Community Work 101

What is a community?

A community is not only the place where we live but can also be "a feeling of fellowship with others, as a result of sharing common attitudes, interests, and goals." The goal of coalition work is to build and shift community systems to create change in a specific way. Specific to ROSCs, our goal is to change community systems to support individuals and families seeking or maintaining recovery.

Examining the community sectors and groups present in your community, and the stakeholders they contain, is a great place to identify who is/is not represented in your coalition. To have sustainable community change, it is important to have a representative group informed and engaged on the issue.

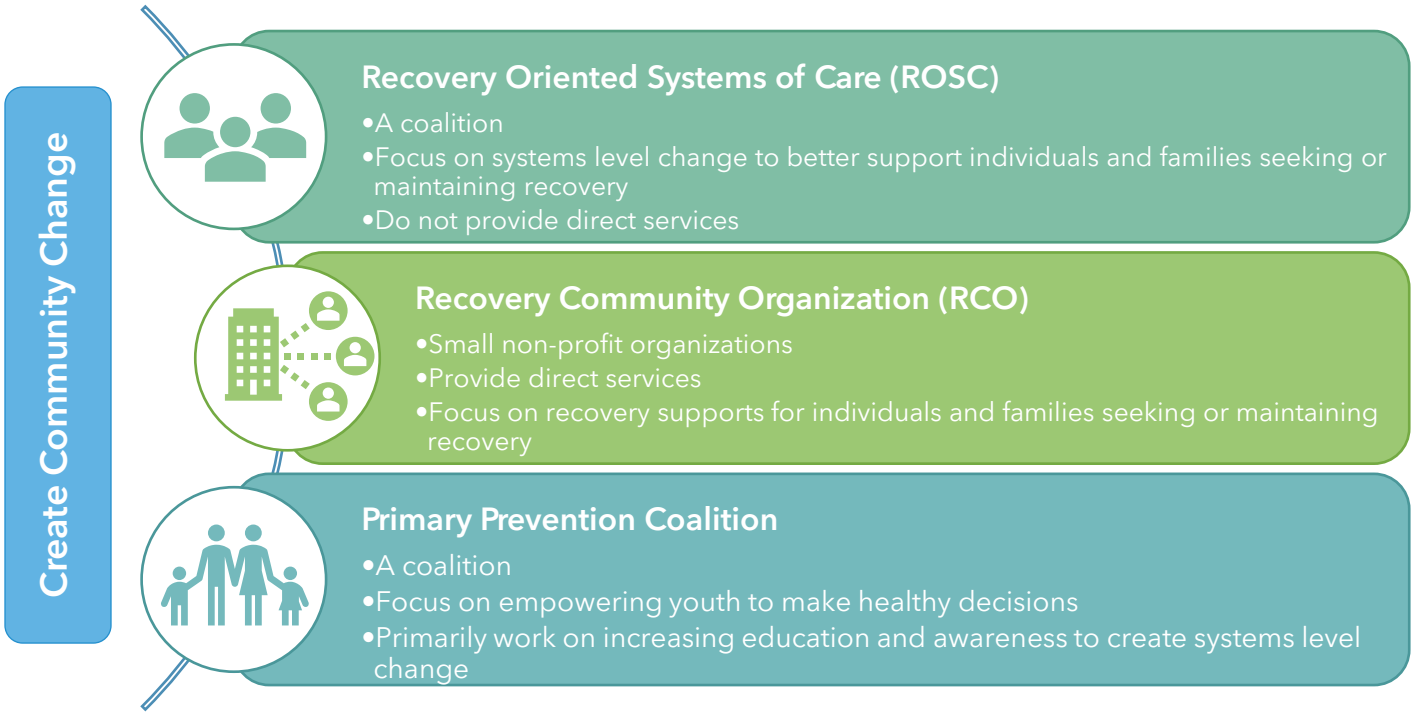
ROSC Community Sectors:		
Business	Civic Groups	Faith
Family Members with Living Expertise	Healthcare	Parents of Youth
Law Enforcement	Local Government	Media
Individuals with Living Expertise	Recovery Support Circles	Schools
Substance Use Organizations	Youth	Youth Serving Agencies

Types of Community Groups:	
Program Specific	The goals for these types of groups differ from group to group. Examples include: • Animal Groups (Lions Club, Elks Club, Moose Lodge, etc.) • Veteran's Groups (Veterans of Foreign Wars/VFW, American Legions, etc.) • Church Affiliated Groups (Knights of Columbus, Catholic Youth Organization, etc.) • Volunteer Groups (Rotary clubs, food banks, etc.)
Event Specific	Planning committees or groups for events like homecoming, parades, Pride events, block parties, holiday activities, etc.
Networking	Groups that gather to share updates on current work and projects. The goal for these types of groups is to make connections.
Coalitions	Coalitions seek to create community change related to a specific issue. Characteristics of coalitions include: • Representative of multiple community sectors • Should have a formal structure (i.e. a strategic plan, leadership team, etc.) • Includes Primary Prevention Coalitions and ROSCs

Community Change Happens at the Speed of Trust

Community change requires community participation and takes time. No one can do this work alone, and the work will not happen overnight. By engaging people in our efforts, and asking them to engage more people, we create a multiplier effect that helps lead to sustainable community change. Relationship building is at the core of community work, and relationships take time to build.

Community Change Agents



Note, for RCOs to be officially accredited, at least 51% of their board members must be people in recovery. Illinois has amended those requirements for RCOs funded through the state. However, they encourage RCOs to adhere to that guidance, but they do not require it as part of their eligibility for funding.

Qualifiers for an RCO in IL- an organization who is educating, advocating, and providing direct peer support services.

The Strategic Prevention Framework

The Strategic Prevention Framework also known by the acronym SPF- Is a planning model that is driven by data. Community groups and coalitions can use this model to better understand and more effectively address substance use and related mental health problems in their communities.



Assessment – Identify local needs based on data; also helps identify assets.

Capacity – Build resources and readiness to address needs.

Planning – Identify methods that will be effective to address needs.

Implementation – Deliver programs and practices as planned.

Evaluation – Examine the process and outcomes of implemented programs and practices.

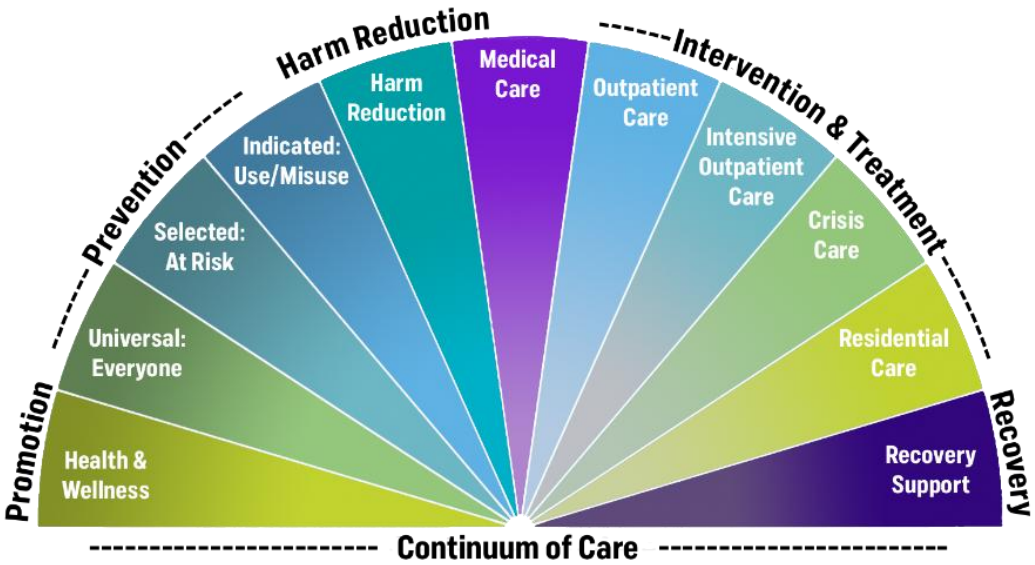
All steps of the SPF should incorporate:

Sustainability – Creating an adaptive and effective system that achieves and maintains long-term goals.

Cultural Competence – Ensuring that all steps, methods, programs, and processes effectively interact with people who have different values, lifestyles, and traditions based on their heritage and social relationships.

The Continuum of Care

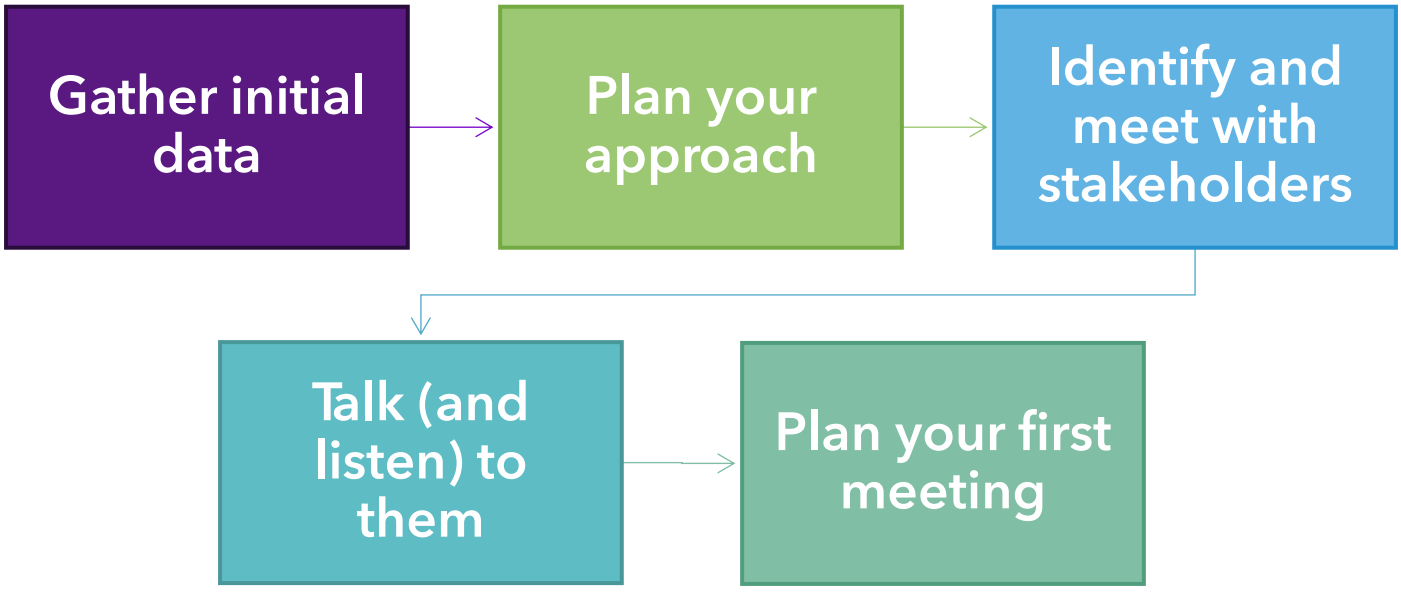
To better understand how to effectively engage community members in prevention and recovery, it is helpful to know where their services land in the substance use continuum of care.



Part of the Continuum	Description	Examples: *(not exhaustive)*
Promotion	Strategies designed to help people improve their overall emotional, mental, and physical well-being.	• Safe prescription disposal education • Primary medical care access
Prevention	Universal - Efforts that are offered to whole populations.	• Substance use prevention education programs that are delivered to an entire grade level
	Selective – Efforts that are offered to those who may be at risk of a substance use disorder.	• Education programs for youth whose parents use substances
	Indicated – Efforts offered to those in which use has been identified.	• Vaping cessation programs for students caught vaping at school
Risk Reduction	Supports provided to lessen the negative consequences of substance use.	• Naloxone • Fentanyl test strips • Safe syringe programs • Wound care
Intervention & Treatment	Services designed to identify individuals experiencing or exhibiting a substance use disorder.	• Outpatient treatment • Intensive outpatient treatment • Crisis care • Residential care
Recovery	Supports and services for individuals that assist with recovery maintenance.	• 12 step groups • Secular recovery support groups • ROSCs & RCOs

First Steps in Coalition Building

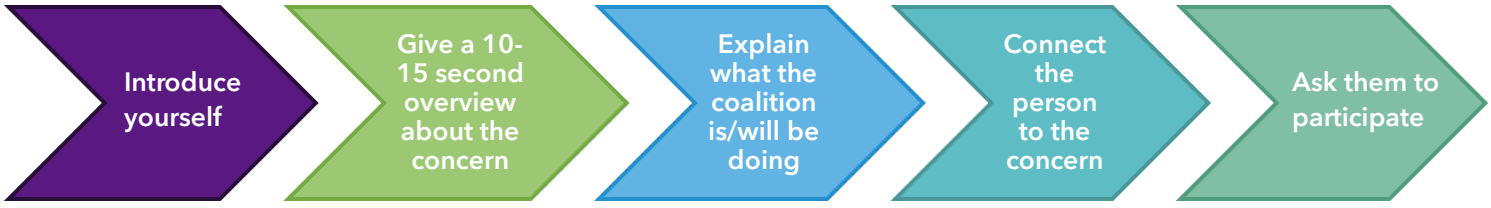
Steps to Build Coalition Engagement



The Elevator Pitch

The elevator pitch is a short, 30 second to 1-minute-long explanation of the coalition and their work that can be utilized while conducting outreach. It allows for a quick introduction that highlights the important points without taking up too much time. Practicing your elevator pitch over and over until you are comfortable delivering it to ensure its effectiveness.

Note, elevator pitches should be tailored to the individual that you are speaking to.



Center for Community Engagement at Chestnut Health Systems

STATEWIDE ROSC

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