

Unit title: Engaging New Families in Your Community

Time needed to complete unit: 2 hours to understand the concepts in the Community Voices program and to review one new Iowans handbook, to several weeks if Community Voices is implemented in a community.

Why is this important to know: As the demographic profiles of communities change, it is important for programs and services to change to meet residents' needs. Providing opportunities for new residents to learn about community services and gathering their feedback on how to make services most effective for them can strengthen relationships between established and new residents in communities, thus leading to stronger, more sustainable communities.

Objectives/Purpose:

Learners will...

- Become aware of a model used to engage new families in a community.

How to use this information:

6.4.1 Activity 1: Review *Community Voices*, a community-based program for engaging new families in the community. Community Voices is a series of educational meetings designed to enhance the civic understanding and leadership skills of minorities and newly arrived immigrants. New residents plan the program content and the program is conducted in the language of the participants. The program's content typically includes a combination of learning skills about living in a new community, visiting with community leaders about local issues and addressing issues important to the new residents and the community. To learn about Community Voices, visit <http://www.extension.iastate.edu/communities/voices/>

6.4.2 Activity 2: Review one handbook from the Welcoming New Iowans series to gain ideas that are transferable to your community.

<http://www.bcs.uni.edu/idm/newiowans/handbook.htm>

6.4.3 Activity 3: Implement *Community Voices*

Resources:

Supporting materials:

Community Voices

<http://www.extension.iastate.edu/communities/voices/>

Community Voices program is a series of educational meetings designed to enhance the civic understanding and leadership skills of minorities and newly arrived immigrants to Iowa.

Welcoming New Iowans: A guide for Citizens and Communities. Building Respect and Tolerance for Immigrant and Refugee Newcomers

<http://www.bcs.uni.edu/idm/newiowans/handbook.htm>

This series consists of 3 handbooks to serve as resources for individuals and communities. Specific handbooks are designed for:

- Citizens and communities
- Managers and supervisors
- Christians and churches

A companion text for the PBS New Americans series is also available.