Resetting the Path Forward: Resident Services

Tuesday, September 8th, 2020 - 1:00 – 2:00 EDT

Call Notes

**Objective**: Discuss resident services approaches and programming shifts as students transition back to school. This will include a focus on afterschool and tutoring programming that meets students’ needs, especially as they have less in person support. Members will also have the opportunity to share other critical services as the pandemic continues.

**Member Response:**

* Rose Mabwa, The Community Builders- STEM tutoring program
  + As they thought about Assisting Youth during COVID Focused on:
    1. Daily routine—called youth to check in
    2. Creating small groups for youth
    3. Keeping Youth connected
    4. Innovation and Influence for greater impact
  + Led them to STEM on virtual platform. Partnered with Illinois State. Programs included extracting DNA from strawberries; determining germs on hands (although taught lessons about washing hands); mosquitos; and exposing them to scientists to learn about careers in the science field.
  + Expanded STEM to include other areas including fitness program, eating healthy (including recipes), graduation ceremony; and voting education for youth aged 17-18 about voting.
  + Also had an education navigator who did a Facebook video sharing tips for parents on how to prepare for school, i.e. creating a dedicated space for students, creating a routine.
  + Learnings from the program include—that it was a great way to expose youth to science and that children had an easier time interacting with each other virtually—especially older youth were more willing to ask questions in a virtual setting. Need to plan programming around how much bandwidth kids have to be online—now to 1 hr. instead of 2 hr. in-person.
  + Also shifted their tutoring to one-on-one so parents/tutors can work out their individual schedules.
* Amanda Hodgin, Jamboree- Tutoring and afterschool program
  + Programming they offer includes after school, adult education, teen engagement and adult education. In the absence of their typical hands on summer programming launched virtual summer programming. Focused a lot on mental health. Kept to their program goals. New things included sending kids activity kits—some basic supplies as well as specific to online activities—Steam (?) and Space.
    - NASA website had good [virtual field trips](https://www.nasa.gov/feature/virtual-field-trips-take-students-inside-nasa-s-commercial-crew-program/).
  + Did online tutoring and homework utilizing resident services teams as well as volunteers from local colleges later in the day/evening Monday-Thursday as resource for students. Expect to keep this going in the future—parents asking about it for school year.
  + Held workshops for families—5-day virtual camps, also game nights.
  + Had about 100 families participate, but participation increased over time—as families realized this was a long-term situation.

**Member Efforts on Racial Equity**—efforts to address topics of racial equity/social justice into programming or children and youth.

* Partners with different local agencies
* Kathryn from Jamboree mentioned the National Night Out which creates and opportunity to build relationships between police and the community (especially youth that may be afraid of the police.).
* Rose also shared that they do a bike-a-thon with police and health institutions. Couldn’t do this year, but plan to do a prayer vigil instead. Try to build relationships with youth when they are young for better relationships as youth get older
* Amanda also noted having police volunteered for food distribution so police viewed in a different way.
* Adriana from Heartland Housing mentioned that they are having more conversations about limiting police involvement in their programs as opposed to including them. Is interested in learning more about those efforts in the future.

**Other Topics:**

* **Digital Divide:** Jeffrey from Aeon asked about how people are addressing the digital divide. He mentioned that they are starting to think about wifi as more of a utility—a necessity—as opposed to an amenity. As they look at NOAA projects looking as ways to include that cost.
* Amanda noted that they have gotten equipment resources from schools.
* Rose noted it was an issue and are shifting some budget resources to purchase Chromebooks. Noted that mayor addressing equipment and internet costs of students; larger challenges for seniors and single adults.
* Most children can adapt well to technology—often teach new things to resident services staff—but where it is time consuming is with seniors or adults who aren’t familiar with technology, may not have email.
* **Eviction**-Brenda from CommonBond noted increasing concern about renters that aren’t paying rent and think they will “self-evict” when the moratorium is cover. Want to connect them with resources but many are resistant. Meaghan mentioned work they are doing with NFCC, will provide an update on the next call.

**Resources**

**Looking Ahead – Topics and Areas of Focus & Next Steps**

* Look at other efforts around social/racial justice, members who are doing work around de-escalation and other efforts to address issues with police.
* Interested in Eviction issues
* Others?