



# COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARDS

HOW CAN I USE COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARDS?

WHO SHOULD MAKE UP THE BOARD?

WHY ARE THEY IMPORTANT?

# WHAT IS A COMMUNITY ADVISORY BOARD?

- A Community Advisory Board (CAB) is a collective group of community members and organization representatives that offers community knowledge and assistance to the a research project or initiative team.

## USING CABS

- How can CABS be useful in the life of a research project/initiative?
  - Provide support to the project/initiative
  - Help identify community issues/concerns
  - Use their thoughts and perspectives in the development of research ideas and protocols
  - Apply their community expertise to the implementation and dissemination practices
  - Offer feedback and input on all aspects of the project/initiative (beginning to end)

## WHAT MAKES A CAB WORK?

- Offer understanding of community's unique history
- Provide pre-established trust among the community
- Respect the community values and norms
- Obtain accurate information for various aspects of research
- Share the decision-making process between community (CAB) and researchers/project designers
- Collaborate ideas, perspectives, and opinions
- Create a well-rounded project/initiative

# WHO SHOULD BE IN A CAB?

- Characteristics:
  - Diverse backgrounds
  - Various expertise
  - All education/experience levels
  - Directly affected by different areas
  - Different interests
  - Various perspectives
- Who should be invited?
  - Community members
  - Academic partners
  - Environmental experts
  - Faith-based leaders
  - Community organization representatives
  - Business owners
  - Parents
  - School-system representatives
  - Local, regional, and state leaders

## HOW TO FORM A CAB?

- Interview the community to identify potential CAB members
  - Identify key stakeholders
  - Find common interests
  - Locate the hard-to-reach group(s)
- Plan initial face-to-face meetings with different groups of people
  - Informal 'Meet and Greet'
- Evaluate roles of various organizations in the community
  - Don't assume individual/group interest levels
- Give all citizens the opportunity – welcome all volunteers
- Get the word out by several different means
  - Newspapers, Posters, Word-of-mouth, nominations

# HARD-TO-REACH POPULATION INVOLVEMENT

- Most areas have a hard-to-reach population
  - Can be caused by geography, politics, religion, socioeconomic status, historical factors, etc.
- Start by engaging them as early as possible
  - Identify the groups early and being a recruitment plan for the group
- Learn about the group(s)
  - Why are the hard to reach? Is it by choice?
  - What is important to them?
- Hold special meetings focused on their needs and concerns
  - Tailor discussion to the particular group and allow them to ask questions

# ROLES OF CAB MEMBERS

- Create a link between a community as a whole and the research team
- Identify health issues and concerns of the community
- Become the “voice” of the people
- Advise on specific aspects of ideas and design of project/initiative
- Support the implementing initiative
- Help recruit research participants and future CAB members
- Prioritize issues and components within research
- Give feedback on proposed methods, plans, strategies
- Assist in disseminating results through various channels
- Get the community excited and interested!

# RESPONSIBILITIES OF MEMBERS

- Inform the participants upfront about the commitment needed
  - Devote time and effort to the group
  - Promote research within the community
  - Attend meetings
  - Ability to talk issues out within a group
  - Be accepting of others' ideas
  - Willing to investigate information to make informed decisions

# COMMUNICATING WITH CABS

- Clearly explain the CAB roles to the group
- Promote community empowerment
- Use members as “messengers” out into the community
- Remember to be culturally sensitive to their values
- Use existing networks as communicators and supporters
- Have a conflict/resolution plan and share with the group
- Incorporate various types of talents and perspectives
- Be approachable to members of the group and community

# BENEFITS TO A RESEARCH PROJECT/INITIATIVE

- Building and fostering partnerships between community and researchers
- Having trusted community members' support
- Incorporating a new perspective into the design
- Giving ownership to the community members
- Tailoring project/initiative components to diverse groups
- Using as a channel to reach deeper into the community
- Evaluating the overall impact on a community