
Strength in Numbers: A Guide to Building Community Coalitions

August 2003

*This report was
written with support from
the W. K. Kellogg Foundation.*



Community Catalyst, Inc.
30 Winter Street, 10th Fl.
Boston, MA 02108
617-338-6035
Fax: 617-451-5838
www.communitycatalyst.org

Acknowledgments

Community Catalyst is a national advocacy organization that builds consumer and community participation in the shaping of our health system to ensure quality, affordable health care for all.

Our work is aimed at strengthening the voice of consumers and communities wherever decisions shaping the future of our health system are being made. Community Catalyst strengthens the capacity of state and local consumer advocacy groups to participate in such discussions. The technical assistance we provide includes policy analysis, legal assistance, strategic planning, and community organizing support. Together we're building a network of organizations dedicated to creating a more just and responsive health system.

This guide was written by James R. Whitley of Community Catalyst and made possible by the generous support of the W.K. Kellogg Foundation.

A copy of this document can be downloaded from www.communitycatalyst.org. Hard copies are available by calling 617-275-2805. Organizations seeking to distribute or otherwise make widespread use of this publication are asked to notify Community Catalyst.

(c) COMMUNITY CATALYST 2003

This publication may be reproduced or quoted with appropriate credit.

Table of Contents

Using this Guide	4
I. Introduction to Community Coalitions	
- What is a community coalition?	5
- What are the benefits of building a community coalition?	5
- What potential challenges are associated with working in a coalition?	7
II. Organizing a Community Coalition:	
- Structure and Governance Coalition mission statement	9
- Operating principles	10
- Growth opportunities	10
- Increasing diversity	11
III. Factors that Affect Coalition	
- Effectiveness and Longevity Community involvement	12
- Publicity	13
- Regular meetings	14
- Open and reliable reporting mechanisms among members	15
- Funding	16
Appendix A:	
Groups to Contact to Build More Diverse Coalitions	18
Appendix B:	
Materials to Include in a Media Kit about the Coalition	21
Further Reading on Coalition Building	22

Strength in Numbers: A Guide to Building Community Coalitions

USING THIS GUIDE

When engaged in advocacy work, individuals and organizations often find that collaborating with other advocates who have similar goals can be extremely helpful. To reap the many benefits of such a partnership and maximize the effectiveness of their advocacy efforts, individuals and organizations may want to build community coalitions.

This guide was written to assist anyone interested in building community coalitions. In this guide, readers will find helpful information on many relevant topics, such as how to establish a strong and stable coalition foundation, how to enhance the coalition by developing a broad and diverse membership, and how to increase the effectiveness and lifespan of the coalition.

Toward the end of the guide, two appendices have been included. Appendix A lists several types of groups to target to build a stronger and more diverse community coalition. Appendix B is essentially a checklist of items to include in a media kit publicizing your community coalition. Finally, a list of resources is included for further reading on many of the issues discussed in the guide.

I. Introduction to Community Coalitions

WHAT IS A COMMUNITY COALITION?

A coalition is an alliance of individuals and/or organizations working together to achieve a common purpose. When this type of alliance forms to address the needs and concerns of a particular community, it is often referred to as a community coalition. While all community coalitions are collaborative efforts by definition, they can vary in numerous ways including purpose, governance, and procedures.

Community coalitions often organize around a single issue or event. An example of this would be several advocacy groups that unite to challenge the imminent closing of a local hospital. Other times, a coalition may form with a focus on several concerns. An example of this type of coalition would be a group of concerned community advocates and organizations banding together to improve the overall living conditions in a given neighborhood. To accomplish its broad goal, this coalition may choose to address multiple related issues such as the expanding the community's access to affordable health care, closing a nearby toxic dump site, improving the local school system, and increasing area housing options.

Also, coalitions may be formed as relatively short-lived alliances rather than longer term partnerships. A coalition intended to have a longer lifespan than others will generally require more effort to maintain its organization and structure over time.

Still, no matter how many issues it takes on or how long it plans to exist, the success of any successful coalition fundamentally depends upon the dedication and organization of interested advocates and advocacy groups. Ultimately, coalition members must identify their common interests, articulate their shared goals, and work together to take advantage of the benefits that result from being part of a larger collective.

WHAT ARE THE BENEFITS OF BUILDING A COMMUNITY COALITION?

Members of coalitions can benefit from working with others as a larger unified entity. Some of the expected advantages of building and working in a coalition include:

Introduction

- ⇒ Definition
- ⇒ Benefits
- ⇒ Challenges



- ⇒ **Heightened effectiveness and community voice:** A well-organized coalition generally finds that it has more power and can exert more influence than an organization or individual operating alone. Also, community members working within the structure of a coalition generally have access to more stable support networks to help them achieve their desired outcomes.
- ⇒ **Increased access to resources:** Working within a coalition provides opportunities for individuals and organizations to combine and share many types of valuable resources. Pooling resources allows coalition members to maximize their effectiveness by complementing one another. Examples of the types of resources that are often shared among coalition members are listed to the right.
- ⇒ **Enhanced legitimacy:** Both within and outside of a community, the powerful presence of several different community members banded together for a common purpose can attract more attention and command more respect than individual efforts. The coalition as a whole and its individual members benefit greatly from this heightened visibility and prestige. A well-organized coalition will not only look more reliable and attractive to potential allies, but will also strike a more imposing figure in the eyes of potential opponents.
- ⇒ **Improved overall community organization and working relationships:** Coalition-building often creates opportunities for groups and individuals who had never worked together before to join forces and collaborate. Members of even short-lived coalition efforts usually find that there are enduring benefits of these newly-created networks. Working in a coalition establishes alliances that can develop into long-lasting bonds between organizations, strengthen

Shared Resources

Resources that are often shared among coalition members include:

- ⇒ Personnel
- ⇒ Research Capability
- ⇒ Funding Information
- ⇒ Technological Capacity
- ⇒ Strategizing Expertise
- ⇒ Access to Networks
- ⇒ Relevant Experience

individual loyalties to community, and generally enhance working synergies among members. Also, coalitions can often help to forge collaborative bonds across racial, socio-economic, gender, age, neighborhood and other traditionally troublesome divides.

WHAT POTENTIAL CHALLENGES ARE ASSOCIATED WITH WORKING IN A COALITION?

Although working within a coalition is often associated with several benefits (e.g., additional strategic alliances, improved professional networks, enhanced legitimacy, increased access to needed resources, etc.), some coalition members may encounter challenges.

- ⇒ **Lack of familiarity with process of group decision-making:** One challenge members might face is related to how the coalition makes group decisions. The actions of many well-organized coalitions have to be agreed upon by some consensus of the larger group. Coalition members who are unfamiliar with this more collaborative approach to decision-making (e.g., those who are used to less participatory or inclusive approaches) may initially experience some discomfort with this method. It can be expected that requiring coalition members to negotiate over alternatives before the coalition as a whole decides to pursue a course of action demands more energy and time. The upside of this increased resource commitment is that available options will likely be better appreciated and the ultimate decisions that are made will likely be more thoughtful and deliberate.

- ⇒ **Disagreement with the coalition position:** Yet another challenge may arise if a coalition member doesn't agree with a position the coalition decides to take on a particular issue. If coalition members are given a chance to participate in the decision-making process however, this type of problem can be minimized and perhaps prevented completely. Participants who have opportunities to question proposals being considered by the coalition, propose their own ideas,

Potential Challenges

- ⇒ Lack of familiarity with process of group decision-making.
- ⇒ Disagreement with the coalition position.



and become integral players in the process are more likely to appreciate and approve of the decisions of the larger coalition and how these decisions were made.

Both of these challenges, and several others, can be minimized if the coalition establishes a solid organizational foundation. Some elements of a solid foundation are:

- ✓ a well-written mission statement that members sign onto when joining,
- ✓ an agreed-upon set of official operating principles, and
- ✓ a diverse coalition membership that is representative of the larger community the coalition will work on behalf of.

Coalitions that are not well-organized often lack one or more of these elements and, consequently, are much more susceptible to experiencing related problems. The next section discusses how to organize a coalition, with a particular focus on structure and governance issues.

II. Organizing a Community Coalition: Structure and Governance

COALITION MISSION STATEMENT

Perhaps the most important document a coalition will need is a mission statement. The mission statement should explicitly articulate the guiding philosophy the coalition intends to further and work under. Often, succinctly stating the coalition's main goal and strategy will be enough.

When drafting a mission statement, strive for both clarity and brevity. Usually one or two sentences will suffice, but the emphasis should be on producing a simple statement that accurately identifies the guiding concern and desired goal of the coalition. Given the overall collaborative nature of the coalition, all existing members should be offered an opportunity to participate in drafting and reviewing the official mission statement. This type of open process is more likely to result in a final statement that existing members readily agree with and support.

Although it may be amended as the coalition matures, it is best to draft the mission statement as early as possible in the coalition's development. At any stage however, a well-written mission statement should succinctly explain what the coalition stands for, why it exists and how it plans to address its issues of interest.

If the coalition creates an information brochure, the mission statement should be featured prominently. Also, individuals and organizations interested in joining the coalition should be required to sign onto the coalition's mission as reflected in the official statement. Thus, the mission statement can serve as both a publicity tool to advertise the existence and aims of the coalition, and as an integral part of the enrollment process for new members.

In order to build a community coalition that will function as a unified whole, members must be committed to the coalition's mission. A well-written mission statement will let new members know precisely what type of alliance they are joining and what they will be expected to support. Additionally, the existence of an official mission statement is an indication of solidarity (i.e., many groups banded together with the same focus) and lends further credibility to the coalition.

Structure & Governance

- ⇒ Mission Statement
- ⇒ Operating Principles
- ⇒ Growth Opportunities
- ⇒ Increasing Diversity

After the mission statement, a set of operating principles is probably the second most important document the coalition will need. The operating principles describe how the coalition will do its work and outline what the coalition's protocols are for coalition members.

More detailed operating principles can set forth how coalition decisions will be made (e.g., the negotiation and voting policies, the number of votes required for an official coalition decision). Less detailed operating principles might include more generally-stated guidelines for members such as *Respect everyone's suggestions* and *Share responsibility*.

Whether more general or specific, a set of operating principles should further inform members what is expected of them as they work with the larger coalition. With an official mission statement and a set of operating principles completed, much of the coalition's structure is established and the work of building a well-organized community coalition can proceed.

GROWTH OPPORTUNITIES

In order to increase its size and strength, the coalition will need to increase the public's familiarity with the coalition, attract and retain new members, and build stable supportive networks.

A newly-formed community coalition will need to publicize its existence and increase public awareness of its efforts. Some of the many ways a coalition can increase its visibility include: developing and implementing a formal media strategy (e.g., arranging newspaper, television and radio interviews spotlighting the coalition and its work, public service announcements), posting flyers about the coalition in the community, and organizing a community forum to educate residents about the coalition and its purpose. If the coalition is well-organized and engaged in notable activities, its publicity efforts should help to increase both its legitimacy and its ability to attract new members.

As they build in size and complexity, coalitions need to pay special attention to how well members are working together and the level of commitment among members to the official mission. This is especially important since a coalition's strength ultimately depends upon its ability to function as a unified whole. It is preferable to maintain a smaller cohesive set of coalition members than to build a larger unmanageable coalition that can't function as a team. With this caveat, any opportunity to add new members who share the coalition's mission should be pursued. By integrating new mem-

If the coalition is well-organized and engaged in notable activities, its publicity efforts should help to increase both its legitimacy and its ability to attract new members.



bers into the coalition, the group will stay vital and dynamic, rather than stagnate. In addition to responding to inquiries from interested individuals and organizations, coalitions may opt to recruit by directly approaching and discussing a partnership with potential new members.

Often even people and organizations who decide not to sign onto the mission and join the coalition can be strong allies. Separate from its recruitment efforts, the coalition should strive to develop such relationships that will enable it to operate more effectively on behalf of the community it represents. Forging these dependable bonds with supporters can increase the coalition's access to resources and enhance its support networks.

INCREASING DIVERSITY

When building a community coalition, a concerted effort should be made to increase the group's diversity. The measure of a coalition's diversity depends on how reflective its membership is of the larger community among gender, ethnic, racial, age, income, and other lines. More diverse coalitions generally have increased legitimacy in the community because of their greater inclusiveness, which tends to make them more representative of the larger community they serve.

Recruiting members with a variety of backgrounds and perspectives, but who all share the common mission, tends to increase not only the legitimacy of the coalition, but also the coalition's support networks. Also, it is more likely that community members will identify with and support the coalition if it is more diverse. (For a list of types of groups the coalition may want to contact and recruit to increase its diversity, see Appendix A.)

More diverse coalitions generally have increased legitimacy in the community because of their greater inclusiveness, which tends to make them more representative of the larger community they serve.



III. Factors that Affect Coalition Effectiveness and Longevity

COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT

Active community involvement and support is vital to a coalition's success. A coalition that enjoys the active support of the larger community is more likely to be able to access needed resources (e.g., personnel and funding) and thrive. Generally, communities that feel more connected to the coalition will be more supportive. To develop long-lasting bonds, the larger community must be able to identify with the coalition and its goals.

Communities are more likely to identify with coalitions whose members actually live and work in the area. Coalitions that consist solely of individuals and groups who were not previously part of the community before joining the coalition risk losing community support and legitimacy. While they may bring other important strengths to the coalition, these members don't know the community as well and are less likely to appreciate the subtleties of the working relationships within the community, and to understand the community's needs. By including members who already have established ties to the community, the resulting coalition will be more representative of that community.

As discussed earlier, improving the diversity of the coalition is yet another way to make it more representative of the community. Some community members may be more able to directly identify with those they share more in common with. If a coalition is more diverse there is a better chance that community members will realize how much they share in common with the coalition and its members. Coalitions should thus make every effort to build a membership that is diverse and inclusive as possible to better represent the varied interests and concerns of the community.

To further benefit from its involvement with the community, coalitions should share important information with other members of the community and allow them to participate in coalition activities. Even those who are not members of the coalition can provide useful information and assistance at coalition meetings, hearings, rallies, fundraisers, media events, community forums, and other gatherings. These types of interactions are great opportunities for the coalition to share information, exchange ideas, and strengthen its bonds with the community. (For more information on organizing

Effectiveness & Longevity

- ⇒ Community Involvement
- ⇒ Publicity
- ⇒ Regular Meetings
- ⇒ Open and Reliable
Reporting Mechanisms
Among Members
- ⇒ Funding

a successful forum, see “A Guide to Organizing Community Forums” also available from Community Catalyst.)

PUBLICITY

A well-managed publicity strategy can help to establish the coalition as a legitimate voice of the community, highlight the importance and achievements of the coalition, and attract new potential members. To achieve these goals, a publicity message should clearly:

- ✓ articulate the coalition’s mission,
- ✓ outline its vision to address the needs of the community it serves,
- ✓ provide details of any notable accomplishments, and
- ✓ offer opportunities and information for others to get involved.

A coalition fortunate enough to have a substantial publicity and advertising budget may decide to launch an expensive media blitz, perhaps with the guidance of expert publicity consultation. Such a campaign may include television, print, and radio interviews or announcements in very popular media markets as well as other planned media events (e.g., a high-profile press conference arranged and paid for by the coalition).

However, even coalitions with more modest funding can mount effective publicity campaigns with a little creativity. A less costly, but still successful, publicity strategy can rely on free or inexpensive sources to communicate the coalition’s message to the public. Some examples of these less costly types of publicity include:

- ✓ simple coalition brochures,
- ✓ brief press releases,
- ✓ announcements and interviews on public television and radio stations,
- ✓ flyers in the community,
- ✓ articles, op-ed pieces, and letters in local papers,
- ✓ a coalition newsletter, and
- ✓ community forums.

Access to the internet presents the coalition with even more opportunities to publicize itself and its work. Creative use of the internet as a communication tool can be an inexpensive and effective option to share

information among members with access to a computer. With a little internet knowledge coalitions can:

- ✓ send out mass electronic mail notices,
- ✓ publish electronic newsletters and
- ✓ design eye-catching informative websites.

Another commonly-used publicity tool is the media kit. Media kits are sets of documents and other materials gathered together to provide media contacts with information on the coalition. These kits can be relatively inexpensive to assemble when compared to other forms of publicity. Perhaps the greatest advantage of the kits is that they can be sent to media contacts and thus provide a detailed introduction to the coalition even when there is no coalition member present. (Appendix B lists several types of information often included in an effective media kit.)

REGULAR MEETINGS

Regularly scheduled coalition meetings can serve several purposes. In general, regular meetings provide coalition members with opportunities to socialize and bond while they reflect on noteworthy achievements and challenges, update each other on current coalition activities and projects, propose new ideas and initiatives for coalition consideration, and decide on the coalition's next steps.

Coalition members should agree on a meeting schedule that works best for the group as a whole. Some coalitions may decide that meeting once a month is adequate given the size of the membership, the coalition's current activities and the predictable challenges related to arranging meetings (e.g., finding and reserving meeting space, travel requirements, other work or family demands).

If the coalition is preparing for a particular event (e.g., such as a public hearing or press conference), the coalition may want to schedule additional meetings during the busy planning period. Alternatively, the coalition could decide to form subcommittees (e.g., a media/communications or fundraising subcommittee) that would hold regularly scheduled meetings separate from those of the full coalition. Also, scheduling meetings at times that are convenient for the community members may increase the likelihood that members will regularly attend.

...regular meetings provide coalition members with opportunities to socialize and bond while they reflect on noteworthy achievements and challenges...



Since the involvement of its membership is essential to a coalition's ongoing success, members should be committed to regularly attending the meetings and this expectation should be communicated to new members before they join. To encourage regular attendance, coalition members should be allowed to participate fully in the meetings. Members are more likely to appreciate the importance of attending regularly if they know that their contributions will be welcomed and valued.

Lastly, the coalition should not simply hold meetings, rather its aim should be to hold *effective* meetings. As discussed earlier, meetings where people feel free to participate and share their thoughts are more likely to encourage regular attendance, which, in turn, results in more effective meetings. Yet another common feature that effective coalition meetings share is organization. A few tips to better organize your meeting include:

- ✓ drafting an agenda with clear bulleted items to be discussed,
- ✓ having someone with facilitation skills direct the meeting,
- ✓ beginning and ending the meeting at the scheduled times,
- ✓ identifying members who will take responsibility for following-up on items discussed,
- ✓ preparing an official summary of the meeting,
- ✓ having food and drink available, and
- ✓ arranging child care for members who need it.

OPEN AND RELIABLE REPORTING MECHANISMS AMONG MEMBERS

It takes an informed and motivated membership to build a successful coalition. In order to keep its members informed, a coalition should make it easy for members to share accurate relevant information and encourage this sharing as well. In addition to open participation at regular meetings and in subcommittees as mentioned earlier, the coalition should pursue other means to facilitate information exchanges among coalition members.

Maintaining a coalition "library" of materials and documents (e.g., meeting notes and agendas, official coalition letters, newspaper and magazine articles about the coalition and its interest, coalition databases containing contact information for all members and supporters) would be a good

Tips

A few tips to better organize your meeting include:

- ✓ drafting an agenda with clear bulleted items to be discussed,
- ✓ having someone with facilitation skills direct the meeting,
- ✓ beginning and ending the meeting at the scheduled times,
- ✓ identifying members who will take responsibility for following-up on items discussed,
- ✓ preparing an official summary of the meeting,
- ✓ having food and drink available, and
- ✓ arranging child care for members who need it.

idea. If possible, the collection of materials should be kept in a place that is accessible to all members.

Also, the coalition could provide its members with frequent and substantive updates by printing a newsletter or posting news on a centralized bulletin board. Again, the internet has expanded the options available to a coalition. Web-savvy coalitions can use e-mail list mailings, electronic newsletters, or dedicated coalition websites as time-saving and cost-effective methods to disseminate and exchange information. Whatever methods are used, the coalition should ensure that all of its members can access the shared information and contribute important news of their own.

FUNDING

Since obtaining funding from an outside source may be necessary for a coalition to pursue its mission, the coalition should seek out and apply for support grants. When applying for a grant, the coalition should draft a proposal that cogently describes the importance of the coalition's mission, clearly articulates why the coalition is a legitimate and able representative of the community, and specifies how the requested funding will enable the coalition to accomplish its mission-related goals.

The impact of inadequate funding can impact both short-term and long-term coalition goals. Without proper funding, the coalition may not be able to pay for personnel support or hire consultants if needed. The most serious consequence of not being able to secure necessary funding may be an inability to sustain the coalition effort. Given its importance to the survival of the coalition, applying for funding demands serious attention.

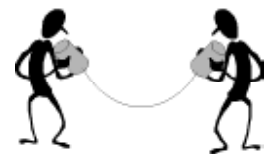
Coalitions submitting grant proposals should provide potential funders with the most persuasive and accurate information available. Any and all guidelines by the funder (e.g., deadlines for submission, requirements to include certain specific information) should be followed exactly. Newer coalitions may want to consider hiring consultants with grant-writing expertise or, at least, seeking assistance from organizations and individuals with more grant experience. More diverse coalitions often have broader support networks and thus may find it easier to identify potential funders and obtain expert assistance than less diverse coalitions.

It is important to note, however, that even coalitions with relatively miniscule budgets can be effective in many ways. While coalitions with little funding

The Internet

The internet has expanded the options available to coalitions. To save time and money, Web-savvy coalitions can use the internet to disseminate & exchange information.

- ⇒ E-mail List Mailings
- ⇒ Electronic Newsletters
- ⇒ Coalition Websites



may not have huge publicity and travel budgets, a relatively small coalition with modest expenses may not require much support to achieve its goals. Also, other forms of support (e.g., volunteer help, donations, membership dues, fundraising events) may substitute for funding and allow a coalition to function effectively. Again, more diverse coalitions, with their expectedly broader support networks, will likely have more viable support alternatives than less diverse coalitions.

Appendix A: Groups to Contact to Build More Diverse Coalitions

LABOR/EMPLOYMENT

- ✓ Workers and their unions (e.g., hotel workers, automobile workers, etc.)
- ✓ AFL-CIO and its chapters
- ✓ AFSCME and its chapters
- ✓ SEIU and its chapters
- ✓ Businesses (esp. local/community businesses)

RELIGIOUS/FAITH-BASED

- ✓ Local places of worship (e.g., churches, synagogues, mosques) and groups based in places of worship
- ✓ National religious organizations
- ✓ Other faith-based organizations (e.g., religious student groups, etc.)

LOCAL COMMUNITY

- ✓ Community action and consumer advocacy groups
- ✓ Community health centers and their staff
- ✓ Clients of community health centers
- ✓ Local housing and homeless coalitions
- ✓ Recognized community/neighborhood leaders

FAMILY/CHILDREN

- ✓ Organizations focusing on children and families
- ✓ National/Local chapters of March of Dimes
- ✓ Parents of children with special needs

SENIOR/ELDERLY

- ✓ Senior advocacy groups
- ✓ National/Local chapters of AARP or the Gray Panthers
- ✓ Others: United Seniors

ETHNIC

- ✓ Organizations protecting health needs/rights of people of color

- ✓ National/Local chapters of NAACP
- ✓ National Council of Negro Women
- ✓ National Council of La Raza
- ✓ North American Indian Legal Services, National Congress of American Indians

WOMEN

- ✓ Organizations protecting health needs/rights of women
- ✓ National Organization for Women
- ✓ League of Women Voters
- ✓ National Women's Health Network/National Women's Health Organization
- ✓ Others: YWCA, Big Sister Association, MADD

GAY AND LESBIAN

- ✓ Organizations protecting health needs/rights of gays and lesbians
- ✓ Gay Men's Health Crisis, AIDS Action
- ✓ Others: PFLAG, Act Up

HEALTH ADVOCACY/MEDICAL ISSUES

- ✓ University-based health law and health care justice advocates
- ✓ Representatives and employees of local health clinics/hospitals
- ✓ Disability rights organizations (e.g., National Alliance for the Mentally Ill)
- ✓ Medicaid and Medicare beneficiaries and their advocates
- ✓ Health services and health reform advocates
- ✓ Others: American Cancer Society, American Lung Association

PROFESSIONAL/TRADE ASSOCIATIONS

- ✓ Primary Care Associations
- ✓ Hospital Associations (e.g., National Association of Children's Hospitals)
- ✓ Medical Societies, American College of Physicians
- ✓ Nurses/Nurse-Midwives/Physician Assistants Associations
- ✓ Small business associations

MULTIPLE INTEREST GROUPS

- ✓ Lesbian and Gay Law Association, Gay and Lesbian Medical Association
- ✓ National Latina Health Organization, National Black Women's Health Project, National Asian Women's Health Organization

- ✓ National Hispanic Employee Association
- ✓ Catholic Health Association, National Council of Jewish Women

OTHER POSSIBILITIES

- ✓ Student groups (e.g., fraternities, sororities, alumni associations, SADD)
- ✓ Immigrant interests: migrant worker rights groups
- ✓ Regional: National Rural Health Association
- ✓ Local affiliates of national organizations (e.g., AARP, NAACP, YMCA)
- ✓ Political groups

Appendix B: Materials to Include in a Media Kit about the Coalition

- ⇒ Mission statement, brief history and purpose of the coalition (or the coalition's brochure, if available)—provides a brief statement of the coalition's focus, how and why it was formed
- ⇒ Contact information—essential for media people wanting more information and anyone interested in joining or otherwise supporting the coalition
- ⇒ List of coalition members—showcases how diverse and representative the coalition is by listing the participating individuals and organizations
- ⇒ Snapshots and bios of a selection of coalition members (limit to one page)—familiarize readers with members of the coalition by providing background information
- ⇒ Clips of newspaper and magazine articles about the coalition and any of its achievements (limit to three or four clips)—enhance the coalition's legitimacy and reputation by showing that the coalition has been acknowledged elsewhere, is working on the issue of interest and has already had some success
- ⇒ Recent sample copy of the coalition newsletter—if one is available

Further Reading on Coalition Building

PUBLICATIONS

- 1) Community Catalyst – *States of Health-Building Coalitions: Lessons from the Alliance for a Healthy New England*, Volume 11, No. 3, Winter 2002
- 2) Bobo, Kimberly; Kendall, Jackie; Max, Steve – *Organizing for Social Change: Midwest Academy: Manual for Activists*, Seven Locks Press, 2001
- 3) Berkowitz, Bill; Wolff, Tom – *The Spirit of the Coalition*, American Public Health Association, 1999
- 4) Kaye, Gillian; Wolff, Tom – *From the Ground Up! A Workbook on Coalition Building & Community Development*, AHEC/Community Partners, 1997
- 5) Minkler, Meredith – *Community Organizing and Community Building for Health*, Rutgers University Press, 1997
- 6) Stout, Linda – *Bridging the Class Divide and Other Lessons for Grassroots Organizing*, Beacon Press, 1997
- 7) Staples, Lee – *Roots to Power: A Manual for Grassroots Organizing*, Praeger Publishers, 1984
- 8) Kahn, Si - *Organizing: A Guide for Grassroots Leaders*, McGraw-Hill Book Company, 1982

WEBSITES

- 1) University of South Florida: Community and Family Health – Outlines key elements of successful community coalitions. http://hsc.usf.edu/mbrown/Principles_in_Building_Successful_Coalitions.htm
- 2) National Network for Collaboration – Reports on the results of a nationwide survey of successful community coalitions across a variety of disciplines. <http://crs.uvm.edu/ncco/collab/buildcoal3.html>
- 3) Michigan State University: Building and Maintaining Community Coalitions on Behalf of Children, Youth and Families – Details the successes and challenges of community coalitions organized in Michigan to benefit children and families. <http://www.msue.msu.edu/mnue/imp/modfl/fl0rr529.html>
- 4) DAWN: Community Organizing – Provides information about forming a local coalition, and tips on how to sustain and grow membership. http://www.dawninfo.org/co/com_people_coal.cfm
- 5) National Coalition Against Censorship: Organizing a Local Coalition Against Censorship – Features information about building issue awareness. <http://www.ncac.org/projects/coalbldg.html>
- 6) University of Kansas: Community Toolbox – Offers practical information on leadership, strategic planning, community assessment, advocacy, grant writing, and program evaluation. <http://ctb.lsi.ukans.edu/tools/tools.htm>
- 7) A Guide to Coalition Building: Canadian Council on Smoking and Health – Provides information on forming and developing various types of coalitions. <http://www.cypresscon.com/coalition.html>
- 8) Community How-To Guide on Coalition-Building: National Transportation Safety Administration – Has useful downloadable how-to guides. http://www.nhtsa.dot.gov/people/injury/alcohol/community%20guides%20html/book1_coalitionbldg.html
- 9) AHEC/Community Partners Coalition Building Guides and Tipsheets – Provides information on coalition development, particularly in rural communities. www.compartners.org/community/resources/index.shtml

- 10) American Association of University Women: Educational Foundation –
Lists contact information for dozens of advocacy organizations. [http://
aauw.org/ef/girlscan/ch10.pdf](http://aauw.org/ef/girlscan/ch10.pdf)