Sustainability through Collaboration: Using Coalitions or Advisory Boards to Support Your Efforts

2012 GLS Grantee Meeting
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Welcome!

Today’s Presenters:

• Jennifer Kennymore, Northwest Missouri State University
• Lena Newlin, University of Wyoming
• Kerri Smith, Suicide Prevention Resource Center
Session Agenda

• Introductions
• Key considerations for advisory boards or coalitions
• Campus examples
• Small group discussions
• Regroup to discuss
• Your questions and comments
What brings you here?
Developing a Coalition or Advisory Board
Starting a Campus Coalition

• Who should be on it?
  – Membership
  – Chairperson(s)

• How should it work?
  – Organizational structure
  – Meeting frequency

• What should it accomplish?

• How long should it exist?

The Jed Foundation, 2006
Membership

• Broad representation
• Senior enough to have the ability to make change
• Those with high student contact

The Jed Foundation, 2006
Identifying Partners/ Members

Who also has a stake in the problem you want to address?

- Obvious partners: counseling center, health promotion, health center, dean of students, residence life, campus safety, student organizations

- Less obvious partners: learning center, financial aid, facilities management, admissions, registrar, local treatment facilities, campus clergy, alumni association, STUDENTS!
Some Characteristics of Effective Coalitions

• Task-focused
• Action planning
• Build coalition capacity
• Build member capacity

Foster-Fishman et al, 2001; Butterfoss, 1993; Community Toolbox; Florin et al, 2000
Northwest
Missouri State
University
- Project Hope -

Jennifer Kennymore, MPH
Project Hope Director
Health Educator
Suicide Prevention Advisory Board (SPAB)

- Our Story and History
- Mission
- Why an advisory board... not a coalition?
- Who is Involved
- What we’ve Accomplished
- Supporting Success
- Barriers to Developing
- Helping with Sustainability
Our Story

- Northwest Missouri State University is located in a rural area.
- In 2004 there were numerous suicides.
- These events were one reason our community was prompted to apply for the GLS grant.
History

- Our Advisory Board was set up in October 2005 and consists of various stakeholders.
- Through the years they have served as advisors and brought their expertise.
- The group has met regularly over the last 6 years.
Mission

- The purpose of the Suicide Prevention Advisory Board (SPAB) is to:
  - Help Project Hope staff stay focused on the goals of the program
  - Provide feedback on programming
  - Help provide direction for the project to ensure we are meeting the needs of our campus community
Why an Advisory Board?

- Collaborative effort aimed at connecting departments
- Group shares ideas/thoughts/recommendations/resources
- Help guide programming
- Have conversations about concerns
Who is Involved?

- Project Hope Staff
- VP of Student Affairs
- Residential Life Director
- University Police Chief
- Wellness Services Director and Staff
- Personal Development and Counseling Director and Staff
Who is Involved Cont.? 

- International/Study Abroad Staff
- Academic and Library Services Director
- Psych/Soc/Counseling Academic Staff
- Student Organization Leaders
- Campus Media
What the SPAB has Accomplished

- Recommended programming and reviewed website
- Shared ideas on trends
- Reviewed our budget, action plan and timeline
- Developed a consistent message
- Provided Valuable Feedback
- Help spread the word about programming and Ask. Listen. Refer. (online suicide prevention training)
Supporting Success

- The support of the SPAB has enabled Project Hope to experience many successes:

  - Developing a strong Behavioral Intervention Team
  - Conducting awareness raising events:
    - Live Your Life Week and Red Flag Events
  - Bringing in Speakers:
    - Kevin Hines, Jamie Tworkowski, Chaz Bono
  - Conducting Trainings and Presentations for:
    - Residential Life Staff, Freshman Seminar Staff, Greek Life, General Psychology Classes, etc.
TO WRITE LOVE ON HER ARMS

ASK
LISTEN
REFER

Live Your LIFE!

Celebrate Life With

Project HOPE
Bearcat Peer Education
To Write Love On Her Arms
Wellness Services
SAMHSA
Partners In Prevention

NW Psych/Soc Club
Barriers to Development

- Time commitment
- Finding a leader who embraces their role
- Maintaining focus to ensure progress
- Having programs/actions designed to fit the departments involved
- Bringing the right people on board
Helping with Sustainability

- Helped consider sustainability
  - What we want to continue, why and how.
- Offered buy-in from their departments
- Recommended interns as an alternate for staffing
- Committed to stay involved even after grant funding has ended
- Continuing conversations beyond the meetings
- Asking for updated statistics to evaluate progress
University of Wyoming: Two Examples of Campus Coalitions

LENA NEWLIN, MPH, CHES
Wyoming

- Least populated state in US
  - 500,000 people spread over 98,000 square miles
- Ranks #3 in the nation for individuals committing suicide* (20.4 per 100,000 versus 12.0 nationally)
  - Leading method is firearm

Source: American Association of Suicidology, 2009
University of Wyoming

- Public land grant university
- Only 4-year institution of higher education in Wyoming
  - (7 community colleges, 1 tribal college, 1 technical institute)
- Approximately 10,000 students
- Located in southeast corner of Wyoming, in Laramie, population 29,000.
Mental Health Issues at UW

- “Cowboy-Up” culture of rugged individualism
- Rural frontier state
  - Limited mental health resources
  - Confidentiality issues
- University Counseling Center
  - Licensed psychologists, counselors, and graduate students
  - Individual and group therapy
  - Free to all students
  - Serve approx. 500 students/year
  - AWARE Program
UW Lifesavers Initiative

- 3-in-1 Framework borrowed from alcohol literature (also a public health model)
  1. University and surrounding community
  2. General student body as a whole
  3. Individual students (especially high risk)
UW Lifesavers Coalition

- **History**
  - Original grant MOUs
  - Started September 2007

- **Membership**
  - Comprised of staff, faculty, students, community members
  - Approximately 10-20 people at each meeting

- **Structure**
  - Meet once per month on campus, 1 1/2 hour meetings over lunch (provided)
Accomplishments

- Strategic planning
- Trained members as gatekeepers
- Development of Crisis / Suicide Response Plan
- Development and dissemination of social marketing campaign
- Support for mental health initiatives/projects
- Educational materials development/review
- Annual statewide conference
Challenges

- Changes in leadership
- Balancing process and task
- Mission: specific or broad?
- Membership recruitment and attrition
  - Faculty, students
- Nature of the subject
Evaluation and Planning

- Used local evaluator to assist with member assessment
  - Conducted interviews with current/past members
  - Future direction of coalition

- Priorities for Coalition
  - Education
  - Check-in
  - Communication between silos
A-team Campus-Community Coalition

- **History**
  - Started in 2002 in response to NIAAA Report
- **Mission:** The A-Team is a collaborative membership comprising UW students, staff, faculty, and invested citizens in the Laramie community, whose mission is to develop, recommend, and assess best practices in policy, prevention / intervention, and enforcement to reduce underage drinking and excessive alcohol use.
A-team Structure

- **Membership**
  - Students, staff, faculty, law enforcement, administrators, community members
  - 25-35 people at each meeting

- Meet once a month, 2 hours over lunch (provided)

- Chair, leadership committee

- 3 parts to a meeting
  - Networking
  - Business
  - Education
Challenges

- Membership recruitment and re-educating
- Keep momentum going and energy high
- Nature of the subject
Accomplishments

- Vibrant coalition with members educated and committed to the issue for 10 years
- Policy and local ordinance changes
- Increased communication across campus and community
- Data driven, follow strategic plan
- Environmental scan
- Support for alcohol education
- National awards and recognition for work
Evaluation and Lessons Learned

- **Effective components**
  - *Strong leadership*
    - Ability to empower others to get the job done
    - Knows what needs to be done and can stay on task
    - Patience, persuasive, flexible, equalitarian
    - Skilled at facilitating discussions and drawing people out
  - *Organizational and logistical structure*
    - Use strategic plan to set agenda and goals
    - Establish sub-committees
    - Hold regularly scheduled meetings (with food!)
    - Communicate clearly and often (email, phone, minutes)
• **Effective components**
  
  ○ **Accountability**
    - Develop a strategic plan with clear goals
    - Keep good records
    - Be data-driven
  
  ○ **An emphasis on process**
    - Have open discussion, inclusive of all members
    - Be patient; don’t expect issues to be resolved quickly
    - Build in flexibility; find balance
Evaluation and Lessons Learned Cont’d

- Discuss sustainability early
- Provide food
- Give people a reason to be there
- Orient new members
- Evaluate
Questions?
Small Group Discussions
Discussion
Final questions or comments?


Thank you!

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