DB CONSULTING GROUP

November 16, 2004
3:00 p.m. EST

Coordinator   Ladies and gentlemen, welcome to HUD's Neighborhood Networks

November Monthly conference call. Today's topic will be "Designing,

Developing and Delivering Programs." At this time, I would like to

introduce Ebony Ross, Technical Assistance Manager. Please go ahead.

E. Ross   Thank you, Madeline. Good afternoon and welcome to the Neighborhood

Networks November conference call: Designing, Developing and

Delivering Programs. My name is Ebony Ross and I am one of the

technical assistance managers that will be working with you to provide

technical assistance to Neighborhood Network centers and HUD

coordinators.

Before we begin our call, I want to remind the multifamily Neighborhood

Network centers that the strategic tracking and reporting tool, START, is

also a very useful tool for tracking and assessing program performance.

For more information about START, visit the Neighborhood Networks'

Web site at www.neighborhoodnetworks.org or call our toll-free number

1-888-312-2743. I also want to remind our listeners that a verbatim

transcript and audio of this call will be made available on the

Neighborhood Networks Web site in about ten days.

That said; let's address program design and development.

We have three very dynamic speakers who will provide you with an

understanding of the processes of designing; developing and delivering

effective programs that will meet the needs of center participants. This

call will provide information on implementing programs that are attractive

to residents of all ages that will best represent your residents expressed

interests.

Our first speaker, Mr. Ray Winbush, currently serves as the Director of

the Institute for Urban Research at Morgan State University in Baltimore,

Maryland and as a technical assistance consultant to Neighborhood

Networks. Ray is a former Benjamin Hooks professor of social justice at

Fisk University and director of the university's Race Relations Institute.

He has had extensive experience in program design and development and

will be addressing the following: what constitutes a program; the critical

elements needed to successfully design and develop a program; the keys

to successfully delivering center-based programs; and the steps to tracking

and evaluating resident participation and program success.

Our second speaker, Mr. Craig Knudsvig, is the client service manager for

the La Grave Learning Center in Grand Forks, South Dakota. He will

provide a ten-minute overview on program design, development and

delivery and lessons learned. Craig has been kind enough to post the

information that he will be presenting online at www.lagrave.com for

your reference and review.

Our final speaker will be Ms. Melissa D. Hughes, who is the center

director for Versailles Neighborhood Networks Learning Center in New

Orleans, Louisiana. Melissa has been a center director for two years and

will be sharing some lessons learned for designing and implementing

effective programs and some nuggets of wisdom that she has received

during her two-year tenure.

All of the presenters will remain on the call for the question and answer

segment, so we encourage you to make notes of questions or suggestions

for today's topic area and save them for the end of the discussion.

I will now turn the call over to Ray Winbush. Ray, please go ahead.

R. Winbush   Hello, HUD coordinators and center directors. I'm going to try to collapse into 30 minutes, what I teach my students at Morgan State in a semester. So what I decided to do was to call this the ten commandments of establishing a successful program. So you'll have ten big points with some subsections to them.

The first thing I want to talk about is, what is a program? Believe it or not, as you might expect, the Government Accounting Office or GAO has an absolute definition of what a program is and it states, "An organized set of activities directed toward a common purpose or goal that an agency undertakes or proposes to carry out its responsibilities." I'm going to say that one more time, "An organized set of activities directed toward a common purpose or goal that an agency undertakes or proposes to carry out its responsibilities."

The main reason for mentioning this upfront is that you must have a goal before you can have a program. Often, particularly with community groups, they establish programs, but they have ill-defined goals. So it is

very important to establish a goal before a program.

This gets us to our first commandment, which I call, clearly state the goal and the vision that you have and state it in language and wording that resonates with or is attractive to the targeted community and stakeholders. Again, clearly state the goal and the vision.

Now, with regard to Neighborhood Networks, the goal has been stated quite clearly. HUD created it in 1995, almost ten years ago, and Neighborhood Networks was one of the first federal initiatives to promote self-sufficiency and help provide computer access to low- income housing communities. That is the goal. So the first thing that a good program does, again, is not establish the program first, but establish the goal of the program.

The second commandment is to hold a meeting that identifies all stakeholders associated with your proposed program. The HUD coordinators, center directors and others that are involved with Neighborhood Networks simply should hold a meeting in the particular location and say, "What do we want to do and who should be involved with this?" This is after the goal has been stated. Are they people in the

immediate neighborhood or what?

I usually divide stakeholders up into two groups: direct stakeholders, that are involved community members, service client, etc.; and indirect stakeholders. Since work placement is a very important goal of Neighborhood Networks that might involve local businesses who might hire service clients that have completed the program, as well as potential funders. So you have direct stakeholders that you should make a list of, as well as indirect stakeholders, that you should also make a list of.

The third commandment is to identify the stakeholder needs. You can do this by using focus groups, door-to-door surveys, one-on-one interviews and other methods. In other words, you should canvass the people that you have identified as the stakeholders.

I've often run into the issue of people creating programs at an organization and saying, "This is what the community wants," and the community has absolutely no idea about what this organization has said that they need. So, identify the stakeholder needs; find out what your community actually wants. Again, this is before a program is actually instituted.

The fourth commandment is to hold stakeholders ownership meetings. This is when you actually get to gather a representative sample of the stakeholders that you have identified through canvassing. You hold a meeting where everybody lists and/or shares the survey results, the interview results, and the focus group results - all on a wall. There are a variety of ways of evaluating what the priorities are and the Technical Assistance (TA) providers involved with Neighborhood Networks will be more than happy to help out with this.

But the key is to then make a list of priorities for the program. I would say, a lot of times organizations will say, "We have 5,000 priorities," which is absolutely impossible. Make a list of short and doable--three to five--priorities so that everybody understands and is clear what they are and can repeat them, if necessary. So that's the fourth commandment. Again, hold a stakeholders ownership meeting in which you decide what exactly you're going to do.

The fifth commandment is to develop workgroups for each priority area or develop a so-called plan of action. Participants should be asked to choose which priority they like the best. They would then be asked to participate in that workgroup. So, if you identified three or four goals of the

program, you would be assigned to that workgroup to really develop that

issue, and we can be more specific about programs later on.

The sixth commandment - and this is specific to Neighborhood Networks

- is to develop the START business planning tool. As Ebony said earlier,

the START business planning tool is one of the best that I've seen in my

experience because it forces you to really understand what you want to do.

So notice that we've only now talked about the START business plan,

which is the sixth step in developing a good business plan or a good

program, and each workgroup will begin to develop a START business

plan appropriate to its priorities. So after you get your workgroups you

should start using the START tool. It may take you a few weeks, but it

may only take some just a few days to develop the START tool. You can

find it online at the Neighborhood Networks' Web site.

The seventh commandment is to implement the program. HUD

coordinators and center directors, this is the hard part. Actually, you've

got everything down, you know what your priorities are; you develop your

START business-planning tool and now, you actually implement the

program. Go over each element of the program and be honest as to

whether or not it will work or not. It's better to have two or three modest

goals than to have ten ambitious goals that you will be unable to complete.

For example, you say that the key goal is to serve 200 people per month in

terms of GED completion. Somebody in that group should say, "Look,

that's unrealistic. We only have 200 people living in this HUD complex in

the first place." So you may say, "Look, we need to serve 20 people." So

it's better to have goals that can be accomplished—that are anchored in

reality.

The people in the meeting should be totally honest about every aspect of

what they are proposing to do; don't hold back; don't indulge in "group

think" about how this program should be implemented.

The eighth point, which a lot of programs neglect and I think is key to a

successful program, is social marketing. That's the eighth commandment,

to really have a good social marketing program. You should be able to

publicize your program, particularly with Neighborhood Networks on the

Web, but also by a variety of methods—hold a press conference, for

example, have an open house, distribute leaflets in the community, use all

available media to publicize your program. The reason for this is because

people want information about you—it helps funders to know that you're

out there in the community and it makes people buy into the group in

terms of funding and other issues, and you'll find that people will beat a

path to your door. So the eighth commandment, again, is to have a good

social marketing program.

The ninth issue is to expand the stakeholder participation and evaluate

your program at least three times during a 12-month period. So I'm going

to say that again, constantly expand your stakeholder participation and

evaluate your program at least three times during a 12-month period.

Evaluation is the best thing that you can do for your program, but it's often

overlooked, and this is where you actually measure if you have done what

you said that you were going to do.

Center directors need to have somebody who is not assigned full time, but

who really takes responsibility for evaluation and knows it can occur in a

variety of ways. Evaluation can occur through questionnaires or through

interviews and a variety of ways, but you get information and feedback.

While you are working on computers on whatever program, you can do

feedback and have a flow of give and take that grows throughout the

program. Never stop growing your program. Keep reaching out. If I

were to kind of borrow a phrase from P.Diddy, instead of "vote or die," I would say, "grow or die." I mean just keep reevaluating everything that you do, and be willing to criticize yourself under the evaluation.

And then the tenth one, is at the end of just one year, conduct a thorough outcome evaluation. Make sure that you compile all of the information you have received from stakeholders, from participants, from people who are actually running the program and say, "Look, we could do this better. We need more computers; we need to do this if we're doing GED training. We don't have enough contacts from the business community and we need to provide outreach to them. We have no publicity with our program, we should increase our publicity on radio or television by doing interviews." So conduct a thorough outcome evaluation. This should include the stakeholders hearing the information that you have.

The corollary is that you should issue an annual report and that's probably going to be required anyway in most programs; even if it is not a requirement, you should still issue an annual report. This is kind of the "10-A" commandment. So that people will know what you're doing, promote services in a place that's prominent publicize it and so forth.

Now, having gone through those Ten Commandments - and I want to

repeat them very briefly, for those who came in late, but I'm not going to

repeat all the information. The first commandment, again, clearly state

the goal and the vision; number two, hold a meeting that identifies all

stakeholders; three, identify stakeholders' needs; the fourth one, hold

stakeholders ownership meeting; the fifth commandment, develop

workgroups for each priority or need or plan of action; the sixth

commandment, develop the START business planning tool for your

Neighborhood Networks; the seventh one, implement the program; the

eighth one, social marketing, make sure you have a good social marketing

program; the ninth one, constantly expand the stakeholder participation

and evaluate your program at least three times during a 12-month period;

and the tenth one, conduct a thorough outcome evaluation. Most of you

have been to the Neighborhood Networks' site and there's a wealth of

information about the Neighborhood Networks, but everyone should visit

the site.

The other thing is that there's no one size fits all, as most of you know,

relative to Neighborhood Networks. These programs should be important

to the community that you're serving and that can happen in a variety of

ways. Keep in mind that technology and work placement are key

components of Neighborhood Networks. I'm going to stop there and turn

it over now to Craig Knudsvig**,** Craig, are you there?

C. Knudsvig   Yes, I am.

R. Winbush   Okay. We'll have a little more time for Q&A at the end. Thank you.

C. Knudsvig   Okay. It's pretty easy for me, as a center operator, to just say I agree with

Ray and shut up because he provided a very good description of what's

involved in program design. But I'll highlight a few things that I have, and

I'll try to give a couple of specific examples that we have or have

experienced here in our centers.

One of the things to remember is that, I don't care how big you are or how

small you are, all of these steps are just as important, just as possible and

will pay the same results, whether you're talking about developing a

whole new center or whether you're talking about one program that's

going to operate for the summer or whatever the case may be. The

discipline involved in doing them is just as appropriate and just as

productive.

Just a couple of things about design and development that I want to

reiterate, and I don't want to steal anybody's time here, but I think some of

this is worth reemphasizing.   Goal setting and needs assessment in the

planning piece is just absolutely the key to long-term success, it is

important to know what you're trying to do, know who needs it, know that

they buy into it and use that as the basis for the rest of what you do.

Also, and Ray kind of alluded to this, talk to as many sources of

information as possible in planning a program or a center or whatever.

Residents, potential users, staff or partner agencies, look at past

evaluations from other programs that have been done. Your property

manager needs to be a part of this; property owners in many cases do that

and then plug it into some kind of a logic model or a flow chart that will

help you get organized. It does need to be organized.

And then as you move along, don't be afraid to get out there and sort of

stick your toe in the water and try it, because you can spend all day in

what we sometimes call "paralysis of analysis" and not really come out

with anything. So once you get the things organized, go ahead and get

started. You need to look for resources, but you don't do that until you

have a plan to plug them into. You need to be willing to try new methods

and approaches, but they need to be linked to your original goal.

One of the things that I want to reemphasize that Ray said is, I believe when you start a program, you need to start evaluating right away. I think he mentioned three times a year and then once at the end. And that annual report is a good idea because it is a good form of evaluation; but by all means, start your evaluation as soon as you can because as hard as it is to find out that something isn't working perfectly, it is what you need to know to have it ultimately succeed. So do that.

When you start delivering and actually get your program up and running, all the partners, all the stakeholders, whatever term you want to apply to them, need to see the program the same way, need to see the goals the same way. I think, more importantly, those participants, those residents or whoever is going to use your center and your programs, they need to hear you all speaking with the same voice as well. There needs to be a focus there that will energize people that will keep them plugging away when things don't go so well or will keep that energy level up for them. I think you need to plan for change.

Success is going to happen if you're able to deal with change, but if you

assume that you've got it right the first time, I think you're going to find as

I have many times, that you need to sort of adjust. So plan for change,

have the right people involved. Sometimes, we get hung up on whose job

it is and what the job titles are and those kind of things. Once you have

the design in place, then you need to make sure that you have people

involved that can deliver whatever that product and that ultimate goal.

Tracking and evaluation is not useful if you don't start with that initial

goal, that initial plan, that good solid needs assessment; and, again, don't

take that to mean that you've got to do grandiose studies. It simply means

relative to the situation, take a look at what you need and identify that and

where you're going to go with it and then identify the outcomes that you're

after. It's easy to evaluate something that works, just keep doing it, but it's

a little tougher to evaluate when it's not working. But the purpose of the

evaluation is to identify what needs fixing and once you do that, then you

can move ahead.

I'm going to give you just a couple of bits of information about specific

programs that we have and some different ways that these things might

apply. We have two centers right now. One of them has been opened for

about eight years, the other one for just three. And some commonalities

include both having an afterschool program, both having partner agencies

that deliver other programming through our facility, and both having

pretty extensive computer activities. Because that computer activity may

be the most common denominator for everybody in Neighborhood

Networks, I'll just point out a couple of things in the way we approach

them differently and yet, it is the same process.

We have what we call an open-computer activity, which is simply access;

people come in, they register with us once; they come in, they get online

or use the software that we have. It's simply access. There's no

instructor, there's a monitor in the building. We have computer classes

and that's basic education and those classes are a little bit different. So on

the design and delivery of them, we tell people that, "Here's a certain time

you can be there." Of course, we have to allow for that as well. We have

a set teacher and curriculum, but that's a different piece of design because

now, we have to be much more structured.

And finally we have what we call tech force, a program whose goal is to

get people hired based on the specific computer skills we teach them. In

other words, they need to reach a high level of skill. In designing

programs like that, we need to allow for access to employers, access to

training in what we call soft skills, employability skills and those kind of

things. So the program design is very different, and yet, we've identified

the goal in all three cases: access, for the one, basic education for the

second one, and employment for the third one.

When you go to program delivery, there are similarly some differences.

For the open computer piece, our staffing level can be different. It can be

a much more relaxed atmosphere and staffing level, our hours of operation

need to be flexible, but we do not need to provide an instructor and those

people using the program need to understand that.

Ray mentioned social marketing. When we get to our class schedule for

our regular classes, we have to do another kind of marketing. We have to

advertise, so that people know when those classes are going to happen.

We do that in a quarterly calendar and people sign up well in advance of

that. Because of that, our program delivery also has to include reminders

to participants, for example, "You signed up for a class six weeks ago."

We do that with maybe a mailing and a phone call and in some cases we

consider that sort of supportive activity as part of program delivery.

And then we need to finalize that by telling those folks, "Well, you had a

class. You received eight hours of learning in Microsoft Word. You don't

know it yet. You have the ability to learn it by working on your own or

continuing your education." So we need to close that piece of the loop as

well.

For our tech force participants, we need to give them access to staff and

equipment on almost a one-on-one tutorial basis, and that means program

delivery is a much different animal in that case and requires extensive

staffing and scheduling. We try to be very flexible to those client's needs

because most of those people are already working or doing something

else. So our program delivery is much more individualized in that case.

Finally then, for those three programs that we evaluate; for the open

computer piece, we look at the numbers. How many people are using our

computer lab? For the basic computer classes, every student fills out an

evaluation sheet as they complete the hours of the class. We then look at

how many of them sign up for other classes, how many of them come

back for a second session or a higher-level class. If it's the beginning of a

Word class, then we may check to see if they come back for the

intermediate or the advanced Class. We also evaluate how many of them

come in for other opportunities and individually use the center. That's a

whole different type of evaluation on just the numbers we use for our

open computer session.

When we get to our tech force program, again, evaluation changes

because the goal there is higher so we evaluate people's skills early on,

and we have skills test that they have to pass. We monitor and check on

their hours of attendance, whether they are really taking advantage of the

program, showing up, working hard and those kinds of things. And then

we go further by monitoring their job-seeking activity and the results of

that.

So as you can see, the three different levels of design, delivery and

evaluation can take on a whole different pattern, depending on what

program it is. Again, it starts at the beginning of the program. You

probably heard this enough from both Ray and I already, but it is about

setting goals and benchmarks and knowing what are you trying to

accomplish because the rest of it should plug into that rubric pretty easily.

Ebony asked if I could just relate some of what I call lessons and best

practices. Planning, goal setting, needs assessment, and evaluation are

involved in every phase. The emphasis might change, but the importance

is the same. So you need to complete all the steps because each step is important.

In designing and developing the Neighborhood Networks' initiative, the idea is to develop innovative private and public partnerships. Partnerships are the most important segment of the whole initiative and this is certainly true with regard to the development of our centers as programs and then the development of individual activities within those programs. Programs without legitimate partners have not progressed very far.

Don't forget that partnerships can involve other agencies and other people serving the same population. Partnerships could also include your property owners and managers and those kinds of folks. Partnerships are about trust, they are about understanding your needs and recognizing what you can do to help others, not necessarily in that order either, but that's really what develops partnerships.

And then finally, with everyone listening and thinking of opening a center or designing a program or whatever, it always comes down to where to find the resources and, ultimately, some of those resources have to be dollars. In doing that, I think it's important to remember that you should

use successful programs to attract resources for new programs. Those

resource dollars are out there and you've heard that. That gets publicized

a lot, but those resources will often follow success more than needs. And

if you have a successful program, use that as a foundation for finding your

resources for your next program.

With that, Ebony, that's all I have.

E. Ross   Thank you very much, Craig. That was very informative. We're going to

turn it over to Melissa Hughes.

M. Hughes   Thanks, Ebony. I think that with what everyone has said, it doesn't leave

me with much left to share. I definitely would want to emphasize the

importance of surveys with new programs. A lot of directors will come in

to centers or begin new centers and just immediately begin thinking of

programs that the community needs.

Surveys are critical. The saying, "If you build it, they will come," doesn't

work here. It has to be something they want. I think that has been

something that we do on a consistent basis. We also spend a lot of time

out on the property just knocking door-to-door, making sure people know

we are here and asking again, "what it is they want to see?"

With regard to the partnerships, I definitely have to agree with Craig. We are extremely short staffed here as many centers are, I'm sure. So we need those partnerships. We partnered with our school board to come in and assist with teaching GED classes and English as a Second Language (ESL) classes.

The partnerships will provide staff, will assist in providing funding and also help out with the evaluation tool that needs to be done. If two or more organizations are working together, then you can pull in all the resources that they share, both for evaluation and just for providing services.

I know that Ebony had also asked me to talk about our lessons learned. I think the biggest lesson I've learned, since coming on board here, is with our youth program. We have 800 units on our property and over 900 school-aged children. So our youth program is the bulk of what we do here. I pushed parental involvement having listened to these conference calls and other centers. I couldn't understand why some of them would have parents coming in and we did not. I think after about a year, I finally

just gave up on the parental involvement.

Instead of pushing to find something that didn't work continually, when I had realized that it was not going to work, we were actually able to enhance the youth program that we had. I think that's probably the biggest lesson that we have that we've learned here in implementing new programs and trying to push things in that just don't work.

Another lesson we've learned; due to staff shortages, is to encourage major partnerships with the universities and the community colleges to bring in interns and work-study students for our programs. The work-study students can teach, tutor, and even assist in answering the phones. Those, I think, are our biggest lessons in addition to what everyone else has said with the best practices that we have.

I know that we are probably running short on time. So I'm just going to close there and emphasize once again, the importance of surveys at the beginning of programs and continuing those surveys. If you do a survey and you think that you're meeting the needs of the community, you have to follow those up with more surveys to ensure that those needs are being met in the best possible way.

E. Ross   Thank you, Melissa. Thank you, Ray and Craig, as well. All of your

presentations were very informative and very helpful. At this time, we'll

open the floor to questions.

Coordinator   Our first question comes from Sandra Pinal. Please go ahead.

S. Pinal   My question is, about opening a new Neighborhood Networks center. I'm

not exactly sure how to go about it? whom I should invite? how I should

go about getting the people to come together for these celebrations?

R. Winbush   I think that you've got to invite, as I said earlier, people that are critical for

the program. I used the term direct and indirect stakeholders, send nice

invitations out to all.   And since you may be limited by the budget, I

think you should consider a public service announcement, they're free. I

think you should serve some food and people will be attracted where they

can get an overview of the center, enjoy the social interaction and you can

use this opportunity to explain the center. It all boils down to the people

you are going to serve, as well as people you want to be involved with the

center.

All of us have received invitations to events and grand openings and we

evaluate them like this: Is this going to have anything to do with me? Is this a center to respect? Is this something I want to be invested in? And I think if you push what Neighborhood Networks is doing, its success stories and lessons learned, and speak in an honest way, I think you should invite people that you think can help the program and will be impacted by the program.

E. Ross   Ray, I'd like to follow up on that if I could. Sandra, this is Ebony. I'd also like to let you know that if you call our toll-free number and, again, that's 1 (888) 312-2743, you can request materials. We have banners that you can use to let the community know that you're open. We have media kits that we can share with you and we can provide technical assistance for you in that area.

R. Winbush   Absolutely.

S. Pinal   That's great. Thank you.

C. Knudsvig   Ebony, this is Craig. Just a couple of things to add to that. First of all, the answer to what should we do to get there is anything and everything. That sounds sort of smart, but it's the truth. Whatever you want to try is probably going to have a chance for some success.

Number two, there's nothing like personal contacts and sending a notice is a good thing, but if you can pick up the phone, or better yet, stop by. If you can just pick up the phone and call whoever it is you invited or are going to invite and say, "Here's what it's about. Personally, I'd sure like to see you there. We'd like to see you there." Use that personal touch because that really is what it comes down to anyway.

And the third thing, there's a saying that, the best way to get somebody to help you is not to give them something, but to let them give you something. If you can go to them and say, "Can you help us with this?" it's amazing how many people will get on board and how they'll be hooked for the duration.

R. Winbush   That's right.

S. Pinal   That's great. Thank you.

Coordinator   Our next question comes from Angela Wilson. Please go ahead.

A. Wilson   I was just wondering if Ebony could repeat that phone number again.

E. Ross   Happy to, 1 (888) 312-2743.

A. Wilson   Thank you.

E. Ross   You're welcome.

Coordinator   Our next question comes from Susan Fries. Please go ahead.

S. Fries   I wanted to know, are there a lot of Neighborhood Networks centers that

                 are working on childcare? If so, is it mostly afterschool care for older

                 kids? Or is it encouraging residents to set up home daycare? Or is it

                 working with daycare centers, or just letting people know what's

                 available?

S. Glenn   Most times - and Melissa can attest to this - our Neighborhood Networks

                 centers have the afterschool programs and they are geared toward school-

                 aged kids, and it's pretty much homework help and tutoring.

M. Hughes   Right, Sharon, our programs are Pre-K and up and offering homework

                 help and tutoring. However, we've had some entrepreneurial programs in

                 which we have encouraged residents to work on getting daycare

certification as a step toward maybe opening their own daycare. So we have encouraged residents to do that as well. At one point, we looked in to having a co-op with our residents, but unfortunately, we just don't have the space available.

R. Winbush   That's always difficult even if you use space in the center, because something is going to have to move out of there to do that. The other thing is, if you're going to do those kinds of things, your property owner and manager have to be at the table at the beginning to make it work.

We have afterschool programs at two sites. One of them is run for us by the school district through a partnership we have with them; the other one we do ourselves. And that one, we sort of redesign every year, partly due to funding, but another part of it is which kids have shown up and what their parents are going to want. To get locked into anything on any kind of a long-term basis seems to be, at least for us, something that just never seems to happen. We change it every year.

E. Ross   Thanks, Craig. Are there any more questions?

Coordinator   Our next question comes from Susan Fries. Please go ahead.

S. Fries   Just asking your indulgence again, what kind of healthcare support effort

               seems to be going on?

C. Knudsvig   Do you have a resident-service coordinator at your property, Susan?

S. Fries   I'm sorry. I'm a writer and I am trying to figure out what would be most

               useful to tell folks.

C. Knudsvig   We have a service coordinator at both our sites and those are folks that

               can get into some of that on an information and referral basis. That might

               be the best way the Neighborhood Network centers can be involved.

S. Glenn   Most of our centers - and Melissa, I'm not sure whether you have it in

               your center - have health resources where we have mobile units come to

               the properties to do screening such as dental screening, HIV testing, as

               well as high blood pressure. So that's one of the most frequent types of

               health resource that's provided at Neighborhood Network centers.

M. Hughes   Yes. We do have those, as well as the immunization mobiles to come out

               during the beginning of school to help the children get all their

               immunizations.

C. Knudsvig   We have a partnership agreement, I guess you'd call it, with the University

of North Dakota. We use a lot of their social work students and others in

our programs, but we also have senior nursing students who come on site.

They call it a mental health clinical rotation for five weeks, and the idea is

to learn about the mental health issues facing our residents. But they

provide blood pressure checks, and—I won't use the word "diagnosis"

because that's probably not very smart--but people bring problems to them

and they refer them to sources of health in that way. The students are

great because they're so energetic and anxious to not only learn, but to

help.

R. Winbush   I know here in Maryland, we have a couple of programs in Neighborhood

Networks to deal specifically with HIV/AIDS, again, because that's a

major issue in this area. So it varies from a variety of ways where there's

a lot of innovation. Again, with this Neighborhood Networks Web site, I

would definitely recommend plugging in that key word on the search

engine; you can find a lot of them around the country.

E. Ross   And Susan, I would suggest that if you're interested in receiving technical

assistance in regard to health resources, that's a service that we could also

provide in terms of identifying and helping you partner with local

organizations and universities. That's something we'll be more than happy

to help you with.

S. Fries   We, meaning?

E. Ross   Neighborhood Networks technical assistance providers.

S. Fries   Okay.

E. Ross   Call that 800 number that I gave you.

S. Fries   Right. Thank you.

Coordinator   Our next question comes from Dipo Masedomi.

D. Masedomi   A note to the three speakers put emphasis on evaluation. Now, you didn't

define for us if that's talking about internal evaluators or external

evaluators, to help us get a better perspective on our programs. If we are

using an external evaluator, how do you get funded? Who takes care of

that for you?

R. Winbush   The technical assistance can help out with a lot of that. It's ideal

sometimes to get funded for outside evaluators but I don't think it's

necessary. The danger, oftentimes, with internal evaluation is that you

want to make your program look as good as possible. I think that when

people are involved with any program they have to be honest in

evaluating exactly what they're doing; it can't be a group-think effort

where everybody is saying the same thing because they think that is what

the director wants to hear.

And I think that in regard to evaluation, an evaluation is just like a map; a

social map for the organization and it tells you which way you're going—

if you're lost or whatever. So a lot of people look at evaluation as being

something that is to be avoided because it looks at something that will

make us look bad, but it can also redirect and usually does redirect the

individuals involved with the program into making the program even

better. So I would say use the technical assistance that Neighborhood

Networks offers for advice for evaluation, but also look within your own

institution to make sure that you have people who understand evaluation

and its important role in making your program better.

C. Knudsvig   I agree. A couple of things, first of all, I think I commented that if you

want to evaluate, you can try to know what isn't working and fix it. But

generally, a program that has good solid goals to begin with, where staff

writes down exactly what the goals are, and asks the questions that will

help them work toward reaching their goals. An evaluation can make you

feel awfully good too, because you can find out if you really did what you

set out to do.

The other thing about external evaluations and lack of funding – we have

had wonderful luck with students working with us for free, providing

evaluation services, while meeting their class requirements and research

requirements. They're an outside source and they'll look at with an

unbiased eye and give you good information.

E. Ross   I'd also like to add - and this is Ebony - that if you go on to the

Neighborhood Networks' Web site, there are TA guides listed under the

publications tab; you can also use these as a resource. Are there any more

questions?

Coordinator   Our next question comes from Sandra Pinal. Please go ahead.

S. Pinol   My question was if we can get an e-mail of the summary of this

presentation?

E. Ross   Actually, Sandra, there will be a verbatim transcript posted on the Web

                 site in about ten days and you can either look into that, listen to it via

                 audio or you can just download the transcript and read it at your leisure.

S. Pinal   That's great. Can you tell me what the Web site is?

E. Ross   I can do that. It's www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org.

S. Pinal   Okay. Thank you.

E. Ross   Sure. And just once more, the toll-free number is 1 (888) 312-2743.

                 Thank you.

S. Pinal   Thanks.

Coordinator   At this time, it seems we have no further questions.

E. Ross   I would just like to thank everyone for their time today, especially our

                 presenters; Mr. Ray Winbush, Craig Knudsvig and Melissa Hughes. Very

                 informative and very helpful. I hope that some of your questions were

                 answered and if they weren't, feel free to give us a call at the toll-free

number, once again, 1 (888) 312-2743 and also check out our Web site at

www.NeighborhoodNetworks.org for publication information and also

feel free to utilize the START tool. This completes our call today.

Everyone, have a great day.

R. Winbush   Thank you.

E. Ross   Bye.

C. Knudsvig   Thank you.

Coordinator   Ladies and gentlemen, at this time, your conference has ended. You may

now disconnect.