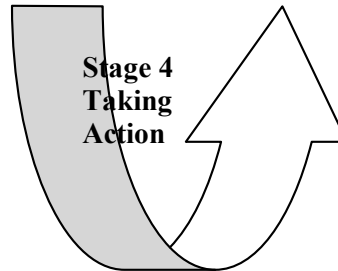


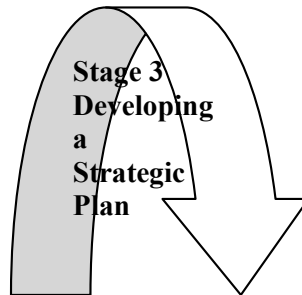
Online Direct Link: <http://www.ILEarlyChildhoodCollab.org/oth/collabtipsheetsoth.html>

COLLABORATION STAGES AND MILESTONES

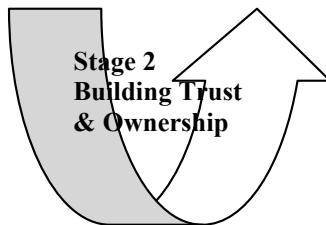
Overview: The stages of collaboration do not follow a straight course. Instead, as illustrated below, stages may loop back, repeat themselves, or overlap.



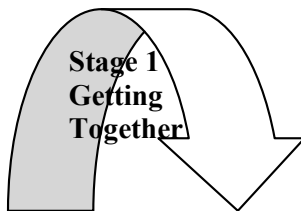
- Evaluate & celebrate the progress
- Adapt & expand
- Deepen collaborative culture
- Implement plan of action
- Formalize interagency relationships



- Evaluate & celebrate the progress
- Develop plan of action
- Examine & select strategies
- Establish well-formed goals
- Assess the environment & the collaborative's capabilities
- Develop a mission statement



- Evaluate & celebrate the progress
- Identify planning resources
- Revisit & revise ground rules
- Commit to collaborate
- Define shared vision
- Develop a base of common knowledge
- Engage partners



- Evaluate & celebrate the progress
- Set initial ground rules
- Involve the right people
- Decide to act



Adapted from Atelia Melaville and Martin Blank with Gelareh Asayesh, *“Together We Can: A Guide for Crafting a Profamily System of Education and Human Services”* (Washington, D.C.: US Dept. of Education and US Dept. of Health and Human Services, 1993).

DANGEROUS SAND TRAPS

Overview: All collaborations experience challenges. Some are inevitable, while others are dangerous sand traps that can be avoided by alert collaborative partners. Below are some common sand traps to avoid, or act upon if they appear.

Organizational Sand Traps

- Deciding not to begin until all partners are at the table
- Failing to set clear ground rules
- Losing sight of the collaborative's purpose and mission
- Choosing unattainable goals
- Trying to handle too many issues or actions at once
- Inadequate resources for carrying out plans
- Adverse community relations or media attention
- Not stopping to evaluate, reflect, and celebrate
- Not acknowledging or avoiding conflict

Leadership Sand Traps

- Trying to maintain control by resisting power-sharing or shared decision-making
- Allowing political pressure or individual partner self interests to drive the collaboration
- Not involving consumers, direct services staff, and policy-makers in critical decisions
- Lack of shared leadership
- Becoming too dependent on one or two partners to keep the collaborative going
- Unrealistic demands or expectations

Membership Sand Traps

- Attempting to act before partners establish a sense of trust and ownership in a shared vision
- Frequent turnover in partners or membership organizations
- Unequal distribution of work or recognition of members
- Not taking the time to involve opponents, who could easily block the collaborative's mission or goals
- Failing to recognize an individual partner's needs or self interests
- Turf battles or power struggles among partners

Adapted from Atelia Melaville and Martin Blank with Gelareh Asayesh, *“Together We Can: A Guide for Crafting a Profamily System of Education and Human Services”* (Washington, D.C.: US Dept. of Education and US Dept. of Health and Human Services, 1993).

BARRIERS TO COLLABORATION



- ❑ **Time**
- ❑ **Absence of Community Vision**
- ❑ **Resources**
- ❑ **Conflicting Requirements**

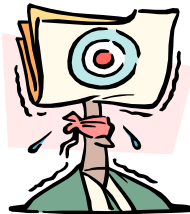
- ❑ **Attitude**



- ❑ **Turf-ism**
- ❑ **Lack of Shared Information**



- ❑ **Lack of Awareness of Need/Opportunity**
- ❑ **Loss of Autonomy**



- ❑ **Lack of Leadership**
- ❑ **Ineffective Inter- OR Intra-Agency Structures or Systems**
- ❑ **Comfort with the Status Quo/Resistance to Change**



Top 10 List

Most Important Elements of a Collaboration/Partnership

1. **Resources.** The clear #1 advice from IL Community Coalitions is that a coalition/collaboration requires resources – the ability to commit staff time, financial, & in-kind resources to the efforts of the Coalition.
2. **Clear, Common Vision, Purpose & Goals.** Must have common goals/vision based on commitment to children & families that goes beyond loyalty to a program & is shared by at least 2 or more key people in the Coalition. Must identify where every member fits into the vision/goal/purpose and have professional agreement to work toward the goals. Commit to high standards.
3. **Openness & Commitment to Change.** Must be open to the possibility of doing things differently & open to learning & relearning what you thought you knew before in ways needed to meet the mission & purpose of the coalition. Must be flexible, creative & adaptable.
4. **Communication & Cooperation.** Must be open and ongoing.
5. **Structure of Coalition.** Need: regularly scheduled (quarterly, monthly), concise meetings; flexibility in maintaining group meetings & schedules; operating procedures, committees, roles & responsibilities; and, good checks & balances, especially with financial resources. Suggested to hold meetings at a different program/organization each time.
6. **Shared, Community-Rooted Leadership; Shared Decision-Making.** Need people willing to do their part & not drop the ball; committed participation. Need to listen to the community & be driven by its needs. Leaders must have vitality & persistence. Members bring enough knowledge of community strengths & weaknesses to the table.
7. **Identify & Work Out Barriers.** Must be willing to work out issues, challenges, & disagreements. Must brainstorm solutions & strategies to common Coalition, community & program challenges.
8. **Relationships.** It is important to have friends in a wide variety of places in the community & relationships that have spanned years. Helps to have all partners at the table from the beginning. Draw from individuals' strengths. Recognize champions & strive for non-competitiveness. Members concerns are unified.
9. **Respect Each Other.** Know your partners & the services they offer. Make sure every member has a chance to be heard. Need implicit trust among key partners. Broaden your frame of reference so you can “walk in my shoes.”
10. **Evaluate & Re-Evaluate the Coalition.** Ensure it is able to meet the group's needs related to purpose & structure. Make certain that it can maintain longevity & meet & establish goals. Evaluate performance & accomplishments.