



Early Childhood Personnel Center

“Building Coalitions for Personnel Systems”

Cross Cohort Leadership Institute

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Overview

- ***Concepts and Terminology***
- ***Rationale, Advantages and Challenges***
- ***7 Steps in Building Effective Coalitions***

What is a coalition?

- ***“A coalition is a union of people and organizations working to influence outcomes on a specific problem.”***
- ***Coalitions can aid in accomplishing a broad range of goals that reach beyond the capacity of any individual member organization.***
- ***These goals can range from information sharing to coordination of services, from community education to advocacy for major environmental or policy (regulatory) changes.***

Cohen L, Baer N, Satterwhite P. Developing effective coalitions: an eight step guide. In: Wurzbach ME, ed. *Community Health Education & Promotion: A Guide to Program Design and Evaluation*. 2nd ed. Gaithersburg, MD: Aspen Publishers Inc; 2002:144-161.

Advantages of Coalitions

- ***Coalitions have greater credibility than individual organizations.***
- ***Coalitions provide a forum for sharing information.***
- ***Coalitions provide a range of advice and perspectives to the lead agency.***
- ***Coalitions foster personal satisfaction and help members to understand their jobs in a broader perspective.***
- ***Coalitions can foster cooperation between grassroots organizations, community members, and/or diverse sectors of a large organization.***



Challenges of Coalitions

Coalitions can be challenging because of:

- Differences in or changes in beliefs, experiences, cultures, languages, interests, political or personal agendas and partners
- The inability to communicate with, engage and motivate partners
- Fluctuating or limited resources and influence in the broader community
- Limited commitment, availability, expertise or skills
- A lack of effective leadership or trust among partners

Seven Steps to Building an Effective Coalition

- 1. Assess if there is a need for a coalition***
- 2. Recruit the right people.***
- 3. Devise a set of preliminary objectives and activities.***
- 4. Anticipate the necessary resources.***
- 5. Define elements of a successful coalition structure.***
- 6. Maintain coalition vitality.***
- 7. Make improvements through evaluation.***

Step 1: Assess need and readiness to form a coalition

Need for a change?

- Assessment of the current situation show areas in need of improvement

Demands support from leadership

- State staff available to support the work of the cohort
- State administration is very involved in the work and ongoing involvement is evident

Takes energy, time, commitment to plan and implement a coalition

- Time commitment is well defined and adequate for the work

Competing priorities

- Other related initiatives are clearly connected to this work

Step 2: Recruit the Right People

- ***Consider the makeup of the coalition teams***

- Core Planning Teams (6-8)
- Strategic Planning Teams (20-25)
- Workgroups (4-6)

Recruit the Right People

- ***Include representatives of all identified stakeholder groups; diverse community representation is key.***
- ***When focusing on policy and funding, consider including with high-level decision-makers.***



Step 3: Devise a set of preliminary objectives and activities for the coalition

- ***Set the tone by defining the purpose of the team.***
 - A written vision and mission statement may be useful in clarifying the purpose of the coalition.
- ***Ensure that activities focus on policy and systems change.***
 - Prioritize objectives and activities on your work plan.
- ***Define the community capacity of the team and identify potential barriers to success.***

Step 4: Anticipate the necessary resources

- CLERICAL: Mailings, typing minutes and agendas, making reminder calls, photocopying
- MEETINGS: Planning agendas, taking minutes, locating and preparing the meeting site, planning facilitation, providing refreshments etc...
- MEMBERSHIP: Recruitment, orientation, ongoing contact, support, and encouragement
- RESEARCH AND FACT GATHERING: Data collection, process and outcome evaluation
- PUBLIC RELATIONS AND PUBLIC INFORMATION: Development and dissemination of materials, linkages to community stakeholder
- COORDINATION OF ACTIVITIES: Special coalition events, PR campaigns, joint projects
- Substantial time commitments are required of the coalition members*



Step 5: Define elements of a successful coalition structure

- ***Coalition life expectancy***
- ***Meeting location, frequency, and length***
- ***Membership parameters***
- ***Decision making processes***
- ***Meeting agendas***
- ***Participation between meetings***



Step 6: Maintain coalition vitality

- ***Address coalition difficulties (e.g., members leaving, losing interest...)***
- ***Sharing power and leadership***
- ***Recruiting and involving new members***
- ***Promoting renewal by providing training and by bringing challenging and exciting new issues to the group***
- ***Celebrating and sharing successes.***

Step 7: Make improvements through evaluation

- ***Data collection and analysis useful for decision making***
- ***Data collected across multiple sources***
- ***Data collected for each components***
- ***Evaluation plan continuously monitored and revised as necessary***

Questions?

