



SWK456/556 GENERALIST  
PRACTICE WITH GROUPS,  
ORGANIZATIONS, AND  
COMMUNITIES

# Chapter 11: Intervention with Communities

- There are many types of community interventions, all of which are based on the data gathered and process used for community assessment.
- The aim of many community practice interventions is to *build community capacity and shape institutional arrangements that meet the needs of community members.*

# Chapter 11: Three Models of Community Practice

- The **planning/policy model** of community intervention focuses on data and logic to achieve community change, using experts to assist in the process of studying problems and *applying rational planning techniques*. Social workers using social planning consider political realities and the usefulness of advocacy in the intervention process, but the primary emphasis is on rational planning.
- The **community capacity development model** focuses on fostering the community's ability to accomplish change by building relationships and skills that help solve local problems in a cooperative manner. *Participant consensus* is the optimal decision-making process for this model. This model emphasizes building competency of community members, groups, and the community as a whole through self-help and local problem-solving.
- The **social advocacy model** is based in theoretical traditions that focus on conflict, power dependency, and resource mobilization. This model is both process- and task-oriented and focuses on *shifting power relationships and redistributing resources* to facilitate change in community structures or institutions to resolve problems affecting many residents. Through this model, community members often experience empowerment when they feel a sense of achievement in helping to influence decisions and policies that affect the entire community.
- Blended models!

# The Use of Group Skills in Community Practice

- Task groups are used to accomplish much of the work related to community practice.
- Using decision-making processes that promote full participation is important!
- Elements of Effective Meetings (p. 507): Preparation, the meeting itself, follow-up

# Chapter 11: Evaluation

- Community social work practitioners join the community in change efforts and facilitate the community leadership of the tasks required.
- Often, community practice accomplishments are the result of months and even years (or decades) of work and consist of many smaller change efforts. For example, social workers may engage in community development efforts to rid the community of lead poisoning over time. This overarching change effort can involve tasks to change local policy regarding rental housing, work with landlords to remediate lead paint, promote local school screening for lead poisoning, and work with the local public health clinic to create an outreach program to prevent lead poisoning and reach persons potentially affected. Each of these may involve lengthy efforts.
- Community practice interventions more easily improve citizen participation and associated benefits (i.e., improving collective action and personal and political skills of participants) than they improve complex physical, social, and economic problems in poor communities. Therefore, social work strategies should simultaneously focus on developing ways to strengthen citizen participation and on building the capacity of individuals.