

Lakeland Ledger, Sunday, June 13, 2004

Neighborhood Groups Can Make A Big Difference

Individuals living in a neighborhood who join together and organize can really begin to change things for the better. Take for example the Combee Road Community who formed CARE (Combee Area Revitalization Effort).

They were one of eight groups selected in the nation to receive help creating a step wise plan to measure the biggest problems faced by their neighborhood. They are now at the point they can take action to make improvements. It can be a slow process, but by better understanding the neighborhood and creating a plan of action, residents can better describe their needs to city and county planners and officials.

The National Association of City & County Health Officers helped provide guidance along with the Polk County Health Department and staff from the Board of County Commissioners. This national association selected this community because they already had a group of neighbors who were organized and working with local government.

By building upon positive relationships and learning about the resources and limitations of local, state and federal assistance, a community can start to make small steps toward a better place to live.

The strategy used in this example is called PACE-EH which stands for Protocol for Assessing Community Excellence in Environmental Health. For more information about steps that a community can take to assess and prioritize their needs, contact Gloria Graham at 863-519-8330.

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