

Authentic Community Engagement

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Overview

Setting the Stage

**How Does Authentic
Community Engagement
Look in Practice**

Recommendations

What do we mean by community?

Community refers to the people who are most impacted by inequities resulting from geography, race and ethnicity, immigration status, language, sexual orientation, gender identity, disability, socioeconomic status, and other structurally marginalized identities

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**Relationship
Building**

2

Power Sharing

3

**Meaningful
Inclusion**



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1

Relationship Building



Relationship Building

Why do we build and sustain relationships with the community?

- Means to achieving our goals
- We need community relationships in order to get support
- Community relationships give meaning to our work and lives
- To advance equity and justice
- Upstream solution

Relationship Building

How do you build relationships with people of different cultural backgrounds than your own?

- Eliminate assumptions
- Learn about the person's culture
- Attend an event in their community
- Take a stand against the person's oppression
- It's okay to make mistakes, but own up to your mistakes

Relationship Building

Recommendations

- Approach with integrity
- Have something to offer
- Tell people about yourself- be open
- Recognize that community members are individuals
- Listen and take them seriously
- Value and prioritize lived experience
- Use meeting time wisely
- Keep a positive attitude
- Establish good communication
- Have defined and clarified plans, goals, and purposes early on
- It takes time, but it's worth it

Source: [Community Tool Box](#)



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“ Relationships we develop
with our coalition partners ”
must be transformative,
not transactional.

— Reverend Dr. William Barber , Pastor



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2

Power Sharing



Power Sharing

What is power sharing?

- Nurturing transparent, trusting relationships, and co-creating strategies with stakeholders
- A commitment to inclusion
- An antidote to White Supremacy

Sources: [Showing Up for Racial Justice](#), [Mission Investors](#), & [Power Moves](#)



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Power Sharing

Why is power sharing so important?

- Increases legitimacy, equity, and sustainability
- Strengthens democracy
- Builds community resiliency and responsiveness

Power Sharing

Recommendations

- Focus on equitable outcomes
- Inclusion of multiple perspectives
- Strong participation from diverse people
- Community-driven planning
- Decision-making process is equitable, authentic, and transparent
- Willingness to confront overarching issues
- Enhancing knowledge and skills of socially excluded groups

“I think of diversity as representation, inclusion as belonging and equity as shared decision making, or shared power.”

— Nicole Anand, Political Economist



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Meaningful Inclusion



What does meaningful inclusion mean?

“Refers to an authentic, mutually beneficial, and collaborative process of working to address issues that affect the health and well-being of particular communities, which often involves prioritizing health equity. Community engagement exists on a spectrum; involves equitable distribution of decision-making power and a focus on community partnering and collaboration; and is rooted in trust and respect.”

- de Beaumont Foundations

Meaningful Inclusion

Why engage community members meaningfully?

- Avoids manipulation or tokenistic involvement
- Increases everyone's capacity to address the toughest challenges
- Systems change
- Balance uneven power dynamics
- Responsive to actual community needs
- Community ownership
- Healing

Sources: [Community Capacity Index](#), [Community Tool Box](#) & [Community Partnership Principles Guide](#)



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Meaningful Inclusion

Recommendations

- Follow the Colorado MCH Continuum of Community Engagement
- Data gathering before new projects are designed or implemented
- Commit to partnership in the co-creation and co-ownership of solutions
- Compensation for community engagement
- Understanding capacity and meeting community needs
- List roles and responsibilities
- Share power
- Being present
- Relationship-centered practices
- Centering self-care and personal healing

Sources: [Community Capacity Index](#), [Community Tool Box](#), [Facilitating Power](#) & [Community Partnership Principles Guide](#)



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Belonging is where we co-create... it's predicated on power and agency and responsibility. People want to be full participants, to have a voice, to have power. When you're co-creating or belonging, you're not just co-creating for yourself, you have responsibility to all the members and to the institution itself.

”

— John A. Powell, Director Othering & Belonging Institute



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Colorado's Community Engagement Continuum

Increasing Level of *Community Involvement, Impact, Trust and Communication Flow*

Increasing *Ownership, Empowerment, Skills, Opportunities and Supports* of Both Staff and Community

Please note: Each level has value.

Participation		Engagement		Partnership
Outreach	Consult	Involve	Collaborate	Share Leadership
Communication flows from the program or initiative to <u>inform</u> community members.	Community members <u>provide one-time or periodic feedback.</u>	Communication flows both ways and community members provide <u>ongoing participation.</u>	Community members <u>influence decision-making.</u>	Community members <u>share power and responsibility</u> making decisions together.
<u>Outcome:</u> To establish communication and outreach channels, while sharing information with the community.	<u>Outcome:</u> To develop connections.	<u>Outcome:</u> To establish visibility of the partner and increased cooperation.	<u>Outcome:</u> Increased trust and partnership-building	<u>Outcome:</u> A strong partnership with bidirectional trust that affects broader community health outcomes.

(Adapted from CDC's Report "Principles of Community Engagement: Concepts and Definitions from the Literature and Wong, N. T., Zimmerman, M. A., & Parker, E. A. (2010). A typology of youth participation and empowerment for child and adolescent health promotion. American Journal of Community Psychology, 46, 100-114.)



THANK YOU!

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