

SESSION THIRTEEN

Community Empowerment *Bimaadizi Wiidookaagewin*

SUMMARY:

The session activities will focus on the importance of community empowerment. We will talk about the strengths of our community and how to promote positive change. How can we improve our community, what are the goals of our community, and how can they be achieved?

SESSION OVERVIEW

- **FAMILY: Group Activity**
Community Empowerment Discussion
- **YOUTH: Individual Activities**
Gifts and Values
My Ideal Community
- **PARENT: Group Activity** Promoting Positive
Change Community Strengths Discussion
- **FAMILY: Group Activity**
Scrapbook

OBJECTIVES

By the end of the session, we hope participants will:

1. Understand the importance of community engagement.
2. Understand what "community empowerment" means.
3. Be able to identify community strengths.
4. Be able to identify areas for positive community change.
5. Understand ways to engage in positive community change.

MATERIALS:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Developed Photos | <input type="checkbox"/> Scrapbooks |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Index Cards | <input type="checkbox"/> Scrapbooking Materials |
| <input type="checkbox"/> BZDDD Video: Our Family, Our Culture | <input type="checkbox"/> _____ |

PREPARATION CHECKLIST:

- Ask the Guest Elder to look at the Community Empowerment section on **page 51** of the Adult Workbook to assist with ideas.
- Make sure all family pictures are developed. Group each family's photos into their folder.
- Optional: DVD player or internet connection for BZDDD Our Family, Our Culture Video
- Review and set up the video – test the video before participants arrive.

As the Families Arrive

15 min



Welcome each family as they arrive. Ask any new family members to fill out a name tag and put them on. If the adult who attended last week is not in attendance, they can use the lanyard from the family folder. Give each returning family their workbooks and lanyards as they check in. Have all participants sign the "Session Sign In and Photo Consent" form. Ask the kids to put a sticker on the family Attendance Chart. Hand out an attendance raffle ticket to each child as they sign in. Write their name on the ticket we keep and put it into the Raffle Jar.

While we are waiting for all the families to arrive, kids can take a few minutes to cut out some of their scrapbook coloring pages for pasting into the scrapbooks later.

Meal

30 min

Once all of the families have arrived, introduce the Guest Elder to the group and thank them for attending. Ask a youth participant to offer tobacco (asemaa) to the Guest Elder so that he or she may pray, smudge, and perform an opening prayer and a blessing of the food. After the prayer is complete, let families know where plates, silverware, and beverages may be found and where the garbage cans are located. Remind families to throw away their items and clean up their area after the meal.

Mingle with the families during the meal. Please spread out and sit with the families. After people have finished eating, make sure that the area is cleaned up and ask others to help if necessary. Set aside any leftover food and redirect the group to their seats.

Welcome

5 min

Welcome everyone to the session. Reinforce to the families how important their participation is.

Thank you for spending your time with us. This is the last session before our celebration feast. We have really enjoyed spending time with you all over the past three months and your participation is appreciated.

Ask if there are any questions from last session. The Take Home Activity was **Community Social Support Network** activity. Does anyone want to share what they created? Was everyone able to name at least one person for all the bubbles?



Give raffle tickets to the youth who completed their Take Home Activity. Write their name on the ticket we keep and put it into the Raffle Jar.

Community Empowerment Discussion

15 min

Introduce: building social support at the community level through community empowerment. Lead the group in a brief discussion of what community empowerment is.

In the previous sessions, we have learned ways to solve personal problems and problems within our family. We have talked about how to better handle our stress, problems,

conflicts, and feelings. We have talked about how traditional Anishinabe families and communities worked together to solve problems and get things done. Now we want to discuss how families can use the skills they have learned to help their community.

Community empowerment is the idea that people in a community can become inspired and decide to take action to achieve their own community goals.

One of the most important things about community empowerment is the idea that it takes a decision by people to change things before anything will get done. If people within a community do not believe in the goals or do not want to begin the process of empowering themselves, it will not happen. People are less likely to latch onto and work for an idea if it is not their idea and they are not working on it themselves.

Successful community empowerment depends upon building on the strengths that already exist in the community. It is much easier to build something when the foundation is already in place, than to start completely from scratch.

Can you give some examples of successful community empowerment in our community?

Prompts could include:

1. How did this come about?
2. Was it based on an existing foundation?
3. How is it reflective of the community?
4. How did it reflect cultural values and ideas?
5. Can you give an example of areas where our community can be empowered?
6. How can you use your talents and strengths to contribute to a positive community?
7. What are challenges or barriers to community engagement?
8. What can you do to address those challenges?

Any ideas for community empowerment should reinforce, rather than take away from, community and cultural values and ideas.

Parent and Youth Breakout Activities - 20 Minutes Total Time

Ask parents to split out into a separate group from their children. Direct them to their individual meetings spaces. Let parents and youth know where they will be moving to and how much time they will be splitting up for, we recommend two adjacent rooms so you can easily check on the other group's progress. One facilitator should be with each group. Ask the Guest Elder to stay with the youth for this activity. Adults should move to a different area for the breakout activity.

YOUTH

Gifts and Values

Direct the youth to **page 64** in their Workbooks.

10 min

We have talked about gifts and values before. Today we want to think about how your gifts and values can help your community. We want to think of ways we can help to promote positive change in our community. Let's take a few minutes to complete the worksheet.

Ask the kids to share what their gifts are and how they can help their community.

My Ideal Community

10 min

Direct the youth to **page 65** of their Workbooks labeled **"My Ideal Community."**

This worksheet focuses on the strengths that you can offer to bring positive change in the community. What are strengths in our community that we can build from?

Walk around to see if anyone needs help with ideas or explanations of the ideas discussed. Encourage creative ideas and have the youth try to be as detailed as possible in their drawings. Allow time for the youth to complete the worksheet. After everyone has finished, ask participants to share some of their ideas with the group in the talking circle. Encourage discussion on the different possibilities. Feel free to share some of your own ideas.

Finally, everyone can have a role in empowering their community, no matter what their strengths or weaknesses.

PARENTS

Promoting Positive Change

20 min

Lead a talking circle about ways to promote positive change in our community, including aspects of community empowerment.

- *What are barriers to getting inspired and deciding to change something?*
- *What are aspects of the community that would hinder community empowerment?*
- *How can we work around these?*
- *What are some goals that we have in our community?*
- *How do we help our kids to get engaged?*

Direct the parents to **page 50** of their Workbooks labeled **"Community Strengths."**

This worksheet focuses on the strengths in the community that already exist and can be built upon to create positive change in the community. What are strengths in our community that we can build on?

Every community has collective skills and knowledge. And we have the people and resources that can help create change. What or who are these in our community?

Allow time for participants to complete the worksheet. After everyone has finished, ask the participants to share some of their ideas with the large group. Feel free to share some of your own ideas. Direct parents to **page 51** of their Workbooks labeled **"Community Empowerment."**

This worksheet shows some examples of things we can do to promote empowerment within our community. Although these ideas may work in our community, it is also important to define your own goals and vision for ways to empower our community. What are some ideas that you have that could promote community empowerment?

Allow time for the parents to complete the worksheet. After everyone has finished, ask participants to share some of their ideas with the group in the talking circle. Encourage discussion on the different possibilities. Feel free to share some of your own ideas.

Finally, everyone can have a role in empowering their community, no matter what their strengths or weaknesses. What are different roles people can play in community empowerment? How can a community organize itself to achieve its goals?

Group Gathering

5 min

Gather your families back together for the scrapbooking activity.

Scrapbooking

60 min

Announce that is time for the families to create a scrapbook using materials from throughout the program. Hand out albums and distribute the developed photographs to each family. Put glue, markers, crayons, and other scrapbooking supplies on the tables.

The session activity reflects on our past weeks together. I would encourage you to organize your scrapbook by sessions of the program. You may want to discuss, when putting photos and other items from the program into your scrapbooks, what you learned.

Remind the families when they have 10 minutes left. When the time is up, collect the finished albums for presentation next session at the celebration feast. Have the families clean up their area and throw away any scraps of paper they may have. Collect the scrapbooking supplies.



Optional BZDDD Video: Our Family, Our Culture

You may want to show the short BZDDD video “**Our Family, Our Culture**” so that people can watch while they are working on the scrapbook. Begin the Our Family, Our Culture video either from the BZDDD DVD or online.

Reminiscing

10 min

Lead the group in an activity called “Reminiscing.” Go around the room and have each person finish the following statement:

My favorite part of the Bii-Zin-Da-De-Dah Listening to One Another Program was.....

Announcements and Reminders

5 min

Tell the families how sincerely you appreciate their participation.

I just want to tell you how much we appreciate your participation and how excited we are to have everyone back here for our last session, which will be our Celebration Feast. At our Celebration Feast we will have a Blanket Ceremony and honor all of the work that you have done over the past few months. We encourage you to invite your family and friends to attend, this is a very special night.

Closing

5 min

Tell the families that you appreciate their participation. You may want to ask a family member or Guest Elder to give a closing prayer before ending.

I just want to tell you how much we appreciate your participation and how excited we will be to have everyone back here next session.

We want to especially thank our Guest Elder (Elder's name) _____ for being with us!

Please be sure to put your workbooks and lanyards in your family folders.

Be sure to get your gift cards and sign your receipts!

If you can help straighten up the supplies and the room before you leave, we would really appreciate it.

As people are preparing to leave, be sure to collect the lanyards and the Parent and Youth Workbooks or ask them to put them in their family folder in the plastic facilitator tote.

Have one adult from each family sign the \$20 visa gift card receipt (purple paper) and give them their gift card envelope. Have each eligible child sign the \$10 visa gift card receipt (blue paper) and give them their gift card envelope. Ask the Guest Elder to sign the \$50 visa gift card receipt (white paper) and give them their gift card envelope. Thank participants for their attendance and participation this week.

Complete the brief one-page 'Weekly Session Evaluation' form for your records. Remember to go online to the online fidelity survey <https://tinyurl.com/bzddddeval> to complete the overall weekly session evaluation BEFORE your next session.

Check to make sure that you have picked up all your supplies before leaving. Be sure that the area is clean and tidy. Check all bathrooms and eating areas to be sure that we aren't leaving any messes behind. Turn off lights and locks doors as directed by the facility.