



## Celebrating 10 Years of the Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice

Over the last 10 years the Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice (GJCPP) has worked to provide high quality and practical information on community practice with the commitment to engage and expand the practice community and its broader social impact. The GJCPP offers community practitioners of a variety of backgrounds and professional affiliations a new opportunity for collaborative development, to increase skills, and to exchange information, ideas and resources. During the past 10 years the GJCPP has had over 30K users from across the world take advantage of the resources and content published. To celebrate the 10th anniversary of the GJCPP we are proud to highlight a compilation of the 10 most popular<sup>1</sup> articles, editorials, tools and issues from 2010 - 2020:

### 1. Theories in the Field of Community Psychology

**Author(s):** Leonard A. Jason, Ed Stevens, Daphna Ram, Steven A. Miller, Christopher R. Beasley, and Kristen D. Gleason.

**Abstract:** In this article, we review some of the key attributes of useful theories and assess whether these attributes are present in several prominent Community Psychology theories. The field of Community Psychology often deals with complex systems and attempts to create change through the use of multiple mechanisms. It has provided researchers new ways of thinking about contextual factors and how participants could be more involved in research efforts. However, this field has encountered significant challenges in testing and evaluating theories that involve system-level environmental change. It has struggled to establish consensus when operationally defining criteria and when creating reliable instruments for measuring theoretical constructs. We conclude that Community Psychology theories have tended to function as frameworks, which indicate important elements to examine, but do not specify relationships that can be used for explanation and are, therefore, too broad to make the types of predictions characteristic of science. Because Community Psychology theories have often served as orienting frameworks, there needs to be more discussion about their usefulness, and whether community psychologists can develop more rigorous and specific theories. This has implications for formulating various practices and for discussions about how future research can better inform theory

**Recommended Citation:** Jason, L.A., Stevens, E., Ram, D., Miller, S.A., Beasley, C.R., Gleason, K. (2016). Theories in the field of community psychology. *Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice*, 7(2), 1 – 27. Retrieved Day/Month/Year, from (<http://www.gjcpp.org/>).

**To read more visit:** <https://www.gjcpp.org/en/article.php?issue=22&article=125>

<sup>1</sup> "Most popular" content derived from Google analytics data provided for the gjcpp.org website.

2. Using Social Media as a Tool to Complement Advocacy Efforts

**Author(s):** J. Taylor Scott and J’Vonnah Maryman

**Abstract:** Community practitioners must leverage a variety of tools in order to promote and advocate for social change. Social media are relatively innovative tools for informing and mobilizing communities in an advocacy effort. As part of a coordinated effort, social media align well with the principles of community psychology by enabling individuals to contribute to participatory dialogue about social issues, collaborate on change efforts, and establish a sense of community. These tools can enhance supporters’ advocacy engagement and can help sustain efforts in the midst of inevitable challenges. However, social media alone are not sufficient for promoting social change, but should be used to enhance traditional organizing strategies. In addition to synthesizing literature across empirical and practitioner (e.g., communication consultants) sources, real-world examples are provided to illustrate how social media can enhance advocacy efforts. This article presents findings from an extensive literature review to serve as a resource for community practitioners on ways to enhance advocacy efforts with social media.

**Recommended Citation:** Scott, J.T., & Maryman, J. (2016)/ Using Social Media as a Tool to Complement Advocacy Efforts. *Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice*, 7 (1S), 1 – 22. Retrieved Day/Month/Year, from (<http://www.gicpp.org/>).

**To read more visit:** <https://www.gicpp.org/en/article.php?issue=21&article=121>

3. Phenomenon of Interest, Framework, or Theory? Building Better Explanations in Community Psychology.

**Author(s):** Jennifer Watling Neal

**Abstract:** Theories are a fundamental part of research. They provide guidance for the development of research questions and testable hypotheses as well as inform study methods and designs. However, in this issue, Jason, Stevens, Ram, Miller, Beasley, and Gleason (2016) raise important questions including: Are prominent “theories” in community psychology really theories? How useful are these “theories” for developing specific predictions and testable hypotheses? And, how can the field continue to develop and test theories that promote its agenda of social change? To answer these questions, Jason et al. (2016) identify and evaluate three “prominent theories” in community psychology – the ecological perspective (Kelly, 1968), psychological sense of community theory (Sarason, 1974), and empowerment (Rappaport, 1981). Based on their evaluation, they “conclude that community psychology theories have tended to function as frameworks” (p. 2). That is, these “theories” provide general guidance for what elements to study but fall short of offering specific predictions about the relationships between these elements. Jason et al (2016) conclude that the lack of predictive and explanatory theories in community psychology hinders progress in both the research development of explanatory mechanisms of social change as well as practice initiatives to promote social change.

**Recommended Citation:** Neal, J.W. (2016). Phenomenon of Interest, Framework, or Theory? Building Better Explanations in Community Psychology. *Global Journal of*

*Community Psychology Practice*, 7(2), 1 – 6. Retrieved Day/Month/Year, from (<http://www.gjcpp.org/>).

**To read more visit:** <https://www.gjcpp.org/en/article.php?issue=22&article=132>

4. Tearless Logic Model

**Author(s):** Ashlee D. Lien, Justin P. Greenleaf, Michael K. Lemke, Sharon M. Hakim, Nathan P. Swink, Rosemary Wright and Greg Meissen

**Abstract:** Even among people who know and have seen the value of logic models, the term can “strike fear into the hearts” of experienced community psychologists and veteran non- profit staff and board members alike. Add the phrase “outcome-based planning” and you are likely to energize those you are working with to run as fast as possible for the door. Such technical terms may confuse and intimidate community members and grassroots partners who are the foundation of the practice of community psychology. At the same time, organizations can benefit from time spent on outcome-based planning, especially in developing a well-conceived logic model.

**Recommended Citation:** Lien, A.D., Greenleaf, J.P., Lemke, M.K., Hakim, S.M., Swink, N.P., Wright, R., & Meissen, G. (2011). Tearless Logic Model. *Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice*, 2(2), 1 – 12. Retrieved Day/Month/Year, from (<http://www.gjcpp.org/>).

**To read more visit:** <https://www.gjcpp.org/en/tool.php?issue=7&tool=9>

5. Ten Places Where Collective Impact Gets It Wrong (Editorial)

**Author(s):** Tom Wolff

**Abstract:** In this article, I articulate ten important issues and concerns which Collective Impact fails to adequately acknowledge, understand, and address. These failings have serious consequences for the engaged communities. I welcome the community of activists and scholars who are engaged in coalitions, partnerships, and collaboratives to react, disagree and/or to add to the list of concerns.

**Recommended Citation:** Wolff, T. (2016). Ten Places Where Collective Impact Gets It Wrong. *Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice*, 7(1), 1 – 11. Retrieved Day/Month/Year, from (<http://www.gjcpp.org/>).

**To read more visit:**

<https://www.gjcpp.org/en/resource.php?issue=21&resource=200>

6. The Living Room, a Community Crisis Respite Program: Offering People in Crisis an Alternative to Emergency Departments

**Author(s):** Michelle Heyland, Courtney Emery, and Mona Shattell

**Abstract:** Objective: To describe The Living Room, a community crisis respite center that offers individuals in crisis an alternative to obtaining services in an emergency department (ED). Methods: This article describes the problems individuals in a mental



encounter in traditional EDs and explains how The Living Room addresses these problems. The Living Room's development, setting, staffing and procedures are described in order to promote increased use of this type of program. Results: In its first year of operation, The Living Room hosted 228 visits by 87 distinct individuals (termed "guests"). Guests were deflected from EDs on 213 of those visits – a 93% deflection rate. These deflections represent a savings of approximately \$550,000 to the State of Illinois since guests of The Living Room are overwhelmingly individuals with Medicaid or no insurance of any kind. On 84% (n=192) of the occurrences in which guests were deflected from EDs, they alleviated their crises sufficiently to decide to leave The Living Room and return to the community.

These guests reported an average decrease of 2.13 points on the Subjective Units of Distress Scale. Conclusions: Community crisis respite centers such as The Living Room represent an important alternative to EDs by remedying many criticisms of traditional EDs made by individuals in crisis. Outcomes from The Living Room's first year of operation suggest that community crisis respite centers are cost-effective, effective in helping many individuals alleviate crises, and have the potential to decrease the use of EDs for mental health crisis.

**Recommended Citation:** Heyland, M., Emery, C., & Shattell, M. (2013). The Living Room, a Community Crisis Respite Program: Offering People in Crisis an Alternative to Emergency Departments. *Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice*, 4(3), 1 – 8. Retrieved Day/Month/Year, from (<http://www.gjcpp.org/>).

**To read more visit:** <https://www.gjcpp.org/en/article.php?issue=15&article=74>

#### 7. Academic Performance in Middle School: Friendship Influences

**Author(s):** Lisette T. Jacobson and Charles A. Burdsal

**Abstract:** The results of the Peer/Performance Relationship Study build on previous research findings demonstrating relational significance of peer influences to academic performance during adolescence. Whereas family, teachers, and friends play a significant

role in a student's academic career, extant literature about the relational dynamics between peers and academic achievement remains scarce. This study evaluated social support and negative interchanges in relation to self-reported grades in reading, mathematics, social studies, and science. Additionally, students' gender, race, and perception of a friend's level of school interest were measured. The sample consisted of 321 participants in the 6th, 7th, and 8th grade from three medium-sized suburban, public middle schools in the Midwest.

Social support and negative interchanges were measured by scales of the Network of Relationships Inventory. Academic performance was measured as a grade point average of the scores for the four academic subjects. Results support the hypothesis that adolescents' relationships with peers influence academic performance.

Specifically, the study's outcome demonstrates that social support was significantly and positively related to academic performance. Negative interchanges were not significantly related to academic performance. A positive correlation was found between level of school interest and academic performance. Furthermore, gender differences were found among social support, negative interchanges, and academic

performance. There were no statistical differences for race. Altogether, these results are consistent with previous research findings and provide evidence for the importance of adolescent friendships and their impact on academic performance.

**Recommended Citation:** Jacobson, L.T., & Brudsal, C.A. (2012). Academic Performance in Middle School: Friendship Influences. *Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice*, 2(3), 1 – 12. Retrieved Day/Month/Year, from (<http://gjcopp.org/>).

**To read more visit:** <https://www.gjcopp.org/en/article.php?issue=8&article=31>

8. The Community Tool Box, a Comprehensive Toll and a Sample of What You Will Find There: Community Assessment Methods – Conducting a SWOT Analysis (Tools of the Trade)

**Author(s):** Christina Holt and Tom Wolff

**Abstract:** The Community Tool Box, <http://ctb.ku.edu>, is a free, online resource for those working to build healthier communities and bring about social change, offering thousands of pages of tips and tools for taking action in communities. The vision behind the Community Tool Box is that people — locally and globally — are better prepared to work together to change conditions that affect their lives. The Community Tool Box covers core competencies for community practice such as community assessment, planning, intervention, evaluation, and advocacy. Under continuous development since 1994, the Community Tool Box is widely used in teaching, training, and technical support. The team’s aspiration is to make it easier and more likely that people bring about change and improvement and further social justice.

**Recommended Citation:** Holt, C., & Wolff, T. (2015). The Community Tool Box, a Comprehensive Toll and a Sample of What You Will Find There: Community Assessment Methods – Conducting a SWOT Analysis. *Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice*, 6(1), 1 – 12. Retrieved Day/Month/Year, from (<http://gjcopp.org/>).

**To read more visit:** <https://www.gjcopp.org/en/tool.php?issue=19&tool=13>

9. Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice - Volume 8, Issue 2

**Topic:** Seeking A Sense of Community

**Editor:** Scott Wituk

**Editor’s Note:** Perhaps in 2000, many readers thought that Robert Putnam’s *Bowling Alone* was overly dramatic, describing his observed loss of sense of community and warning of the consequences of that loss. However, those warning now appear prescient, 17 years later, as we mourn the division currently wracking the world harder than ever to bridge widening gaps in beliefs, policies, identities. Community Psychologists, and those practicing community psychology, have always emphasized the importance sense of community has on development, well-being, mutual support/recovery, and other dimensions of health.

There is no other time in human history when people have more ability to connect to others, and yet the General Social Survey and other research continues to see declines in people behaving in connected ways like spending time with neighbors. Our latest issue looks at the different ways sense of community



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continues to be a keystone to community well-being (or the lack of it). First, Badali, Grande, and Kassabian look at how community affects refugees resettling in Canada. They note that peer support helps build sense of community for those who have been displaced from their native communities by violence,

assisting in their resettlement. Next, Ojeda and Gonzalez describe how art therapy in a community in Mexico may be used to build sense of community as a way to reconnect with their families and the others in their neighborhood. The third article by Julian walks through the importance of leadership in fostering effective community collaboration and problem solving. The relationship between collaboration and sense of community (both between collaboration and within the community the collaborative has been established to assist) weaves thematically through this exploration. Finally, Suarez, Turnbull, Lomnitz, and Polanco explore the varied interpretations of community and family support for mothers surviving in a marginalized section of Mexico City, Mexico. The dynamic is complicated, and the consequences of exclusion are difficult. In addition to the fantastic article here, we bring you more thoughts and stories from the field in our sidebars, so be sure to look there for inspiration and thought-provoking programs. The power of and need for a sense of community in a number of ecological contexts (from the family unit to our national and global politics) is stronger than ever. We hope you find something to take with you in these articles, and, as always, we invite you to let us know what you think here on the site, on Facebook, or whatever you feel most comfortable.

**To read more visit:** <https://www.gjcpp.org/en/index.php?issue=26>

10. Global Journal of Community Psychology Practice – Volume 7, Issue 2

**Topic:** Theories in Community Psychology

**Guest Editor:** Leonard A. Jason

**Editor's Note:** In the spring of 2015, Lenny Jason, Daphna Ram, and Ed Stevens posted this note on the Society for Community Research and Action listserv:

Dear SCRA members:

According to Popper (1968), good theories need to offer clear predictions that can be rigorously tested and falsified. In a sense, as you know, theories allow data to be organized, systematized, and interpreted. A group of us at DePaul University are thinking about which theories are central to the field of community psychology. We would be interested in learning whether you use theories explicitly, and if you do use theories explicitly, what theories you use, and do you borrow them from other disciplines or are they from the field of community psychology.

We were very gratified by the responses, and many privately asked us if we would be willing to share the responses with the larger SCRA community. After sharing the responses, a group of us began writing a paper that grew to about 50 pages over time. We are so thankful to Scott Wituk and the Global Journal for giving us a forum to publish our initial piece, as well as the 10 authors who wrote reaction articles to our papers.

We certainly hope that this is just the beginning of the dialogue on this topic that we feel is so needed in our field. There are many methods to keep this discussion alive, including direct comments on each article, facebook, and other forums on which you

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may wish to share this issue. The dialogue that occurs should be widely available to our field, using

various modalities including social media, so that we may continue to critically think through the very important work of Community Psychology.

**To read more visit:** <https://www.gjcpp.org/en/index.php?issue=22>