COLLECTIVE IMPACT: GETTING STARTED
AGE-FRIENDLY COMMUNITIES CONFERENCE
APRIL 10, 2017
Collective impact is a unique form of structured, multi-sector collaboration

- All relevant actors are working toward the same goal and measure the same things.
- There is cross-sector alignment with the government, nonprofit, philanthropic, and corporate sectors coming together as equal partners.
- Organizations are actively coordinating their action and sharing lessons learned.

Collective Impact is the commitment of a group of key stakeholders from different sectors to a common agenda for solving a specific social problem.
Collective impact only makes sense under **certain circumstances**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>APPROPRIATENESS</th>
<th>READINESS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Addressing the issue will require leaders and organizations from <strong>multiple sectors or systems</strong>, including “strange bedfellows”</td>
<td><strong>Influential Champions</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Addressing the issue will require <strong>different kinds of interventions or strategies</strong> (e.g., data, policy, awareness, coordination, identifying new solutions, etc.) at the systems level and not just replication of programs and services</td>
<td>• Champions are respected by and have ability to engage cross-sector leaders</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ The issue impacts a <em><em>significant</em> part of the population</em>* and does so in varied geographies</td>
<td>• Government leadership is engaged</td>
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* Defining “significant” is more art than science

**Urgency for Change**
- Critical, complex problem in the community
- Frustration with existing approaches

**Availability of Resources**
- Committed, potential **funding partners** with sustained funding for 3 – 5 years for the collective impact infrastructure

**Basis for Collaboration**
- Trusted relationships among cross-sector actors
- Existing collaborative efforts
Moving through the **stages of collective impact** can take several years

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Duration</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Scope &amp; readiness</td>
<td>~3 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Initiate action</td>
<td>~4-6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Organize for impact</td>
<td>~4-6 months</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Develop strategies &amp; sustain impact</td>
<td>~6 months + ongoing</td>
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**Is collective impact the right approach?**

**Who needs to be at the table?**

**How do we break up the work?**

**How do we build momentum for the long haul?**
Achieving large-scale change through collective impact involves **five key elements**

1. **Common agenda**
   - Common understanding of the problem
   - Shared vision for change

2. **Shared measurement system**
   - Collecting data and measuring results
   - Focus on performance management
   - Shared accountability

3. **Mutually reinforcing activities**
   - Differentiated approaches
   - Coordination through joint plan of action

4. **Continuous communication**
   - Consistent and open communication
   - Focus on building trust

5. **Backbone support**
   - Dedicated staff
   - Resources and skills to convene and coordinate participating organizations
Collective impact initiatives work to set up a **strong foundation** for systems change in year 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1</th>
<th>Common agenda</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Shared measurement system</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Mutually reinforcing activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Continuous communication</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Backbone support</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TYPICAL YEAR ONE CI CONTENT AND PROCESS ELEMENTS**

- Convene a **diverse set of stakeholders** to focus on the issue (i.e., usual and “unusual” suspects)
- Help stakeholders view their individual challenges and opportunities from a **systems level**
- Gain agreement on the key challenges today and a **vision for change**
- Identify key indicators to measure progress
- Determine how to best “**break up the problem**” into manageable pieces to move forward
- Develop multi-stakeholder, **systems-changing solutions**
- Maintain momentum and hold stakeholders accountable
- Establish a **neutral, facilitator** role
Several elements make up a common agenda.

**PRINCIPLES**
How are you going to work together?

**PROBLEM DEFINITION**
What is in and what is out?

**GOAL**
How will you define success?

**FRAMEWORK FOR CHANGE**
How are you going to split up the work and prioritize?

**PLAN FOR LEARNING**
How will you track progress and learn?

Icons by Blake Thompson and Jack & Steve Laing from the Noun Project
Five reasons to engage the community in collective impact efforts

1. Understand pressing systemic community challenges
   - Understanding the issues
   - Clarify questions that arise about the challenge

2. Co-create solutions
   - Spark innovative problem-solving rooted in “lived experience” of the community
   - Identify and spread unique solutions that exist within the community

3. Verify the direction
   - Get feedback on specific strategies and indicators from selected communities, particularly those who will be the end users of new programs or activities

4. Expand the reach of strategies
   - Expand the reach of adoption of initiative strategies
   - Evoke and sustain the will to take aligned action

5. Build community capacity to lead and sustain change
   - Train stakeholders in skills of effective collaboration and strategy execution
   - Share resources and learning across the community to help scale best practices
Doing collective impact well means being even more vigilant about **equity and inclusion**

- How do we effectively **integrate community voice** into institution-heavy collective impact efforts?
- How do we authentically and meaningfully **involve communities who have historically been left out** of decision-making processes?
- How do we engage stakeholders in sensitive **conversations about race, class and culture** without driving away those who need to sit at the problem-solving table?

1. **A common language** is useful to help communities engage in constructive conversations
2. We need to be clear on **who we mean** by the community
3. We need to recognize the difference between **equity and equality** in community engagement
4. We need to more carefully **redefine power** in collective impact efforts

There is a spectrum of options for engaging community members

**Inform**
- To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, or solutions

**Consult**
- To gather feedback from targeted stakeholders on the project’s goals, processes, shared metrics, or strategies for change

**Involve**
- To work directly with stakeholders to ensure that concerns are consistently understood and considered

**Collaborate**
- To partner with stakeholders in each aspect of decision-making, including the development of alternatives and priorities

**Co-Lead**
- To place final decision making in the hands of stakeholders so that they drive decisions and implementation of the work

*Source: Adapted from Tamarack Institute Community Engagement Continuum*
Collective impact achieves action through various structures

**Strategic guidance and support**
- Steering committee
- Backbone support
  - Guides strategy
  - Supports aligned activities
  - Establishes shared measurement
  - Builds public will
  - Advances policy
  - Mobilizes resources

**Partner-driven action**
- Community partners working on strategies

*Adapted from *Listening to the Stars: The Constellation Model of Collaborative Social Change*, by Tonya Surman and Mark Surman, 2008.*
Each **structure** has a different responsibility – yet no one person makes all the decisions.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Structure</th>
<th>Responsibilities</th>
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| Steering Committee  | - Provides **strategic direction** for the initiative  
                      - **Champions** the work  
                      - **Aligns own work** to common agenda  
                      - Some Steering Committee members serve on **working groups** |
| Backbone            | - Provides **dedicated staff**  
                      - Supports the work of partners by assisting with **strategic guidance**, supporting **aligned activity**, establishing **shared measurement**, building **public will**, advancing **policy**, and mobilizing **resources** |
| Working Group       | - Comprised of **cross-sector community partners** targeting particular element of common agenda  
                      - Designs and implements strategies, involving non-working group members as needed |
| Community partner   | - **Individual organizations and members of the community** (e.g. nonprofit, funder, business, public agency, student, parent,)  
                      - Partners should have **access to a variety of opportunities to learn about and engage** in the initiative, and will be key to implementing strategies  
                      - Ultimate “power” resides within the **community at large** |
The **backbone** serves a neutral role “behind the scenes” in six ways

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Functions of the backbone:</th>
<th>What the backbone does NOT do:</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>✓ Guide <em>vision and strategy</em></td>
<td>✗ <em>set the agenda</em> for the group</td>
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<tr>
<td>✓ Support <em>aligned activities</em></td>
<td>✗ <em>drive the solutions</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Establish <em>shared measurement practices</em></td>
<td>✗ <em>receive all the funding</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Build <em>public will</em></td>
<td>✗ <em>self-appoint</em> itself rather than selected by the community</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Advance <em>policy</em></td>
<td>✗ <em>conduct “business as usual”</em> in terms of staffing, time, and resources</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>✓ Mobilize <em>resources</em></td>
<td>✗ <em>do all of the work</em> for the initiative</td>
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