

St. Vincent de Paul Wausau

# Getting Ahead Workshop Guide

to help identify  
potential Investigators

## The Getting Ahead Workshop is a way...

- For people (Investigators) to explore the impact poverty has had on their lives and their community
- To help people experiencing poverty stabilize their living conditions
- For those in unstable situations to help solve community problems as they create their own plan to improve their lives and build resources

## Getting Ahead is different because...

- It addresses all four causes of poverty:
  - individual behaviors and circumstances
  - community conditions
  - exploitation
  - political/economic structures
- Investigators are problem solvers, whose ideas are valuable
- Investigators make decisions and solve problems independently
- It employs self-assessment of resources and a personal My Life Now Mental Model to help conceptualize the difference between what life is like now and what life could be
- The workshop is facilitated rather than taught; everyone contributes to the discussions
- Investigators receive stipends, meals, and materials for their participation and time

## A Potential “Investigator” ...

- Is experiencing generational, situational, or persistent poverty
- Wants to make a change in their life, but is uncertain how or where to begin
- Is motivated and ready to participate
- Can work in a group environment
- Has desire, drive, and determination to stabilize their situation

Some may not be ready for Getting Ahead as they may be dealing with stressful situations that interfere with daily life.

The potential Investigator decides whether to apply for the Getting Ahead Workshop.

## Benefits of Participating in “Getting Ahead”:

- A “kitchen table” style group learning experience to identify and solve problems
- Completion of a self-assessment of personal resources and beginning to build “social equity”
- Development of a unique “Future Story” and a plan to make it happen
- The building of relationships and the support and encouragement received from Mentors, Facilitators, and other committed Community Members
- As Graduates become active participants in the community, they bring with them a knowledgeable voice concerning poverty

## Expectations of the Investigator:

- Commit to attend all 16-20 weekly sessions
- Help to create and abide by group rules
- Complete all assignments
- Communicate any questions or concerns regarding the workshop to the facilitators, mentors, or coordinators

