

Coalition Building Best Practices

How to Build an Effective Coalition

Planning

- Assess problem and determine significance
 - Identify methods that are currently in place that address the problem
 - Determine who would support a coalition
 - Define the community capacity for a coalition and identify potential barriers
 - Ensure that coalition activities ultimately focus on policy or environmental change rather than individual-level change
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Formation

- Clarify mission
 - Recruit members – include substantive representation from all identified stakeholders; community representation is KEY
 - Formalize rules, roles, procedures, and responsibility (e.g., bylaws, standard operating procedures, goals and objectives, memoranda of understanding)
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Implementation

- Define the community capacity for a coalition and identify potential barriers
 - Conduct needs assessment
 - Set priorities based on results of needs assessment and funding
 - Select appropriate strategies to achieve coalition goals
 - Raise community awareness of coalition and problem
 - Generate additional funds for coalition
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Maintenance

- Coalitions must provide benefits (e.g., solidarity, appreciation, evidence of impact) that exceed costs (e.g., time, frustration) to sustain membership and momentum
 - Assign tasks based on skills and available resources
 - Define action steps that are broad enough to address funders' goals and also the goals of the coalition
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Adapted from Centers for Disease Control and Prevention Best Practices User Guide: Coalitions