



# A Dedication to Tom Joe

This series of Learning Guides is dedicated to Tom Joe, founder of the Center for the Study of Social Policy and its Director for 21 years. Tom believed that one of the Center's most important contributions was to build the capacity of local decisionmakers. By that, he meant giving ordinary people the information and tools they needed to improve conditions for children and families in their communities.

Tom first conceived of these Learning Guides in 1997 and was their original champion, but he died in 1999 before they were completed. Tom would be proud of the final products. They are based on a premise that he spent his life pursuing: that government, in tandem with citizens and community organizations, can and should do a much better job of helping disadvantaged people. Tom was a fierce critic of the way human services have evolved. He described the problem this way:

*“A family should be able to get what it needs, based on its particular circumstances, not given some treatment or service because that’s the only thing the government will pay for. Our human services systems are still in the dark ages. Instead of looking at what the whole family needs and how the individual pieces can work together toward those goals, we’ve built up this crazy collection of categorical programs that have little or nothing to do with the family’s real needs.”*

To Tom, our social service systems had grown fragmented, unresponsive, and even harmful to the people they were intended to serve.

Tom proposed various solutions that evolved over time. In the last 20 years, he argued passionately that the best way to break out of the current morass was to empower people at the local level. While simultaneously giving communities local authority, one could break down the current categorical systems and create new approaches to help families in need. Tom knew early on that the federal government could not do this alone. Consequently, he became an early advocate for the concept that no one sector of our society, alone, can achieve better outcomes for children and families. He hoped that local leaders and citizens could take up the challenge, generating their own ideas about what communities needed to help families prosper.

Federal and state governments' roles would then be to figure out how to align with communities and avoid bureaucratic rules to make it happen. As he put it:

*“Since as far back as 1972, I tried to get services integrated for people. While others were trying to get the federal government to integrate services from the top down, I suggested a different angle. I said, ‘Let’s allow the community to propose what they want to do and then ask the federal government for waivers to integrate programs when the community runs into problems.’ Of course, communities would have to develop a proposal explaining the results they were trying to accomplish and why. I still think that’s the best strategy, but we have to prepare communities with the capacity, skills, and staff to propose to the federal and state government what they want to do.”*

Tom believed that this series, *Building Capacity for Local Decisionmaking*, was a valuable tool to equip communities for this strategy. If average citizens—computer technicians, teachers, stay-at-home moms, and sales managers—could learn how the current systems work, with their flaws and opportunities, they would be able to figure out better ways to use existing resources to help struggling families. To do this, Tom knew that we first have to provide people with skills, knowledge, and tools as well as the confidence in their capacity to design an effective agenda of their own.

All of Tom’s work and the Center’s have promoted the involvement and leadership of citizens in community-based problemsolving. In 1997, under Tom’s leadership, the Center embarked upon a four-year effort with its partners in Georgia, Missouri, and Vermont to develop this series of Learning Guides. With these Guides, we hope that any group of citizens with the will to accept the challenge of improving results for children, families, and communities have the critical understanding of social policy needed to succeed. That is Tom’s legacy and was his hope for the future.

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June 2001

# Acknowledgment

## S

### Building Capacity for Local Decisionmaking

This series of Learning Guides was developed by a consortium of partners convened by the Center for the Study of Social Policy, including Georgia's Family Connection, Missouri's Family Investment Trust, and Vermont's Agency for Human Services. The Annie E. Casey Foundation supported the Center's time and publication of these guides.

#### Center for the Study of Social Policy

The Center for the Study of Social Policy was established in 1979 with the goal of providing public policy analysis and technical assistance to states and localities. Its approach blended high academic standards with direct responsiveness to the needs of policymakers and practitioners.

The Center's work is concentrated in the areas of family and children's services, income supports, neighborhood-based services, education reform, family support, disability and health care policy, and long-term care for the elderly. In all of its work, the Center emphasizes several common themes:

- ☞ An approach based on results accountability,
- ☞ Community service strategies that reach across categorical boundaries and are truly community owned,
- ☞ New forms of state/local governance,
- ☞ More flexible financing strategies linked to results, and
- ☞ New approaches to professional development and local capacity building.

## **Georgia’s Family Connection**

Georgia’s Family Connection is a state-level, public-private entity created in statute to support the work of Georgia’s 155 partnerships. It is comprised of state agency directors, corporate, and civic leaders.

The work of the local partnerships is dedicated to positively affecting outcomes related to children’s health, safety, success in school, and self-sufficient families.

## **Missouri’s Family Investment Trust**

Caring Communities Partnership (CCP) is Missouri’s system reform initiative to achieve its core results through partnerships between communities and state agencies. The Family Investment Trust (FIT) is Missouri’s state-level body, created in 1993 by Executive Order of the Governor, to assist communities and state agencies in achieving the core results. The FIT Board of Directors is a 17-member governing body comprised of the directors of eight state agency partners as well as business and civic leaders.

The CCPs are the local decisionmaking bodies, broadly representative of a county or multi-counties, which partner with the state agencies to plan, develop, finance, and monitor strategies to achieve the state’s core results. The Partnership, in turn, serves as the parent board to neighborhood or site councils, which also broadly represent decision-making entities at the neighborhood or site level. The neighborhood councils partner with their individual Community Partnership to plan, develop, finance, and monitor strategies to achieve the core results.

## **Vermont’s Agency for Human Services**

Vermont’s Agency for Human Services and the Department of Education, together, have given broad discretion and support to twelve Regional Partnerships.

Vermont’s system of local governance is less formal than either Georgia’s or Missouri’s in keeping with the small size of Vermont communities and the more informal political culture of the state. The partnerships focus their work on achieving a core set of results agreed upon by the state.

## **Contributors**

Phyllis Rozansky, a consultant to the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP) wrote significant portions of the guide's first draft. Cheryl Rogers and Phyllis Brunson, Senior Associates, and Barbara Pearson, an instructional designer, contributed to its further development and finalizing the guide. Barbara Pearson turned the drafts into a curriculum guide and a tool for learning.

Representatives from partner states were responsible for reviewing and providing community profiles for this Learning Guide. The team members' commitment, time, expertise, and willingness to share their experiences in local governance were invaluable to the development process. The team included:

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# Preface

Georgia, Missouri, and Vermont have forged an alliance, supported by the Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP), to help local decisionmakers acquire the skills needed to improve conditions for children and families in their communities.

In a number of states, including these three, local businesses, civic leaders, and other citizens are working through Local Governance Partnerships (LGPs) to improve children's health, safety, and success in school and to ensure a productive adulthood. These Partnerships are being asked, usually by state or local government, for new strategies to improve specific results and to monitor the community's progress over time.

Partnership members are assuming ever-greater responsibility for important decisions affecting public-sector resources, staff, and service delivery. Yet, community members are rarely equipped to handle these tasks without the skills and knowledge needed to carry out their new roles.

To help meet this need, Georgia, Missouri, Vermont, and the Center for the Study of Social Policy have developed a set of curriculum materials for local governance members and staff. These materials represent our collective best effort. These Guides are meant to develop the capacities, skills, and knowledge that we think community members need to make local decisionmaking a successful venture. No specific product or blueprint is intended.

# **Local Governance Partnership S in Georgia, Missouri, and Vermont**

Georgia, Missouri, and Vermont have created new decisionmaking structures at the local level through which communities are mobilizing resources to improve child, family, and community well-being.

## **Georgia**

Georgia has established 155 local partnerships dedicated to achieving statewide outcomes related to children’s health, safety, success in school and self-sufficient, strong families. The partnerships are made up of public and private agencies, parent and neighborhood representatives, community organizations, faith community leaders, business people, and other community representatives. Their work has been supported at the state level by the Georgia Policy Council for Children and Families, a public-private body created in statute, comprised of agency heads and corporate and civic leaders.

## **Missouri**

Missouri currently provides funding to 21 Caring Communities Partnerships (CCPs) serving 24 counties. The CCP is Missouri’s systemic reform initiative to achieve its core results. The partnering state agencies have pooled approximately \$24 million for the Caring Communities initiative. The dollars are used to build local infrastructure, conduct assessments and evaluation, and enhance or expand existing strategies. The Family Investment Trust (FIT), Missouri’s state-level entity created by Executive Order of the Governor in 1993, assists communities and state agencies in this work. The FIT is a 17-member governing body comprised of the directors of eight state agencies as well as business and civic leaders. Through this systemic reform process, Missouri is using its community partnerships to help redesign core programs, such as welfare reform.

## Vermont

Vermont has formed 12 Regional Partnerships in a system of local governance that is less formal than either Georgia's or Missouri's, in keeping with the small size of Vermont's communities and the more informal political culture of the state. Vermont's State Team for Children, Families, and Individuals has given broad discretion to the Regional Partnerships to work on achieving a core set of results agreed upon statewide. Vermont's outcomes help to sharpen the focus and work of the Regional Partnerships. The outcomes begin with the goal of assuring that pregnant women and young children thrive and progress developmentally. The State is witnessing significant reductions in the rates of reported child abuse and neglect as well as improvements in other indicators in the jurisdictions in which the Regional Partnerships have been developing preventive programs and family support.

## Audience for the Learning Guides

The primary audience for this series of Learning Guides includes local governance board members, their community partners, and staff. This audience comprises a broad range of people, including local elected officials, business people, staff of local service organizations (both public and private), representatives of the faith community as well as consumer parents and other lay citizens involved with helping children and families.

An equally important audience for this series of Learning Guides is state officials who are supporting the Local Governance Partnerships. These officials are among the state executive and legislative branches; others include key staff from state agencies that work with children and families. Staff from the following state departments could also benefit from these Learning Guides:

Education

Economic Development

Mental Health

Corrections

Health

Employment

Social Services

Public Safety

# Description of the Six Learning Guides

The six Learning Guides developed by this consortium include the following:

## **Learning Guide 1: Theory and Purpose of Local Decisionmaking**

This guide sets forth the theory and purpose of local governance. It begins with issues and problems facing today's children, families, and communities and an analysis of the categorical human services system. It proposes an alternative—local governance and a Local Governance Partnership (LGP)—as a means of addressing these problems and improving results.

The basics about an LGP are presented: its role, defining characteristics, functions, how it relates to existing entities, decisions about structure and legal standing, relationships with state and local governments, and relationships with neighborhoods.

## **Learning Guide 2: Forming and Sustaining a Successful Partnership**

This guide focuses on the roles and responsibilities for board members of Local Governance Partnerships. It includes skills for building trusting relationships, negotiating with partners, effective decisionmaking, ensuring meaningful parent and community member involvement, and racial, ethnic, and gender diversity.

## **Learning Guide 3: Setting a Community Agenda**

This guide presents the knowledge and supports the skill building needed for creating a community agenda. It includes identifying community conditions, gathering community perspectives, and mapping community assets. It shows how this information is used to create a vision—with results and indicators—and establish community priorities. Finally, it presents ideas and guidelines for building a wider circle of support and consensus for the agenda.

## **Learning Guide 4: Strategies to Achieve Results**

This guide presents the requirements for developing effective strategies. It contains knowledge and skill-building activities in systems thinking, researching promising practices, and synthesizing the information collected into a comprehensive community strategy and a plan for implementation.

## **Learning Guide 5: Financing and Budgeting Strategies**

This guide presents the basics to financing a comprehensive mix of strategies. It includes a collaborative view of financing and ways to identify existing funding and resources, develop a core funding base, obtain discretionary and grant funds, restructure and repackage resources, obtain informal and in-kind resources, and develop a financial plan and a budget.

## **Learning Guide 6: Using Data to Ensure Accountability**

This guide deals with accountability and the Local Governance Partnership. It presents a results framework and roles and responsibilities for shared accountability. Subsequent chapters present knowledge and skills for setting up a data collection system, including collecting, reporting, and using data to determine progress toward improving results.

Together, these six guides are intended to give local people—both professionals and non-professionals—the knowledge and skills needed to become active decisionmakers on behalf of children and families in their community.

## The Development Process

✍✍ CSSP drafted an initial outline of topics to be included in each guide.

✍✍ Each of the three states formed a design team of state staff and community representatives to draft one guide. CSSP consultants helped each design team write the guide and gather resource materials. CSSP drafted three guides.

✍✍ CSSP and each state partner reviewed the work of each design team, providing written feedback. Each guide was revised based on this feedback.

✍✍ CSSP contracted with a curriculum design team of instructional designers and training experts to translate the content for each guide into a learning tool and a training program.

✍✍ The revised Learning Guides and accompanying training programs were pilot tested with Local Governance Partnership members in at least one of the three contributing states to make sure the information and activities were appropriate and relevant. The Learning Guides and training programs were then revised based on the pilot tests and community feedback.

### What do you think?

The project partners are interested in your reaction to the Learning Guides.

✍✍ What is your reaction to the Learning Guides?

✍✍ How could they be more useful to you?

Please contact the Center for the Study of Social Policy at: <http://www.CSSP.org> and click on “Contact Us” at the bottom of the page.





# Introduction

## Learning Guide 2: Forming and Sustaining a Successful Partnership

A Local Governance Partnership (LGP) offers a structure that is fundamentally different than traditional organizations. An LGP offers an inclusive process for local governance and community decisionmaking. Bringing together diverse viewpoints in a continuous community exchange can lead to better decisions, and ultimately improved results for children, families, and communities.

This Learning Guide supplies a means for forming and sustaining such a partnership. You will find guidelines for recruiting members and strategies for working within this new partnership environment. A critical element of this guide is skill building. Sections include both individual and group process skills that are necessary for carrying out the functions of an LGP.

Using these skills, members can form and sustain a partnership that supports community goals. The basics for developing a vision, mission, operating principles, bylaws, operational structure, and enhanced participation round out the content in this guide.

## Using the Learning Guide

Designed for reference and self-study, this Learning Guide can assist those interested in building or expanding their knowledge about forming and sustaining a partnership. The guide reflects the combined experience and best thinking of the partners involved in developing the *Building Capacity for Decisionmaking* series.

Because this Learning Guide is intended for a broad and diverse audience, its design purposely provides options for its use.

- ✍✍ You may want to start at the beginning and study each chapter sequentially;
- ✍✍ You may want to refer to the table of contents and select the chapters that capture your interest;
- ✍✍ You may want to take the self-assessment in the last chapter, *Moving Forward*, to determine areas that need your attention; or
- ✍✍ You may want to use the Appendices to access activities, worksheets, and tools, locate resources, or find contacts for more information.

# Overview of Chapters and Appendices

The tasks and skills involved in forming a partnership prompt many questions. Information related to some questions you may find yourself asking are found in the following chapters and appendices.

## **Review: A Local Governance Partnership**

What is local governance? What are the functions of an LGP? What characteristics define an LGP?

## **Chapter 1: Members of a Local Governance Partnership**

Who are potential LGP members? What factors define membership? What are important attributes for LGP members? How can community members be effectively recruited and involved?

## **Chapter 2: Working Relationships**

What makes relationships among the members work? What are the challenges for working together? How have some LGPs addressed these challenges?

## **Chapter 3: Individual Member Skills**

What are the characteristics of listening appreciatively? What key elements build trust? In what ways can members show respect for each other and for their collective work?

## **Chapter 4: Group Process Skills**

What are the characteristics of collaborative leaders? How can we develop collaborative leadership? How can meetings be effectively conducted? What characteristics and steps build consensus? What is interest-based negotiation and what are the steps toward it?

## **Chapter 5: Forming a Partnership**

What state requirements apply to forming an LGP? What are the tasks involved? Why are vision, mission statements, operating principles, bylaws, and operating structure important? What characterizes each task and what are members' roles and responsibilities?

## **Chapter 6: Sustaining and Sharpening Leadership**

What core competencies define an orientation program? What are the steps for setting up such a program? How is commitment sustained over time? How is an LGP's performance assessed? How is member capacity built?

## **Chapter 7: Moving Forward**

How can this Learning Guide be used to increase knowledge and build skills? What do we already know? What more do we need to learn as individual LGP members and as a partnership?

## **Appendix: Glossary**

What are the definitions of local governance terms and terms used throughout this Learning Guide?

## **Appendix: Activities**

What are some activities that can help us better understand the concepts presented in this guide? How can we assess our current progress and plan for improvement?

## **Appendix: Tools**

Are there examples from others that we could adapt to our needs?

## **Appendix: Resources**

What resources and websites may be helpful in learning more about forming and sustaining a partnership?

## **Appendix: Contacts**

Who can we contact for more information?

# Learning More About Local Governance

The Learning Guides are intended for use as a series, although each guide is a valuable resource and learning tool by itself.

If you would like to build on knowledge gained from this guide, review the following topics. Use the list to refer to other Learning Guides in the *Building Capacity for Decisionmaking* series.

- Refer to Learning Guide 1: Theory and Purpose of Local Decisionmaking
- ✂✂ The roles, success factors, defining characteristics, and functions of LGPs.
  - ✂✂ How LGPs relate to existing entities, such as state and local government.
  - ✂✂ Ways to ensure community outreach and linkage to neighborhoods.
- Refer to Learning Guide 3: Setting a Community Agenda
- ✂✂ How a community agenda is developed.
  - ✂✂ How to build consensus for the agenda among the broader community.
- Refer to Learning Guide 4: Strategies to Achieve Results
- ✂✂ Systems thinking and how it applies to services and supports.
  - ✂✂ How to develop a community strategy to improve results.
  - ✂✂ What makes a community strategy effective.
- Refer to Learning Guide 5: Financing and Budgeting Strategies
- ✂✂ What is meant by a collaborative view of financing.
  - ✂✂ How to identify existing funding and resources.
  - ✂✂ Ways to build a core funding base.
  - ✂✂ Ways to round out the core funding base.
  - ✂✂ How to develop a financial plan and a results-based budget.
- Refer to Learning Guide 6: Using Data to Ensure Accountability
- ✂✂ The meaning of results-based accountability.
  - ✂✂ How to set up a data-collection system for reporting and using information related to results.



# Review

## A Local Governance Partnership

### Learning Goal

You will recall the functions and defining characteristics of a Local Governance Partnership.



# A Community Approach

## Glossary

**Local governance** —

A decisionmaking process whereby the community takes responsibility for making decisions about developing and implementing strategies to improve results for children, families, and communities.

**Local Governance Partnership** — A

decisionmaking partnership between the state, private sector, local government, community and neighborhood leaders, and residents to carry out the process of local governance.

Communities are beginning to look at the well-being of their families and children. They are identifying conditions that must improve if all children, families, and communities are to prosper.

Research, innovative programs, and promising practices indicate that a community approach is a viable solution to existing human services systems. These systems are complex and categorical—that is, they are fragmented into separate and narrow service categories. A community approach can support families in a more holistic way. Thus, building strong and healthy families and communities requires change both within the current system and in how a community uses its resources.

How does this change come about? What is a process for eliciting decisions from a community, while still involving those who are currently making decisions about services and financing?

A promising answer to these questions is local governance.

This chapter presents an overview of local governance and the functions and defining principles of a Local Governance Partnership (LGP). For some readers, this chapter will be a review; for others, this information will lay the groundwork for subsequent chapters about forming and sustaining a partnership.

# Local Governance

## Glossary

**Stakeholders** — Those who have a vested interest or “stake” in improving results, which may include parents, neighborhood residents, local businesses, elected officials, local and state agencies, and private-sector organizations.

Local governance is a decisionmaking process that brings together state and local government, the private sector, elected officials, and community members to take responsibility for improved results for children, families, and communities.

Local governance builds on community strengths and supports incremental and long-term change in categorical systems.

Local governance embraces the hopes of all families and community residents that their children will grow up healthy, safe, well educated, and prepared for a productive adulthood.

## A Local Governance Partnership

An LGP is the entity that carries out the process of local governance.

An LGP provides a focal point for multiple partners working together to develop and implement community and neighborhood-based strategies targeted to improving results for children, families, and communities.

An LGP pulls together information across all agencies and sectors to build a community profile of its strengths and needs.

An LGP provides a forum for all stakeholders to present their perspectives, offer their resources, ask for assistance, and negotiate a common plan of action.

An LGP serves as the mediator, convener, problemsolver, information sharer, and mentor. An LGP has the potential of being a catalyst for reshaping the community service system.

# Local Governance Partnership: Functions

The functions of LGPs, and their capacity to carry out these functions, vary; however, the following functions are essential to the work of any LGP:

## Identify Community Strengths and Needs

Analyze community-wide and neighborhood or locale-specific problems and resources.

## Set Results and Indicators

Establish results and indicators that stakeholders agree on wanting to achieve.

Use the results/indicators to guide actions.

Use the results/indicators as a basis for accountability.

## Develop Comprehensive Strategies

Understand:

Existing programs, activities, and resources,

Promising practices,

The structure and system of services at the state and local levels of government,

The parts of the system difficult for families to access,

What services could be more accessible to families of different cultures, and

What opportunities could bridge separate service systems and lessen the duplication of bureaucracy.

**Local  
Governance  
Partnership:  
Functions  
(Continued)**

**Develop Comprehensive Strategies (Continued)**

- ☞☞ Translate this understanding into strategies that can have a positive impact on priority areas and results agreed upon by the community.
- ☞☞ Develop strategies that encompass multiple services and systems involving formal and informal resources.
- ☞☞ Develop strategies that reach across an entire community: counties, cities, towns, and neighborhoods.
- ☞☞ View services as part of an overall strategy that includes programs, activities, and resources to address the combined social, health, and economic well-being of families.

**Design Financing Strategies**

- ☞☞ Understand the full range of current resources and how they are used.
- ☞☞ Coordinate and combine public and private resources to implement the strategies.
- ☞☞ Realign current resource allocations (human, material, and financial) to implement an LGP's strategies.

**Support New Ways of Working**

- ☞☞ Provide training and professional development in the skills needed for working with families in new ways.
- ☞☞ Ensure availability of the support and professional development needed by frontline workers.
- ☞☞ Facilitate rethinking of personnel policies, workload standards, and standards of effective practice.

**Local  
Governance  
Partnership:  
Functions  
(Continued)**

**Support New Ways of Working (Continued)**

Support staff working across systems by providing a common perspective about helping families, knowledge of available resources, and a set of core skills for use across systems.

Support training and capacity building for community members, including leadership skills, decisionmaking, group processes, and problemsolving.

**Monitor and Evaluate Progress**

Develop a data collection system.

Develop interim measures to continually assess progress toward specific results.

Maintain standards of accountability for all children and families as well as for systems to accomplish results.

# Defining Characteristics

## Focus on Results

Results are the organizing principle for an LGP. Its decisions and actions are based on desired results. In the long run its success is judged by results—i.e., whether conditions improve for children, families, and communities.

## Inclusion, Diversity, and Outreach

The heart of an LGP is a more inclusive process for making decisions. As many individuals, organizations, and perspectives as possible contribute to the decisions made by the LGP about its work. Families and community residents are explicitly engaged as active and equal voices.

## Manageability, Scale, and the Right Geographic Scope

An LGP's geographic scope should cover a large enough area to be recognized by community-wide institutions, yet manageable enough to be responsive to residents' needs.

## Comprehensive Strategies Involving Informal Supports

The intent of an LGP is to develop and implement strategies that encompass multiple services and systems. A comprehensive strategy would involve informal supports, the natural helping system, and formal service providers.

## Influence Over Resources

Influencing the allocation of resources across systems is necessary to improve results for children, families, and communities. An LGP has to influence how funding is spent and how staff members are deployed.

**Defining  
Characteristics  
(Continued)**

**Legitimacy and Credibility**

To adequately represent local residents and their communities, an LGP needs legitimacy and credibility. Legitimacy implies formal recognition by key constituents; credibility addresses the less formal trust earned from the community.

**High-Level Commitment**

High-level commitment from state government is necessary to confront ineffective traditional ways, support new service delivery options, and transfer some decisionmaking authority to the local level.

# Chapter 1

## Members of a Local Governance Partnership

### Learning Goal

You will be able to describe potential members of a Local Governance Partnership, factors that define membership, and guidelines for recruiting and community outreach.



# Sharing Decisionmaking and Accountability

## Glossary

**Results or outcomes** — Conditions of well-being for children, families, and communities to be achieved through services or strategies. Although these terms are interchangeable, the Learning Guides use “results.”

**Community** — An identified geographic area that may be one or more neighborhoods or an entire city or region.

**Neighborhoods** — Subcomponents of a community. In some states, particularly in rural areas, the term “localities” is used.

The prospect of achieving desired results entices individuals from all walks of life to come together and contribute their time, energy, and passion to the work of a Local Governance Partnership (LGP). An LGP may be comprised of a top executive from a non-profit agency, an elected official, or a mother who provides informal childcare in her home. All share equal responsibility for decisionmaking, and all share equal accountability for results.

Agreed-upon results are the common ground and shared purpose of LGPs. Their challenge is to ensure that the necessary ongoing supports and learning opportunities are in place to get the most from each member’s contribution.

This chapter describes a typical LGP—its potential members, critical factors of membership, and the member attributes for an LGP to be successful. The chapter concludes with guidelines and steps for recruiting new members and ideas for community outreach.

Refer to Learning Guide 1, Theory and Purpose of Local Decisionmaking for more information about results.

All Learning Guides in this series provide information about a results focus. Learning Guide 6, Using Data to Ensure Accountability, explains how to collect, monitor, report, and use data about results.

## Who are potential members of an LGP?

Any member of the community is a potential member of an LGP.

By its definition, a community-based LGP involves the whole community, not just a segment. An LGP can *not* be true to its definition without reaching out and making sure that all segments of the community are represented.

Broad-based, inclusive representation in its membership—and the value placed on this diversity—is the defining characteristic that sets LGPs apart from other organizations. The board of a traditional organization is typically comprised of individuals who are the inner circle or power brokers of the community—whether from business, government, or non-profit agencies. In contrast, an LGP embraces a wider circle of membership and leadership.

As a microcosm of the community, an LGP must “look like” the community. Members need to come from different backgrounds and perspectives and with all types of experiences. Potential members for an LGP might include:

### TIP

Consider potential members who can provide essential information and/or have an impact on a given issue.

- An executive from the business community,
- A resident who started a neighborhood safe house for children,
- An advocate who led an effort on affordable housing for families,
- A legislator who established a committee on children and youth issues,
- Individuals who experienced first hand how the service systems work, such as a young mother who went from welfare to work or a youth who recently aged-out of foster care.

In Vermont, LGP members from People in Partnership include agency directors, parents, frontline workers, Americorps members, concerned and interested citizens, and representatives from business and economic development.

Continued

## Keep in Mind...

A distinguishing characteristic of an LGP is giving “average” and “not-so-average” citizens a real voice in fashioning a plan to improve conditions in their community.

The unifying factor for such members is an interest in the community’s quality of life and the well-being of its children, families, and residents. The issues confronting the community cannot be addressed successfully without widespread involvement of community members who “touch, see, and feel” the issues first hand. Therefore, a broad-based and diverse membership gives an LGP more strength to:

- Consider others’ perspectives,
- Use data to recognize and define the issues,
- Identify strategies that address needs and issues,
- Access resources, and
- Accept ownership and accountability for improved results.

## PROFILE

### Involving Youth

The Alliance for Building Community (ABC), an LGP in Vermont, targeted issues related to school-dropouts and youth who were involved with the court and the corrections systems. To better understand and develop strategies to address these issues, ABC focused specific outreach efforts to expand its youth membership.

Outreach began with a Windham County Youth Council. With the part-time assistance of a talented out-of-school 16-year old, a broader array of youth were recruited, ranging from members of their schools’ Student Council to youth on furlough with the Department of Corrections.

By deliberately making the effort to bring youth to the table as stakeholders in the process, the work of the ABC partnership improved significantly.

## What factors are critical to membership of an LGP?

The composition of an LGP is important for carrying out its functions. A dynamic group of members has diversity across professional disciplines, a range of values, and passion for different issues. Getting the “right mix” is based on:

- Inclusiveness
- Representation
- State or local government requirements

Refer to Review, A Local Governance Partnership, for a list and description of LGP functions.

### TIP

Remember to look for members with political access and leverage.

### Inclusiveness

Inclusive membership does not mean an exceptionally large number of members. Inclusiveness means that members represent different segments of the community. An LGP’s membership should reflect:

- Where residents live and work
- Racial heritage
- Cultural background
- Economical class make-up
- Age
- Gender
- Work experiences
- Life experiences
- Community experiences
- Neighborhood involvement

In many instances, a member may reflect several aspects of diversity. For example, one individual may be a leader in the faith community, a member of a minority group, a parent, a mentor to middle-school youth, and a resident in the far corner of the county. Consequently, this individual alone brings a variety of experiences to an LGP.

## **ALERT!**

### **Beware of conflicts of interests.**

Put policies in place early on in order to handle them appropriately.

### **Representation**

Another factor critical to defining the composition of an LGP is the agencies, organizations, and interests that different members represent. Questions to determine board representation:

- What organization or agency does a member represent?
- Do members represent themselves or an organization, coalition, constituency, non-profit agency, or government entity?

These are important questions to answer. Individuals who represent a particular group need to be clear on whose behalf they are speaking or if they are speaking for themselves.

### **State or Local Government Requirements**

Some states have requirements for LGP membership. These requirements could include:

- Specifying the percentage of members from the public and private sector.
- Whether members are elected by the existing membership or appointed by a government entity or official.

In some states, such as Maryland, specific agency representatives are required to be members of the LGP. In Georgia, many local LGPs have specific requirements in their bylaws about membership.

Refer to Chapter 5, Forming a Partnership, for more information about bylaws.

## PROFILE

### Membership Requirements and Levels

Membership for ABC in Vermont is comprised of individuals rather than representatives from agencies. Individuals may join ABC with sponsorship from their place of work. After orientation, the individual signs a membership agreement.

ABC has several levels of membership—active membership, membership-at-large, and board members. An active member is defined as *“any person who receives an ABC orientation and has attended at least 50% of the last six general membership meetings and/or attends at least 50% of Board approved work group or committee meetings. Active members are eligible to vote in ABC General Membership Meetings and be on the Review Committee.”*

## PROFILE

### Including Family/Consumer/Community Members

The Executive Board of Vermont’s Rutland Regional Board for Family Services (RRBFS), an LGP, is comprised of 15 members. A minimum of five must be family/consumer/community members. These members are defined by the State of Vermont as people who are not paid by their employers to attend meetings. They are further defined by RRBFS as people who have accessed the system for their own children or for another family member, so they bring personal experience to the local governance process.

The balance of the membership is a mix of representatives from education, state agencies, and non-profit organizations.

RRBFS has an annual election process. Those interested in a seat on the Executive Board send a letter of interest, which is then forwarded (with a ballot) to all 250 members for a vote.

## PROFILE

### **Criteria for Membership: Montgomery County Collaboration Council for Children, Youth, and Families**

Members are individuals who will:

- Accept the responsibility for being accountable to achieve better outcomes for children, youth, and families.
- Bring leadership.
- Contribute specific skills, such as strategic planning, negotiation, public relations, technology, data management, fiscal strategies, etc.
- Have a working knowledge in one or more areas, such as the needs of children, community development, technology, etc.
- Commit to advance the mission of the Council for a two-year term.
- Be an active member of a Council committee.
- Participate in sessions to enhance their effectiveness as a member of the Council.
- Bring perspectives from their own life experience, including family, culture, neighborhood, faith community, and employment.
- Be a resident or employee of Montgomery County.

## What are important attributes for LGP members?

Certain attributes such as integrity, honesty, reliability, and commitment in members are important for any organization to be successful. However, some additional attributes especially predispose LGP members to being active participants. Consider the following:

- Understanding why inclusiveness is integral to an LGP.
- Believing that change is possible, tempered with the understanding that it will take time.
- Deeply caring and being passionate about improving results.
- Being willing to stand up and take risks.
- Being faithful to a set of beliefs about children, families, communities, and partnerships.
- Being open to new ideas and willing to learn.
- Being willing to tackle tough issues.
- Possessing staying power and committing to “hanging in there” when times are tough.
- Recognizing the value of conflict as a vehicle for growth.
- Being willing to share power.
- Appreciating the contributions of others.
- Having a sense of humor.
- Being willing to admit error and make improvements.



## Glossary

**Stakeholders** — Those who have a vested interest or “stake” in improving results, which may include parents, neighborhood residents, local businesses, elected officials, local and state agencies, and private organizations.

These useful attributes for LGP members are evident in interactions with others and in the relationships that members build. The attributes translate into the following behaviors:

- Listening to the concerns of community residents and other stakeholders.
- Being responsive to concerns from the community.
- Being respectful of the race, class, and cultural characteristics of the community’s neighborhoods.
- Keeping people informed of progress, challenges, and emerging needs.
- Engaging and involving community stakeholders in shaping priorities.
- Working collaboratively with all stakeholders.
- Staying focused on results.

*Keeping these attributes in mind and the need for inclusive and diverse membership, how can LGP members be recruited? →*

## What are guidelines for recruiting members?

### TIP

Once the partnership is formed, a “litmus test” for recruiting new members is whether they share in and buy into the vision, mission, and guiding principles of the LGP.

Refer to Chapter 5, Forming a Partnership, for information about developing a vision, mission, and guiding principles.

All too often, individuals are asked to join an organization without really knowing what they are getting themselves into. Only afterwards, do they comment: “*Oh, I didn’t realize what this organization really did*” or “*I didn’t know that we had to attend so many meetings.*” Make sure that prospective members thoroughly understand their roles and responsibilities.

### **Be inclusive by casting a big net.**

LGPs need to explore new ways to reach new members. Outreach may include placing ads in the paper; contacting community organizations, including those for parents, residents, businesses, and faith groups; asking community leaders for nominations; using an LGP’s website to post invitations; and making announcements at public meetings.

### **Build relationships with prospects.**

Getting to know potential prospects beforehand helps determine whether membership is a good fit. Spending time to develop relationships upfront also saves time once a prospect becomes a member. Having been briefed on the LGP’s work, the new member can more quickly become involved in LGP activities.

Refer to Chapter 6, Sustaining and Sharpening Leadership, for information about orientation programs.

## What are steps for recruiting LGP members?

### Keep in Mind...

**Recruiting works best when it is an LGP member's job and not a staff person's job.**

### TIP

Look around the table before starting any new committee, work group, planning effort, or community effort to ask, "*Who is missing?*" This will help target recruitment goals.

- 1) Get ready to recruit.
- 2) Reach out to multiple sources.
- 3) Engage potential members.

#### 1. Get ready to recruit.

Discuss LGP membership and recruitment. Make sure everyone is clear about goals for recruiting new LGP members. Discuss responses to the following questions:

- What are goals for a diverse membership?
- Does our current membership meet these goals?
- Where are our gaps?
- What individuals do we need to recruit to have a diverse membership?
- What attributes are we looking for?
- What experiences are we looking for?
- How many individuals are we looking for?
- Are we clear about what we are asking members to do?

Ensure effective recruiting by organizing a working committee or team with members who care about recruitment and represent the LGP's diverse subgroups.

## **ALERT!**

### **LGP member networks can work against the goal of inclusiveness.**

One common way that LGPs recruit members is by asking existing members to identify individuals who would be effective members. As any individual's network tends to reflect similar interests and experiences, this approach may counter the goal of inclusive and diverse membership and not always widen the circle or bring in new voices.

Gather information from current members to help target the recruitment. Discuss responses to the following questions:

- What motivated you to join the LGP?
- How were you recruited to the LGP?
- What did you like about the recruitment process?

From this information, put together guidelines for recruiting.

Recruiters should be clear about the number of people to recruit and the type of experience or diversity needed. Ensure that recruiters are supported with the time and tools to do the job. Possible tools include a recruiting packet with briefing sheets about the LGP's vision, mission, and principles, targeted results of the LGP, membership list, sample reports, opportunities for leadership and involvement (positions, committees, etc.), membership criteria, and responsibilities or job descriptions.

Vermont's ABC strives to balance its recruiting by using a Community Assets Map, developed by John Kretzman and John McKnight.

Refer to the Appendices, Resources, for more information.

Another recruiting option is to open the nomination process to the public. Through newspaper advertisements, website alerts, announcements, and letters, LGPs can invite community residents to nominate new members.

## **2. Reach out to multiple sources.**

A variety of approaches exist to recruit new LGP members. Use more than one approach. Remember, cast a big net to reach people whose voices are not heard enough in decisions that impact their well-being. Following are some ideas for reaching such prospects:

- Attend community meetings of neighborhood groups.
- Post announcements in gathering places, such as grocery stores, laundromats, places of worship, childcare centers, etc.

- Talk to leaders in neighborhoods, faith communities, cultural groups, immigrant and refugee communities, etc.
- Have a program on direct-access cable television.
- Use websites to let the community know that the LGP is recruiting.
- Hold an information session for prospective members.

### **3. Engage potential members.**

Once individuals express interest, continue to build the relationships by helping them learn more about the LGP and the responsibilities of being a member. Consider:

- Inviting a prospective member to an LGP meeting or a committee session to get a sense of the work and to meet other members.
- Asking a current member to take a potential member to lunch and share experiences or describe the benefits of being a member.

Refer to Chapter 6, Sustaining and Sharpening Leadership, for more information about orientation.

## **PROFILE**

### **A Simple Experience with Recruiting**

One of the simplest and most effective ways that Vermont's RRBFS has recruited is placing an article in the local newspaper. The article contained information about the partnership, its mission, and its membership and invited those interested to send a letter. As a result, the LGP received widespread newspaper coverage and many letters of interest for its five open seats.

## **PROFILE**

### **Experiences from Missouri**

LGPs in Missouri found that, over time, the need for new members and their roles becomes evident as the community agenda is set and plans for implementation develop. Leaders emerge as community issues are highlighted and addressed.

Refer to Learning Guide 4, Strategies to Achieve Results, and Chapter 4, Involving Partners in Strategy Development, for more information.

## Ideas for Community Outreach

For one reason or another, some individuals lack the time or opportunity to serve on an LGP, which should not preclude involving them in other ways. An LGP needs to continually reach out to community members in a number of ways.

Consider the following ideas:

- Create “open membership” committees, task forces, and workgroups that include individuals with specific interests and expertise but limited time.
- Create subcommittees as a way to involve members in specific aspects of the LGP’s work.
- Create joint workgroups with other organizations to address community issues.
- Create community conversations, such as focus groups, town hall meetings, and issue briefings, where residents can share their views.
- Involve individuals who have limited time in just one project annually, then make sure that they remain on the mailing list.
- Create an advisory board.

Refer to Learning Guide 1, Theory and Purpose of Local Decisionmaking, for more information about community outreach and building relationships with neighborhoods.

## What’s next?

LGP membership is diverse, inclusive, and “looks like” the community. New members are recruited in a variety of ways from a broad population. So how does this mix of backgrounds, experiences, values, and passions work together to get anything accomplished?

The next chapter examines these unique working relationships.



# Chapter 2

## Working Relationships

### Learning Goal

You will understand the unique working relationships among members of Local Governance Partnerships.



## Working Together

Consider the reality of a vastly diverse group of individuals brought together to work toward common goals. Because this group should mirror the community, its representation will include those who have direct experience with the current services system as well as those who have none.

Consider the background and experiences that a diverse group of individuals will bring to the Local Governance Partnership (LGP). On one hand, their diversity can enrich the discussions and decisionmaking. On the other hand, the challenge will be to establish effective working relationships. An executive, for example, may have served on many committees and traditional boards. In contrast, a young mother or any youth members of the LGP probably have not. Certainly, few, if any, have served on any LGPs.

An LGP is a unique entity. Individuals with experience will be challenged to drop their preconceived notions about how organizations should operate. Individuals with little or no experience will be challenged to speak up and share leadership, responsibility, and decisionmaking. Can the “playing field” be made more level?

This chapter points out the unique working relationship among LGP members and the challenges of working together effectively.

## What makes working relationships among LGP members unique?

As LGP members get to know each other, they will learn about their community from many new perspectives. The relationships among LGP members will begin to transcend traditional barriers of race, gender, class, and political affiliation.

The nature of local governance also makes working relationships unique. Consider the following approaches to the work that may be new to some members:

- Shared Leadership
- Data-based Decisions
- Shared Accountability
- Working Collaboratively
- Embracing the Process
- Acting, Not Just Talking
- Walking the Talk of Change
- Creating Synergy Among Members

### Shared Leadership

Unlike traditional organizations where one leader may possess the majority of power and influence, an LGP's strength lies in its shared leadership. Without strong, shared, and committed leadership, an LGP will flounder.

Shared leadership can be a challenge. An LGP member who is accustomed to a position of influence may be reluctant to give up power. An LGP member who is unaccustomed to leadership may defer too quickly to those with experience.

## Glossary

**Indicators or benchmarks** — Measures for which data are available to help quantify progress toward achieving a result.

**Promising practices** — Programs and activities that have demonstrated effectiveness in producing results.

**Data** — Information, especially that organized for analysis or used as a basis for decisions.

### Keep in Mind...

Local governance is *not* new people making decisions; it *is* more people making better decisions together.

## Data-based Decisions

Making decisions using data balances personal priorities with realities. An LGP uses data about community conditions to make decisions in an ongoing cycle of data collection. As a result, LGP members are more objective in their discussions. Consider the following:

- Information is collected from the community about issues, problems, issues, values, beliefs, priorities, and existing programs, activities, and resources. When the “story behind the issues” is uncovered, the LGP uses this information to develop indicators.
- Additional information is compiled through research of “promising practices”—programs and activities that have worked well in other places and have the potential of addressing the community’s issues.
- All this information is used to make decisions about the design and implementation of strategies that have the potential of achieving desired results.
- Data collection continues using the indicators to monitor progress and to determine whether mid-course corrections are needed.

For this process to be effective, LGP members must see the importance of data, be committed to creating data-collection systems, and feel comfortable using data. An LGP member might say, “*I have a hunch this might work.*” But this statement needs to be followed with, “*What does the data show?*”

Refer to Learning Guide 3: Setting a Community Agenda, Learning Guide 4: Strategies to Achieve Results, and Learning Guide 6: Using Data to Ensure Accountability for more information.

## Shared Accountability

LGP members and partners accept responsibility for the impact of their work on mutually agreed-upon results for children, families, and communities. They are equally accountable for tying strategies to desired results and for making a difference in community conditions.

## **Unique Working Relationships (Continued)**

### **Keep in Mind...**

Members must see themselves as part of the whole. Their contributions will be more meaningful if they view themselves as full partners.

## **Shared Accountability (Continued)**

Shared accountability means that the contributions of each LGP member are part of making a difference. No agency heads, presidents, or chairpersons are present to take responsibility for the actions of others. Each LGP member shares a “stake” in the outcomes.

Refer to Learning Guide 6, Using Data to Ensure Accountability, for more information about data collection and shared accountability.

### **Working Collaboratively**

Working collaboratively means working as a team with all stakeholders, giving up personal preferences, and supporting a shared agenda with influence over resources. In this way, stakeholders share and celebrate success as well as share in disappointments. Support replaces blame and finger pointing.

One example of collaborative work is that many states now submit collaborative grant proposals for state funding when, in the past, individual agencies competed regionally for the same pot of money.

Refer to Learning Guide 1: Theory and Purpose of Local Decisionmaking, Chapter 2: The Categorical Service System, Learning Guide 4: Strategies to Achieve Results, Chapter 1: Systems Thinking, and Learning Guide 5: Financing and Budgeting Strategies.

### **Embracing the Process**

The process of local governance and the defining characteristics of an LGP guide the work of each LGP member. Members need to understand that, in this case, form really must follow function. They need to be clear about the principles, functions, and values that make a community decisionmaking process unique.

Refer to Review, A Local Governance Partnership, at the beginning of this guide for the defining characteristics of an LGP.

Continued

## **Acting, Not Just Talking**

A critical part of understanding diverse viewpoints and complicated issues is taking part in lengthy discussions. However, an effective LGP needs to know when enough “talk” has passed and time has come to act. Each LGP member must respect the perspectives of others, synthesize the information presented, and translate that into action. LGP members must have confidence and trust in each other to make decisions and move forward, but they must also be able to say, *“We made a mistake, let’s look at this again.”*

## **Walking the Talk of Change**

The local governance process is based on the premise that today’s critical issues facing children, families, and communities need the best thinking of all stakeholders and partners, especially those who receive services and support. This approach is different. Focusing on results rather than units of service is change. Shared decisionmaking and shared accountability is change. Members need to step out of their comfort zones and embrace these changes to make progress.

## **Creating Synergy Among Members**

An effective LGP will have synergy among all who come from different walks of life. This task is not easy; it takes time and effort working on problems together. Creating synergy requires the willingness of each member to be open to new viewpoints, accept each other’s individuality, and respect each other’s contributions. Equally important is celebrating successes.

Refer to Chapter 3, Individual Member Skills, for ways to interact with others, including listening appreciatively, building trust, and showing respect.

Refer to Chapter 6, Sustaining and Sharpening Leadership, the section about sustaining commitment.

*With a membership as unique as an LGP, challenges are bound to affect working relationships. →*

## What Are the Challenges to Working Together Effectively?

- Ensuring that leadership is *not* vested in one or just a few members.
- Equalizing and neutralizing power.
- Working differently, not just doing things as always.
- Finding a common language.
- Building the knowledge and skills of members for the work.
- Working as partners and reaching out to other partnerships.
- Getting beyond the baggage of failed efforts.
- Having the patience and willingness to stick with the process for the long haul.
- Withstanding the shifts in political priorities and leadership.
- Educating constituencies about what is needed to improve results.

## PROFILE

### Meeting the Challenge of “Not Enough Time”

After being involved with school dropout recovery work, the Executive Board of the Vermont’s Rutland Regional Board for Family Services (RRBFS) realized that keeping youth who are truant from dropping out of school was an important step in the prevention process.

From this realization, a committee was formed to develop a truancy prevention process. Starting as an ad-hoc committee of the RRBFS, four members began this intensive work.

Understanding and respecting busy schedules, the team asked for very short commitments of time from key stakeholders to get the information needed. For example, the Deputy States Attorney, who handles the juvenile caseload, was asked to meet with the team for only 15 minutes during lunch to get his perspective and opinions about a truancy intervention process.

Because the team respected the Deputy States Attorney’s time and listened to his point of view, he continued to help develop the process. Two years into implementing the project, he is still working with the team.

### What’s next?

Challenges are sure to occur when combining unique working relationships with the characteristics of an LGP’s diverse and inclusive membership. Yet, instead of this slowing the LGP’s momentum, the resulting synergy has the potential of spurring discussion and innovative approaches to the work. To support this growth, LGP members need to hone their individual skills for interacting with each other.

The next chapter presents a set of core skills.

# Chapter 3

## Individual Member Skills

### Learning Goal

You will be able to demonstrate individual skills necessary for forming and sustaining a successful partnership.



## A Set of Core Skills

Members of Local Governance Partnerships (LGPs) bring a combined wealth of experience to committees and workgroups—from personal, cultural, and family experiences to experiences at their jobs or in the community. With these experiences come varied approaches to working with groups, making decisions, building relationships, exercising leadership, and solving problems. An LGP needs to take advantage of this diversity, yet at the same time not get deadlocked by differences. LGPs have learned that they progress when their members share some common skills, including:

- Listening appreciatively,
- Building trust, and
- Showing respect to each other.

This chapter defines each of these skills and presents ways to integrate the skill into LGP members' working relationships and local decisionmaking.

## Listening Appreciatively

“*Are you listening to me?*” is a common question asked when someone senses that another person is not listening. Listening is a behavior that we do all the time; therefore, we do not generally view it as a skill. However, LGP members find that listening appreciatively is a basic skill for all of their work.

### What are the characteristics of listening appreciatively?

- Being quiet while the other person is talking
- Being attentive to the speaker by not performing other tasks
- Looking at the person who is speaking
- Responding when the speaker asks something
- Thinking about what the speaker is saying, rather than thinking about what you will say next

### Why is listening appreciatively important for LGP members?

Listening is a “building-block” skill. All other individual member skills build on the skill of listening appreciatively. For example:

- Listening appreciatively affects the way that trust is built with other LGP members.
- Listening appreciatively has an impact on members’ ability to understand the issues and make decisions.
- Developing listening skills is critical to building trusting relationships among individuals with different cultural and ethnic backgrounds.

## Steps for Listening Appreciatively

### **Step 1: Become aware of how you currently listen.**

The first step is creating an awareness of how you currently listen in order to recognize any changes that you might need to make.

For example, people often filter what they hear in a conversation. In other words, we hear what we want to hear. At other times, we may not listen intently enough to distinguish between what is being said and our reaction. Or, we are not listening because we are thinking about what to say next. Perhaps the worse mistake people make is not listening because they have already made up their minds on whatever the talk is about. These behaviors effectively shut down communication and close the door to exploring interests and options.

To become aware of your current listening behavior, notice:

- If you are listening or reacting.
- What you are appreciating about the speaker's words.
- If you are thinking about what to say next.
- If you are listening with an open mind.
- If you are curious about what is being said.

### **Step 2: Recognize what to listen for.**

As we listen, we do not just receive information; we also process it. We like what we hear or we don't like it. We agree or we disagree. Before drawing a conclusion, we can listen better by understanding what to listen for. Asking yourself the following two questions can help.

- What are my assumptions?
- What preconceived ideas am I bringing to the discussion?

Continued

## Keep in Mind...

Letting the speaker know your reasons for asking questions by connecting them to your interests can lead to more specific answers.

### Step 3: Use effective questions to listen appreciatively.

Once we begin to change the way we listen, we find that we are curious about the speaker's:

- Assumptions,
- Facts, or
- Point of view.

This naturally leads us to gather more information or to inquire.

- What led the speaker to a specific conclusion?
- What is the speaker's line of reasoning?

Inquiry is an effective means to create a dialogue in a non-threatening way. It also makes one's thinking more visible to others. The key to using questions well is not to judge, threaten, or attack the speaker. Examples of inquiry might include, What leads you to conclude that? How does the proposal affect...? What things need to happen if...? How do you feel about...?

### Tips for Listening Appreciatively

- Stop talking.
- Imagine the other person's viewpoint.
- Look, act, and be interested.
- Observe non-verbal behavior.
- Don't interrupt.
- Sit still past your tolerance level.
- Listen between the lines.
- Ensure understanding through rephrasing key points.

Adapted from Peter Senge et al., *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organization*. Refer to the Appendices, Resources, for the full citation.

*Listening appreciatively helps to build trust.* →

# Building Trust

## Glossary

**Trust** — Having confidence in the integrity, ability, character, or truth of an individual.

### Why is building trust important?

What does building trust have to do with being an effective LGP member? A lot. We may not label trust as a factor in having the work of an LGP or lack of trust as the reason why the work is not progressing. However, trust is often a necessary condition for success.

Trust is viewed as an essential ingredient in decisionmaking groups, because trust involves relying on the integrity and authenticity of others. LGP members need sufficient levels of trust to make decisions and to form partnerships. With trust comes the willingness to depend on another.

### What are key elements in building trust?

#### Time

Trust is not instantaneous. It is built over time as a result of interactions and experiences. In our private lives, we may extend complete trust to a circle of family or long-term colleagues or friends. This standard of trust—“*I trust you completely*”—takes time and a strong alignment of values.

### A Degree of Trust to Match the Level of Risk

LGP members need a degree of trust to match the level of risk that the work of local governance takes over time. The greater the risk is, the higher the level of trust needed among LGP members or partners.

For example, if the LGP agrees to publicize the date for releasing a report to the community about a school readiness program, then it trusts that the school district will gather the necessary data to produce the report on time. The trust is high, because if the school district falls behind in providing the data to the LGP, the failure to release the report affects the credibility of the LGP, but it does *not* affect the credibility of the school district.

As trust is built, one takes greater risks. A greater level of trust supports a more intensive and expansive level of group problemsolving or decisionmaking. LGP members can trust what they know about an individual’s or an organization’s “track record” as the basis of decisions.

## ALERT!

### Beware of ways that erode trust:

Not following through.

Using decisions to influence the LGP (stakeholders or partners) for personal gain.

Stating one view inside the group and another outside the group.

Personalizing blame for something that didn't work.

Manipulating the decisionmaking process through "backroom" or "inside" decisions.

Participating in a decision by consensus and publicly complaining afterwards.

Misrepresenting the actions or motives of the LGP (committee, workgroup, etc.).

### What are ways to build trust?

- Keep commitments or do what you say you are going to do.
- Acknowledge when you can't keep your commitment.
- Take risks.
- Be honest, speak the truth, and convey what you think or believe.
- Honor confidential items by keeping them inside the meeting or discussion.
- Support the open exploration of ideas and options.

An environment where individuals can consider options and opportunities builds their trust. Those participating in a meeting and/or discussions are more willing to express ideas when they *trust* that they will not be criticized or put down.

- Support decisions made by consensus.

Trust is built based on how individuals work together, make decisions, and respond to those decisions. For example, once an LGP member participates in consensus decisionmaking, then he or she must support that decision.

- Identify an "end run" and call the member on it.

If an LGP member uses his or her knowledge or position to go outside of the group to effect a change or decision, then trust erodes. The LGP is responsible for appropriately challenging the individual's behavior so that group trust is maintained.

*Showing respect is also basic for good working relationships. →*

## Showing Respect

Often respect is described as admiration for influential figures and leaders or a deference to power and position. LGP members need another kind of respect—the respect that is built by listening and showing that you have listened. You show you have listened by saying or doing something *differently* based upon what you have heard.

We have all been exposed to biases, assumptions, and prejudices that interfere with our appreciating and respecting someone who is different from us. Our thoughts and actions can reflect social bias without us realizing it. Diversity, unfortunately, can threaten some people. LGPs strive to embrace differences among people as a way to strengthen the work of local governance and fulfill their responsibilities to the community.

LGP members appreciate diversity. Individual members of LGPs come from all walks of life with unique life experiences. LGPs recognize that each person contributes value to the organization. Everyone has something to offer the group. The challenge for the LGP is to make the commitment to create an environment that values and respects diversity. This commitment requires change and powersharing. Shared power ensures effective problemsolving. Problems that ignore the diverse perspectives of participants usually fail.

## PROFILE

*“Don’t squash my spirit! I have something to contribute. It may be different, but it is me.”*

Michael Morris, single parent from Indianapolis

### Keep in Mind...

Through LGPs, people interact to build better communities. Having a sense of teamwork is critical to an LGP’s longstanding success. LGP members stay involved not only because of their commitment to results, but also because they are connecting to others within an environment of mutual respect.

**Showing Respect  
(Continued)**

**What are some ways to show respect?**

- Ensure an inclusive composition of community stakeholders.
- Include appreciation of diversity in the LGP's principles, policies, and practices. Include conversations about cultural diversity in meetings and annual retreats.
- Develop relationships. Get to know each person on an individual basis.
- Create a listening environment that encourages diversity of thought.
- Respect and acknowledge different beliefs, values, and experiences, recognizing their influence in decisionmaking.
- Recognize and honor holidays and practices of various cultural groups.
- Make publications and materials bi-lingual and culturally responsive.
- Provide interpreters, when needed, for community meetings.
- Encourage the use of cultural awareness training within the organization and with partners.
- Respect members' time and circumstances, e.g., provide food if meetings are at mealtimes, consider childcare, transportation, and confidentiality.



## PROFILE

### Adjust the Setting and Stay True to Principles

An emerging LGP decided *not* to have an executive committee. The thinking behind this decision was that executive committees, over time, tend to make most of the decisions; therefore, power ends up in the hands of three or four people. This LGP carefully thought through ways that all could share equally in the power of decisionmaking. The decision stood: no executive committee; all decisions were made in the style of a town meeting.

At one particular meeting, an issue was being discussed. A community member had thoughts to share as did an executive from the Department of Mental Health. As the discussion progressed, the executive, in stating her views, blatantly ignored the views—even the very presence—of the community member. Another member called the executive on this, “*We have another perspective on the floor that needs to be heard and respected.*” This comment set the tone for equal voices and equal responsibility at future meetings.

Yet, after this particular incident, the executive stopped coming to meetings. What were the next steps? This individual had the needed resources, influence, and a stake in improving conditions.

The solution was to involve the executive and nurture her commitment in other ways aside from LGP meetings. The executive was still supportive and committed to the work, but the town hall meeting was not the right place for her. She contributed to the discussion and decisionmaking in smaller forums and continued to provide resources for the LGP’s work.

The LGP continued to stay true to principles of local decisionmaking by conducting its meetings in a way that encouraged equal contributions; at the same time, it recognized that some partners needed another setting for their involvement.

### What’s next?

With these basic skills—listening appreciatively, building trust, and showing respect for others, LGP members have a solid foundation for building group skills, such as demonstrating collaborative leadership, facilitating effective meetings, making decisions by consensus, and using interest-based negotiation. The next chapter presents the characteristics, importance, and steps for building these group process skills.

# Chapter 4

## Group Process Skills

### Learning Goal

You will be able to understand and demonstrate group process skills necessary for forming and sustaining a successful partnership.

## Working Together

The previous chapter addressed personal skills that are important for individuals as members of Local Governance Partnerships (LGPs). These skills are also basic for group process. When LGP members listen appreciatively, build trust, and show respect for others, they are contributing to the group skills that are necessary for LGP work. To form and sustain a successful partnership, individual members—and the LGP as a whole—must be able to:

- Demonstrate collaborative leadership
- Conduct effective meetings
- Make decisions by consensus
- Use interest-based negotiation

This chapter describes each of these group process skills, including their rationale, characteristics, community profiles, and steps to achieve them. Emerging LGPs may want to try out these processes, while mature LGPs may want to compare these processes with how they are already conducting business and, perhaps, adjust or enhance their current procedures.

## Demonstrating Collaborative Leadership

Simply put, collaborative leadership fits the functions, characteristics, and principles of local governance. Collaborative leaders support inclusion, diversity, and outreach by inviting individuals from all walks of life into the decisionmaking process. Collaborative leaders share leadership responsibilities with others to reach the group's goal of improved results.

### PROFILE

#### Leadership Roles in Missouri's Caring Communities

LGP members and staff from Missouri's Caring Communities Partnerships identified key roles for leaders in an LGP.

- Champion the cause publicly
- Keep the vision focused
- Enroll and sustain others in the work
- Keep the group from stalling or being stuck
- Transfer personal credibility as a leader to the credibility of the LGP
- Work with the power structure in the state and community to advance goals

Source: The Family Investment Trust, *Missouri's Caring Communities*

## How is collaborative leadership developed?

LGPs nurture and support the development of leadership skills in a variety of ways. The most frequent approaches include the following:

- Provide opportunities for leadership development through training programs or workshops to individuals and groups.
- Devote time to leadership development at LGP meetings and at new member orientation.
- Establish coaching or mentoring programs for leaders.
- Develop peer-to-peer leadership-sharing opportunities with other LGPs.
- Identify potential leaders and ask them to assume responsibility for a project or committee.

### Keep in Mind...

When developing leadership skills, always maintain a focus on the LGP's common purpose and shared results for children, families, and communities.

## Knowledge, Skills, and Attitudes for Collaborative Leaders

<b>Knowledge</b>	<b>Skills</b>	<b>Attitudes</b>
<p>Collaborative leaders need to understand:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Their own strengths and weaknesses.</li> <li>■ Their own values and interests, what they are passionately committed to creating and why.</li> <li>■ Results-based decisionmaking.</li> <li>■ The relationships, assets, and interests in their community.</li> <li>■ The issues of power, diversity, and the stages and processes of change.</li> <li>■ That community change is not a linear process.</li> <li>■ The levers of change and how to move them.</li> <li>■ The community, government, and the condition of children, youth, and families.</li> </ul>	<p>Collaborative leaders need the ability to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ Communicate in a non-threatening way.</li> <li>■ Frame an issue.</li> <li>■ Generate trust.</li> <li>■ Facilitate meetings.</li> <li>■ Create safety so that people can take risks.</li> <li>■ Use interpersonal skills to deal with all people, especially those not happy with you.</li> <li>■ Relate to where people are coming from and their starting points.</li> <li>■ Share power.</li> <li>■ Prioritize and manage time.</li> <li>■ Listen and hear clearly from a diversity of voices.</li> <li>■ Speak in a way that respects the interests of others and provides clarity in the dialogue.</li> <li>■ Create Win/Win negotiation and reciprocal relationships.</li> <li>■ See diverse contributions and create roles so people can make those contributions.</li> <li>■ Figure out where you are and what the next appropriate step is for that stage and level of change.</li> <li>■ Facilitate people making</li> </ul>	<p>Collaborative leaders need to value:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>■ The local decisionmaking process.</li> <li>■ A focus on results.</li> <li>■ Results-based accountability.</li> <li>■ Diversity and inclusion.</li> <li>■ Families and communities as having strengths as well as challenges.</li> <li>■ The experiences of those who have been part of the traditional services system.</li> <li>■ Youth as resources and stakeholders.</li> <li>■ Community members as knowledgeable about what is best for their community.</li> <li>■ Data as a means of supporting decisionmaking.</li> <li>■ A range of funding and resources, including informal and in-kind supports.</li> <li>■ Making better use of existing resources.</li> </ul>

	<p>contributions and following through.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>■ Assess when and why the LGP is stuck and the next steps.</li></ul>	
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## Conducting Effective Meetings

Effective meetings are more than well-working mechanical parts. Conducting an effective LGP meeting means ensuring that the structure and processes are consistent with the principles of local governance.

Still, starting on time, reading the minutes from the previous meeting, and having an agenda are important mechanics. Yet, even with these practices in place, an LGP also needs to assess the substance of its meetings—all participants should feel that a meeting was worthwhile.

### PROFILE

#### Using a Proposal Approach in Leelanau County, Michigan

When you walk into a meeting of the Leelanau County Family Coordinating Council (LCFCC), the act of putting on a nametag has a larger purpose than name recognition. Printed on the back of each nametag are the LCFCC's mission, values, and principles. This reminder of the group's common intent is also the criteria by which all make decisions.

LCFCC conducts its meetings using an approach that gives all members the opportunity to be heard, keeps meetings within a reasonable amount of time, and makes sure that no one person dominates or derails the focus of the meeting.

The meeting process starts beforehand with a planning committee that develops an agenda based on proposals. All too often, groups spend an enormous amount of time hashing and rehashing issues. More time is spent with the problem than looking at solutions. Making agenda proposals beforehand is an effective technique for moving decisions or resolutions forward. A member wishing to contribute a proposal simply shows up at the planning meeting or contacts a member of the committee in advance.

This agenda planning system sorts out issues that do not concern the entire LCFCC. With this system, the LCFCC considers meeting agendas as potential contracts appropriate for acceptance by its members.



## Decisions for Effective Meetings

Each LGP must decide the best way to conduct its business with the premise that principles of local governance should undergird each decision. For meetings to be effective, LGPs need to make decisions in the following areas:

- Meeting Format or Approach
- Role Assignments
- Logistics
- Ground Rules
- Follow-Through

### Meeting Format or Approach

Some LGPs might want to use a proposal approach, whereby issues are stated as proposals for the meeting agenda and developed beforehand by an agenda planning committee. Once proposals reach the floor and appear understood by all, the facilitator asks for concerns or objections. If there are none, then the proposal is accepted. If there are objections, then discussion follows to resolve the concerns and move the group toward consensus.

Refer to the profile on the previous page about a proposal approach in Leelanau County, Michigan, and to the section in this chapter about making decisions by consensus.

## PROFILE

### Having Something Concrete to Discuss

The LGP in Rutland, Vermont, continually discussed and debated the issue of standing seats or committees. For years, the LGP had standing seats for Education, Mental Health, and Social and Rehabilitative Services.

As funding changed, some members felt that these standing seats were unnecessary, while others felt strongly for a number of reasons that the standing seats should remain.

Months went by with the discussion continuing without resolution. Finally, the coordinator came up with a proposal. The proposal generated more discussion and disagreement but led to a final vote and resolve. The coordinator's proposal was *not* approved, but by presenting something concrete for members to consider, the debate focused in a way that moved the discussion to a final decision.

## **Meeting Format or Approach (Continued)**

Many LGPs use a results-focused planning process for meetings. This approach starts with what the LGP wants to achieve at the meeting and works back from these results. A results-focused committee that is planning a meeting might begin with the following questions:

- What results do we want to achieve?
- What agenda items will support these results?
- How much time is appropriate for items compared with their importance and the type of work needed?
- What information do participants need to make decisions and understand their implications?
- Who has the information needed for these decisions?
- What are areas of potential conflict? What approaches can be used to address the conflict?

## **Role Assignments**

In some LGPs, the chairperson runs the meeting; other LGPs use skilled facilitators; some rotate responsibilities. Overall, the person who facilitates a meeting has two jobs: (1) determining who talks when, and (2) encouraging discussion. The first job is fairly easy and involves stacking the speakers in order of their gesture to speak (such as raising a hand). The second job is more complex and requires the facilitator to draw on a set of skills to assist the group in accomplishing the meeting agenda.

## PROFILE

### Moving Away from Traditional Meeting Roles

The LCFCC of Michigan redesigned traditional meeting roles in order to “get the work done.” Instead of a president, secretary, treasurer, etc., members serve as:

- Facilitator—Responsible for moving through the agenda and guiding the process (a rotating position).
- Notetaker—Records discussions and maintains a written document or meeting minutes.
- Timekeeper—Keeps track of the agreed-upon time for discussions and alerts the facilitator when the time limit is approaching.
- Scribe—Assists the facilitator in recording proposals, ideas, and notes for the entire group to see, i.e., uses easel pad charts, whiteboards, etc.
- Doorkeeper—Greets members as they enter; all meetings start on time, so latecomers are directed by the doorkeeper to the proper place on the agenda.
- Peacekeeper—Reminds the group of its common goals and commitment to cooperation, if tempers flare; also celebrates when things are going well.
- Advocate—Removes individuals for one-on-one discussion if strong emotions are out of control; helps to diffuse the situation privately and in a respectful manner.

## PROFILE

### Roles that Reflect a Process Approach

The Alliance for Building Community (ABC) in Vermont analyzed its key tasks and assigned members accordingly. ABC has:

- An Agenda Design Committee of two members who assist the administrative coordinator in creating an efficient agenda for each LGP meeting.
- Two members who alternate in facilitating meetings, rather than the LGP chairperson.
- One member who is timekeeper at each meeting.
- One member who observes and evaluates the group decisionmaking process, and then reports at the end of the meeting.

This emphasis on process helps discussions occur democratically and efficiently and allows more active participation for the LGP members who are new to leadership.

### Logistics

As with all meetings, LGPs need to plan the logistics of their meetings. Planning involves considerations as to who, what, where, and when, such as the following list of questions:

- Who will attend the meeting?
- Do any participants have special needs? Do new members need a “meeting buddy?”
- Who will facilitate the meeting?
- Who will present issues or proposals? Do they have the information they need?
- Where will the meeting be held? Who is the contact person?
- What is the day and time of the meeting? How long will it run?
- What arrangements are needed for transportation, childcare, meals?
- What materials, media, or supplies are needed?

## What Works for Effective Ground Rules

Fewer is better.

Post the ground rules at each meeting.

Do a quick check-in about the rules.

Review the rules periodically to see whether they still work for the group.

## Ground Rules

With increased use of collaboration in teams and partnerships, people are looking for ways to use their time with one another more efficiently. Having a set of ground rules increases effectiveness and productivity.

Some LGPs use the term, “Ground Norms” rather than “Ground Rules.” A norm has a different implication than a rule. The norm defines how members of a group interact with one another emphasizing that these relationships are key to the success of an LGP’s work.

Ground rules or norms help to:

- n Keep a meeting on track to achieve the desired results.
- n Encourage members to behave in ways that are acceptable to others.
- n Maintain consistency about the use of skills, such as consensus decisionmaking.
- n Define behaviors that are not acceptable to the group.
- n Approach disagreements in a positive way.

## Follow-Through

For each meeting, LGPs need to keep track of decisions made, proposals approved, and, most importantly, implementation of agreed-upon actions. LGPs use various approaches, including:

- Sending out a short summary of decisions at the meeting and key actions to take (including who and when). This reminder works as a “call to action” for members, committees, and staff.
- Making “help calls” one week after the meeting, inquiring as to whether members or groups need any help with the task agreed to at the meeting.

## Making Decisions by Consensus

### Glossary

#### **Consensus decisionmaking —**

A process of finding a solution that members can support, even if some members are not in full agreement.

### Keep in Mind...

Consensus is built upon principles that are embraced by LGPs, including trust, respect, unity of purpose, nonviolence, self-empowerment, commitment, and active participation.

Consensus means finding a proposal or solution that everyone in the group can support, even though some members may not be in agreement. The assumption for consensus is that individuals will leave their personal issues “at the door” and consider instead the good of the organization. Each person doesn’t have to agree completely with the decision in order to support it.

Consensus is *not* a unanimous vote. Consensus is reached when each person can at least say, “*This is not exactly what I want; however, I can live with the decision and support it.*”

### Why is consensus decisionmaking important for an LGP?

Consensus decisionmaking is more than a technique for reaching decisions. LGPs consider consensus decisionmaking important because it embodies the LGP’s values of collaboration, shared responsibility, and accountability for better results. Consider the following about consensus decisionmaking:

- All viewpoints are heard in the process of reaching decisions, thereby increasing the LGP’s understanding of the range of community’s interests.
- Unity and strong support for decisions about the well-being of children and families undergird the process as well as how resources are used to improve conditions.
- Consensus strengthens the decisionmaking process. It creates a sense of individual responsibility for the group’s actions and, at the same time, increases individuals’ participation in the decisionmaking process.

Consensus decisionmaking does *not* imply that the group thinks alike on all matters. Consensus decisionmaking does not shy away from conflict. On the contrary, conflict is considered healthy. Exploring diverse viewpoints brings the strengths and weaknesses of proposals into focus and uncovers underlying attitudes and assumptions.

## What are characteristics of consensus decisionmaking?

### Keep in Mind...

If the group cannot reach consensus, it may have the “wrong” issue on the table. The group should go back and re-examine the issue.

- An atmosphere of inquiry.
- A focus *away from* an individual who is advocating personal views.
- The LGP’s mission as the criterion for measuring ideas and actions.
- Airing of differing views so that they can be addressed.
- An environment that promotes trust, respect, and unity of purpose.

### PROFILE

#### Changing to Consensus Decisionmaking

One LGP in Georgia typically used majority rule. As members recognized that the LGP was stuck in “the usual” way of conducting business, they began exploring consensus decisionmaking methods.

The LGP did *not* go from using majority rule one day to using consensus decisionmaking the next. Instead, members requested and received an orientation to consensus decisionmaking. They outlined what this new decisionmaking process would look like and the steps the LGP would take to implement it. This process took several months.

Now the LGP seldom takes votes. Several members have commented on how energized the group is as a whole and that individual members are more vocal and involved at meetings. Other members mentioned that their sense of being vested in the work has increased, and the chairperson remarked that a broader representation of members is now more actively involved.

## PROFILE

### Consensus Decisionmaking: The Process

A consensus approach to decisionmaking is a format that reflects the best interests, needs, and desires of the entire group. Michigan's LCFCC adopted a consensus decisionmaking process for its work. The underlying premise was that agreement existed among members on the common intent of the group—its mission, values, principles, bylaws, traditions, and the results to effect.

The process starts with agenda planning that sorts out issues and puts together proposals that advance the organization's purpose. The proposals are brought to the larger group as agenda items for the meeting. Once a proposal reaches the floor, the facilitator asks for any clarifying questions. (Only questions that further the understanding of the proposal are submitted.) Then discussion begins on three levels:

- (1) Level One—Open discussion and a call for consensus. The facilitator asks if any concerns or objections to the proposal exist. If none, the proposal passes. If not, the process moves to Level Two.
- (2) Level Two—Discussion focuses on identifying concerns by asking and answering the following questions: How does this proposal conflict with our mission statement? How does this proposal support our mission statement? Comments are short and to the point without rebuttal from others, e.g., *I think this proposal conflicts with our mission by....* The Scribe records responses, pros and cons, for all to see.
- (3) Level Three—Discussion is intended to resolve those concerns. Members with concerns may state what it would take for them to agree with the proposal. At this point, a new or revised proposal may emerge. The facilitator then asks for consensus or concerns.

If consensus cannot be reached, closing options include:

- The concerned individual standing aside, if the proposal obviously aligns with the mission and the greater good of the organization;
- Sending the proposal back to the committee for further study;
- Declaring a block.



## Using Interest-based Negotiations

### Glossary

#### **Interest-based negotiation** —

An approach to developing agreements that focuses on mutual interests and options.

LGP members negotiate regularly and frequently, formally and informally, with each other and with stakeholders and partners. Negotiation does not always mean a formal group sitting around the table trying to hash out an agreement. Negotiations regularly occur during meetings as members aim to reach decisions.

#### **Why do LGPs use the interest-based approach to negotiation?**

The old way of doing business is for one or two persons to make decisions and then share these decisions with others. Interest-based negotiations require that all partners take part in the negotiations and “own” the agreement. Four reasons stand out as to why interest-based negotiations are important to LGPs.

- (1) The aim is for a “win-win” versus a traditional “win-lose” result.
- (2) All parties have parity at the table.
- (3) All parties bring resources to the table, e.g., dollars, knowledge, experience, skills, access to multiple types of resources, including, staff, training, or technical assistance.
- (4) Interest-based negotiation is consistent with the LGP’s principles and use of consensus decisionmaking.

Refer to Appendices, Resources, for authors and books about win/win negotiations.

#### **Elements of Interest-based Negotiation**

Interest-based negotiations include interests, positions, and options.

##### **Interests**

- Interests are the things we need, care about, or are important to us.
- Each party to a negotiation has multiple interests (needs).
- The other parties’ interests need to be acknowledged in order to create solutions together.
- Being specific about your own interests can further understanding

with others.

### **Positions**

- Your position is something you have decided upon—your interests are what caused you to do so.
- Positions are explored to discover the hidden—but shared—compatible interests as well as the conflicting one.

### **Options**

Creating options includes incorporating your own needs as well as the other parties' needs.

## **ALERT!**

**Remember to analyze disagreements when the group is at an impasse.**

What helps most often is to stand back and ask, “*What do we agree on? What do we disagree on?*” According to Peter Senge, disagreements fall into four categories.

- (1) Facts: What are the data? What exactly has happened?
- (2) Methods: How should we do what we need to do?
- (3) Goals: What is our objective?
- (4) Values: Why do we think it must be done in a particular way? What do we believe in?

After answering these questions, the group can identify what is needed to move forward.

Adapted from Peter Senge et al., *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: Strategies and Tools for Building a Learning Organization*. Refer to the Appendices, Resources, for the full citation.

## Steps for Using Interest-based Negotiation

### TIPS

#### What Works

Keeping communication open and ongoing is everyone's responsibility.

Tracking the elements of the agreement in writing reduces confusion later.

Ensuring that all parties are at the table when decisions are made saves backtracking later.

Providing worksheets to help all parties identify their interests clarifies and speeds-up the process.

Using a trained facilitator helps maintain the spirit and process of negotiation.

The steps for interest-based negotiation apply to all types of efforts, including negotiating an agreement with a fiscal agent, a lease with the landlord, a contract with a provider, or a multi-year results agreement with state agency partners. The steps for using interest-based negotiation apply even when no formal agreement is produced. For example, a committee may use the same steps when negotiating with the executive committee for resources to implement its plan for gathering data.

#### Step 1: Identify interests and positions.

What do the people want? What is each party's position? Clarify everyone's interest and check for underlying interest. Separate positions from interests.

#### Step 2: Create options.

What are the possible agreements or possible parts of an agreement? Create options that meet mutual and individual interests.

#### Step 3: Seek alternatives.

What are the alternatives to a negotiated agreement? Identify each party's "Best Alternative to a Negotiated Agreement (BATNA)."

#### Step 4: Assure legitimacy.

In what ways can we assure all parties that the agreement is fair? Use external standards and rely on the fairness of the process.

#### Step 5: Make a commitment.

What are the issues to be included in the agreement? Plan the steps to make the agreement a reality.

Refer to Learning Guide 4, Strategies to Achieve Results, and Learning Guide 6, Using Data to Ensure Accountability, for information about partnership agreements. These guides also include sample agreements.

## Success Factors for Interest- based Negotiations

### **Identify mutual and different interests.**

Personal interests motivate people. Take the time to ask everyone to talk about his or her interests. Straying to “positions” is a natural tendency. Continue to emphasize the desire to hear about interests.

### **Distinguish between an interest and a position.**

Interests are what parties care about or what they need. Positions are something parties already decided upfront—their “bottom-line” about what they need. Try to stay away from intractable positions and focus instead on everyone’s interests.

### **Identify and resolve conflict.**

Don’t shy away from awkward or difficult conflicts. Handling these conflicts during the negotiation process will help reduce friction and even more difficult misunderstandings *after* the agreement is signed.

### **Be open to possibilities and opportunities.**

Usually many solutions and strategies exist and at least some are compatible with *everyone’s* interests. Being open to possibilities is like brainstorming: no idea is “wrong.” By opening the door to a variety of possibilities and opportunities, instead of focusing on only one “right” way, a more lively and interesting dialogue will lead to a negotiated agreement.

### **Create options for mutual gain.**

Create options for mutual gain that fully use the mix of resources, then fine-tune the agreement until everyone agrees it will work. Numerous interests may have to be satisfied. As long as everyone is open to a variety of options and solutions, an agreement will result that everyone can own and work hard to achieve.

## What’s next?

LGP members will use group process skills in all aspects of their work. These skills are especially helpful with the groundwork necessary for forming and sustaining partnerships. The next chapter addresses the key components of vision, mission, principles, bylaws, and operating structure as a base for the LGP.

# Chapter 5

## Forming a Partnership

### Learning Goal

You will understand what is involved with forming a Local Governance Partnership and members' roles and responsibilities for this process.

## A Solid Start

*“If you spend all your time talking about structure, you’ll never get it.”* This premise reflects the essential viewpoint that a Local Governance Partnership (LGP) needs when forming a partnership. There are certain tasks that help to build a solid foundation in the formative stage of the partnership. A sound structure provides a base for:

- Organizing an LGP’s work,
- Aligning the work to the community’s vision and priorities,
- Ensuring clear lines of accountability, and
- Broadening communication and decisionmaking across committees, workgroups, constituencies, and partners.

A strong structure will sustain an LGP over time, as long as the LGP continues to revisit, reevaluate, and update it. As an LGP grows and assumes increased responsibility, its structure as well as its mission and operating principles need to fit its new responsibilities.

If an LGP skips or avoids this defining work, a struggle among its members and partners may result. Time and effort spent upfront pays off with big dividends in the long run.

This chapter addresses critical tasks for the design and construction of an LGP and the roles and responsibilities of its members. The chapter begins with state requirements, because they often set parameters for decisions about structure. The chapter continues with information about a community vision, the LGP’s mission, principles, bylaws, and operating structure, and concludes with members’ responsibilities for these elements.

## State Requirements for Establishing an LGP

### Keep in Mind...

An LGP's structure can change over time with maturation, increasing levels of responsibility, broader scope of work, and its willingness to take on specific responsibilities.

Each state has a set of requirements, guidelines, or expectations for LGPs. The list of duties may be found in legislation, policy manuals, contracts, or guidelines. For example:

- Maryland has legislation that describes the authority and responsibilities for an LGP.
- Missouri has an Executive Order and uses guidelines to set expectations for the Caring Communities Partnerships.
- Several states, including Maryland, require the involvement of local government in the decision about the type of organization.

Understanding and making decisions consistent with state requirements is one part of the state-LGP relationship. This partnership is a “two-way street” and needs to be nurtured.

Refer to Learning Guide 1, Theory and Purpose of Local Decisionmaking, Chapter 4, Structures to Support Local Governance Partnerships, and Chapter 5, Relationships with State and Local Government, for more detailed information.

### PROFILE

#### Legal Standing or Structure in Various States

In Georgia, the community collaboratives called Family Connection (LGPs) typically have one of the following structures:

- Meet-and-Confer Bodies that have no legal authority.
- Advisory Bodies that provide advice and recommendations but are created by local ordinance (and the government maintains legal control).
- Private Nonprofit Organizations that have legal standing and the authority to conduct business.
- Quasi-Governmental Bodies that can establish public policy and authorize funds.

Continued

## Keep in Mind...

A structure without legal standing does not imply that the LGP does not have authority to act. Rather, it has influence by acting through its state partners.

## Legal Standing or Structure in Various States (Continued)

In Missouri, Caring Community Partnerships are nonprofit corporations with legal standing and authority to conduct business. The partnerships have the authority to nominate and elect their members.

In Vermont, Regional Partnerships may choose to be either a community collaborative, organized by a community group with no legal standing, or a nonprofit corporation with legal standing. Either structure allows the LGP to conduct business and elect members.

## State Requirements for Membership

Often, state requirements outline the responsibilities for LGP members. The same policy that establishes the LGP often lists members' responsibilities, such as making decisions about the LGP's type of organization, lines of accountability, and formal relationships with other governing bodies.

## PROFILE

### Maryland's Responsibilities for Community Partnerships or Local Management Boards

- Stimulate action by stakeholders to improve outcomes through effective systems, supports, and opportunities.
- Develop and assure that implementation of the five-year strategic community plan includes resource allocation for state-funded interagency service delivery.
- Maintain standards of accountability and monitor state-funded services.
- Develop service strategies as identified by the Governor's Office of Children, Youth, and Families.
- Shift focus to prevention and early intervention services.
- Galvanize resources.



## What are tasks for establishing a strong structure?

### Glossary

**Vision** — A dream about the future. Describes what the community hopes for its children and families.

**Mission** — A statement of purpose describing what the LGP does and how it contributes to achieving the community's vision.

**Operating principles** — Guidelines, consistent with principles for local governance, underlying the LGP's day-to-day work.

**Bylaws** — Standards for the LGP's practices and procedures, e.g., membership and/or voting requirements. Bylaws are often required for LGPs with legal standing.

**Operational structure** — The various parts of the LGP, e.g., committees or workgroups and how they relate to one another.

Given the unique nature of an LGP, careful attention is needed to construct an organization that embodies the functions and characteristics of this new type of community organization. The experience of over 300 LGPs in Georgia, Maryland, Missouri, and Vermont suggests that certain tasks, in sequence, assist in the formation and continued development of an LGP.

### Tasks for Forming an LGP

- Create a community vision for children, families, and the community.
- Develop a mission statement.
- Develop operating principles.
- Make decisions about establishing bylaws.
- Design an operational structure.

### Keep in Mind...

The individual and group process skills presented in previous chapters are essential for these tasks. Investing time and effort into *forming* an LGP with a sound foundation ends up *sustaining* the LGP over time.

## A Community Vision for Children, Families, and the Community

A vision describes the community's view of the ideal—positive results for its children and families. The community vision reflects the themes that continue to surface in meetings and forums, such as supported families, children succeeding in school, or simply being safe during an evening walk.

A simple definition of a vision is a picture of the future that is desired now. A vision statement describes “what” you want.

Creating a community vision is an opportunity for the LGP to collaborate with community members and prove that it is not going to direct or monopolize the process of achieving desired results.

The vision is crafted from input that the LGP collects about community issues, challenges, and assets. A vision is a positive outcome that partners and stakeholders can embrace and rally around. An example of a vision might be: *“Every child is a healthy, responsible, productive, and contributing member of a community.”*

Refer to Learning Guide 3, Setting a Community Agenda, for more detailed information about gathering information to craft a community vision and a checklist for developing vision statements.

### Key Characteristics of a Community Vision

- Focuses on results for well-being
- Arises from the hopes and dreams of individuals
- Gives meaning to collaborative action
- Has great power to inspire people
- Motivates people to act
- Unites people in a common cause
- Enables a broad range of stakeholders to identify with it as individuals
- Provides the basis to set goals
- Sets high standards
- Represents future accomplishments
- Embodies shared values

## Examples of Community Visions

### Keep in Mind...

The community vision should be prominent and public.

Many LGPs in Georgia “get the vision out” by adding it to greeting cards and stationery, including it in e-mail messages and newsletters, and posting it in partners’ offices.

*A caring community that builds on its strengths to provide meaningful opportunities for children, families, and individuals to achieve self-sufficiency, attain their highest potential, and contribute to the public good.*

Local INvestment Commission (LINC) Vision, Missouri

*All children will grow up in stable families, healthy, emotionally stable and mature, free of abuse and neglect, with good social skills, aware of the rights and responsibilities of being a community member, prepared for post secondary education and/or work.*

An LGP in Georgia

*A healthy community built on natural community supports (families, neighbors, friends, churches and synagogues, associations, etc.) that are complemented by formal services.*

Alliance for Building Community, Vermont

Refer to Learning Guide 1, Theory and Purpose of Local Decisionmaking, and Chapter 5, Relationships with State and Local Government, for examples of visions crafted from a statewide perspective.

### Why is a community vision important to an LGP’s development ?

#### **Unites stakeholders in what they want for children and families.**

The community vision statement reflects stakeholders’ views on where they want to go and what it will be like when they arrive. All stakeholders need to participate in creating the vision in order for them to “own” the vision and to invest in carrying it out.

#### **Earns credibility for LGPs by demonstrating how local governance works.**

A community vision statement is one of the most important steps in forming an LGP and in building relationships with the community. The vision statement brings members and stakeholders and other partners to the table. By holding its vision in the forefront, LGP members *keep* stakeholders and partners at the table.

Continued

By involving varied stakeholders in the process of building the vision statement, the LGP demonstrates that its approach is to:

- Involve, share, build, and collaborate,
- *Not* to control, direct, or monopolize.

### **Involves people whose voices are not often heard.**

An LGP's vision statement needs to incorporate the vision of all. LGPs need to reach out into the community through neighborhood gatherings, community-wide meetings, focus groups, educational presentations, surveys, etc., to ask residents, parents, providers, local activists, faith communities, and youth about their vision for children and families.

### **Success Factors for Community Visions**

- Do it early in the LGP's development.
- Be inclusive by using multiple approaches to reach out to diverse groups.
- Circulate a draft statement with key stakeholders and ask for responses.
- Share a draft statement at community meetings and ask for comments.
- Ask a wider circle of community groups to support the vision statement after getting agreement on it.
- Make the vision statement visible through the LGP network.
- Revisit the vision annually at retreats and when negotiating partnership agreements.

## A Mission Statement

### Keep in Mind...

Creating or revisiting the mission statement is a good time to use a skilled facilitator, especially one knowledgeable about LGPs. Board members need to invest time and effort in developing concepts for their mission statement, instead of haggling over wording. A skilled facilitator can help with this. Later word crafting and revisions can be done by staff.

The mission statement conveys the fundamental purpose or reason *why* the organization exists. It describes specifically what the LGP does and how that helps achieve the community vision. The community vision and the mission statement are the “hot links” to results—the conditions of well-being—that community members want for their children and families.

Defining a vision and mission is a continuous process, not “one-time activities.” LGPs typically revisit their mission, vision, and principles at annual retreats and at seminars with new members.

### Examples of Mission Statements

*To provide leadership in integrating an array of programs and opportunities to support children and families through school-linked services to achieve core results.*

Pettis County Community Partnership, Missouri

*To provide a central focus for conceptualizing, planning, and implementing a community agenda for families and children, building new service capacities to serve children and families, developing fiscal strategies to support system reform, and developing accountability systems.*

Family League of Baltimore City, Maryland

### Why is a mission statement important?

#### **Encourages discussion and unites LGP members.**

LGP members must be clear about how the LGP fits into the community vision of improving results. By developing a mission statement, LGP members uncover assumptions, expectations, and hopes about the LGP’s role in fulfilling the community vision.

The process, if done well, helps to create a common purpose among individuals from different experiences and disciplines. Some members may come from organizations that also have mission statements. They can function as a cross check as the LGP’s mission needs to be distinct to these members.

Through discussion while crafting a mission statement, members typically end up coming together with a common understanding and grounding for the work ahead.

Continued

### **Helps to set organizational priorities.**

A mission gives shape to the LGP's future as the underlying reference point for setting goals.

### **Keep in Mind...**

Some LGPs develop organizational vision statements as well as mission statements. The organizational vision statement helps new members—and stakeholders—understand what is unique about the LGP. It provides a clear understanding of how the LGP is different from service-delivery organizations and issue-based collaboratives.

Consider the following examples:

*Phelps County Community Partnership is a non-profit organization that promotes awareness of community issues, facilitates system reform, and works together with citizens and organizations to enhance or develop community resources to achieve better results for children, families, and communities.*

Wicomico County Community Partnership in Maryland reads:

*We are an inclusive and constructive group of individuals who are accelerating positive change for children and families.*

## Operating Principles

Operating principles are guidelines for how the LGP will conduct its business. They provide an opportunity to translate the defining principles of local governance into the day-to-day operations for decisionmaking. (Some LGPs have statements of beliefs or values for their work that serve as operating principles.)

LGPs use their operating principles as a test for decisions. For example, an operating principle in many Georgia LGPs was “being family-focused.” Therefore, at every juncture of planning, program implementation, decisionmaking, and shared financing, LGP members asked, *“Is this decision inclusive of the whole family or does it just focus on children?”* *Does this decision enhance the stability of the family or does it strip families of a sense of efficacy in raising their own children?”*

## PROFILE

### Operating Principles: Montgomery County Collaboration for Children, Youth, and Families

- Families and Neighborhoods: We believe that for children to succeed they need stable, nurturing families and safe neighborhoods that are rich in opportunities for growth.
- Communities: Communities have a responsibility to assure the development of a healthy infrastructure, adequate housing, and economic opportunities and supports for families.
- Outcome-Based Decisionmaking: We make policy and funding decisions based on improved outcomes for children, youth, and families.
- Community Involvement: We are committed to the active involvement of county residents—parents, members of faith communities, businesses, providers, neighborhood organizations, civic associations—and others in shaping the agenda. Families and communities are partners with government in the decisionmaking process to design, deliver, and finance support services to families. Families, communities, and government are partners in defining benchmarks of progress and accepting accountability for results.

Continued

## **Operating Principles: Montgomery County Collaboration for Children, Youth, and Families (Continued)**

- **Collaboration and Partnerships:** We promote collaboration and partnership with community stakeholders as the primary approach to assure that children are healthy, safe, ready to learn, and prepared for life.
- **Building on Community Assets:** We believe in making every effort to draw upon and build on existing community resources and initiatives rather than developing parallel or competing efforts.
- **Maximizing Resources:** We believe in maximizing public and private funds and human resources to assure the supports and services that children and families need to be successful.
- **Accountability:** We are accountable for improving the well-being of children, youth, and families of Montgomery County.

*The following profiles show the relationship between vision, mission, and operating principles.*

## **PROFILE**

### **Alliance for Building Community (ABC), Windham County, Vermont**

ABC Vision: A healthy community built on natural community supports\* that are complemented by formal services (\* families, neighbors, friends, churches and synagogues, associations, etc.).

ABC Mission: To facilitate an ongoing community forum where participants mobilize community strengths and resources to address community needs.

ABC Principles:

- n To promote positive change and conditions of well-being
- n To be actively inclusive
- n To foster collaboration
- n To identify community strengths and needs objectively



- n To support community actions around identified needs

## PROFILE

### Local Investment Commission (LINC), Missouri

**Community Vision:** A caring community that builds on its strengths to provide meaningful opportunities for children, families, and individuals to achieve self-sufficiency, attain their highest potential, and contribute to the public good.

**Mission:** To provide leadership and influence to engage the Kansas City Community in creating the best system to support and strengthen children, families, and individuals, holding that system accountable, and changing public attitudes toward the system.

#### Guiding Principles

- **Comprehensiveness:** Provide ready access to a full array of effective services.
- **Prevention:** Emphasize “front-end” services that enhance development and prevent problems, rather than “back-end” crisis intervention.
- **Outcomes:** Measure system performance by improved outcomes for children and families, not simply by the number and kind of services delivered.
- **Intensity:** Offer services to the needed degree and in the appropriate time.
- **Participant Involvement:** Use the needs, concerns, and opinions of individuals who use the service-delivery system to drive improvements in the operation of the system.
- **Neighborhoods:** Decentralize services to the places where people live, whenever appropriate, and utilize services to strengthen neighborhood capacity.
- **Flexibility and Responsiveness:** Create a delivery system, including programs and reimbursement mechanisms, that are sufficiently flexible and adaptable to respond to the full spectrum of child, family, and individual needs.
- **Collaboration:** Connect public, private, and community resources to create an integrated service-delivery system.
- **Strong Families:** Work to strengthen families, especially the capacity of parents to support and nurture the development of their children.
- **Respect and Dignity:** Treat families, and the staff who work with them, in a respectful and dignified manner.
- **Interdependence/Mutual Responsibility:** Balance the need for individuals to be accountable and responsible with the obligation of the community to enhance the welfare of all citizens.
- **Cultural Competency:** Demonstrate the belief that diversity in the historical, cultural, religious, and spiritual values of different groups is a source of great strength.
- **Creativity:** Encourage and allow participants and staff to think and act innovatively, to take risks, and to learn from their experiences and mistakes.

- Compassion: Display an unconditional regard and a caring, non-judgmental attitude toward participants that recognizes their strengths and empowers them to meet their own needs.
- Honesty: Encourage and allow honesty among all people in the system.

*The following profiles uses beliefs and values to guide their work. →*

## PROFILE

### People in Partnership, Vermont

Mission: People in Partnership is a community collaborative that exists to promote the growth of shared responsibility among the members of every community in the Lamoille Valley region. We will coordinate and improve the supports, services, and resources to reflect the needs of the community.

- We believe that health is a state of physical, mental, and social well-being.
- We believe that learning is a lifelong process.
- We believe that safety of self, family, and community is a critical factor in our wellness.
- We believe that having the economic means to adequately support your family is a precursor to wellness.
- We believe that respect and dignity for families is necessary for self-determination and family strength.
- We believe that a unified, inclusive, and continuous community effort is required to maintain healthy communities.

## PROFILE

### Rutland Regional Board for Family Services, Vermont

The mission of the Rutland Regional Board for Family Services is to continually improve systems to create comprehensive and accessible health, social, and educational services that are user-friendly, integrated, preventive, family-centered, and outcome-oriented. In partnership with families and other community systems, the approach to all activities will be strength-based, respectful of the diversity of individuals and families, and outcome-driven. Citizen participation in all forms will be encouraged and expected. The process will be dynamic and open to constructive criticism and self-evaluation.

#### Shared Values

- We value children.

Children deserve to be raised in families where each child's basic needs are met in a safe, nurturing, and respectful environment that includes unconditional love and acceptance.

- We value families.

Communities recognize the individuality and diversity of families. Families are responsible for members' moral values.



## **Rutland Regional Board for Family Services, Vermont (Continued)**

- We value communities.

The community has a responsibility to protect, support, and ensure economic security and develop social norms for people through social policy. Communities must respectfully offer people a diverse, comprehensive array of protective, social, educational, recreational, and rehabilitative opportunities.

The community is responsible for fostering an atmosphere that is strength-based and that empowers individuals and families toward self-advocacy.

- We value our environment.

People are entitled to a clean, healthy, and safe environment so that each may develop and prosper financially, spiritually, aesthetically, and emotionally.

- We value our partnership with the state in addressing and finding creative ways for improving outcomes.

Refer to Learning Guide 1, Theory and Purpose of Local Decisionmaking, for a list of Vermont outcomes.

## **Why are operating principles important?**

### **Operating principles create a bond.**

Principles create a bond among people. LGPs bring together a diverse membership of people in the community. The process of agreeing to a set of principles helps people better understand one another.

### **Operating principles clarify an LGP's beliefs.**

Principles are essentially a statement of what a group believes and a statement on what the group stands. Through the process of creating principles, LGP board members are able to define what is important to them as they go about the work of improving results.

*A strong basic structure may include bylaws.* →

## Bylaws

Some LGPs might find it helpful to establish bylaws. Special attention needs to be made so that when developing bylaws, LGP members don't fall back on traditional policies and procedures just because they are "a known commodity." Instead, members need to wrestle with ways to make their standards reflect their philosophies.

Bylaws are the rules that describe:

- How the LGP operates,
- How the LGP will govern its affairs,
- The responsibilities of LGP members and officers.

Bylaws must fit the LGP structure and requirements. LGPs with legal standing, such as non-profit corporations or quasi-public entities, are required to have bylaws. In most states, if an LGP is registered as a non-profit corporation, then bylaws are filed with the Secretary of State's office. For a registered non-profit organization, bylaws have the force of law. Failure to comply with the provisions of the bylaws could lead to a challenge in court.

One partnership in Vermont does not have bylaws at all. It considers bylaws only necessary for legal purposes; since it does not have legal standing, bylaws are not needed.

## PROFILE

### Discovering a Need for Bylaws

Some LGPs in Georgia, without legal standing, discovered that their informal structure required a more deliberate attempt at consistency. Since these emerging LGPs were in the process of establishing their credibility, their decisionmaking process needed to be reliable and fair. Bylaws helped to provide the needed decisionmaking structure.

## Articles or Sections of Bylaws

Most bylaws contain the following articles or sections:

- Name and purpose—States the LGP’s name and mission.
- Membership—Describes the LGP’s membership, including member responsibilities, qualifications, and term of office.
- Leadership—Outlines the number and type of officers, term of office, and duties.
- Committees—Creates a functional structure to support the LGP’s work, including committee functions and responsibilities.
- Voting—Defines the standard for decisions by majority or by consensus.
- Meetings—Describes when and how often meetings are held, provisions for special and/or annual meetings, and the required number of members present for voting.
- Conflict of interest—A statement that addresses a possible conflict if a member is contributing to decisions about resources.
- Amendments—Describes the steps for changing bylaws.
- Dissolution—Addresses the steps that need to be taken if the LGP dissolved.

Refer to the Appendices, Tools, for complete listing and description of possible articles for bylaws.

## Why are bylaws important?

Bylaws legitimize the LGP’s work, even if it is not a legal entity. They provide consistency and ensure the LGP’s credibility in the community and among stakeholders. When bylaws are democratically crafted and approved, all members have a stake in them.





## What are steps for developing and establishing bylaws?

### ALERT!

#### Beware of *not* thinking through implications for using a simple majority.

One Community Partnership in Maryland discovered a significant implication of using a simple majority. The bylaws required:

A quorum of half of the 21 members (11) was required to conduct business, such as voting and making decisions; therefore, a business meeting could take place with only 11 members present.

A simple majority was needed to pass a motion; therefore, if only 11 members were present, then 6 members would equal a simple majority.

The implication of these two rules was that a motion could pass with a vote of only six members. For this LGP, six is less than one-third of the members. In this instance, LGP members needed to assess whether decisions could be made with only one-third of the members present, which is not consistent with its shared decisionmaking principles as an LGP.

Bylaws need to be customized to an LGP's work and unique characteristics. They need to have balance. Some people advocate putting as little as possible in the bylaws because they want flexibility. Others advocate for being very prescriptive. Finding the middle ground is the aim.

#### Steps for Bylaws

1. Clarify the specific requirements in your state.

Check to see if the state has established specific requirements that should be included in the bylaws. Identify if any other governing body has to sign off on the bylaws, such as local government.

2. Review bylaws from other LGPs in your state.

Having a model or example to follow is helpful. Other LGPs may have already wrestled with developing bylaws and may have some experiences to share. Ask the LGP how well the bylaws are working.

3. Decide who will write the bylaws and how they will be approved.

Making "process" decisions upfront helps to make the process run smoothly. The process decisions will inform those involved when their input is needed and who has the final approval of the proposed bylaws and/or changes to them.

4. Determine specific steps and timeline for completion.

For new LGPs, reaching general agreement on the parameters of the bylaws will aid the process. For existing LGPs, identifying the parameters of the sections to be revised also helps.

*How do LGP members craft bylaws that reflect the principles of local governance? →*

## Success Factors for Bylaws

### Bylaws that Reflect Principles of Local Governance

As a unique entity, an LGP should *not* have bylaws that look like bylaws from other organizations. Take time to carefully apply the principles of local governance to the laws governing operations. An LGP can evaluate its bylaws by discussing responses to the following questions:

- How do our bylaws support a focus on local accountability and results?
- Are the membership and leadership provisions inclusive and diverse?
- Does our committee structure reflect community outreach and our work in strategy development?
- Do our provisions for voting reflect shared responsibility and accountability?
- Is the structure for our meetings appropriate for our diverse membership and conducive to voicing different opinions?

*An LGP must also consider its operational structure. →*

## An Operational Structure

### Keep in Mind...

An operational structure that works for one LGP may not work for another.

An operational structure is frequently depicted as a graphic of boxes and lines that indicate the parts of the organization and their relationship and accountability to one another. The parts can include individuals and/or groups, such as committees.

An LGP's operational structure should support and facilitate the community vision, its mission, and its operating principles. Often, LGPs will creatively fashion their missions and principles but inadvertently set up operating structures that are linear and hierarchical. For example, an LGP may have a guiding principle about youth decisionmaking but operationally neglect to set up systems to support that principle, e.g., not providing the opportunity for youth to have a voice, setting meeting attendance requirements that don't consider youth schedules.

Traditional operational structures depict the vertical relationships of "who is accountable to whom." An LGP's operational structure needs to be horizontal, reflecting the LGP's defining characteristic—that is, shared accountability. Some LGPs' operational structures also show the relationship with other governing bodies, such as state agency partners, advisory groups, the fiscal agent, or neighborhood groups.

Some LGPs have complex operational structures. They may have many workgroups with several hundred people involved in each. For example, one LGP discovered that it had 28 committees within its partnership. This realization helped the LGP consolidate committees and establish criteria for creating new ones.

## PROFILE

### The Work Group Model

Vermont's ABC uses a workgroup model as an operational structure. ABC has seven workgroups, each are effective partnerships in tackling a particular outcome(s) and indicator(s).

As the ABC defines it: *"Work Group status means that the group and the ABC Board have agreed to work together to address an identified community need and have agreed on a process for sharing information and support."*

**PROFILE  
(Continued)**

A work group assesses community needs, shares information about needs and resources, coordinates community efforts and resources to address the needs, creates a way for the work group and the ABC Board to effectively communicate, and creates a structure that may facilitate access to funding.

Refer to the Appendices, Tools, for examples of organizational structures from Vermont partnerships.

**Why is an  
operational  
structure  
important?**

**A framework to determine responsibility for decisionmaking serves as a gatekeeper for directing decisions to the right people.**

Decisionmaking is a daily task for members of an LGP. Without clear steps, the process can lead to poor decisions, confusion, and distrust. Consider this example: A committee spends many hours preparing a proposal for the legislature. However, the committee cannot use the proposal after realizing that the entire LGP needs to approve the decision to submit the proposal before its presentation. The committee members feel frustrated.

Confusion over decisionmaking responsibilities can occur with committees, task forces, or neighborhood groups. For example, in Missouri, the Caring Communities Partnerships serve as the parent board for a neighborhood decisionmaking body, the Caring Communities Site Council. Determining which decisions will be made by the Partnership and which by the Site Council is an ongoing process as new topics surface.

## **ALERT!**

### **Constantly revising the operational structure can lead to “organizational paralysis.”**

Allowing the operational structure to evolve as the LGP matures is important; however, too much attention to refining the structure can take the LGP away from its work of improving results for children, families, and communities.

Whatever operational structure is in place, LGP members should be clear about decisionmaking responsibilities. Ensure that information is communicated to all members, committees, partners, etc.

## **ALERT!**

### **Beware of reaching beyond the resources available.**

Ensure that sufficient human and financial resources are available to support the structure created. One LGP over extended its resources when it invited various stakeholders to get involved by signing up for committees.

Once the committees were formed the LGP did not have the staff available to support the committees' work. When the committees didn't meet for several months, interest faded and people stopped coming. The LGPs credibility was damaged as participants only remembered that the community partnership let them down.

*For all these tasks—creating a community vision, developing a mission, developing operating principles, crafting bylaws, and setting up an operational structure—the following is a summary of LGP member roles and responsibilities. →*

## LGP Member Roles and Responsibilities

Tasks	LGP Member Roles and Responsibilities
Community Vision	<p><b>Roles:</b> Catalyst, Convener, Facilitator, Communicator, Advocate</p> <p><b>Responsibilities</b>            To initiate and guide the process of creating a community vision.            To ensure that all stakeholders have a voice.</p>
Mission	<p><b>Roles:</b> Facilitator, Communicator</p> <p><b>Responsibilities</b>            To address the LGP's purpose in making the community vision a reality.            To ensure that the mission is results-focused and reflects the unique characteristics of the LGP.            To ensure that the mission is understood by all who participate in the work.</p>
Operating Principles	<p><b>Roles:</b> Facilitator, Organizer, Communicator</p> <p><b>Responsibilities</b>            To apply principles of local governance to the operations of the LGP.            To ensure that the operating principles are clear and understood by all involved with the LGP's work.            To ensure that operating principles are used to guide decisionmaking and test decisions.            To ensure that operating principles are reviewed and updated periodically.</p>
Bylaws	<p><b>Roles:</b> Visionary, Organizer, Communicator, Decisionmaker</p> <p><b>Responsibilities</b>            To envision the operations of the LGP and anticipate potential challenges.            To articulate guidelines that promote and support positive working relationships among members and their work in carrying out LGP functions.</p>
Operational Structure	<p><b>Roles:</b> Facilitator, Organizer, Communicator, Decisionmaker</p> <p><b>Responsibilities</b>            To think through the processes of carrying out the work, including relationships and ways that decisions are made.            To ensure that a broad base of opinions and ideas are considered and respected.</p>

## **What's next?**

This chapter was concerned with forming a solid foundation for the LGP's work. Careful attention to these beginning tasks, ongoing assessments, and continual updating will sustain the partnership over time. Another factor for success is sustaining and sharpening leadership.



# Chapter 6

## Sustaining and Sharpening Leadership

### **Learning Goal**

You will understand what is involved with sustaining and sharpening the performance of members and improving their ability to contribute to local decisionmaking.

## Continuous Learning

A Local Governance Partnership (LGP) needs to take stock, both regularly and periodically, of how well members are doing. A status check helps identify the support systems that members need (or want) to do their jobs better. Supports might include ways to build knowledge and skills or remove barriers, such as lack of childcare so that parents can attend meetings.

Many LGPs create a learning environment that supports exploration and creativity. They seek to improve performance by arranging opportunities for learning and its application. LGP members come to value these opportunities as part of a continuous learning process and often identify ways to get the most out of these opportunities.

New LGP members, regardless of their backgrounds, need orientation to ease into the work. Providing a relevant, engaging, and supportive orientation for new members helps get them off to a solid start and helps sustain their commitment.

This chapter focuses on sharpening the performance of LGP members. It begins with orientation that “preps” new members in the basic functions and principles of an LGP. The chapter then looks at ways for an LGP to sustain commitment, assess its performance, and incorporate capacity building as an ongoing LGP function.

## Orientation for New Members

Orientation is an essential part of welcoming new members. Whether conducted in a large group, one-on-one, or a combination of settings, orientation serves a critical purpose in giving information. It also helps new members feel comfortable and builds relationships that are so important to the local governance process.

### Core Components of an Orientation Program

#### Group Sessions

- “Getting to Know your LGP.” These sessions mix new and existing members and tend to be content-focused. The intent is to help new members understand the LGP’s purpose, functions, guiding principles, etc., as well as give them opportunities to ask questions of existing members.
- “Welcome to LGP events.” LGP members often host activities to build relationships with new members and offer opportunities for exploring ideas and interests.

#### One-on-One Relationships

Use a variety of ways to link new members with experienced members. Consider matching interests, skills, and/or knowledge as a way for existing members to mentor new ones.

#### Resource Handbook

Develop a new member guide that includes information on the LGP, such as its mission, principles, recent reports, a glossary, expectations for members, etc.

#### Hands-on Experiences

Provide opportunities for new members to visit community programs, attend community meetings, sit in on committee meetings, and/or talk with residents about their concerns.



## PROFILE

### Orientation Experience from Georgia Community Collaboratives

Experience among Georgia's community collaboratives has shown that, typically, only one or two new members join the collaborative at a time. The "buddy system" is the most practical orientation. An existing member becomes a mentor to a new member and, over lunch, provides an informal orientation.

Another approach that works well is to have new members attend their first LGP meeting without a formal orientation. Ask them to keep track of their questions as they listen and observe. Then tailor the formal orientation session to address their questions and observations, along with the basics about the collaborative, i.e., mission, principles, operating structure, etc.

Reserve the "event approach" for bringing on a group about a particular issue, such as an advisory council or a youth advisory committee. When planning and conducting events, be sure to keep them lively, interactive, and fun.

### What Works for Orientation

Targeting one-on-one outreach

Inviting a new or potential member to visit the LGP's website or view a videotape about the LGP, if available

Providing new members who are contributing a skill or perspective to an issue with the LGP's most recent data on the topic.

### What are characteristics of successful orientation programs?

- Providing multiple and varied opportunities.
- Addressing the interests and preferences of new members.
- Recognizing the contributions that new members bring to the LGP.
- Creating two-way communication between new and existing members.
- Talking with new members prior to their first LGP meeting about what to expect.
- Asking current members to be a buddy or coach with new members by sitting next to them at meetings to fill in the blanks, answer questions, etc.
- Speaking to new members after meetings to discuss what happened and answer questions.
- Getting new members involved early by matching their interests or skills to a committee.
- Ensuring that the needs, e.g., childcare, transportation, scheduling, etc., of new members are met.



## What steps are important for orientation?

1. Designate a committee or group to plan and manage the orientation for new members.
2. Develop a plan for orienting new members that includes individual and group learning opportunities.
3. Develop a budget and designate funds to support orientation for new members, including the costs for childcare.
4. Develop a new member kit that includes, among other things, a “bio sheet,” interest and skill survey, list of members and staff, vision, mission, principles, bylaws, meeting minutes, history of the LGP, list of partners, committee descriptions and membership, reports, news articles, etc.
5. Conduct new member orientation sessions and invite existing members to share experiences and lessons learned.
6. Assess the effectiveness of orientation from the participants’ viewpoint, including what they learned as well as practical considerations, e.g., amount of time for orientation, scheduling, etc.

### **ALERT!**

#### **Don’t ignore new members.**

Think through how a new member feels—“walk in their shoes” —and plan accordingly. The following are comments from a new member of a partnership:

*“Well, it finally came and I was appointed to the board. I was thrilled, but when I got there I started to change my mind. First, introductions were not made and I was in the dark for a while not knowing all the board members. Then we had new members come and old ones leave. I felt like I never knew what was going on.*

*Secondly, I felt in the dark when they talked about money all the time. I thought we were going to talk about children and families and how we can make it better.*

*Third, beside myself there was only one other parent. I felt very frustrated.”*

*A relevant and engaging orientation is important for new members. What takes place after orientation? How is commitment sustained over time? →*

## Sustaining Commitment

### TIP

Celebrate! Celebrate!  
Celebrations do not need to be formal or elaborate. Celebrating successes—even small ones—is food for the soul.

Sustaining commitment goes beyond keeping members for the full-term of their appointment or election. An LGP's "table" is never big enough. Continuously reach out to expand the LGP to all who might contribute in improving results for children and families. Some additional guidelines for sustaining commitment include:

### Keeping the Eye on the Prize

Ensure that members stay focused on *why* they belong—to achieve better results for children and their families. Keeping the results visible is essential and keeping the group focused on its progress is vital.

### ALERT!

#### Don't wait for a crisis.

Take time often for members to reflect on the work and the results, then make mid-course corrections.

### Maintaining Momentum

Assess the energy of the group. Is the LGP meeting its goals and generating new ideas? Are members regularly attending meetings? Are people actively seeking to learn? Are they willing to take risks? Do they propose ideas that "walk the talk?" Are their ideas fresh and innovative? If the answers to these questions are "no," then work on ways to re-energize the work.

### Involving Members

Make sure that each person is connected to the work of the group. Understanding why people get involved is the key to understanding why they stay involved. The more involved members are, the more that ownership in the process flourishes. Certainly, tracking the percentage of members who attend meetings is one indicator of involvement; another indicator is determining whether members are satisfied with their involvement. Do they feel that they are making a contribution? As one LGP member stated passionately in a recent meeting, "*Use me or lose me.*"

### Keep in Mind...

The ongoing theme is rallying around a common purpose. Know that more can be achieved together than alone. Always building



and sustaining a common purpose keeps people involved.

## Assessing LGP Performance

First and foremost, an LGP should assess its performance by its results and its ability to “turn the curve.” Critical questions for assessing an LGP’s performance include:

- Are we achieving results?
- Is our structure effective in getting better results?
- Do we have a decisionmaking process that supports getting better results?

### Ways to Assess Performance

#### Written Surveys with LGP Members

LGPs often use surveys as an evaluation of current or past performance. For example, a survey may be distributed prior to the annual LGP retreat and the results used for planning the agenda. A survey may also be used as a diagnostic tool, such as when an LGP is struggling with its operations. LGPs find that surveys offer members a way to comment anonymously (and more candidly) about their views on what the LGP is doing or could be doing.

#### Surveys with Partners and/or Stakeholders

Some LGPs use surveys with partners or stakeholders to complement their member surveys. An “outside view” provides information on how the LGP is perceived in the community. That perspective can offer suggestions about how the LGP could improve its performance.

#### Full LGP Conversations

Members can discuss how well the local decisionmaking process is working in a number of ways. Some examples include inviting a facilitator to take LGP members through a self-reflection process or establishing a short time at the end of each LGP meeting to gather comments from those attending.

Continued

### **Individual LGP Member Interviews**

Some LGPs invest in having a consultant interview LGP members individually to shape the annual retreat, to set priorities, and/or to make mid-course corrections, etc. The consultant provides confidentiality and objectivity in compiling the information for the LGP to review. This approach can provide in-depth information but may take a financial investment for the consultant's time and expertise.

### **Individual Interviews with Partners and/or Stakeholders**

For similar reasons, an LGP may choose to use a consultant to establish a one-on-one interview process for gathering opinions from partners and stakeholders. The benefits and drawbacks are similar to the interviews with LGP members.

Refer to Learning Guide 6, Using Data to Ensure Accountability, for more detailed information about collecting, reporting, and using data.

### **What Works in Assessing Performance**

#### **TIP**

Use the assessment tool(s) in the last chapter, Moving Forward, of each Learning Guide in this series.

### **Customized Assessments**

The key to performance assessment is to design one that fits the functions of an LGP. Many assessment tools have limited value for an LGP, because they tend to focus on a more traditional type of non-profit structure that is not consistent with a local decisionmaking entity.

### **Post-Meeting Reflections**

Mini-reflections at the end of an LGP meeting can be useful for enhancing an LGP's performance in having effective meetings, making decisions consistent with its mission, assuring that all voices are heard, etc.

### **Using a Consultant**

An "outsider" who understands the purpose and role of LGPs and who understands organizations can be an asset to assessing performance. The consultant provides safety, objectivity, insights, and anonymity.

*LGP members come from all walks of life and bring a variety of experiences to the work. Local decisionmaking may also be a new experience to many. This mix contributes to the importance of building capacity. →*

## Building Capacity

Ultimately, the success or failure of an LGP is measured by its capacity to implement effective strategies that achieve the desired results for children and families over time. An LGP reflects the collective capacity of its members to make results-based decisions, to negotiate partnerships, to map community assets, to implement and assess the effectiveness of strategies, and to make mid-course corrections when needed. The challenge is for LGP members and staff to have the knowledge and skills needed for this work.

A variety of ways exist to build capacity. Just as LGP members strive to “think out of the box” in other aspects of their operations, they need to think creatively about ways to increase their knowledge and skills.

Some guidelines to keep in mind are:

- n Recognize that building capacity is not a one-time training activity or workshop but an ongoing endeavor.
- n Remember that adults learn in different ways, so provide a variety of approaches and options.
- n Mix and match learning opportunities by varying the time, place, media, and setting.

Ways to build capacity include:

- n Large and small group sessions, e.g., training, workshops, conferences, seminars, courses.
- n A variety of products and learning tools, e.g., learning guides, worksheets, handouts, exercises, self-assessment tools, briefing papers, best practice reports.
- n Peer-to-peer networking, including individual and group matches and community-to-community matches.
- n Coaching and mentoring or one-on-one learning.
- n Onsite assistance with a consultant or team of consultants.

## Steps for Building Capacity

LGPs need to view capacity building as a means of supporting new ways of working within the LGP and with the community. LGPs need to be careful not to place skill building on the back burner. To help avoid this:

1. Ask members and staff about the interests and skills that they want to develop or improve.
2. Compile a working list of desired knowledge and skills and set priorities.
3. Identify resources available from state and community partners and request the resources needed to meet priorities.
4. Distribute a calendar of existing events, activities, and opportunities for members and staff.
5. Incorporate skill building into work sessions and meetings.
6. Set aside time at each LGP meeting as a “learning moment.”
7. Develop a plan for providing a continuous opportunity for building skills.

## PROFILE

### Just-in-Time Training

In working with Community Partnerships and their state partners, Missouri’s Family Investment Trust found that “Just-in-Time Training” worked effectively. Just-in-Time Training aims to “time” or schedule the training for when members need the knowledge or skills to do specific work.

For example, when an LGP is due to develop a results-based budget, members need the training “just” before planning the budget. Having a training session three months beforehand will have limited value, because members will not soon use the information.

Continued

## **Keep in Mind...**

Three principles guide Just-in-Time Training:

- (1) Learning should match the work—the right people with the right training at the right time.
- (2) Less is more—learn just enough to complete the task.
- (3) Learning occurs quickly—happening exactly when needed.

## **What's next?**

The next chapter, Moving Forward, contains assessment tools to help review what you have learned and to determine whether you want to reread any chapters or sections.



# Chapter 7

## Moving Forward

### Learning Goal

You will have access to tools that can help you assess learning and planning for continued development.



## Keep in Mind...

You can always return to portions of this Learning Guide and revisit topics to expand your knowledge.

## Next Steps

This Learning Guide is meant to be a continual learning tool as well as a reference. Use it to increase your knowledge and skills with forming and sustaining a successful partnership.

The next steps are up to you. At this point, you may:

- Assess your individual knowledge and skills.  
Go to the Self-Assessment in this chapter.
- Assess the knowledge and skills of your LGP.  
Go to the LGP Assessment in this chapter.

**Activities, Tools, Resources, and Contacts** are located in the Appendices.

## Self-Assessment

Assess your knowledge and skills. Respond to each question with “Yes,” “Somewhat,” or “No.” For questions marked “Somewhat” or “No,” plan for improvement. You may want to refer back to pertinent chapters, seek additional information from the list of resources in the Appendices, and/or work through activities you might have skipped.

Are you able to...	Y	SW	N	Page References	Ideas for Next Steps
<b>Chapter 1: Members of a Local Governance Partnership</b>					
Recognize potential members?				Pages 17-18	
Identify factors critical to defining membership?				Pages 19-22	
Identify important attributes for LGP members?				Pages 23-24	
Identify effective ways of recruiting and involving community members?				Pages 25-29	
<b>Chapter 2: Working Relationships</b>					
Identify characteristics that make working relationships among LGP members unique?				Pages 33-36	
Identify challenges to effectively working together?				Pages 37-38	

**KEY:** Y = Yes, SW = Somewhat, N = No

### Self-Assessment (Continued)

Are you able to...	Y	SW	N	Page Reference s	Ideas for Next Steps
<b>Chapter 3: Individual Member Skills</b>					
Describe the characteristics and steps for listening appreciatively?				Pages 41-43	
Demonstrate listening appreciatively?					
Describe key elements and ways to build trust?				Pages 44-45	
Demonstrate behaviors that build trust?					
Identify ways to show respect?				Pages 46-48	
Demonstrate behaviors that show respect to others?					
<b>Chapter 4: Group Process Skills</b>					
Describe characteristics of collaborative leaders?				Page 51	
Identify ways to develop collaborative leadership?				Pages 52-53	
Describe decisions for effective meetings?				Pages 54-59	

**KEY:** Y = Yes, SW = Somewhat, N = No

### Self-Assessment (Continued)

Are you able to...	Y	SW	N	Page Reference s	Ideas for Next Steps
<b>Chapter 4: Group Process Skills (Continued)</b>					
Describe the importance and characteristics of consensus decisionmaking?				Pages 60-61	
Identify steps for consensus decisionmaking?				Page 62	
Describe interest-based negotiation?				Pages 63-64	
Identify steps for interest-based negotiation?				Page 65	
<b>Chapter 5: Forming a Partnership</b>					
Recognize state requirements for establishing an LGP?				Pages 69-70	
Identify tasks for forming an LGP?				Page 71	
Describe characteristics, examples, and the importance of vision, mission, operating principles, bylaws, operating structure?				Pages 72-88	
Identify members' roles and responsibilities for these tasks?				Page 89	

**KEY:** Y = Yes, SW = Somewhat, N = No



### Self-Assessment (Continued)

Are you able to...	Y	SW	N	Page Reference s	Ideas for Next Steps
<b>Chapter 6: Sustaining and Sharpening Leadership</b>					
Recognize core competencies for an orientation program?				Pages 93-94	
Identify characteristics and steps for successful orientation programs?				Pages 94-95	
Identify ways to sustain commitment over time?				Page 96	
Identify ways to assess an LGP's performance?				Pages 97-98	
Identify ways to build the capacity of LGP members?				Pages 99-101	

KEY: Y = Yes, SW = Somewhat, N = No

## Assessment of a Local Governance Partnership

Assess the knowledge and skills of your LGP. Discuss each question and respond in the “Yes,” “Somewhat,” or “No” column as it applies to your LGP as a whole.

Is your LGP able to...	Y	SW	N	Page References
Recognize characteristics and attributes of potential members?				Chapter 1 Pages 15-18; 24
Identify factors critical to defining membership?				Chapter 1 Pages 19-22
Effectively recruit and involve community members?				Chapter 1 Pages 25-29
Identify challenges to working together effectively and generate ideas for addressing these challenges?				Chapter 2 Pages 33-38
Demonstrate collaborative leadership?				Chapter 4 Pages 51-53
Conduct effective meetings?				Chapter 4 Pages 54-59
Use consensus decisionmaking?				Chapter 4 Pages 60-62
Use interest-based negotiation?				Chapter 4 Pages 63-65
Recognize state requirements for establishing an LGP?				Chapter 5 Pages 69-70
Identify tasks for forming an LGP?				Chapter 5 Page 71

**KEY:** Y = Yes, SW = Somewhat, N = No

### Local Governance Partnership Assessment (Continued)

Is your LGP able to...	Y	SW	N	Page References
Create a community vision?				Chapter 5 Pages 72-74
Develop the LGP's mission?				Chapter 5 Pages 75-76
Develop operating or guiding principles?				Chapter 5 Pages 877-81
Make decisions about bylaws?				Chapter 5 Pages 82-85
Develop an operational structure?				Chapter 5 Pages 86-88
Identify the roles and responsibilities of members in forming an LGP?				Chapter 5 Page 89
Develop an orientation program that reflects core competencies and characteristics of successful programs?				Chapter 6 Pages 93-95
Plan ongoing ways to sustain commitment over time?				Chapter 6 Page 96
Assess the LGP's performance?				Chapter 6 Pages 97-98
Develop and incorporate strategies for building capacity in LGP members?				Chapter 6 Pages 99-101

**KEY:** Y = Yes, SW = Somewhat, N = No



# Appendices

**Glossary**

**Activities**

**Tools**

**Resources**

**Contacts**



## Local Governance Terms

# Glossary

**Local Governance**—A decisionmaking process whereby the community takes responsibility for developing and implementing strategies to improve results for children, families, and communities.

**Local Governance Partnership (LGP)**—A decisionmaking partnership between the state, private sector, local government, community and neighborhood leaders, and residents to carry out the process of local governance.

**Results or outcomes**—Conditions of well-being for children, families, and communities to be achieved through services or strategies. Although these terms are interchangeable, the Learning Guides use “results.”

**Indicators or benchmarks**—Measures for which information is available to help quantify progress toward achieving a result.

**Formal resources**—Services and supports that traditionally serve children, families, and communities, such as public agencies.

**Informal supports**—Nontraditional resources and supports, such as businesses, the faith community, civic organizations, citizen groups, and the natural helping system. These supports are not usually provided by government agencies and are not part of any formal service system.

**In-kind resources**—Donated goods, services, or space that support services and activities, but not in cash, typically include space for meetings, use of office equipment, lending staff, or employees volunteering during work hours. Sometimes called informal resources.

**Natural helping system**—An informal network of extended family, friends, neighbors, and community leaders.

**Resources**—Funding, staff, leadership, information, physical space, and equipment that can be used to support the work of an LGP.

**Stakeholders**—Those who have a vested interest or “stake” in improving results, which may include parents, neighborhood residents, local businesses, elected officials, local and state agencies, and private-sector organizations.

## Terms Presented in Learning Guide 2

**Bylaws**—Standards for LGP practices and procedures, e.g., membership and/or voting requirements. Bylaws are often required for LGPs with legal standing.

**Community**—An identified geographic area that may be one or more neighborhoods or an entire city or region.

**Consensus decisionmaking**—A process of finding a solution that all members can support, even if some members are not in full agreement.

**Data**—Information, especially that organized for analysis or used as a basis for decisions.

**Interest-based negotiation**—An approach to developing agreements that focuses on mutual interests and options.

**Mission**—A statement of purpose describing what an LGP does and how it contributes to achieving the community’s vision.

**Neighborhoods**—Subcomponents of a community. In some states, particularly in rural areas, the term “localities” is used.

**Operating principles**—Guidelines, consistent with principles for local governance, underlying the LGP’s day-to-day work.

**Operational structure**—The various parts of an LGP, e.g., committees/workgroups and how they relate to one another.

**Promising practices**—Programs and activities that have demonstrated effectiveness in producing results.

**Trust**—Having confidence in the integrity, ability, character, or truth of an individual.

**Vision**—A dream about the future. Describes what the community hopes for its children and families.

# Activities

## Chapter 1: Members of a Local Governance Partnership

## Learn by Discussing

### LGP Membership Profile

Recognize characteristics of current LGP members and identify “holes” to ensure that membership is diverse and representative of the community.

---

Is your current LGP membership inclusive and diverse? Does it “look like” the community? Use the worksheet on the following page to discuss characteristics of your community and compare this with your current membership. Completing the worksheet will help you identify “holes” or gaps in the LGP’s membership.

---

### Materials

Copies of the worksheet

### Option

Use John Kretzman and John McKnight’s Asset Mapping categories to describe your community. Refer to Resources in the Appendices.

1. Review column one, Description of the Community. Add, delete, or otherwise edit this list so that it accurately portrays your community.
2. Use column two, Adequately Represented in Current LGP Membership, to record the extent to which each aspect of the community listed in column one is represented. Use your own recording system. Some may want to simply write “yes;” others may want to write notations about the level of representation.
3. Use column three, “Holes” or Gaps in Membership, to highlight aspects of the community that are *not* adequately represented.

# LGP Membership Profile

## Discussion Worksheet

(1) Description of the Community	(2) Adequately Represented in Current LGP Membership?	(3) "Holes" or Gaps in Membership
Government: State partners Locally elected officials		
Businesses: Large chain establishments Small or locally owned establishments Chamber of Commerce		
Education: Post-Secondary—technical, college, etc. Junior and senior high school Pre-school and elementary Arts, music, sports Administration, school board Teachers, paraprofessionals		
Services: Social services Health, including public and mental health Childcare Transportation Parks and recreation Administration Direct-service providers		
Informal Supports: Faith community Civic organizations Citizen groups Natural helping system		
Community Members and Residents: Seniors Family members Young adults, teens Consider: race, gender, ethnicity, abilities/disabilities, economic status, work experiences, life experiences, and those who have experienced services and supports first-hand.		

**Chapter 1:  
Members of a  
Local  
Governance  
Partnership**

## **Learn by Doing**

### **Getting the Right Mix**

Assess the LGP's composition and determine whether it is the "right mix" for carrying out the work.

---

Is your LGP's membership balanced? Is it the right composition to ensure a wide range of perspectives on issues? This activity provides a worksheet to guide discussions about inclusiveness, representation, and requirements.

---

Using the worksheet as a guide, discuss the composition of your LGP.

### **Materials**

Copies of the worksheet

☞☞ Does the membership truly represent the community?

☞☞ Are key organizations and agencies represented and do representatives from these organizations understand whom they are representing?

☞☞ Do any requirements set forth by the body sanctioning the LGP's work or by the LGP's bylaws need to be followed?

Once you have a clear picture of the composition of current membership, discuss ways in which the membership could be better balanced.

# A Balanced Membership

## Discussion Worksheet

Do we have a balanced membership?				How can we get a more balanced membership?
<b>Inclusiveness: Does our membership represent...</b>				
Considerations	Y	N	DK	Plans and Next Steps
Where residents live and work?				
Various racial, ethnic, and economic backgrounds?				
A range of ages, a mix of genders?				
Different work and life experiences?				
A range of values and beliefs?				
Passion about issues?				
<b>Representation: Does our membership include representation from ... (and are members representing their agencies or themselves)?</b>				
Considerations	Y	N	DK	Plans and Next Steps
State government?				
Local government?				
Business?				
Non-profit organizations?				
Education?				
Service providers?				
Mental and public health?				
Faith community?				
Civic organizations?				
<b>State or Local Government Requirements: Are there requirements that we must meet, such as...</b>				
Considerations	Y	N	DK	Plans and Next Steps
Percentage of members from state or local government?				
Number of appointed members?				
Specific agency representation?				
Specifics in the bylaws?				



Other?				
--------	--	--	--	--

**Chapter 1:  
Members of a  
Local  
Governance  
Partnership**

## **Learn by Doing**

### **Developing a Recruitment Plan**

Identify effective ways of recruiting and engaging new members and develop a recruitment plan.

---

How are you currently recruiting and engaging new members? Are there areas in which the LGP could be more effective? This activity provides two worksheets to help guide discussions about recruitment.

---

### **Materials**

Copies of worksheets  
Easel chart pad, markers

### **Part 1: Recruitment Worksheet**

1. Discuss how you were recruited. How did you become interested in the LGP? What motivated you to join? What recruitment practices have you heard were successful in other LGPs? What did you like best about the recruitment process?
2. Discuss community outreach practices. What community outreach practices have you heard to be successful in other LGPs? Ask community members what would work, i.e.; *“If you had limited time, in what ways could you contribute to the work of the LGP?”*
3. Add the information and ideas from these discussions to the lists on the Recruitment Worksheet on page 121.
4. Discuss the list of ideas. Would they work for your LGP and your unique situation?

## Materials

Information about gaps in membership or recruitment goals. Refer to the previous activities, LGP Membership Profile and Getting the Right Mix.

## Part 2: Recruitment Plan

Use the worksheet, Recruitment Plan, on page 122 to discuss, plan, and assess the effectiveness of recruiting and community outreach strategies.

- ✍✍ List gaps in membership or recruitment and outreach goals across the top of the worksheet.
  
- ✍✍ Referring to the ideas discussed in the first part of this activity, select and list the strategies that have the best potential for being effective for your LGP.
  
- ✍✍ After a period of time, e.g., at the next LGP meeting, assess how well the recruitment plan is working. Plan for adjustments, as needed.



# Recruitment Plan

## Discussion and Planning Worksheet

Gaps in Membership or Recruitment and Outreach Goals			
Recruitment Plan	Did it Work ?		Adjustments Needed
	Y	N	
Strategies or ways to recruit new members:			
Strategies or ways to engage potential new members:			
Strategies for community outreach:			

**Chapter 2:  
Working  
Relationships**

# Learn by Discussing

## Working Together Effectively

Identify characteristics that make working relationships among LGP members unique. List challenges to these relationships. Generate ideas for meeting these challenges.

---

What characteristics describe working relationships among LGP members? What is your experience with these characteristics? Are you comfortable with them or are they a challenge to the way that you are used to working? This discussion activity assists LGP members in discovering the experiences that each member brings to LGP working relationships, the potential challenges this might bring, and ways to address these challenges.

---

### Materials

Copies of the worksheet  
Easel chart pad, markers

### Option

A skilled facilitator could conduct this activity as a large group discussion, omitting the worksheet.

### Part 1: Reflection

Individually, think about a work or personal experience, e.g., your work experience as a business professional or as a service provider, your experience organizing the church fair or the neighborhood block party. Use the worksheet on page 125 to make notes about these experiences. Consider:

- ☞☞ Leadership
- ☞☞ Decisionmaking
- ☞☞ Accountability
- ☞☞ Approach to work
- ☞☞ Experiences with taking action and/or making changes
- ☞☞ Synergy among workers

## Part 2: Discussion

1. As a group, discuss each characteristic.

*✍✍* What are members' experiences with previous work or work apart from the LGP?

*✍✍* Because of their experiences, what strengths are members bringing to the current situation?

*✍✍* Because of their experiences, what “baggage” are members bringing to the work of the LGP?

2. Brainstorm ideas for addressing potential challenges.

3. Review Profiles in the Learning Guide and/or contact other LGPs for their experiences.

Refer to the section on Contacts in the Appendices for ways to contact partner states involved with this project.

# Working Relationships

## Discussion Worksheet

Questions	A Previous Work or Personal Experience: Your Notes	Current Situation with the LGP: Your Notes
Was/is power and leadership shared?		
How were/are decisions made?		
Who was/is accountable for the outcome of decisions?		
Who was/is accountable for the success of the work?		
Did/do you work collaboratively? If yes, in what ways?		
Were/are any of the defining characteristics of local governance present in your experience?		
In what ways did/you take or are you taking action?		
What were/are your experiences with making changes? Did they affect short- or long-term solutions or problems?		
Did/do you experience synergy among your colleagues? If yes, in what ways?		



**Chapter 3:  
Individual  
Member Skills**

## **Learn by Discussing**

### **Listening Appreciatively**

Assess and improve your listening skills.

---

How well do you listen? Has anyone ever said, “*Are you listening to me?*” In what ways can you improve your listening skills? This activity uses the steps from the chapter to help you practice listening. Keep in mind that improving your listening skills takes time, practice, and ongoing awareness.

---

#### **Materials**

Watch or timer  
Copies of the worksheet

1. Think about the way that you currently listen. Use the questions from the worksheet section, Getting Ready to Enhance Listening Skills, on page 128 to help you become aware as a starting point for building your listening skills.
2. Organize into pairs. You and your partner will take turns talking and listening.
3. Select one of the following topics and decide who will speak first.
  - ☞☞ What I find most difficult about working collaboratively
  - ☞☞ What I find most challenging about our partnership meetings
  - ☞☞ A day in my life with its ups and downs
  - ☞☞ My most unique travel experience
4. Engage in the listening exercise. One person speaks for about 5 minutes about the selected topic; the other person listens. Then switch roles. (Topics selected may be the same or different.)
5. Individually, if you were the “Listener,” complete the first two steps of the worksheet, Listening Appreciatively, page 128. You may want to discuss your self-assessment with your partner.

**Listening  
Appreciatively  
(Continued)**

6. Repeat the listening exercise with another topic, maintaining the same listening and speaking roles. Notice any changes in your listening behavior. Notice if you are curious about the speaker's assumptions, facts, or point of view. Ask inquiry questions.
7. Complete the last step of the worksheet with your partner. Discuss what you appreciated about the conversation. You may want to discuss with your partner ways in which you could improve your questioning.
8. Switch roles and repeat these steps.
9. Apply the three steps of listening appreciatively on a regular basis in your interactions with others.

# Listening Appreciatively

## Assessment and Discussion Worksheet

<b>Step 1: Become aware of how you currently listen.</b>		
Getting Ready to Enhance Listening Skills Think about...		
<p> <i>☞</i> How well do I currently listen?  <i>☞</i> Are there times that I do not listen?  <i>☞</i> Are there issues that cause me not to listen? Do I filter out information?  <i>☞</i> What conversations are currently <i>not</i> working?  <i>☞</i> What difference could my listening make in these conversations?  <i>☞</i> If I change the way I listen, who would notice? What would they notice?  <i>☞</i> In terms of listening, what has worked for me and what has not worked?         </p>		
<b>Self-assessment</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Was I listening or reacting?		
Was I listening or thinking what to say next?		
Was I paying attention or was my mind wandering?		
Was I listening with an open mind?		
Was I curious about what was being said?		
<b>Step 2: Recognize what to listen for.</b>		
<b>Self-assessment</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
Did I have assumptions about the topic?		
Did I make assumptions about the speaker's viewpoint?		
Did I have preconceived ideas about the topic?		
Did I jump to conclusions?		
<b>Step 3: Use effective questions to listen appreciatively.</b>		
<b>With your partner</b>	<b>YES</b>	<b>NO</b>
What inquiry questions did I use?		
Were my questions judgmental?		
Were my questions threatening?		
Did my questioning help me to understand the topic and/or point of view better?		

**Chapter 3:  
Individual  
Member Skills**

# Learn by Discussing

## Building Trust

Identify characteristics of trust and ways to build trust.

---

Why do you trust somebody? What behaviors and actions build trust? How can the LGP use these to build trust? This activity provides questions and a worksheet for notes to guide discussion among LGP members.

---

### Materials

Copies of the worksheet

1. Individually, respond to the following questions. You may want to use the worksheet on the next page to take notes.
  - ✍✍* Think about a person whom you trust. What characteristics make this person trustworthy? Why do you trust him or her? Think about a situation that built trust. What elements helped to build that trust?
  - ✍✍* Think about yourself. Would you consider yourself trustworthy? What characteristics do you possess that let others trust you?
  - ✍✍* How could you build trust with someone whom you just met?
2. Think about your answers up to this point. Apply what you realized about your personal experience to the work of the LGP. What are some ways that the LGP, as a group, can build trust and credibility with partners and stakeholders?
3. Discuss your responses with other LGP members. Notice areas in which the LGP could expand how it builds trust. Discuss specific plans for doing this.

# Building Trust

## Discussion Worksheet

Questions	Responses: Your Notes
<p>What characteristics make a person you know trustworthy?</p> <p>In a situation that built trust, what elements helped to build that trust?</p>	
<p>Would you consider yourself trustworthy? What characteristics do you possess that cause others to trust you?</p>	
<p>How could you build trust with someone whom you just met?</p>	
<p>What are some ways that the LGP can build trust and credibility with its partners and stakeholders?</p>	



**Chapter 3:  
Individual  
Member Skills**

## **Learn by Discussing**

### **Showing Respect**

Identify a variety of ways that one can show respect to others.

---

What does respect “look like?” How can the LGP infuse respect in all that it does? This activity provides questions that can guide discussions about ways to build respect.

---

#### **Materials**

Easel chart pad, markers

#### **Option**

Skip small group discussion. Discuss examples of respect as a large group.

Organize into pairs. With your partner, discuss examples of respect. Create a list.

As a group, combine everyone’s list of examples. The comprehensive list should portray respect as seen through the eyes of LGP members.

Discuss ways that the LGP can expand how it exhibits respect in the following areas:

☞☞ Meetings

☞☞ Communications

☞☞ Relationships with state and local government

☞☞ Community outreach

☞☞ Partnership agreements

**Chapter 4:  
Group Process  
Skills**

## **Learn by Discussing**

### **Collaborative Leadership**

Describe characteristics of collaborative leaders and generate ideas for developing collaborative leadership among LGP members.

---

How would you describe a collaborative leader? How is this leadership different from traditional leadership? What ways can an LGP help develop collaborative leadership among its members? This discussion activity will help LGP members exchange ideas and reach a common understanding about collaborative leadership.

---

#### **Materials**

Note cards, pens  
Easel chart pad, markers

1. Individually, write three to five statements that in your opinion describe a collaborative leader.
2. Circulate among other participants and share your statements.
3. As a group, discuss the responses. Were most in agreement about characteristics of collaborative leaders? Were you introduced to new ideas?
4. Compare collaborative leadership with traditional leadership. You may want to list responses on an easel chart pad.
5. Discuss the leadership qualities that are important for your LGP.
6. Discuss ways to develop collaborative leadership. Make plans to implement these ideas.



**Chapter 4:  
Group Process  
Skills**

## **Learn by Discussing**

### **Effective Meetings**

Make decisions about effective meetings.

---

Are LGP meetings consistent with characteristics of local governance and community decisionmaking? In what ways are the meetings successful and in what ways could they be improved?

---

#### **Materials**

(Optional)  
Easel chart pad, markers

1. Review the characteristics of local governance.  
(You may want to have them posted on an easel chart pad.)
2. Individually, think about how your LGP currently conducts meetings. Does it reflect characteristics of local governance? Use the worksheet on the following page for your notes.
3. As a group, discuss your responses. In what ways do you agree? In what ways do you disagree? Use the list of local governance characteristics to guide your discussion.
4. Brainstorm ways to make your meetings more effective. You may want to reread the section about conducting effective meetings for ideas.
5. Plan to implement improvements. Reassess your LGP meetings in six months.

# Effective Meetings

## Discussion Worksheet

<b>Meeting Decisions</b>	<b>What is our current way of doing things?</b>  <b>Does it fully reflect characteristics of local governance?</b>	<b>How could we improve?</b>
Meeting Format or Approach		
Role Assignments		
Logistics		
Ground Rules		
Follow-Through		

## **Learn by Discussing**

### **Consensus Decisionmaking**

Identify characteristics and steps for consensus decisionmaking.

---

Is your LGP experienced with consensus decisionmaking? If not, you may want to try these exercises. Some LGPs may want to skip the practice exercise and instead become comfortable and skilled at the process simply by using it with actual LGP issues.

---

## Materials

Copies of the worksheet  
If taking notes,  
participants  
will need a worksheet for  
each practice proposal.

1. Depending on the number of participants, organize into groups of two to four participants.
2. Develop a practice proposal with a clearly stated decision related to any of the following areas:
  - ☞☞ Membership
  - ☞☞ Recruitment practices
  - ☞☞ Community outreach
  - ☞☞ Communication practices
  - ☞☞ Data collection
3. Bring each practice proposal, in turn, before the group. Select a facilitator to lead the group through the following steps:
  - ☞☞ Ask for clarifying questions.
  - ☞☞ Call for consensus. If consensus exists, the proposal passes.
  - ☞☞ If there is no consensus, ask for the existing concerns to be stated in terms of the mission statement, i.e., *This proposal conflicts with our mission statement by ....* Ask about ways that the proposal supports the mission statement, i.e., *I think this proposal supports our mission statement by....* Select a participant to list the pros and cons.
  - ☞☞ Ask those participants who have concerns what it would take to resolve them.
  - ☞☞ Consider a revised or new proposal.
  - ☞☞ Call for consensus (or concerns). If concern persists, discuss closing options.

# Consensus Decisionmaking

PRACTICE WORKSHEET	Your Notes
<b>Develop a Practice Proposal</b>	
Situation: Who, What, Where, When, Why, How	
Proposed Decision about the Situation	
<b>Practice Consensus Decisionmaking</b>	
Clarifying questions?	
Consensus? Do you agree with the proposal?	
Do you disagree with the proposal? In what ways? How is the proposal in conflict with the LGP's mission?	
If you have concerns, what would it take to resolve these concerns?	
Revised or new proposal. Consensus?	

--	--

**Chapter 4:  
Group Process  
Skills**

## **Learn by Doing**

### **Interest-based Negotiation**

Use interest-based negotiation for an LGP issue.

---

Is your LGP familiar with interest-based negotiation? If not, the following activity walks you through the steps. LGPs that regularly use this approach may still want to use the worksheet to guide their negotiations and discussions.

---

#### **Materials**

Copies of worksheets  
Easel chart pad, markers  
or large group discussion

#### **Option**

Practice using a simple and/or fictitious issue so that participants can focus on the process. A practice issue might be developing a proposal for a new public park. Each participant represents a party that is contributing a resource. Before beginning the practice activity, make clear what resource each party is bringing to the agreement.

1. Make sure all involved understand the definitions of “interests” and “positions.”
2. Identify interests. Provide time for parties to discuss what they care about and what they need. Use the worksheet on page 138 to record responses.
3. For a given issue, have each party discuss its interests underlying the issue and list them in the appropriate column on the worksheet. Each party presents its position for the issue and summarizes this in the appropriate column on the worksheet.
4. Review the Interests Worksheet. Determine whether the positions encompass everyone’s interests. Notice and discuss where conflict or disagreement arise.
5. Use the Agreement Worksheet on page 139 to guide the following discussions. For areas of conflict, create options that address mutual interests and/or propose alternatives to a negotiated agreement. Discuss what is needed for all parties to consider the agreement fair and agree on a course of action.

Refer to Learning Guide 4, Strategies to Achieve Results, and Learning Guide 6, Using Data to Ensure Accountability, for information about partnership agreements.

# Interest-based Negotiation

<b>INTERESTS WORKSHEET</b>			
<b>Party</b>	<b>Interests</b>	<b>Interests Underlying Issue</b>	<b>Position Concerning the Issue</b>



# Interest-based Negotiation

AGREEMENT WORKSHEET			
<b>Issue</b>			
	Will it work for us?		
Options	Y	N	Notes
<b>Alternatives to Negotiated Agreement</b>			
<b>Ways to Ensure Fairness</b>			

**Chapter 4:  
Group Process  
Skills**

## **Learn by Doing**

### **Mapping and Resolving Conflict**

Identify relationships involved in a conflict and use this information to generate ideas for “win-win” solutions.

---

Has conflict about a particular issue(s) ever been confusing or overwhelming? Sometimes charting or mapping out all the aspects of who is involved in the issue will help you better “see” the interests and positions.

---

#### **Materials**

Easel chart paper,  
markers

1. Write the issue for which the LGP is experiencing conflict in the center of a piece of chart paper.
2. Write the names of the individuals or organizations that are involved with this issue around the statement. Show individuals or organizations that are linked by placing them next to each other and/or with connecting lines.
3. Discuss individuals and organizations involved. Add annotated notes to the chart or “conflict map.” Consider:
  - ☞☞ What are their interests (what do they want or need)?
  - ☞☞ Is their orientation positive, negative, or neutral?
  - ☞☞ Is the issue involved with the conflict very important, mildly important, or not important to them?
4. Using the chart as a visual depiction of the conflict, brainstorm ways to resolve the conflict keeping diverse interests in mind. Consider:
  - ☞☞ Engaging additional parties so that the conflict is re-framed.
  - ☞☞ Proposing options and alternatives.

## Chapter 5: Forming a Partnership

# Learn by Doing

## Tasks, Roles, and Responsibilities

Assess the LGP's work in forming a partnership and plan to improve the process and/or the product.

---

Does your LGP have a mission statement, operating principles, bylaws, and an operational structure? Do members understand their roles and responsibilities involved with these tasks?

---

### Materials

Copies of worksheets

Use the discussion worksheets on the following pages to assess your LGP's work in forming a partnership and to plan ways to start, continue, or improve. For each worksheet, you may want to:

1. Individually check your responses to the discussion questions.
2. As a large group, discuss these responses to determine areas of consensus and areas of disagreement. Clarify responses and determine the next steps, or what more the LGP could do. Consider:

☞☞ Obtaining additional information for questions marked DK (Don't Know).

☞☞ Contacting other LGPs for examples of their work to discuss the process they used, their successes, and their lessons learned.

Refer to the section in the Appendices, Contacts.

☞☞ Locating and using other resources, e.g., books about the work, a skilled facilitator.

Refer to the section on Resources in the Appendices.

Refer to other Learning Guides in this series, Building Capacity for Local Decisionmaking.

## Mission Statement Worksheet

Discussion Question	Y	N	DK	What More Could We Do?
Do members have a common understanding for the work ahead?				
Does our LGP have a mission statement?				
<b>If no...</b>				
Do we have plans to develop one?				
Do members understand their roles and responsibilities for developing one?				
<b>If yes...</b>				
Is our mission statement results-focused?				
Does it show how the LGP will contribute to achieving the community's vision?				
Is it simple, clear, and compelling?				
Is it easy to remember and easy to communicate to others?				
Does it answer the question of why the LGP exists?				

Do members understand their roles and responsibilities in keeping the mission in the forefront of their work?				
---	--	--	--	--

## Operating Principles Worksheet

Discussion Question	Y	N	DK	What More Could We Do?
Do we have a common understanding about the beliefs that guide our work?				
Have we translated these beliefs into operating principles?				
<b>If no...</b>				
Do we have plans to do this?				
Do members understand their roles and responsibilities for this process?				
<b>If yes...</b>				
Do our operating principles reflect our beliefs and values?				
Do they translate the principles of local governance to our day-to-day operations?				
Are they clear and understood by all involved with the LGP's work?				

Do we use our operating principles to guide our decisionmaking and test our decisions?				
Do we have a process for periodically reviewing and updating the principles?				

## Bylaws Worksheet

Discussion Question	Y	N	DK	What More Could We Do?
Are bylaws or standards of operation needed to meet requirements for legal standing?				
Do we need to register our bylaws with the Secretary of State's office?				
<b>If yes...</b>				
Do we have bylaws or plans to develop them?				
<b>If no...</b>				
Do we think bylaws will be helpful to our LGP's work?				
<b>If yes...</b>				
Do we have a process for developing bylaws?				
Do members understand their roles and responsibilities in developing bylaws?				
<b>If we have bylaws...</b>				
Do our bylaws reflect principles of local governance?				
Are they clear and thorough?				
Do they focus on local accountability and on results?				

Do they describe how we will conduct our meetings?				
Do they describe membership, recruitment, and responsibilities of members and officers?				
Do they describe our committee structure and community outreach approaches?				
Do we consistently follow our bylaws?				
Is there a process for reviewing and updating them?				

## Operational Structure Worksheet

Discussion Question	Y	N	DK	What More Could We Do?
Have we thought through the process of carrying out our work, including relationships and decisions?				
Have we put together an operational structure that reflects our beliefs and unique LGP characteristics?				
<b>If no...</b>				
Do we have plans to do this that include consideration of diverse opinions and ideas?				
Do members understand their roles and responsibilities for this process?				



<b>If yes...</b>				
Does our structure support the community's vision, our mission, and our operating principles?				
Does our structure define relationships, processes for decisionmaking, communication, data collection, ways to incorporate a results-based framework, plans for capacity building, and LGP evaluation?				
Does our operational structure work or is it too complex?				

## Chapter 6: Sustaining and Sharpening Leadership

# Learn by Doing

## Ways to Sustain and Sharpen Members and LGP Performance

Assess how the LGP sustains and sharpens its members' performance and builds capacity for its members and itself in local decisionmaking.

---

Does your LGP have an orientation program? Is it effective or can it be improved? Does your LGP have plans to sustain commitment over time and ways to determine how well the LGP is doing? Is capacity building part of the LGP's ongoing work?

The following pages provide worksheets to guide discussions in these areas. Once LGP members have determined areas that need improvement, they can generate ideas for filling the gaps.

---

### Materials

Copies of worksheets

### Keep in Mind...

You may use these discussion worksheets, particularly the Assessing LGP Performance Worksheet, throughout the forming and sustaining stages of the LGP's development. As your LGP matures, the number of pertinent discussion questions will increase.

1. For each worksheet, answer the questions individually.
2. As a group, review and discuss responses.

*Discuss ways to obtain more information for questions marked DK (Don't Know).*

*Highlight areas needing attention. Generate ideas for solutions, making notes in the column, What More Can We Do? Consider contacting other LGPs to discuss their successes and lessons learned.*

Refer to the section on Contacts in the Appendices.

*Discuss and select those areas with the greatest need and those solutions with the best potential of working. (Save others for consideration at another time when areas are reassessed.)*

*Develop plans to implement ideas.*

# Orientation Programs

## Discussion Worksheet

What type of orientation program will work best for us?	Y	N	DK	What More Can We Do?
Group sessions, a mix of new and existing members				
One-on-one sessions				
Question-and-answer sessions				
Welcome events				
Welcome kits and/or handbooks				
Hands-on experiences with committees/workgroups				
Other				

Continued

# Orientation Programs

## Discussion Worksheet (Continued)

Do we have an orientation program? If we do...	Y	N	DK	What More Could We Do?
Do we have multiple and varied approaches that work with the intended audience?				
Do we know the needs and interests of new members and are we addressing them?				
Do we recognize the contributions that individual new members make to the group?				
Do we prepare new members for LGP meetings ahead of time?				
Do we have an ongoing way for new and existing members to communicate with each other?				
Do we have an effective way of inviting and welcoming new members?				
Do we have a way to "check in" with new members to answer questions?				
Are we making the best use of the skills that new members bring to the work?				

Are we planning or providing ways for new members to build skills?				
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# Sustaining Commitment

## Discussion Worksheet

Discussion Question	Y	N	DK	What More Can We Do?
Are we keeping results visible and staying focused on <i>why</i> we are doing this work?				
Are we continually building our common purpose and rallying around it?				
Does the group have “energy”—meetings are well attended, ideas are fresh and abundant, members are willing to take risks?				
Do members feel connected with each other and with the work?				
Do members feel pride and ownership in the work?				
Do members feel that they are making a contribution?				
Do members “see” change occurring?				
Do we celebrate our successes?				
Do we take time to think about our work and our accomplishments?				

Do we have ongoing opportunities to build leadership?				
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# Assessing LGP Performance

## Discussion Worksheet

Refer to all the Learning Guides in this Building Capacity for Local Decisionmaking series for detailed information related to each discussion question. (See Learning Guide [LG] references in parentheses.)

WHAT ARE WE DOING?				
Discussion Question	Y	N	DK	What More Can We Do?
Have we developed an organizational and operational structure that supports our unique situation? (LG1)				
Have we developed relationships with state and local government? (LG1)				
Have we developed relationships with community groups and neighborhoods? (LG1)				
Have we developed an LGP with a broad-based membership that “looks like” the community? (LG2)				
Do we have ongoing plans to build members’ individual and group process skills? (L2)				
Are we using an inclusive process to guide the development of a community vision and community agenda? (LG3)				
Have we developed results (outcomes) and indicators (benchmarks)? (LG3, LG6)				



Have we set up a data-collection system? (LG6)				
--	--	--	--	--

## Assessing LGP Performance (Continued)

WHAT ARE WE DOING? (Continued)				
Discussion Question	Y	N	DK	What More Can We Do?
Are we providing ongoing information and asking for ongoing feedback? (LG6)				
Are we researching and considering root causes to issues and problems? (LG4)				
Are we finding out about promising practices and activities that work? (LG4)				
Are we surveying existing programs, services, and activities? (LG4)				
Are we analyzing the gap between what exists and what is desired? (LG4)				
Are we developing a community strategy that meets the community's unique situation, values, and culture? (LG4)				
Are we incorporating informal supports into the community strategy? (LG4)				
Are we developing partnerships and agreements to implement strategies? (LG4, LG6)				
Are we considering a broad range of resources to implement the community strategy? (LG5)				
Are we developing a range of results-based financing strategies? (LG5)				
Are we moving toward a results-based budget? (LG5)				

Do we have a plan for making mid-course corrections to strategies, or to the LGP's work? (LG6)				
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## Assessing LGP Performance (Continued)

HOW WELL ARE WE DOING IT?				
Discussion Question	Y	N	DK	What More Can We Do?
Do we stay focused on results?				
Does our work contribute to realizing the community's vision?				
Is our work consistent with our mission and guiding principles?				
Have we the right geographic scope to affect results?				
Do we work in a climate of openness, trust, and respect for others?				
Do we provide a welcoming forum for diverse opinions?				
Do we share in leadership, accountability, and responsibility?				
Do we make decisions based on data and/or evidence?				

Do we work collaboratively with each other and with our partners?				
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## Assessing LGP Performance (Continued)

HOW WELL ARE WE DOING IT? (Continued)				
Discussion Question	Y	N	DK	What More Can We Do?
Do we understand and embrace the process of local governance?				
Are we taking action, not simply talking?				
Does a working synergy exist among our members?				
Are we working differently and creatively?				
Are we striving to have a common language among members, partners, and stakeholders?				
Are we building commitment among members, partners, and stakeholders?				
Are we keeping up with and addressing shifts in political priorities and leadership?				
Are we making the best use of our meetings?				

Are we making the best use of our time and energy?				
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## Assessing LGP Performance (Continued)

HOW DO WE COLLECT THIS INFORMATION?				
Considerations	Y	N	DK	Notes
Written surveys with LGP members				
Surveys with partners				
Surveys with stakeholders				
Full LGP group discussions				
Individual interviews with LGP members				
Individual interviews with partners				
Individual interviews with stakeholders				
A committee or workgroup designated to design and lead the assessment				
An outside consultant to design and/or lead the assessment				
Other				



# Building Capacity

## Discussion Worksheet

Discussion Question	Y	N	DK	What More Can We Do?
Do we consider capacity building an ongoing endeavor and, therefore, have ongoing strategies to address this?				
Do we provide a variety of approaches and options for members to build capacity?				
Do we mix and match learning opportunities, varying the time, place, media, and setting?				
Do we have a process for determining members' interests and skills that they want to develop or improve?				
Do we have a process for addressing these interests and providing skill-building opportunities?				
Are members and staff involved with decisions about capacity building, i.e., design and delivery methods?				
Are we connecting learning to the real work of our LGP?				
Do we have a process to learn from each other and from other LGPs?				



# Tools

This appendix contains tools that LGPs have found useful:

☞☞ Recruitment worksheet from Georgia's Family Connection

☞☞ Bylaws: Essential Sections or Articles

☞☞ Organizational structures, Vermont examples: Alliance for Building Community (ABC), People in Partnership, Rutland Regional Board for Family Services

# Recruitment Worksheet

**Part 1:** Use the following worksheet to discuss the current level of support for the Local Governance Partnership (LGP) and to plan for either securing or increasing support.

Type of Support	Level of Support			Ideas for Securing or Increasing Support
	L	M	H	
Political				
Non-political				
Media				
Family support				
Neighborhood support				

Key: L = low level, M = medium level, H = high level

## Recruitment Worksheet (Continued)

**Part 2:** Use the following worksheet to assess current resources that members bring to the work of the LGP, to determine resources that need to be recruited, and make plans to do this.

Already Involved	Resource(s) Contributed	Resources	Individuals to be Approached	Recruiter(s)
		Consumers who use public, human services		
		Parks and recreation departments		
		Local businesses		
		Community civic groups		
		Transportation department		
		Youth		
		Local media		
		Foundations		
		Municipal and county elected officials		
		Municipal and county managers		
		Community hospitals		
		Community planners		
		Leaders in the local school system		
		Local colleges and universities		
		Senior citizens		
		Religious groups		
		Job training and job placement		

		Other		

Use this key for Resource(s) Contributed: H = Human, F = Financial, C = Capital, space, equipment, staff, V = Volunteer, O = Other

# Bylaws: Essential Sections or Articles

Listed below are commonly used sections in bylaws.

- ✂✂ Name and Purpose
- ✂✂ Membership
- ✂✂ Leadership
- ✂✂ Committees
- ✂✂ Voting
- ✂✂ Meetings
- ✂✂ Conflict of interest
- ✂✂ Amendments
- ✂✂ Dissolution

**Name and Purpose** - Identifies the name and purpose or mission of the organization.

**Membership** - Describes the number, type of members (mandated/non-mandated/voting/non-voting), qualifications, criteria, and term of office responsibilities, appointment or election process, conditions for removal from the LGP, and procedures for filling a vacant term.

✂✂ **Number:** Some LGPs use an exact number of members, such as 15, while others set a minimum number of members.

✂✂ **Type:** Most LGPs have a mix of members from the public and private sector. In some states, the law requires an exact percentage of the public sector (51%) and the private sector (49%). Some states also require a percentage of parents or residents.

Some individuals serve as *ex officio* members. In such cases, the individual serves by virtue of his or her position. For example, the school superintendent may be an *ex officio* member or the lead staff person. Note: in using *ex officio* members, whether or not a substitute can be sent and whether the individual can vote is important to clarify.

✂✂ **Responsibilities:** Being clear about members' responsibilities is important for completing the bylaws and for individuals considering membership. This section encompasses the level and type of participation, and standards for behavior.

✂✂ **Qualifications:** This section describes specific qualifications for membership, such as being a resident of the county or representing a particular interest or constituency.

✂✂ **Term of office:** The length of office sets the period of time that a member serves, such as two or three years. At the outset, an LGP may establish staggered terms of office in order to have a rotating membership. When the term of office is three years, one-third may be elected for a one-year term of office, one-third for a two-year term, and one-third for a three-year term.

✍✍ **Election or appointment:** Most often, LGPs have self-perpetuating memberships, i.e., they elect their own membership, which is particularly true if the organization is non-profit. Some states, such as Maryland, require an appointment versus an election process for LGPs.

**Leadership** - Describes the number and type of officers, the term of office, their duties, succession, and conditions for removal. The term of office includes the length as well as the number of terms.

**Committees** - Describes the functional structure that supports the work of the LGP.

✍✍ **Type:** Generally, bylaws create two types of committees—standing and ad hoc committees.

✍✍ **Functions:** Typically, LGPs have an executive committee and specific committees related to the functions of the LGP and the operations of the organization, e.g., membership, finance, personnel, and/or communications.

✍✍ **Appointment or election:** Clarifies whether members and chairpersons are appointed (by whom) or elected to committees.

✍✍ **Responsibilities:** This section includes the specific charge to the committees, such as an annual plan, making reports, involving the community in the work, relationship to other committees.

**Voting** - Defines the standard for decisions by majority, super majority, or consensus.

**Meetings** - Describes when and how often meetings will be held. This section specifies under what conditions special meetings can be called. It usually describes that an annual meeting will be held and may or may not say when it will occur. This section also sets the number of individuals required for a quorum. The quorum is officially required to conduct business and vote.

**Conflict of Interest** - A conflict-of-interest statement is important for an LGP when involved with making decisions about resources. This statement needs to identify clearly when members must excuse themselves from influencing or voting on specific issues.

**Amendment** - Describes how the bylaws can be changed, specifically identifying the steps to do so; amount of notice to be given, and the type of vote necessary to pass changes, i.e., a majority, super majority, or consensus.

**Dissolution** - Addresses the steps to be taken should the LGP be dissolved and the manner in which to distribute the assets.



# ALLIANCE FOR BUILDING COMMUNITY ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

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## People Who Live/Work in Windham County

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### Membership - At-Large

Bi-Monthly General Membership Meetings  
250 community members participated in last year

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### Active ABC Members

72 active members: Attended 3 out of  
last 6 General Membership meetings or  
are active in ABC work group. May vote  
in Board elections  
and on broad strategic planning issues.

### ABC Board

13 elected members  
Manages administration of ABC  
Supervises Administrative Coordinator



**ABC Community Projects  
Fund Review Committee**

oversees all funded projects including  
Success By Six

**ABC Work Groups**

1. Early Childhood Council
2. Asset Development Initiative
3. Covering Kids
4. Infant Child Guidance (CUPS)
5. Youth Summit Team

December 2000



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Alliance for Building Community  
325 Partridge Road  
East Dummerston, VT 05346  
254 9469 phone/fax Email: [abcwahle@sover.net](mailto:abcwahle@sover.net)  
Web Site: <http://www.sover.net/~abcwahle/>

## **ABC WORK GROUP POLICY STATEMENT**

### **What is a Work Group?**

A work group is any group of people in the community who have requested and received Work group status from the ABC Board. Work Group status means that the group and the ABC Board have agreed to work together to address an identified community need and have agreed on a process for sharing information and support.

### **Purpose of a Work Group**

To implement strategies that improve indicators of community wellness.

### **What a Work Group Does**

1. assesses community needs
2. shares information about community needs and resources
3. coordinates community efforts and resources to address community needs
4. creates a structure to optimize communication between the group and the ABC Board
5. creates a structure that may facilitate access to some funding sources through ABC's support and 501 (c)3 status.

### **Responsibilities**

#### **ABC:**

- Identify one contact person as a liaison with the Work Group
- Help coordinate information and resources around an identified community need
- Help develop linkages between the Work Groups and related groups and coalitions
- Provide technical support and training when possible
- Advocate for the Work Group politically and with funding sources
- Provide fiscal oversight when ABC is the contractor

#### **Work Group:**

- Identify one contact person as a liaison with the ABC Board
- Observe any reporting requirements required by funding sources and ABC
- Track the results of their work
- Keep the ABC Board informed of their progress, problems and results

### **Intent of ABC**

It is the intent of the ABC Board to act as a catalyst and connector. Although the start-up of a Work Group will require a certain amount of effort, it is anticipated that Work Groups that remain on-going will become relatively autonomous over time, while maintaining a mutually-agreeable relationship with the ABC Board. Work Groups may also move toward integrating their work into that of community groups or other coalitions and dissolve as work groups.

### **Work Group Evolution**

Work groups are typically formed either by the ABC Board or from within the community to address an identified need. Work Groups may:

1. launch an on-going effort, or
2. address a particular project or effort, report their results and dissolve.

ABC is available to provide technical support and political advocacy, and to share information on funding to get a program started.

# People in Partnership

## Membership Voting Procedure

APPROVED BY THE MEMBERSHIP 10/14/94

1. Any business brought before the membership where formal action is requested:
  - a. shall be warned in the next meeting agenda for a vote, and
  - b. exceptions to the rule will include items previously discussed that are not contentious and need immediate approval for deadlines, etc.

2. Warned item is on the agenda for a vote.
  - a. Discussion on the merits of warned item.
  - b. Test readiness for the vote by asking if it meets the criteria of moving us toward our mission and strategic goals.

\*Mission elements include:

- shared responsibility
- coordinated supports, services and resources
- improved supports, services and resources
- reflects the needs of the community

\*Strategic goal areas:

- needs assessment
- agency integration
- community involvement

3. If yes to #2, then vote.
  - a. Members can vote by absentee ballot by calling or writing the coordinator prior to the meeting when the warned item is scheduled for a vote.
  - b. All members may exercise one vote.
  - c. Two thirds (66%) majority of those voting is required for approval.
4. Members have the opportunity for a minority dissent opinion to be noted in the minutes, or in writing by a member of the minority vote.

# MANAGEMENT STRUCTURE

The management structure is designed to promote the development of a well organized, responsive system of family-focused services for the people of Rutland County. The Rutland Regional Board for Family Services is a regional multi-disciplinary and family consortium that shares responsibility for the welfare of the people of Rutland County.

The Rutland Regional Board for Family Services has redesigned the management structure to focus efforts beyond Child and Family services to fulfill our original mission which includes all the people of Rutland County.

The RRBFS Community Board is comprised of a board range of people living in Rutland County, including individuals, organizations, agencies and businesses interested in improving outcomes. To date the mailing list boasts approximately 300 members with many participating on community assessments, data analysis, information sharing, program development and other Board activities. Anyone is welcome to be a Community Board member, receive mailings and participate in activities.

The RRBFS Community Board will continue to set the direction of the community planning process via quarterly meetings at which the Executive Board presents information, reports and data along with recommendations for the Community Board to review.

A fifteen member Executive Board comprised of consumers, citizens, State agency representatives and advocacy groups representative of specific populations will elect four executive officers and be responsible for the operation of the Board. Four Standing Committees are task-based working committees established by function to carry out the dictates of the Community Board. The chairs of the committees will serve on the Executive Board and Committee membership will be drawn from the community, Board affiliations and family membership group.

The responsibilities of the Executive Board are:

- ?? Assign tasks and delegate responsibility to committees.
- ?? Monitor Committee work.
- ?? Insure membership of at least three members to each Committee.
- ?? Insure family/consumer/citizen representation on each Committee.
- ?? Meet monthly.
- ?? Evaluate the structure and functioning of the Executive Board.
- ?? Periodically review and revise the operating policies and procedures of the Board.

## Resources

Ashkenas, Ron, et al., *Boundaryless Organization* (San Francisco, CA: Josey-Bass, 1995).

Covey, Stephen R., *Principle-Centered Leadership* (New York, NY: Simon & Schuster, 1990).

Fisher, Roger, and William Ury, *Getting to Yes* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1991).

Fisher, Roger, and Danny Ertel, *Getting Ready to Negotiate* (New York, NY: Penguin Books, 1995).

Folger, Joseph P., et al., *Working Through Conflict* (New York, NY: Harper Collins, 1993).

Heifetz, Ronald A., *Leadership without Easy Answers* (Cambridge, MA: Belknap Press of Harvard University Press, 1994).

*Technology of Participation—Group Facilitation Methods* (Phoenix, AZ: Institute of Cultural Affairs, 1994).

Jaffe, Dennis T., and Cynthia D. Scott, *Getting Your Organization to Change* (Menlo Park, CA: Crisp Publications, 1999).

Kurtz, Daniel L., *How to Manage Conflicts of Interest: A Guide for Nonprofit Boards* (Washington, DC: National Center for Nonprofit Boards, 1995).

Kretzman, John, and John McKnight, *Building Communities from the Inside Out* (Evanston, IL: Northwestern University, 1993).

Lahey, Berit, George Lahey, Rod Napier, and Janice Robinson, *Grassroots and Non-Profit Leadership* (Philadelphia, PA: New Society Publishers, 1995).

McLagan, Patricia and Christo Nel, *The Age of Participation* (San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler, 1995).

## Resources (Continued)

Melaville, Atelia and Martin J. Blank, *Together We Can: A Guide for Crafting a Profamily System of Education and Human Services* (Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education and U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1993).

Muldoon, Brian, *The Heart of Conflict* (New York, NY: G. P. Putnam and Sons, 1996).

Schorr, Lisbeth, *Common Purpose: Strengthening Families and Neighborhoods to Rebuild America* (New York, NY: Anchor Books, Doubleday, 1997).

Senge, Peter, et al., *The Fifth Discipline Fieldbook: Strategies and Tools for Building Learning Organizations* (New York, NY: Doubleday/Currency, 1994).

Senge, Peter, *The Dance of Change: The Challenges of Sustaining Momentum in Learning Organizations* (New York, NY: Doubleday/Currency, 1999).

Spencer, Laura J., *Winning Through Participation* (Dubuque, IA: Kendall Hunt Publishing, 1989).

Vella, Jane, *Listening to Listen, Learning to Teach: The Power of Dialogue in Educating Adults* (San Francisco, CA: Josey-Bass, 1994).

Wall, Bob, Robert Solum, and Mark R. Sobo, *The Visionary Leader* (Rocklin, CA: Prima Publishing, 1991).

Weatley, Margaret T., *Leadership and the New Science* (San Francisco, CA: Barrett-Koehler Publishers, 1994).

## Survey Instrument

Chrislip, David D. and Carl E. Larson, *Collaborative Leadership: How Citizens and Civic Leaders Can Make a Difference* (San Francisco, CA: Josey-Bass, 1994). Research for the survey instrument, *Working Together: A Profile of Collaboration*. For information: OMNI Institute 899 Logan Street, Suite. 600, Denver, CO 80203, 303-893-9422 ext. 23, 800-279-2070 ext. 23.



## Web Sites

Aspen Institute: <http://www.aspeninstitute.org/>

Board Source, Building Effective Non-Profit Boards, formally  
National Center for Non-Profit Boards: <http://www.boardsource.org/>

The Community Toolbox: <http://ctb.lsi.ukans.edu/>

Family Connection Partnership: <http://georgiafamilyconnection.org/>

Family Investment Trust: <http://www.mofit.org/>

Fundraising Consultation: <http://www.cpgfundraising.com/>

Promising Practices Network: <http://www.promisingpractices.net/>

Sherbrooke Consulting for tools:  
<http://www.sherbrookeconsulting.com/>

State of Vermont website with community profiles, outcome planning  
book, etc.: <http://www.ahs.state.vt.us/>

The Vermont Community Foundation, technical assistance to nonprofit  
and community organizations: <http://www.vermontcf.org/tap.html/>

Vermont Alliance of Nonprofit Organizations: <http://vanpo.org/>

### Online Newsletter

Non-Profit Quarterly E-Newsletter: <http://www.nonprofitquarterly.org/>



## Contacts

**The Center for the Study of Social Policy (CSSP)** is a private, nonprofit research, policy analysis, and technical assistance organization. CSSP focuses on human services reform, particularly the establishment of neighborhood-based governance and service delivery systems that are developed through partnerships between the public and private sectors and community residents.

Center for the Study of Social Policy  
1575 Eye Street NW, Suite 500, Washington, DC 20005  
Tel: (202) 371-1565, Fax: (202) 371-1472  
<http://www.cssp.org>

**The Child and Family Policy Center**, established in 1989 by former Iowa legislator Charles Bruner, links research and policy with issues that are vital to children and families and advocates for results-based policies to improve child well-being. The Center provides many Iowa communities with technical assistance to develop effective services and supports for children and families. On a national level, the Center operates the publication clearinghouse and technical assistance resource network of the National Center for Service Integration (NCSI). The Center also provides technical assistance and support to construct comprehensive, community and results-based systems of support for children and families.

Child and Family Policy Center  
218 Sixth Avenue, Suite 1021, Des Moines, IA 50309-4006  
Tel: (515) 280-9027, Fax: (515) 243-5941  
<http://www.cfpciowa.org>

**The Fiscal Policy Studies Institute (FPSI)**, established in 1996, provides assistance to states, counties, cities, and communities working to improve the well-being of children, families, and communities, using a results-based accountability and budgeting approach. The FPSI works with state and local, public and private-sector partners from over 30 states, 12 countries, and the United Nations.

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8 Charles Plaza, Suite 1407, Baltimore, MD 21201  
Tel: (410) 659-9745, Fax: (410) 659-9753  
<http://www.resultsaccountability.com>

**Midwest Community Leadership Resource Center** is a collaboration of Communities in Schools, the Midwest Center for Nonprofit Leadership at the University of Missouri—Kansas City, the Family Investment Trust, and the Local Investment Commission in Kansas City.

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**Promising Practices Network** is sponsored by the Foundation Consortium, the Colorado Foundation for Families and Children, the Missouri Family Investment Trust, and Family Connection Partnership. This website highlights information on programs and practices that are effective in helping children, families, and communities. The information included is organized around seven results areas associated with the well-being of children and families and two new ways of doing business: healthy children, children ready for school, children succeeding in school, children safe at home, strong families, self-sufficient families, strong communities and neighborhoods, new forms of governance, and results-based accountability.

<http://www.promisingpractices.net>

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