



In the summer of 2004, Youth Professionals and Regional Extension Educators in Community Youth Development were asked to prepare case studies regarding community efforts to coordinate out-of-school time programs. This is an introduction to the project.

Introduction

Welcome to Minnesota from the perspective of out-of-school time program coordination efforts.

There are a myriad number of roads, bridges, and utilities that make up the infrastructure of cities, towns, and communities across Minnesota. As drivers and consumers, we are aware that this infrastructure provides services and allows us to navigate in and across communities.

A less visible infrastructure is the one that supports the youth programs and opportunities in a community. This infrastructure impacts the availability of opportunities for young people. Some of the elements of this infrastructure are public will, funding, transportation, marketing, and coordination between youth-serving organizations and agencies.

About the Communities

Ten case studies, prepared by Youth Professionals in Community Youth Development, provide a view of the infrastructures in communities that underlay youth opportunities. These case studies illustrate the uniqueness of communities and the highlight the many aspects of coordination efforts.

In **Lyle**, you will see the strength of public will; **Mankato** has the vision of impacting accessibility; **PACT 4 Communities** coordinate beyond community to utilize the resources of the region; **Duluth** builds on the strength of a critical mass of agencies with similar work; **Frogtown** has invested thought and resources in a structure that makes a difference; **Rochester** has noted the importance of a plan; **Lewiston** recognizes communication needs at several levels; in **Murray County** there is an awareness of the community as a whole; in **Marshall**, the importance of leadership is articulated; and the experiences in **Hoffman** highlight flexibility and new ways of thinking.

Invitation

We invite you to read the case studies and look under the surface of ten Minnesota communities at their efforts to provide more for their young people.