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www.Culturechangenow.com

# Culture Change in Practice

## Neighborhoods

Wednesday, August 29, 2007  
posted by Steph Kilen at 1:10 PM



*"Culture Change in Practice" is our own weblog where people can become involved in a conversation about Culture Change as it is practiced by professionals in real nursing homes. Feel free to join the conversation, or post a comment about something you have learned on your journey.*

<http://www.culturechangenow.com/weblog/>

We've heard some great news from *Town & Country Health and Rehab in Minden, LA.* (<http://www.townandcountryhealth.com/>). Their **National Night Out** (<http://www.nationalnightout.org/>) celebration won a first place award from Minden's City Council. Each of Town & Country's five neighborhoods had its own celebration. Their participation in National Night Out is a reminder that even if you live in a nursing home, having a sense of community both within the nursing home and in the greater community is essential for identity, meaning, purpose, relationships and, yes, fun.

It has me thinking about neighborhoods (see <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Neighborhood>). Truth is, for many nursing homes, the Neighborhood Model is the way they go. The Neighborhood Model focuses on community, relationships

and a sort of graceful living that comes when the stage is set for spontaneous gatherings and activities. People know each other and look out for each other. (In fact, those operating in the Household Model should not ignore the neighborly relationships between households and with the greater community outside the facility.)

The Neighborhood Model is more than just calling a hallway a "neighborhood." A neighborhood pools its resources to make positive things happen. John McKnight and John Kretzmann of Northwestern University and the Asset Based Community Development Institute have developed a system for neighborhoods to get the most out of what they have. From the website (<http://www.northwestern.edu/ipr/abcd.html>), the ABCD Institute spreads its findings on capacity-building community development in

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## Neighborhoods, *continued*

I have come to depend on and treasure the people in my neighborhood even though we are acquainted just because we happen to live in close proximity. Some of those people are now my dearest friends. If it is possible here, where people leave the neighborhood for hours or even days at a time and can hole up in their own houses for similar periods of time, it can certainly happen in a nursing home.

two ways: (1) through extensive and substantial interactions with community builders, and (2) by producing practical resources and tools for community builders to identify, nurture, and mobilize neighborhood assets.

Once all the resources are out on the table, interdependent relationships can start to take form. This means that everyone – staff, elders, family – both give and receive care and friendship. The Pioneer Network’s Declaration of Interdependence (<http://www.pioneernetwork.net/documents/DeclarationofInterdependence.pdf>) says this: “As human beings, we live by and through cooperation with others- it is out destiny. In spite of the emphasis placed on being independent, in reality we are all interdependent. The nature of our cooperation withy and relationships to others changes as we grow, mature and age. These relationships form the basis of all true communities. Therefore, we seek to understand and possess the skills necessary to be

interdependent in healthy, productive ways.”

I would also humbly recommend the information and activities in the Good Neighbors Action Pact workbook (<http://www.actionpact.com/wb-gn.html>). I wrote it because I happen to live in a thriving neighborhood, Washington Heights (<http://www.wis.net/www.washingtonheights.com/resources.htm>), on Milwaukee’s west side. I have come to depend on and treasure the people in my neighborhood even though we are acquainted just because we happen to live in close proximity. Some of those people are now my dearest friends. If it is possible here, where people leave the neighborhood for hours or even days at a time and can hole up in their own houses for similar periods of time, it can certainly happen in a nursing home.



## Neighborhoods, *continued*

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**Here are just a few facilities operating in the  
Neighborhood Model**

Baltimore, MD

**Levindale**

< <http://www.lifebridgehealth.org/levindale/> >

**Jewish Convalescent**

< <http://www.lifebridgehealth.org/jewishconvalescent/> >

New York, NY

**Elizabeth Seaton Pediatric Center**

<http://www.setonpediatric.org/>

Freeport , IL

**Provena St Joseph**

<[http://www.provena.org/seniors/home\\_stjosephcenter.cfm?id=28](http://www.provena.org/seniors/home_stjosephcenter.cfm?id=28) >

Avilla, IN

**Provena Sacred Heart**

<[http://www.provena.org/seniors/home\\_sacredheart.cfm?id=26](http://www.provena.org/seniors/home_sacredheart.cfm?id=26)>

New York, NY

**Kateri Residence**

< <http://www.chcsnet.org/kateri.html> >

I really encourage you to make community or neighborliness a priority and corner stone in your culture change. It's one of the easiest things you can do to change your culture because it is already there, you just need recognize it and put it to good use. Start with the elders, they'll show you how it's done.