TIP SHEET AMCHP
ASSOCIATION OF MATERNAL & CHILD HEALTH PROGRAMS

COLLABORATION SCIENCE TIP SHEETS
**USEFUL THEORIES AND FRAMEWORKS FOR MEASURING COLLABORATION –
WILDER COLLABORATION FACTORS INVENTORY**

Assessing functioning, progress and outcomes of collaboratives using Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory

What is collaboration?

Two or more entities (organizations, organizational systems, programs, community groups, or individuals) working together for a common purpose.

Collaborations form the bedrock of public health work to address community needs.

Why collaborate?

To address complex issues, we need stakeholders from multiple sectors and levels of operation to work together toward a common vision and goal[1].

The Role: Engage with and build consensus among diverse organizations and individuals in a community to address a community-level issue or problem[2].

The Format: Collaborative partnerships vary by level of commitment, activities undertaken, membership composition, and intensity (e.g., meeting frequency).

? WHAT IS IT?

A free online collaboration assessment that assists in measuring how a collaboration is functioning on 22 research-tested success factors through a 44-item inventory. The assessment can be completed in approximately 15 minutes.[1] The online inventory is accessible at https://www.wilder.org/wilder-research/research-library/collaboration-factors-inventory-3rd-edition and the printable version is at https://wilderresearch.org/tools/cfi-2018/start. The inventory captures status and progress of collaboration in the following factor groups: Convening, Environment, Membership Characteristics, Process and Structure, Communication, Purpose, Resources, and Future. Although the inventory is free, there is a book for purchase, *Collaboration: What Makes It Work, 3rd Edition*, that reviews the research on factors influencing successful collaboration. The 22 factors are:

1. History of collaboration or cooperation in the community
2. Collaborative group seen as a legitimate leader in the community
3. Favorable political and social climate
4. Mutual respect, understanding, and trust
5. Appropriate cross section of members
6. Members see collaboration as being in their self-interest
7. Ability to compromise
8. Members share a stake in both process and outcome
9. Multiple layers of participation
10. Flexibility
11. Development of clear roles and policy guidelines
12. Adaptability to changing condition
13. Appropriate pace of development
14. Evaluation and continuous learning
15. Open and frequent communication
16. Established informal relationships and communication links
17. Concrete, attainable goals and objectives
18. Shared vision
19. Unique purpose
20. Sufficient funds, staff, materials, and time
21. Skilled leadership
22. Engaged stakeholders

[1] The previous version with 20 factors was discontinued as of July 1, 2019

Scoring:

Respondents rate each of the 44 items according to their agreement, from strongly disagree (1 point) to strongly agree (5 points). The individual scores for each item are averaged, and the scores for items that make up each factor are averaged for the group, to come up with a score between 1.0 and 5.0 for each factor. Although the inventory does not have normative standards that allow for definitive interpretations of numerical scores, guidance is offered as a basis for discussion and planning for the collaboration.[2]

4.0 OR HIGHER indicates a strength and does not need special attention yet

3.0 TO 3.9 indicates the factor is borderline and may require attention

2.9 OR LOWER indicates the factor is a concern and should be addressed

An online companion to the inventory links to resources from Chapters 4 and 5 of the books ("Putting the Factors to Work" and "Collaborating Across Difference") to provide ideas and tools for how to improve across the factors. The online companion is at https://www.wilder.org/collaboration.

THINK ABOUT

★ Before you field the assessment, consider what steps you might take to improve a factor that is scored as borderline or an area of concern. For example, if open and frequent communication is an area of concern, how might you identify what type of communication would meet the needs of the group?

⭐ Do you have a plan if members of your collaborative do not agree on a shared vision?

★ How might you build that shared understanding with your team?

⭐ What tools might you need to employ, and how might you engage members in the process of setting or resetting the shared vision?

1825 K St., NW, Suite 250
Washington, D.C. 20006
(202) 775-0436
www.amchp.org