

Connecting Silos: Uniting Institutions for Healthy Schools and Communities

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Session Objectives

- By the end of the session, participants will be able to:
 - Employ at least two strategies to promote collaboration among stakeholders
 - Describe how to facilitate partnerships in support of health education
 - Provide examples of how to use needs assessment data to examine factors that enhance or compromise the process of health education

Building Capacity for School Health Systems Change

- Partnership between SUNY Cortland Health Department & NYSED
- Facilitate school health systems change
 - develop sustainable school health infrastructure and systematic processes for improving health and academic outcomes



Characteristics of Highly Effective Partnerships

- Genuinely cooperative & sustainable
- Have strong leaders
- Shared vision that prioritizes improved outcomes for students
- Processes for regular & joint monitoring of goals, activities, & outcomes
- Tangible results

Lonsdale, M. (2009). New awards for school-community partnerships. *Research Developments*, 20 (article 9), Australian Council for Education Research.

Moving districts toward

- Including health in school improvement plans
- Using academic & health data to explore contributions & solutions to educational challenges
- Evidence-based programs and policies
 - Using systematic planning & process models
- Increased involvement of a wide variety of stakeholders
- **Identifying and establishing effective sustainable partnerships**

SHSC Project Foundation

- Coordinated School Health Framework
- Health Literacy
- Ecological Perspective

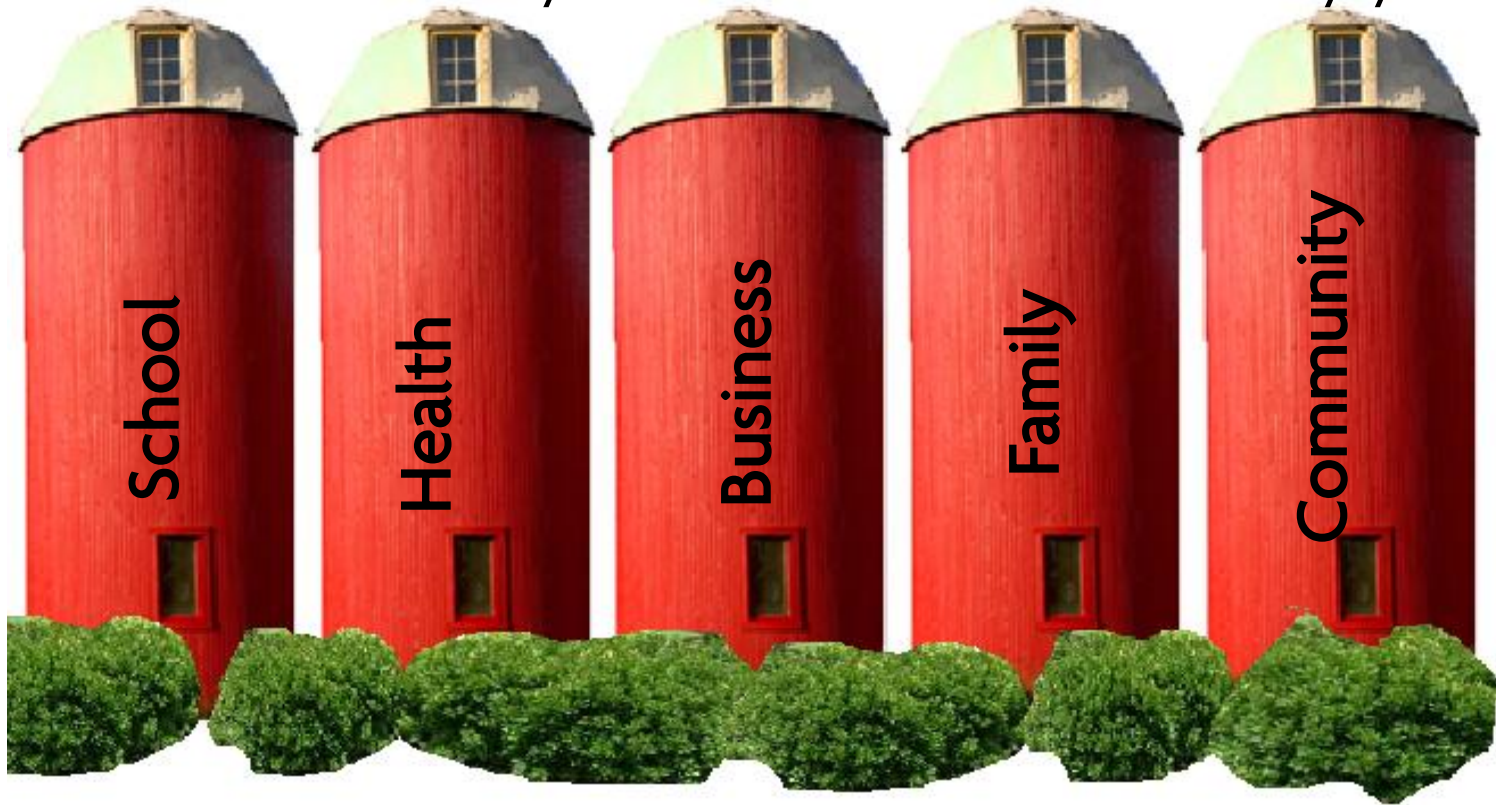


CSHP Graphic



Current Reality

Each is necessary but not sufficient for healthy youth



Macro system is not working

Healthy Students, Strong Learners

Assessment Activities

- Community Profile
 - Existing information
 - Health
 - Socioeconomic
 - Environmental
 - Other demographic
 - Windshield tours
- School District Profile
 - Academic performance
 - Enrollment patterns
 - Existing School Health Program and Services
 - School Health Index results



Assessment Activities

- Focus Groups
 - Parents
 - School Faculty + Staff
 - Community members
- Key Informant Interviews
 - Administrators
 - Faculty + Staff
 - Community Leaders



School/Community Partnerships: Big Picture

- Perception vs. reality
- Reactive rather than proactive
 - Tend to be “one-shot” events
- Interest from community agencies
 - CSH framework good foundation

Barriers & Challenges to Developing Effective Partnerships

1. Unclear or undefined leadership for school health
2. Not recognizing shared vision, values, & goals
3. School health individual driven not district driven
4. Lack of effective communication
5. School district in a silo
6. Perceived & real budgetary constraints

Barriers & Challenges to Developing Effective Partnerships

7. Protecting turf
8. Past negative experiences
9. Failure to recognize health systems & links to academic success
 - School health systems vs. health class
10. Implementation issues
 - Putting policy & initiatives into action



1. Unclear or Undefined Leadership for School Health

- Real & perceived increase in burdens on school administrators
- Lack of institutionalization
- “Not MY job”
- Lack of good communication about school health and school health activities
 - Those not directly involved with school health appear to lack knowledge of coordinated school health framework and/or activities
 - Creates difficulty in recognizing shared vision, values, & goals

2. Not Recognizing Shared Vision, Values, & Goals

- Health is a luxury in a school building
 - Not enough buy-in to healthy students are better learners
- “Health” indicates specific health conditions
- Lack of understanding of what school health encompasses

3. School Health Individual Driven Not District Driven

- Sustainability
- Scope
- Efficiency

4. Lack of Effective Communication

- Within district; across schools; school/district to community & parents
- School health not always sharing/communicating effectively with stakeholders not actively involved with school health
- Information sharing more than communication
 - Does not appear to be a **system** for stakeholder groups to talk with each other

5. School District in a Silo

- Schools' perceptions \neq community perceptions of connectedness
- Community groups do not feel entirely welcome in schools
- Sense that structure, administration, functioning of schools do not easily lend themselves to collaboration

6. Perceived & real budgetary constraints

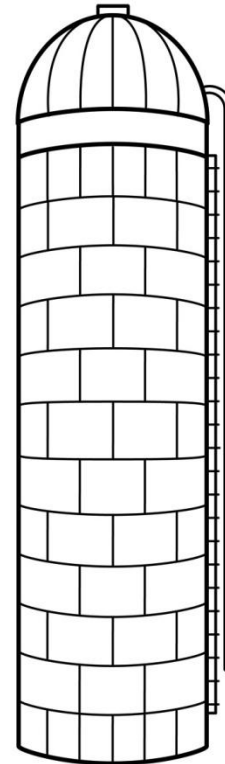
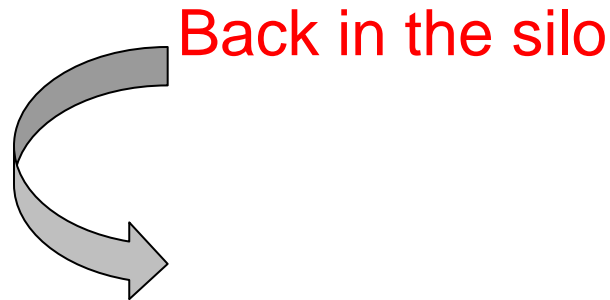
- Many disparate events & initiatives with little or no coordination
- Little recognition of budgetary efficiencies possible with partnerships

7. Protecting Turf

- Related to resource allocation
- Competition among schools within district
- Not using health & academic data in strategic planning
 - Cannot see relationships

8. Past negative experiences

- Failure to recognize health systems & links to academic success



9. Failure to recognize health systems & links to academic success

- Difficult to get to shared vision with regard to student outcomes
- Contributes to lack of leadership in school health

10. Implementation

- Self-efficacy

Reflection

- Asking for reflection on which barriers might exist in their own situation

Building Partnerships: Essential Tools

- Community Profile – “map” of community resources
- Academic data
- Health data
- Data management & interpretation skills
- Leadership skills
- Team building skills and processes
- Well defined & functional communication system

Key Steps to an Effective Partnership

1. Determine need for partnership
2. Evaluate potential partners
3. Engage
4. Establish leadership
5. Goals and Objectives
6. Partners' level of involvement
7. Keep the long-term goals in view
8. Evaluate the partnership



Vehige Calise, T., Moeti, R., & Epping, J.N. (2009). Partnerships. In D.R. Brown, G.W. Heath, & S. Levin Martin, S. (Eds.), *Promoting Physical Activity: A Guide for Community Action* (pp. 119-137). Atlanta, G.A.: Center for Disease Control and Prevention

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Determine need for partnership

- Can you reach your goals alone?
- Benefits vs. Challenges of a partnership
- Is there an agency interested in a partnership?
 - Do they have a shared vision?

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Steps 2 & 3

Evaluate Potential Partners

- Are you lacking;
 - Resources
 - Personnel
 - Funding
 - Programing expertise
 - Visibility/ Credibility
- Find a partner who fits the bill

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Activity: A Guide for Community Action (pp. 119-137).

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Healthy Students, Strong Learners

Engage

- Recruit and/or entertain potential partners
- Consider organizations, agencies, or institutions that fit with your needs
- Involve target audience in the search
- Ask, don't assume involvement in communication
- What are **YOU** bringing to the partnership?

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Establish Leadership

- Identify clear leadership, acceptable to all partners
- Effective leadership
 - Inspire action
 - Guide decision making process
 - Productive meetings
 - Well-planned activities
 - **KEEP FOCUS** on goals and objectives

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Goals and Objectives

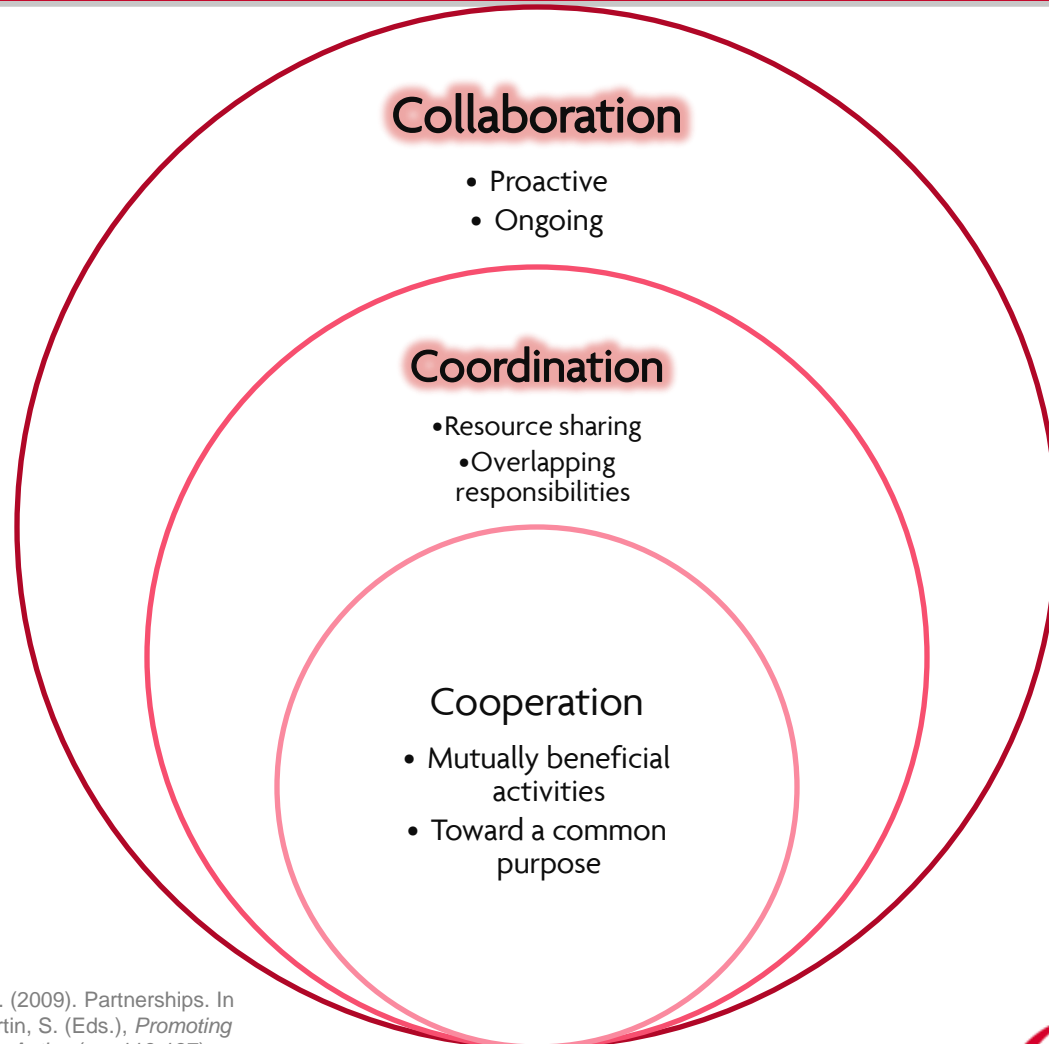
- Data driven
- All partners need to agree
- Communicate vision, to find common ground
- Developing trust takes time

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Level of Involvement



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Keep Long-term Goals in View

- Start with short-term objectives
- Persistence
 - Overcome obstacles
- Constant communication
- Sharing reports and results with stakeholders
- Celebrate small successes

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Evaluate the Partnership

- Ongoing, begins early
- Continues throughout the partnership
 - Leadership
 - Political climate
 - Resources
- Track progress toward goals/objectives

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Benefits of Coordination/ Collaboration

- Community buy-in
- Resource sharing
- Mutually beneficial outcomes
- Efficiently address complex issues

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Places to Partner



Government

- Health Department
- Zoning Board
- Parks and Rec
- Transportation
- City Council
- Mental Health Services
- Gov./Mayor's Council on wellness



Community

- Sierra Club
- Local Higher. Ed.
- Church Groups
- YMCA/YWCA
- Voluntary health organizations
- ASPCA



Business

- Chamber of Commerce
- Worksite Wellness Coordinator(s)
- Pro Sport Teams
- Business Coalition

Partnership

- PLANET
- Safe Routes to School

Successful Partnership

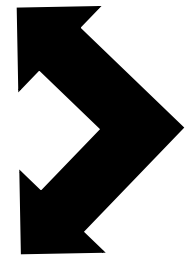


Healthy Students, Strong Learners

SUNY
Cortland

Walking Through It

1. Determine need for partnership
 - a. High rates of obesity in the school and community that impact academic performance
 - b. Need to improve environment to improve physical activity
 - c. Can we do it alone? NO
2. Evaluate potential partners
 - a. What resources do we lack? What resources can we offer? Who can help?
 - b. Who or what might have similar mission/ similar goals?
3. Engage
 - a. Local parks and recreation department
4. Establish Leadership
5. Goals and Objectives
 - a. Develop walking program
 - b. Develop and maintain walking trails from school to the community
6. Partners' level of involvement
7. Keep the long-term goals in view
8. Evaluate the partnership



Activity Break

1. Determine need for partnership
 2. Evaluate potential partners
 3. Engage
- In pairs, pick one of your school districts and walk through the first three steps
 - Share your steps

Wrap-Up

- Partnerships are important and beneficial
- Need research on the effectiveness of TRUE partnerships, not just research on the effectiveness of a program

Any questions?

Thank you for coming!