Using Photovoice to Engage Young People in a Community Needs Assessment

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Overview of Session

- What is Photovoice?
- Steps in Photovoice
- Group activity
- Wrap-up/debrief
What is Photovoice?

- A participatory action research method that uses photography to enable people to identify, represent and enhance their community (Wang, 1999).
  - The pictures can then be used to facilitate discussion the realities of the photographers’ lived environment and ultimately lead to social change.

- In 1992, Wang and Burris developed Photovoice based on the notion of “critical consciousness” Freire
  - A deep understanding of the way the world works and how society, politics, and power relationships affect one’s own situation
  - Using photography to bring about social change
Photovoice 5 main concepts (Wang & Burris, 1997)

- Images teach
- Pictures can influence policy
- Community members ought to participate in creating and defining the images that shape healthful public policy
- The process requires that planners bring policy makers and other influential people to the table to serve as an audience
- Photovoice emphasizes individual and community action

Three main goals

- To enable people to record and reflect their community’s strengths and concerns through taking photographs;
- To promote critical dialogue and knowledge about important issues through discussion of their photographs; and
- To reach policy makers through public forums and showings of photographs (Wang & Burris, 1994; Wang, 1999).

Photovoice 7 Steps

- Planning the needs assessment
- Camera training
- Photo assignment
- Photo discussions
- Analysis and member checking
- Photo “art show”
- Dissemination
Step 1 - Planning the needs assessment

- How will you recruit youth?
- Informed consent/assent needed? (oral or written)
- Are there any issues with using photography?
  - Cultural or religious issues that make it appropriate to take photos or be in photos?
- Do youth know how to use a camera?
- Who will be photographed (if people will be photographed, will you need their consent)?
- How will you maintain confidentiality/anonymity of people who appear in pictures (if necessary)?
- How will the photographs be used? (conferences etc.)
- How will participants use photos to engage in the discussion?
- How will you reach policy and decision makers?
- Do you have money to pay a graduate student to help?
Step 2 - Camera Training

- Have participants meet in a group for camera training!
  - Parts of the camera
  - How to protect it - keep away from water, sand etc.
  - Do not put fingers on the lens
  - Stand at least 3 feet from the subject
  - Keep sun behind you when outside
  - When in doubt, use the flash
  - Stand still when taking pictures
  - Do not remove film from disposable camera and advance film if needed
  - Others can take the picture for you as long as you are the one deciding what should be in the picture
Step 3 - Photo Assignment

- This is what you are asking your participants to do!

- I want you to take 12 pictures that illustrate “things that make you feel healthy in your life”

- I want you to take 12 pictures that illustrate “things that make you feel unhealthy in your life”
Step 4 - Photo Discussion Methods

- Conduct interviews and/or focus groups with the participants
  - Interviews are good for sensitive information, but take a long time to complete
  - Focus groups are good for gaining lots of information quickly (6-8 people is best), but need to have a trained focus group leader and at least one other person present to take notes
  - Make sure and audiotape or videotape the interviews and focus groups as well as take notes
  - Ask participants to select 2 pictures to represent “things that make them feel healthy” and 2 represent “things that make them feel unhealthy”
    - Ask the participant about their specific pictures
    - If in a focus group setting, then you could ask others to comment on the pictures as well
### Step 4 - Photo Discussions - SHOWED

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>See</th>
<th>What do we literally SEE in the photograph?</th>
<th>Start with the concrete. Literally describe the photograph.</th>
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I had a hard time financially. First of all, I had gotten laid off from my job and I had insurance but once they laid me off I would have to pay $150 a month to have that insurance. So I didn’t have the money to hold on to it. Then I was diagnosed with breast cancer. I had been saving cans before breast cancer but after I got breast cancer it was more important that I save them – financially. So that’s the reason I saved the cans, financially for my medication. And the cans were some support. And friends that heard about me saving the cans, they gave me cans to help support me.
See - Literally, what are you seeing in this picture?
- What objects, colors, things in the picture stand out for you?
- If you telephoned a friend, how would you describe what the pictures looks like to him or her?

Happening - What is happening in the picture?
- When we see the cans the survivor collected, what is really happening?
- How do you think the survivor felt about having to collect cans to pay for her medications?
- How do you think she felt about having to accept help from her friends?

Our - How does this relate to our lives?
- How have you felt when circumstances put you (or someone close to you) in a difficult financial bind?
- Is this a common situation? Could this happen to others? Who?

Why - Why does this issue exist?
- What makes it difficult for some survivors to pay for their cancer-related expenses?
- How does this affect our community when some people do not have the resources to pay all of their expenses?
- Who or what is responsible for perpetuating this situation?

Evaluation/Empowerment - How can we become empowered with our new social understanding?
- What insights does this offer us about the issues some survivors face?
- How are we part of the problem?
- How can we be part of the solution?

Do - What can we do to address these issues?
- What strategies can we come up with to help assure that survivors are able to afford cancer-related expenses?
- How might we advocate for survivors who are having a difficult time with their financial situations?
Activity

Designing questions using SHOWED
Why not drop the trash in the canals? Everyone else does it. Plus, its not like there is any other place to put the trash. There are no receptacles, and if there are, they are always overflowing. Trash is never picked up when its supposed to be. I remember when I was younger and the canals were clean and beautiful. I wish we could get back to those days.
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Step 5 - Analysis and Member Checking

- **Content analysis**
  - Look for themes and group together (coding)
    - By photo assignment (barriers and facilitators)
    - By question asked
  - Can be done by hand or using software (Nudist, NVivo) etc.
  - If you hired a graduate student, have them assist with the analysis
  - Focus on content that tells a story about the lives of the participants
  - Policy makers like numbers, but they also like good stories - use emotional appeals

- **Member checking**
  - Make sure you bring the results back to the participants to make sure that you are accurately representing their words
Step 6 - Art Show

- Display the pictures taken by the participants at an “art show”
  - Select 2 pictures, along with quotes for each participant

- Hold the art show in a community space - library or community center
- Invite the participants and their families
- Invite influential advocates - local policy and decision makers and health providers
  - Funders, mayor, gatekeepers, youth educators, church leaders, health officials, academic faculty
- Invite the media - newspaper, radio and TV
Step 7 - Dissemination

- Who else needs to know the results of your needs assessment?
- Where will the information be presented?
  - Presentations at conference
  - White paper
  - Publications
  - Speaking in public forums
  - Newsletters
  - Websites
Group Activity

- Time to practice what you learned!
  - Partner up with one other person (make sure one person has a smart phone)
    - Take pictures of things here in Baker center:
      - Facilitate health
      - Act as barriers to health
    - Other person will create questions to interview photographer
  - Take 10 minutes to do this and then return to the room with your partner!
Debrief

- What was the most challenging in this activity? Why?
- What was the most enjoyable? Why?
- What would you have done differently? Why?
Questions!

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References

