

COALITION BUILDING FOR DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION AND EFFECTIVE DRUG POLICY

Calvina L. Fay

Executive Director

Drug Free America Foundation, Inc.

www.dfaf.org



Why do we need coalitions?

- The drug problem affects all of us
- The drug problem affects most societal problems
 - Crime
 - Child abuse/neglect
 - Healthcare
- Prevention, treatment and law enforcement efforts or under attack with drug legalization and normalization efforts



What is a Coalition?



- A coalition is a union of people and organizations working to influence outcomes on a specific problem.
- Coalitions are useful for accomplishing goals that reach beyond the capacity of any individual member organization.



Big Picture Questions:

- Why are you doing this?
- What is your vision for your community?
- What are you trying to accomplish or change?
- State the big picture in a single sentence...
“We are going to _____ by _____.”

Ask More Specific Questions:

What are your assumptions about how to achieve your vision?

What are your funder's underlying assumptions about how you should operate?

What is the history of work being done in this area?

What does scientific research say about your assumptions?



...More Questions to Ask

- Do we want to invite everyone to the table, then achieve consensus?
- Do we want to get our goal, then recruit people who believe in our goal?



WHAT IS A DRUG DEMAND REDUCTION COALITION AND ITS BASIC PRINCIPLES?

A prevention coalition aims to achieve the goal of building communities free of drugs by developing actions and creating alternatives based on a community's needs in synergy with other groups.

Working in coalitions allows the incorporation of a preventive attitude into the normal behavior of all of its members and of the population in general.

WHY COALITIONS?

- Greater strength
- Sharing of information and resources
- Motivate each other
- Mutual growth
- Reach goals together, faster



The Fundamental Objective of a Coalition

To generate *changes* in the attitudes and behaviors of the population of the local, national and international communities



Requirements of a Coalition

- Unified vision and mission
- Support networks
- Cooperation
- Coexistence
- Tolerance
- Mutual respect



Coalition Strategies

Individual

- Knowledge
- Attitudes
- Behaviors
- Skills
- Resources

Environmental

- Policy level changes
- Social norm changes
- Enforcement efforts
- Technology changes

Elements of Successful Coalitions

- Shared mission statement
- Understanding your community
- Clear strategic plan
- Organizational structure
- Diversified and relevant funding
- Strong leadership
- Volunteer contributions

Elements of Successful Coalitions

- Representative membership
- Access to community leaders or decision makers
- Meet the needs of the members
- Commitment and energy
- Willingness to change and adapt
- Meeting flexibility
- Be there for one another

Growth

- Develop your mission
- Clearly state your purpose!
- Who do you want in your coalition?
- Outline your decision-making process?
- Determine who has internal/external power
- Conduct self-interest assignments
- Hold one-on-one meetings



guiding principles

Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction

Effective drug demand reduction programs should:

- Be guided by research
- Target all forms of drug use – including tobacco, marijuana and inhalants
- Clearly identify target populations, motivations, risk factors and demographics to design prevention and education strategies
- Be age specific
- Be evaluated

Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction

Involvement of many segments of the community:

- Educators, youth and parents
- Law enforcement officials
- Business leaders
- Members of the faith community
- Social service providers
- Representatives of other community agencies

Guiding Principles of Drug Demand Reduction Coalitions

- Promote healthy lifestyles free of drugs
- Advocate no use of illegal and misuse of legal drugs, including alcohol, tobacco and solvents
- Oppose the legalization of drugs
- Support the United Nations Conventions and Treaties concerning drugs and psychotropic substances – Visit www.ungassdrugs.org

Understanding the international drug treaties

- The United Nations International Drug Conventions of 1961, 1971, and 1988 explicitly state that every member country must take measures to reduce drug use and the total harm resulting from the use of drugs.
- The Conventions require member states to devote resources towards reducing the demand and supply of drugs and to not cede to legalization efforts.

Understanding the international drug treaties

- The adoption of the 1961 Convention is regarded as a milestone in the history of international drug control.
- The Single Convention:
 - codified all existing multilateral treaties on drug control; and
 - extended the existing control systems to include the cultivation of plants that were grown as the raw material of narcotic drugs.

Understanding the international drug treaties

- The principal objectives of the 1961 Convention are to:
 - limit the possession, use, trade, distribution, import, export, manufacture and production of drugs exclusively to medical and scientific purposes; and
 - to address drug trafficking through international cooperation to deter and discourage drug traffickers.
- This Convention also established the International Narcotics Control Board (INCB), merging the Permanent Central Board and the Drug Supervisory Board.

Understanding the international drug treaties

- The Convention of 1971 established an international control system for psychotropic substances.
- It responded to the diversification and expansion of the spectrum of drugs of abuse and introduced controls over a number of synthetic drugs according to their abuse potential and their therapeutic value.

Understanding the international drug treaties

- The Convention of 1988 provided comprehensive measures against drug trafficking, including provisions against money laundering and the diversion of precursor chemicals.
- It provided for international cooperation in areas such as extradition of drug traffickers, controlled deliveries and transfer of proceedings.



Understanding the international drug treaties

- Every ten years the goals that have been set forth in the Conventions are reviewed.
- The current review was due in 2008 but, has been delayed until 2009 with 2008 to be observed as a year of “reflection.”

Elimination of international drug treaties as a legalization strategy

- Drug legalization advocates are planning to petition the United Nations during the General Assembly Special Session on Drugs (UNGASS) in 2009.
- A call will be made for the elimination or rewriting of the Conventions which are vital in preventing countries from legalizing currently illegal drugs or implementing other drug permissive measures under international law.
- A similar attempt was made during the review of the Conventions in 1998.

It is imperative that we protect the international drug conventions

- Project SUNDIAL has been formed to counter the efforts of the drug legalization advocates and support the international goals against drugs.
- An online petition is available via the Internet to enable citizens around the world to show their support to the UN Drug Conventions and to push back against drug legalization.
- Individuals and organizations may sign this petition located at www.ungassdrugs.org.

Coalition Evaluation Strategies

- What questions do you want to answer?
- What lessons did we learn?
- How did our partnerships work?
- What adjustments are needed?
- Are we following our goals and mission?
- What worked and what did not?
- Should we continue?
- Is this necessary?



Evaluation Strategies are Helpful for:

- Planning programs
- Monitoring implementation of programs
- Improving programs
- Advancing knowledge

Coalition Challenges

- Group dynamics
- Various personality types
- Power struggles
- Search for status
- Private vs. public sector
- Size of group



Characteristics of collaborative organizations:

Advisory committees respond to organizations or programs by providing suggestions and technical assistance.

Characteristics of collaborative organizations:

Networks are loose-knit groups formed for the purpose of resource and information sharing.

Characteristics of collaborative organizations:

Task Forces work together to accomplish a specific series of activities at the request of an overseeing body.

There are other types of collaborative organizations:

- Commissions
- Consortia
- Alliances

What makes a successful meeting?



Unsuccessful

- Late start
- Late end
- Unclear/no agenda
- Poor handling of new members
- Bad attitudes

Successful

- Begin and end ON TIME
- Clear agenda distributed in advance
- Inform new members of expectations
- Make introductions to new members

What makes a successful meeting?



Unsuccessful

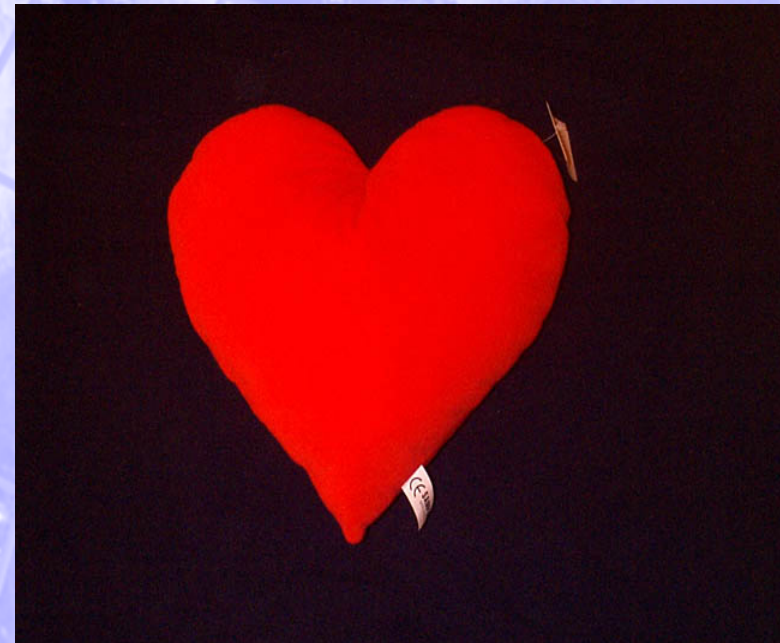
- Uncomfortable environment
- Inaccessible location
- One-way communication
- No minutes
- No refreshments

Successful

- Good room set-up
- Easily accessible location
- All opinions shared
- Good facilitator
- Good/timely communication
- Refreshments!

Encouraging the Heart

- Praises people often
- Reward for contributions
- Recognition for shared values
- Celebrate accomplishments
- Give support and appreciation
- Express confidence in peers



Outcomes

- Did you get what you wanted? Full victory? Partial victory? What did you win?
- Share and assign credit
- Ensure documentation
- Celebrate success
- Provide recognition



Resources

- **The Drug Prevention Network of the Americas (www.dpna.org)**
 - **Developed in partnership with Drug Free America Foundation.**
 - **Supported and promoted by RISE.**
 - **An excellent medium for keeping community leaders informed about drug policy issues.**

Additional Resources

- Drug Free America Foundation, Inc.-
www.dfaf.org
- International Task Force on Strategic Drug Policy – www.itfsdp.org
- The Journal of Global Drug Policy and Practice – www.globaldrugpolicy.org

QUESTIONS?



www.dfaf.org