

# The Critical Nature of Social Capital

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CLASS



Community Living  
And Support Services

# Social Capital is.....

Friendships and relationships we develop and grow as we become members of various communities.

These relationships actually make our lives better!

# Interdependence

Social Capital is best understood from the framework of Interdependence. All people have strengths and weaknesses – Interdependence is when we use our strengths to build relationships that help us in other parts of our lives



To understand Social Capital and friendships we must first think about the importance of relationships

Consider this question!

# The Magic Wand

If you could wish for 3 things for yourself, or for someone you love, what would you wish for?

# The 3 most common answers are:

- \* Healthfulness
- \* Happiness
- \* Longevity

# Sociological Studies show that:

- \* Healthfulness
- \* Happiness
- \* Longevity

Are all tied to – SOCIAL CAPITAL



Quite simply, the more social capital you have, the more healthfulness, happiness, and longevity you have!

But there is more!

# Social Capital is also related to:

- \* Tolerance – giving people a chance
- \* Honesty – being truthful
- \* Kindness – being nice
- \* Compassion – caring about people
- \* Fairness – doing the right thing
- \* Integrity – being counted on

# Finally, Social Capital assists with

- \* People getting jobs
- \* People keeping jobs
- \* Helping people solve problems
- \* People being safe
- \* People being psychologically stable
- \* People framing their identity/self confidence
- \* People advancing/achieving



“Without friends, the world is a wilderness”

Wadsworth

# Social Capital creates 3 values:

- \* Informational – things we learn from friends
- \* Emotional – knowing we have friends behind us
- \* Instrumental – actual things we get from friends



“If you belong to no group or community, and decide to join one, you cut your risk of dying in half over the next year”

Robert Putnam

# Where we find Social Capital

- \* Family
- \* Neighborhood
- \* Religious venues
- \* Work
- \* School
- \* Clubs, Groups, and Associations



So.....how do we develop Social Capital?

# Through Engagement

Engagement is when we participate with other people toward a common goal. It could be a project, providing a service, or just having social time.

Yet, there is mounting evidence that families with children who have disabilities engage less.

# Chatham/CLASS/Mamre Findings 2016/17

- \* Children with disabilities are less likely to stay connected with others via the internet.
- \* Families w/disability are more likely to report not receiving enough support.
- \* Children w/disabilities tend to not see their school friends outside of school.
- \* It appears that Families w/disability are less likely to get support from other family members.

# Why

- \* It appears that social reactions may be negative
- \* Families w/disabilities do not feel as welcomed
- \* Families w/disabilities have less disposable dollars
- \* The energy/time necessary to engage is burdensome
- \* Accessibility of engagement venue
- \* Lack of support to assist in engagement
- \* Families w/disability are more tired

# To this end....

- \* Families need to be supported
- \* Supports need to be both formal and informal
- \* We must assist families in developing more social capital

# 4 Steps to Social Capital

- \* Identify families key areas of interest/affinities
- \* Find the matching cluster/venue in community
- \* Understand how communities behave
- \* Finding a gatekeeper to acceptance

# Gatekeepers

A natural player in a community who has influence on other members. They might be formal or informal players who set the tone for what others do in the community

Key theories – Social Influence/Value juxtaposition



The magic of Social Capital is when similarity overrides difference and creates a bridge. Through this bridge people begin to relate and that synergy promotes an upward effect for all.



Connection with another person takes you deeper into your own soul. Through others we get to know ourselves better. This deeper fulfillment is the fuel that helps us lead a better life as it enlivens our humanness. So connect with others, and do it often!



“What we do with our lives individually is not what determines whether we are a success. What determines our success is how we affect the lives of others”

Albert Schweitzer

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