



Harnessing Community Organizing to Enact Alcohol Policies

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How Do We Improve Health?



Focus on Environmental Change vs. Changing Individuals

- Policy change
- Enforcement of policies
- Improve physical environment
- Etc.



Policy or Other Environmental Interventions

- Level of change:
Institutional, local, state, federal

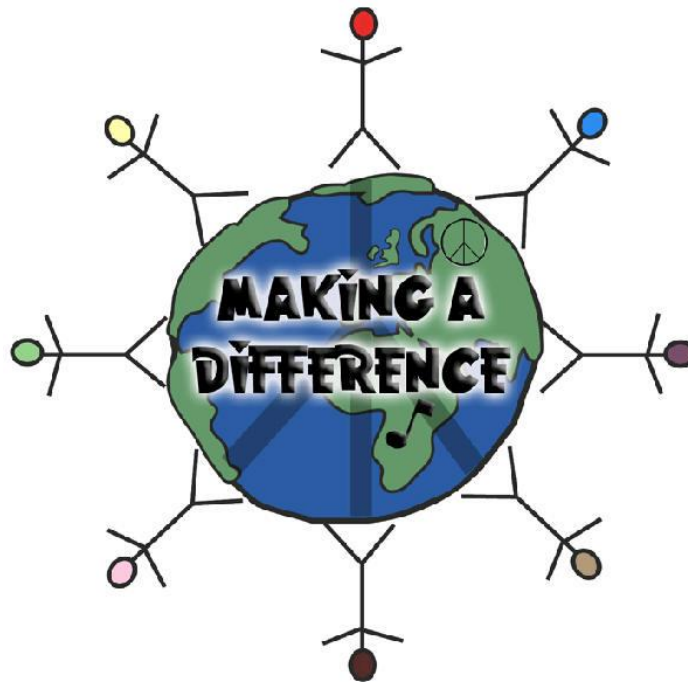


Policy Implementation

- What can we do to make sure policies are as effective as possible, i.e., fully implemented? For example...
 - People are aware of policies
 - Policies are enforced



How do we influence policies and other environmental-level changes?



There is No Curriculum



- Core techniques exist, but...
- Selected strategies and method for creating environmental strategies depends on context and long-term goals
- Need staff or volunteers who know which strategies are best for the local context and political climate

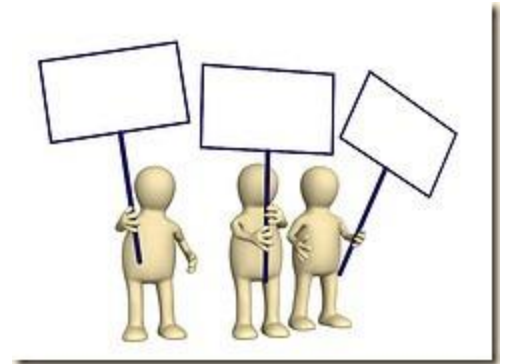
Policy Makers Are Influenced By:

- Constituents
- Money (donors)
- Special interests, including business, nonprofits, issue-oriented groups
- Crisis creating an opportunity to respond
- Relationships with lobbyists
- Media coverage
- Public opinion



Advocacy Is All About:

- Building relationships with our stakeholders
- Engaging our stakeholders
- Moving them from interested supporters to engaged advocates to support legislation



Advocacy Campaigns May Include

- Grassroots community organizing
- Coalition building
- Lobbying
- Media Advocacy



Collaboration Is Important

- Problems will not be solved by one program, one policy or a change at one institution
- Need multiple voices and skill sets
- May need political power to change the status quo



Collaborations

- Not a goal or end point
- Means to achieving a significant change!

Reference: 1,2



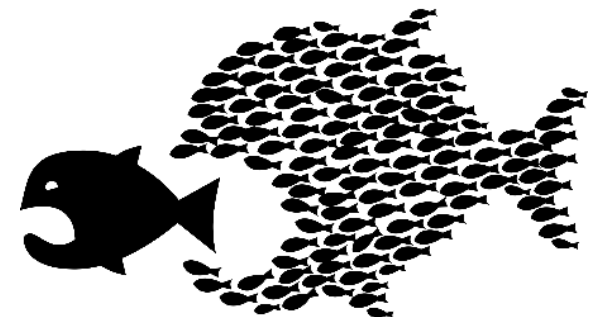
Examples of Two Types of Approaches to Building Collaborations

(1) Grassroots (or Direct Action) community organizing

(2) Coalition Building



Reference: 1



Definition of Grassroots (Direct Action) Community Organizing

- Community organizing = People are brought together to act in their shared self-interest
- People directly affected by the problem take action to solve it



Community Organizing

- Collective action
- External pressure
- Community driven
- Build leadership skills
- Strategic and action oriented
- Focus on power

Reference: 1,2



6 Steps of Direct Action Organizing

1. People identify a problem
2. The organization turns the problem into an issue (i.e., a specific solution to the problem you are trying to solve)
3. Develop a strategy
4. Bring many people to face the decision-maker
5. The decision-maker reacts to you
6. Win, regroup, and go on to the next campaign



Community Organizing Stages

1. Assess Community
2. Build the Base
3. Expand the Base
4. Develop Plan of Action
5. Implement Plan of Action
6. Maintain the Effort and Institutionalize
7. Evaluate



Role of Organizer

- Build relationships
- Conduct community assessments
- Build strategy team
- Build leadership of community members
- Help team be successful
- Help team be focused, action-oriented, and strategic

Reference: 2



Preventing Illegal Alcohol Sales at Community Festivals



Reference: 3,4

Changing Alcohol Policies at Events (CAPE)

- Example: 1-year community organizing intervention
- Communities randomly selected
- Two organizers
- Four festivals

Assess Community

- Data collection
 - Surveys
 - Focus groups
 - Community observations
- Power mapping
- One-on-ones

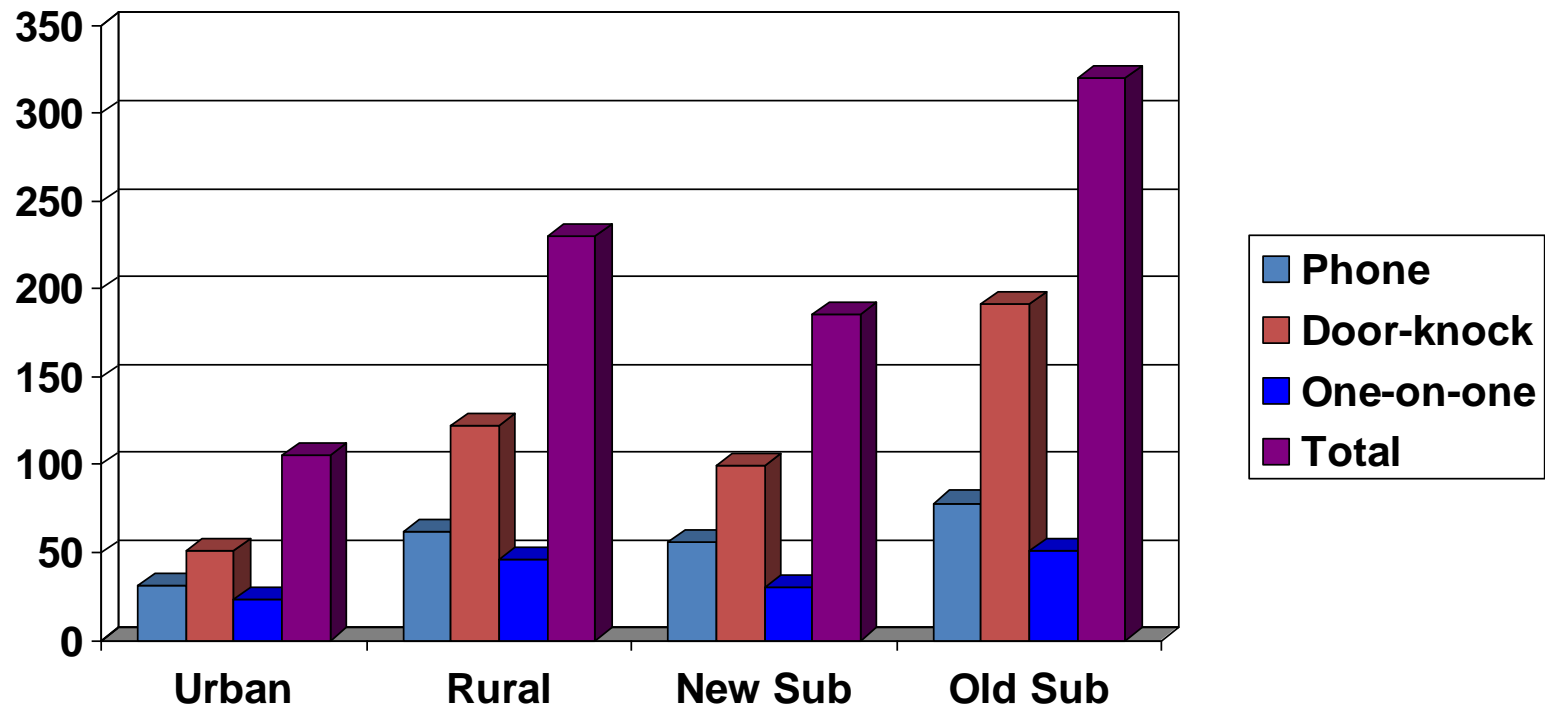


One-on-Ones



- Critical step!
- Conversations with individuals throughout community
 - Learn about concerns and what motivates
 - Explain issue that is being worked on
- Build relationships
- Identify supporters and opponents
- 100-300 should be completed within first few months

Number of Contacts For CAPE



Build and Expand Base

- Build community awareness
- Build strategy team
- Broaden strategy team



Reference: 5,6

Develop and Implement Action Plan

- Community driven
- Policy focus
- Strategic



Recommended Policies

Categories

- Underage sales and social provision
- Preventing intoxication
- Management issues
- Protecting the community

Policy Levels

- Booth level
- Festival level
- Community level



What happened?

- All 4 communities/festivals changed policies within one year!
 - 1 at the festival level
 - 3 at the community level



Reference: 3

Key to CAPE Successes



- Local media coverage
- Community-specific solutions
- Leadership development
- Active involvement of team members
 - Talking to city council members, vendors, festival planners
 - Presenting to city councils
 - Chairing meetings, taking minutes, scheduling rooms, drafting media announcements

CAPE Challenges

- Framing the issue – communities randomly selected
- Timeline
 - One year
 - Teams couldn't make observations before making policy recommendations
 - Didn't get to enforcement actions



Challenges of Community Organizing

- Providing sufficient time for one-on-ones
- Maintaining engagement of core team members and base of supporters
- Building leadership
- Avoiding burn out of team



Factors to Consider

- Serve as organizer or hire organizer?
- Qualities of organizer
 - Personality
 - From community?
 - Experience
- Organizational support for organizer
- Leadership development
- Activities vs. strategic action
- Agenda-based organizing vs. bottom-up approach



Examples of Key Ingredients for Successfully Planning an Organizing Campaign



- Reasonable effort for organizer (e.g., 50-100% effort)
- Enough time for one-on-ones to be completed
- Space & time for strategic planning
- Contact database
- Resources necessary for organizing work (e.g., lap top, etc.)
- Reasonable timeline given desired changes (e.g., state vs. local change, geographic scope, schedule of policy-making body)

Community Organizing Training Example

Midwest Academy

<http://www.midwestacademy.com/training.html>

Examples of Two Types of Approaches to Building Collaborations

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Reference: 1



Coalitions

Build a coalition

- An organization of organizations
- Work together for common goal
- Can be temporary or long term



Reference: 1

Why Build a Coalition?

- Can't win alone
- Increases resources
- Increases impact of individual organization's efforts
- Broaden geographic scope



Reference: 1

Considerations for Coalitions

- Identify organizations that may have shared interests
- Choose a common issue
- Hire neutral staff
- Agree to disagree – focus on common goals
- Decide decision-making procedures up front

Reference: 1



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Building a Coalition

Build a coalition:

- An organization of organizations
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Reference: 1

Challenges of Coalition Work

- May not take action!
- Inequality of power
- May distract from your organization's other work
- May end up using weaker strategies
- Your organization may not get credit



Examples of Key Ingredients for Successfully Planning an Coalition Component



- Reasonable effort for coalition Director (e.g., 50-100% effort)
- Time for building coalition – e.g., consider how you would invite organizations to join
- Space for meetings
- Time for meetings (1-2 times per month)
- Contact database
- Resources necessary for director (e.g., lap top, mileage, etc.)
- Reasonable timeline given desired changes (e.g., state vs. local change, geographic scope, schedule of policy-making body)

Considerations for Coalitions and Organizing

- Action-oriented
- Focused
- Don't just do activities
- Do activities that are strategic and move you toward your goal



Additional Considerations for Coalitions and Organizing

- Do not waste time on interventions that:
 - Do not work
 - Are not going to create changes at a population level

Remember

“...Talk alone moves nothing. Only talk that is tied to action can do so.”

» adapted from Aristotle



Reference: 2

Advocacy Campaigns May Include...

- Grassroots community organizing
- Coalition building
- Lobbying
- Media Advocacy



What is Lobbying?

“Carrying on propaganda, or otherwise attempting, to influence legislation”

What we
picture...



What is reality in
public health...



Advocacy/Lobbying

- Build relationships with elected officials/administrators
- Become a resource for decision makers
- Strategist
- Can be staff person, volunteer, or contract lobbyist



Types of Lobbying

- **Direct lobbying**

Direct communication with any member or employee of a legislative body or any government official who may participate in formulation of legislation

- **Grassroots lobbying**

Educating and activating members or public to persuade elected and appointed officials to vote in support of policy



Media Advocacy

- The story will likely be told with or without you. *So take the opportunity to help shape it*
- Can use media to influence decision makers



Media Advocacy, continued

- Media attention contributes to setting the public agenda for important issues
 - Confers importance and legitimacy
- Media attention also provides story “frames” for interpreting meaning
- Media attention to issues and story frames are strongly influenced by news “sources”
 - Mobilized organizations, groups, advocates, scientists, and so on...



Media Advocacy

- Credible – People hear, remember and believe what the news tells them (at least used to be true!)
- Cost effective – News vs. Advertising
- Ability to reach large numbers of people
- Immediate
- Establish/enhance your credibility





Questions?

<http://www.aep.umn.edu/>



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- 3) Toomey TL, Fabian LA, Erickson D., Wagenaar, A.C., Fletcher, L., Lenk, K. Influencing alcohol control policies and practices at community festivals, *Journal of Drug Education*, 36(1):15-32, 2006.
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