DEVELOPING GUIDING PRINCIPLES

PURPOSES & BENEFITS

Establishing a collective, agreed upon set of group guiding principles or norms helps a group to determine how they will work together to successfully accomplish their community organizing efforts.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOL

Use this tool in conjunction with the "Guiding Principles Examples" tool, which can be found in the same section of the toolkit as this one.

The collaborative partners can review the example ideas outlined in the "Guiding Principles Examples" tool as a place to begin their collective conversation outlined on the following pages on what guiding principles they deem important for the collaborative group's success both internally and externally, as they collaborate with other stakeholders and the community. Once the important guiding principles have been identified and agreed upon, group members can also then consider how they will uphold and promote the guiding principles identified.

In addition, previous collaborative group discussions and decisions already made by the group members that are of relevance to and should be referenced in order to help to inform the development of guiding principles include the following tools *(See section 1A – Setting Your Collaborative Group Up for Success: Tools for Coming Together of the toolkit)*:
- "What I Have to Contribute to & How I Benefit from This Collaborative"
- "What Does It Mean for Us to Collaborate?"
- "Collaboration Benefits"

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Guiding principles identify how a group agrees to work:
- together internally
- with other stakeholders
- the larger community

Guiding principles also identify how collaborative group members will uphold and promote the identified and agreed upon guiding principles.

Guiding Principles Examples
See the "Guiding Principles Examples" tool that can be found in the same section of the toolkit as this tool for examples of common guiding principles of collaborative groups.

Guiding Principles
- Communicate what makes your collaborative group unique.
- Are a useful tool when considering prior action and assessing, "Are we staying true to our guiding principles?"
- Are often absent from strategic planning documents, as they inform <u>how</u> the group works together but not directly <u>what</u> they group's work consists of, which is the purpose of a strategic plan.
- May be included as an "addendum" to the collaborative group's vision and mission statements.

DEVELOPING GUIDING PRINCIPLES EXERCISE

Step 1:
As a full group, review:
- The example guiding principles in the companion tool document "Guiding Principles Examples"
- The group's previous work that will help to inform the development of guiding principles, including:
  - "What I Have to Contribute to & How I Benefit from This Collaborative"
  - "What Does It Mean for Us to Collaborate?"
  - "Collaboration Benefits"

Step 2:
Each group member take a few minutes working individually to provide answers to the questions at the top of the table below from their personal perspective. Be sure to separate the answers by the categories listed in the left-hand column of the table.

	Clarify your collaborative group's important guiding principles: What are the values, beliefs, and/or guiding principles that should guide our work together and we will promote? How are we going to work together?	Identify the practical impact(s): What are the things we can do related to upholding and promoting the guiding principles identified?
As a Core Collaborative Group		
As we Collaborate with Other Stakeholders		
As we Collaborate with the Community		

Step 3:

After writing your answers individually, call-out and discuss your guiding principles and the related practical impact(s) as a full group for each level: as a core group, as we collaborate with other stakeholders, and as we collaborate with the community. Have someone record the value-added (i.e., unduplicated) ideas on a flip chart.

Once all of the unduplicated ideas have been recorded, as a collaborative group decide which guiding principles and related practical impacts are important to the collaborative group's success. Have someone notate which guiding principles and related practical impacts the group has selected. Type up the results and distribute amongst collaborative group members for their reference and guidance as the collaborative group works together.