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INNOVATIVE RESEARCH & DESIGN CONSULTANTS

Coalition Policy Synthesis Project

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Community Based Organizations

- Historically - program “pass-throughs”
- Recently - data-driven comprehensive strategies

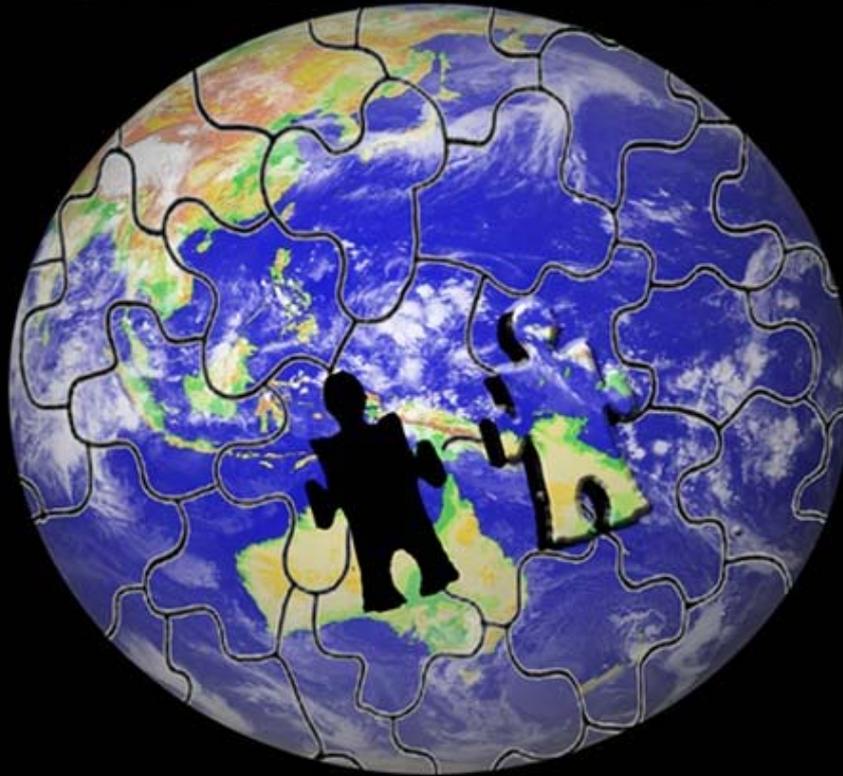
Evidence-Based Program Development

- Well-funded research protocols
 - Designed to *insure fidelity*
- Recorded sessions reviewed by supervisor
- Supervision with feedback minimizes “drift”



What really happens?

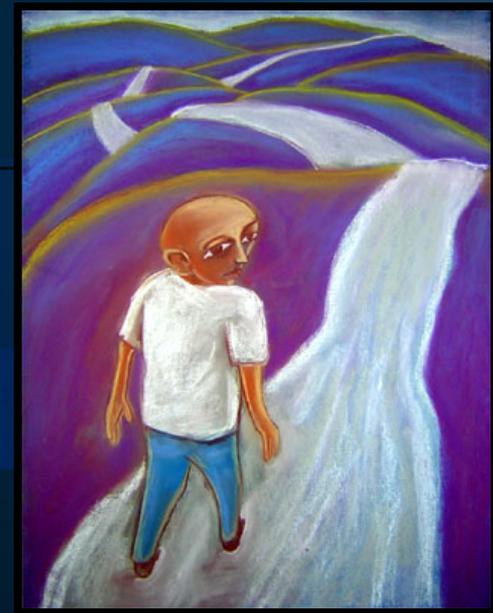
PROJECT REAL WORLD



**Why is it so difficult to show
“what works”?**

Community Initiatives

- Ambitious, expensive, complex commitments
- Multiple organizations
- Outcomes must be produced



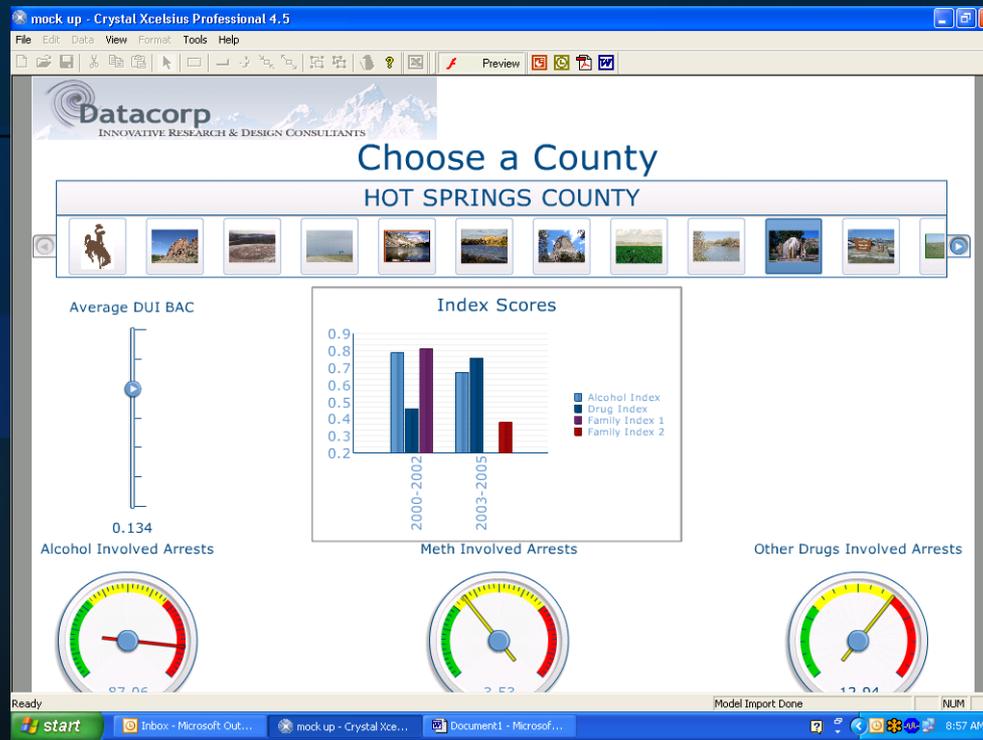
How will we show coalitions are effective?

- Effectiveness is rarely tested
- Primarily process evaluations
- Few evaluations of population-level change



How Do We Know If It Works?

- Activities that move the needle
- Large scale community undertakings





What makes coalitions effective?

Key CPSP Activities

- Literature review to distinguish
 - What we know
 - What we don't know
 - What is cutting-edge
- Cull our own experience for "What works?"



What does the literature say
about “what works”?

What Does Research Say?

Coalitions are popular vehicles to address various public health concerns

BUT

Evidence is limited

Fighting Back Initiative

- Robert Wood Johnson Foundation funded
- Evaluation by Hallfors et al., 2002
 - Unfavorable findings
- Green & Kreuter, 2002 - "we've oversold what coalitions can do"

FB Coalition Contributions to Reductions in Alcohol-Related Fatal Crashes

Hingson et al. (Injury Prevention, 2005)

- Retrospective study of 5 Fighting Back sites that attempted to reduce alcohol availability and expand substance treatment
- FB sites experienced significant reductions in alcohol-related fatal crashes

FB Coalition Contributions to Reductions in Alcohol-Related Fatal Crashes

Lessons learned:

- Coalitions had clear goals and plans to address alcohol-related problems
- Implemented evidence-based interventions targeting alcohol-related problems and/or interventions with plausible mechanisms to do so

Fighting Back Initiative - Coalition Factors that Foster Organizational Capacity

Zakocs & Guckenburg (Health Education & Behavior, 2007)

- Retrospective study of Fighting Back sites
- Organizational capacity - “the ability of local orgs to respond to systemic problems by offering new/modified policies, programs or services”

Fighting Back Initiative - Coalition Factors that Foster Organizational Capacity

7 Characteristics of FB sites with greater organizational capacity:

- Received more funds for coalition-building
- Delayed establishing a new lead agency
- Supportive lead agencies
- Stable, participatory decision-making bodies
- Collaborative leadership
- Active involvement from government agencies
- Effective, long-term project directors

Fighting Back Initiative - Coalition Factors that Foster Organizational Capacity

- But does greater organizational capacity lead to lower rates of alcohol abuse or related problems?
- One interesting observation:
 - 4 out of the 5 coalitions in the Hingson study were coalitions that had the highest levels of organizational capacity

Relationship Between Coalition-Building Factors and Measures of Coalition Effectiveness

Zakocs & Edwards (American Journal of Prevention Medicine, 2006)

- Reviewed 26 articles
- 26 different ways to conceptualize coalition effectiveness (measuring coalition functioning and community changes)
- Found 55 coalition-building factors associated with coalition effectiveness

Relationship Between Coalition-Building Factors and Measures of Coalition Effectiveness

- Five or more studies indicated the following coalition-building factors were positively associated with indicators of coalition effectiveness
 - Formalization/rules
 - Leadership Styles
 - Active member participation
 - Diverse Membership
 - Member agency collaboration
 - Group cohesion

Coalitions and Evidence-Based Prevention Programs

Collins, Johnson and Becker (Substance Use & Misuse, 2007)

- Significant but small reductions in cigarette, alcohol and binge drinking rates among 10th graders
- The # of evidence-based programs implemented do not have an impact on substance use outcomes
- Some risk factors (friends' drug use and perceived availability) help explain the relationship between use of evidence-based programs and reductions in use rates

Why is evidence limited?

Merzel & D'Affitti (American Journal of Public Health, 2003)

- Methodological Issues
- Limitations of the Intervention
- Limitations of Theory

Evidence of Effectiveness of Collaborative Partnerships

Roussos & Fawcett (Annual Review of Public Health, 2000)

1. Coalitions can affect more distal population-level outcomes.
2. Coalitions can help bring about community-wide behavior change.
3. Coalitions can help bring about changes in the community and systems.
4. Certain factors affect a coalition's capacity to create community and systems change.

Factors Affecting Rates of Community and Systems Change

- Clear Vision and Mission
- Action Planning
- Leadership
- Documentation and Feedback
- Technical Assistance
- Resources to Sustain the Work
- Making Outcomes Matter

Rethinking Coalition Effectiveness

Effective coalitions can document their contributions toward population-level outcomes

Effective coalitions help bring about community changes

Effective coalitions build strong organizational capacity

Next steps

- What should coalitions be held accountable for?
- How do we build capacity of coalitions?
- How do we measure appropriate indicators of coalition contributions?

Download the Presentation

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