CADCA®

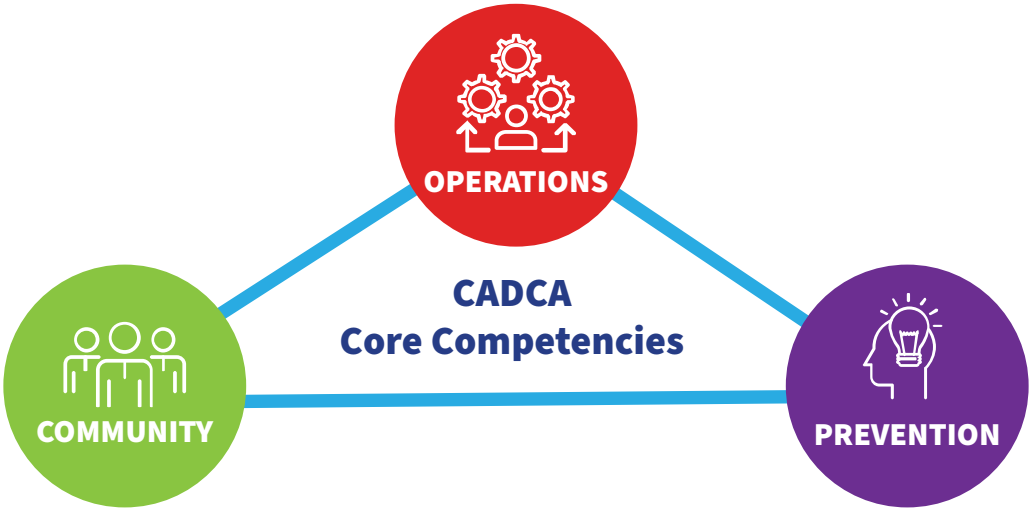
CHEATSHEET

Core Competencies for Coalitions

OPERATIONS

COMMUNITY

PREVENTION



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OPERATIONS

Competencies necessary to form and operate a coalition

Coalition Structure

Formalizing rules and structures to guide coalition communication and decision making, such as a regular meeting schedule and shared vision and mission

KNOWLEDGE

Values: Knowledge of community and member values to guide coalition operation

Organizational structures: Knowledge of possible coalition structures, such as shared leadership, workgroups, and committees

Coalition agreements: Knowledge of coalition bylaws and written agreements

SKILLS

Communication: Conveying messages to coalition members verbally and in writing about expectations and rules

Summation: Summarizing and communicating the coalition purpose through a mission statement and coalition goals through a vision statement

Networks: Developing systems for coalition members to communicate with each other and the public

ABILITIES

Visioning: Ability to articulate a clear vision and mission for the coalition

Coalition governance: Ability to develop clear bylaws of coalition governance and clear descriptions of member roles

Coalition operations: Ability to develop standard operating procedures of the coalition

Application: Ability to apply community, needs, values, and priorities to coalition vision

Membership

Recruiting and retaining a diverse, inclusive mix of organizations that bring together many skills and perspectives to achieve coalition goals

KNOWLEDGE

Community: Knowledge of the community demographics (e.g., race/ethnicity, religion, LGBTQIA+ population) to ensure diverse representation in membership

Coalition characteristics: Knowledge of coalition mission, structure, member roles, and operations

Communications: Knowledge of messaging techniques and channels to promote the coalition to potential members

SKILLS

Member identification: Identifying potential members possessing appropriate skills and community connections

Persuasion: Articulating the importance and vision of the coalition and maintaining member motivation via public speaking and other communication methods

Member skills: Identifying, utilizing, and growing member skills to advance coalition goals

Interpersonal communication: Maintaining strong communication between members by providing regular updates and clarifying roles

ABILITIES

Participation: Ability to secure and maintain participation in coalition activities and encourage ownership of coalition efforts

Diversity: Ability to create a diverse membership across sectors, including historically overlooked partners

Role variety: Ability to provide a variety of ways to engage with the coalition

Member satisfaction: Ability to foster meaningful engagement through satisfying member opportunities, a collaborative atmosphere, member appreciation, and balanced costs and benefits of participation

Adaptability: Ability to mobilize membership into a dynamic and responsive organization that prioritizes adaptability and cohesion

Leadership

Creating and communication a shared vision for a changing future, including championing solution to organizational and community challenges and building partnerships

KNOWLEDGE

Policy: Knowledge of policy development and legislative process

Ethics: Knowledge of ethical standards in leadership, including hiring, financial management, leadership succession, and collaboration

Evidence-informed approaches: Knowledge of evidence-informed practices for substance use prevention programs and initiatives

SKILLS

Collaboration: Promoting effective working relationships

Advocacy: Achieving political commitment for coalition initiatives

Distributed responsibility: Collaborating with coalition members to distribute and delegate responsibility in a flexible, inclusive structure of shared decision making

Problem solving: Fostering effective decision making by analyzing facilitators and barriers to success, negotiating with stakeholders, and leading problem-solving teams

Funding: Acquiring monetary and non-monetary resources

Communication: Developing and articulating coalition vision and goals

ABILITIES

Diversity: Ability to drive the coalition's focus and initiative toward health equity and inclusion

Strategizing: Ability to identify coalition needs and initiate strategies aligned to the mission, strategic direction, and values

Systems thinking: Ability to regularly apply systemic thinking and skills to the planning process

Leadership development: Ability to foster broad and deep leadership in diverse coalition members and prepare for succession

Cohesion: Ability to create consensus in an environment based on trust, openness, transparency, and mutual benefit

Improvement over time: Ability to guide continuous innovation and improvement for long-term coalition success

Planning

Developing measurable goals and objectives for a coalition in response to assessment of needs and assets

KNOWLEDGE

Evidence-informed approaches: Knowledge of evidence-informed prevention strategies

Data sources: Knowledge of trusted sources for relevant information and where to access local data

Resource management: Knowledge of how to manage, allocate, and coordinate resources

Assessment: Knowledge of assessment techniques to collect relevant information, including a SWOT analysis

SKILLS

Assessment: Assessing and monitoring coalition and community context to revise coalition activities

Data-driven decision making: Using assessment and other data to select and prioritize strategies

Goal-setting: Identifying clear, measurable goals and outcomes

Implementation: Creating realistic timelines, developing a budget, and assigning responsibilities

Resource management: Selecting feasible strategies based on coalition resources

ABILITIES

Partner engagement: Ability to effectively engage partners from a variety of different backgrounds and perspectives in planning process

Strategy prioritization: Ability to identify and prioritize strategies based on community input and existing resources

Systems thinking: Ability to understand and apply knowledge of systemic processes and their influence when planning prevention strategies

Resource Management

Identifying resource requirements, selecting funding strategies, accessing non-monetary resources, and ensuring stability

KNOWLEDGE

Coalition context: Knowledge of coalition priorities, financial needs, and funding history, including which initiatives were or were not funded previously

Grant applications: Knowledge of how to access and apply for grants, including grant components

Funding sources: Knowledge of current and potential funding sources, as well as fundraising techniques

In-kind sources: Knowledge of current and potential in-kind sources to support coalition activities

SKILLS

Securing resources: Developing strategies to secure diverse resources, including identifying potential donors, writing grant applications, obtaining in-kind contributions, and planning fundraising activities

Cultivating donor relationships: Helping donors understand why supporting the coalition is a worthwhile investment

Funding allocation: Building and monitoring a budget to effectively use funds, adjust allocations based on changing needs, and assess potential funding gaps

Resource leveraging: Identifying and coordinating members' financial and nonfinancial resources to avoid duplication of work

ABILITIES

Resource determination: Ability to determine financial and other resources needed for coalition infrastructure, programs, and services

Prioritization: Ability to prioritize coalition activities to appropriately direct funding and resources

Community support: Ability to build community member and leader support for coalition work and defend budget allocations for coalition activities

Internal Communication

Effectively communicating among members to manage coalition work, make decisions, and achieve shared goals

KNOWLEDGE

Group dynamics: Knowledge of different communication styles and how to work effectively in groups

Coalition members: Knowledge of member characteristics, including the role their organizations play in the prevention community and the coalition

SKILLS

Effective communication: Communicating consistently with coalition members and practicing active listening

Coalition management: Developing systems to support communication and information distribution

Vision: Communicating vision, goals, and objectives to members, stakeholders, and other decision makers

Meeting facilitation: Leading effective meetings, including producing and disseminating agendas, maintaining group focus, and making decisions

Group decision making: Building consensus, negotiating satisfactory outcomes, and solving problems as a group

ABILITIES

Trust: Ability to create trust and cohesion through open communication, active listening, mutual respect, and transparent information flow

Diversity: Ability to welcome differences, communicate values and goals, and foster innovation through openness to diverse ideas

Power sharing: Ability to share decision making among members

Conflict management: Ability to identify, recognize, and manage conflict with creative solutions

Development

Providing opportunities for members to understand intervention, practice new skills, and get feedback to achieve coalition goals

KNOWLEDGE

Expectations: Knowledge of role expectations and performance outputs for coalition members

Evidence-informed approaches: Knowledge of evidence-informed prevention strategies and development

Training formats: Knowledge of online and in-person training formats

Development resources: Knowledge of appropriate trainings and related resources available to meet coalition needs

Instructional strategies: Knowledge of instructional pedagogy for delivering training content

Substance-specific information: Knowledge of the latest trends and facts surrounding specific substances, including alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs

SKILLS

Learning needs: Soliciting input from coalition members through surveys or discussions about training needs

Tailoring: Tailoring development content to coalition setting and goals

Adaptation: Monitoring coalition activities and appropriately adapting ongoing training

Coaching: Providing support and technical assistance for coalition members to perform coalition activities

Feedback: Assessing and discussing coalition member activities to enhance performance and professional development

ABILITIES

Continuous learning: Ability to develop a culture of learning and continuous growth at all levels within the coalition

Prioritization: Ability to allocate resources to prioritized training needs based on coalition goals

Peer learning: Ability to create spaces in which coalition members can learn from one another

Sustainability

Maintaining the coalition and its achievements over time

KNOWLEDGE

Planning process: Knowledge of short- and long-term planning processes, including plan creation, coordination, and facilitation

Coalition background: Knowledge of current capacity, funding, timeframes, goals, supporters, and needs

Assessment: Knowledge of methods and tools to assess coalition strengths and weaknesses

SKILLS

Group facilitation: Managing a collaborative sustainability planning process, including garnering participation from diverse participants

Planning strategies: Identifying short- and long-term strategies by focusing on relevant issues and setting realistic goals

Leadership development: Fostering collaborative leadership and planning for succession

Funding diversification: Identifying and obtaining funding and non-monetary support from a wide variety of sources, including in-kind resources

Communication: Conveying information to stakeholders and building support with external partners

ABILITIES

Vision and goal setting: The ability to align structure and vision around sustainability planning to achieve goals

Partnerships: The ability to secure collaboration from internal and external stakeholders

Effective data use: The ability to use assessment and evaluation data to select, modify, and end coalition programs while maintaining momentum and resources

Capacity building: The ability to mobilize coalition resources to promote and sustain efforts

Readiness

The extent to which an organization is both willing and able to implement a particular innovation

KNOWLEDGE

Community readiness: Knowledge of community context including community readiness, norms and values, organizations, leaders, and political climate

Readiness and change: Knowledge of readiness principles and stages of change

Resources: Knowledge of current and potential coalition resources

Training: Knowledge of appropriate and available prevention training

Strategies: Knowledge of evidence-informed prevention strategies

SKILLS

Readiness assessment: Assessing coalition readiness to implement policies or programs (e.g., capacity, challenges,resources, community context)

Communication: Communicating assessment results and coalition plans to stakeholders in order to build support for implementation

Strategy: Strategizing coalition activity through selecting, planning, and executing programs and policies that match coalition readiness

Monitor over time: Monitoring coalition readiness over time and throughout all phases of coalition activity in order to promote readiness and implement activities effectively

ABILITIES

Motivation: Ability to motivate coalition members by implementing activities that are consistent with community values, meet community needs, and prioritize equity

General capacity: Ability to build general coalition capacity including leadership, structure, and resources

Innovation-specific capacity: Ability to build innovation specific capacity including collaborating with prevention champions and developing inter-organizational relationships

Long term planning: Ability to create flexible, long-term plans that account for community readiness, coalition readiness, and fluctuations in readiness

Change Management

Making adjustments to programs, processes, policies, and practices to meet changing priorities and community needs

KNOWLEDGE

Cultural influences: Knowledge of local cultural values around change acceptance and resistance

Change principles: Knowledge of change management principles, processes, and theory

Transition resources: Knowledge of technical assistance needs for spin off programs and what resources are available to meet those needs

SKILLS

Data-based decision making: Using data to support collaborative problem solving and decision making for coalition next steps

Team formation: Organizing and facilitating teams of members and stakeholders that can effectively prepare and plan for transitions

Group facilitation: Reaching agreement among internal and external partners on next steps

Technical assistance:Providing appropriate technical assistance and support to facilitate transitions

Transition communication: Recognizing and celebrating what the coalition has accomplished and communicating transition plans and expectations

ABILITIES

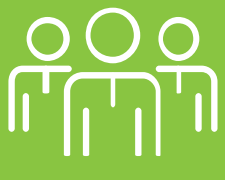
Monitoring: Ability to monitor and assess complex indicators of changing internal and external conditions

Strategy: Ability to oversee the coalition's selection and implementation of next steps under changing conditions

Team consensus: Ability to achieve consensus among stakeholders around the change plan and process, including managing conflict and overcoming resistance

COMMUNITY

Competencies focused on bringing diverse people and groups together to support coalition goals



Cultural Humility

Building honest and trustworthy relationships through a process of self-reflection and discovery

KNOWLEDGE

Community context: Knowledge of the demographics, experiences, and culture of the surrounding community, especially related to substance use

Social determinants of health: Knowledge of the drivers of health equity, such as neighborhood, access to healthcare, economic stability, education, and social context

Local barriers: Knowledge of barriers faced by people from culturally diverse groups accessing and using public health and prevention services

Role of power: Knowledge of the role of power dynamics in shaping health equity

Policy, systems, and environmental change: Knowledge of the benefits of PSE approaches in lieu of individual behavioral approaches

SKILLS

Member empowerment: Delegating authority and giving voice to coalition members from many different sectors of the community

Partnerships: Building meaningful and diverse partnerships that represent the people in the community

Root cause analysis: Analyzing root causes and determinants of health to strategically select interventions

Tailored messaging: Crafting effective messages for different audiences

Respectful communication: Actively listening to all community and coalition members and respecting their input and experiences

Conflict management: Dealing with and resolving conflict when it arises

ABILITIES

Cross-cultural communication: Ability to communicate through respectful language with people from diverse backgrounds, including sharing culturally appropriate information

Patterns: Ability to learn and adapt to personal and cultural patterns

Self-reflection: Ability to recognize one's own cultural values and biases and how those affect others

Respectful behavior: Ability to act with sensitivity and understanding

Community Engagement

Developing relationships with different sectors, groups, or organizations to implement substance use prevention strategies

KNOWLEDGE

Community resources: Knowledge of community champions, partners, and resources with potential to support coalition efforts

Community demographics: Knowledge of community demographics and norms

Organizing strategies: Knowledge of techniques to motivate, organize, and mobilize community members

Cultural humility: Knowledge of assumptions, biases, legacies of harm, and limitations of cultural knowledge and experience

SKILLS

Communications: Communicating with diverse community sectors via a variety of platforms to gain buy-in and maintain transparency

Public speaking: Speaking effectively to a variety of audiences

Group process: Promoting community involvement via proven processes (e.g., focus groups)

Volunteer oversight: Managing, training, and coordinating volunteers

ABILITIES

Empowerment: Authentically facilitate community contribution to goal setting and planning

Diverse perspectives: Ability to engage diverse community members and focus on openness, transparency, and accountability

Partnerships: Ability to establish dynamic, flexible partnerships that can support adaptability and problem solving

Community connection: Ability to connect community assets to coalition efforts

External Communication

Representing the organization to the public, government, and other external sources to build support for coalition activities and spread coalition messages

KNOWLEDGE

Messaging: Knowledge of effective message components, including coalition activities and goals and the costs or benefits to the community

Audience information: Knowledge of audience priorities and cultures, and effective messaging, language, and communication styles for that audience

Communication modes: Knowledge of various modes of communication, including in-person, print, and digital (including emerging digital modes)

SKILLS

Online channels: Using online platforms and social media to promote coalition activities

Written communication: Writing clear, easy-to-understand messages

Verbal communication: Ability to clearly communicate coalition purpose and activities

ABILITIES

Message tailoring: Ability to tailor communication messages to fit audience interests

Translation: Ability to translate community data and research evidence into understandable, actionable information and messages

Persuasion: Ability to influence others by sharing information, thoughts, and ideas

Direction-setting: Communicating the coalition's vision and goals and supporting strategic solutions to challenges

PREVENTION

Technical competencies required to implement substance prevention interventions

Assessment

Collecting data to define programs, resources, and readiness within a geographic area to identify needs and gaps in substance use prevention

KNOWLEDGE

Coalition: Knowledge of the goals and objectives of the coalition

Evidence-informed approaches: Knowledge of substance use prevention strategies, evidence-informed approaches, and necessary data

Risk and protective factors: Knowledge of context and interventions that promote or prevent substance use initiation (e.g., neighborhood income and violence)

Research methods: Knowledge of community assessment design and data collection methods

Statistics: Knowledge of statistical methods, how statistical surveys are performed, and what results mean

SKILLS

Planning: Identifying the scope and purpose, selecting and planning assessments, and managing assessment timeline

Data collection: Selecting appropriate methods and collecting data in accordance with best practices

Analysis: Applying best practices to collect and analyze data in partnership with community members, including root cause and gap analysis

Dissemination: Communicating assessment results with coalition and community members

Making connections: Using the assessment process to build connections with community partners and the media

ABILITIES

Engagement: Ability to engage local partners, including those most affected by the issue, in the assessment process

Timing: Ability to integrate assessment into the early phases of coalition development and maintain it as a continuous process

Prioritization: Ability to use assessment process and data to inform coalition action plan and ensure activities match local priorities

Activity selection: Ability to select and implement coalition activities based on community concerns and focus on the root causes of community challenges

Evidence-informed Strategies

Identifying and selecting approaches based on theory, best available research evidence and experience, documented body of knowledge, input from informed experts

KNOWLEDGE

Prevention theory and practice: Knowledge of evidence-informed prevention strategies

Risk and protective factors: Knowledge of context and strategies that promote or prevent substance use initiation (e.g., neighborhood income and violence)

Community context: Knowledge of current norms, community health issues and local context; community and political preferences and actions; and public health resources that may hinder implementation of strategies

SKILLS

Assessment: Evaluating evidence for quality, community fit, and feasibility

Adaptation: Monitoring and continually adapting strategies to fit with community

Planning: Creating a logic model to match evidence-informed strategies to coalition goals

Comprehensive strategies: Examining the benefits of multiple evidence-informed strategies to create a comprehensive approach to prevention

ABILITIES

Community assessment: Ability to assess community strengths to inform selection and application of strategies

Planning: Ability to develop an action plan that leverages existing resources and prioritizes strategies based on coalition goals and evidence quality

Communication: Ability to understand and communicate evidence-informed strategies to community members

Resource procurement: Ability to secure resources to support implementation of evidence-informed strategies

Training: Ability to provide implementation training to coalition members to enhance intervention fidelity

Implementation

The process of putting evidence-based interventions into routine use in specific settings, such as a health clinic, school, or community

KNOWLEDGE

Implementation strategies: Knowledge of various implementation strategies, such as pilot testing, adapting, and scaling up, to implement evidence-informed practices

Local context: Knowledge of the local context, including available resources, to select implementation strategies that are appropriate for the population's size and characteristics, draw on community strengths, and meet community needs

Core components: Knowledge of the core components of evidence-based strategies that must be implemented to achieve intended results and processes for monitoring fidelity

SKILLS

Pilot testing: Testing small changes, assessing successes, and adjusting based on challenges using methods such as a Plan-Do-Study-Act cycle

Scaling up: Using lessons learned from a pilot test or initial implementation cycle to implement practices at higher levels or in more settings

Adapting: Assessing practices to meet the needs of a new population or setting, reach more people, simplify the strategy, or reduce cost

Skill development: Providing training and technical assistance to increase coalition and community capacity to implement practices with fidelity

ABILITIES

Strategy selection: Ability to select implementation strategies that draw on coalition strengths to implement evidence-informed strategies

Change management: Ability to oversee and facilitate smooth change processes within coalition practices

Resource management: Ability to secure and allocate resources for implementing evidence-informed strategies

Integration: Ability to incorporate implementation of new practices into general coalition workflow and functioning

Policy

Engaging decision makers and community leaders to support substance use prevention programs, policies, and infrastructure

KNOWLEDGE

Community context: Knowledge of the community priorities, strengths, resources, and local policy environment, including key players

Legislative process: Knowledge of how policy is made, including lobbying restrictions for federally funded organizations

Policy frameworks: Knowledge of policy, systems, and environmental change frameworks (e.g., socioecological model and health impact pyramid)

Social determinants of health: Knowledge of the social determinants of health, including economic stability, education access, and social and community context

SKILLS

Policy research: Collecting, analyzing, and interpreting research relevant to the coalition's prevention policy issues

Persuasion: Effectively communicating to win support, including public speaking

Negotiation: Bringing stakeholders together to reconcile differences

Implementation: Overseeing strategy implementation, timelines, roles, and responsibilities

Enforcement: Using data to assess the impact of policy change and monitor enforcement efforts

ABILITIES

Health equity focus: Ability to develop, implement, and enforce policies designed to produce equitable health outcomes

Mobilization: Ability to engage a variety of stakeholders and decision makers in critical mass the right time to advance policies in collaboration with the community

Research translation: Ability to translate substance use prevention programs and policy research for community and members to inform policy change and educate the community about new policies

Complex process: Ability to use a variety of resources and strategies to apply multilevel policy, systems, and environmental strategies with a focus on long-term sustainability

Evaluation

Systematically collecting, analyzing, and using data to examine the effectiveness and efficiency of the coalition and contribute to continuous program improvement

KNOWLEDGE

Coalition background: Knowledge of the coalition's evaluation history, goals, and capacity

Evaluation methods and design: Knowledge of evaluation methods, study design, implementation, and strengths and limitations of various strategies

Analysis: Knowledge of how to use descriptive and inferential evaluation results to analyze coalition efforts

Dissemination: Knowledge of dissemination principles to communicate results in a clear, effective way for various audiences

SKILLS

Team expertise: Forming, facilitating, and training evaluation team

Evaluation planning: Ensuring appropriate time, plan, budget, and expertise for evaluation; hiring and collaborating with outside evaluator when appropriate

Goal-setting: Identifying clear, measurable goals and outcomes

Data collection: Selecting appropriate methods and collecting data in accordance with best practices

Data interpretation: Examining evaluation data for patterns and changes

Communication: Presenting results in useful ways to reach stakeholders

ABILITIES

Evaluation tools: Ability to use a logic model and data collection tools to carry out evaluations of internal functioning and external program and policy activities

Strategic planning: Assess short- and long-term outcomes and use evaluation findings to adapt coalition activity

Stakeholder engagement: Ability to engage community stakeholders during planning, data collection, analysis, and dissemination of evaluation findings

Integration: Ability to embed evaluation and monitoring into coalition activities