



Community Planning Council

The Community Planning Council was established by Greenwich United Way to encourage the most effective and efficient health and human service delivery system for Greenwich. Comprised of community leaders, nonprofit service professionals, Greenwich United Way board members, and community volunteers, the work of the Planning Council, particularly through its periodic Needs Assessments, has led to the development of some of the Town's most valued programs and institutions.

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Community Planning Council Meeting Thursday 2/21, 8:30 am, Temple Sholom

Children and Youth: Youth Empowerment

Bobby Walker Jr., CEO, Greenwich Boys and Girls Club

According to the Greenwich United Way's Needs Assessment, the community and service providers continue to place a very high priority on meeting the needs of our children and youth. Greenwich has approximately 17,000 children under the age of 20, or about 28% of our population.

Highlights from the Presentation:

The GUW Needs Assessment noted, that with the increasing number of youth in our community, the increased pressures on our youth, and the diminished federal and state funding for agencies serving youth, there is more need than ever to prioritize and coordinate youth services. The CEO from the Greenwich Boys and Girls Club, Bobby Walker Jr., presented on Youth Empowerment.

Mr. Walker explained how youth are involved in the strategic planning and decision-making process at the Boys and Girls Club. An example that he provided was when the Board refused to approve the organizations strategic plan until the youth agreed to it. He spoke about his upbringing and how his work with children and youth have been a critical component of his professional career and personal life, especially with his wife.

He noted the importance of developing youth leadership skills and youth action. He explained the unique and powerful role of youth in Birmingham, Alabama during the Civil Rights Movement. In addition, he noted the importance a female teenager had, during the Flint Water Crisis, to raise awareness and money to address the issue. He provided examples of youth empowerment at the Boys and Girls Club with the Torch Club, Keystone Club and the work of middle school students.

He explained the importance of youth volunteering in their community and how the approach helps to develop the academic, civic, leadership and life skills that young people need to succeed in an increasingly competitive environment.

Mr. Walker encouraged positive youth development, youth advocacy, civic participation and social change and the benefits it can bring to the entire community. He explained the important role that adults can have to help empower youth and create spaces that foster youth empowerment.

Next Community Planning Council Meeting:

Thursday, 3/28, 8:30 am, Windrose Program, Topic: Children and Youth - Education