

Building Community Collaborations to Support Healthy and Stable Marriages

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Community Involvement in Programming



- Define the problem of programmatic need(s)
- Identify effective strategies to address the need(s)
- Generate a variety of resources
- Promote local ownership and commitment

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Sustaining Community-Based Programs



Mancini, J.A. & Marek, L. I. (2004). Sustaining community-based programs for families: Conceptualization and measurement. *Family Relations*, 53, 339-347.

Community Saturation Model

- Recruitment of partners and leaders from within communities
- “Flood” the community with messages and opportunities that support healthy marriages
- Creating cultural-level changes

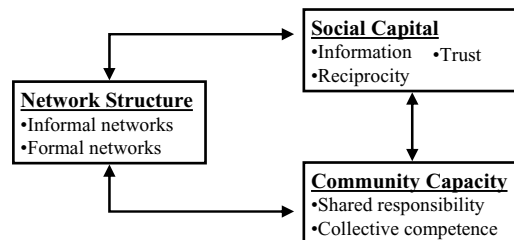


Community Social Organization

- “The collection of values, norms, process, and behavior patterns within a community that organize, facilitate, and constrain the interactions among community members” (Mancini, Martin, & Bowen, 2003).
- Building community assets or maximizing opportunities that support healthy marriages

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Community Social Organization



Source: Mancini, J. A., Bowen, G. L., & Martin, J. A. (2005). Community social organization: A conceptual linchpin in examining families in the context of communities. *Family Relations*, 53, 440-447.

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Community Capacity

Community capacity... the extent to which community members demonstrate a sense of shared responsibility for the general welfare of the community and its individual members, and demonstrate collective competence by taking advantage of opportunities for addressing community needs and confronting situations that threaten the safety and well-being of community members.

Bowen, Martin, Mancini, & Nelson (2000)

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Community Capacity

- a concern for the whole, as well as the parts of a, community
- degree vs. simply the presence or absence of capacity
- taking action vs. being a sentiment of support
- seizing opportunities versus being reactive
- incorporating action into normative everyday life situations

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Community Networks - Critical!


<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government • Cooperative Extension • Faith Community • Social Services • Family Services • Head Start Agencies • Community Action Agencies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public Health & WIC • School/Youth Programs • Housing/Urban Dev. • Other Agencies or Groups Relevant to your Community • Volunteers • Couples!
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Resource: Lewin Group, Coalition Building for a Community Healthy Marriage Initiative
http://www.lewin.com/spotlights/features/spotlight_feature_CHMI.htm

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Defining Community Collaborations

Low



High

- Network
- Alliance
- Partnership
- Coalition
- Collaborative

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Advantages of Community Collaboration



- Many couple issues and risk factors are interrelated
- Helps deliver consistent messages
- Reach couples through a variety of channels
- Sharing and creation of resources

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Challenges of Community Collaborations




- Disagreement over goals and strategies
- Turf/boundary issues
- Competing demands and limited funding
- Different opinions and perspectives

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Community Collaborative's Composition

- What skills, information, and resources do we need?
- What resources already exist in the community?
- How can we reach stakeholders?
- What expertise and services can other groups and organizations contribute?
- What members of the community can help bring credibility to our cause?
- Do members represent a variety of different constituent groups or cultural perspectives?

Source: <http://www.helpingamericasyouth.gov>

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Community Collaborative's Composition



- Recruiting a broad and representative number of partners will enable the collaborative to:
 - Effectively address community issues around marriage
 - Access and attract a variety of resources
 - Engender the community's "buy in"

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Community Collaborative's Composition

- What can each potential member contribute?
- Do the individuals represent a variety of different constituent groups or cultural perspectives? Are any groups or perspectives missing?
- Will certain organizations or individuals need incentives to join? What will they gain by joining the effort?
- What constitutes membership within the community partnership?

Source: <http://www.helpingamericasyouth.gov>

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Making Community Collaboratives Work

- Clearly define the core working group
- Assemble the broad membership
- Clearly define the leadership
- Specify the shared mission/vision, goals and action steps
- Define structure, staffing, and communication
- Identify resources and funding sources
- Implement strategies and action plans
- Evaluate the work of the collaborative as it progresses
- Sustain the collaborative

Source: Lewin Group, Coalition Building for a Community Healthy Marriage Initiative
http://www.lewin.com/spotlights/features/spotlight_feature_CHMI.htm

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Clearly Defined Leadership

- Attend to the many aspects of organization functioning
- Maintain the focus and momentum of the collaborative
- Facilitate and coordinate activities
- Effectively negotiate among partners
- Assist in surfacing, addressing, and resolving conflicts
- Establish trust among members of the collaborative and community

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Clear and Shared Mission, Goals & Plan

- State a mission that concisely describes what will be accomplished and why it is important
- Specify goals and objectives that indicate what and how much will be accomplished by when
- Identify action steps that specify which members will do which tasks by when
- Periodically review your plan and analyze effectiveness

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Structure, Staffing & Communication

- Establish a structure that defines the procedures for building and sustaining collaborations.
- Hire staff that are qualified and connect with the community who can help organize, facilitate, and mobilize the collaborative.
- Foster open and regular communication with the collaborative members and the broader community

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Identify Resources and Funding

- Have a clear purpose for why funding is needed and how it will be used
- Identify and build a diverse “portfolio” of funding through a variety of sources
- Don’t collaborate just to seek funding... seek funding to support your collaborative’s response to the community’s needs.

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Implement Strategies and Action Plans



- Take action to achieve the short- and long-terms goals of the collaborative
- Celebrate small and big successes with the collaborative and community
- Share the collaborative’s milestones/accomplishments

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Evaluation and Documentation of Impact

- Essential to monitor progress related to the collaborative’s goals and objectives
- Seek support from existing resources as well as expertise within the community to guide your evaluation plan
- Visit University of Wisconsin Extension for resources: www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/index.html

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Evaluating Process

- Are the right people on board? What is the level of involvement?
- Are we working effectively together as a group? Are members satisfied? Are we achieving what we want?
- Are programs being implemented as planned?
- Are we using resources wisely?
- How can we sustain people’s involvement?

Source: University of Wisconsin Extension (1998) Evaluating Collaboratives: Reaching the Potential. http://cecommerce.uwex.edu/pdfs/G3658_8.PDF

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Documenting Outcomes and Impacts



- Outcomes: the desired conditional changes you seek to achieve, “What was accomplished?”
- Impacts: those results that usually take longer to achieve and have wider socioeconomic and environmental benefit, “What were the long range effects?”

Source: University of Wisconsin Extension (1998) Evaluating Collaboratives: Reaching the Potential. http://cecommerce.uwex.edu/pdfs/G3658_8.PDF

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Sustainability

- Develop a maintenance plan to sustain:
 - Guiding vision and mission, and related goals and objectives.
 - Basic governance structure and rules for operating within that framework or structure.
 - Leadership and membership.
 - Roles, responsibilities and functions of members.
 - Funding and public support.
 - Visibility in the context of the broader community.

Source: Lewin Group, Coalition Building for a Community Healthy Marriage Initiative
http://www.lewin.com/spotlights/features/spotlight_feature_CHMI.htm

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Reach out, Connect...Make an impact!



Never doubt that a small, group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

MARGARET MEAD

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