Building Your Coalition: Lessons Learned in Lincoln

Linda Major, Project Director

Tom Workman, Communications

NU Directions

NCC

Nebraska Collegiate Consortium To Reduce High-Risk Drinking

UNIVERSITY OF Nebraska Lincoln

The Campus Task Force in Context

State Association of Colleges and Universities

Campus-Community Coalition

Campus Task Force

Higher Education Center

Mobilizing the Community

1. Assess the community (wants, needs, resources).
2. Create a core leadership group.
3. Develop a plan of action (goals, activities, timeline).
4. Build a mass base of support through community awareness
5. Implement the action plan
6. Maintain the organization and institutionalize change
7. Evaluate changes

Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol: Lessons and Results from a 15-Community Randomized Trial, 1999.

Common Characteristics of Successful Coalitions

- A comprehensive vision that addresses all segments of the community and community life
- A wide sharing of vision
- A strong core of committed partners from the start
- An inclusive and broad-based membership
- Consensus on the partnerships basic purpose
- Decentralized units encouraging participation and action at a variety of levels
- Non-disruptive staff turnover
- Shared leadership
- Extensive prevention activities and support for local prevention policies

NCC

Nebraska Collegiate Consortium To Reduce High-Risk Drinking

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Lincoln

Common Characteristics of *Unsuccessful* Coalitions

- Considering the partnership to be a "special project," not a long-lived entity
- Misunderstanding the basic ground rules of partnership
- Permitting staff to exert too much control
- Allowing partnership identity to be confused with other organizations
- Competitive
- Hidden agendas
- Top-Down leadership
- Failure to keep all members informed appropriately
- Lack of interim rewards
- Delay or change in conditions

NCC

Nebraska Collegiate Consortium To Reduce High-Risk Drinking

UNIVERSITY 1 OF Nebraska Lincoln

A Grounded Theory of Successful Alcohol Control: Perspectives From Three U.S. Institutions of Higher Education
by Anne Hoffmann (2005)

**Cluster One:
Diverse and Committed Stakeholders**

-Administrator Oversight
-Development of Social Capitol
-Approachable, Emphatic Staff
-Student Leadership and Participation
-Diverse and Engaged Students

**Cluster Two:
Planning and Preparation**

-Commitment to an Evolving Process
-Clearly-Articulated, Realistic Goals
-Extensive Planning Using Models Grounded in Research
-Expert Assessment Procedures
-Adequate Resources

**Cluster Three:
Diverse and Connected Programs and Services**

-Comprehensive and Concurrent Programs and Services
-Sustained Delivery of Programs and Services
-Open, Cogent Communication
-Transparent Policies and Consequences
-Contextualized Teaching-for-Learning
-Purposeful Dialogue

Ne... Co... Con... To Re... High-Risk Drinking

UNIVERSITY 1 OF
Nebraska
Lincoln

Lesson 1: Establish a Core Philosophy of Organizing

This will be an INCLUSIVE process

- Community-wide consensus is critical for long-term environmental change; though it takes longer, the results last longer

- What's a **stakeholder**? Anyone who lives in as is impacted by the environment
  - Who is impacted by a change in the environment?
  - Who would oppose a change in the environment?
  - Who has the ability to create the change?

- **Three questions for all stakeholders**:
  - What's my experience?
  - What's my interest for change?
  - What's my potential role?

NCC

Nebraska Collegiate Consortium To Reduce High-Risk Drinking

UNIVERSITY 1 OF Nebraska Lincoln

Identifying Stakeholders

- Think Constituencies
  - What groups are impacted by our work?
  - What groups can impact our work?
  - Who represents these constituencies?
- Think Interests
  - What are the interests of the constituency regarding the alcohol environment?
  - What are the interests of the individual representative?
- Think Role
  - What role can this constituency play in creating/maintaining change?
  - What role can this individual representative play in creating/maintaining change?

Potential Stakeholders: Campus Task Force

- **Students**
  - Student Government
  - Athletes
  - Peer Educators
  - Judicial Board Members
  - Greek Leaders
  - Organization Leaders
  - Ambassadors/Orientation Leaders
- **Staff & Administrators**
  - Housing
  - Judicial Affairs/Dean of Students
  - Campus Police/Security
  - Greek Affairs
  - Athletic Support
  - Communications
  - Student Activities
  - Special Populations (GLBT, etc)

- **Faculty**
  - Related Research Interest
  - Organizational Advisors
  - Course Instructors
  - Academic Advisors
- **Parents**
  - Parent Group Representatives
  - Concerned Parents
  - Alumni Parents
- **Alumni**
  - Local organizers
  - Alumni advisors
  - Fundraisers
  - Former students with experience

Creating "Fluid" Coalition Membership

- **"Core" members**
  - Individuals that are regularly involved in/ responsible for the environment
- **"Ad Hoc" members**
  - Represent specialized constituencies that are more interested in/able to assist with certain issues or strategic items
- **"Will Call" members**
  - Represent individuals who have a specific interest or ability, often unrelated to AOD

Organization

- **Organize by Workgroup**
  - **Coalition members self-select their workgroup based on interest, responsibility, expertise, and/or resources**
  - **Workgroups develop and implement interventions, continue environmental monitoring, and address any issues related to implementation**
  - **AD hoc committees used for interventions that require special experience/expertise**

NCC

Nebraska Collegiate Consortium To Reduce High-Risk Drinking

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Lincoln

Lesson 2: Establish a Core Philosophy & Language for the Group

"Shared Responsibility"

- Responsibility for individual behavior is shared between the individual and the environment
- All stakeholders within the environment need to share the responsibility for the condition of the environment

"Harm Reduction"

- The GOAL of our efforts is to reduce the harms from intoxication, not to eliminate consumption
- We are interested in reducing harms for EVERYONE in the environment, not just the drinker

NCC

Nebraska Collegiate Consortium To Reduce High-Risk Drinking

UNIVERSITY OF Nebraska Lincoln

ENVIRONMENTAL INFLUENCE

INDIVIDUAL CHOICE

Unclear Community Beliefs, Values, & Standards

Inconsistent Messages About Alcohol

Inconsistently Enforced or Communicated Laws & Policies

High-Risk Traditions & Celebrations

Lack of Negative Consequences for High-Risk Behavior

Heavy Promotion of Alcohol Products & Activities

Inexpensive Alcohol is Easily Available and Accessible

NCC

Nebraska Collegiate Consortium To Reduce High-Risk Drinking

UNIVERSITY 1 OF
Nebraska
Lincoln
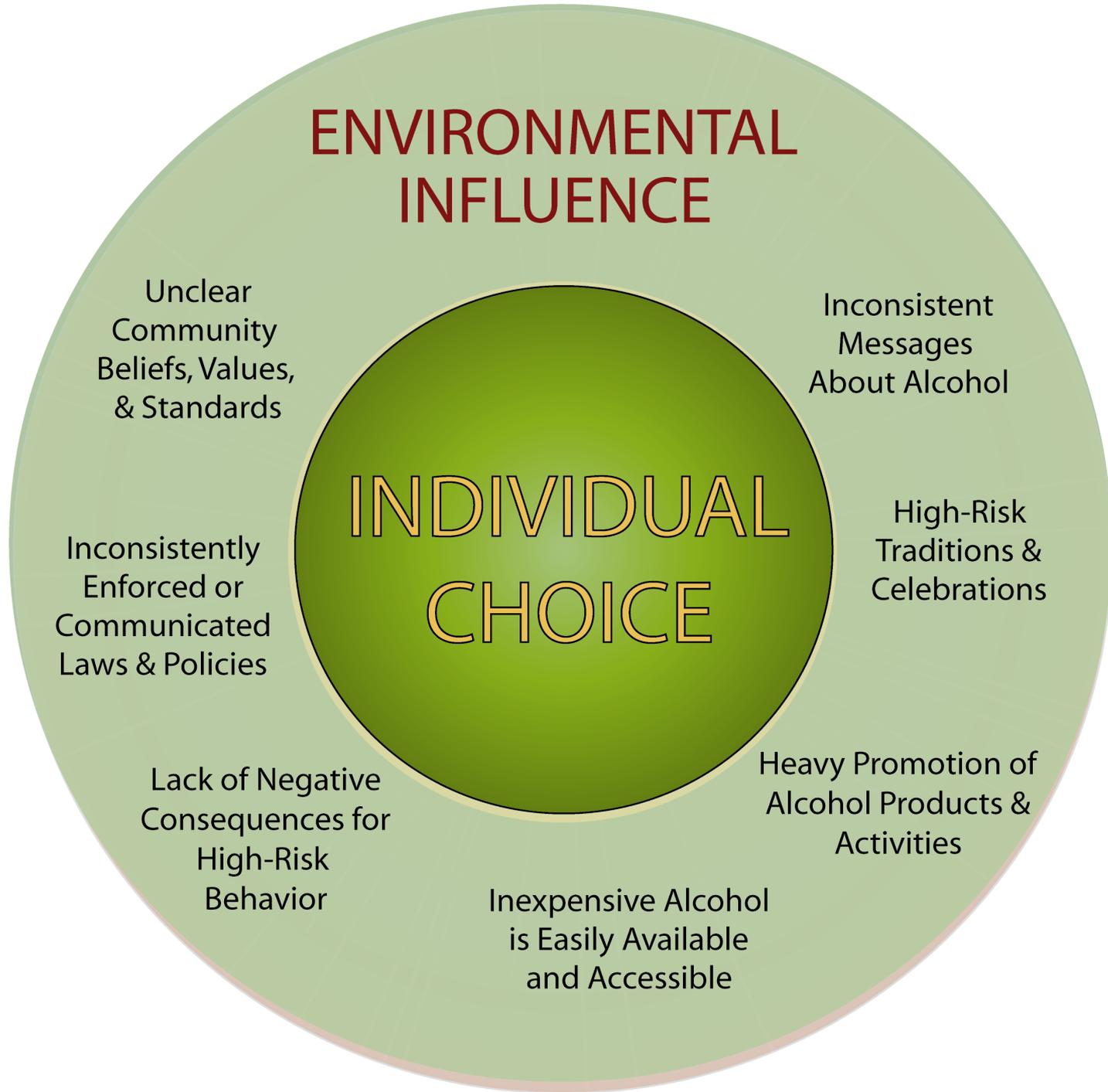
Agree on Key Language

- High-Risk Drinking/Dangerous Drinking
- Primary and Secondary Harms
- Environmental Management
- Policy, Education, Enforcement

NCC

Nebraska Collegiate Consortium To Reduce High-Risk Drinking

UNIVERSITY OF
Nebraska
Lincoln

Lesson 3: Build Consensus Among Diverse Stakeholders

1. Focus on the vision of the IDEAL ENVIRONMENT

2. Use DATA to separate fact from opinion

3. Help stakeholders share their experiences, not their positions

4. Work from a list of emerging needs across partners: what solutions best meet all these needs?

5. Research how other communities met a similar set of needs through a specific solution, asking, "Could this work here?"

6. Be ready to mediate between disagreements, but recognize debate as healthy.

7. Role-model productive debate and disagreement

NCC

Nebraska Collegiate Consortium To Reduce High-Risk Drinking

UNIVERSITY OF **Nebraska** Lincoln

Lesson 4:
Get TOP Administrative Support

Key ROLES of Upper Administrators:

1. Provide access to partners/stakeholders
2. Providing understanding and helping to frame the issue for other administrators
3. Managing expectations and messages
4. "Rally the troupes"
5. Resource dedication
6. Provide political support, particularly with insidious barriers
7. Institutionalization

Lesson 4:
Get TOP Administrative Support

What do upper administrators need from US?

- Data they can use to clarify against anecdotes
- Document the extent of the problem credibly
- Share stories of success – quickly!
- Recognize the amount of risk for administrators/ work to minimize risk.
- Help them frame the issue for various constituencies
- Bring well-researched ideas to the table

Lesson 5: Establish Communication Systems

- What is the best way to let each stakeholder know about meetings/activities?
- What data/information/models does everyone need to know/have in order to make the next meeting productive?
- How can we best solicit experiences/ opinions/ ideas/suggestions from members?
- How can we enable workgroups to report progress back to the larger task force?

Lesson 6: Make Meetings Productive and Rewarding

- Meet the needs
  - Time, location, refreshment, etc
- Always have a clear agenda
  - What will we accomplish today versus what will we talk about
- Have support and visual materials
- Create an atmosphere of productive discussion

Lesson 7: Build Relationships Outside of the Meetings

- Check in with members about the meeting and their walk-away thoughts
- Clarify vision/explain issues with individuals where appropriate
- LISTEN without defense when you hear criticisms or hesitancies
- Connect the vision and goals of the coalition to the individual's interests