

A young child with dark hair is shown from the chest up, holding a large, bright white flower in front of their face. The child is wearing a patterned top. The background is a soft, out-of-focus light color. The slide has a green horizontal bar at the top and an orange vertical bar on the left side.

Effective Community Coalition Building

Purpose

- To develop a shared understanding of what is effective community coalition building
- To gain knowledge needed to make informed decisions about creating a community coalition for children's health promotion in Sussex County

Key Questions

- What is a community coalition?
- Why are community coalitions created?
- What do community coalitions do?
- Why do some community coalitions succeed and others fail?
- Who should be involved in building a community coalition?
- What are the steps to cultivating a community coalition?

What is a community coalition?

- A group of individuals and organizations from a community
- Come together to pursue common goals
- Aim is to improve the community
- Needs **active** attention to be created and sustained

Why are community coalitions created?

- Need for a shared response to an urgent community concern
- What are some examples of **when** a community coalition might be needed?

What can a community coalition do?

- Identify needs
- Enhance awareness
- Stimulate involvement
- Develop a shared vision and plans for action
- Foster networking and collaboration
- Mobilize people to take action
- Change practices

What can a community coalition do?

- Promote service integration
- Influence policy and legislation
- Pool existing resources
- Develop new resources
- Provide community with information
- Sustain long-term focus on an issue

Why do community coalitions fail?

- Lack of a compelling issue
- Inadequate leadership
- Inadequate planning
- Poor communication
- Turf issues
- Narrow membership (key stakeholders not at the table)
- Domination by an elite group
- Lack of expertise or resources
- Lack of staff support

Why do community coalitions succeed?

- Strong leadership
- Broad membership of stakeholders
- Clear mission, vision, goals, and roles
- Diverse and adequate resources
 - Staff support
- Strong expertise in process and content
- Frequent communication
- A bias toward action

Who should be involved in a community coalition?

- People most involved in the issue
- Organizations providing relevant services
- Community opinion leaders
- Public officials
- Potential funders

How do we cultivate a community coalition?

- Start with a core group
- Develop an initial vision (what, who, how)
- Identify important additional members
 - Keep in mind various sectors
- Recruit additional members
- Convene first meeting (s)
 - Educate, plan, identify resources, agree on outcomes
 - Select leadership
 - Select facilitator

Develop a coalition charter

- Written description of why the coalition exists and how it will operate
 - Documents the agreements made
- Should be signed by each member
- Helps to maintain focus over time

Recruit and orient new members

- Important to help new members become oriented to purpose and plan

Develop a strategic plan

- May take one to three meetings
- Should address
 - Issues to be addressed
 - Population affected
 - Mission
 - Action steps
 - Evaluation plan
 - Roles, responsibilities, and accountability
 - Subcommittee structure
 - Sustainability or exit strategy
- Staff support

Execute the strategic plan

- Carried out by subcommittees
- Overseen by executive committee
- Implementation results shared
- Accountability for resources

Manage the coalition for sustainability

- Provide champion leadership
- Publicize the vision
- Focus on results
- Hold quarterly meetings on sustainability
- Maintain a strategic financing orientation
- View change as opportunity
- Welcome new members
- Establish levels of involvement

Manage the coalition for sustainability

- Clarify roles
- Establish decision-making processes
- Deal with conflict
- Build strong internal systems
- Communicate efficiently and effectively
- Celebrate success and share credit

Coalition Building References

- **Cultivating Community Coalitions** – Elevation Series by Steve Horan, Community Health Solutions
- **Leading Change** by John Kotter
- **Leadership Challenge** by James Kouzes and Barry Posner