

Sustaining Your Momentum with Existing Community Resources

Examining What Creates Sustainability in Your Community

The Content of this Training Comes From...

National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention and Health Promotion/ Division of Adult and Community Health. (n.d.) A Sustainability Planning Guide for Healthy Communities. www.cdc.gov/healthycommunitiesprogram/pdf/sustainability_guide.pdf

Hayes, C., Hayen, C., Mawn, D.G., Danahar, D., Carlton, C.. (n.d.) The Keys to Sustainability. Southeast CAPT.

This Workshop is Possible Through...

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Workshop Overview

WORKSHOP GOAL

For participants to identify ways to sustain efforts that are meaningful and provide value to the community.

WORKSHOP DESCRIPTION

Improving the behavioral health of a community to achieve community level outcomes requires vision, commitment, motivation, and a community wide comprehensive approach. How can we get our community to buy into behaviors that may go against what they have known and believe? Creating an environment that supports health and wellbeing takes time. That's why sustainability is so important. This session will ask participant to identify the strengths their community has that support sustainability and will explore what is needed to sustain commitment and motivation over the long haul. Participants will also review what research says is needed to sustain efforts. Participants will leave with custom ideas of what sustainability means to them and how to plan for sustainability in their community.

WORKSHOP OBJECTIVES

By the end of this workshop, participants should be able to:

1. Define sustainability based on their community's experience and expertise.
2. Describe best practices for sustainability based on research.
3. Identify 3 best practices that meet their community's needs they will discuss further when they return home.

Defining Sustainability

Think about services, programs or activities that have survived in your community. What are the specific things that kept them going?

Using the things you wrote down, how would you define sustainability for your community?

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Source: SECAPT's *The Keys to Sustainability*

THEIR DEFINITION OF SUSTAINABILITY

A process of ensuring an adaptive and effective system that achieves and maintains desired long term results. Ultimately, sustainability is about maintaining positive outcomes in communities. Sustainability is never achieved, it is a continuous process.

3 KEYS TO SUSTAINABILITY



Organizational Capacity



Assure Effectiveness
and Alignment of the
Prevention System



Community Support

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KEY 1 ORGANIZATIONAL CAPACITY

The agencies, organizations and institutions delivering the strategies must have the structures and capacity necessary to carry out administrative functions related to effective implementation and oversight of the strategies designed to achieve the targeted behavior changes.

ACTION 1: DEVELOP ADMINISTRATIVE STRUCTURES AND FORMAL LINKAGES

ACTIONS

Administrative Structures

Prevention is considered critical to carry out the organization's or coalition's mission

Included in the agency's organizational chart

Have adequate time devoted to prevention efforts.

Administrative Functions

Effective staff management

Sound fiscal management

Implementation oversight

Data collection and reporting

Formal Linkages

Cooperation among diverse organizational units needed to support and sustain outcomes

Collaboration among diverse community agencies needed to sustain community prevention efforts

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ACTION 2: ADOPT SUPPORTIVE POLICIES AND PROCEDURES

ACTIONS

A standard decision making process based on needs assessment and evaluation data.

Linkage agreements with other agencies to formalize roles and responsibilities that support data sharing, joint planning, and collaborative implementation to achieve population level outcomes.

Orientation manual for members of the agency's board of directors and new staff that describe the role of the agency and staff in support of the prevention effort.

Ongoing education and skill enhancement for staff.

Support of flexible hours for staff who primarily work with the coalition so that they can fully participate in prevention efforts.

Funding: Continuous and diverse funding streams that support intended outcomes.

Staffing:

- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Organizational and contracting• Management• Implementation | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Analytical functions• Administrative functions• Communication• Information systems/technology |
|--|--|
-

Computer and other technology:

- High speed internet access
 - Needs assessment and evaluation data collection software
 - Data storage capacity
 - Data analysis capacity
 - Data reporting software
 - Data presentation software
 - Communication capacity among partners and stakeholders (telephone, fax, e-mail, conference calls, etc.)
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Workspace:

- Designated physical space for staff.
 - Designated physical space for activities
 - Informational resources (journal subscriptions, training material, books relating to activities) maintained and housed.
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ACTION 3: SECURE DIVERSE RESOURCES

ACTIONS

Partnerships with other member agencies and organizations

In-kind contributions from colleges/universities, community agencies,
And individuals who are not coalition members

Short-term external grants or contracts with consultant entities to provide specific technical assistance and support.

ACTION 4: ACQUIRE APPROPRIATE EXPERTISE

ACTIONS

Knowledge of assessment, logic model construction, selection and implementation of evidence-based prevention program, practices, and policies, and staging intervention components.

Knowledge of data collection methods and interpretation

Knowledge of effective prevention strategies to meet the needs of the target population.

Skills to implement strategies with fidelity and to make needed adaptations.

Knowledge of process evaluation and outcome evaluation methods and using this information to inform strategy planning.

Communication and data presentation skills

Leadership skills

Fundraising expertise

KEY 2: ASSURE EFFECTIVENESS AND ALIGNMENT OF THE PREVENTION SYSTEM

In order to reduce substance use related problems in the community, each component of the prevention system has different roles and responsibilities. Agencies and organizations are responsible for identifying evidence based strategies that target risk factors/Intervening Variables/Contributing Factors that lead to these problems and for ensuring that they are appropriately implemented and can demonstrate outcomes.

Coalitions are responsible for coordinating among agencies and organizations and other prevention partners to ensure adequate resources for effective implementation and evaluation, to fill gaps and avoid duplication, and to ensure reach of strategies to maximize population level impact.

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ACTION 5: ASSESS IMPLEMENTATION QUALITY FOR EFFECTIVENESS OF EACH STRATEGY

ACTIONS

Quality Implementation

Assure that the strategy matches the cultural, developmental, and gender characteristics of the population.

Receive training or technical assistance to support appropriate implementation of the intervention.

Work with the developer of the program or the evaluator to understand the core or most important components or elements that are most responsible for demonstrated outcomes.

Assess the need for any adaptations to the strategy, especially the core components, in order to meet the particular needs of the target population.

Seek input from the program developer about the planned adaptations to assure they would be consistent with the program's core components.

Plan carefully any necessary adaptations to target population, program content or materials, delivery setting or timeframe to assure integrity of implementation.

Seek to deliver the program's core components with fidelity whenever possible.

Track implementation through process evaluation as well as all planned and unanticipated adaptations to inform outcome evaluation findings.

Utilize process evaluation data to inform and strengthen implementation when outcome evaluation did not reveal desired program results.

ACTION 6: ASSURE EFFECTIVENESS OF EACH STRATEGY

ACTIONS

Work with an evaluator to develop an evaluation design that will answer questions not only about whether the intervention is effective, but also how any adaptations may affect the intervention's expected outcomes.

Incorporate key stakeholders' concerns into the evaluation design to assure that the outcomes assessed and the evaluation report will answer their questions and concerns.

Use outcome evaluation to continue, adapt, or change strategies.

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ACTION 7: ASSESS REACH AND ALIGNMENT OF EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES

ACTIONS

Develop a theory of change and a logic model that identify the strategies currently implemented, their measured or expected outcomes, and their relationship to the targeted long-term behavior change and related community problems.

All members providing prevention services are able to explain in simple, understandable terms how the strategies in the strategic plan work to accomplish intended results (theory of change).

Conduct a gaps analysis to ensure there are effective strategies will logically work together to result in long-term behavior change among the population targeted.

Ensure current strategies collectively reach the target population. If not, consider expanding effective strategies or relying on strategies with greater population reach.

Develop a coordinated plan to bridge gaps in effectiveness, quality, reach, and comprehensiveness of strategies in order to maximize likelihood of achieving long-term behavior changes among the target population.

KEY 3: COMMUNITY SUPPORT

The problems and conditions needing to be addressed are complex and require a similarly complex response. Fostering positive relationships among those who have a stake in sustaining the initial outcomes of a preventive intervention can help to increase their interest and commitment.

Community agencies and organizations, working through the coalition, must cultivate broader community support in order to sustain outcomes as they are achieved and reduce substance use and related community problems. Key stakeholders must see themselves as stewards of the community's health and well-being whose success depends on their collective effectiveness. This collectively responsibility requires trusting relationships among all the stakeholders and a willingness to work strategically together.

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ACTION 8: DEVELOP AND NURTURE POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS

ACTIONS

Community agencies and organizations, working through the coalition, cultivate broader community support in order to sustain outcomes as they are achieved and reduce substance abuse and related community problems.

Key stakeholders see themselves as stewards of the community's health and well-being whose success depends on their collective effectiveness.

There are trusting relationships among all the stakeholders and a willingness to work strategically together.

The formation of a coalition to address specific substance abuse problems at the community level.

Coalitions work through an informed, data driven, objective process to determine the most effective direction, strategies, and allocation of resources to achieve identified substance use reduction outcomes.

Cultivating champions for prevention strategies which can influence population level changes in substance use behaviors and consequences.

Build awareness of the importance of prevention in meeting short-term outcomes and its contribution to an overall comprehensive strategy.

Facilitating active involvement of key stakeholders in the planning, decision-making, implementation of the intervention, and review of evaluation results to increase interest and commitment.

Communicate with key stakeholders through a variety of means (meetings, newsletters, presentations, newspaper articles, etc.) that celebrate key success stories and connect positive outcomes of the prevention system to identified needs of the community.

Seek advice, feedback, and assistance from peers, program developers, and others who have created and sustained successful coalitions that demonstrate changes in policies and reduction in problems related to substance use.

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ACTION 9: TURN STAKEHOLDERS INTO SYSTEM LEADERS AND CHAMPIONS

ACTIONS

Prevention leaders view themselves as stewards of not only the prevention system and its strategies, but also its outcomes.

Prevention leaders prioritize the effectiveness of the system in their strategic and day-to-day actions as they guide the prevention work of community agencies, organizations and institutions.

The Coalition views itself as a prevention leader, advocating for policies and actions throughout the community that support long-term strategic outcomes of reductions in community problems related to substance use.

Identify the needs of influential stakeholders within organizations that are implementing effective strategies and in the broader community.

Assess how well strategies are meeting the needs of influential stakeholders.

Communicate to targeted influential stakeholders how sustaining outcomes of effective strategies can meet their needs.

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ACTION 10: ENCOURAGE OWNERSHIP OF THE PREVENTION SYSTEM

ACTIONS

Creativity is used to demonstrate and communicate the extent of the problems in the community related to substance use.

Awareness among influential audiences such as the business community and civic leaders of the costs of problems related to substance use to the community and the savings realized by effective prevention.

The importance of using data to make strategic decisions about resource allocation and strategy selection in order to accomplish population level changes is communicated.

Support for the importance of using a public health approach to achieve population-level change is built throughout the community.

Identify and target key influential stakeholders (individuals or groups) in the community whose ownership of the prevention system is critical to its sustainability.

Develop a communication plan that uses appropriate messages and communicate modes to strategically target stakeholders.

Assess ownership among system stakeholders.

Involve key decision-makers in the implementation process.

Communicate regularly with key stakeholders about efforts of the coalition to strengthen the prevention system and the resulting impacts on substance abuse behaviors and consequences.

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Source: CDC's *A Sustainability Planning Guide for Healthy Communities*

THEIR DEFINITION OF SUSTAINABILITY

A community's ongoing capacity and resolve to work together to establish, advance, and maintain effective strategies that continuously improve health and quality of life for all.

STEPS TO SUSTAINABILITY

1. Begin thinking about it as soon as possible.
2. It won't just happen; make a plan with action steps.
3. Sustainability is a complex goal, it requires a multifaceted approach involving many sectors of the community.
4. Leadership and community champions are key.
5. Sustainability requires collaboration.

IT'S IMPORTANT TO HAVE A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

Core elements of the sustainability planning process are:

1. A functional coalition:
 - a. sufficient leadership, funding, communications;
 - b. procedures in place to monitor policy results (changes to enforcement and compliance ordinances);
 - c. buy-in and support from key decision-makers.
2. A long-term plan for ensuring coalition viability.
3. Develop diverse funding sources, leadership and marketing strategies.
4. Make sure all stakeholders are ready for the transition and the changes that will come with it.

KEY POINTS ABOUT SUSTAINABILITY

- It's not just about funding. It's about creating and building momentum to maintain community-wide change by organizing and maximizing community assets and resources.
- It means institutionalizing policies and practices within communities and organizations.
- From the outset, an approach that emphasizes the development of a network of community practitioners who understand and can lead a movement is needed.
- A multiplicity of stakeholders who can develop long-term buy-in and support throughout the community for your coalition's efforts is needed.

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- It's not just about achieving public health goals; it also relates to concepts such as social justice and socioeconomics.

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT FOR COALITIONS TO DEVELOP A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN FOR THEIR WORK?

Developing a plan is a critical part of the sustainability process. A plan can help your coalition:

- Obtain input and buy-in from coalition members and key external decision-makers.
- Define critical long- and short-term policy strategies.
- Create an organizational plan to attract and make the best use of human, financial, and in-kind resources for achieving these strategies.
- Document and organize the information you've collected: evaluation findings, lists of strategies and activities, criteria grids, effort justification sheets, budgets, and more.

FOR SUSTAINABILITY TO BECOME A REALITY, COALITIONS NEED:

- Buy-in and support from key decision-makers as well as community volunteers.
- Sufficient leadership, funding, and channels of communications.
- Procedures in place to monitor policy (e.g., city ordinances) results through enforcement and compliance, and to modify strategies accordingly.
- Create a long-term plan for ensuring the viability of the coalition or initiative.
- Develop a diverse funding portfolio, collaborative leadership, and marketing/branding strategies.
- Ensure that all community stakeholders are ready to respond to a changing environment.

10 STEPS TO SUSTAINABILITY

These 10 steps integrate the issue of “how to build capacity for operational purposes” with the goal of “how to prioritize and implement policies.” In practice, the sustainability planning group should also focus on organizational (strategic planning) issues and pass along critical policy strategy recommendations to the coalition for implementation.

STEP 1—CREATE A SHARED UNDERSTANDING OF SUSTAINABILITY

- Determine what type of organization will best suit the needs of the coalition for the long run.
- Organize your coalition structure and communication strategies to help achieve your objectives.
- Be clear about what sustainability means in the context of coalition policy strategies and activities.
- Agree (earlier rather than later) that planning for sustainability is valuable.
- Include multiple community stakeholders in the sustainability planning process.

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STEP 2—CREATE A PLAN TO WORK THROUGH THE PROCESS

- A coordinator is essential to lead the process. If possible, you may also want to use a neutral and skillful facilitator if possible.
- Form a planning team. This can be a subcommittee of the coalition.

STEP 3—POSITION COALITION EFFORTS TO INCREASE THE ODDS OF SUSTAINABILITY

- Start by identifying what your coalition is already doing to plan for sustainability.
- Think about current and future goals and factors such as infrastructure, operational practices, and financial resources needed to support those goals.
- For coalitions just beginning their plan, ask members, external stakeholders, local groups, and community members to fill out a connection map—a catalog of existing and potential community connections.

STEP 4—LOOK AT THE CURRENT PICTURE AND PENDING ITEMS

- You can start by listing all of your coalition's efforts.
- It might also be helpful to list other community efforts that could complement or duplicate your coalition strategies and activities.
- Finally, if you haven't already, discuss how all these factors influence the current organizational structure and the potential for achieving future policy strategies, goals, objectives, or activities. This analysis can help your coalition leverage funding and partnerships.

STEP 5—DEVELOP CRITERIA TO HELP DETERMINE WHICH EFFORTS TO CONTINUE

Focus on Money or Effort?

- Most groups begin to work on sustainability because a funding source is ending. They often focus so much on replacing that funding, they don't question whether or not the policy strategy is worth sustaining (St. Leger, 2005).
- Important questions to consider: What is its value? Does it have community buy-in and support? Do leaders see its outcome as important? Conversely, have effective policy strategies been successfully implemented and no longer need your group's attention? Or do existing strategies need monitoring or enforcing? Are there funders who will support your objectives? Asking these questions before beginning sustainability discussions can help lead to informed choices about whether a policy strategy and activity should be continued and, if so, in what form.
- When developing these criteria, consider your coalition's mission and vision, how the group is structured and supported, as well as the long-term goal of each of your policy efforts.
- Potential criteria include: available resources (financial, organizational, human), level of community support, evidence of strategy effectiveness, and whether a need still exists for the effort in question. Determine whether any of these criteria are relevant to your coalition's situation. To make the rating process easier, consider selecting only 3–5 of the most important criteria.
- It is also important to ensure a direct relationship between coalition goals and the supporting objectives and activities. Objectives should be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant, and Time-bound). Coalitions should view objectives as short- or long-term strategies. For example,

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a coalition can fund a strategy as part of a demonstration project (short-term) to successfully make the case for a future policy goal (long-term).

- Evaluation results can help you adjust the current policy to ensure effectiveness—and make it a more likely candidate for sustainability.
- Develop a logic model that shows how continuing strategies will help improve community outcomes.
- Survey coalition members and other relevant decision-makers to determine if your current organization is helping to make the most of community resources to achieve its goals.
- Instead of just counting numbers, explain an effort's return on social investment. For example, show how strategies might help save lives (Ralsler, 2007). In a report by Trust for America's Health (TFAH), an investment of \$10 per person per year in proven community-based strategies to increase physical activity, improve nutrition, and prevent smoking and other tobacco use could save the country more than \$16 billion annually within 5 years (Braveman & Egerter, 2008).
- Use short-term results to make the case for or support how this strategy will have long-term benefits.
- Involve evaluators early in sustainability discussions to provide key data for decision making.

STEP 6—DECIDE WHAT TO CONTINUE AND PRIORITIZE

- If you decide to continue most or all of what you have been doing, prioritize the list to ensure that you can reasonably sustain the strategies and efforts that the group values the most.
- Just because your coalition designed and implemented a policy strategy, it may not necessarily be responsible for its long-term success or continuation. Coalitions often serve as community laboratories for testing innovative strategies; after deciding which should be continued, your coalition may conclude that another group is better suited to the task.

STEP 7—CREATE OPTIONS FOR MAINTAINING PRIORITY EFFORTS

After deciding what strategies the coalition will prioritize, think creatively about resource development and leveraging funding sources. Remember, continuing an effort does not necessarily mean continuing it in the same way. There are many options for you to explore!

Creative Ways to Secure Funding

Here are a few examples to consider when looking for longer-term funding sources.

- Consider whether or not your current fiscal agent is able to manage funds from a variety of sources.
- Request that coalition members add collaborative support costs into their funding proposals.
- Use fees to continue community improvements (DeJong & Davidson, 2000). For example, fees charged to rent local park facilities can fund continuing after-school recreation activities.
- Leverage existing funding sources with other local efforts. For example, ask school districts or city and county governments to financially support efforts that fall within their own programs. Also, consider partnering with the local parks and recreation department to monitor trail usage on a quarterly basis by sharing positions and resources.
- Before approaching local funders, plan how to support them to create a win-win situation.

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STEP 8—DEVELOP A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

- This step pulls together the information gathered in the first seven steps. As previously mentioned, a sustainability plan describes a process for:
 - Obtaining input and buy-in from coalition members and key external decision-makers.
 - Defining critical long- and short-term policy strategies.
 - Considering the type of organizational structure will best help the coalition to effectively reach its partnership, policy, and resource goals.
 - Acquiring resources—human, financial, and in-kind—necessary for implementing these strategies.
 - Documenting and organizing the information that has been collected—evaluation findings, lists of strategies and activities, criteria grids, effort justification sheets, budgets, and more.
- It's a good idea to make the plan as concise as possible and include an appendix with items documenting the entire planning process. These can help maintain institutional memory that will, in turn, help future planning efforts replicate successes and avoid mistakes.
- The planning team may find it helpful to develop planning documents for two different audiences. The first document is the full sustainability plan and targets the coalition. It provides more specific operational strategies for achieving sustainability goals. The second document is a brief executive summary, or overview, to share with outside parties, such as key community stakeholders and decision makers.

EXAMPLE OF A SUSTAINABILITY PLAN OUTLINE

I. Executive Summary

- Organizational and/or program history (brief)
- Definition of sustainability—Step 1
- Description of who was involved—Step 3
- Summary of efforts for which sustainability is an issue—Step 4
- Goals, needs, and costs for efforts being continued—Step 6 and 7

II. Situational Analysis

- Organizational strengths as they relate to positioning—Step 2
- Current picture/pending items—Step 4

III. Criteria to Determine Program Value-Added Benefits—Step 5 and 6

- Identify what elements will be used to determine criteria (e.g., population reached, evidence of effectiveness, broad support)

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IV. Sustainability Planning Goal(s)–Step 6

- Efforts to continue
- Efforts to revise and continue
- Efforts to ask another organization to continue

V. Sustainability Strategies

- Describe any organizational or structure changes–Step 7
- Recruit program champions and partners–Step 2
- Marketing and public relations–Step 2
- Funding–Step 7
- Communication of justification matrix–Step 7

VI. Action Plan by Strategy – Step 9

- Develop SMART objectives for organizational and policy efforts
- Develop action plan and timetable for strategies

STEP 9—IMPLEMENT THE SUSTAINABILITY PLAN

- Create action plans for each organizational and policy strategy. Such an action plan would also include steps to ensure the presence of supporting organizational structures (e.g., steering committee, task groups, communication activities), and processes fiscal agent practices, resource development roles, and conflict resolution protocols, to achieve policy strategies.
- **Keeping People Involved:** Be sure to:
 - Continuously recruit new members/staff and develop new leaders to provide transition.
 - Meet with participants to discuss whether their needs are being met. Are they developing desired skills? Does the effort benefit their organization?
 - Provide periodic training through workshops, conference calls, and webinars. If individuals need to build certain skills, refer them to these training opportunities.
 - Implement communication strategies to keep members motivated and informed of the plan's progress.

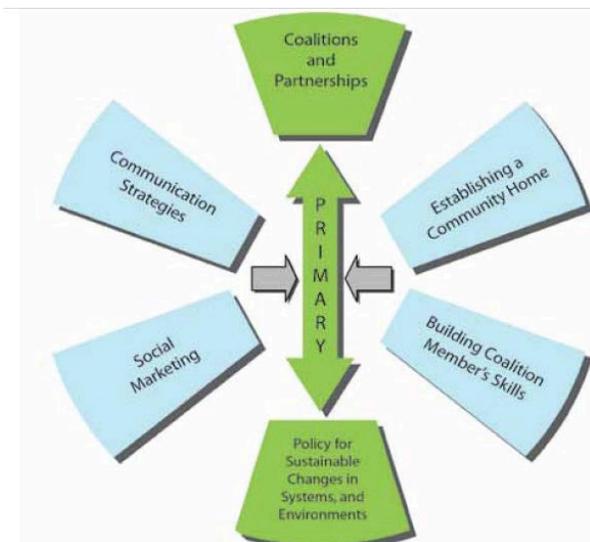
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STEP 10—EVALUATE OUTCOMES AND REVISE AS NEEDED

Sustainability Approaches

The approaches are shown below. Core approaches are seen in green and complementary approaches are seen in blue.

1. Developing and implementing policy, systems, and environmental change strategies.
2. Building the long-term capacity of your coalition and relevant partnerships to achieve policy goals.
3. Establishing a home for your Healthy Communities work.
4. Focusing on building coalition members' skills.
5. Developing communication strategies.
6. Developing social marketing strategies.



WHY ARE POLICIES IMPORTANT FOR SUSTAINABILITY?

- A coalition should not only promote policies but also ensure that they've been implemented as expected and are having the intended effect.
- Policy strategies are the most effective way to ensure long-term momentum.
- While individual approaches to behavior change are important for health promotion efforts, these changes need to be prompted and supported by changes in environments, social norms, and networks that support positive health decisions (Green, Richard, & Potvin, 1996; Stokols, 1996).
- Whether implemented in schools, the community, or within community organizations, policy strategies can result in change on multiple levels, significantly impacting social and cultural norms and values (Swinburn, 2008; Stunkard & Pennick, 1979).
- In addition, policy strategies are more economically sustainable long-term than other approaches (Swinburn, 2008).

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WHY ARE COALITIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS IMPORTANT FOR SUSTAINABILITY?

- The term “coalition” is used to describe a diverse group of individuals and organizations working together to achieve specific goals.
- Internal partners are coalition members who help plan and participate in efforts to accomplish those goals.
- External coalition partners (e.g., local decision-makers, funders, and media contacts) can provide assets or champion coalition causes.
- Strong coalitions and partnerships help support sustainability by providing a platform and process that promote buy-in and support from participating community organizations and leaders. This heightened level of support enhances the reputation of the coalition increasing the likelihood of new funding opportunities.
- Coalitions and partnerships can, among other things:
 - Serve as effective vehicles for exchanging knowledge and ideas.
 - Limit duplication of strategies and services.
 - Demonstrate and develop community support for issues.
 - Maximize the talents and resources of individuals and groups through collective action.
 - Improve trust, communication, and collaboration among community agencies and sectors.
 - Change community norms and standards concerning health-risk behaviors.
 - Promote policies to create sustainable change in systems and environments.

Identifying 3 Practices You Will Try at Home

Using what you have identified as necessities for sustainability in your community in addition to the practices identified in research, identify 3 things you will work on when you return home to foster sustainability.