

How to build a collaborative promoting group

The whole school approach is necessarily based on teamwork and can never be carried out by one person alone.

One of the first steps is identifying who should be in the group to take the initiative forward. You also need to ensure that you have people from both health and education working in partnership. Teamwork is also essential to ensure that you make the best use of everyone's skills and strengths.

Choosing the team members:

- Start with the best people you can find;
- Choose team members with a diversity of backgrounds and perspectives;
- Look for members with a commitment to the concept of working as a team;
- Look for team members committed to the project's guiding vision and related contents;
- Find people with a sense of humour;
- Involve people who have time to contribute.

Building the team:

- Start with the construction of a shared vision (around the objectives and contents of Shape Up);
- Build team bonds (affective, operational);
- Make sure the concept of a team is absolutely clear (co-planning tasks, responsibilities, limits);
- Involve the team in jointly planning how it will function, and what the team and each of its members will do;
- Address personal issues;
- Establish team norms;
- Hash out the logistics of working as a team;
- Start the team with a (small?) task that is doable and requires teamwork to accomplish;
- On a regular basis, go back over successes and failures to understand what happened and learn for the future (action and evaluation);
- Provide both individual and team support;
- Provide people with something extra for working as a team;
- Reward accomplishments.



What is collaborative community group process?

Important characteristics of collaborative work are:

- Insistence on collaborative problem solving and decision-making;
- Maintenance of an open process;
- Leadership of the *process*, rather than people;

Why take a collaborative community approach?

*The **advantages** to collaborative leadership include:*

- Sense of membership/ownership;
- More involvement in implementation;
- Trust building;
- Elimination of turf issues (departmental and sec);
- Access to more and better information and ideas;
- Better opportunity for substantive results;
- Generation of new, widely diffused leadership;
- Community of organisational empowerment;
- Fundamental change for the better in the ways communities and organisations operate.

*There are some **disadvantages** to collaborative leadership:*

- It is time-consuming;
- It demands the ability to face conflict directly;
- It may mean trying to overcome resistance to the whole idea of collaborative work;
- It can lead to groups taking what seems to you to be the wrong path.