



Education and Housing Equity Project Records.

Copyright Notice:

This material may be protected by copyright law (U.S. Code, Title 17). Researchers are liable for any infringement. For more information, visit www.mnhs.org/copyright.

NOW THAT WE'VE TALKED... IDEAS FOR COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

You can help your study circles move into discussion of action by providing handouts that help them think about how to become involved locally. The following combines elements of documents developed by Robert Sherman of the Surdna Foundation and the study circle organizers in Lima, Ohio and San Leandro, California.

Take stock of yourself

- Do you prefer to work alone or with a group of people?
- Could you put together a new organization?
- Do you have a specific area of interest such as child welfare, domestic violence, or intercultural understanding?
- Do you already belong to groups that are involved with these issues, or that might move in that direction?
- Do you have skills that you could share with your community? (Every community could use a gardener, a grant writer, a computer trainer for after-school programs, or a mural painter!)
- Realistically, how much time can you commit?

Take stock of your community

- As an individual or as part of a group, talk with young people, ministers, businesspeople, social service people, teachers, city officials, police officers, and neighbors to gain more perspective on your community and the issues it faces.
- Ask people about efforts to address problems in the community, and what these efforts might need in order to be more effective.
- Read sections of the newspaper that you might have ignored in the past, including local news, opinion pages, and the calendar of events.

Take ACTION!

Now that you know more about yourself and your community, choose some ways in which you might become involved.

- Apply for appointment to a city advisory commission.
- Help organize another study circle.
- Volunteer with a social service agency or nonprofit organization.
- Volunteer to help with the city's cultural diversity celebrations.
- Volunteer to work in local schools.

Planning Community-wide Study Circle Programs: A Step-by-Step Guide

- Organize or assist with a neighborhood activity (park clean-up, picnic, etc.).
- Participate in — or help develop — an ongoing neighborhood social group (i.e. monthly potlucks, weekly volleyball games) or neighborhood watch.
- Spend some time outside in your neighborhood, and make it a point to become acquainted with neighbors of all ages and backgrounds.
- Mentor a young person in an after-school program, either informally or through a Big Sisters/Big Brothers program.
- Help organize a neighborhood or citywide function to honor people working to build a stronger community. Even if you choose one or two outstanding individuals, make sure that you give more than passing acknowledgment to the hundreds of people who help in hundreds of big and little ways!