

**Practice Name:****Date Created:** 26-May-09**Author:****Last Updated:****Abstract:****GENERAL INFORMATION**

Name of Practice	Community Action Group
Date	26-June-08
Name of Municipality	<a href="#">Town of Penhold</a>
Your Name and Title	De Galesloot, Neighbourhood Place Co-Ordinator
Phone Number	403-886-5464
Fax Number	403-886-5717
E-mail for Practice Contact(s)	<a href="mailto:neighbourhoodplace@townofpenhold.ca">neighbourhoodplace@townofpenhold.ca</a>
Mailing Address	1123 Fleming Avenue Box 565 Alberta T0M 1R0

**DISCLAIMER**

Terms of Use

This site is set up to allow municipalities to share their practices with each other. Information within the municipal practices is provided by municipalities. Information provided is solely for the user's information and is provided strictly as is without warranty of any kind. Alberta Municipal Affairs does not guarantee the accuracy of the practices. The municipal practices should not be relied upon without seeking legal or other professional advice.

Limitation of Liability

The Crown, its agents, employees or contractors (including Alberta Municipal Affairs) shall not be liable to any user for any losses, claims, or damages that may result either directly or indirectly from access to or any reliance upon the information contained within the municipal practices or information provided at any other site that can be accessed from this site.

Copyright

The copyright in the information within the municipal practices belongs to the municipality that submitted the practice to the Municipal Excellence Web site. The user should contact the municipality who posted the materials for permission to use or reproduce the materials.

[Click here for the site disclaimer](#)

**THE ISSUE****Abstract:**

What is the practice you developed or are developing (brief abstract)?

Please briefly describe the final practice developed. (e.g. if you developed a new Council agenda, list the agenda items, or if a new communications plan was created,

provide a summary of the plan's goals, objectives and highlights.)

The practice that has been developed within the Community Action Group is the art of bringing all areas of the community together to one table to discuss solutions to potential problems, community needs, and how to best address the issues within the community.

This group has come about because the Town of Penhold has made it a priority to link the schools of the community with other organizations that make up the Town. Businesses within town and programs supported or developed by Family & Community Support Services, Neighbourhood Place, Recreation & Events and the Town of Penhold Council, the relationship has bloomed into one of complete cooperation. The schools and the other groups share resources and facilities. This partnership has provided the community with programs that are more common in larger communities.

In the winter of 2006, the issues of bullying and substance abuse emerged as key issues for the children of the community. Community dialogue was generated through two open discussion sessions, and then a core group was formed (called the Community Action Group) comprised of school officials and community stakeholders, to create a seamless and collaborative community/school approach to these issues.

January 2008 the Community Action Group hosted a Decadent Dessert Night to share the newly developed Social Development Plan and invite others to join the Community Action Group. The evening was very well attended with great community spirit coming together as well.

Another very awesome item to come from the Community Action Group is the Penhold S-H-A-R-E-S motto in which it is our vision all things in Penhold will be based on. Running of businesses, schools, programming and so forth. Penhold S-H-A-R-E-S we feel is values to live by. S - upportive H - ealthy A - ccepting R - esponsible E - veractive S - afe (poster attached). Our Social Development Plan

**Need:**

Please describe (just a couple of sentences or bullet points) why you needed to create this practice (policy or process).

What issue made it necessary? (e.g. “We needed a comprehensive plan to deal with...”, or “We needed an annual forecasting tool because...”)

The Community Action Group was formed when the issue of bullying & substance abuse became very evident within our Town. The issue was how to approach these very significant topics affecting everyone in our community and how these should or could be addressed as a whole instead of each area in town doing something different.

Since its inception, the Community Action Group still functions in this manner with monthly meetings and looking at the community as a whole. The Group is currently working on a Communications Plan as a way to better get information out to the community and incorporate Penhold S-H-A-R-E-S (Supportive, Healthy, Accepting, Responsible, Ever-active, Safe).

**CREATING YOUR PRACTICE****Research:**

How did you obtain information to help design your practice (including consultation with stakeholders, formal and informal research)?

Please include any research documentation you can share, or give us a source reference (e.g. Web site, literature, “We reviewed the bylaws from other municipalities in the area...”).

We held two open community discussion forums, attended by stakeholders such as municipal leaders, community services agencies, service providers, RCMP, School Division Officials, School Administrators, AADAC, David Thompson Health Region, Child & Family Services Authority, parents, youth and children. To date, these representatives still remain part of the Community Action Group along with many community members and businesses.

Initial research was done through Internet and discussion with experts in these fields. David Thompson Health Region sent in School Health Facilitators to assist with gathering anecdotal (anonymous) information from students, and show various curriculums and approaches that the schools and community may consider. Child and Family Services Authority sent a Family Violence and Bullying Facilitator to present information on this issue. AADAC did a presentation regarding the types of drugs we may see in our community and how to recognize signs of substance abuse.

The Community Action Group continues to work together as a Team and as things come up look to each other and our base of support for guidance and information.

**Process:**

How did you go about designing your practice? For instance, did you create a team, hire a consultant, borrow something ready-made from another jurisdiction?

Describe briefly who did the design work and what process they followed.

1) Penhold Neighbourhood Place received feedback from community members regarding these issues.

2) Penhold Neighbourhood Place gathered in key stakeholders, experts, community members and community groups.

3) The Town of Penhold and Penhold Neighbourhood Place invited the David Thompson Health Region's Healthy Communities Initiative regional facilitator to work with the community in developing a master Social Development Plan.

4) A core group (the Community Action Group) was formed based on those with passion for these issues and a key stake in the community.

The Community Action Group continues to work to enhance community life in Penhold and solidify a seamless, collaborative approach to issues affecting children, youth and families in the community.

## GETTING APPROVAL FOR YOUR PRACTICE

### Authority:

Whose/what approval did you need to create and implement the practice?

To implement the practice the approval of the Town of Penhold Council was required as well as the support of the local school administrators, along with the cooperation of the respective service providers, and the participation of children, youth and families.

### Reporting:

How did you inform the decision-maker(s) about the practice and your need for their approval?

Please note the name of any documents provided to the decision-makers that you would be willing to share.

To inform the decision-makers the following was done:

- \* Presentations were made at meetings
- \* Dialogue occurred with the partners on an ongoing basis
- \* Action Plans were developed
- \* Community Stakeholders were kept abreast of all developments and action plans

### Consultation:

Did you consult with stakeholders as part of your approval process?

If so, how? If possible, attach a copy of templates, surveys or other documents you used as part of your consultation.

The Town of Penhold consulted with the respective committees of the organizations involved to identify:

- \* Priorities/visions
- \* Roles
- \* Strategies
- \* Outcomes

**IMPLEMENTING YOUR PRACTICE****Plan:**

Describe the process you went through to implement the practice. If you used an implementation plan, please note it here.

The core group was formed in June of 2006 under the leadership of the Healthy Communities Initiative.

The Healthy Communities Initiative model includes a gathering phase (during which interested community members come together, build relationships and establish the core rationale), planning phase (involving creating a community vision, recognizing local strengths, knowledge and abilities, identifying key priorities and developing action plans) and action phase (when the group acts on identified priorities, evaluates success and celebrates!).

**Policy:**

What changes to bylaws, regulations or procedures were needed to implement this practice and how did you deal with them?

No changes of this nature have been required to date.

Please attach a copy of the change in bylaw, policy or procedure.

However, our Social Development Plan has been developed and adopted by the Town of Penhold Council and will be used in future strategic planning for the Town.

**When:**

When did your municipality begin to use the practice? Was it implemented all at once or in stages?

The first community meeting to address these specific issues was held in March of 2006, however the relationship between the schools and the municipality has been cultivated over the years.

These relationships continue to date.

**Who:**

Who was responsible for implementing the practice?

The implementation of the practice was led by the municipality, Penhold School administrators, Penhold Neighbourhood Place, the various service providers and community volunteers. Each individual project and action requires a unique blend of leadership and cooperation.

If someone else is responsible for ongoing management, who is it?

**RESOURCES REQUIRED****Budget:**

How much did it cost you to design and implement your practice (i.e. We saved/spent \$XX per year)?

The Community Action Group will be seeking funding and sponsorship to assist with various components of the identified actions. We do not have an identified total cost at this time.

What are your ongoing operational and capital costs, if any?

Community members volunteer their time.

**Staff:**

What human resources did you need to design, implement and manage your practice? (e.g. “It took X staff member (s) X months on this” or “This is part of normal staff duties.”)

The leadership and gathering was coordinated by Penhold Neighbourhood Place

- \* Healthy Communities Initiative (DTHR) provided a facilitator for community discussions and Community Action Group.
- \* David Thompson Health Region provided School Health Facilitators.
- \* RCMP provided a member to be part of the discussion and the core group (currently in transition due to transfer).
- \* Chinook's Edge School Division officials.
- \* DTHR Health Promotion Facilitator.
- \* Town of Penhold Mayor.
- \* Special Constable.
- \* Family & Community Support Services Worker.
- \* Recreation & Events Worker.
- \* Penhold Parent Link Co-ordinator.
- \* Penhold School Principal.
- \* Jessie Duncan Elemenatry School Vice Principal.
- \* Other service providers involved include:
  - ^ Penhold & District Public Library,
  - ^ Innisfail Big Brothers & Big Sisters,
  - ^ Community Members at large.

Note : all of the above noted people all actively participate at the Community Action Group table on a monthly basis. To date, we have all been able to incorporate these into our normal staff duties.

In the future we hope to get more business people to the table.

**Infrastructure:**

What “capital costs” (such as information technology, other equipment or building assets) did you need to design, implement, manage, and/or evaluate your practice?

There have not been any capital costs identified to date.

When our Communication Plan is finalized there will be some costs at that time which we hope to locate funding for.

**EVALUATING YOUR PRACTICE****Formal:**

If you did a formal evaluation (e.g. user satisfaction survey, analysis of annual expenditures or number of rate

payers served) for your practice, please describe the evaluation tool and the process used.

Tell us who was involved.

**Informal:**

If you did an informal evaluation, describe what you did (such as discussing the practice with people in the office or on the street, or letters/comments received).

**Performance measures:**

Please list the performance measures for this practice (i.e. reduced number of complaints, money saved, or change in equipment life expectancy.)

Please list the process you used for measuring performance, (i.e. We do annual surveys on...) examples include:

- collecting data
- establishing a baseline
- applying the measures
- results
- follow up

**Changes:**

(a) Based on the evaluation (formal or informal), describe any changes you have made, or would like to make, to your practice as a result. (e.g. "After implementing this practice, we decided that it would be better if...")

-or-

(b) Has your practice met your expectations and if so, how?

This group will do a self review on an annual basis, as well as submitting to regular reviews by town council, and community feedback.

Discussion between the partners of the programs is ongoing to determine the success of each program.

Outcome measurement will include:

- \* Group self review and evaluation,
- \* Town council review and feedback,
- \* Community feedback (through survey and open dialogue).

At this point in time no changes need to be made. The practice is deemed effective and considered an asset to the community and is a go to area for when community conversation needs to occur.

**LESSONS LEARNED / BENEFITS RECEIVED**

**Benefits:**

What are the benefits of this practice to your municipality? (eg. Preparation of Council agenda packages now requires less time, etc.)

The benefits to the Town of Penhold are huge with regards to the formation of the Community Action Group. By the whole town working together it makes us a very a unified community as a whole.

Together we function as a strong unit and when specific issues need to be addressed then we can come together to work through the requirements.

The outcome of this special relationship has been a community that is working towards meeting the needs of its children, youth, and families. All parties involved have been impacted favorably and a positive community spirit has been fostered. A community working together can achieve anything.

The practice has provided:

- \* All partners with support,
- \* Community members with services that larger communities have,
- \* Children, youth, and families of Penhold with a positive way of spending their free time.

### Key Lessons:

What key lessons have you/your municipality learned through the process of:

- designing;
- obtaining approval;
- implementing; and
- evaluating your practice?

Include any problems, surprises, and unanticipated benefits. (e.g. “We realized that we needed to spend more time...”)

The key lessons that the Town of Penhold learned in designing this practice is the importance of:

- \* Giving users of the programs input in the design process,
- \* Planning,
- \* Clear and open communication,
- \* Identifying the roles,
- \* Gathering resources,
- \* Getting the users to buy into the services and feel a sense of ownership,
- \* Working together to achieve a strong sense of belonging and importance in the community you live in,
- \* All of those involved knowing they are important and their opinion matters.

### Advice to Municipal Peers:

What advice would you give to another municipality that is considering adopting your practice? Is there anything you might have done differently?

It is important to have clear, open communication, and honour and respect among all partners involved in the practice. It is key to get the users involved in the design of the programs and it is a good idea to establish a good working relationship with all partners prior to beginning the projects.

Since the Community Action Group has been formed, a new sense of working together has been formed. Whether it be the sharing of space for example the Drop-In Centre for a Safe-at-Home Course or the school gym for adult volleyball, or the other school gym for a Parent / Child Information Fair evening while these did happen before, they seem to be less of a hurdle now that we work closer together. The formation of the Community Action Group has taught us all that in a small community our issues are not all that different no matter where you may work in town. It is awesome to be part of the community in such a way that I am welcome in both schools just to be there as well as the Drop-In Centre and by getting to know those in your community it makes it a whole lot smaller place to be with a sense of security and pride going along with it.

## PRACTICE UPDATES

### New Information:

There may be some new information to add since this practice was first posted. This is especially true if:

- a new process has been implemented in your municipality;
- there are new practice evaluation results; or
- there has been a change affecting organizational direction. For example, explain how new economic conditions or a new vision/strategy affect the practice.

Please indicate those changes here. Don't forget to list any new documents that may be useful to your peers. Then go to "Other Information" to attach the new documents.

Business participation has always been welcome at the Community Action Group table but it has only been thought to be more of a service provider area. Now with the completion of the Social Development Plan, it is our hope that as we finalize our Communication Plan and get it out to all corners of Penhold that more businesses will take an active role in the Community Action Group.

The adoption of Penhold S-H-A-R-E-S by all those in town will have astounding results on all of those who live, play and go to school in this amazing little community.

Stay tuned.

**OTHER INFORMATION****Suggestions:**

Please list relevant information sources that others might use or you would be willing to share (courses, Web sites, literature, experts).

**Documents & Attachments:**

Please attach (using the "Browse" button below) any documents you would be willing to share with others interested in your practice (e.g. a bylaw, a policy, approval documents, templates).

\* Note: If you do not have an electronic copy of a document, please send Municipal Excellence a paper copy for scanning to:

Alberta Municipal Affairs  
Municipal Excellence Network  
17th Floor, Commerce Place  
10155-102 Street  
Edmonton, AB  
T5J 4L4

**Nominations:**

Do you have any suggestions of other individuals or municipalities with municipal practices that we should add to the Municipal Excellence network? Please list their practice, municipality, and contact information.

Or, e-mail [menet@gov.ab.ca](mailto:menet@gov.ab.ca) and let us know about a municipal colleague that has a really good way of doing things.

Social Development Plan - Town of Penhold  
Community Action Group - Decadent Dessert Nite - January 2008  
Social Development Plan Powerpoint - Decadent Dessert Nite - January 2008  
Preventing Vandalism & Theft in Your Community - Community Awareness Nite - June 24, 2008  
Penhold SHARES Poster

**COMMENTS**

Have we missed something; anything you'd like to add to the areas we have touched on, or an area we have not mentioned?