

Developing community leaders & advocates

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Agenda

- What is community organizing?
- How can we use it for substance abuse prevention?
- What traits do you need to be a successful community organizer?
- How can you use community organizing to prevent substance abuse in your community?

Successes and Challenges:

Think about a community organizing initiative or collaborative project that you were involved with recently.

- What worked?
- What didn't?

Community Organizing

...What is it really?

Definition:

Community organizing is a long-term approach where the people affected by an issue are supported in identifying problems and taking action to achieve solutions.

From www.marininstitute.org

Empowerment is the key:

- The empowerment process is at the heart of community organizing.
- Community organizing is the only strategy that invests all of its resources and energy to build the power of the people themselves.

See Nina Wallerstein, "Powerlessness, Empowerment, and Health: Implications for Health Promotion Programs," *American Journal of Health Promotion*, 1992, (6): 197-205

Empowerment, continued

- Empowerment promotes participation of people, organizations and communities toward the goals of...
 - ✓ increased individual and community control
 - ✓ political efficacy
 - ✓ improved quality of community life, and
 - ✓ social justice

See Nina Wallerstein, "Powerlessness, Empowerment, and Health: Implications for Health Promotion Programs," *American Journal of Health Promotion*, 1992, (6): 197-205

Looking at the bigger picture

Smaller picture:

- "Parents need to do a better job"
- "Kids need to learn the consequences"

Bigger picture:

- "We need to change the way our society promotes and makes it so accessible to kids"

VALUES:

- Personal Responsibility**
- Parental Responsibility**
- Family**

VALUES:

- Community Responsibility**
- Corporate Responsibility**
- Social Justice**

Broadening the frame:

- Individual → **Community**
- Personal Change → **Societal Change**
- Private responsibility → **Public responsibility**
- Education & Programs → **Policy change**

Examples to study

How can we use community organizing for preventing substance abuse?

Successes: Tobacco

More than 600 local policies have been passed to regulate tobacco availability, use and marketing. Local coalitions have taken the lead by writing ordinances that best address local problems and organizing broad support.

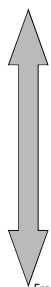
- National Institutes of Health; National Cancer Institute. Major Local Tobacco Control Ordinances in the United States. Smoking and Tobacco Control Monograph No.3 National Cancer Institute, Bethesda, MD, 1993.

CMCA: Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol

- Multi-year research project. (Wagenaar et al, 1994, 1999)
- Community organizing and multi-sector collaboration to create change.
- A focus on policies to reduce underage access to alcohol.
- A community organizer, an Action Team of concerned citizens, & support from a broad base of community volunteers.

<http://www.epi.umn.edu/alcohol/cmca/index.shtml>

CMCA community organizing steps



- Step 1: Assess the community.**
- Step 2: Create a core leadership group.**
- Step 3: Develop a plan of action.**
- Step 4: Build a mass base of support.**
- Step 5: Implement the action plan.**
- Step 6: Evaluate efforts.**
- Step 7: Maintain and institutionalize efforts.**

From Wagenaar, A.C., Gehan, J.P., Jones-Webb, R., Toomey, T.L., Forster, J.L. (1999).
Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol: Lessons and results from a 15-community
randomized trial. *Journal of Community Psychology*. 27(3):315-326.

1x1 Meetings

The Foundation of Community Organizing

- **Assessment**
- **Education**
- **Recruiting support**
- **Capacity-building**
- **Building the team**

Why 1x1's?

- Connect in a way you can't in a group setting
- LISTEN more than talk
- Hear real concerns & opinions
- Gauge level of interest and commitment
- Learn about resources the person can offer
- Develop a level of trust
- Ask for additional contacts

http://www.marininstitute.org/action_packs/community_org4.htm

The community organizer

What traits do you need to be a successful community organizer?

Activity: Self-assessment tool

- Fill out the self-assessment tool on your own
- Tabulate your results and compare your total to the attached chart
- What are your strengths? What are your challenges?

Reporting back:

- Is there anything there you disagree with?
- Is there anything missing?

People power

Who are the leaders in your community?

Who are the leaders in your community?

- Formal/Organized
- Informal
- Stakeholders
- Sectors

CMCA Sectors

1. **Education & health**
2. **Youth & parents**
3. **Civic & religious**
4. **Law enforcement**
5. **Public officials**
6. **Alcohol industry**
7. **General business**
8. **Media**

From Wagenaar, A.C., Gehan, J.P., Jones-Webb, R., Toomey, T.L., Forster, J.L. (1999). Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol: Lessons and results from a 15-community randomized trial. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 27(3):315-326.

A moment of reflection...

Individually or together with members from your community:

- Who is already involved in your efforts, and what is their level of participation?
- Who is missing?**
 - List 3-5 people to schedule a 1x1 with when you return home.

The Tipping Point by Malcolm Gladwell

The Law of the Few: "The success of any kind of social epidemic is heavily dependent on the involvement of people with a particular and rare set of social skills."

FROM WIKIPEDIA

The Tipping Point, continued

- Connectors:** "link us up with the world ... people with a special gift for bringing the world together."
- Mavens:** "information specialists", "people we rely upon to connect us with new information."
- Salesmen:** "persuaders", charismatic people with powerful negotiation skills that make others want to agree with them.

FROM WIKIPEDIA

Implications for Community Organizers

- How can we identify and engage the connectors, mavens, and salesmen in our community?
- How can we become, in our own way, connectors, mavens, and salesmen ourselves?

But wait!

□“As in most social networks, it is not just a question of who knows whom, but who is willing to help.”

Chang, Kenneth (2003-08-12). "With e-mail, it's not easy to navigate 6 degrees of separation", The New York Times.

The 6 R's of Participation

1. **Recognition**
2. **Respect**
3. **Role**

The 6 R's of Participation, continued

4. **Relationship**
5. **Reward**
6. **Results**

The 6 R's of Participation

ACTIVITY:

- On each of 6 R's: What do we do now? What could we do better?

Reporting back:

- What are you doing now?
- What can you do better?

Reporting back/conclusions

- Reflect on today's learnings.
- What is one key "take-away" learning that you'll apply to your work?

Resources:

- Marin Institute Community Organizing Action Pack
http://www.marininstitute.org/action_packs/community_org.htm
- Community Organizing Toolkit
<http://www.nfg.org/cotb/>
- Community Organizing and Community Building for Health by Meredith Minkler

Contact information



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