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2017 Brief Summary

Partnership for Success – South Glens Falls School District

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Partnership for Success – South Glens Falls School District

This report provides findings from the responses of members of the Coalition for Family Wellness in South Glens Falls School District area (the "Coalition") to the Coalition Capacity Checklist (CCC). The CCC is an online survey administered yearly by the New York State Office of Alcoholism & Substance Abuse Services to assess capacities, resources, and activities of grantees in the Partnership for Success, which is a program to prevent the use of heroin and abuse of prescription medications in New York State. The Coalition is a Partnership for Success grantee.

Findings in this report are based on responses from 11 Coalition members; two of the 11 responded to less than 40% of the items. Thus, data were only available for as few as nine Coalition members for most of the items. This is down from 18 respondents from a year ago. As such, it is possible that the findings in this report do not reflect the Coalition as a whole. Findings from this report are organized by the CCC's two sections: (1) Background Information and (2) Coalition Characteristics.

- *The Background Information* section consisted of 10 items that asked about (1) members' roles on the Coalition, including whether respondents were a coordinator or director, the number of years members have been on the Coalition, meeting attendance, and participation in various types of activities or committees; (2) representation, i.e., groups that members represented on the coalition (e.g., youth, Religious/Fraternal Organization, etc.); and (3) self-assessments, including satisfaction with roles, the extent to which the Coalition needed additional skills to fulfill Coalition goals, and the importance of the role of the coordinator to the coalition's sustainability.

- *The Coalition Characteristics* section consisted of 15 domains with a total of 88 items. The number of items varied across domains, ranging from four to ten items per domain. Each item was scored based on a 5-point Likert scale, where 1 was "weak" or "never" and 5 was "strong" or "always". Table 1 shows each domain's name, example item, and total number of items.

Table 1 Coalition Characteristics

Domain	Example Item	Number of Items
1. Vision, mission, goals	Our coalition's vision, mission, and goals are clear and well-documented	6
2. Structure & Membership	All of the necessary sectors of the community are represented	7
3. Coalition Leadership	(The Leader/Coordinator) effectively promotes the mission and goals of the coalition	6
4. Outreach and communication	Our coalition keeps the community updated on its activities (e.g., through a newsletter, website, Facebook)	4
5. Coalition Meetings and Communications	Our coalition has a regular meeting schedule	10
6. Opportunities for member growth and responsibility	New members receive an orientation and copies of relevant background materials	6
7. Effectiveness in planning and implementation	Our coalition develops an annual or overall plan that lists goals and activities	6
8. Relationship with local government and other community leaders	Representatives from our coalition meet with local officials and community leaders	4
9. Partnerships with other organizations	Our coalition is knowledgeable about other community organizations and what they do	7
10. Coalition members' sense of ownership and participation	Our coalition builds social time for members into meetings and events	7
11. Ability to collect, analyze, and use data	Our coalition has members, or a consultant, with experience in collecting and analyzing data	4
12. Understanding of and commitment to environmental change strategies	Coalition members are familiar with concept of population-level change	4
13. Cultural Competence	Our mission statement recognizes the importance of respecting cultural diversity (including racial/ethnic, age gender, socioeconomic, and lifestyle)	5
14. Funding and sustainability	Our coalition has received funding from multiple sources	5
15. Additional items	Our coalition engages young adults to help inform its planning efforts	7

Frequencies for Background Information items were calculated to understand and describe respondents' roles, activities, and perspectives.

The analysis of responses to Coalition Characteristics involved three components. First, responses were analyzed to identify the strongest and weakest domains, which can point to (a) areas where the Coalition is already doing well so they can sustain those efforts and (b) other areas that may need additional effort or resources to improve Coalition effectiveness. This analysis involved rank ordering domains by their mean (average) scores. Second, responses were also analyzed to understand the level of consistency of responses, which may be an indication of level of agreement among responders. This analysis involved

calculation of range, the distance between the highest and lowest scores. Finally, items that were rated below three, the scale's midpoint, were identified to detect specific areas of improvement.

It is useful to understand both the typical perspective of Coalition members (averages), as well as members' level of agreement (range). Coalitions typically function democratically and work to solicit the views of all members. Thus, capacities and resources domains with high agreement (consistency) could be areas the Coalition can confidently address, either by sustaining efforts in those areas (high-average domains) or increasing efforts to improve those areas (lower-average domains); those with lower agreement (inconsistency) and scores below three could be areas the Coalition could address directly or explore through discussion to understand the different views among members.

Findings

Background Information (n=9)

Respondent roles

None of the respondents indicated that they were the Coalition coordinator or director. Thus, in addition to a low number of respondents (n=11), it appears the coordinator was among those who did not complete a survey. Most of the respondents (n=5) indicated they were a member of the Coalition for one to two years; two reported less than one year with the coalition and another two reported more than five years. Most respondents (n=5) indicated they were involved in two activities or committees; three said they were involved in one activity/committee and one indicated involvement in three activities/committees. "Volunteering as needed" was the most commonly selected activity (n=6). Four respondents indicated they were chairs of committees; another four indicated they were members of committees. Two indicated membership on the executive team.

Respondent affiliations

Participants were asked to identify a group they primarily represent, as well as other (non-primary) groups they may represent. Participants chose their responses from a checklist of groups. Most (n=5) identified only a primary group they represented. Groups primarily represented included youth-serving organization (n=2); other organization involved in reducing substance abuse (n=2); school (n=1); parents (n=1); 2 respondents wrote in their answers: "Staff" and "County Department". Four respondents selected other (non-primary) groups they represented, including youth-serving organizations, other organization involved in reducing substance abuse, business, and healthcare professional. Several of the groups represented in last year's CCC were not represented this year (e.g., law enforcement, religious/fraternal organization), indicating Coalition members have shifted their representation in the intervening year and/or this year's respondents did not complete last year's CCC. One noteworthy difference between the last two CCCs is that no respondent from this year indicated affiliation with youth or parents; instead, all respondents indicated affiliation with formal organizations, even where youth and parents are concerned (i.e., "youth/parent-serving organization", not youth/parents more broadly).

Respondent self-assessments

Responses to self-assessment questions indicated respondents were satisfied with the Coalition, its leadership, and its capacity to meet its goals. All respondents indicated that they were either satisfied or very satisfied with their role on the Coalition. All but one respondent reported they attended all or almost all of the Coalition meetings; one attended about half of the meetings. Most (n=7) indicated the Coalition needed to recruit a couple more members to round out the skills needed to achieve the Coalition's goals.

One respondent reported the Coalition had all the members needed and one was neutral. Seven respondents said the Coalition coordinator was very or extremely important for the Coalition's sustainability; one said the role was moderately important and another indicated the role was slightly important.

Coalition Characteristics

Table 2 shows the means (averages) and ranges of domain scores. The table also identifies high (green), medium (yellow), and low (red) levels of means and ranges. Items that that respondents scored below three are displayed below the table. The results showed that all the mean scores were above the scale's midpoint, indicating that even the lower-scoring domains were not low in an absolute sense. Based on the "typical view" of coalition members, all domains were areas of strengths. Thus, these high, medium, and low levels indicate areas of relative strength/weakness. That said, examination of domain ranges and items below three shows that some respondents felt the Coalition could improve in some areas, even if most Coalition members regarded those areas as strengths.

The highest-scoring domains also had lower ranges, indicating that most respondents viewed these domains as areas of strength for the Coalition. These findings suggest that the Coalition's strongest assets are in coalition meetings and communications, coalition members' sense of ownership and participation, partnerships with other organizations, and coalition leadership. A scan of higher-scoring items in these domains indicated that the Coalition excels in several areas, including holding regular meetings; sending agendas ahead of meetings; recording and distributing minutes; a leader who creates space for members to speak their mind without being criticized; resolving conflicts respectfully; having a clear vision, mission, and goals that members agree with; and staying informed about issues affecting the community. Another higher-scoring domain – ability to collect, analyze, and use data – also had a high range, indicating that while most respondents thought the Coalition performs well in this area, some may view this as an area of improvement.

The lowest-scoring domains also had high ranges, indicating that while some Coalition members view these areas of strengths, others think the Coalition could improve in these areas. However, one of the lowest scoring domains also had a low range – structure and membership – indicating many members view this as an area for improvement. A scan of the lower-scoring items in this domain indicated that the Coalition has not adequately (a) represented nonprofessional organizations or (b) involved youth and parents. Several of the lowest-scoring domains also included items with scores below three, as displayed below Table 2. These items show the Coalition's performance could also improve in the areas of respecting and enhancing cultural diversity and orienting and mentoring new members.

Table 2 Means, range, and scores below 3 of Coalition Characteristics Domains

Domain	Mean	Range
Coalition meetings and communications n=10	4.7	0.9
Coalition members' sense of ownership and participation n=9	4.5	0.9
Partnerships with other organizations[a] n=9	4.5	1.1
Coalition Leadership n=10	4.4	1
Effectiveness in planning and implementation n=9	4.4	1.3
Ability to collect, analyze, and use data n=9	4.4	2
Vision, mission, goals n=11	4.3	0.8
Funding and sustainability n=9	4.3	1.8
Relationship with local government and other community leaders n=9	4.2	1.5
Outreach and communication n=10	4.1	1.5
Understanding of and commitment to environmental change strategies n=9	4.1	1.8
Cultural Competence[b] n=9	4	2.2
Opportunities for member growth and responsibility[c] n=10	4	2.3
Structure & membership[d] n=11	3.8	1
Additional items[e] n=9	3.7	2.3

Key:		
	4.4+	< 1
	> 4 & < 4.4	> 1.2 & < 2
	< 4.1	> 2

[a] "Our coalition interacts with and shares information with other prevention organizations (other than substance abuse related) and/or coalitions in our community"

[b] "Our mission statement recognizes the importance of respecting cultural diversity (including racial/ethnic, age gender, socioeconomic, and lifestyle)"; "Our membership reflects the cultural makeup of the community"

[c] "New members receive an orientation and copies of relevant background materials"; "We use mentoring or some other means to help less experienced members learn what is needed"

[d] "Our coalition membership includes more than just professional and organizational representation, i.e., parents, youth, etc."

[e] "Our coalition engages young adults to help inform its planning efforts"; "Our coalition engages parents to help inform its planning efforts"; 1"Our coalition relies on external volunteers to help accomplish our goals"

Summary and Recommendations

Respondents included Coalition members who seem actively involved, as indicated by participation in multiple committees and activities, representation of members of the executive board and chairs of committees, frequent meeting attendance, and a willingness to volunteer to accomplish whatever the Coalition needs. However, the survey included a small number of respondents, and about half from last year. Thus, this year's respondents may reflect members of the Coalition who are motivated to complete this year's CCC and, thus, may reflect perspectives of more active Coalition members.

This year's respondents indicated the Coalition is performing strongly, but could become even stronger if improvement efforts were targeted to specific areas. The Coalition's meeting procedures appear to be strong, as respondents felt the Coalition holds productive meetings routinely and records and disseminates meeting notes to keep members informed. The Coalition also appears to stand behind their leader and vision, mission, and goals. Strengths in these areas are important, as these are central to the Coalition's goals and capacity to achieve them; *sustaining these efforts will be important this year.*

Respondents also identified a possible areas of improvement: membership and training and mentoring practices. In particular, respondents indicated membership should (a) reflect the diversity of the South Glens Falls community and include more (b) representatives of nonprofessional organization and (c) youth and parents. Responses also indicated the Coalition could bring in new members to round out its collective skills and capacities. It is recommended that the Coalition *recruit youth and parents and enhance its training and mentorship practices, particularly with respect to cultural competence.* Improvements in these areas may cultivate active participation among newly recruited youth and parents, as well as current members, and could bring a new set of skills that members believe the Coalition needs.