Mission Possible! Building and Sustaining a Healthy Coalition

Cheryl A. Ferguson, MPH
Owner, Policy Matters
Presentation at Good & Healthy South Dakota, Chronic Disease Partners Meeting
August 15, 2013

Learning Objectives
1. Understand why, when & how to create a coalition
2. Know strategies for coalition recruitment
3. Understand group dynamics in coalitions

A Coalition Is...
An organization of individuals representing diverse organizations, factions or constituencies who agree to work together in order to achieve a common goal.

E. Feighery and T. Rogers, 1989

A coalition is like a choir – different voices are needed and everyone should be singing off the same sheet of music...

-- Joanne McEntire
Mission Possible!
Building and Sustaining a Healthy Coalition

August 15, 2013

South Dakota Chronic Disease Partners Meeting

Coalitions & Partnerships

- Provide platform and process of support
- Maximize talents and resources of individuals and organizations
- Improve trust, communication and collaboration
- Change community norms

Is a Coalition Right for You?

- Does the issue affect a broad range of people?
- Is the issue complex?
- Is broad public awareness or education needed?
- Is there no existing organization clearly mandated to take on this work?
- Are other organizations willing to work together to address this issue?

Ontario Healthy Communities Coalition, 2002.

Caveats...

- Not always appropriate tool
- Success isn’t guaranteed
- Usually works best with paid staff or some form of paid organizational support
- There are responsibilities for lead agency
- Require commitment from members
- Take a lot of time and resources

What’s in a Name?

Coalition
Network
Advisory Group
Professional or Grassroots
Community-Based
Grassroots
How will we organize?

- Start with core group of 3-8 people
  - Guide initial decisions & plans
  - Determine recruitment needs
  - Can evolve into steering committee later
- Potential structure

What will the Core Group do?

- Determine a preliminary purpose for the coalition
- Anticipate needs
- Use available information on community and resource as a guide
- Make sure that coalition’s agenda blends with that of member organizations

Right Person, Right Place, Right Skills, Right Time

Picture Your Community

- Demographics
- Needs
- Strengths
- Issues
- Coalition Profile
The Shoe Test

Types of Roles

- Implementers (“doers”)
- Planners (“thinkers” or project managers)
- Access & Influencers (“movers & shakers”)
- Chairs/Co-chairs/Team Leads (“governors” or people managers)
- Experts (content specialists & resources)

Develop a Recruiting Plan

Recruiting ....toward a vision

If you want to move people, it has to be toward a vision that's positive for them, that taps important values, that gets them something they desire, and it has to be presented in a compelling way that they feel inspired to follow.

-Martin Luther King, Jr.
Develop a Recruitment Plan

- What do you want to do?
- Who is already at the table?
- What skills and resources are missing?
- Who do you want to bring to the table?

Source: TTAC CXP – Tool 2B: Assessing Coalition Diversity

Have Clear List of Tasks & Needs

A few examples of what members can do:

- Work on committees (education, fundraising, policy, etc.)
- Participate in developing program objectives
- Assist in implementing program activities
- Develop and maintain community/coalition communication
- Advocate

Where do you find them?

Approaches to Recruiting

- Funnel Approach
- Community Wheel Relationship Mapping
Community Forum
- Raises issue in community
- Attracts people with interest
- Provides opportunity for discussion
- Serves as vehicle to recruit

The Power of Personal Stories
- Hardwired to respond to stories
- Make it personal
- More convincing than data

Framing the Story
- Who am I?
  - I help ______ to do __________.
  - What’s your personal story?
- What we (the coalition) do.
  - What we need from you.
    - WIFM – What’s In It For Me
    - Appeal to the person’s needs and interests

Managing the Coalition
Yea…coalitions are a lot like that!
Stages of Coalition Development

1. Forming – Why are we here?
2. Storming – Can we work together?
3. Norming – How will we work together?
4. Performing – How can we work smarter?
5. Mourning/Re-forming – Should we continue?

Tuckman, 1965

Staff & Member Roles Evolve

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>% of Effort</th>
<th>Coalition</th>
<th>Members</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Time</td>
<td>Staff</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adapted from Blais, 1996, in The Stepped Approach to Volunteer Recruitment and Retention

High Performing Coalitions

- Share information to build trust & responsibility
- Set expectations that help members achieve own tasks & share responsibility for group tasks
- Use members’ time, talents & ideas effectively
- Build members’ empowerment to make decisions that yield great results

Adapted from Butterfoss, 2010, in Building Effective Coalitions & Partnerships

It’s All About Process...

Group process – the ways that members share information, plan, and make decisions – **matters**.
Group Participation is Key!

As meeting facilitator, Coalition Chair needs to:
- Draw out opinions and ideas
- Focus on WHAT and HOW
- Never take sides

Sustaining Your Current Coalition

- Review and amend plan as needed
- Revisit current needs of coalition representation
- Growing your coalition – what’s just enough?

The 6 R’s of Participation

- Recognition
- Respect
- Role
- Relationship
- Reward
- Results

Source: From the Ground Up!: A Workbook on Coalition Building & Community Development, Kaye & Wolff, 1997

Better and Healthier Coalitions

- Check in with members at least annually to get their perspective
- Compare goals with activities to track progress
- Evaluate meetings
  - +/−Δ
Key Messages

- Coalitions can be powerful tools for success, yet building a coalition takes considerable time and effort.
- Invest time up front. Recruit the right people with the right skills at the right time.
- Your passion is your biggest sales tool. Have an elevator speech ready. Teach your coalition members to do the same.

Key Messages continued...

- Effective group engagement is essential to developing a successful and empowered coalition.
- Recognize coalition’s small wins and early successes, and develop member skills to retain engagement over time.
- Coalition needs change. Continually re-assess need for new members or new collaborative opportunities.

Contact Information

Cheryl A. Ferguson, MPH
Policy Matters
cheryl@nmpolicymatters.com
505-463-5460