

NEO CANDO

In Practice

DEMONSTRATING THE NEED FOR COMMUNITY SERVICES

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Cleveland contributes to the positive development of communities and neighborhoods by providing area youth with supportive, caring role models. Through this model, which has been supported by research, the positive relationship between youth and their mentors will have long term, desirable, and positive impacts on the life of the youth by "increasing their self-confidence, improving their academic performance, and reaching their highest potential."

Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Cleveland supports approximately 1,000 matches annually, primarily in their community based program where youth meet with their mentor four to eight hours each month. The agency also has site-based programs where matches meet at a school, organization, agency, or other location.

Rebecca Kodysh, Director of Site-Based Mentoring and Research for Big Brothers Big Sisters of Greater Cleveland (BBBS-GC), is responsible for partnership development, program development, supervision, and grants management at the agency. She works with others in the communities that the agency serves to find unique, innovative, and effective ways to meet the specific needs of youth in the service area.

Rebecca uses NEO CANDO to demonstrate the need for services and programs in specific neighborhoods of Cleveland. Recently, Rebecca submitted a proposal to the Women's Community Foundation, seeking funding for an all girls site-based mentoring program in the Hough Neighborhood. The program is administered in partnership with Footprints, "an all-girls program that helps girls reach their fullest potential through activities that focus on self-respect, life endeavors, community, and the arts."

NEO CANDO was used in the grant proposal to give the funder a snapshot of the conditions in the neighborhood that suggest a need for increased mentoring relationships, and to justify a program focused on girls. Rebecca used NEO CANDO to compare the total poverty rate in the Hough neighborhood to that of Cuyahoga County, to show the child poverty rate for the neighborhood, to report that a high percentage of juvenile offenses committed in the neighborhood were committed by females, and that a high percentage were committed by youth ages 10-14. Using U.S. Census data, in combination with NEO CANDO data, Rebecca was able to estimate that there are approximately 2,754 girls living in the Hough neighborhood.

Rebecca needed to assess the social and economic conditions in Cleveland's Ward 1 to prepare a Needs Statement for a school-based mentoring program focused on males. Using NEO CANDO, she found the poverty and child poverty rates for the Ward, as well as the number of single parent households with children under the age of 18. She also researched the number of juvenile delinquency offenses, the number of the offenses committed by males, and the number committed by African American youth in both the City of Cleveland and within Ward 1. Additionally, the NEO CANDO data indicated that the area has a higher percentage of high school dropouts than the county, as well as data showing that only 6.5 percent of residents in Ward 1 held a bachelors degree. All of which can be seen as indicators for the need to develop a mentoring program in Ward 1.

Using the data from NEO CANDO, the staff at BBBS-GC is developing a program where African American high school juniors and seniors at John F. Kennedy High School would mentor boys at 5 area elementary schools, providing children with positive role-models. This program would also have a focus on character and life skills development for the mentors.

Rebecca Kodysh



Big Brothers Big Sisters - Greater Cleveland

Examples of NEO CANDO data cited to show community need for BBBS-GC services

Total Population Poverty Rates

Child Poverty Rates

Juvenile Delinquency Offenses broken down by gender, age

Educational Attainment

Population By Age

Population By Gender

Population by Race

Single Parent Households

All data for specific geographies (neighborhoods and wards)



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