers and family child care homes to improve their quality. May require additional funding above the rate paid by child care subsidy vouchers.
2. Utilize successful model like Head Start, and Early Head Start for school readiness programs, and provide full funding so there are no waiting lists for children in the target community.
3. Utilize the faith community to promote the important of strong parenting by both mothers and fathers, and as sites for early childhood programs and parenting education.
4. Families need a community health worker to help them understand their parenting opportunities and to help them access resources--health; education & other services.
5. Outreach and engagement of parents and grandparents with pre-school children to improving their knowledge and skills about parenting, well-child care, etc. Utilize the existing Healthy Start and Healthy Families programs as a base, and consider implementing the "Baby College" from the Harlem Children's Zone, which educates parents-to-be about healthy parenting and child development.
6. Reach out to support families to access available early childhood developmental screening and health care resources and participate in available programs for their children.
7. Utilize Head Start parent councils and parent involvement as a base for other parenting initiatives. Create a "Quick Start" guide for various challenges facing parents – such as school enrollment – with useful information that parents will read.
8. Reframe the role of males in parenting, and educate/support young men and fathers to balance nurturing roles in their children's lives with the traditional expectations of fatherhood.
9. Continue development of Ready Schools to improve the successful transition of children and their parents from child care to kindergarten programs.
10. Build training teams to work within the community with child care providers – both formal and informal (relatives, neighbors) – to improve quality.

Challenges	Strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Many families do not access available early childhood developmental screening and health care resources unless a child has a significant problem. ▪ There is limited early teaching and reading aloud by parents at home to young children. ▪ Parent knowledge about early child development is limited. The importance of father’s active role in nurturing and coaching their children needs to be a priority. ▪ Quantity and quality of available early childhood programs is inadequate to meet the needs of children living in Liberty City. ▪ Many families cannot afford cost of early childhood programs, or do not have adequate transportation to reach them. ▪ There is limited parent involvement with the educational and child development programs that their children are enrolled in. ▪ The economics of operating child care programs based on subsidized rates makes it difficult to afford qualified child care workers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Ready Schools: Beginning in August, all Miami-Dade County Elementary Schools will be ready schools. This will essentially link between childcare centers and schools those children typically feed into. This will create a smooth transition for these children as they will have already been quite familiar school environment. The model is similar to the Head Start transition protocol. Several Liberty City elementary schools have been pilot sites. ▪ Head Start/ Early Head Start programs are comprehensive (except no transportation). They have parent councils and require parent involvement. ▪ Early Steps program serves children up through month 35. Once children reach 36 months, FDLRS does assessment for exceptional needs, and there is a significant wait time for these assessments. ▪ Healthy Start/ Healthy Families: families are connected to Healthy Start at the hospital; programs offer well baby appointments, other services for at-risk families with children until age 5. ▪ Voluntary Pre-Kindergarten ▪ Miami-Dade County Public Library/ Jump Start Literacy Program: Early childhood programming is a priority for the libraries. The Committee also recognized that access to computers is a real attraction for children. As a result, there has been increased traffic in the libraries. Budget cuts may force the reduction of hours ▪ Early Steps Learning Program: This program utilizes infant toddler specialist to go into the Liberty City area and work with children at a very young age with mild/moderate delays. However, many staff are not willing to travel to these zip codes. ▪ Early Intervention Programs for children with developmental challenges: Birth to age two centers for children with more severe disabilities – Linda Ray, United Cerebral Palsy, Mailman Center and Easter Seals (near Jackson Health System).

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Education of Children & Youth

Strategies and Recommendations

1. **Goal is to changing the structure and function of schools to increase the quality and amount of time spent on instruction and increase programmatic options and offerings.** Select elementary, middle, and senior high school to implement program as a unified mini-district.
2. **Target population and area to include:**
 - a. All youth ages 6 – 19 currently participating in school programs
 - b. The initiative will target those schools the children living in the target area attend.
 - c. Selecting a neighborhood that has stable resources as well as challenges would be a strong opportunity.
 - d. The vision must be crafted to take into account problems of mobility, that some of the initial residents will move outside the target area over time.
3. **Priority #1: Developing and sustaining resources to support strong parenting behaviors and values.**

Primary caregiver and child has a social support network (informal and formal) support, education and mentoring for parents and other adults (including grandparents) raising children so they are able to provide their children with developmental strengths, educational achievement, and strong adult role models as they grow from infancy to adulthood. Primary caregiver demonstrates nurturing and effective parenting; Child has positive relationship with primary caregiver; Child's home environment is safe and stable; Addressing lack of support systems and supervision at home.
4. **Priority #2: Parents and children/youth remain engaged and actively involved in stimulating educational environments from pre-school to successful high school completion.**
 - a. Supporting children to be successful through critical transition points in their educational journey, such as pre-school to kindergarten, elementary school to middle school, and middle to high school. Developmentally, the transitions from elementary to middle school, and again from middle school to the first year of high school are very high risk periods when many students disengage from education, and from adult role models.
 - b. Involvement of youth in art is as a tool for education- must be integrated as part of general education, geared to strengthen individual skills (social, internal – e.g., self esteem, etc.)
 - c. Educational resources that work well for families and children include computers, parent academy, parent resource centers
 - d. Initiatives that support and enhance educational programs and activities at the school site are youth groups: dance, sports, debate, etc. (reward and recognition programs sponsored by the school site: such as parent/student night; achievement recognitions, honor roll, etc.
 - e. Build a foundation on the existing youth programs in the target neighborhood that provide afterschool, vacation and summer programs for youth ages 9-14, such as the Freedom School developed by the Children's Defense Fund.
 - f. Afterschool programs are uniquely poised to help young people see themselves as learners in an informal, hands-on learning environment. They can bring parents, schools and the community together. They can create the foundation for a positive peer culture that values learning skills and contributes to society.

- 5. **Incorporate the Positive Behavior Support program into our middle school** to improve the ability of the school to manage adolescent behavior in positive ways while retaining youth in their educational program.
- 6. **Bay Point School for Boys** –This program seeks to enroll seriously at-risk boys in a residential school outside the neighborhood for one or more years, to educate them and teach them to be gentleman and productive citizens. The program will include vocational classes, entrepreneurship classes, and financial aid for higher education. There would also be parenting classes. This program will not necessarily change the community but it will encourage the boys to come back into the community and be the change they wish to see.

Challenges	Strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There is a dire need for parental involvement to realize educational success. ▪ Challenge: Affordable Housing – results in the residents constantly changing. Neighborhoods are changing by design, making it impossible for programs to help those people who it has been designed to help because affordable housing resources have moved them elsewhere ▪ Challenge: Trends show that as a child gets older, the fewer parents become involved. Where does this point begin? ▪ 5th through 9th graders (high risk of disengaging from education). Middle school kids are the major priority but there has to be a safety net for the high school students. ▪ Behavior problems multiply in middle school, and too many youth are pushed out of education because of the negative impact of their behavior on the school environment. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Schools that have improved their performance substantially. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Liberty City Elementary ○ Kelsey Pharr Elementary ○ Poinciana Park Elementary ○ Shadowlawn Elementary ▪ Liberty City Elementary School: The group recognized Liberty City Elementary’s accomplishment in moving to an “A” school last year. “City Year” volunteers may have provided extra person power to help them to achieve this. ▪ Continuously high performing school <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Lillie C. Evans Elementary ▪ Evidence-Based/ Best Practice Models – These are needed to support strategies and make their implementation easier. It may be helpful to research programs that have worked before and known to be effective despite failure to meet national standards.

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Elder Affairs

Strategies and Recommendations

- 1. To support grandparents caring for grandchildren**
 - a. Identify grandparents who are raising grandchildren within the MCI zone.
 - b. The Children's Trust has a database of children and who they are being raised by, by zip code. DCF has databases of grandparents that are receiving TANF benefits to help raise their own grandchildren. The Alliance for Aging also has data, and has provided a map for the MCI plan. Miami Dade County also has registered seniors who need emergency assistance.
 - c. The Workgroup recommends setting up a grid, and going door to door, neighborhood by neighborhood to identify the seniors who have relationships with their grandchildren, nephews and nieces. Young people could be involved in this process of identifying seniors).

- 2. Create a resource center within the MCI zone which has the highest percentage of seniors caring for their own grandchildren and create a TRIAGE system to help seniors raising their own grandchildren.**
 - a. Once we have identified the seniors who may need assistance, the MCI needs to help them access resources to assist them. In some cases the senior may just need "an answer," but in others they may need a case manager who will help them access community resources over time. There are some grandparents who are caring for children who are angry/acting out and making it very challenging for the grandparents to care for them.
 - b. Provide training for the Grandparents who are acting as surrogate parents (or step grandparents) about benefits (such as TANF) that may be available to help them raise their own grandchildren. (NOTE: There are parents who are not spending the funds they receive from the Department of Children and Families on their children—and the grandparents are aware of this).
 - c. The Resource Center should call providers together in the community to find out what each of them are doing/what they can offer seniors or youth. We may find out that they offer "generic" services that could serve the whole community. We may find out that they need better training to meet the needs of the community.

- 3. To provide intergenerational programming that will support the needs of seniors AND their grandchildren.**
 - a. Arrange structured activities for grandparents and grandchildren.
 - b. Identify needs of the elderly that can be met by students as part of their community service credit.
 - c. Expand PTA Intergenerational Program and Foster Grandparent programs to serve seniors and youth WITHIN the Liberty City area.
 - d. The PTA Intergenerational program in the schools can be a linkage to the seniors who are raising grandchildren (they can also offer structured training in the schools).

- 4. Need to address Parenting Education, Discipline—for Parents, Grandparents raising grandchildren, and for Teachers.**
 - a. There may be deep psychological and emotional issues (e.g. domestic violence at home, or abuse and neglect) that are affecting the students' behavior. Parenting Education is essential.

- 5. Get a Waiver from Dade County Public Schools—to ensure that they will no longer put teachers who are NOT able to teach into Liberty City’s schools**
- a. Discussion of Harlem Children’s Zone model: Liberty City could develop a “Council” of Community Leaders and Stakeholders that will coordinate services and HOLD THE SCHOOLS ACCOUNTABLE. (“Jaws”).
 - b. This Council would also recognize and appreciate excellent service, and do capacity building for the service providers in the neighborhood.

Challenges	Strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ There are many grandparents raising grandchildren, as well as extended families as guardians for children whose birth parents are not active in their life. ▪ These extended families frequently do not have adequate financial resources to support their responsibilities. ▪ There are few available resources that provide peer support and/or programs appropriate to older parents. ▪ Some elderly residents are fearful of youth in their community. ▪ There are often intra-family tensions and emotional issues when a child/youth lives with family members rather than their birth parents that need to be addressed. ▪ Older “parents” need resources to adjust to the current youth culture and learn effective methods of parenting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Seniors have weathered the storm, and continue to be part of the community—they are not transient, coming and going (a lot of other people leave) ▪ Churches/Faith based organizations ▪ Neighborhood Associations and AARP hold politicians accountable ▪ Seniors are volunteers ▪ Seniors are active professionals with years of experience... Not just as professionals, but as parents, role models ▪ Seniors know the history of the Liberty City Community. ▪ Seniors love to talk! ▪ Seniors will say “Do not disrespect your mother, teacher of father.” ▪ Seniors know the traditions. ▪ Existing Services: Older Americans Act-Family Caregiver Services, URGENT-Intergenerational Programs, State of Florida Medicaid Waiver programs (Home and Community Based Care), and Community Service (DCPS) and Job Corps could be assets to the degree they provide opportunities (and apprenticeships) for YOUTH to help seniors).

Miami Children's Initiative

(formerly known as the Magic City Children's Zone)

Faith Community

Strategies and Recommendations

1. **Create a Family Resource Center based out of the church that would provide a comprehensive array of services to work with individuals from the "cradle to the grave" (through every aspect of life):**
 - a. Based on identified common ground and a developed set agenda and collaborative effort by the faith community to meet the needs of its residents. Look at churches that are already engaged.
 - b. Strong outreach component that engages community through door to door outreach strategies.
 - c. Connection to care and referral linkages. Include comprehensive follow up. Use community navigators who are closely tied to community- understand the issues and know the resources.
 - d. Strong Parenting Program
 - 1). Must educate parent and child...interventions that target only the child is not effective...still have to go home into an environment that does not support/enforce that learning. Need to work with entire family unit.
 - 2). Must strengthen communication within the family. Need to provide for whole family, their needs, and education. Must change mindset.
 - e. Job training and placement programs
 - 1). Job placement efforts must have an educational component – many don't know how to conduct themselves on a job. Have to make residents more marketable.
 - 2). Must teach youth how to make real money. The temptation to make money illegal is strong.
 - 3). Need 2nd chance programs for individuals with criminal records.
 - 4). Must teach youth how to generate wealth.
 - f. Finds innovative ways to better engage segments of the community including youth. Should include youth recreational programs/activities. Use music to bridge the gap.
 - g. Develops role modeling/mentorship opportunities for youth people.
 - h. Substance Abuse – need safe houses until a bed becomes available; need housing upon program completion for those who cannot go back to their neighborhoods.
 - i. Homeless Assistance Program
 - j. Uses a shared integrated system with social service system and other major systems including school, health, juvenile justice, etc.
2. **Create comprehensive program to better equip churches to meet community needs including:**
 - a. Capacity Building- Technical Training and Support
 - b. Ongoing training and development
 - c. Developing strong leadership
 - d. Implementing strategies that helps churches to operate more efficiently
 - e. Hiring of staff with the right set of skills/expertise
 - f. Establishing standard of measurements
 - g. Facilitating strong, collaborative relationships with social service entities, government, businesses and other churches. Must also include churches of other denomination such as the various mosques and temples.
 - h. Adequate funding/dollars to support the work of the churches
3. **Develop/influence the development of a strong community K-College Continuity Plan.**

Challenges	Strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Violence (shootings/school incidents of violence including guns and knives). Much of the violence is due to lack of money/lack of jobs (some are understandably desperate and will do anything for money). ▪ Lack of programs for special population (i.e. those who have been incarcerated). ▪ Lack of Economic Development – limited number of flourishing businesses - mom and pops stores are gone (now owned by foreigners). At one point, 15th Ave. as very productive but then integration came along. There’s no money circulating in the community. We now go outside of the community for everything we need. Funding for business development is nearly nonexistent (A new business may get a \$500.00 loan but realistically not enough to start a viable business. ▪ Racism. ▪ Certain jobs (i.e. construction) go to other ethnic groups...limited opportunities for residents. ▪ Community/Family Challenges: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Highly dysfunctional families. ○ Education of our “people” is also a challenge, there is no community-based support, and the “village concept” does not work. Church does not play as big of a role as before. ○ Many children don’t have a relationship with their fathers...absent for a number of reasons including incarceration. ○ No stake in our community like we did in the 60’s...don’t see the value of community. ○ Professionals leave the community to live elsewhere. ○ There are people in the community who don’t see a problem-either don’t know or don’t care (must empowers the community to give back...there are those who can be part of the solution that are not engaged). ○ Need more drug treatment programs. ▪ Churches <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There is a church on every corner...need to identify some common ground...develop one set agenda to meet the needs of the community (i.e every church could offer the same program). Must get along and check your ego at the door. ○ Larger churches don’t care about grant money...find it too restrictive. Smaller, less mature churches can play a major role. ○ Greater outreach efforts to the community including outreach to engage more professionals. ○ Must address disconnect between government and religion. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ PULSE- an organization of organizations, 39 churches and civic organizations; able to address a any discrimination and injustice; not dependent on any outside source for support – can set own agenda. ▪ Many churches in the community-many of which are providing some level of services. ▪ Churches have a natural ability to provide social services and to help the community. ▪ Churches have the ability to touch large segment of the population.

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Health & Wellness

Strategies and Recommendations

1. Prevention and Treatment

- a. To reduce the impact of health disparities including Dental Care, Diabetes, Hypertension, and Obesity with an emphasis on increased physical activity through education, early detection and treatment.
- b. To reduce the incidence of injuries and fatalities by implementing specific injury prevention programs targeting specific age groups and mechanisms of unintentional injury (i.e. pedestrian, child restraint, passenger restraint, falls, drowning, etc.)
- c. To reduce the risk of teen pregnancy among adolescents.
- d. To reduce the progressive on HIV infection through early detection, prevention, and treatment services.
- e. To effectively screen for Mental Health, Substance Abuse, and Domestic Violence problems during the delivery of care process and provide access to services and treatment.
- f. To reduce the impact of cancer in the service area through early detection and treatment.

2. Access to Care

- a. To assure the quality and accessibility of health services by facilitating the enrollment of residents into a medical home through the use of Health Navigators.

3. Food and Nutrition

- a. To facilitate access to fresh, good quality, affordable, and nutritious food to residents within the service area.

Challenges	Strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Crossing Guards – not enough crossing guards to adequately cover the number of schools. Also, needed improvement to/additional sidewalks, signage, or engineering modifications. ▪ Arts and Cultural Center (African Heritage Cultural Arts Center may close) ▪ Uninsured and underinsured. ▪ Lack of knowledge of what is available in the community. ▪ Lack of Grocery Stores/ Fresh Fruit markets – very important for health & wellness. Many big grocery stores such as Publix refuse to come into these neighborhoods, not considered a good business investment. Perhaps the initiative could form some kind of partnership with the homestead farmers to come into the community and sell their 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ WalkSafe Program- there has been a decrease in the number of injuries/ fatalities. ▪ A number of strong comprehensive Health Centers (i.e. JTCHC has long history and extensive health resources- others include Borinquen, Juanita Mann). ▪ Many private practitioners/corner clinics and urgent care clinics (but don’t provide follow up- strength only when associated with health center). ▪ Churches – provides social service programs, however, often the infrastructure is inadequate. Also, there is a Black Faith Base Group (advisory board). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ There’s a push to get faith community to focus on health more by incorporating health tips in announcements/bulletins. ○ More efforts need to be directed toward

Challenges	Strengths
<p>produce. Cost of food is also major issue.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Violence prevention – New Horizon’s service partnership (Children’s Trust funding) on call to police and child protective workers to help children involved with domestic or other violence. ▪ Domestic violence --If patients at JTCHC exhibit signs of depression or talk to health care staff, refer them through a hotline. Have psychologist and social workers on staff, also. ▪ Race/ethnicity between health professionals and patients affects trust, and patients won’t talk about MH/SA/DV issues unless they trust. ▪ Nutrition – need information about healthy foods that are within their cultural norms. ▪ No gyms/workout facilities that are comprehensive and affordable. ▪ Limited evening hours (some may not want to catch bus at night). ▪ Insurance plan sometimes don’t cover mental health. ▪ No children mental health provider in the community. ▪ Funding to conduct outreach is very limited. 	<p>encouraging the faith community to talk about HIV/AIDS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Rev. McCray is a pioneer in this area- working to train the faith community. ○ The ministries have to hit the streets; it’s often the people outside of church who need to be engaged most. ▪ Parks – Hadley, African Square, Arcola Lakes, MLK, Olinda, NFL Yet Center. ▪ The community wants to see change. ▪ Optimist Clubs – kids have to have physical to play sports. ▪ 5000 Role Models Program. ▪ Health Connect in some schools.

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Housing and Community Development

Strategies and Recommendations

1. Sustainable Housing

- a. Affordable rental communities including for the elderly and people with disabilities.
- b. Affordable housing:
 - 1). Program to help renters become owners including grant programs for down payments and closing costs; low-interest mortgage loans to eligible homebuyers with low- to moderate-income households.
 - 2). Housing rehabilitation, restoration of abandoned housing and new construction
 - 3). Teach residents how to keep their housing-can't put people in houses that they can't sustain over time.
 - 4). Access to supportive programs including avoiding predatory practices for senior.

2. Financial sustainability

- a. Job training and development including compensating residents for time spent on job training programs.
- b. Financial Literacy programs.
- c. Educate the business community and create partnerships with the business community:
 - 1). Identify specific business needs that should be in the targeted area.
 - 2). Educate employers on the benefits of employing the residents of the target area.

3. Service Coordination

- a. Create a Liberty City Housing Alliance to coordinate the individual organizational efforts so they can complement one another and develop a coordinated plan that addresses the area's economic, social and cultural infrastructure to form the basis for a sustainable and viable community. Alliance would:
 - 1). Facilitate collaboration among the housing and housing related agencies and programs thus eliminating isolated and uncoordinated efforts of various agencies and programs.
 - 2). Serve as a centralized "one stop" clearinghouse for clients thus eliminating the confusion of where to go for needed services.
 - 3). Maximize available programs - increase knowledge of what is available in the community and make sure programs that are in place are being utilized.
 - 4). Conduct annual community resource expo.
 - 5). Prepare annual report to the community of housing and community development efforts.

4. Infrastructure Development

- a. Must also look at ways to change the mindset of what housing really means- from a government perspective its treated as a social service not as a major component coupled with the proper infrastructure – we can't look at just building houses, we must build a community
 - 1). Transportation, jobs, grocery stores/shopping, parks/recreation, etc.
 - 2). Neighborhood Beautification
 - i. Including lighting, sidewalks, crosswalks, foliage design, trash receptacles, bus stops, gateway signs, etc.
 - ii. Educating citizens to take greater responsibility for the safety and attractiveness of their streets.

- iii. Collaboration with Code Enforcement and increased neighborhood clean ups, anti-litter campaigns, and continuous maintenance.
 - iv. Encouraging and involving business owners in maintaining their establishments in a clean and attractive manner.
- 3). Community safety - Improve security and lighting for public safety

5. Enhance and recruit Leadership

- a. Create a formal mechanism to identify and recruit energetic and committed stakeholders representing financial institutions, local businesses, manufacturing, government, social services, youth, seniors, homeowners associations, and the churches to continue to work on housing and community development efforts. The workgroup would be responsible for:
 - 1). Crafting and overseeing the implementation of comprehensive housing and community development strategies for Liberty City in conjunction with the Miami Children’s Initiative.
 - 2). Developing guidelines for monitoring and enforcing individual organizational housing and community development efforts to ensure transparency and accountability.

Challenges	Strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Liberty City and other similar areas don’t get the same enforcement – must be clear on what should be enforced and how and hold the proper entities accountable. ▪ Lottie: Scott Carver – a lot of people lost their benefits/housing – some didn’t want to follow the rules and regulations- have to come up with ways to teach people how to get housing and also how to keep their housing- we constantly put people in houses that they can’t sustain over time- - public housing should be a stepping stone to home ownership – initiative must provide additional programs to help residents in the rental market prepare for homeownership. ▪ There are people who never needed housing before that need it now because of the current economy – whole new population needing assistance. ▪ Senior Group: Must look at how to protect our seniors- are often victimized (i.e. Predatory lending) have lost their homes and don’t understand how that happened. ▪ Issue of home owners who are dying off – properties that were historically occupied by their owners are now becoming rentals – shift of home ownership. ▪ Not enough specialized housing for people with disabilities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ A lot of programs – great deal of focus on Liberty City- questions: how effective is the focus? Diana: Strength can also a weakness – multitude of programs but not appropriately linked. ▪ Good deal of infrastructure in place – sidewalks – pedestrian friendly- close to employment areas- mass transit, etc. ▪ Community has a lot of beauty – Liberty City is hidden jewelry – should increase efforts to get people back to the community

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Parent & Guardian Support

Strategies and Recommendations

- 1. Develop a Strong Parenting Program that:**
 - a. Addresses the negative perception/stereotype often associated with inner city mothers;
 - b. Strengthens communication practices and the importance of parents having positive relationships with their children;
 - c. Bridges the generational gap that exist between the younger generations of the elders of our community;
 - d. Stresses the important of tradition, heritage, and culture in child rearing practices;
 - e. Targets specific populations including grandparents raising grandchildren, dads as primary (or only) caregivers, teenage/young moms (possibly at COPE North);
 - f. Supports the development of culturally competent policy and practices;
 - g. Emphasizes pre and post natal care including screening for post partum depression; and
 - h. Replicates the Harlem Children's Zone Baby college:
 - i. Offers parenting workshops to expectant parents and those raising a child up to three years old in issues of health, safety, discipline, child development, parental stress, and child-parent bonding.
 - j. Strengthens families as well as empowering them to have a positive impact on their children's development.
 - k. Use role models/ modeling/mentors who can guide parents and support them in their parenting role.

- 2. Develop "Professional Standards of Practice" / "Community Code" that looks at how to change "mindset" of community residents including behavior, culture, dress, etc.**

- 3. Develop additional youth After-School/Recreational Programs that:**
 - a. Has a strong emphasis on academics;
 - b. Start early...target kids in elementary or middle school (could target Optimist Clubs which has great parent involvement. Must begin early - parental involvement begins to curtail once kids are older).
 - c. Focus on Protective Factors versus Risk Factors;
 - d. Creates opportunities for exposure to the arts including music;
 - e. Matches each child with a "Life Coach" through a professionally supported one-to-one relationships;

- 4. Focus on Education as a core community and family value including:**
 - a. Providing access, information and exposure to educational opportunities. Education must become core value for both secondary and post secondary (Some kids have never been told that college is an option).must start at home.
 - b. Making school system more accessible to parents (front desk is not friendly, don't make parents feel welcomed).
 - c. Must develop kids at elementary level instead of waiting until high school.
 - d. The use of Aptitude testing to determine student's interest and ability to learn in some particular area and include academic advisory work with elementary and middle school.
 - e. The community must demand what it needs/wants from the school system.
 - f. Must develop alternative education models for youth who are not interested in college (i.e. trade schools/apprenticeship programs "using hammers to build lives" and military).

Challenges	Strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parents/caregivers don't know what is available or are often intimidated by the complexity of navigating the different systems on their own including the school system, juvenile justice system, health care system, child welfare system, etc. ▪ Apathy among residents, very discouraged by what they see every day. ▪ Few role models including professional male role models. ▪ Older people haven't seen a lot of change that is passed down. ▪ No system of care. ▪ No continuity of services....services disappear with funding cuts. ▪ Lack of trust. ▪ Self fulfilling prophecy (self destructive behavior). ▪ Violence (Economy begets violence. ▪ Some are not using resources committed to the community. ▪ Lack of Quality Education, they do enough but not enough to make impact. ▪ Funding is driven by problems/challenges. ▪ Cultural competency/diversity in program provision is lacking. ▪ Lack of opportunities for Children/Families to be exposed to other places, elements of culture (e.g. Freedom Writers (Harlem's Gem Program – college is introduced as an option.) ▪ Some kids don't know the strength of their own history. ▪ Not as much of "a sense of community" as there once was. ▪ Lack of employability skills/opportunities ▪ Lack of Communication ▪ Dress/attire ▪ Competing priorities ▪ College assistance program (CAP) Advisors some work well and others do not. ▪ Peer pressures. ▪ Lack of positive press/Image of community (Hard to fight against this – overwhelming). ▪ Sometimes we look to others to do things for us ▪ Economic development is lacking. ▪ Difficult to sustain infrastructure w/o economic foundation. ▪ Lack of community development. ▪ Children are not accessed for disabilities...kids are written off... parents with children with disabilities don't have adequate resources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parents/caregivers are strong, raising multiple children; try to build a bond with children and children with each other. ▪ Beliefs/faith "praying grandma." ▪ Intergenerational links/connections. ▪ Extended family presence. ▪ Resilience. ▪ Opportunities for learning experiences. ▪ Strong church and faith based community. ▪ Reach out when there are problems/concerns ▪ Institutional support-health centers, Caleb Center. ▪ 2-1-1. ▪ The Children's Trust as a funding source for CBO's, resources, support for CBO's. ▪ Community involvement/activist/community involvement. ▪ School based programs. ▪ Neighborhood support/Informal support networks (families helping one another). ▪ Listening ears/ADVOCATES/often serves as voices ▪ Elected officials and non-elected advocates. ▪ Cultural resources, e.g. Haitian Heritage Museum, African Heritage Cultural Arts Center. ▪ Some are willing to seize opportunity for teachable moments, w/o preaching.

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Youth Support

Strategies and Recommendations

- 1. Parenting involvement in lives of youth**
 - a. Engagement strategies, show why parent should be involved, teach/instill the importance of being involved in children's education, many parents may not know better
 - b. Connect child participation in activities, e.g. sports, to parental involvement & active participation
 - c. Engage alumni of some of the local school to mentor youth
 - d. Parenting classes at churches, schools
 - 1). Family and adult literacy/leadership training/computer training/assessing grades/teachers
 - 2). Training on various topics, e.g. life skills, nutrition, budgeting, teaching values, conflict resolution, communication with one another, homework assistance
- 2. Restorative justice teaches kids how to mediate conflict and peers serve as mediators** (youth court), happens in school (Brownsville Middle)
 - a. Neighborhood accountability - community service as a part of it
 - b. Early anti-bullying programs (should include education of children, parents, educators)
 - c. Early anti-gang education (could even start as early as kindergarten)
 - d. Wrap-around services that are based on comprehensive needs assessment
 - e. Mentoring programs targeting certain populations, e.g. girls, boys
 - f. Targeted intervention for kids that have been suspended
 - g. Mandatory classes for kids participating in youth intervention strategies, e.g. restorative justice/ neighborhood accountability program
 - h. Sexual health/STI & teen pregnancy prevention/HIV/AIDS
 - i. Abstinence program, operating in schools, working with child/parents
 - j. Parenting classes, particularly for fathers
- 3. Youth engagement and educational strategies:**
 - a. focus groups, assemblies – asking the youth for feedback, gets them talking
 - b. Consider student-run programs and using kids as ambassadors
 - c. Junior Achievement – entrepreneurship/businesses
 - d. Zulu Warriors (boys 8-13) replication, expansion
 - e. Provide vocational & technical training academies in the schools
 - f. Provide entrepreneurship training and support
 - g. Programs that help to instill a sense of interest in the environment
 - 1). Have motivational quotes throughout school (or other buildings)
 - 2). Provide opportunities to involve youth in landscaping environment
- 4. Civic engagement strategies**
 - a. Community service/youth – youth service America, youth led projects (civic engagement)
 - b. Family service projects to get everyone involved
 - c. Development of corporate relationships (can use donated goods as incentive for parental and family engagement)
 - d. Use of County Store (in Hialeah) – potential partnership which would allow parents/families to choose items as incentive for involvement
 - e. Develop & disseminate a community newsletter that focuses on positive news

- f. Plan & programs to promote use of community development dollars
- g. Liberty City should have its own cable TV channel to broadcast local, relevant information for the community (especially about resources)

Challenges	Strengths
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Lack of positive role models including father figures and other males. ▪ “Poor man’s country club.” ▪ Gambling. ▪ Kids may be put out of class for small infractions, e.g. dress code violation, tardiness. ▪ Apathy in community. ▪ Self-imposed barriers (e.g. parental involvement is not impossible). ▪ Transportation to parks and recreation...available in a 3 mile radius, previously free and now fee is paid for (increased price and less slots available). ▪ Religious beliefs (e.g. 7th Day Adventist may curtail participation in events/activities). ▪ Not as much interest in the community in volunteering. ▪ Domestic violence affects the children in the home and can lead to repetitive interpersonal violence by youth. ▪ Lack of exposure to options and opportunities for adult success. ▪ Schools have really changed – not the same level of concern. ▪ Schools are “testing” grounds – FCAT. ▪ Stigma exhibited by law enforcement and DCF (protective investigation) about youth living in this community. ▪ Kids are suspended from school without appropriate alternative programs for their education and to engage them outside the school campus. <p>Many high school youth are working long hours during the week (even longer if it is a family-owned business).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Parks and recreation programs. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 6 “manned” parks within a mile radius ▪ Sports-related optimist groups. ▪ Social service infrastructure. ▪ Agencies have been here for a long time providing services with limited resources. ▪ Rich in history. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Older people have ties ○ Proud of where they come from ▪ Need to instill in youth ▪ Faith-based community. ▪ School pride, e.g. NW championships. ▪ Lots of schools. ▪ Lots of people that want to give back to the community.