



How to build a community coalition to support fathers

For any long-term goal, the following steps will guide the creation of a coalition to work toward systems-level change through three key steps: 1) coordinating and aligning services and programs; 2) removing barriers to access and creating policies and practices that support targeted groups; and 3) developing healthy communities with positive norms. Remember that systems-level change is an active, iterative process that requires key stakeholders to work collaboratively toward a shared, measurable goal.

Step 1: Foundational Activities

- Identify which community partners need to be at the table
- Ask yourself if your community partners are ready and able to collaborate
- Identify the coalition’s specific and measurable goal(s)

Step 2: Collaborative Activities

- Identify the evidence-based drivers of change for the goal
- Identify the community context, including the available funding, resources, and political support
- Identify how each community partner can contribute
- Identify the barriers that need to be removed

Step 3: Indicators of Progress

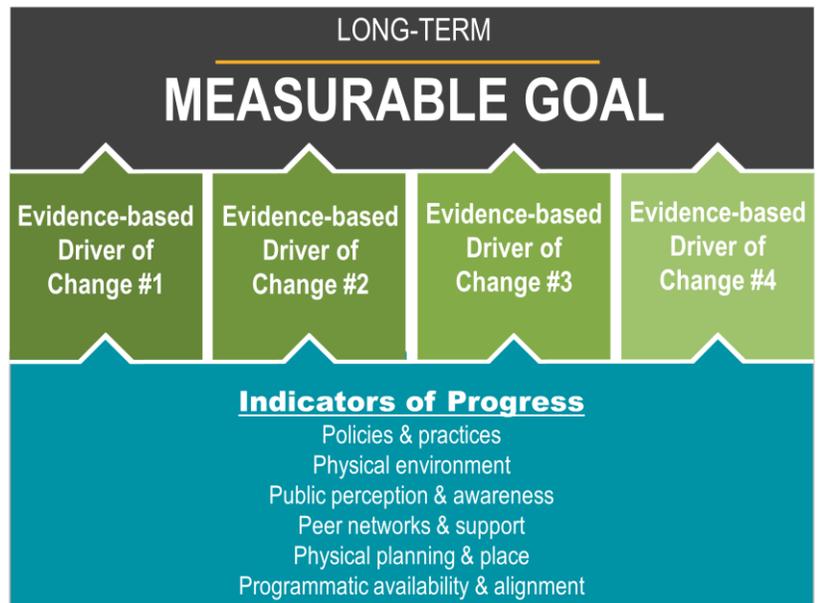
- Define the underlying structural factors that need to change to help the coalition meet the long-term goals
- Ask yourself what the community would look like if the coalition did not exist

Step 4: Outputs

- Identify short-term metrics that represent the indicators of progress and help quantify a community’s progress toward their goals
- The outputs show that the community is adopting the indicators of progress

Step 5: Measurable Outcomes

- Ask how your community wellbeing changed
- Evaluate your progress toward the long-term goal(s)





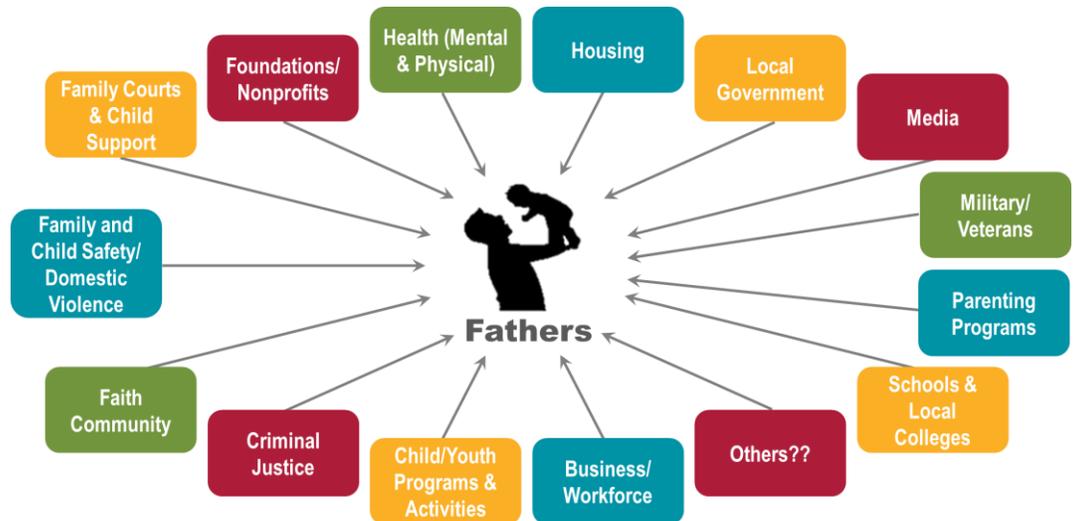
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Foundational Activities: A Closer Look

Identifying which community partners need to be at the table

Are your community partners ready and able to collaborate?

Ask yourself: Do we already have the inter-organizational relationships and resources to build the coalition, or do we need to dedicate time and resources to build the groundwork and form inter-organizational relationships?



Indicators of Progress: A Closer Look

Indicators of progress provide the coalition a framework to develop strategies and action steps and to assess and measure the interim changes occurring in the community.

Each indicator represents an aspect of the community that can be improved or enhanced in multiple ways to nudge the needle and move a community forward in their systems-level work.

Each indicator should be measurable. Finding ways to track the indicators is key to demonstrate interim progress.

Indicator of Progress	Definition
Policies & practices	Decisions made by a legislative or administrative body which determine what actions and implementation options are available to communities and organizations
Physical environment	The physical characteristics of a space that compose its character, utility, and potential
Public perception & awareness	Opinions and knowledge of the public and media
Peer networks & support	Integration and linkages between community groups, individuals, families, businesses, and other entities
Physical planning & place	Spatial relationships between systems (e.g. job access, transit routes)
Programmatic availability & alignment	Ensuring adequate availability of evidence-based services and resources that are aligned with: 1) larger systems goals, 2) the need in the community, and 3) other programs across sectors



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Most fathers want to be involved in their children’s lives. But fathers often face many barriers to becoming the father they want to be, such as difficulty finding meaningful employment, incarceration, or juggling multiple parenting roles among residential and nonresidential children.

By thinking of your services in the context of the community system, you can build a coalition with other community stakeholders and work to address the complex needs of fathers through systems-level change.

Below you will find an example of how a coalition dedicated to supporting fathers can move through the first three steps of systems-level change.

Step 1 The coalition identifies increasing father involvement as the long-term goal.

Step 2 The coalition uses existing research to establish the evidence-based drivers of change for the long-term goal. We know the four predictors of increased father involvement, and those predictors are the evidence-based drivers of change for the coalition.

Step 3 Long-term goals, like increasing father involvement, can take years to achieve, but the indicators of progress help coalitions measure the short-term progress. The coalition selects the best indicators of progress for each driver of change.

