

ASSET BUILDING IN OUR COMMUNITY (ABC)
Board Minutes - September 23, 2008

Agenda: Combined & open meeting between *ABC Board & ERASE*
Attendance: 14 *ABC Board* Members & 3 *ERASE* Representatives.

Results from the 2nd year of a 3-year survey, reveal that Eaton Rapids suffers a higher percentage of its' youth **using & abusing alcohol** than comparable schools in the this Mid-Michigan area. Much on this concern was communicated in a 90-minute joint-meeting between representatives from the *Eaton Rapids Alliance for Substance Abuse Elimination (ERASE)*, and the *Board for Asset Building in Our Community (ABC)* , as we sought to *understand* the difficulties we face, what we need to *considered*, and any *next steps*.

In some families, teen-drinking is **tolerated**, even **acceptable**, as is child abuse. Can be a 3-generational phenomenon (as *okay*).

Local Beer Distributor observes a **high per capita usage** of alcohol beverages for adults in Eaton Rapids.. **“role-models.”**

Need for a **cultural awakening**, including the scope & risk-implications, recognizing “risk-factors”, and much more.

Need a variety of **alternative venues**, activities & approaches to address “*boredom*,” and other “triggers,” and build on **positives**.

To build “**youth-assets**,” *ABC* offers: “**Strut-Your-Stuff**” (1/24), “**Hobbies Rock!**” (28 hobbyists), “**Project Write!**”, and newly proposed “**SHARE**” (“*Share Assets & Resource Exchange*”) rooms, accessible in each school, and an annual “**Youth Assets & Community Pride Day**.”

Known venues (with challenging activities & healthy relationships) can be “*welcoming*” linkages for kids into “**community assets**.” **SHARE** rooms offer listening, friendship, mentor (tutor) assist, a “rap” group, media/reading materials, referral/link to hobbyists...

We need to encourage a variety of approaches to “*reaching kids,*” and their parents, to **build positive thoughts & self-concepts**. *ERASE* promotes a “common” gathering place to promote success, education, code of conduct, and mutual recognition. Use coaches! Pastor’s church has a paid “*mentor coordinator*” to assist with recruitment, for “one hour, one school, one child,” and parent approval. Child invited to activities at Church, if interested.

How do we build a sense of “**neighborhood**” with kids & parents? Or, how do we find “**common ground**” in our community to bring us together, and ways to express more fully a sense of “**community caring**” for kids & parents?

We decided to **explore** possibilities of a further interface between our two groups, and consider a **joint-letter** to the community, or community groups, to spell-out our concerns, hopes & possibilities.

Minutes by Mary Fraizer, and summarized by Roger Nelson.