Coalitions:
Forming and Sustaining
Community Collaborations

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September 2005
Workshop Overview

- Purposes of Coalitions

- Key Elements for Forming and Sustaining Effective Coalitions

- Stages of Coalition Development

- Factors Influencing Coalition Effectiveness
A Coalition Is:

• The coming together of people and organizations to influence outcomes related to a specific problem or set of problems (Cohen, et. al.)

• A vehicle for structured, purposeful interaction among a set of organizations, groups and individuals
Advantages of a Coalition

• Create a synergy of joint actions
• Draw upon the wisdom of many
• Stay the course
• Mobilize and maximize power and influence
• Share responsibility and accountability
• Coordinate planning, strategy and action
• Pool resources and expertise
• Minimize duplication of effort
Key Elements for Forming and Sustaining Effective Coalitions

• Leadership
  – Development
  – Succession planning
• Infrastructure
• Key Stakeholders
• Focus on Specific Goals and Strategies
Key Elements for Forming and Sustaining Effective Coalitions

- Demonstrated Results
- Community Awareness
- Comprehensive Coalition Planning
- Diversified Funding, Resource Development

These elements demonstrate if a coalition is capable of sustaining and adapting to change – internally and externally.
Stages of Development

- Researchers have identified four stages of coalition development:
  - Stage One: Getting to know your partners
  - Stage Two: Getting ready for action
  - Stage Three: Taking action
  - Stage Four: Continuing or ending
Factors Influencing Coalition Effectiveness

- Factors Contributing to the Effectiveness of Coalition Building
  - Coalition structure and governance
  - Coalition strategy
  - Coalition processes
Internal Factors

• Coalition Structure and Governance
  – Organizational home
  – Mission
  – Membership
  – Structure as an organization
  – Staffing and funding
Internal Factors

• Coalition Strategy
  – Vision
  – Strategy
  – Plans and priorities
  – Capacity to learn from experience
Internal Factors

• Coalition Processes
  – Leadership
  – Decision making
  – Conflict identification, resolution and management
  – Communication
    • Internal
    • External
External Environment

• Community Attitudes Toward Coalition Goals
  – Level of community support
  – Priority in the community
• Opposition to the Coalition
• History of Collaboration
External Environment

• Barriers to Collaboration
  – Geography and climate
  – Cultural diversity

• Resources
  – Abundance verses scarcity
Trust Factor

• Most Critical Factor is TRUST
  – Within the coalition
  – Between the coalition and the community
Coalition Key Elements: Strengths and Challenges

• Leadership Development and Succession Planning
• Infrastructure
• Key Stakeholders
• Focus on Specific Goals and Strategies
• Demonstrated Results
• Community Awareness
• Comprehensive Coalition Planning
• Diversified Funding, Resource Development
Learning From Experience

• Specifying Measurable Objectives
  – Objectives that address your “means”
  – Objectives that address your “ends”

• Tracking Progress in Implementing Action Plans and Achieving Objectives

• Using the Information for Improvement

• Engaging Staff and Members

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Direction Provided By The Southern Institute On Children And Families
Learning From Experience

• Implementing a Coalition Survey
  – Assessing a coalition from the perspective of members
  – Collecting data and information about the key elements and factors influencing coalition effectiveness
  – Providing feedback to the coalition to support improvement efforts
Technical Assistance Opportunities

• Judi Cramer and Sondra Gardetto at The Southern Institute on Children and Families are available to provide
  – Customized training tailored to meet coalition needs
  – Coalition development training
  – Strategic planning assistance
  – Coalition self-assessment survey
  – Asset mapping and gap analysis
  – Conference call technical assistance