Making Connections
A Neighborhood Transformation Family Development Initiative
The Annie E. Casey Foundation
Core Belief

- Children do well when their families are strong; and families do well when they live in supportive neighborhoods.

*Families matter and Place matters*

&

*Connections count*
Core Areas of Work

• Family Economic Success (FES)

• Children Healthy and Prepared for School Success (CHAPSS)

• Resident Engagement and Leadership (REAL)
What is the Indianapolis work?

• Two targeted neighborhoods:
  – Martindale Brightwood
  – Southeast
A Statistical Glance
Martindale-Brightwood

- Population: 9,334
- African-American: 8,727
- White: 430
- Hispanic: 116
- Children 18 years (-): 2,944
- Adults 65 years (+): 1,387
- Households: 3,558
- Households w/children under 18: 1,262
- Single adult households w/children under 18: 881
- Median Household Income*: $29,828 (high)
- Median Household Income*: $17,656 (low)
Resident Engagement and Leadership (REAL)

• Philosophy:
  – Residents who take formal and informal leadership roles in their neighborhoods are more likely to be connected to resources and more likely to make decisions to improve their family and their neighborhood.
Tools and Resources Available for REAL

• Engagement Tools:
  – Study Circles
    • small group neighborhood based discussions that engage residents in developing solutions for neighborhood concerns.
Study Circles Goals

**Strength through relationships**
Connect families to others with similar interests and concerns.

**Strong community-building skills**
Link families to leadership opportunities within their neighborhoods.

**Strength in numbers**
Link families to needed services

**Small scale action that impact a large scale agenda**
Study Circle Logistics

- Neighborhood Groups will:
  - Conduct 1-2 circles
  - 8-10 participants per circle
  - 4-5 weeks of circle discussion
  - Conduct Action Forum & implement
Study Circles Process

MOBILIZING RESOURCES TO GET STARTED

RECRUITMENT (engaging residents)
Process takes a month

6 months

DIALOGUE
Discussion guide

ACTION
Action Forum process

Administrative Support

Neighborhood Partners

Grant money

Training

Residents that feel isolated

A strong Recruitment strategy

Diversity

4 weeks of discussion

Led by a ngh. Facilitator

Moves from personal to community to action

Months - years

Mini-grant

Technical assistance
Best Practices

• Martindale Brightwood Environmental Justice Collaborative

• Martindale Brightwood Weed and Seed Study Circles Action Plan
Resources

- Annie E. Casey Foundation  
  www.aecf.org
- Everyday Democracy  
  www.everyday-democracy.org
- Making Connections Indianapolis  
  www.mcindy.org
- Alicia J. Barnett, REAL Coach  
  aliciajbarnett@aol.com