

How Community Led Health Initiatives Work

Goal: A community-level shift in attitudes towards chronic disease prevention

Ideas to consider as you begin planning:

Be respectful of your community's knowledge

Expertise is within your community

Know when to ask for help

Who needs to "buy in" or be on board with you?

What resources do you need (people, money, equipment/facilities)?

Key Process Steps

- Step 1. Identify the health and wellness issues in your community
- a. Bring together people who are interested in the health and wellness issues
 - b. Identify and define your communities needs, gaps and readiness
 - c. Identify and define community strengths and assets to build on
 - d. Find local data related to health and wellness, or those who can help you find the data
 - e. Ask community members to interpret what the data means in their community
 - f. Make high-risk populations a priority

- Step 2. Find your community champions
- a. Identify "champions" – community members willing to take up a cause and able to lead
 - b. Respect community's knowledge
 - c. Value the different ways communities get things done

- Step 3. Engage partners
- a. Find ways to work with existing programs and services
 - b. Find others who can assist
 - c. Be clear about roles & contributions
 - d. Learn from others
 - e. Value volunteers

- Step 4. Develop your plan
- a. Clarify expectations and build in accountability
 - b. Learn from what other communities have done. What information is available regarding similar approaches to issues?

- c. Use your data in developing your plan
- d. Be flexible and responsive to local community needs

Step 5. Train program leaders

- a. What skills or knowledge do you need to carry out the plan in your community?
- b. Nurture leadership – include youth

Step 6. Carry out your plan

- a. Promote your program and raise awareness
- b. Capture community's experiences
- c. Adjust your plan to respond to different results

Step 7. Evaluate what's been done

- a. To what extent did you reach your goals?
- b. What worked well or didn't work? Were changes needed midway?
- c. Identify unintended outcomes that add value to the efforts
- d. Gather advice for others
- e. Identify ways to integrate efforts into existing programs and services – ensure sustainability
- f. Who else needs to know? (advocacy)

Step 8. Celebrate, share and continue

- a. Tell your stories
- b. What do you need to continue your program?

Life Cycle of a Program

1. Identify the health and wellness issues in your community

- Bring together people
- Identify needs, gaps and readiness
- Find the evidence (data)
- Ask community to interpret what the data means in their community
- Find community strengths to build upon
- Make high-risk populations a priority

2. Find your community champions

- Identify community members willing to take up a cause and able to lead
- Respect community's knowledge
- Value the different ways communities get things done

3. Engage partners

- Find ways to work with existing programs and services
- Find others who can assist
- Be clear about roles & contributions
- Learn from others
- Value volunteers

4. Develop your plan

- Clarify expectations and build in accountability
- Learn from what other communities have done.
- What information is available regarding similar approaches to issues?
- Use your data in developing your plan
- Be flexible and responsive to local community needs

5. Train program leaders

- What skills or knowledge do you need to carry out the plan in your community?
- Nurture leadership – include youth

6. Carry out your plan

- Promote your program and create awareness
- Capture community's experiences
- Adjust your plan to respond to different results or outcomes

7. Evaluate what's been done

- To what extent did you reach your goals?
- What worked well or didn't work? Were changes needed midway?
- What unexpected outcomes added value?
- Gather advice for others
- In what way can your programs continue?
- Who else needs to know? (advocacy)

8. Celebrate, share and continue

- Tell your stories
- What do you need to continue your program?

