What is a Community Coalition?

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What is a Coalition?

A vehicle for bringing together community sectors to develop and carry out strategies to reduce substance abuse problems.
Who is a Coalition?

Elements (sectors) impacted by a problem that all contribute to carrying out strategies.
What isn’t a Coalition?

A coalition is not a program, although partners often carry out programs as their “piece” of the community-wide strategic plan.
Essential Differences Between “Coalitions” and “Programs”

Difference One = Scale

Coalitions measure success by examining community level indicators. This applies to all coalition outcomes (short and long term).
Essential Differences Between “Coalitions” and “Programs”

Difference One = **Scale**

Coalition-appropriate longer term outcomes

- Reduction in 30-day use of alcohol for all high school students in the community.
- Perceived availability of tobacco for all middle school students in the community.
Essential Differences Between “Coalitions” and “Programs”

Difference Two = Addressing Multiple Causes

Coalitions seek to insure that all causes of identified problems are addressed.
Essential Differences Between “Coalitions” and “Programs”

Difference Two = Addressing Multiple Causes

Coalition-appropriate Focus on Multiple Causes

- Identifies and reports salient personal and environmental risk factors
- Attempts systems level solutions (integration, coordination, policy and practice changes)
Difference Three = **Actors**

- Action in coalitions is diffused and taken by all members.
- Coalition staff plays a coordinating and supportive role.
Essential Differences Between “Coalitions” and “Programs”

Difference Three = Actors

Members (Sector Representatives) act within their own spheres of influence enlarging the coalition’s ability to create change and implement multiple strategies.
Difference Three = **Actors**

- New members are invited to join in an effort to increase the coalition's sphere of influence and gain needed capacity.
- Coalition staff assists with support for planning, problem solving and information management (evaluation, reporting, etc.).
Are all coalitions the same?

• There are several types:

  ▪ Activity or event focused coalitions
  ▪ Service/program delivery coalitions
  ▪ Community mobilization coalitions
  ▪ Comprehensive community coalitions

  • Respond to community conditions by developing and implementing multi-faceted plans to lead to measurable, population-level reductions in one or more substance abuse problems
 Desired Coordinator:

- Passionate & dedicated leader
- Facilitator
- Content meta-expert
- Visionary
- Strategist
- Broker
- Spokesperson
- Coordinator
Desired Coordinator Must Have:

- Flexible hours
- Computer skills
- Writing skills
Coalitions are at different stages:

- Community assessment
- Capacity building
- Planning
- Implementing
- Evaluating
Essential Differences Between "Coalitions" and "Programs"

THINK COMPREHENSIVELY EVEN WHEN YOU CANNOT ACT COMPREHENSIVELY!