

WHAT IS A SAFE & HEALTHY COMMUNITY?

- A *community* is a town, a neighbourhood, a rural county, a group of people living in the same place, sharing common interests and a sense of identity.
- A *healthy* community is influenced by the physical and social environments in which we live, so that economy, environment, lifestyle and social climate have as much effect on our health as medical care.
- A healthy *economy* requires income and employment. A strong economic base provides opportunities to earn a fair living.
- *Environment* includes water, good air quality, waste management, green spaces, safe streets and caring neighbours. The health and welfare of the community is delicately balanced on a sustainable, clean and safe environment.
- *Human health* requires resources for physical, emotional, spiritual and mental health and an adequate health care system. A human component gives meaning to our lives.
- Our *social climate* involves transportation, housing, education, arts and culture. A social base provides essential services and opportunities to grow and interact.

ACTION PLAN

1. **Get started.**
 - Respond to the needs, challenges and opportunities in your community.
 - Identify the limits and size of your community.
 - Talk to others who are aware of these needs, challenges and opportunities.
 - Form a core group of leaders (Women's Institute) to organize community action.
2. **Get organized.**
 - Invite the key organizations and individuals (government, church, education, labour, employers, the unemployed, business, professional associations, service clubs, volunteers, environmentalists, health care providers, cultural groups, youth, seniors) to meet together.
 - Share information.
 - Clarify the goals and purposes of the gathering.
 - Consider asking the Rural Community Advisor from the Ontario Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Rural Affairs to facilitate your organizational meetings.
3. **Develop a plan.**
 - Establish long-term goals.
 - Establish the objectives of the project.
 - Prioritize the needs, the most pressing first.
 - Get the facts together.
 - Explore all the possibilities.
 - Use the resources and strengths in the community to develop a plan.
4. **Get things done.**
 - Start with something small.
 - Build community spirit.
 - Form networks or partnerships between groups.
 - Work towards a major project.
 - Assign responsibilities to each participant.
 - Adjust the plan as needed, keeping in mind the long-term goals.
5. **How did we do?**
 - Evaluate. Take a look at how the team is working together, whether the project is meeting its long-term and short-term goals.
 - Celebrate the success. If a job is worth doing, it is worth celebrating. This builds more community spirit and a desire to continue.

SAFE & HEALTHY COMMUNITIES PROJECTS

In November, 1996, the FWIO Provincial Board decided to undertake and promote the following:

C.A.N. DO: The Movement for Clean Air Now

Did you know that the majority of us spend 90 % of our time indoors?

That's where the air could have the biggest impact on our health.

YES YOU CAN TOO! - a campaign to rid your home of pollutants.

Contact The Lung Association 1-800-972-2636 to obtain their Clean Air Now kit.

Call Jean Baker (613-389-0676) to learn how Kingston Area initiated their project.

Ontario Breast Screening Program

One in 10 women in her lifetime will develop breast cancer. This is the leading cause of cancer deaths in women. The older the woman, the higher the risk. The Ontario Breast Screening Program helps educate and empower women to take control of their health. Mary Lou Norton, FWIO Program Coordinator, and the program committee are preparing an informative program for branches. Watch for it.

Parenting Skills

Dialogue with groups who work with parents and children (child care workers, youth leaders, etc.)

Meet with Family Studies teachers; raise funds to provide *Baby Think it Over* for the classroom.

Offer mentoring and sharing skills to groups or individuals who need someone to talk to.

Work with 4-H clubs, such as *On Your Own*, or offer babysitting courses to young people.

Work with Health Units offering *Parenting in the 90s* programs.

Adopt a Mom, or a single parent family. Call Mary Janes (519-786-5511) for details.

Medication Booklet

Medical information should be kept together in booklet form and readily available in case of emergency. It needs to include the drugs that a person is taking, possible allergies and family medical history which can impact on treatment. Mary Lou Norton, FWIO Program Coordinator, is preparing a booklet to satisfy the needs. Call her at 613-393-2052.

Other Suggestions

To combine centennial celebrations and the FWIO focus, consider a centennial flower bed or planting 100 bulbs, 100 trees, or 100 shrubs in a community park.

SUGGESTIONS FOR PROJECTS AND PROGRAM TOPICS

The following keyword suggestions may stimulate initiatives for informative programs and creative projects.

1996 Health

addiction and substance abuse; alternative remedies; development of children and youth; emotional health; health care system; health risks; mental health; physical health; quality of life; reproductive health; menopause; spiritual health; etc.

1997 Social Climate Affects Safe & Healthy Communities

abuse; arts; child care; citizenship; culture; education; equality of sexes; family structures; heritage; housing; justice/crime; lifelong learning; literacy; pornography; poverty/welfare; public/community participation and interaction; social safety nets; social services; recreation/leisure; responsibility; rural/urban planning; transportation; TV violence; rural/urban planning; etc.

1998 Safety: How to Make our Communities Safer

bicycle safety; Block Parents; car/travel safety; community safety audits; deceptive telemarketing; farm safety; food safety; fraud; Highway Help; Neighbourhood Watch; Operation Lookout; parole system; personal safety; pesticides/insecticides; safe home checklist; Smart Risks; etc.

CONFERENCE '98 theme: Safe & Healthy Communities

1999 Economic Factors for a Safe & Healthy Community

agritourism; employment standards; entrepreneurship; global marketplace; gross national product; income/prosperity; infrastructure; innovations/technology; investments; productivity; resources; standards of living; standards of training/education; sustainable communities; trading practices; work environment; etc.

2000 Environment

aerosols; agricultural practices; air quality; biotechnology; conservation; ecosystems; energy; genetics; green spaces; pollutants; pollution prevention; renewable/non-renewable resources; waste management; waste reduction; water issues; wildlife/natural habitats, etc.