

Mobilizing Resources for Project Success

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A great deal of the work done in *Healthy Foods, Healthy Moves: InForm Chicago* relied on the contributions of members of the CLOCC and CISC networks who donated services, time, space, and other valuable resources. While most of our contributions came from within these pre-existing networks, the search for project support was also an opportunity to develop new relationships. Local businesses, government agencies, and non-profits were willing to help in a variety of ways – especially when the project’s goals addressed their community service and outreach goals. While donations of money, goods, and services were critical, network members also gave their time to help with specific project elements. Our approaches to mobilizing local resources in all of these ways are discussed below.

Donations and In-Kind Contributions

Many of the resources donated to *Healthy Foods, Healthy Moves: InForm Chicago* were tangible goods and services for which project partners typically have to pay. These contributions included funds to support stipends for Go Team members, meeting space, artwork for materials; public relations, and water and healthy snacks for events and meetings. Website design services were provided at a reduced rate. We also received in-kind meeting space and promotional materials. In addition, workshop presenters waived their speaker fees for our project conference, and sound and voiceover talent was donated for the Go Team documentary. These donations meant that the project budget could be put towards other items.

HOW TO REPLICATE, STEP BY STEP

- 1. Identify opportunities to secure support.** Contact coalitions of which you are a member, your Board of Directors, private and corporate partners, and those with whom you’d like to form new partnerships. Inform them about the project. Reach out to local government agencies as well – especially those whose mission is aligned with your project goals.

Tip: Be creative and resourceful. While some organizations will not be able to donate money to the project, they may be able to help by providing equipment, advertising, volunteer time or help in many other ways.

- 2. Develop your pitch.** Create a clear, concise way to talk about the project, its goals and its activities. Tailor messages so that they are appropriate for potential partners and that address their issues or goals.
- 3. Promote the project and its specific elements.** Often we think that the most visible activities are the only ones that will be of interest to potential contributing partners. Share as many of the project’s elements as you can and let the partners help you figure out how they can help.

Tip: Some partners may be interested in the elements from which they can learn, or that help them to forge new partnerships, or that will provide meaningful volunteer experiences for their employees or members.

- 4. Clarify expectations.** Nonprofits often feel that if they are receiving contributions they cannot have too many expectations. On the contrary, if expectations are clear on both sides, many organizations will welcome conversations about the possibilities.

Tip: Keep in mind how a partner’s own timetable and availability can impact the project.

Tip: Make sure partners know what not to expect. For instance, if you do not want partner logos on all printed material, make sure this is clear up front. Discussions about “branding” should be very specific – let organizations know where and how their contributions will be acknowledged.

Tip: A letter of agreement, memorandum of understanding, or a contract can help to keep all of the specifics clear.

Engaging Schools

For school-based message dissemination, we needed to mobilize schools. This began by identifying schools best equipped to participate in the project. The strongest school prospects were those that knew the value of external partnerships and had staff available to coordinate service delivery. CISC accessed its existing network of schools for project participants. Having assessed schools’ priorities, we started by approaching a group of schools that had prioritized nutrition and physical activity services. We then reached out to schools in neighborhoods where community data showed proven need. We also examined where the most services were available and targeted schools in those neighborhoods.

CISC engaged schools by reaching out to staff in nutrition and physical activity-related positions, including the school nurse, counselor, or physical activity teacher. We created marketing materials that presented the benefits of the project to the school and their students and included project alignment with learning standards and our school district’s health and physical activity requirements. We utilized existing organizational events as opportunities to present the project to large groups of schools. These opportunities included an annual orientation for new schools joining the CISC network and training events for our key contact people at partner schools, where we frequently included special workshops highlighting the project.

HOW TO REPLICATE, STEP BY STEP

- 1. Target prepared schools.** Contact schools where you have existing relationships or data demonstrating a need for nutrition and physical activity programs.

Tip: Create materials that clearly demonstrate the project’s alignment with schools learning standards and mandates.

- 2. Present project to broad groups of schools.** Find opportunities to introduce the project to large groups of schools. Present project benefits and participation requirements.

Tip: Use your organization’s, or your partner organization’s, standard school events to spread word of the project.

- 3. Identify and engage specific contact people.** Reach out to school staff who work in health-related areas. Share project marketing materials.

Tip: It is ideal that the principal of the school be aware, supportive, and engaged in your efforts, but the principal is rarely the most effective direct contact.

Tip: You or your partner agencies may have connections in the school that can help you mobilize people there.

- 4. Follow-up with schools.** Determine which project staff is going to be responsible for this communication and technical support. Be clear with schools about the opportunities and resources you are making available to them as well as your expectations for participation.

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Reaching Out to Agencies and Community-Based Organizations

Community-based organizations played many vital roles in *Healthy Foods, Healthy Moves: InForm Chicago* in multiple ways. They provided free nutrition and physical activity services in schools, often incorporating the 5-4-3-2-1 Go! message, and helped with the recruitment, training and marketing of the Go Team. Partners also hosted the Go Team at their locations and events.

We accessed the existing CLOCC and CISC networks and built new relationships. CISC and CLOCC staff who spend the majority of their time in schools and neighborhoods identified prospective partners and developed many of these new partnerships.

CLOCC's Community Networkers – full- and part-time staff based in targeted communities – built relationships with organizations in their neighborhoods. CLOCC also accessed partners through a wide range of events, including: quarterly city-wide network meetings which bring together approximately 200 health and social service organizations; quarterly community meetings that bring together organizations located or working in specific neighborhoods; and introductory meetings with new focus neighborhoods.

CISC reached out to educators and medical professionals providing nutrition and physical activity programs and services in the school setting. CISC targeted agencies including: hospitals and universities with community outreach departments; broad social service organizations that offer health promotion services; local non-profits or local affiliates of national organizations with existing nutrition and physical activity programs; and individuals with healthy lifestyle expertise and an interest in working in schools.

CISC reached out to existing network partners individually and through group training and networking events. CISC staff identified new agencies by attending coalition meetings, following leads from newspaper articles, getting recommendations from engaged schools and agencies, and searching the web. Initial outreach only targeted nutrition and physical activity-specific organizations. We expanded to target organizations that provided more general health education that included healthy lifestyle components. We then further broadened our outreach to engage oral health educators since their programs often included an emphasis on good eating habits. This broader outreach accessed an extremely receptive audience.

For agencies that were already working in collaboration with CISC to provide nutrition and physical activity programming in the schools, we had individual conversations to engage them in the project. The meeting included: informing them of the larger project goals and context; introducing 5-4-3-2-1 Go!; encouraging them to incorporate the message into their curricula and lesson plans; solidifying plans for actual coordination of services into our network schools; and discussing increasing the number of students they could serve.

As is true for other mobilization efforts, recruiting people from agencies is best seen as an ongoing activity – not just a start-up activity.

HOW TO REPLICATE, STEP BY STEP

- 1. Develop an outreach plan.** Outline what community-based organizations will be targeted, methods of outreach, timeframes, and roles and responsibilities.

Tip: Track specific information about the capacity and success of experienced agencies.

Tip: Use partner organization's existing events to present the project and recruit partners.

- 2. Provide key information.** Make it easy for potential partners to understand the project by providing background information about other partners, goals and desired outcomes. Leave something in writing that they can share with colleagues or to which they can refer later.
- 3. Make sure staff are well-versed about the project.** In some cases, staff from the lead partner organizations that are less involved in the project will be able to play an instrumental role in getting project information out to people and organizations you want to mobilize.
- 4. Conduct ongoing outreach to potential agency partners.** Keep track of who you have met with and learn from previous outreach strategies to improve future ones.

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Attachments

Who's Who In Schools?

Sample Invitation to School Discussion

School-based Service Provider Information Gathering Guide

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Who's Who in the Schools?

Before presenting your program, it's a good idea to know the lay of the land at your typical Chicago public school. Who are the key decision makers that will help your program be successful? With whom should you consider touching base to get a better understanding of the students, parents and teachers you'll be serving? Use this Who's Who guide as a **starting point** for learning more about some of the important people who make every Chicago public school function each day.

School Administration

Principal: Principals are schools' key decision makers. Most Chicago public schools elect their principals via a local school council (see **LSC**, below). Principals are typically the instructional leaders at their school, making key decisions about things like curriculum, lesson plans, and school scheduling. They are also responsible for hiring teachers, overseeing the school budget and making other key decisions that impact the overall academic program of the school.

Assistant Principal: Most elementary schools have one assistant principal. High Schools can have as many as three. Assistant principals handle a range of responsibilities. They are often a school's primary disciplinarian. They may also evaluate teacher performance, distribute text books, and oversee much of the daily functioning of a school, particularly when the principal is out of the building.

School Secretary/Clerk : Most schools have a number of people who work in the office; however, there is usually one lead secretary who acts as the gate keeper to the principal. Make a good impression on this key office staff member, and you may find that your phone messages are promptly returned and that your requests for setting up a meeting with the principal are fulfilled.

Support Staff

Case Manager (CM): Case managers' main responsibility is to coordinate a range of services for special education students. In particular, case managers must assemble a team of support staff members (e.g., social workers, nurses, psychologists) to evaluate students for initial placement in special education. With the help of the full support team, case managers also conduct annual re-evaluations of students already receiving special education services. Some schools have one staff member who works exclusively as case manager; other schools combine the CM role with other designated school positions, such as guidance counselor or social worker.

School Counselor: Most schools have at least one counselor; large high schools may have multiple counselors to work with students in different grade levels. Elementary school counselors perform a wide range of tasks. They may create a school's master course schedule and plan and implement school-wide standardized testing schedules.

Communities In Schools of Chicago repositions existing community resources into school sites to help young people successfully learn, stay in school and prepare for life.

They also may handle the enrollment or transfer of students, update student records, and in some cases, serve as the school's case manager. Providing actual counseling services to students may or may not be a significant part of their job. High school counselors share many of the job responsibilities of their elementary school counterparts. However, they also tend to provide more one-on-one counseling for students, as well as advise them about college and career opportunities.

Nurse: The majority of nurses in CPS work at two or three different schools throughout the year; a small number are assigned to work every day at one school. Whether part-time or full-time staff members, school nurses' primary responsibility is to ensure that all students have updated physical examinations, dental check-ups and immunizations.

Nurses also help evaluate students for participation in special education programs, as well as administer basic first-aid to sick/injured children during the course of the school day.

Social Worker: Like nurses, social workers often serve two or three schools. A few are assigned to work at one school. Regardless, social workers are responsible for supporting the social and emotional wellbeing of students and their families. Social workers may work individually with students, conduct support groups with multiple children, or provide counseling for entire families. When necessary, social workers also provide crisis intervention for students, families and teachers. As part of the school support team, social workers often are included in the special education evaluation process.

School Psychologist: School psychologists play a major role in the special education evaluation process. For each new student recommended for admittance to special education, psychologists administer a series of cognitive and behavioral tests. The results of these tests, combined with input from other support staff members, determine whether students qualify for special education services. Most school psychologists, particularly at the elementary school level, serve a number of schools in a particular area of the city.

Academic Leaders

Department Chairperson (DC): As the name suggests, a department chair leads a team of school staff members who work in a particular academic, counseling or vocational discipline. For example, a high school might have one English teacher serve as DC for a 15-teacher English department. Duties performed by this chairperson might include reviewing teachers' lesson plans, mentoring new teachers, coordinating curriculum and learning objectives across grade levels, and developing interdisciplinary learning units. Many high schools are organized by departments and as such have multiple DCs. The same is true for some large elementary schools.

Lead Teachers (LT): Lead teachers are similar to department chairpersons in that they plan curriculum and support teachers on a grade level-wide or even school-wide scope. However, unlike department chairs, who usually lead a particular academic or vocational subject area, lead teachers, do not necessarily have a particular curricular focus. A veteran sixth grade teacher, for instance, might be the LT for a group of fellow sixth grade teachers. On the other hand, some high schools designate lead teachers to direct an entire small school within the larger building. Lead teachers are found in both high school and elementary school settings.

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Other Key School Staff

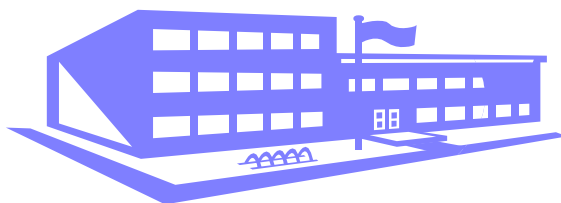
Physical Education/Health Teacher: Students at many Chicago public schools have physical education (PE) once a week. It is not unusual for PE teachers to instruct all of a school's students during the course of a school year. At some schools, students engage in physical activity and learn about various health topics during PE class. As part of the health curriculum at some schools, PE teachers also teach students about a range of safety and prevention education topics, such as violence prevention, substance abuse awareness and understanding eating disorders.

School Community Representative (SCR): The SCR is usually a resident of the local school community – a parent or grand parent of a current student, a neighborhood activist, alum of the school – who serves as a liaison between the school staff and the surrounding neighborhood. School/Community Reps often focus on helping schools increase parent involvement. They may lead monthly parent meetings, contact parents to obtain consent forms for students to participate in upcoming field trips or medical services, serve as point persons for sharing information about local resources, and represent the views of parents in formal school planning processes.

Special Teams

Local School Council (LSC): Local School Councils function as the site-based management team for most CPS schools. Their primary responsibility is to select the school's principal, renew the principal's contract, approve the School Improvement Plan for Advancing Academic Achievement and approving the school's budget for the school year. Elementary school LSCs are comprised of the principal, along with representatives for parents, students and community members. High schools add an additional student representative.

School-based Problem Solving Team (SPST): Each school has a SPST. The role of the team, which is usually comprised of school administrators, social workers, teachers and other members of the support staff (see above), is to design and implement innovative interventions for academically struggling students. The interventions and strategies designed by the team are meant as an alternative measure to initiating the special education referral process. The SPST's focus on developing creative, flexible plans for promoting student achievement make it a potential venue for agencies to target their student support services.



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Communities In Schools of Chicago



Special Extended Session



Site Coordinator Forum 2008

*Your school has been selected to join us for our
Move Into Action
Lunch and Discussion*

- Personal Health Inventory Report:
Hear what Chicago public school students know and should recognize about healthy eating and physical activity
- 5-4-3-2-1 Go! and Beyond:
Share creative strategies with other schools for promoting nutrition and physical activity
- Spotlight on Programs:
Learn about community agencies that are ready to provide valuable programs to your school
- Receive resources that will help build awareness on healthy living and move your school into action

**March 13, 2008
Noon-1:15 PM**



Immediately following the
Site Coordinator Forum general session

**The Peggy Nortebaert Nature Museum
2430 North Cannon Drive**

**Please RSVP by March 7 to:
(555) 555-5555 ext 55**



School-based Service Provider Information Gathering Guide

Agency:

Contact Person:

Date:

1. What grades/ages do you target?
2. What is your ideal number of sessions? Is there room for flexibility with this?
3. Any bilingual presenters and/or materials?
4. Do/can you provide your program to parents? Other populations, like faculty?
5. What geographic area do you serve?
6. Which schools have you worked with in the past?
7. What are the qualifications of your staff?
8. Can/will you incorporate the 5-4-3-2-1 message with your program? How might this happen?
9. For nutrition agencies—how much do you talk about physical activity? For physical activity agencies—how much do you talk about nutrition?
10. When might I be able to observe your program?
11. To how many schools can I refer your program this year?
12. Can you provide curricula and/or evaluation data?
13. Do you have a one-page document that sums up your program?
14. What topic(s) might you like to cover in our next roundtable of nutrition/physical activity providers?

