

# Ideas for Community Needs Assessment



There are many methods you can use to identify needs in your community. Below are just a few ideas:

## Mind Mapping

- Draw your map (issue, root causes and effects on individuals and community).
- Consider the following questions:
  - What are the issues facing your community?
  - What are the root causes of this problem?
  - What are the effects on the individuals and the community?
- Brainstorm on project ideas.
- Evaluate and prioritize the project ideas.
- Focus on your top idea.

## Conduct a Survey

- Ask young people what their greatest concerns are.
- Give them a list and have them rank their concerns.

## Hold a Community Forum

- Have an open microphone to share community problems/dreams.

## Interview Senior Citizens

- Ask senior citizens about societal changes (for the best/worst). What are their greatest fears in the community? What are they proud of in your hometown?

## Three Wishes

- Throughout the week, ask people what they would wish for (given unlimited power/resources) if they were granted three wishes for their community. Keep a list of the dreams people share.

## Watch the News

- What stories leave you feeling disturbed or unsettled? Cut out articles in the newspaper that make you sad or angry.

## Utopian Towns

Think of all the places you've been. What is your favorite city to visit? Why? How is that different from your hometown?



## I Have a Dream

- Read Martin Luther King's well-known speech. Think about your own personal/community dreams, and write them down somewhere.

## Group Goals

- Does your town have a set of goals? What about your school/organization/neighborhood?
- Research and find out what the groups around you are trying to do.

## Look around You

- What special events are going on around town? What organizations/ businesses/schools are really struggling to reach their goals or keep up with society?

## Ask Your Legislators

- Find out key issues at the forefront of the national agenda. What are the serious dangers that face our country and our world?

## Sixty-Minute Search

- Get a street map of your community, divide up the territory, and have group members search their area for needed improvements. Mark the "hot spots" on each map and discuss area needs.

Originally published by the Points of Light Foundation. Revised by HandsOn Network in 2010.