Growing Breastfeeding Coalitions

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Purpose of this talk:
- Share ways to talk about coalition growth and development.
- Share story of Oregon OFH & WIC support for a statewide breastfeeding coalition.
- Affirm the presence and process of every state on the call.
- Create community among participants.

Instructional Guide
- Research BF coalitions nationally
- Write a guide showing best practices
  - Six steps to growing a community coalition
  - Ten BF promotion and support activities
  - Incorporation and financial structure resources
  - Resources useful to have on hand (stats, websites, etc.)

Not available at this time.

Plan
- Survey local BF coalitions and groups in Oregon
- Show purpose, functional model, linkages to local coalitions
- Emphasize outreach to all parts of the state

Training
- Provide training to WIC staff
  - Used metaphor of a sunflower to demonstrate stages of growth of a coalition
  - Affirmed importance of each stage of growth, no group better than other for different stage
  - Included activities participants could replicate

Key concepts offered here.

BCO Launch by 2008
- October 30, 2006 planning and visioning meeting
  - 40 participants
  - Professional facilitation
  - Formed 5 committees, including planning of:
  - May 8, 2007 First Annual Meeting

Kristen Sasseen, Amelia Psmythe, Kimberly Radtke
Sunflower metaphor

Who influences a mother’s decision and success regarding breastfeeding?

- Family
- Health provider
- Community
- Policy

Why Coalitions?

• Have a higher impact by working with different influencers in a mother’s life
• Individuals (or solo orgs.) can’t do it alone
• Coordinate care, training
• Speak with one voice for change

Efforts are varied across the US

• What experiences are present with this group?
• Some have strong breastfeeding coalitions already performing in their communities.
• Some may feel like the “lone ranger” in their area.
• Most are somewhere in between.
• We can help each other.

How does YOUR garden grow?

Coalitions are important but….

...what is done toward that end will be different for every community.

Some components of coalition building will be common.

You’re the seed

Just as a seed contains all the potential for growth of a particular plant…

You, as an inspired breastfeeding advocate have all the potential for growth of community breastfeeding support….
Seed – breastfeeding advocate

- Education to personal community
- Helping individual moms with visits and phone calls
- Education to the mother’s immediate circle

Courtesy: Positive Images of Breastfeeding Contest, Sonoma County

Roots

the Seed reaches out….  

Community linkages

- Where is your work already known?
- Where do you already refer?
- How can you take advantage of that?

Courtesy: USDA online photography center

Building a strong root system

Diversity of coalition

Compare list of agency and personal linkages with list of influencers.

What is missing?

Where do your roots need to reach to gather the best "nutrients"?

Overcoming barriers to Building a strong root system

What are the known or imagined barriers to garnering participation of each influencer?

For example – doctors often have barrier of time

How can these be overcome?

Shoots

First public signs of growth…..

Kristen Sasseen, Amelia Psmythe, Kimberly Radtke
Shoots – first public signs of growth

Convene a meeting:
- Convenient time (remember school and work hours if including clients)
- Convenient location (remember parking)
- Child care
- Food

Keep meeting minutes:
- Helps define who is there and who is accountable
- Helps people not in attendance keep up on progress
- Makes a map for others to follow

Flower Bud

Tangible early activities....
Promise of what's to come....

Flower Bud – core working group

Some early group activities
- Get people involved early with concrete things to do and tangible results
- Goals and actions need to be appropriate for resources and community need
- Helps galvanize the group

People volunteering their time need to see what comes of it

Flower Bud

It's important for the group to share the experience of tangible projects....

...Even more important:

Work within your limits; do not over-commit or over-extend
Regardless of size, structure is vital to growth

Advantages:

• Smooth and consistent decision making process
• Continuity if chief "visionary" leaves
• Define jobs to fill jobs
• Create a roadmap for those who follow

Flower – formal structure

Mission Statement
By-laws
Job description
Strategic Plan

Mission Statement
Succinctly defines:
– Who you are
– Purpose
– Scope of work –
  • what you do, and by exclusion don’t do
– Responsibility to those you serve

Helps you:
– Promote your work
– Gain community support
– Attract new members

Steps to determine your mission at a (single) coalition meeting:
Adapted from “Bee Involved in Teen Pregnancy Prevention – organizing, operating and building your coalition” Oregon Department of Human Services, 2000.

• Define who constitutes your group
• Each member identifies most important thing the coalition does
• Each member lists three positive activities
• Write both lists on a flip chart to see people’s different perceptions.
• Work on a consensus to incorporate these perspectives into a brief statement
• One person drafts the Mission Statement from the group’s work.

Creating by-laws and job descriptions

Your structure does not have to be complicated. Just record what is.

• Name
• Mission Statement
• Who constitutes Membership
• Leadership roles/responsibilities
• Officer/Committee roles/responsibilities
• Decision making processes
• How are leaders chosen/evaluated (if incorp.)
• Financial structure (if incorp.)

Strategic plans/objectives

Advantages:

• Makes a forum for group to dream
• Sets the goals of the organization
• Helps orient/prioritize decisions
• Helps with evaluation
A sunflower always turns towards the sun…

…..And so will you

- Stay flexible
- Project evaluation and reflection
- Document, document, document
- ANY level of action is GREAT!

What comes from a full grown sunflower? – more seeds!

Your efforts will encourage individuals in your community to become inspired breastfeeding advocates, like you!

Full bloom – aspects of a fully developed coalition

- Has a core commitment to breastfeeding, continuity of care, and readily available support
- Has a strong, diverse community base
- Meets regularly
- Has meeting minutes
- Visible actions
- Mission statement and formal structure
- Holds all the stages of growth, from seeds to full bloom to more seeds.

Visualize your work in bloom

What will your “seed” realistically look like in one year?

Forming, Storming, Norming, Performing

- Developmental Sequence for Small Groups* is a model used in management theory to describe the behavior of existing teams.
- Phases are all necessary and inevitable, lets the group:
  - grow
  - face challenges
  - tackle problems
  - find solutions
  - plan work
  - deliver results

*Tuckman, 1965
Developmental Sequence for Small Groups

Forming: orientation, testing and dependence

Oregon Coalition is FORMING:
• Key Goals, visioning & planning meeting:
  – Create community among participants
  – Put BCO in context regionally and nationally
  – Discuss roles coalitions play
  – Discuss vision, mission and org. structure
  – Benefits and constraints to participation
  – Goals and stakeholders for spring meeting
  – Create committees

Key lessons from planning meeting
• Important to have representation across state, professional facilitation
• Worked well to have tables brainstorm, then report to larger group (community goal)
• Each committee recruited “doers” & “reviewers”; will work from brainstorming sheets at meeting
• Contractor will coordinate committees, not left to volunteer effort

Storming: BCW example, ’98-’99
Storming is characterized by conflict and polarization around interpersonal issues, with concomitant emotional responding in the task sphere. These behaviors serve as resistance to group influence and task requirements.
• 2 angry people challenged the BCW’s work/focus
• Led to hiring of facilitator for WSC & Ann. Meet.
• Led to the development of the BCW Guidelines
• Very difficult at the time but made us stronger

Norming & Performing (BCW today)
• Norming: Resistance is overcome. Cohesiveness develops, new standards evolve, and new roles are adopted. In the task realm, intimate, personal opinions are expressed
• Performing: Interpersonal structure becomes the tool of task activities. Roles become flexible and functional, and group energy is channeled into the task. Structural issues have been resolved, and structure can now become supportive of task performance. (Tuckman 1965 - page 78 in the 2001 reprint)

Together….
• We (could be) forming an

Association of State Breastfeeding Coalitions (ASBC)