



## It Takes a Village

*Developed in the field by educators affiliated with NSRF.*

### **Purpose**

To identify a core belief/value of each member of the Learning Community and to have a conversation to explore how to make the community's core values visible and present in the work of the group.

### **Materials**

All kinds of arts and crafts materials (i.e. play dough, cotton, colored pipe cleaners, feathers, sparkles, craft sticks, glue, scissors, construction paper and or cardboard to build on.)

### **Set up**

Set out craft materials so that they are easily accessible to the group.

Place two conference tables side by side for the construction of the village with enough chairs placed around the tables for all of the participants.

1. Ask participants to reflect on and write a description of a core belief or value that they hold dear and that is related to their work. (5 minutes)
2. Introduce the crafts materials and direct participants to create a visual representation of their core beliefs. The only limit placed on their creation is that it must be portable so that they can move it fairly easily. It helps if they build on a piece of construction paper on cardboard. Let them know that you know that you are asking many participants to go to their "risk zone" and remind them that it is your responsibility to "nudge" people out of their safety zone. (20 minutes)
3. When everyone is done creating, ask each participant to pick up their work and move to a chair around the empty conference tables. You might want to place those tables in the center of the group's tables and keep those core values at the center of your workspace.
4. "The Ritual." When everyone is ready, ask people to place their core belief on the table and explain to the group what the value is and why s/he chose it. The rest of the group follows in no particular order, but rather when the "spirit moves them." You can suggest that people place their work near those who have similar values. (Less than a minute per participant)
5. "The Conversation." Convene a text based conversation using the just created "village" as the text. Suggested prompts: What core values/beliefs emerged as themes for our group? Using the creations as data, What do you now know about our group that you didn't know before? What would it take for us as a group to have these core values visible and present in the work that we do together? (As long as you can)
6. Debrief: What did you think of this experience? Why do it? What did you find frustrating? What surprised you? How might you use It Takes a Village in your work setting? (5-10 minutes)