



**UNITED WE FIGHT.
UNITED WE WIN.**

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Collective Impact...If we only knew

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United Way
of Greater Cincinnati



Achieving Large-Scale Change through Collective Impact Involves Five Key Conditions For Shared Success

Common Agenda

All participants have a **shared vision for change** including a common understanding of the problem and a joint approach to solving it through agreed upon actions

Shared Measurement

Collecting data and measuring results consistently across all participants ensures efforts remain aligned and participants hold each other accountable

Mutually Reinforcing Activities

Participant activities must be **differentiated while still being coordinated** through a mutually reinforcing plan of action

Continuous Communication

Consistent and open communication is needed across the many players to build trust, assure mutual objectives, and appreciate common motivation

Backbone Support

Creating and managing collective impact requires a separate organization(s) with staff and a specific set of skills to **serve as the backbone for the entire initiative and coordinate participating organizations and agencies**

Success By 6: A Backbone Organization (Change Agent) for Early Childhood

- ✓ Guiding vision & strategy – a common agenda and strategic coherence
- ✓ Supported aligned strategies – distinct partner roles and communication
- ✓ Establishing shared data & practices – decisions based on data
- ✓ Building community will and public support – increasing awareness, engaging stakeholders
- ✓ Advancing public policy – empowering action, advocating for change
- ✓ Mobilizing funding and resources – align existing and new funding to common goals

Learnings: Guiding Vision & Strategy

Establish a shared vision for change and an agreed upon approach to solving it

- The shared vision piece can be the easiest part
- The approach to solving it can be a little trickier....
 - Partners need to see themselves in the work and personal agendas can get in the way of the collective approach.
 - Developing strategies to address the problem you are looking to solve depends on the issue – how much best practice and research is out there
 - Do you have to try completely new untested strategies? Taking risks is OK! The best learning comes from failure and trying again.
 - Once you decide on the strategies – stick to them like glue and don't get out of your lane.



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Learnings: Supporting Activities

Clear roles, differentiated activities and tight coordination.

- BY FAR, THE HARDEST PART TO MANAGE
- An illusion of activity is not the goal – must be mutually reinforcing and complementary programs, activities that are supporting that vision for change.
- Your action plan is your guide post – if its not in the plan and not agreed upon, then why is it being done or discussed. Keep the train on the tracks!



Learnings: Communication

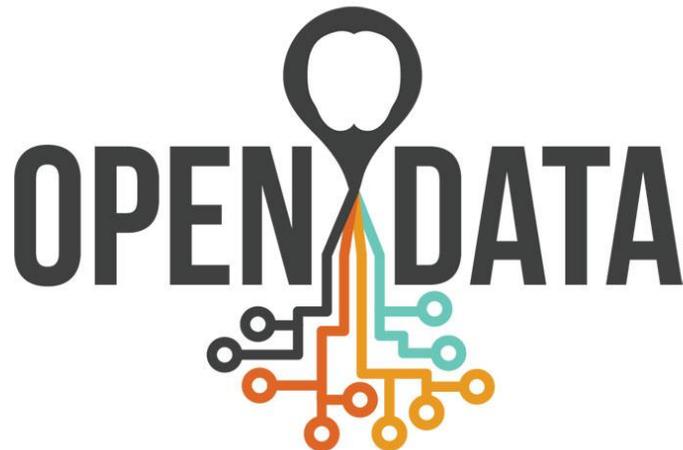
- Without it – you can't have collective impact
- Open and honest feedback about what is and is not working
- Learn together, don't take it personal
- Always that one annoying partner....figure out how to understand and manage their motivation



Learnings: Shared Data and Practices

Data informed decision making....

- Timely – how quickly can you collect it, analyze it and improve
- Consistently – how often do you review it (annually is going to cut it).
- Accountability – data tells the real story –not about how many good things you are doing, but rather how many things are doing good.
- Relevancy – don't track it for tracking sake!



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Learnings: Building Community Will

What is your collective message?

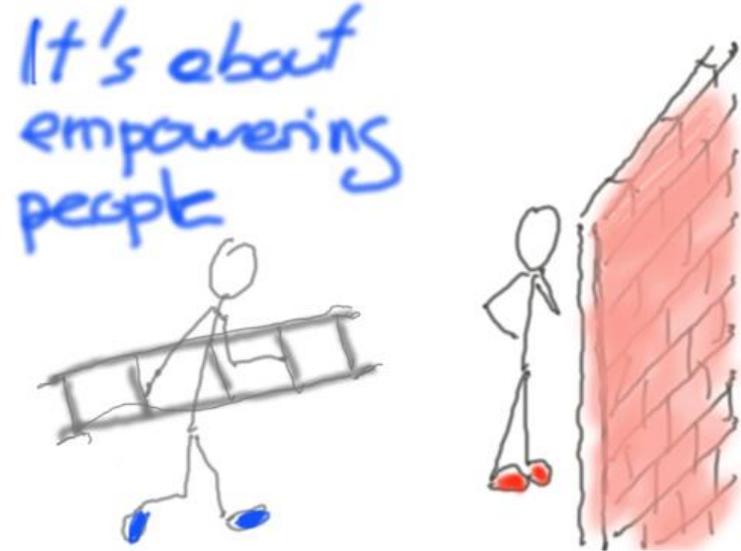
- Don't assume everyone understands or supports your cause not matter how obvious it might be to you and your partners.
- Just when you are getting tired – people are finally getting it so you have to double-down!
- Understand the different techniques/tactics for grasstops vs. grassroots community will building



Learnings: Advancing Policy, Mobilizing Funding

Align Passion, People and Policy

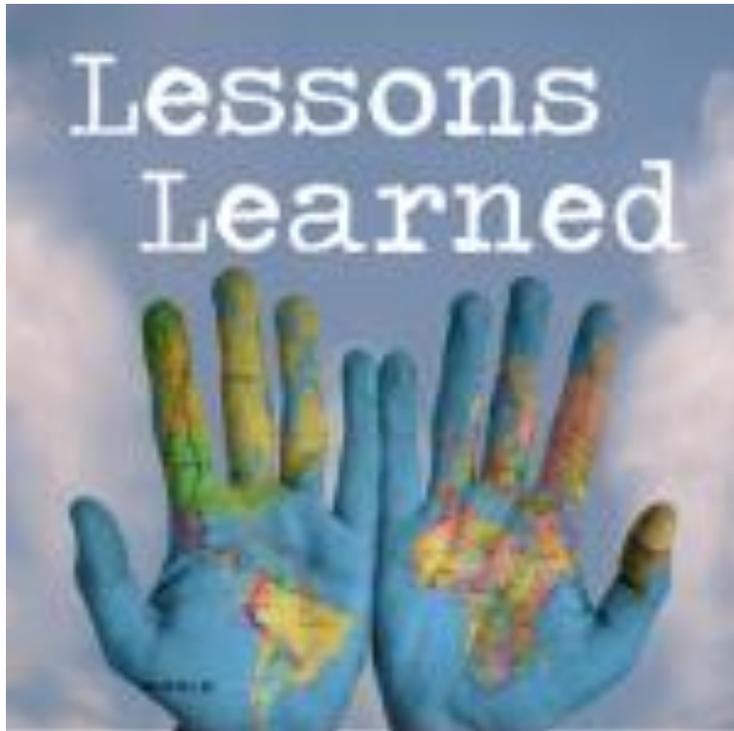
- Build a volunteer army!
- What policies are standing in the way of changing the game for the people served?
- Dissect your own organizational budgets to shift dollars toward collective work
- Know your funding gaps....which strategies are most appealing to potential funders.



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Key Take-Aways...If We Had Only Known



Collective impact is not a side project, but should rather be the core of your work (*The Culture of Collective Impact, Paul Schmitz*).

Collective impact efforts must be as rigorous about culture as they are about data and strategy if they wish to achieve enduring change (*The Culture of Collective Impact, Paul Schmitz*).