Information Sheet
Identifying community resources

Every community contains resources, which include capacities, strengths, physical spaces, services and stakeholders. As Early Years Networks seek to improve outcomes for the local community, it is important to systematically identify and map the resources within the local community.

By identifying and auditing the community resources, the Early Years Network will be able to find connections and relationships which provide opportunities. Identification of community resources can also be helpful in identifying barriers to accessing services, which can lead to targeted changes to address these barriers. Likewise, a gap in available resources may be identified and a plan to address these gaps developed.

A clearly identified set of resources supports an Early Years Network's strategic planning effort. Understanding the availability or lack of community assets can provide an important context for planning. Plans can encompass ongoing identification of community resources, strategies to strengthen them and development of programs to address community needs. Other supporting community data can be presented alongside the identified resources, such as AEDC results, ABS statistics, Child Development Atlas data or personal narratives.

Resources may include:

- physical spaces, such as parks or community buildings

- individual or organisational skills, knowledge and capacities

- local knowledge, including stories, history and values

- local groups, associations and networks, including government and non-government agencies and services

- economic resources

The process of maximising community resources includes:

- Systematically identifying and detailing resources and strengths in the community

- Connecting these resources to work together

- Creating opportunities for these resources to be productive and powerful together

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To assist in identifying community resources, there is a community resource mapping template.

How can we achieve this?

Ask your members about:

- the resources they use in the community

- the resources they access outside your community

- what they wish was available

- the resources that are most valued

- who is not accessing services and what would help them to access services

These questions can be asked individually, via survey, or through a focus group.

More information

To find out more about Early Years Networks, please visit our website or contact:

- **Web:** www.communities.wa.gov.au
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