Community Engagement:
Working Together Toward a Shared Goal

Office of Adolescent Health and Administration on Children, Youth and Families
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Healthy Teen Network

A national nonprofit membership organization that connects professionals to one another in the field of adolescent reproductive health

- Networking
- Training & Technical Assistance
- Resources & Publications
Presenters...

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Objectives

At the conclusion of this 60-minute webinar, you will be able to…

1. Identify three action steps of project partners for supporting community initiatives

2. Define the difference between a project partner and a community stakeholder

3. Summarize the components of building and sustaining relationships with project partners and community stakeholders
Agenda

- Define and explain community & community engagement
- Describe community engagement action steps
- Explore who’s involved in the community engagement process
- Describe steps in building & sustaining a community engagement effort
Common Ground
What Is Community?

- The answer depends who you ask!
- Community is a complex and fluid concept that is defined by both an individual’s perspective and the structures and values of others in the larger system.
- This complexity can present challenges to understanding how to define community when targeting an engagement effort.
Community: The Individual

- May belong by choice
  - Voluntary associations
- May belong because of innate personal characteristics
  - Age, gender, race or ethnicity
- Shares a common characteristic with others
  - Geography, shared interests, values, experiences, culture or traditions
- May belong to **more than one** community at a time
Community: The System

- Community is made up of individuals and sectors that are connected through a role, function or activity.
  - School, faith organization, recreation center, organized activity, enterprise, government, etc.
- Success is dependent on each sector performing its function well.
  - Healthy youth is a SHARED responsibility.
- Community also includes the dynamics of status and power.
  - Engaging the community requires negotiating relationships with groups and institutions that hold status and power.
Community Engagement

“…[is] the process of working collaboratively with and through groups of people affiliated by geographic proximity, special interest or similar situations to address issues affecting the well-being of those people.”

Principles of Community Engagement
CDC/ATSDR Committee on Community Engagement
Retrieved, May 2, 2011
Community Engagement

“…involves partnerships and coalitions that help mobilize resources and influence systems, change relationships among partners, and serve as a catalyst for changing policies, programs and practices.”

Principles of Community Engagement
CDC/ATSDR Committee on Community Engagement
Retrieved, May 2, 2011
The Art and Science of Community Engagement

…draws upon evidence-based practices from social science while giving parity to the artistry of the process, resource constraints and the complexity of relationships.

Principles of Community Engagement
CDC/ATSDR Committee on Community Engagement
Retrieved, May 2, 2011
Benefits of Community Engagement

- Broadens your program’s base of support
- Leverages resources and expertise
- Increases your program’s influence to achieve desired change
- Improves prospects for program sustainability
Before You Start: Gaining Entry

What is the plan for…

- Establishing relationships?
- Building trust?
- Identifying formal and informal leaders?
- Engaging and sustaining membership?
- Developing capacities and resources?
- Staying neutral?
- Adhering to ethical standards?
- Ensuring a community-driven process?
PROCEEDING WITH A CLEAR GOAL IN MIND

Action Steps
#1: Conduct a Thorough Needs & Resources Assessment

- Quantitative data
  - Surveys
  - Vital statistics
  - National data (to compare with community data)

- Qualitative data
  - Focus groups
  - Interviews – individual or group
  - Observation
#1: Needs & Resources Assessment – Focus on Youth

- The individual
  - Age, gender, race, ethnicity
  - Sexual risk-taking behaviors
  - Risk and protective factors
#1: Needs & Resources Assessment – Focus on Youth

- The community system (structures and values)
  - Resources
    - Pre-existing programs
    - Youth-serving organizations
  - Policies supporting reproductive health
  - Community’s values toward programs
  - History and experience with engagement efforts
  - Perception of those initiating the process
#1: Needs & Resources Assessment – Focus on Youth

- Identify the **needs** for successful initiative by answering, “Where are the **gaps** in the community?”

- Identify the people and organizations to be involved by answering, “Who are the **change agents** in the community?”
#2: Share Information About Your Program with the Community

- Should be a regular and routine activity – at least monthly
- Builds mutual understanding and collaboration
- Strengthens reciprocity of relationship
- Leverages collective wisdom, effort and support
#2: Share Information About Your Program with the Community

- Tell the “story” of the initiative, complete with the purpose and vision
- Present results in simple, compelling and clear language; avoid jargon
- Use visuals and metaphors to illustrate results
- Involve the audience by asking open-ended questions
- Be prepared; practice, practice, practice
#2: Share Information About Your Program with the Community – Verbally

- Community meeting
- Town hall style meeting

Prepare the space
  - Position chairs with unobstructed views

Create a safe environment
  - Establish reciprocity by asking basic questions

Check for understanding
  - Use reflective listening and summarizing
#2: Share Information About Your Program with the Community – in Writing

- Report and press conference
- Community newsletter
- Journalistic news story
  - Newspaper
  - Internet
  - Letter to the editor
- Post on social networking sites
  - Facebook
  - Twitter
#2: Share Information About Your Program with the Community – Other Ways

- **Photovoice**
  - Community members record and reflect upon issues affecting their lives
#2: Share Information About Your Program with the Community – Closing

- Reiterate the vision and express the benefits of participating in the community initiative to...
  - Build ownership in process and outcomes
  - Empower membership
  - Develop collective wisdom to produce innovative solutions
  - Help participants gain better awareness of themselves, their community, and the potential for improving their quality of life
#3: Ask Community Members to Assist Your Program

- Program planning
  - Bringing different perspectives to the table
  - Offering specialized expertise

- Program expansion
  - Volunteers to permit increased staffing
  - Partnerships to create new opportunities

- Marketing
  - Raising awareness of the program via informal networking
  - Using social networking media to publicize events
#3: Ask Community Members to Assist Your Program

- Building program support
  - Raising money
  - Finding/providing space for activities

- Other kinds of support
  - Advocating (as private citizens) for public policies that address needs identified in the community
  - Providing pro bono specialized training for staff
  - Other – Be creative!
#4: Shape Your Community Engagement Effort – Who Should Be Involved?

- Open to all or by invitation only?
- Representative, influential, including those not traditionally asked to the table
- Diverse knowledge, skills and capacities
- Thinkers and doers
- Manageable size

- Who else should be there?
  - Get buy-in sooner rather than later
#4: Shape Your Community Engagement Effort – Determinants of Involvement

- Intensity of participation (frequency of activities)
- Knowledge, skills and attitudes to contribute
- Resources - $$$, time
- Flexibility
  - Releasing control of process expectations (linear vs. iterative)
  - Revising activities to match community’s comfort while achieving the goal
- Endurance
  - Long-term, sustainable commitment to the initiative
#4: Shape Your Community Engagement Effort – Getting Started

- Determine meeting schedule & mode
  - In-person, online, phone

- Define and assign roles and responsibilities

- Agree on leadership role(s)

- Agree on the decision-making process
  - Democratic process (i.e., voting)
  - Consensus
  - Final & binding vs. revisit at a later time & flexible

- Develop and use group rules
MULTIPLE LEVELS OF INVOLVEMENT

Who’s Who in Community Engagement?
Who’s Who: Project Manager

- Responsible for **coordinating** and **coaching** core Project Partner Group and Stakeholder/Advisory Group

- Coordinates **operational** activities and facilitates **relationship-building activities**
  - Meetings, events
  - Team building activities

- **Supervises** outreach staff

- **Oversees** data collection, analysis, and dissemination with community
Who’s Who: Project Partner

- **Shares** resources, knowledge & staff
- Has **equal** responsibility for the project’s success
- Works with **like-minded** individuals
- Is **fully** informed of project benchmarks
- Is a member of the **core** decision-making group (i.e., Project Partner Group)
Who’s Who: Community Stakeholder/Advisor

- Is informed of the project’s progress and is a key informant; has clout
- Provides insight into community’s reaction
- Is an ally, engaged in supporting initiative’s goals
- Can present alternate viewpoints while not blocking progress
- Takes direction from core Project Partner Group
TRUST, EQUALITY & PRODUCTIVITY

Building and Sustaining Relationships
Building and Maintaining Trust

- Being open and honest
- Being able to listen well
- Using appropriate humor to add levity and build group cohesion
- Being able to directly address and speak frankly about contentious but important issues such as power differentials, racism and financial decisions

http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/cbpr/u4/u42.php
Retrieved May 2, 2011
Understanding One Another

- Proactive or reactive performance assessment
- Formal process or “organic” process
- Frequency of “check-ins”
  - Beginning of each meeting
  - Monthly, quarterly, annually
- Facilitated by whom?
- What to do with the information garnered?
Activities to Build Trust & Understanding

- Immerse yourself in the community
  - Daily interactions (yes, even weekends!)
  - Attend festivals and community events
  - Eat together!
- Facilitate learning exchanges
- Engage in interactive activities
- Develop agreed-upon operational norms
Accountability

- All must find a balance between operational tasks and allowing the process to go on eternally.

- Make a decision!
  - Vote
  - Nominal group process
  - Consensus or modified consensus
  - SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, threats)
Conflicts: A Natural Part of the Group Process

Bruce Tuckman’s Stages of Group Development

- Forming
- Storming
- Norming
-Performing

http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3954/is_200104/ai_n8943663/
Conflicts: A Natural Part of the Group Process

Richard Hackman’s Conditions for Success

- Being a real team
- Compelling direction
- Enabling structure
- Supporting context
- Expert coaching

http://www.leadingteams.org/open/index3.htm
Conflicts: Why They Happen

- Communication breakdown
- Power imbalances
- Incompatible goals and agendas
- Commitment imbalance
- Inequitable distribution of work and resources
- Turf battles
- Discrimination
Conflicts: Avoiding and Resolving

- Open communication
- Negotiation
- Third-party consultant/facilitator
- Written agreement
- Interactive activities
  - Role-play
  - “Walk in my shoes”
Involuntary Separation: Asking Someone to Disengage

- Review the person’s contributions to the process
- Focus on behaviors and any behaviorally-based performance feedback given previously
- Give the person ample warning and a specific time frame for improvement
- Be clear and concise
- Negotiate an alternate role ONLY when necessary
Community Engagement and Teen Pregnancy Prevention
Findings from Case Studies

- **Community Engagement in Public Health.** Mary Anne Morgan and Jennifer Lifshay, 2006.
  - *A Framework: Ladder of Community Participation*
  - Setting: Contra Costa, CA
  - Contra Costa Health Services

- Lesson learned: The Health Department cannot act alone to create healthy communities.
The Ladder of Community Participation includes seven strategies:

1. Health Department Initiates and Directs Action
   - Local health department takes the lead and directs the community to act

2. Health Department Informs & Educates Community
   - Local health department shares information with the community

3. Limited Community Input/Consultation
   - Local health department solicits specific, periodic community input

4. Comprehensive Community Consultation
   - Community members serve as conduits of information and feedback to and from the local health department

5. Bridging
   - Community and local health department define and solve problems together

6. Power-Sharing
   - Community makes decisions, acts, and shares information with the local health department

7. Community Initiates and Directs Action
Findings from Case Studies

- **Successful Community Engagement: Laying the Foundation for Effective Teen Pregnancy Prevention.** Barbara Goldberg, Victoria Frank, Susan Bekenstein, Patricia Garrity and Jesus Ruiz, 2011.
  - Setting: North Chicago
  - Family Life Education program within the Lake County Health Department/Community Health Center
Case Studies: Findings from Studies

- Lessons learned from the Chicago study:
  - A program must take time to build relationships BEFORE providing services
  - Staff must understand the community’s systems and context
  - Staff must be invested in the initiative and integrate the community engagement core values into their own values
QUESTIONS & ANSWERS
Conclusions
Successful Community Engagement: What We Can Do

1. Address the systems, not just the individual (and vice versa)
2. Ensure initiative is culturally appropriate
3. Explain the relevance & benefits of the initiative
4. Empower the community from within
5. Use core Project Partner Group and Stakeholder/Advisory Group effectively from the beginning to the end of the initiative
References

  http://www.cdc.gov/phppo/pce/

- **It's Not Enough to Collect the Data: Presenting Evaluation Findings So That They Will Make A Difference.** Minnesota Department of Health.
  http://www.health.state.mn.us/communityeng/

- **Developing and Sustaining Community-Based Participatory Research Partnerships: A Skill-Building Curriculum**
  http://depts.washington.edu/ccph/cbpr/index.php

- **Developmental Sequence in Small Groups.** Bruce W. Tuckman.
  http://findarticles.com/p/articles/mi_qa3954/is_200104/ai_n8943663/
References

- **Successful Community Engagement: Laying the Foundation for Effective Teen Pregnancy Prevention.** Barbara Goldberg; Victoria Frank; Susan Bekenstein; Patricia Garrity and Jesus Ruiz, Journal of Children and Poverty, 17(1), pp. 65-86, 2011.


Thank you!!

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