

Community-Based Coalitions

Summary of Significant Trends:

Communities are faced with a myriad of challenges, physical, social, and economic, to protecting and promoting the health and well-being of their members. Community-based coalitions are increasingly replacing the single agency, single discipline approach to community problem solving with more effective and efficient formally organized structures capable of bringing the concerted efforts of the entire community to bear on community concerns.

Emerging Trends and Issues:

Community-based coalitions are composed of individuals and organizations combining their interests and resources to make meaningful changes at the local level. A www survey produced 830 community-based coalitions, a sample of the thousands of local coalitions working to improve lives nationwide.

Research findings indicate that the most important factors in coalition success are having a dedicated coalition leader and a formal structure including a mission statement, committees and voting rules.¹ With these elements in place, coalition development, and maintenance have a high likelihood of resulting in increased activity and thus success.

Relevance of Trends to County Programs:

Many of the issues facing communities are multifaceted requiring the input of various disciplines, business interests and community residents. The formation of collaborative groups dedicated to accomplishing specific goals is an effective way to enhance the lives of individuals, families and communities. Given their experience in working with community groups, Extension professionals are uniquely positioned to provide leadership and/or encouragement and support to emerging community-based coalitions. Further training and technical support are available through the department of Community and Family Sciences.

References:

1. Garland B, Crane M, Marino C, Stone-Wiggins B, et al, The Effect of Community Coalition Structure and Preparation on Subsequent Cancer Control Activities, American Journal of Health Promotion, in press.

Sources of Supporting Data:

Other relevant sites may be accessed through a Google search.

Key words: Community Coalitions

Primary Contact: Barbara Garland, Ph.D.
barbara_garland@ncsu.edu

2003



Family & Consumer
SCIENCE S

www.ces.ncsu.edu/depts/fcs