Did It Work?
Prove It to Me!

Combating Obesity
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Session Objectives

1. Explore methods for evaluating community change
2. Develop comprehensive evaluation strategy based on coalition theory (Get ready, Get set, Evaluate)
3. Explore tools for assessing & evaluating communities
4. Use results to be accountable to stakeholders, as well as improve partnership function & strategies
Evaluation Myths

#1: Evaluation is complex - we might not do it "right"!

#2: We don’t have the time or resources!

#3: We never evaluated our coalition or strategies – it’s too late to start now!

#4: We don't to evaluate our partnership to know if our strategies are working!
Help Community Value Evaluation

• Demystify evaluation - Integrate it into everyday work

• View evaluation as reflection: How can it …
  – improve our work?
  – Influence stakeholders?
  – Ensure funding?
  – Increase visibility & credibility?
Participatory Evaluation

- Values multiple perspectives
- Builds community capacity
- Based on local community circumstances & issues
- Adapts to needs of partnerships, strategies & populations

Cousins & Whitmore, 1998; Kellogg Foundation, 1998
The 4 “Ws” of Coalition Evaluation

- Why
- When
- Who
- What
Why Should We Evaluate?

1. Builds capacity within organization & community
   Do partners use approaches or tools for other issues?

2. Determines whether objectives are achieved
   Did organization achieve goals?

3. Improves strategies, practices & policies
   Were strategies effective?

4. Provides accountability to partners & funders
   Are members satisfied & contributing? Are resources used well?
When Do We Evaluate?

- Change in resources
- Change in membership, leadership or staff
- Change in structure
- Expand topics, population, geographic focus
- Begin new project or hold important event
- Before marketing or fund-raising initiative
Who Evaluates?

- Evaluation team - Tap experts, staff or coalition members to help coordinate evaluation efforts
- In-house evaluator - coalition makes decisions & controls process
- External consultant plans/collects data & engages coalition as appropriate
- External evaluation by funder
What will it Cost?

7-10% of program budget

- Salary & benefits: Staff time & training
- Consultants: Varied expertise & perspectives
- Travel: Variable - depends on program & methods
- Communications: Postage & phone/fax
- Printing: Data-collection tools, reports & other documents
- Supplies & equipment: Computers, software & licenses
- Incentives: Meals, babysitting, transportation & gift cards
What Do We Evaluate?

• What about partnership works/doesn’t work well? How can we make it work better?

• Who are key members? Are we meeting their needs? Are we building their capacity?

• What resources have been most helpful or are needed? What are associated costs?

• Do strategies fit partnership’s mission & goals?

• Are strategies successful? Reaching intended groups?

• What have we accomplished?
1. Get Ready
Describe Partnership or Strategy

Stage of coalition & strategies
• Planning or formation
• Implementation
• Maintenance

Problem Statement
• Nature of problem?
• Causes & trends?
• Consequences?

Create logic model
Theories & Logic Models

- Describes core components of partnership or strategy
- Shows connection between partnership, strategies & expected outcomes
- Includes key contextual (influencing) factors
Community Coalition Action Theory (CCAT)
Butterfoss & Kegler, 2009
**Logic Model Shows...**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Inputs/Resources</th>
<th>Strategies/Activities</th>
<th>Outputs</th>
<th>Short-term Outcomes</th>
<th>Intermediate Outcomes</th>
<th>Long-Term Outcomes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Available resources: time, staff, volunteers, money, material</td>
<td>Actions to be taken: Events, training, curricula, marketing, advocacy</td>
<td>Tangible results or products of activities: # people reached, sessions held</td>
<td>Changes in learning, knowledge, skills</td>
<td>Changes in behavior or practice</td>
<td>Changes in health, policy, systems, or environments</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Influencing Factors** - Surrounding environments in which coalition exists (politics, socioeconomics, social norms & conditions, history, stage of development, staff turnover, other initiatives) that can positively or negatively affect its success

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How your efforts...  
...lead to change
CDC’s Obesity Prevention Logic Model

**Inputs**
- Data on obesity
- Data on dietary intake
- Other state policies
- Local activity
- School gardens
- Farmers marketing to schools

**Activities**
- Formulation
- Create a coalition
- Recruit legislators
- Generate press releases
- Testify to legislature
- Organize grassroots
- Collect endorsements
- Write policy briefs

**Outputs**
- No. of partners engaged in advocacy
- Media coverage
- Public awareness
- Public support
- Policymaker support
- Policy drafted

**Outcomes**
- Policy enacted
- No. of participating schools
- No. of participating farmers
- Cost to schools
- No. of schools with gardens
- No. of children reached

**Short Term**
- Access to healthier foods

**Intermediate**
- Intake of healthier foods
- Equitably distributed improvements in body mass index

In theory, there’s no difference between theory and practice. In practice, there is.

Yogi Berra
2. GET SET . . .
Focus the Evaluation

Ask partners what they want to know about:

- Partnership
- Community
- Special populations
- Strategies & activities
- Outcomes
Evaluation Questions

• Are we meeting partners’ needs?
• Do work groups function well?
• Which strategies are effective?
• Are we accomplishing goals & objectives?
• Are we reaching our priority audiences?
• Are we influencing policies & practices?
• Are we building community capacity?
• Could we improve? Do we make a difference?
• What unintended outcomes are occurring?
Evaluation Plan

• Goals & measurable objectives?
• Design: Pre-post, time series, case study? Process, outcome, or both?
• Documentation (participant information, type & number activities completed) & how it will be used?
• Methods (surveys, interviews, focus groups)?
• Major tasks
• Responsible persons
• Timeline?
Ecological Levels of Outcomes

- **Individual outcomes:** Changes in status, quality of life, attitude, behavior, knowledge, skills & transfer of skills

- **Organizational outcomes:** Changes in policies, practices, programs, services, resources, lives/career options, perceptions/skills of staff, mission, direction, or partners

- **Inter-organizational outcomes:** Changes in linkages, relationships, collaboration, interaction, civic engagement & participation, authority & responsibility among organizations

- **Community or systems outcomes:** Changes in health, social or physical environment due to changes in policies, practices, norms & sense of community
Levels of Coalition Evaluation

• **LEVEL 1:** Process - coalition effectiveness

• **LEVEL 2:** Impact - coalition strategies

• **LEVEL 3:** Outcome
  – Change in community policies, systems & environments
3. EVALUATE!
Choose Data Collection Methods & Sources

- Use mixed methods to assess coalition & strategies (qualitative & quantitative)
- Use well-defined, measurable outcomes
- Collect enough data to be reliable, but reduce response burden
- Don’t try to measure it all – Plan to use data you collect!
Sources of Data

Existing Data
- √ Coalition Documents (Reports, newsletters, minutes, rosters)
- √ Existing databases
- √ Business records or websites

People
- √ Coalition members
- √ Participants or participants
- √ General public
- √ Key informants (funders, officials)

Other
- √ Actual events, activities, practices
- √ Before/after pictures (photovoice)
- √ Maps, charts
A Dozen Data Collection Methods

1. **Survey** - mailed, electronic, in-person, phone
2. **Interviews** - in-person, phone, focus group
3. **Group Assessment** - forum, Delphi technique, Nominal Group Process
4. **Observation** - use trained interviewers
5. **Case Study** - multiple data sources & methods
6. **Formal Review** - by peers, panel, experts, review committee
7. **Portfolio Review** - work samples to rate quality & scope
8. **Document Review** - content analysis to assess & summarize
9. **Testimonials** - responses/reactions by key participants
10. **Tests** - standard measures of knowledge, skill, performance, physiology
11. **Photographs/videos** - visual images & stories
12. **Diaries/Journals/Logs** - chronological records; personal views
Selecting Methods

- What data do you need to make decisions about your strategies or coalition?
- What data can be collected & analyzed practically?
- What methods will be used if more data is needed?
- Will results be credible to decision makers?
- Are methods acceptable: Will respondents engage in surveys/interviews/focus groups? Allow record access?
- Who has skills to use methods? Is training required?
- How will data be analyzed?
Instruments & Tools

- SWOT Analyses
- Windshield Tours
- Coalition Effectiveness Tools (CEI & MEI)
- Teamwork surveys
- Member & Community Surveys
- Key Informant Interviews
- Observation Checklists
Free/Low Cost Evaluation Tools

• Online Evaluation Resource Library: Create surveys, interviews, observation guides: [http://www.oerl.sri.com/](http://www.oerl.sri.com/)
• United Way Outcome Measurement Resource Network: Downloadable or low cost (< $50. tools & instruction) [http://national.unitedway.org/outcomes/resources/](http://national.unitedway.org/outcomes/resources/)
Free/Low Cost Evaluation Manuals & Websites

- Community Toolbox:  http://www.ctb.edu
- Empowerment Evaluation Website: http://www.stanford.edu/empowermentevaluation
Selecting Outcomes

Desired & unanticipated results of policy, systems & environmental strategies
Short-term Partnership Outcomes

- Changes in coalition structure & function
- Changes in member recruitment, retention, satisfaction & participation
- Changes in partnership procedures

Sample Outcomes
- # of coalition meetings in past year
- # members from priority population attending training
- Level of satisfaction of coalition members
- # hours contributed by volunteers
Short-term PSE Outcomes

Changes to environment that promote healthier foods & increase physical activity:

- **Physical**: Breastfeeding, proximity to healthier food, spaces for physical activity & screen time
- **Economic**: Changes in prices & taxes
- **Social Norms**: Changes to social networks
- **Communication**: Advertisements & point-of-decision prompts
- **Educational**: Changes in knowledge & skills

Sample Outcomes:

- Increased fruits & vegetables available in cafeterias
- Increased knowledge of healthy foods
- Increased knowledge of benefits of physical activity
- Increased skills in saving $ on food
Intermediate Partnership Outcomes

- Changes in implementation of strategies
- Changes in media coverage
- Changes in community actions

Sample Outcomes

- Increased news coverage of partnership activities
- New or modified services & programs
- New or modified policies & practices
Intermediate PSE Outcomes

Behavior changes that result from policy’s effects on environments:
  - Changes in diet, physical activity, screen time & breastfeeding
  - Changes in social norms related to obesity & behaviors that prevent it

Sample Policy Outcomes:
  • **School children increase consumption of healthy foods**
    (more vegetables, fruit, grains & fiber; less fat & sugar sweetened beverages & appropriate serving sizes)
  • **Increased time spent daily in physical activity**
  • **Food prepared at home more often**
  • **Preparing food budgets**
Long-term Partnership Outcomes

• Community capacity & competence
• Organizational viability
• Health status indicators

Sample Outcomes

• Related coalition formed in adjacent community
• Long-term funding obtained by coalition
• Coalition strategy spun off to partner agency
• Decreased rates of obesity & substance use
Long-term PSE Outcomes

• Effective population-wide health outcomes related to obesity, such as healthy weight
• Equitable distribution of health improvements across population subgroups, especially those at greatest risk
• Cost-effective in achieving improvements

Sample Outcomes

• Decreased risk factors for chronic disease
• Decreased future health care costs
• Local policy changes related to healthy eating & physical activity
• Better attendance at work and/or school
• Decreased amount of money spent on food
Analyze & Interpret Data

Analyze & Summarize data

• Tabulate/stratify data - check errors
• Present summarized data to partners for feedback
• Re-circulate draft to ensure brevity & clarity

Interpret results

• Are results as expected?
• Compare to other programs?
• Limitations of evaluation?
Communicate! Ensure Use of Findings

- **Final Report:** Methods, strengths, weaknesses & results (tables/graphs)
- **Recommend:** Actionable, relevant & useful - Create action plan, roles & responsibilities for acting on findings
- **Share Results:** Media, mail, websites, list serves, forums, newsletters; Reception, social or press event to legislators, funders & supporters
Parting Tips

• Let your questions about partnership & strategies drive the evaluation
• Enlist partners’ help to build buy-in & cooperation
• Start small – plan 1 or 2 evaluation activities/year
• Take advantage of data you already have
• Use & adapt existing tools – Google & Google Scholar are invaluable
Did it work?
Prove it to me!
Are You Ready to Prove It Works?

☐ Are you committed to evaluate coalition & its work?

☐ Are coalition’s goals realistic?

☐ Are strategies consistent with coalition’s goals?

☐ Are desired results specific & clear enough?

☐ Are strategies well-grounded in theory/evidence?

☐ Do you know what kinds of data will be needed?

☐ Is data available? Can you access it?
Are You Ready to Prove it Works?

- Will evaluation be used to make coalition/policy decisions?
- Will findings help you decide whether to expand strategies to new populations/settings?
- Are adequate resources available?
- Will evaluation focus on key questions to yield “lessons learned”?
- Will you heed results, even if it requires change?
- Will evaluator work w/coalition to design evaluation & report & interpret findings?
Then, take your mark & start evaluating!
References


• CDC. (2011). Developing an Effective Evaluation Plan. Atlanta, Georgia: CDC, National Center for Chronic Disease Prevention & Health Promotion, Office on Smoking & Health; Division of Nutrition, Physical Activity & Obesity.