Action to Impact:
A Coalition-Building Roadmap

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This Roadmap relies on the significant expertise of practitioners, consultants, thought leaders and experts across the country who are engaged in collaborative communities of practice. We encourage anyone using specific resources included in this Roadmap to cite their work. Should you use or cite the information in this report, we ask that you use the following citation:
Welcome

How To Use The Roadmap

Acknowledgements
**Welcome to Action to Impact: A Coalition-Building Roadmap**

*Action to Impact: A Coalition-Building Roadmap* is designed by and for local, grassroots nonprofit organizations to help you decide whether building a coalition is the right collaborative strategy for you. Whether you are a *nonprofit* organization seeking to better understand your capacity to collaborate, or a *group* of organizations investigating the potential for better results by tackling a common challenge, or an *existing coalition* looking for advice and guidance to build momentum, identify new strategies to improve work and assess progress, *Action to Impact: A Coalition-Building Roadmap* is for you. It guides readers in implementing a specific type of collaboration – also known as the collective impact model – in which organizations, often cross-sector, come together as a coalition to more effectively solve complex community challenges.

The *Roadmap* provides concrete, actionable and reflective guidance on how to create a coalition structure that is realistic and effective, and how to work in coalition to achieve your common goals. It has information for coalitions at all stages of development – from assessing feasibility, to launching, to taking community action, to achieving impact. The Roadmap includes *how to* information, hand-selected articles and resources for a deep dive into the topics presented and the essential information you need to figure out what resources, expertise or even consultants you may need to position your coalition for success.

This *Coalition-Building Roadmap* combines current research and practice tools on coalition building based on lessons learned from a multi-year pilot project with the Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition (CMHWC), in Charlottesville, Virginia, as well as the authors’ combined experiences with coalitions over the last 20 years. The Roadmap is tailored to local coalitions, but the key principles are readily applicable to other communities.
HOW TO USE THE ROADMAP

Users will find this Roadmap helpful at any stage of coalition development and are encouraged to move between the READY, SET, GO and SIDE TRIPS sections as needed to build the strongest, most effective coalition.

**READY** This section guides you in assessing whether you have the basic requirements for an effective coalition. It details how to ensure a firm foundation by conducting several key assessments. It describes how to conduct needs assessments and details the purpose, scope, and types of needs assessments. *If you are trying to determine your organization’s readiness, whether a coalition is the right model and whether the environment is primed for the benefit of a coalition, the READY section is for you!*  

**SET** This section describes essential building blocks coalitions need for success. It details how to set a frame for creating a coalition vision, mission and goals. It guides you through planning for impact by addressing why it feels hard to measure and what approaches can be used to help. Finally, it will support you through how to harness a range of resources by focusing on governance, committing to systems leadership and planning for the funds needed to do the work. *If you are ready to form a coalition and are seeking guidance on how to establish the building blocks for success, the SET section is for you!*  

**GO** This section guides you in effectively managing a working coalition by tracking productivity and impact and engaging in data-driven strategic planning. It outlines how to: survey coalition health, develop effective committees, communicate effectively and sustain resources. *If you are ready and set and seeking guidance on how to move through the day-to-day processes of coalition work, the Go section is for you!*
SIDE TRIPS This section allows you to further explore effective collaboration. You can take a deeper dive into the Key Virtual Resources that were used in the development of the Coalition-Building Roadmap. This section also describes local coalitions already tackling this work, for your reference. Further, it provides a summary of all Lessons Learned from working with local coalitions. Finally, it provides a section on how to know when working with a consultant is the right move for your coalition. If you are looking for information on any of these issues, the SIDE TRIPS Section is for you!

THINGS TO LOOK OUT FOR...
While using the Action to Impact: A Coalition-Building Roadmap, there are several valuable things to look out for. These resources will be highlighted with the following icons:

Keep an eye out for Local Spotlights which describe how local coalitions have approached the work!

The Resources links will highlight essential articles, tools and templates that you can use right now!

Throughout the Roadmap, look out for Lessons Learned from the Center for Nonprofit Excellence, Partnerships for Strategic Impact and the Community Mental Health and Wellness Coalition project! A summary of all the Lessons Learned can be found in the SIDE TRIPS section!

The authors have highlighted some carefully curated online resources throughout the Roadmap. To access these resources, please use the online version of the Roadmap, available at www.thecne.org/engage/virtual-resources/cne-toolkits/.