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Community Readiness Assessment: How Ready Is Central Oregon to Foster Resilience

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“Community Readiness Assessment: How Ready Is Central Oregon to Foster Resilience”

For OHSU-PSU SPH Annual Conference

Overview

Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs) has devastating human impact and a major financial burden on the health care system. Fostering resilience in the individual and on the community-level to address this issue is a priority for the Central Oregon communities.

To measure community capacity to address resilience, the Community Readiness Assessment (CRA) was chosen. The assessment results have presented an opportunity for the communities to guide their own efforts through collaboration and reorganizing resources.

Method

The CRA is a validated tool for assessing community capacity. The CRA consists of 36 open-ended survey questions about the community’s attitudes, knowledge, and beliefs surrounding resilience. It was administered to 29 community leaders and stakeholders in Central Oregon. The CRA produces scores for five distinct areas, which also support an overall score. Additionally, it allows for qualitative examination of results.

Findings

The individual community scores revealed strength and weaknesses within community organizing and capacity. One county was found to be more resourceful, but also duplicating efforts, while another had great strength in volunteer power but seeking the necessary leadership to move efforts forward. Lastly, barriers such as language and transportation were identified as hindering optimal community participation in existing efforts.

Conclusion

The CRA provided important and useful knowledge which will guide ‘next steps’ in Central Oregon. It furnishes an inclusive starting point for addressing resilience through organizational work as well as supporting smaller individual initiatives. The CRA can become a recurring measure to understand what moves the communities forward and successfully nurture resilience.