

Hallmarks of Successful Collaborations

A long-term study conducted by the University of Nebraska Cooperative Extension (2002) reports some common themes that help describe why some collaborations thrive:

- Adequate outside funding allows for the hiring and support of a paid coordinator whose responsibility it is to keep the collaboration functioning.
- Project sustainability is a key part of the project from the very beginning.
- Communication among collaboration members is accomplished through e-mail, regular newsletters, in-person meetings, conference calls, annual directories of services.
- The collaboration conducts valid needs assessments to give the collaboration and its work credibility.
- New resources are made available for the community.
- Member agencies maximized access to services and minimized duplication of services.
- Member agencies have worked together long enough to effectively identify current needs in the community.
- The community has come together to support activities of the collaboration.
- Member agencies have received feedback that parents and families feel that they have benefited from the programs and services of the collaboration
- The collaboration has a common goal to serve the needs of families in the community.
- The members feel a responsibility for the commitment that they have made to the collaboration.
- As the collaboration experiences some early success of programs or activities, members gain the enthusiasm to work harder, thus creating a cycle of success.
- The collaboration has been recognized for its success.
- Youth membership is encouraged to maintain collaboration longevity.
- Members become skilled at securing funding.

Adapted from: Lodl, K., & Stevens, G. (2002, February). Coalition sustainability: Long-term successes & lessons learned. *Journal of Extension*, 40,1.