National Center for State and Tribal **Elder Justice Coalitions**

Elder Justice Coalitions: **A RESOURCE GUIDE** for Building and Sustaining Effective State and Tribal Elder Justice Coalitions

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Introduction

Message from National Center for State and Tribal Elder Justice Coalitions

In many ways the development of the National Center for State and Tribal Coalitions (National Center) has mirrored the process many state and tribal coalitions have followed or will follow to get launched, grow and become functional. In 2017, a group of five social workers from different parts of the nation, all involved in some capacity with state elder abuse and elder justice coalitions, presented at a national conference about their coalitions. Following the conference, recognizing the potential for state coalitions to dialogue, problem solve together, and share information about mutual issues related to elder justice matters, they decided to form an association called the National Network of State Elder Justice Coalitions. The group launched the Network in 2019 as a forum for state coalitions to meet (virtually) and to learn how they could better lend their voices to advocacy around elder justice in their states and on a national level.

From the start, the National Network advocated for federal support for the development and enhancement of state and tribal coalitions. In 2022, the U.S. Department of Justice issued a Request for Proposals (RFP) to establish a national center to disburse funds for new and existing coalitions and to act as resource for training and technical assistance to elder justice coalitions.

At the request of the National Network Steering Committee, Lifespan of Greater Rochester submitted a proposal to establish a National Center for State and Tribal Elder Justice Coalitions. Lifespan has been represented on the National

Network since the beginning and is home to the Upstate Elder Abuse Center and the New York State Coalition on Elder Abuse. The proposal was accepted and the National Center was launched in October 2022.

Many of the principles and processes outlined in this guide were applied in the development of the Center: collaboration, consensus building, attention to cultural competence and equity, engagement of specialists and professionals who could bring their passion and expertise to the support of coalitions throughout the nation, and building out an organizational structure which would best align with the mission of the Center, which is to "elevate respect, safety and well-being for all older persons by promoting excellence in state and tribal elder justice coalitions."

This guide was commissioned by the Center and developed by the Ohio Coalition for Adult Protective Services (OCAPS) and its expert subcontractor colleagues, Katie Block and Juanita Davis. We are grateful for to them for consulting with existing functional coalitions and researching best practices to assemble the most current thinking and practice experience to help groups and organizations plan, design, and operate the most effective and resilient coalitions in the elder justice field.

This guide is designed to be a resource for elder justice coalitions at any stage of development. The guide aims to support the efforts of any organization or group in the process of building, maintaining, or sustaining a state or tribal elder justice coalition. The guide is not so much a prescriptive manual but a source of ideas and best practices and a collection of resources for coalitions to adapt to their own purposes and organizational structures. Elder justice coalitions tend to vary extensively in their governance, staffing, financial sponsorship, and priorities which are highlighted in this guide. They all share a common aim, however, in their dedication to the protection of older adults from mistreatment and to the promotion of their dignity and well-being. They also all recognize that the achievement of elder justice can only be realized through a communal effort by multiple disciplines and community service systems.

The Center staff and partners hope that this Coalition Guide will serve as a valuable resource for state as well as tribal coalitions to mobilize a collaborative, interdisciplinary response to elder abuse and mistreatment and to other issues related to elder justice in their communities.

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Our Partners:

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MINNESOTA ELDER JUSTICE CENTER

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Chapter 1

Foundations

What is an Elder Justice Coalition?

Elder Justice Coalitions (EJCs) emerged in the 1980s to address the absence of federal initiatives that mitigate elder abuse effectively. The work of defining elder abuse, developing intervention and prevention strategies, and establishing policy fell to states, and while states rose to the challenge, this dynamic left a field disconnected from itself. Rife with siloed organizations working towards elder justice, professionals did not have a unified place to collaborate, troubleshoot, advocate for effective state and federal policies, and share best practices. With a clear need for collaboration and seeing successful collaborative responses in child welfare and domestic violence spaces, the field's response was the gradual development, on a regional basis, of multidisciplinary teams (MDTs) and EJCs.

EJCs serve as a mechanism for bringing organizations and individuals together, all of whom have a touch point on an older adult's life to best address harm or exploitation. Different from MDTs which often focus on case review and localized interventions, EJCs have a broader scope of purpose and activities, often addressing systems-level change, policy advocacy, public awareness, and other initiatives that help to establish a landscape in which elder abuse and elder justice issues can be addressed in meaningful ways.

Definition & Characteristics of an Elder Justice Coalition

The National Network of State Elder Justice Coalitions defines EJCs as established state or tribal elder justice organizations that pursue systemic and practice reforms through coordinated advocacy. Such entities may be called coalitions, networks, councils, commissions, centers, associations, partnerships, or task forces, with this common purpose: to mobilize collaborative interdisciplinary initiatives to improve the detection, prevention, and responses to elder abuse.

By design, EJCs are collaboratives with missions to address the unique and specific needs of a state or tribal community's older adults. Because elder abuse and elder justice laws vary from state to state, and the landscape of services often varies based on location. Priorities set by an EJC in Montana, for example, may look very different from priorities set for an EJC in Maine. While needs and approaches may vary from coalition to coalition, common priorities have emerged from existing coalitions that have shown over time to be pathways to successful outcomes.

Common EJC priorities include:

1. Provide public awareness through education and awareness campaigns.
2. Promote service coordination by connecting providers from different systems and creating opportunities for open dialogue and mutual planning.
3. Design and facilitate professional training and resource development.
4. Conduct needs and gaps analysis to identify areas for improvement for coordination, service delivery, or policy change.
5. Organize and implement advocacy campaigns for enhanced funding and legislation at the local, state, and federal levels.

Benefits of Establishing an Elder Justice Coalition

The complexity of elder justice requires interventions from multiple fields, organizations, and people. EJCs provide space for people to share ideas and resources and form a powerful group with expertise and numbers to influence policy and systems-level change.

Older adults experiencing harm and exploitation or those navigating the complexity of long-term care or healthcare often get lost in the cracks of complex and sometimes uncoordinated systems. Well-organized, generative, and

meaningfully collaborative EJCs can be antidotes to these system gaps and failures. EJCs have proven to be effective models for change, advocacy, and oversight, resulting in tangible impacts for older adults, their families, and the professionals doing the work.

Examples of successful EJC projects and initiatives:[2]

- Providing expert-level reports to state legislators and impacting legislative agendas.
- Advising attorneys general on elder justice issues.
- Helping to establish elder justice coordinating councils.
- Increasing the development and effectiveness of localized MDTs.
- Increasing access to victim services, support groups, and trauma-informed counseling.
- Connecting disjointed elder justice programs, including APS, law enforcement, and legal support across communities by advocating for state liaisons.
- Increasing funding for long-term care ombudsman programs.
- Implementing successful reform resulting in improved residential care facility oversight, new regulatory codes for assisted living, and improved consumer rights to contest involuntary discharges.
- Managing helplines and connecting older adults to resources.
- Providing professional and community education to bolster supports, prevention, and intervention initiatives.
- Providing expertise and unique perspectives to the national dialogues on elder justice, impacting state and federal legislation.

For professionals and organizations, participation in an EJC can result in:

- Improved capacity for organizations to meet their goals.
- Increased knowledge, knowledge sharing, and professional development opportunities.

- Well-rounded understanding of member and partner organizations.
- Improved capacity to understand and address systemic barriers for older adults.
- Easier pathways for thought partnership and creative problem-solving.
- Access to additional and diverse funding opportunities.
- Amplified power for advancing advocacy initiatives.
- Increased opportunity to be culturally responsive and specific.
- Improved ability to identify gaps between systems.
- Expansion of diversified professional networks and stronger network capital.
- Increased opportunities for innovations and transformative work.
- Greater capacity to influence service providers, funders, and policymakers.
- Participation in anti-ageism efforts on a systemic level.

With the growing number of EJCs, there are increased opportunities to advance the field of elder justice nationally. Coalitions can work with and support one another across state and tribal lines to share best practices, effective advocacy strategies, and collaboration frameworks, as well as help each other troubleshoot challenges as they arise and provide expert perspectives.

National Landscape of Elder Justice Coalitions

History and Trends:

Emerging research in the 1980s and 1990s, as well as disjointed responses to elder abuse experienced by professionals, inspired a shift from agencies going it alone to an attempt at collaboration. The initial coalitions of the '80s had broad

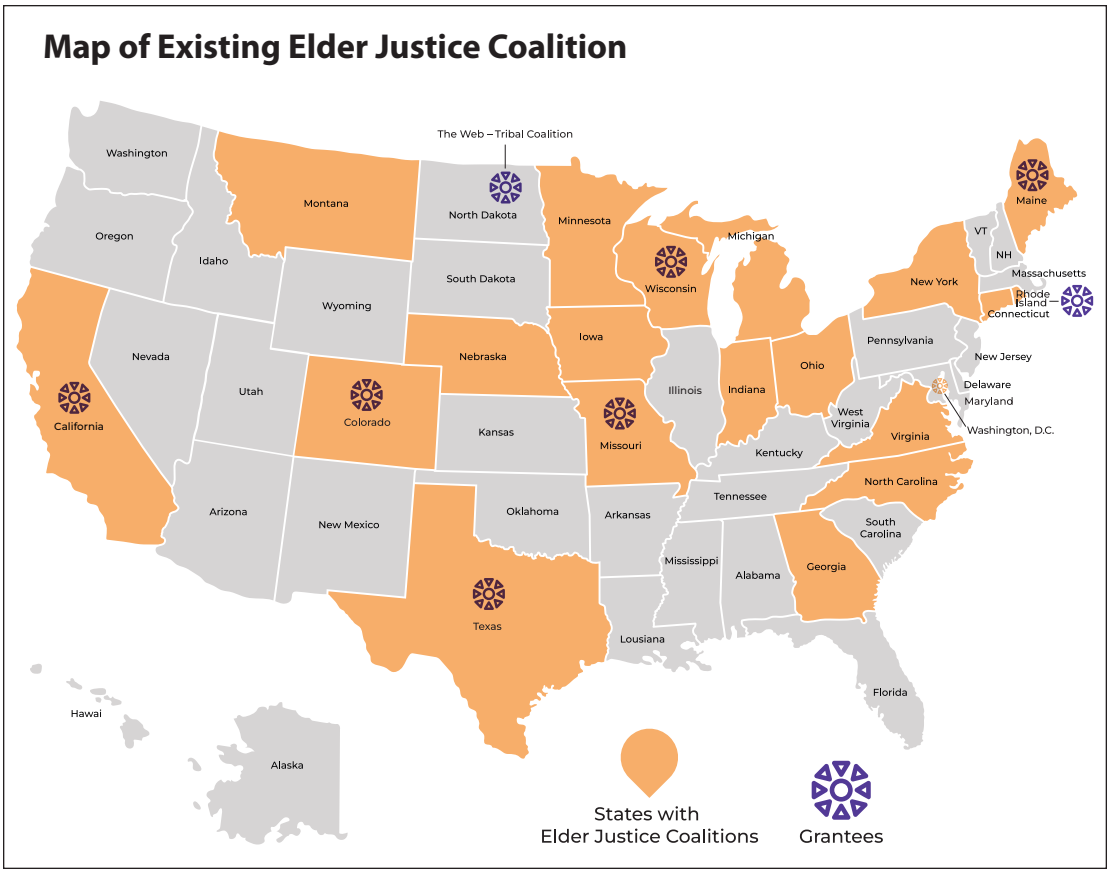
missions to bring non-profit, private, and government institutions together to establish best practices and recommendations for public policy, programs, research, and public education campaigns.

In time, the emergence and use of a public health lens showcased how the complexities of elder abuse were wrapped up with social determinants of health such as access to safe and affordable housing, healthy and affordable food, reliable healthcare, accessible transportation, effectively regulated long-term care, guardianship oversight, etc. While the shift to a more holistic public health view of the problem has been slow in elder abuse spaces, the movement towards collaboration allowed EJCs to be more expansive in their missions and move from the narrower conversation of elder abuse to more expansive advocacy conversations on elder justice.

In the early 2000s, there was renewed energy across states to develop new EJCs, many coming out of some triggering event that made it clear that an organized collaborative response was needed. In 2001, the National Policy Summit on Elder Abuse strongly recommended the establishment of state-level efforts to address elder abuse. Since then, nationally, over 20 and counting state and tribal coalitions are in operation, and there is federal encouragement and concentrated energy to support the development of coalitions in every state and tribe.

Other Multidisciplinary Collaborations

While EJCs are positioned to have a more universal, higher-level view of the issues, with work focused on systems change, advocacy, and community engagement, there are several other types of collaborations that may make sense for your area or may already exist that your coalition can partner with or learn from. Multidisciplinary Teams (MDTs), Coordinated Community Response Teams (CCRs), Domestic Violence and Sexual Assault Coalitions are just some examples of other collaborations that may exist in your area. Depending on the needs of your community



and the landscape of services available, there may be many other collaborations you can connect with as you build or embolden your elder justice coalition.

These may include:

- APS-Interdisciplinary (APS-I) Teams
- Elder Abuse Enhanced Multidisciplinary Teams (E-MDTs)
- Elder Abuse Fatality Review Teams
- Elder Abuse Forensic Center Teams
- Financial Abuse Specialist Teams (FAST), or Elder Financial Exploitation Teams
- Guardianship Teams
- Hoarding Teams
- Sexual Assault Response Teams (SART)
- State or Local Elder Justice Coordinating Councils
- Tribal Elder Protection Teams

Elder Abuse and Elder Justice Defined

While there is no universally accepted definition, elder abuse or elder mistreatment is defined by the CDC as an intentional act or failure to act that causes or creates a risk of harm to an adult over the age of 60.[3] You may also hear people refer to Abuse in Later Life, which defines elder abuse at the intersection of domestic violence and sexual assault by describing it as "the willful abuse, neglect, abandonment, or financial exploitation of an older adult who is age 50+ by someone in an on-going trust-based relationship (i.e., spouse, partner, family member, or caregiver).[4]

Types of abuse include physical, sexual, emotional, and psychological abuse, financial exploitation, neglect, self-neglect, abandonment, and spiritual abuse.[5] While there is consensus on the types of elder abuse, legal definitions of each type, as well as mandated responses to them, differ between individual states and native nations.

In the United States, 1 in 10 adults over the age of 60 will experience at least one form of abuse every year.[6] It's important to note that widely accepted prevalence studies on elder abuse are often limited, excluding people with dementia, cases of self-neglect, or other forms of mistreatment like spiritual abuse. Elder abuse is also extremely underreported with only 1 in 24 cases being reported to authorities.[7] However, experts estimate that at least 5 million older adults experience some form of abuse, neglect, or financial exploitation annually in the U.S., many of whom experience multiple types of abuse at once.[8] This type of poly-victimization often results in older adults needing support and healing services from multiple sources such as financial assistance, housing support, civil and/or criminal justice support, trauma-informed counseling, caregiver and family support, etc. When overlaying the complicated nature of elder abuse with the realities of systemic oppression, racism, homophobia, transphobia, xenophobia, ableism, and ageism, comprehensive and effective responses to elder abuse for people who are historically pushed to the margins become that much more

complex and inaccessible.[9] Inequitable system responses along with policies and processes that are ineffective, underfunded, and operate in vacuums reinforce the notion that collaborative systems change work is needed to break through the barriers older adults face either by interpersonal or systemic harms.

Different from elder abuse, *elder justice* can be described as work at the intersection of social justice, aging services, and policy work.[10] Broadly, elder justice is defined as "The commitment to ensuring the safety, well-being, and rights of older adults, specifically focusing on addressing and preventing abuse, neglect, and exploitation."[11] Initiatives working towards elder justice often include policy development and advocacy, resource development and education, service provision and/or coordination, criminal justice responses, social work and public health responses, and victim advocacy among other issues. It is in this vein that EJCs are encouraged to take multilayered approaches to raising awareness and reforming the landscape of elder justice responses.

RESOURCES

The following list of resources is provided as a library for you to deepen your understanding of elder abuse, elder justice, and working with older adults. You can use these resources to extend your learning or to incorporate into education campaigns your coalition initiates:

- Administration for Community Living
- APS Technical Assistance Resource Center
- Consumer Financial Protection Bureau
- Diverse Elders Coalition
- Elder Justice Coordinating Council
- Elder Justice Initiative
- Federal Trade Commission
- Futures Without Violence

- Justice in Aging
- National Adult Protective Services Association (NAPSA)
- National Asian Pacific Center on Aging
- National Caucus and Center on Black Aging
- National Center for Reaching Victims Older Adult Resource Library
- National Center on Elder Abuse (NCEA)
- National Center on Law and Elder Rights
- National Clearinghouse on Abuse in Later Life (NCALL)
- National Council on Aging
- National Resource Center for Alaska Native Elders
- National Resource Center on Native American Aging
- National Resource Center for Native Hawaiian Elders
- Native American Elder Justice Initiative
- National Indigenous Justice Information Inclusion
- Providing Trauma-Informed Advocacy for Older Survivors
- Reclaiming What is Sacred: Addressing Harm to Indigenous Elders and Developing a Tribal Response to Abuse in Later Life
- SAGE – Advocacy and Services for LGBTQ+ Elders
- Training Resources on Elder Abuse
- VAWn

Chapter 2

Considerations for Equity and Inclusion

"Equity challenges us to consider the including of those most impacted by the systems in need of transformation. Deeply understanding the problem from the perspective of individuals with lived and living experience ensures we design change with integrity and often uncover radical and unforeseen opportunities."[12]

Throughout this resource guide, equity and inclusion principles and values are centered as foundational to the success of an EJC. Beginning with this section and continuing throughout the guide, recommended resources rooted in equitable principles and intentional pause points are provided for an EJC to consider ideas and assumptions about advancing equity in its lifecycle, roles, and major functions. Providing space and time for an EJC to discuss these issues, particularly if there are opposing views around its table, can help build trust among EJC members and help members create opportunities for improving support for all older adults.

These equity pauses will allow an EJC and its partners to reflect on how perspectives shape interactions with equity problems and help the EJC identify ways to operationalize equity into their coalition's fundamental and strategic frameworks. In addition, throughout this resource guide, tools and resources are included to support EJCs in learning more about equity and inclusion strategies for their work.

The Impact of Inequity for Older Adults from Marginalized Communities

In the United States, we live in a society where one's race, gender identity, sexual orientation, age, disability status, national origin, religion, language, and other identity factors have a direct impact on one's access to resources, opportunities, and ability to thrive. This inequity occurs because we all operate within systems that are rooted in a long legacy of white supremacy; in which they are designed to include or exclude people based on their identities. These types of systemic oppression, which have deep roots in our history, can often be debilitating for those who experience their harms, and challenging to see for those who do not. Systemic oppression can manifest in the form of racial discrimination against communities of color, anti-Indigeneity against First Peoples, gender discrimination against women, genderqueer, and gender-nonconforming people, homophobia

and transphobia against members of the LGBTQIA2S+ community, ageism against older adults, ableism against people with disabilities, xenophobia towards immigrants, and so on. The mistreatment of marginalized populations is a hallmark of the social structure and foundational belief systems of this country, and, as a result, many older adults from historically marginalized communities have experienced different forms of exclusion and inequity that compound across their lifetimes.

Elder abuse responses are not immune to perpetuating these types of inequities, leaving older adults not only to fall through the cracks but to be at risk of experiencing systemic harm when attempting to receive support. By being intentional about incorporating equitable strategies into your EJC, you are actively working to uproot the systems of white supremacy that have done everyone harm, and working towards building stronger pathways for every older adult to receive what they need when experiencing harm or abuse both interpersonally and systemically.

The Intersection of Trauma and Oppression

> "Our systems don't recognize how trauma impacts people, and as a result, decision-makers in those systems create trauma and hold people in a space of trauma…If we don't talk about it and acknowledge it, then it is very difficult to bring about change."[13]
> — Allison Wainwright

For many older adults, experiences of marginalization and oppression are traumatic. These traumas are experienced at the individual and community levels, as well as historically, and across generations. For example, many older adults who are African American have learned about their race through the experiences of negative attitudes towards their race and race-based prejudice. This experience of racialized socialization can result in racial trauma. Whether in the form of a single experience of racism, discrimination, or microaggression, or from cumulative experiences over the lifespan, racial trauma is commonplace in the lives and

consciousness of many African Americans. This can directly impact how many people may or may not engage with elder justice and surrounding systems. It then becomes the responsibility of these systems to shift to center the needs of people from marginalized communities, to break down those barriers of mistrust, and to provide right-fit support without perpetuating continued harm.

Many marginalized communities have also experienced multigenerational and collective traumas, known as historical trauma. The legacies and impacts of violent colonization, forced displacement, and the abduction of native children to assimilationist boarding schools in Indigenous communities; the experiences of the Holocaust and systematic genocide against Jewish people; and the forced internment of Japanese Americans during World War II are all examples of historical trauma, all of which have left marks on communities for generations. Historical trauma can cause damage to the cultural identity of marginalized communities as well as deep physical, emotional, and psychological harms that can be transmitted across generations as intergenerational trauma. In addition, because some of these traumas and oppressions remain pervasive and unaddressed, these harms continue to manifest in the lives of many older adults from marginalized communities.

In any form, trauma can have harmful and chronic effects on an individual's psychological and emotional development, self-concept, physical and mental health, and overall quality of life. Many individuals with marginalized identities and their communities have developed responses to trauma that support healing and reduce the risk of further trauma. Specifically, for many marginalized communities, the legacies of persistent oppression and injustice have fostered a sense of institutional distrust which has impacted their willingness to engage in a myriad of social systems. This distrust is rational, as often these systems that are there to help have instead caused their communities harm. These systems include public health and healthcare, social service systems, financial institutions, government processes, educational systems, housing associations, criminal justice and legal systems, etc.

For older adults from marginalized communities who have experienced system-based oppression as well as abuse, mistreatment, and exploitation, these challenges can create significant barriers to receiving the support they need to access justice and heal. This is because systemic oppression and discrimination are embedded within system responses to violence and abuse of older adults. As a result, older adults from marginalized communities may not trust the entities responsible for responding to their harm, including area agencies on aging, adult protective services, law enforcement, victim advocacy, hospitals, first responders, faith communities, ombudsmen, mental health, etc. Older adults from marginalized communities may not engage with those systems or have confidence in their representatives to effectively, safely, and equitably support them on their way to healing and justice.

Why Equity and Inclusion are Important for EJCs

Advancing equity and inclusion are important to EJCs because, as champions for enhancing the safety, well-being, rights, and healing support for all older adults who experience harm, EJCs are uniquely positioned to serve as meaningful beacons for building equitable strategies, collaborations, and inclusion for all older adults and the professionals who serve on them. Moreover, an equity and inclusion-oriented EJC can serve as a model for respect and belonging for other state and tribal collaborations and organizations that have touchpoints with older adults across the various systems that support them (i.e., health, housing, food, social work, elder abuse, domestic violence, and sexual assault services, etc.).

In order to effectively raise awareness about the complex needs of older adults impacted by harm, EJCs must have a deep understanding of the unique obstacles to healing and justice faced by older adults from marginalized communities. Additionally, EJCs have a responsibility to address issues of oppression and discrimination within their internal structures and functions to be meaningful agents of change. Finally, as an important advocate for a robust and coordinated

response for older adults, EJCs must do the work to foster inclusive environments where the voices of all older adults, as well as professionals, are heard in a way that allows for transformative systems change to happen and for just outcomes to thrive.

Equity Pause: Strategies for Equity and Inclusion:

For many EJCs, embedding equity and inclusion in their values and practices is a critical component of advancing fairness and their larger social justice mission. While some EJCs are taking steps toward greater equity and inclusion, it is important to note that real change on these issues is challenging and is often stymied because EJCs need to learn how to proceed beyond performative solidarity and avoid equity traps and tropes.

Substantive equity and inclusion within an EJC and its work often require a paradigm shift in the way it is run and how members perceive their work, as well as a deep cultural change to allow all older adults to have a meaningful voice that is valued within an EJC. Here are some strategies for EJCs to better operationalize equity and inclusion into the EJC and its work:

Strategy 1: Diversity and Inclusion in Composition:

An EJC and its partners can work together to ensure their coalition is constructed in a way that is fully representative of the varied lived experiences of the communities it serves. To foster this intentionally diverse and inclusive space, an EJC must ensure that the voices of older adults from marginalized communities are centered in ways that allow for safe engagement and foster belonging. EJCs can create and maintain spaces that disrupt centering white supremacy values and allow for authentic participation from professionals and older adults from marginalized communities. Having an EJC that is diverse and inclusive helps members and partners have a comprehensive understanding of the many systems-based issues that impact older adults from marginalized communities. Additionally, diverse perspectives allow for more robust discussion and decision-making when an EJC is strategy-building. Potential partners can include impacted

older adults from marginalized communities, culturally responsive and specific programs, community organizations, and institutions that have touchpoints in older adults' lives (i.e., grocery stores, bodegas, barber shops, religious institutions, community centers, etc.)

Strategy 2: Co-creation in Prevention, Intervention, and Coordination of Services and Initiatives:

Having true diversity and inclusion are foundational to an EJCs effort to advance equity in its work and to be as effective as possible as a collaborative. An EJC can strengthen its capacity in these areas by implementing approaches to harm prevention that incorporate principles of co-creation into its problem-identification and solution-building processes. For example, as an EJC looks at service coordination systems, the process of co-creation can enhance the ability of EJC partners to collaborate effectively across broader, more expansive networks to bridge gaps, providing all older adults access to the kinds of resources and support they need to navigate responding systems. Co-creation can also enhance an EJCs ability to create spaces for open dialogue and mutual planning among its partners around new and right-fit interventions that are responsive to the complex needs of older adults.

Principles of Co-Creation Include:[14]

- Listen first and listen to learn
- Move at the speed of trust
- Cultivate an inclusive environment
- Communicate transparently
- Ensure mutual benefit
- Welcome discomfort
- Include unserved, underserved, and marginalized communities
- Engage for the long-term
- Continuously evaluate and adapt

Strategy 3: Developing Critical Competencies in Education, Public Awareness, and Data:

Another way for EJCs to advance equity in their work is by developing and disseminating educational resources, materials, data, and information to raise awareness around the unique needs of older adults from marginalized communities. Specifically, an EJC can work collaboratively with its partners and networks to provide community education and training opportunities to develop critical literacies around these issues, support needs, and find ways to design services to increase equity for older adults from marginalized communities.

An EJC can also launch culturally responsive public awareness campaigns targeting older adults from marginalized communities, aimed at increasing access to equitable services for their populations. In addition, an EJC can work to create data sets or to co-conduct needs assessments and/or asset maps with marginalized communities that highlight where systems-based disparities exist. An EJC can then use this data to help develop initiatives or frame out advocacy campaigns that are responsive to the unique gaps and needs discovered in the assessment.

Strategy 4: Transformative Advocacy, Public Policy, and Systems Change:

To further support equity and inclusion for all older adults, EJCs can advocate legislatively, at the federal, state, and local levels, for comprehensive and transformative changes to public policy that reduce harm, increase investment and resources, and/or expand the rights of all older adults who have experienced abuse, harm, and mistreatment. In our current political landscape, equity is a strategic imperative, and implementing a change model rooted in strategic, critical, and purpose-driven efforts is essential for genuine and sustainable progress on these issues.

Amanda Vickstrom, Executive Director of the Minnesota Elder Justice Center (MEJC), shares, "Policy advocacy is a core program of the MEJC. However, resource limitations require us to choose only three priorities for our policy platform. When MEJC identifies policy issues that match our mission, we use an equity framework

that prioritizes people with the greatest barriers to achieving safety and support. One still unresolved example dates back to 2022, when we began to promote increased resident/consumer protections for vulnerable adult residents of public and low-income housing. These facilities, which are unlicensed under Minnesota's Assisted Living Licensure law, often become de facto assisted living facilities without legal protections of licensed assisted living. MEJC prioritized this issue because it disproportionately impacts older people of color living with limited economic means, putting them at greater risk of harm, exploitation, and systemic oppression."

An EJC can also promote equity-oriented changes to system responses to harm against older adults to support more equitable and just outcomes. This work can include advocacy within or in support of a coordinated community response (CCR) or other teams, or in processes with specific efforts to recognize and rectify bias in existing policies and procedures, thereby enhancing responses and services for all older adults.

Strategy 5: Fostering equity and inclusion in the structure, processes, policies, and culture of an EJC:

A critical strategy for this work is for EJCs to focus on centering equity values in the internal structure, processes, systems, policies, and culture of their EJC. One way to do this is to develop a set of commitment statements that (re)affirm the mission, vision, purpose, and values of the EJC as relates to equity and inclusion. Relatedly, EJC partners can work to develop their own (organizational or personal) commitment statements and/or goals around supporting equity and inclusion and the mission of the EJC. When doing this, it is important for the EJC to make the commitments not only in writing but also in action. From there, an EJC can develop an equity-oriented strategic framework to set or clarify the strategic priorities of the coalition as they relate to equity. Lastly, an EJC can conduct an equity audit to examine where gaps and challenges to equity and inclusion exist within its structures and its work. This will help identify opportunities for change that foster equitable outcomes.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR ADDITIONAL LEARNING AND RESOURCES TO SHARE:

The following list provides more information, educational opportunities, glossaries of terms, and resources on equity and inclusion for your continued learning, as well as to provide coalitions with resources to bolster initiatives that center older adults from marginalized communities:

- Activating Change: End Abuse of People with Disabilities
- American Society on Aging DEI Resource Library
- Collaborating for Justice for Older African Americans
- Collective Impact Forum: Racial Equity Toolkit
- Community Commons
- Equity Meets Design
- Hear our Voices: Trauma-Informed Principles through a Culturally Specific Lens
- Inclusive Language Glossary
- Increasing Access to Healing and Just Outcomes for Older African American Crime Survivors Toolkit
- National Center on Elder Abuse Publications on Cultural Issues
- National Center on Law and Elder Rights Equity Tools
- Racial Equity Tools
- SAGEcare: LGBTQ+ Aging Cultural Competency
- Seeking Solutions: Elder Abuse – Creating a Clear Vision for Where We Go From Here – Focus on Underserved Populations of Older Adults

Chapter 3

Considerations for Tribal Elder and Tribal Communities

Abuse, harm, and mistreatment of American Indian and Alaska Native (AI/AN) elders is a serious and growing issue that presents unique challenges for elders experiencing abuse, their families, tribal communities, as well as service providers, collaboratives, and responding systems that are focused on ensuring safety, well-being, and rights for older adults. As vital advocates for elder justice for all older survivors, both tribal and non-tribal, EJCs can play an essential role in ensuring tribal elders are treated with dignity and respect and that they have access to the kinds of supports they need to heal from harm.

For tribal services and collaboratives working to build an EJC within tribal communities, there is exciting work emerging via the creation of The Web, an overarching Tribal Coalition, designed to support the development of tribal EJCs across native nations. The Web includes founding members of The Standing Rock Sioux, Pyramid Lake Paiute, and Shoshone-Bannock Tribes. It seeks, through interconnectedness, to promote racial equity, healing, and justice for older Indigenous victims of crime. The Web also works to identify service needs, share ideas around best practices, build skills within key communities, and determine priority areas to advance these and other goals to best protect the dignity, rights, and well-being of older adult members of Native American communities.[15]

RESOURCES AND TOOLS FOR BUILDING AN EJC WITHIN A TRIBAL COMMUNITY:

- Tribal Elder Protection Team Toolkit
- Native American Elder Justice Initiative
- National Indian Council on Aging
- National Resource Center on Native American Aging
- National Resource Center for Alaska Native Elders
- Hā Kūpuna: National Resource Center for Native Hawaiian Elders
- Native American Rights Fund
- The National Native American Boarding School Healing Coalition

- NICOA Compass: A Guide to Native Wellness
- The American Indian and Alaska Native Long-Term Services and Supports Technical Assistance Center
- National Indian Law Library: Finding Legal Help

For non-tribal EJCs working with tribes and AI/AN older adults and non-tribal collaboratives seeking to form an EJC to advance elder justice in this context, this work must begin with a deep appreciation for the social and historical contexts within which harm against tribal elders occurs. Non-tribal EJCs must also understand the scope of the issue, the range of existing responses to harm against elders, and the barriers to access to effective supports and services impacting tribal elders. To achieve elder justice aims, non-tribal EJCs must understand the spectrum of governance/authority and infrastructure across tribal communities and the nuances of supporting tribal elders who do or do not reside on federally recognized lands. Doing this work effectively requires that non-tribal EJCs have an understanding of the diversities and resiliencies of the cultures of First Peoples in this country, as well as the enduring social impacts of European settler colonialism within tribal and non-tribal communities in the United States.

Social and Historical Context

The Role of Tribal Elders in Community and the Cultural Conceptions of Elder Abuse:

While many Native populations share similar values, tribes have distinct histories, cultural identities, languages, practices, and traditions. One commonality across many tribal communities is a reverence for tribal elders. As keepers of wisdom and holders of vast cultural knowledge, tribal elders who are also older adults are historically beacons of honor, guidance, and spirituality within their communities, and they hold an esteemed and protected position in the culture of many tribes.[16] For these reasons, when incidents of abuse and neglect surface, they

not only create issues of personal safety and quality of life for tribal elders, but they also present a challenging "cultural paradox" around the conventional role of elders in the community and the real impacts of harm and mistreatment against them.[17] Elder abuse against tribal elders also has implications for the transmission of historical and cultural knowledge within many tribal communities. Understanding this facet of many tribal cultures is important for non-tribal EJCs because it helps them think about the importance of developing cultural competencies within their work in this context.

Also relevant to the work of an EJC is clarity on how elder abuse is defined in many tribal communities. While there is some range around what constitutes elder abuse in tribal communities, it is clear that an underrecognized form of elder abuse is spiritual abuse. Spiritual abuse involves older adults being denied access to ceremonies, sacred objects, and traditional healing supports, the contamination of sacred objects or practices, and abuse perpetrated by trusted spiritual leaders.[18] For non-tribal EJCs, being clear on this important difference in tactics used to harm tribal elders can help groups better utilize culturally responsive approaches to enhance supports and advocacy efforts.

Scope of Abuse Against Tribal Elders, Current Responses, and Barriers to Support:

Limitations in existing research have resulted in an inadequate understanding of the prevalence and incidence of abuse against tribal elders. Using data from the National Elder Mistreatment Study, researchers in 2022 suggested that about one-third of tribal elders had experienced abuse in the prior year. The number of AI/AN older adults experiencing abuse is expected to continue rising as populations grow older.[19] Additional studies have shown that when abuse of tribal elders occurs, immediate and extended family members are most often the perpetrators. Rates of abuse are highest in families where income levels, housing, and economic security are extremely low for the elder and/or for the abuser/caregiver. Abuse rates are also higher when an elder lives in the same

home as the primary caregiver or has other forms of interdependency with the caregiver.[20] Finally, because the vast majority of tribal elders live in urban areas and not on tribal reservations, it is likely that most incidents of harm and abuse of tribal elders occur outside of tribal lands.[21]

Across the 574 federally recognized tribes and communities and more than 100 state-recognized tribes, there are a myriad of approaches and responses to dealing with harm against elders.[22] Some tribes utilize county and state protective services programs to respond to reported elder abuse cases. Others have created their own response systems, including an estimated 100 tribes that have created codes to report abuse and a designated tribal agency (i.e., protective services) to accept and investigate reports and offer direction about meeting families' service needs. Additionally, some tribes have developed Elder Protection Teams (EPTs), which provide comprehensive assessment and consultation around addressing elder abuse. In many of these instances, tribal codes, systems, and policies have been adapted to reflect community values and traditional approaches to resolving conflicts.[23]

While not uniform across all tribal communities, the challenges faced in addressing elder abuse on tribal lands have common themes including:[1]

- A need for increased awareness, training, and education about the problem.
- Inadequate infrastructure to support robust responses.
- Minimal prevention services for the issue.
- A lack of programs that focus on urban and non-tribal land-residing elders.
- Insufficient ordinances and codes in tribal communities on elder abuse.
- A need for adequate funding.

Outside of tribal lands, AI/AN older adults who experience abuse can ostensibly access services for all older adults, although historical trauma, institutional distrust, fear, lack of awareness, cultural insensitivity, and other challenges can all create barriers to accessing effective supportive services.

Systemic Challenge: Structural Racism Encroaches Upon Tribal Sovereignty

An additional complexity that creates significant barriers to effectively addressing abuse against tribal elders is around issues of jurisdiction and authority. Specifically, as inherently sovereign and autonomous entities, tribal nations have a unique political status and relationship with the United States government.[25] As sovereigns, tribal governments have the intrinsic rights to self-govern and to address all concerns involving tribal members within tribal lands.[26] This tribal sovereignty allows for tribal governments to protect the safety and welfare of tribal citizens within tribal territory and to create governing structures to enforce tribal codes, including elder abuse codes, through police departments and tribal courts.

These rights and responsibilities allow tribal governments to exercise their powers to preserve their tribes' unique cultures and identities. However, historically the rights of tribes have been limited by racist federal laws and court decisions rooted in anti-indigeneity and white supremacy.[27] In the context of elder abuse, these issues have created challenges to tribal enforcement authority based on who is the perpetrator, who is the victim, and where the incident(s) happened. These complexities also create policy difficulties, and they undermine many tribes' ability to self-adjudicate who is responsible for intervening when elder abuse occurs and to ensure that non-tribal entities fulfill their enforcement duties.[28]

Systemic Challenge: Impacts of European Settler Colonialism

Another challenge to addressing elder abuse is related to the legacies of colonialism and anti-Indigeneity. The history of Indigenous populations in this country began long before European colonization and the founding of the United States. Before those periods and events, the First Peoples of North America had deep, rich, and vibrant cultures with flourishing communities. Their specialized knowledge, sophisticated tools, and developed trade and migration routes created a strong and diverse system of settlements and societies. These characteristics allowed for centuries of strong governance structures and public life.

Upon the arrival of European settlers in North America in the 16th and 17th centuries, and their unilateral and violent implementation of the doctrine of discovery, the lives of Native populations changed radically, as did the trajectory of Native American history.[29] One of the most calamitous impacts of European Settler colonialism was the introduction of diseases for which tribal populations had no immunity. This harm perpetrated devastating impacts including mass deaths, caused the loss of generations of cultural knowledge and tradition, and inflicted intergenerational and historical traumas that have had far-reaching implications across generations.[30]

European Settler colonialism is based on interlocking forms of oppression, including anti-Indigenous racism, white supremacy, heteropatriarchy, and capitalism. For centuries after the arrival of European settlers, the United States government expanded on those early colonization efforts by enacting laws and policies designed to further effect comprehensive genocide and assimilation among Native populations. These actions included but were not limited to, implementing the Indian Reservation System, Native American Boarding and Residential Schools, the Native American Foster Care Program, forced sterilization programs, forced displacement and relocation, and a pattern of breaking treaty promises.[31]

Not only did these state-sponsored acts have a devastating and enduring impact on the cultural identity and social systems of tribal populations, but they also caused complex intergenerational and historical traumas and led to enduring social inequities among tribal elders (i.e., housing insecurity, economic insecurity, lack of health care, and food insecurity, etc.), and health disparities (i.e., mental health, physical health, substance abuse disorders, chronic illnesses, and domestic violence) for AI/AN people in comparison to non-Native populations.[32]

Additionally, many AI/AN peoples and communities have learned to distrust those who colonized their lands as well as the institutions they create(d), including systems often engaged when there are issues of harm and mistreatment of older adults. This institutional distrust extends to service providers who intentionally or inadvertently impose their values, beliefs, and systems of care upon tribal individuals, families, and communities even when the services rendered may be ineffective, traumatizing, or harmful in other ways.

In doing work to improve responses to elder abuse in tribal communities, non-tribal EJCs and collaboratives must ensure they have a solid understanding of each of these issues and challenges. They must, where possible, work diligently to support community-driven and tribal-based approaches that prioritize and value local perspectives and expertise, tribal histories, and the sovereignty and jurisdictions of tribal governments. Also, to be effective in this context, non-tribal EJCs must ensure their work to advance elder justice is culturally responsive to AI/AN older adults' unique needs in ways that honor community norms and values and effectively meet the unique needs of tribal elders.

Equity Pause: Strategies for Equity and Inclusion for Tribal Communities

Despite numerous systemic inequities that disadvantage Native people, tribal elders, and their communities continue to be resilient and creative in finding ways to address elder abuse and advance elder justice. Non-tribal EJCs must work internally and in partnership with Indigenous communities to identify the unmet

needs of tribal elders, implement culturally relevant supports, engage in equitable partnership, and incorporate the direct voices of tribal communities in public awareness, education, prevention, intervention, and policy solutions.

Specifically, non-tribal EJCs can advance and support elder justice and effective responses to elder abuse in tribal communities by working to ensure cultural safety in their work in this context. While cultural safety will look different based on the nuances of particular tribal communities and the issues impacting tribal elders, broadly, non-tribal EJC approaches to cultural safety should focus on:

1. Creating culturally safe environments within EJCs,
2. Building trust and reciprocal relationships with tribal governments and communities, and
3. Utilizing approaches that honor Indigenous cultural knowledge and community-based processes in this context.

Creating a Culturally Safe Environment Within an EJC

Non-tribal EJCs can take actions to transform the culture of your EJC towards one of cultural safety including:

- Honoring Indigenous knowledge and expertise in your work at all levels.
- Welcoming and acknowledging traditional territories at formal meetings and events.
- Facilitating the inclusion of access to traditional Indigenous responses to elder justice in your work.

In practice this can look like developing and endorsing statements of commitments to Indigenous cultural safety, supporting initiatives, and the development of practice guidelines for the EJC to strengthen cultural safety, and increasing accountability for cultural safety by requiring action and documentation

around specific instances where Indigenous knowledge and expertise informed and/or were utilized in the work of the EJC. These actions can be implemented throughout all phases of the work of an EJC, including recruitment and retention of new members, engagement of partners, education and public awareness activities, and so on.

Developing Trust Through Relationality and Reciprocal Relationships

Trust is a core component of cultural safety and healing relationships. For non-tribal EJCs, having trust is key to advancing elder justice within your EJC, as well as externally, in partnerships with tribal communities. One way to develop the kind of trust necessary to advance elder justice in these spaces is to develop respectful and meaningful relationships with community members by embracing Indigenous conceptions of relationality, or "the acknowledgment that we all exist in relationship to each other, the natural world, ideas, the cosmos, objects, ancestors, and future generations, and furthermore, that we are accountable to those relationships."[33]

Relationality, first conceptualized by Cree scholar Shawn Wilson, can be fostered within non-tribal EJCs by creating and promoting group agreements and values that acknowledge the interconnectedness of all beings to the natural world, deep responsibilities to self and others, and the importance of reciprocal relationships with others. Non-tribal EJCs can also promote relationality internally and in partnership with tribal communities by developing screening tools to determine whether traditional Indigenous healing practices and cultural teaching are meaningfully included in problem identification and solution-building discussions as well as in your approaches to public awareness, education, data gathering, and research.

Non-tribal EJCs can develop trust by building reciprocal relationships with tribal governments and communities. Groups can do this by establishing guiding principles that ensure full and participatory representation of the voices of tribal elders and communities within the EJC and throughout its lifecycle. Establishing a Tribal Advisory Board within your EJC helps to provide specific time, energy, and resources for dialogue and solution-building related to elder abuse issues faced by AI/AN older adults throughout your state. EJCs can also develop trust by establishing formal agreements around engagement with tribal communities which include parameters for accountability for relationality and reciprocity between partners to ensure culturally sensitive protections for tribal populations. Lastly, EJCs can build trust by providing reciprocal supports (i.e., MOUs, statements of supportive agreement, endorsements, resource commitments to capacity and sustainability, etc.) directly to tribal communities in their efforts to address elder abuse on their lands and beyond.

Utilizing Asset-Based and Community-Based Approaches Anchored in Tribal Sovereignty and Self-Determination

For non-tribal EJCs, advancing elder justice in this context is also about using asset- and community-driven practices and approaches. Since time immemorial, Indigenous traditional practices and cultures have contributed to the survival and resiliency of tribal communities and many of these traditional ways remain effective in enhancing responses around elder abuse. For these reasons, non-tribal EJCs must ensure that their work to advance elder justice recognizes these assets and that their approaches to elder justice are strength-based and utilize community-based practices to advance elder justice.

To be effective in these ways, non-tribal EJCs can ensure tribal elders and communities are included in the problem identification and solution-building processes of the EJC. These groups can also support the implementation of community-led solutions and local approaches to harm against elders. When done

with integrity, these solutions are anchored in an appreciation for and advocacy around the sovereignty and right to self-determination of tribes. Solution and strategy building should also support and reinforce tribes as the rightful leaders and knowledge keepers about their people and their needs in relation to addressing issues of harm against elders.

TOOLS/RESOURCES:

- Indigenous Knowledge Library
- A Vision for Indigenous Evaluation
- Native Data Sovereignty Can Address Data Gaps and Improve Equity
- Native Organizers Network
- Native Governance Center
- Partnering with Native Nations in a Good Way Guide
- Tribal Civics: A Guide for Fostering Engagement
- Justice for Tribal Elders: Issues Impacting American Indian and Alaska Native Older Adults
- National Indigenous Elder Justice Initiative Cultural Sensitivity Training
- Rural and Tribal Elder Justice Resource Guide
- The Tribal Resource Tool
- Community-Asset Based Approaches

Chapter 4

Building an Elder Justice Coalition

"The Vulnerable Adult Justice Project, forerunner of the Minnesota Elder Justice Center, began in 2007 as an initiative to reform state laws for case reports, investigations, and safeguarding people who experienced elder mistreatment. When the reform law was enacted in 2009, coalition members faced a question: Do we celebrate our victory and disband or stay together to address the harder, unresolved issues? The response was unanimous. We stayed."

— Iris Freeman, Founding Chair,
Minnesota Elder Justice Center.

There are many reasons for building an EJC in your state or tribal community. The Ohio Coalition for Adult Protective Services (OCAPS), for example, began in 1984 in response to state APS law lacking appropriations despite its passage three years prior. Advocates in Ohio realized that a statewide network could help secure the needed funding to implement APS law. Leading the way as the oldest state EJC, OCAPS has since gone from an idea of three advocates to a long-standing incorporated nonprofit organization with a membership of organizations and individuals from a multitude of sectors representing the needs of older vulnerable adults. They serve as a leading resource for the state to enhance service provision for adults at risk for abuse and exploitation.[34] The California Elder Justice Coalition (CEJC) was born out of the recognition of systemic disparities for older adults. In 2008 participants in the Archstone Foundation's Elder Abuse and Neglect Initiative began to coalesce around barriers they were seeing for older adults in accessing the justice system. This resulted in the creation of a multidisciplinary summit, and eventually, in 2012, CEJC was created to implement the elder justice blueprint that emerged from that gathering. Today, CEJC is a nationally recognized organization with a statewide membership of 85 agencies and individuals and was a critical participant in the creation of the National Network of State Elder Justice Coalitions.[35]

Whatever the impetus for building an EJC, taking the care and time to establish a good foundation rooted in a clear understanding of need, capacity, values, and vision can create a recipe for success and sustainability. Effective and resilient coalitions take time to form fully; working out the details for a good foundation for your EJC can take a long time, but it is worth the energy. The following sections provide a blueprint and resources to support this process and help those thinking about starting a coalition, or at the early stages of building a new coalition, do so thoughtfully and with impact.

TOOL:

Checklist — Is A Coalition Right for You?

Assessing Your Coalition and Members for Capacity

When bringing a group together to work collaboratively, it is helpful to understand the need, or the problem to be solved, as well as the capacity of the group to accomplish what it sets out to do. A clear understanding of a group's capacity can help provide a framework for its structure, directly informing how a coalition will work and its impact.[36]

"…coalition membership capacity extends from the obvious, such as having skills to work collaboratively and dedicate resources, to the less obvious, such as understanding how a single issue fits into a broader network of issues, and the ability to weigh the value of coalition membership against other resource expenditures."[37]

Assessing for capacity includes looking at membership (organization and individual) and asking:

- What resources (networks, expertise, connections to community members, relationships with lawmakers, access to funding, leadership skills, etc.) can they contribute?

- What is their ability to problem solve?
- How do they work with others?
- What perspectives do they bring to the table?
- Are they able to look at a problem from multiple vantage points?

Each member will bring something unique to the table, which is the beauty of any collaborative effort. However, it is essential to take the time to understand whether members possess the capacity to know their own strengths and challenges; can work collaboratively with respect; are critical thinkers; can manage through conflict, build strategy, and find right-fit solutions to complex problems; and can help coalition leaders pinpoint how to effectively utilize everyone in a way that makes the group and your objectives thrive. Each member does not need to possess each of these skills or characteristics. However, it is helpful for EJC leadership to understand the unique capacities of those around the table to best utilize their strengths and account for their challenges.

Assessing capacity also extends to coalition leadership:

- Are current leaders able to create an environment in which each member can participate fully?
- Does leadership have the skills to move the group towards meeting its aims?
- Are leaders able to create pathways of support for individuals and organizations within the coalition and beyond?

When considering capacity needs, it can be helpful to list what you hope members can bring to the table and what strengths would bolster the group's success.

Some common capacities for coalition members include:[38]

- Skills and knowledge to work collaboratively
- Commitment to be actionable when working towards the coalition's goals

- Ability to articulate what a member brings to the coalition (i.e., time, resources, expertise, relationships, etc.)
- Ability to articulate individual needs and wants from participating in the collaborative
- Eagerness to share resources
- Willingness to be transparent about conflicts of interest
- Motivation to move through conflict respectfully and generatively
- Ability to recognize and share power
- Readiness to explore alternative ideas and strategies
- Openness to changing the status quo
- Willingness to test one's own assumptions
- Ability to dedicate staffing to implement strategies and tasks
- Ability to dedicate staff with relevant expertise and decision-making power
- Commitment to giving coalition strategies time and energy
- An understanding of how an individual organization's issues/mission fit into the broader issues a coalition is working towards addressing.

Collaborative community building requires that support flows in all directions. Coalition members are there to support the coalition's mission, movement towards meaningful outcomes, and the other team members, but also to access support for themselves and their community or organization. Strong coalition members can recognize and express what they want and need from the group, as well as what their limitations are.[39] Without transparency around these things, blockages can happen where members no longer have the capacity to work towards collective goals. Coalition leadership should make time and space for members to discuss their wants and needs regularly. This helps to mitigate the common barriers to communicating needs, such as assuming people know their needs already, assuming everyone's needs are the same, members not wanting to take up space or move attention away from the broader mission, etc. Creating these opportunities also

establishes a mechanism for building trust and comradery among members and provides opportunities for them to support each other, ultimately making them better able to work towards the coalition's goals.

For newly formed coalitions, assessing your capacity at the start can help you understand what gaps need to be filled, what areas of expertise are present or are needed to meet your goals, what education the group needs, what shared learning the group can provide, and overall, where your strengths and opportunities for growth are. It is also helpful to repeat a capacity assessment throughout the lifecycle of the coalition to be responsive and strategic when adjustments are needed.

Capacity Assessment Tool: What Makes an Effective Coalition? Evidence-Based Indicators for Success. The checklist is designed for coalitions to use to assess their overall performance and identify pain points.

Needs Assessment, Defining the Problem, and Identifying Barriers and Right-fit Solutions

> "Our initial coalition was formed by one person having the courage to stand up to state leadership and say, 'We have an elder abuse problem, and what are you going to do about it?'"
> — Anna Thomas, Section Manager/Forensic Specialist, Georgia Dept. of Human Services

Building an EJC and developing strategic change initiatives require us to fully understand the reason for mobilizing, and how people are impacted by a problem. Needs assessments provide foundational information to understand the scope of a problem as well as the landscape in which the problem exists. This information is

particularly important to ensure that initiatives address the needs of everyone impacted and can help in centering the margins when building strategies and solutions. This strategy often helps coalitions understand the problem dynamics for those most impacted by an issue, and when you build strategies for those most impacted, everyone who is impacted benefits.

A needs assessment can help apply a critical lens to a problem. It provides specific, location-based, community-based, and culturally specific nuance to the addressed challenge and ensures that change strategies apply right-fit solutions. Conducting a thoughtful assessment can also help build trust between a coalition, its members, partner organizations, and the larger community.

While typically understood in the context of research, needs assessments can be tailored to the coalition and the specific problem(s) you are attempting to understand. When developing a needs assessment, several decisions are needed, which will help you collect the information you need to set priorities for your coalition.

Questions to ask when planning for a needs assessment include:[40]

- **Why do you want to conduct a needs assessment?** Understanding the questions you want answered with a needs assessment will help you identify who and how you get information.
- **What data is already available?** It's likely a lot of the information you need already exists. The U.S. Census data, ACL data or other Federal statistics, local government agencies, community organizations, or other coalitions that may have already conducted needs assessments, or studies from local universities can all be good sources of existing information.
- **What additional information do you need?** To bolster the data you already have access to, what other information do you need to have a well-rounded understanding of the problem(s) the coalition can address? The lived experience of community members and

professionals working in the field can offer invaluable information to help a coalition identify its priorities.

- **What methods will you use to gather information?** Data collection can include reviewing existing data as already mentioned, conducting listening sessions and public forums, conducting interviews and focus groups, observation, surveys, and asset mapping.
- **Who will you gather information from?** The more diverse the group of people you gather information from, the better you will understand the scope of the problem the coalition is working on. The more specific you are about the "why" of your assessment, the easier it will be to identify who to speak with. For example, if a priority for your coalition is to identify resource gaps for Black and Indigenous older adults in your state, then you'll want to focus on speaking with those specific communities, and all those who do or do not do a good job of providing services to them. If your "why" is broader, like understanding the impact of long-term care regulations on community members, you'll want to gather information from as diverse a group as possible of community members, policymakers, and service providers as there are in the state.
- **Who will collect the information?** Are there coalition members who can collect information in whichever ways you've decided to gather data? Can you establish an MOU or data-sharing agreement with organizations with existing data sets or the skills needed to collect data? Do you need to hire a consultant to support your efforts? Are there community members who can support the efforts?
- **How will you analyze the information gathered?** Having a clear plan for organizing and looking for themes in the information will make the process manageable. Before collecting information, the coalition should discuss the plan and establish whether you need additional resources or support to execute it.
- **How will you share the information you gathered?** Sharing the

information gathered internally with the larger coalition, the communities you gathered information from, and other impacted stakeholders can help build relationships, get feedback, and ensure all decision-makers are on the same page when it comes time to set priorities for the coalition's work.

Equity Pause: Centering equity in needs assessments

When designing and conducting a needs assessment, coalitions can include questions that help you answer the following to center equity:

- In what ways have historical and/or structural decisions contributed to the problem you are attempting to understand?
- How are the problems and previous solutions impacting different populations?
- What impact has the problem and previous solutions had on either amplifying or diminishing inequity?
- In what ways does cultural context impact the structural conditions in which the problem exists?[41]

RESOURCES AND TOOLS:

- A Community Action Guide to Comprehensive Community Needs Assessments
- Conducting Rural Health Research, Needs Assessments, and Program Evaluations
- Elder Justice Initiative MDT Toolkit: Meeting the Needs of Your Community
- Migrant Education Program's Comprehensive Needs Assessment Toolkit
- Rural Community Health Toolkit: Identifying Community Needs and Assets

- SparkMap
- Toolkit for Conducting Focus Groups

Network and Relationship Building

> "The most important unit of analysis in a system is not the part (e.g., individual, organization, or institution); it's the relationships between the parts."
> — Brenda Zimmerman

When speaking with coalition leaders across the country, one of the most common pieces of advice shared is about taking the time and energy to build strong relationships. The power of forming bonds, finding common ground, building trust, and connecting with people one-on-one should not be underestimated. Often a coalition can move strategies forward because of influential or strategic connections rooted in individual relationships.

Giving energy to the building of authentic and strong relationships is also a primary strategy for meaningful community engagement and advocacy, particularly with communities who have been historically left out of the types of conversations held in elder justice spaces. Approaching relationship building not as transactional, but foundational and from a mutually beneficial perspective, can help to build trust, deepen bonds, encourage commitment, and foster an environment where coalition members are accountable to one another.

Messaging can also become a key element in building strong relationships. Coalition leaders often have a strong network and the ability to build relationships. By creating clear and accessible messaging related to the coalition's goals, mission, and the value it brings, all members, in addition to coalition leaders, may have an

easier route to becoming champions of the work and investing in building relationships that can support the coalition over time.

Building relationships and finding the right people to form connections with can be challenging. Often, assumptions are made about competing agendas, or there are fears about a new coalition taking funding opportunities from previously established organizations. To combat these barriers, there are tools and strategic approaches to help you identify the right people, communication strategies, and mechanisms for building meaningful and fruitful relationships to bolster your coalition's goals and aims.

RESOURCES AND TOOLS:

- Tamarack Top 100 Partners Tool
- Public Knowledge: Building Relationships – Allies, Coalitions, and Government

Membership Structure and Group Formation

Who to include in your EJC is dependent on the needs across the state or tribal community, as well as the explicit functions and aims of the coalition. Most coalitions are open to any person or organization who is interested in being a part of the collaborative network; however, individuals and organizations involved in an EJC may include:

- Adult Protective Services (APS)
- Area Agencies on Aging (AAAs)
- Caregivers with relevant lived expertise
- Civil Legal Aid
- Culturally Responsive and Specific Organizations
- Content Area/Subject Matter Experts

- Community-based Organizations
- Disability Advocates
- Domestic Violence and/or Sexual Assault Organizations
- Financial Institutions and/or Professionals
- Healthcare Systems
- Housing Services/Advocates
- Immigration Advocates
- Law Enforcement
- Legal Assistance Developer (LAD)
- LGBTQIA2S+ Organizations
- Local and State Government Representatives
- Long-Term Care Organizations
- Long-Term Care Ombudsman
- Medical Providers
- Medicare/Medicaid Advocates/ Counselors
- Mental Health Providers
- Mutual Aid Groups
- Older Adult Advocates
- Older adults with lived experience of harm, or other lived expertise
- Policymakers
- Prosecutors
- Public Guardians
- Religious and/or Spiritual Representatives
- Substance Abuse Programs
- Veterans Organizations
- Victim Services / Victim Advocacy

The structure of an EJC's membership can take many forms. For many larger coalitions, there are multiple levels of membership and participation. OCAPS, for example, has volunteer working members who lead and participate in various strategy-centered subcommittees to work on systems change. It also has a community of general members with access to resources, training, professional development, and a network of professionals working on elder justice throughout the state.

Maine's Elder Justice Coordinating Partnership began with six private sector organizations (Elder Abuse Institute of Maine, Legal Services for the Elderly, Long-Term Care Ombudsman Program, Maine Association of Area Agencies on Aging, Maine Coalition Against Sexual Assault, and Maine Coalition to End Domestic Violence) wanting to work together on elder abuse issues from their varied perspectives and then became formalized as the Coordinating Partnership established by the Governor's Office. This allowed Maine to be formal and strategic in their partnerships as it used the coalition to develop and continue to build out their membership to meet the specific aims of the state roadmap.

For other examples of state-wide coalition membership models, see this list of State Sexual Assault and Domestic Violence Coalitions Membership and Due Structure Samples from the Resource Sharing Project.

Understanding the functions of your coalition can help you streamline the types of organizations you want to include and the skillsets you are looking for from potential members and partners. For example, if the main priority of your coalition is raising awareness, it is helpful to have subject matter experts as well as people who understand marketing, communications, resource development, media, community engagement strategy, training and facilitation, graphic design, etc. Often it is challenging to fill all the needs with just coalition members, so another capacity to look for when building your coalition is a member's network capital. Including members with strong working relationships with diverse professionals and groups will bolster your coalition's success in implementing strategies and initiatives the coalition designs.

Diversity of membership is also critical to having a well-rounded and effective coalition. This pertains to not only making sure your coalition is representative of the diverse communities across your state and tribal communities, but also diversity in terms of professional status, skillsets, and content expertise. For example, in coalitions whose primary goal is advocacy or policy work, it is helpful to have leadership or people with positional power in membership organizations participate in the coalition's work. They often have access to other influential people, have credibility in their fields, and have the skill to be strategic and understand the breadth of issues from multiple vantage points. However, it is also beneficial to have front-line staff, such as victim advocates, social workers, nurses, and banking staff who have an on-the-ground understanding of the problem, and who often have deep connections to the older adults and the real problems they face on a day-to-day basis.[42] Diverse groups tend to be better equipped to tackle challenging problems and use more critical and rigorous decision-making skills than more homogenous groups.[43] Therefore, putting effort into developing a team that is diverse in race, gender, disability status, age, and skillsets and expertise can directly impact your coalition outcomes and problem-solving processes.

Lastly, building relationships with multiple people from each membership organization can help strengthen long-term commitments to the coalition. If a relationship with a member organization is contingent on one person, and that person leaves, it opens the likelihood that the connection with the member organization will be lost, and potentially hard to rebuild.

How to Recruit Members:

> "Organizations don't collaborate, people do, based on common purpose, trust, and relationships."
> — Dan Duncan, Clear Impact.

Member recruitment is a task that will be ongoing throughout the lifecycle of a coalition; however, there are some clear steps you can take to set up a foundation

for effective recruitment. Once you have a group of core members (or a group of people interested in starting a coalition), it is important for all those involved to be able to clearly describe the value of the coalition to potentially new members and partners. To do this, it is helpful to answer the following questions as a group and make sure everyone is on the same page:[44]

- Why is this coalition the right approach to solving X problem or reaching X goal?
- What are the incentives for being a part of this coalition?

With clear messaging established, you can be strategic about who and how to recruit new members. Leaning into your existing network is a strong place to start. Likely, you are already coming to this work with a strong network of people, who may also have expansive networks. The previous section discussed identifying groups and people who can strengthen your coalition. From there, make a list of who you and existing members already know and who needs new engagement or relationship building. Then create a plan of action to connect with potential members.

Some strategies for connecting with potential members include:[45]

- Meet face-to-face (meet over coffee, offer to take someone out to lunch, or plan a Zoom call)
- Phone calls and e-mails (ask others in your network to provide introductions)
- Personal letters
- Mass mailing
- Public Service Announcements
- Flyers and Posters
- Social media engagement
- Attend networking or relevant educational events
- Host recruitment or networking events
- Host educational opportunities for like-minded professionals

When meeting with potential members, your recruitment efforts will be strengthened by communicating the value of the coalition and by providing an opportunity for potential members to do something tangible. For example, invite them to the next meeting, group event, or strategy session, ask them to share resources developed by the coalition with their networks, invite them to participate as a speaker, or offer a specific skill set they have to the group. Showing potential members that you recognize their value in addition to what they will gain from the partnership can go a long way.

Equity Pause: Building diverse and equitable teams

In the Elder Abuse Multidisciplinary Team Toolkit, the Minnesota Elder Justice Center provides questions to ask when developing a plan for member recruitment. These questions also support a process for membership recruitment that acknowledges the need for building diverse teams and centering the needs of those often left from critical conversations. These questions include:[46]

- Who has the experience and expertise with the problems the coalition will be working to address?
- Who is most impacted by the decisions the group makes?
- Who will be able to anticipate and identify risks or problems others may miss?
- Who will bring considerations that may be different from the majority?
- Who has personal identities and lived experiences that align with the problems the group is working on?
- Who may be in line with folks from marginalized communities who can bring their perspective to the table?
- Who in the community is often left out of the type of discussion the coalition is having?

RESOURCES AND TOOLS:

- Collective Impact Forum: Community Engagement Tool – Building Partnerships, Starting Local Section
- Community Tool Box: Chapter 7 – Encouraging Involvement in Community Work

Onboarding

Once you've recruited new members, having a process for welcoming them into the work can help set the tone for their involvement with the EJC. A clear, manageable, and welcoming onboarding process helps to build team cohesiveness, buy-in, and provides a good foundation in which new members can have sustainable participation in the coalition. An onboarding process helps to communicate and set the coalition's culture, can help new and existing members feel secure with the dynamics of a changing team, and can have a direct influence on the impact of the coalition's work.

The aim of onboarding is three-fold:

1. To help new members feel welcome, meet existing members, provide them with everything they need to participate fully, and give them a clear understanding of their role, the people, history, and culture of the coalition.
2. To establish a clear process for existing members to get to know new members and understand their roles and potential contributions to the team.
3. To ensure all logistics are handled, such as signing MOUs and confidentiality agreements, reviewing tech needs, data collection processes, communication processes, etc.

A process for onboarding can include the following steps:[47]

- Provide a clear process for reviewing and signing all contractual forms (i.e., Memorandum of Understanding (MOU), Commitment Letters, confidentiality statement, group agreements or guidelines for participation, etc.)
- Leadership welcomes new members via e-mail or phone before the first coalition meeting.
- Provide an Orientation Packet with all the information a new member would need before their first meeting.
- Offer opportunities for connecting one-on-one before the first meeting to clarify goals, roles, or any questions new members may have.
- Provide recent meeting minutes to ensure new members are up to date.
- Host an annual or biannual new member orientation event.

Member Orientation Packet can include:[48]

- Coalition History
- Mission, Vision, and Values Statements
- Current Goals
- Organizational Chart
- A roster of members with contact information. (Including their area of expertise is helpful.)
- Steering Committee and Working Group Members and roles
- Community Agreements/Guidelines for Participation
- Policies and Procedures
- Meeting and Events Calendar
- Recent meeting minutes and agendas
- Resources for learning more about aging and elder abuse

RESOURCES AND TOOLS:

- Model Commitment Letter
- Memorandum of Understanding Template
- Sample Confidentiality Statement
- Confidentiality Form Templates

Creating Vision, Mission, and Values Statements

Establishing thoughtful and clear vision, mission, and values statements can help a coalition and its members dig deep and communicate why and for whom the coalition exists (its mission), what the coalition hopes to achieve (its vision), and the principles the coalition uses as its foundation (its values). Furthermore, the process of developing (or reworking) mission, vision, and values statements can be integral in assuring members are a right fit, are on the same page, help increase trust and buy-in, and support a process for streamlining future goals.

Vision Statements:

Vision statements often serve as the coalition's dream for the future. They are clear and concise statements that communicate the change you believe your coalition can make over time. Helpful questions to ask when developing your coalition's vision statement include:

- Down the road in five or ten years, if the coalition is successful, what will be the big-picture change that is anticipated?[49]
- What is the ideal outcome your coalition hopes to achieve?
- What would have to change for that ideal outcome to happen?

Your vision statement should communicate the ultimate goal you hope to achieve, in broad terms. Establishing this first can help you move into developing your mission statement, which communicates why you want to reach that vision and how you'll achieve it.

Mission Statements:

Mission statements are a critical tool to use to hone in on and communicate your coalition's purpose. Often, mission statements explain how and for whom you do your work. Usually no more than one to two sentences, mission statements should be concise, outcome-driven, and inclusive. The following resources and tools can help coalition members move through a process that works best for their specific needs to articulate a mission that speaks to why they do this work with meaning and clarity.

RESOURCES AND TOOLS:

- TopNonProfits Mission and Vision Development Tool
- Futures Without Violence Organizational Mission and Values Toolkit
- UNC- What Do We Want Our MDT To Be – Mission, Vision, and Values Worksheet
- Community Tool Box: Proclaiming Your Dream – Developing a Mission and Vision Statement Worksheet

Values:

Establishing values helps to clarify what pillars a coalition stands on as members work and communicate with stakeholders. They can also serve as checkpoints for how the coalition's internal processes and procedures align with its broader mission, vision, and goals. For example, if one of the coalition's goals is to help increase access to services for marginalized older adults, then identifying and incorporating the value of equity is critical. Furthermore, referencing the agreed upon value of equity to hold the coalition accountable for being equitable in its internal processes and procedures illustrates how you've incorporated the value as a foundational structure for the coalition's success. If established cooperatively, a list of thoughtful values can serve as a tool for checking if your initiatives and change strategies align with the group's aims. They also serve as an aid to ensure

the group remains accountable to how you want to accomplish your goals and broader mission.

RESOURCES AND TOOLS:

- Tamarak Institute: Tool – Establishing Values and Principles for Working Together
- The Management Center – How to Develop and Use Core Values

Coalition Structure

Establishing the structure of your coalition is something that may take some time and may shift as needs are defined. However, it is helpful to start thinking about structure early on in your coalition-building process. Structure outlines the framework in which your coalition is organized, how decisions are made (governance), how formal rules are set (bylaws), and the tone in which informal/cultural rules emerge.[50]

Governance and Workflow Structures:

Organizational Structure: An EJCs organizational structure provides a framework for members to work together, establish processes, and make decisions. Research indicates that simplicity is key when developing a coalition's organizational structure. Getting too caught up in procedures may lead to a loss of mission. Additionally, members, staff, and stakeholders tend to perceive a coalition as more effective when it is clearly structured and task-oriented.[51] There is no one way a coalition should be structured; the decision should be based on the purpose, aims, and capacity of member organizations.

There are several models coalitions can use for their structure. Below is a grid with different models identified in TCC Groups 2021 publication Coalitions as a Tool for Advocacy – Evidence and Lessons Learned:[52]

Types of Coalition Models

Models by Purpose	Hybrid Model	Models by Leadership Structure
Letterhead: Loose structure with an emphasis on large numbers/prominent members **Campaign/Agenda-Focused:** More of an alliance structure; organized around a specific strategy **Long-Term Orientation:** View effort on a longer time horizon, grounded in making sustained progress	**Hybrid:** Increasingly common; characterized by mixing and matching multiple models simultaneously	**Leaderless:** Purely democratic with a very flat structure **Leaderful:** Multiple leaders with layered, collective decision-making **Leader-Led:** One or two dominant leaders, often grounded in charisma and technocratic skill

EJCs tend to be a Long-Term Orientation model and are either Leaderful or Leader-Led.

Common hierarchical structures include a lead agency structure and an independent non-profit structure. Both examples have a top-tier entity, either an existing agency or the coalition incorporated as a non-profit, serving as its own lead. Under the lead entity is a steering committee, and under that are working groups or subcommittees.

In these models, the top tiers provide administrative support and resources, may hire and fund staff, are responsible for facilitating decisions, serve as the group's leader in strategy development, and provide a birds-eye-view of the coalition's initiatives. Steering committees often take the lead on researching and recommending the strategic directions of a coalition in collaboration with formal leadership. Steering committees usually comprise the group's core members, originating members, or are voted in once a general membership is established.

Lastly, working groups or subcommittees are developed to meet the goals of the coalition. They can be established based on content (i.e., financial exploitation, mandatory reporting, equity and inclusion), activities (i.e., policy and legislative advocacy, public awareness, educational resource development, training), and/or geography across the state or tribal community (counties, cities, Native nations, etc.)[53]

Many coalitions begin without an identified single leader, using a Steering Committee of the core originating members and developing subcommittees and working groups as needed as the coalition evolves. Alternatively, the Steering Committee could comprise leaders from each subcommittee and working group, flattening out the hierarchy structure and giving voice from each group equal value when decision-making. In this structure subcommittees would be process-based such as Membership and Recruitment Committee, Internal Communications Committee, Sustainability Committee, etc. Working Groups would focus on content, activities, or geography as previously described.

Depending on a coalition's growth and evolving scope of work, Steering Committee-led groups often transition into a formal structure. This may include hiring leadership or incorporating and establishing a Board of Directors to help with administrative needs and establishing plans for the coalition's long-term sustainability.

Questions to ask when determining structure can include:[54]

- **How broad is your purpose?** A coalition with a broad purpose may need a structure that has many layers such as executive leadership, a coordinator, and multiple committees, whereas a more narrowly focused coalition may be able to operate as one group with a defined decision-making process.
- **Is the coalition primarily focused on advocacy, or is it service-oriented?** Advocacy-centered coalitions are more often organized in a hierarchical structure, with an emphasis on content-specific or need-specific subcommittees.

- **Is the coalition organically decentralized, or is formed under a primary organization?** A decentralized coalition comprises multiple organizations, with none as an apparent lead agency. It may be challenging to establish a hierarchical structure from the start with this type of group, with the smoother option to establish a flat structure with a leading Steering Committee and a Coordinator to help keep the workflow and processes organized. As the EJC develops, it may be apparent that a more top-down structure is needed, but it depends on the growing needs of the group and the culture the coalition is attempting to establish.

Decision-Making Structure:

Your governance model will determine the decision-making structure your coalition will use. There are several ways to organize a decision-making process. Keep in mind the culture you want to foster as well as the coalition's goals and aims when establishing which framework will work best for the group. You may likely want to implement multiple forms of decision-making processes depending on the task at hand. If you have a leader-led organization, financial, staffing, and administrative decisions may likely be made by executive leadership, whether that's a single person, co-lead, or Board. Simultaneously, it may make sense for strategic decisions like how to design an advocacy campaign are better accomplished in committee using a shared decision model like consensus or consent-based decision-making. It's important to go about how you design your decision-making processes with some nimbleness. Sometimes, a process decided early on may not be the right fit as the coalition grows and goals become further defined. What's most important here is to grow the capacity of the group to be able to assess whether your processes are working and be able to adjust without too much disruption along the way.

Decision-Making Structures Include:

Executive Leadership: This hierarchical decision-making structure leaves all

final decisions to the coalition's top leadership. This model can help when there is some urgency needed for a decision; however, it can create challenges related to collective problem-solving, empowering membership, or finding opportunities to build trust. It can also be a burden for leaders at the top, leaving them feeling like they are operating on an island without support, when in fact one of the most important elements of collaborative work is that those doing it do not feel alone.

This decision-making process may be necessary when making financial, quick advocacy or legislative, or urgent communication decisions. If leadership needs to make decisions in this way, it can be helpful to draw on the steering committee and/or a board of directors for guidance to ensure that all angles are considered and that opportunities are thoroughly thought through before a decision is made.

Consensus/Consent-based decision-making: This is a more equitable approach to decision-making for a coalition. While consensus/consent-based decision-making can take more time, it allows for a problem to be fully discussed, and if done well, sets up a framework for all voices around a table to be heard.

Consensus and Consent-based decision-making use very similar processes; the primary difference is how participants' opinions are framed. In consensus, everyone agrees on the decision being made. Consent, however, means that no one is wholeheartedly against the decision. The distinction here is important because the latter allows for the inevitability and acknowledgment of differences while allowing the group to move forward. Consent-based decision-making is considered to be the more inclusive of the two options.

A Consensus/Consent-based decision-making process after establishing a list of group agreements, for example, can look like:[55]

1. Once the group develops an initial list of group agreements, facilitate a discussion to see if anyone needs anything clarified. The goal is to ensure that everyone clearly understands the information provided.

2 After clarification is provided and all questions are answered, ask the group if anyone would like to make changes or additions to the agreements. All edits should be justified, and the person recommending changes should be available to answer clarifying questions from the group.

3 Incorporate all the changes suggested by the group. Once the list is complete, you can choose to proceed with consensus or consent. To reach a consensus, ask the group if everyone agrees on the final list of agreements. If everyone does, you have consensus and are ready to move forward with your group agreements intact.

   For consent, ask if anyone has any strong disagreements with the list. If there is a strong disagreement, meaning that a person cannot move forward if the decision stays as is, then continue your conversation from step 2 until there is no longer a strong disagreement. The aim is to ensure all perspectives are heard and you reach a place where your decision truly meets the group's needs.

4 Lastly, ask one more time if there is strong disagreement or if everyone can move forward with the group agreements list as it stands. Once you've reached that agreement, you've reached consent. This may mean that some people are not fully happy with the decision made, but they are happy enough to not stop the process from moving forward.

Majority Rule: Similar to consensus/consent decision-making, majority rule decision-making requires that time is spent ensuring that everyone involved in making the decision has all the information necessary to be informed about their choices.[56] It's helpful, before voting, to facilitate a clarifying discussion on whatever decision point is being made, and work to ensure that everyone involved has an opportunity to ask questions and provide feedback. Once the group feels they have all the information needed about the decision at hand, hold a vote, leaving the final rule to the majority.

Coalition Rules:

Bylaws:

Bylaws are the formal and legal rules by which an EJC is governed. They spell out all the details of a coalition, including its name, mission and purpose, goals, membership structure and requirements, officer and staff titles and responsibilities, organizational structure, meeting formats and timelines, decision-making protocols, dues/fee structures, voting processes, and how positions are filled.

Developing bylaws can be a helpful process in defining the entire structure of the coalition from nuts to bolts. It's a helpful tool for all members to ensure transparency about the inner workings of the EJC. If you are not incorporating as a non-profit, bylaws are not required, but many coalitions develop them to provide clarity and structure. See the Resources and Tools section for a Bylaws template.

Group Agreements:

Often, at the beginning of any engagement, it is helpful for a group to decide on agreements that frame how members will work together. Group agreements aim to provide cultural rules to which the group agrees to be accountable. Group agreements help develop respectful organizational cultures that are generative, navigate conflicts well, are inclusive, and are mindful of differences. Group agreements can be established early on in a coalition's lifecycle but should also be assessed and reviewed with members regularly to ensure they continue to be a good fit for the group and its aims.

Building group agreements together can also help build camaraderie and trust and unearth communication challenges early on. If it is initially challenging for a new group to develop agreements together, especially if many people do not know each other, leadership can provide an initial list of agreements, ask for additions from the group, and then facilitate a consensus/consent process to ensure participating members agree.

Examples of Group Agreements Include:[57]

- Have permission to speak in first draft, or not require all initial ideas/contributions to be fully flushed out.
- Assume good intentions, but attend to impact
- Engage tension, don't indulge in drama
- Notice power dynamics
- Be mindful of taking too much, or too little space
- Address the issue, not the person
- Lean into discomfort
- Use "I" statements
- Actively listen and respect differences of opinion
- Don't disclose others' information without their knowledge and consent.

Legal/Fiscal Structures:

You may not know how to legally structure your EJC at the beginning of your coalition-building journey. It is okay to take time to figure this piece out, but it is important to understand the opportunities available as the coalition begins to grow, build strategies, and streamline its aims. There are several ways in which a coalition can legally and fiscally organize itself, and how you choose to do so will depend on the group's needs, infrastructure and support, and strategic plans for the future.

These options include:

- Stand-alone 501(c)3 or 501(c)4 non-profit organization
- Grassroots or unincorporated volunteer organizations
- Fiscal Sponsorship
- Fiscal Agent
- Housed under a larger institution (university, health system, etc.)

RESOURCES AND TOOLS:

- Coalition Check List – Understanding What Organizational Model is Best for Your Aims
- Checklist to Establish a 501(c)3 Nonprofit Organizations
- Bylaws Template
- Tools for Working Groups
- Developing Community Agreements
- Decision-Making: Pros, Cons, and Mitigations Template

Leadership

> "Over the nearly forty-five years I've been involved in local or state elder abuse coalitions, I have seen how important the right leader can be in coalition growth and accomplishment. More specifically, I've noticed that the best coalition leaders have been inclusive. They truly believe that every interested person and organization has a key role to play in addressing elder abuse and furthering the mission of the coalition, and they work to enable the fulfillment of these roles."
>
> — Georgia Anetzberger, Founding Board Chair, Ohio Coalition for Adult Protective Services and Ohio Elder Abuse Commission Steering Committee.

Leadership Roles:

Strong leadership is a key element for a successful EJC, particularly at its start.[58] How leadership is structured depends on your governance model; however, there

are common roles and recommended skills that are useful for coalition leaders to move the group forward successfully and sustainably. Coalition leaders usually include a Director or co-directors, a Board or Steering Committee Chair, and a Project Manager or Coordinator. Other leaders include leads of subcommittees or working groups, and informal leaders that naturally emerge as part of the group's culture.

It is important to distinguish between the leadership responsibilities to develop a synergy that allows for all of the coalition's needs to be met, and for the development and execution of meaningful strategies. Sylvia Pla-Raith, former Board Chair of OCAPS shares: "Coordinators and Project Managers can run the coalition's projects, but they shouldn't also be charged with leading its sustainability strategy. It's too much for one person. Good top leaders stay connected to the coalition's projects while maintaining a birds-eye view with a mind for sustainability. Directors and Chairs can support Coordinators, while also building relationships, developing funding strategies, tracking progress, and seeing where gaps and adjustments are needed along the way."

Role of a Director:

An EJC Director is charged with maintaining a high-level perspective and responsibility over the coalition's operations, staff, membership, financial health, and strategic alignment. Depending on how your coalition is structured, a director can lead advocacy initiatives, education and training, planning and development, fundraising, and communications strategies. If a director is not leading those initiatives, they are tasked with being connected to each project to ensure that the coalition remains aligned with its mission and vision and operates within the limits of its resources. A strong director will ensure that there is transparency across the coalition's operations and internal communications, working to build cohesiveness between coalition staff, board, steering committee, and working groups. The director is also typically the liaison between the coalition and any funder organizations. As a leader of the EJC, a director is also charged with providing mentorship and developing new and emerging leaders throughout the coalition's organizational structure.

Role of Board of Steering Committee Chair:

A Board or Steering Committee Chair is responsible for supporting the director and providing leadership in prioritizing strategies to meet the EJC's aims. Chairs also support fundraising efforts and design sustainability frameworks. The chair manages and organizes board/committee meetings, facilitates voting, ensures members have the information they need to make all necessary decisions, and provides learning opportunities that help leadership stay on the pulse of emerging issues.

Role of a Coordinator:

Coordinators play an essential role in the success of a coalition. They are often the glue that keeps people and processes together and provides leadership, not just administratively, but also in forming and maintaining the culture of a coalition, organizing and facilitating meetings, and providing necessary direction and accountability as members build strategies and implement change. Coordinators often contribute significant subject matter expertise to an EJC's work, as many are well established in the elder justice field respectively.

A Coordinator's role includes:

- Administrative Functions: Meeting planning, membership management, internal communications, attend to accessibility needs, conference and training coordination
- Meeting Facilitation: Agenda setting, and steering committee and/or subcommittee meeting facilitation
- Cultural Stewardship: Setting the tone for internal communication styles, holding staff and members accountable to group agreements and policies, facilitating welcoming environments virtually and in person.

Leadership Characteristics:

While some people have a natural charisma, character, and personality to be effective leaders, leadership is also a set of skills that can be fostered. No matter

what leadership role a person has, some defining characteristics of leadership can be cultivated to support the success, cohesiveness, and sustainability of an EJC.

Foster Collaboration:

Collaborative leadership includes having the capacity to:[59]

- Assess the internal and external environment for collaboration. A strong leader has a sense of the larger story and context of a problem before initiating change or action.
- Provide clarity for the group and help set up systems and a culture that allows others to do the same.
- Build and foster trust. Be intentional in how coalition meetings are facilitated and how the collaborative culture evolves to ensure it is safe, brave, innovative, and equitable.
- Self-reflect. Being self-aware is just as important as maintaining awareness of the coalition. Often, we see members leave or staff disengage because of ineffective or unhealthy leadership patterns. Leaders need to have mechanisms that allow them to receive trusted and meaningful feedback and look for ways to address pain points and opportunities for growth.

Understand and Acknowledge Your Positionality and Power:

Leaders with a keen understanding and acknowledgment of their positionality can help to develop teams that are inclusive, equitable, and responsive. Positionality is the combination of a person's social identities (race, gender, age, class, etc.), their place and roles in the broader context (within their community, in the coalition, in their organizations), and their personality and personal perspectives. Leaders who are aware of their positionality and can articulate it are well-prepared to lead a coalition that recognizes power dynamics, diverse perspectives, and lived experiences as expertise. They also understand the influence and impact of their words and energy on the culture of the coalition. This sense of awareness and the process of acknowledging it also help leaders to model

how to recognize power (in themselves and others), when to cede it, and when to use it for meaningful impact.

Understand and Acknowledge Intersectional Identities:

> "There is no such thing as a single-issue struggle, because we do not live single-issue lives."
> — Audre Lorde[60]

A mark of a good leader is one who understands the power and importance of the diversity and full humanity of an EJC's membership. Just as it is important to approach problem-solving for elder justice issues from an equitable and trauma-informed lens, it is equally important to understand that each coalition member comes to this work from the lived experiences of their own intersectional identities. We are each the sum of our parts (race, gender, gender expression, age, sexual orientation, disability status, class, education level, etc.) and the privilege or oppression experienced because of society's response to those parts (ageism, racism, ableism, access to power, white privilege, access to wealth, etc.). Leaders who acknowledge this can help to develop a coalition whose culture breaks down oppression and inequity and the disjointed change efforts that come as a result.

Commitment to Mentorship and Building New Leaders:

A challenge often felt in social movement spaces, and particularly felt in the aging and elder justice field, is a need for more mentorship and encouragement of emerging leaders. Coalitions and their existing leaders are uniquely positioned to shift this for the field, by prioritizing efforts to develop people across the leadership spectrum. Effective leaders understand that coalitions are the sum of their parts and know the value of building others' skills and capacities to become leaders themselves.

RESOURCES AND TOOLS:

- A Tool for Understanding Individual and Institutional Positionality
- Role Expectations Template and Examples
- Bridgespan Nonprofit Leadership Development Toolkit

Consideration of Power Dynamics:

> "The most important question isn't who has power and who doesn't but HOW is power exercised"
> — Collective Change Lab

One undeniable truth about a coalition (or any organization) is that power dynamics are always at play in multiple ways. Power can be a tool for and a barrier to success depending on who has it and how it is utilized. Generally, power is defined as "the ability or authority to influence others, to decide who will have access to resources, and to define reality or exercise control over oneself or others."[61] However, when broken down, power can show up in multiple ways with a variety of impacts on how an EJC functions and its outcomes. Lily Zheng describes six different variations of power:[62]

- **Formal power** – the right to request behavior from another. We see this power used by executive leadership, boards, and funders.
- **Reward power** – the ability to promise compensation to influence power. This can include money (i.e., the power of funders) or a promise of other influences like resources, connections, a promotion, etc.
- **Coercive power** – the ability to threaten punishment to influence behavior. This is the prominent dynamic of the criminal justice and US political systems.
- **Expert power** – the ability to influence behavior by possessing greater expertise or ability. EJCs may notice this dynamic between well-established members and newer professionals. This can also

show up in advocacy initiatives where subject matter experts can influence policymakers.

- **Informational power** – the ability to influence behavior by possessing greater information. This dynamic may show up if one organization is unwilling or unable to share information or hoard resources.
- **Referent power** – the ability to build rapport and influence behavior through charisma. Facilitators often hold this power, using it to influence group dynamics or culture. It's also a power used when engaging in advocacy or attempting to gain favor from partners or outside groups.

An EJC can evaluate how and where power dynamics show up, allowing the coalition to use power to its advantage. It can also work to ensure that unhealthy power dynamics do not stifle the group, limit member participation, or design strategies that center whiteness or ignore the needs of marginalized communities.

Equity Pause: Analyzing power dynamics

Take time to analyze the power dynamics of your coalition by asking the following questions:[63]

- How is power distributed in your EJC across leadership, steering committees, subcommittees, working groups, partners, and funders?
- Where is there an imbalance of power? And what power dynamics play out related to those imbalances?
- How does your organizational structure and processes impact decision-making? Do certain voices carry more weight or get dismissed during discussions or final decisions?

RESOURCES AND TOOLS

- Collective Impact Racial Equity Toolkit (pg. 24)
- The Power Project
- Reimagining Power: Examining the Role of Advocacy and Organizing in Collective Impact

Chapter 5

Maintaining an Elder Justice Coalition

Now you've built a coalition. You've identified your mission, vision, and values, you've begun recruiting members, established your structure and governance, and it's time to get to work. The following section will provide information, resources, and tools to help support the functional needs of an EJC as the collaborative builds and implements strategies for improving elder justice outcomes in your state or tribal community. Here we will look at how to identify goals and outcomes, ways and reasons for collecting data, facilitation techniques, managing team dynamics, communications strategy, community engagement, and navigating transitional moments.

Goal Setting and Strategy Building

In many cases, EJCs are established or members join because of some inciting event or a starkly apparent need that made people in the field realize that collective power is required to make a necessary change.

For example, in 2002, retired Duluth, MN police officer, Scott Campbell, discovered that his mother was being financially exploited by his brother, Tim (also a police officer), who stole over $100,000 from a joint account. The stress of this victimization took a heavy toll on Scott's mother's physical and mental health. The prosecution of this case was handled by the Minnesota Attorney General's Office, and despite the best efforts from a talented prosecutor, the trial resulted in a hung jury due to ambiguities in Minnesota's financial exploitation laws. Persistence and an appeal ultimately led to a conviction, and lessons learned resulted in revisions and clarification in the laws. This experience prompted the prosecutor to become an active member of the Vulnerable Adult Justice Project, a policy-focused coalition and predecessor of today's Minnesota Elder Justice Center. The Vulnerable Adult Justice Project, founded in 2007, made reforming MN's criminal financial exploitation laws a centerpiece of its work. The Governor signed those changes into law in 2009. Furthermore, Scott Campbell continued to advocate for victims

and families through public awareness campaigns and sharing his story. He later became a founding board member of the Minnesota Elder Justice Center.

Elder abuse and elder justice are complicated and nuanced and encompass a large variety of problems, often making it hard for an EJC to pinpoint where to focus and what to prioritize. It can help to start with problem identification. For example, the Vulnerable Adult Justice Project knew to prioritize its goal of reforming criminal financial exploitation laws because it acknowledged that the problem was that existing laws were ambiguous, resulting in an ineffective system response to elder abuse cases. Once you can define a problem, you can begin to drill down on a goal (or goals).

Goal Setting:

Setting thoughtful goals can do several things for a coalition at any stage of its lifecycle. Goals help to prioritize needs and manage resources accordingly, provide a clear vision and definitions of success, provide a rubric for how well an EJC is meeting expectations, and can be a tool for equity and inclusion by being responsive and including the perspectives of those most impacted by the problem.[64]

The SMARTIE goals framework developed by The Management Center can help you transform a problem statement into strategic, outcomes-driven goals that align with your coalition's mission and values. Ultimately, well-formed goals should communicate what success looks like and how you'll know that you've achieved it.

SMARTIE Goals:[65]

Strategic: A strategic goal should reflect your coalition's vision and help move the coalition's work closer to achieving it.

Measurable: A measurable goal includes clear indicators of success. Measures of success can be numerical (i.e., increase training participation by 15%), or they can be qualitative (i.e., bank staff have an improved understanding of how to make a report).

Ambitious: An ambitious goal aims for impact. By their nature, coalitions are very powerful, and your goals should reflect your EJCs' capacity to make meaningful change.

Realistic: A realistic goal considers the coalition's resources, time, and capacity. You want to create goals that you can keep track of to ensure that you don't overwhelm your team, network, or funds.

Time-Bound: A time-bound goal sets a realistic deadline, and meets the moment of the problem you are trying to address.

Inclusive: Inclusive goals include people with traditionally marginalized identities in meaningful ways. It is helpful to think about a problem in the context of who is most impacted and include them in the goal development process, including the decision-making process.

Equitable: Equitable goals seek to disrupt inequity and systemic injustice. Being specific about who the most impacted person of a problem is can help a coalition find the interruption points for inequity and build equitable strategies to address them. For example, say a goal is to increase access to victim services for older victims of abuse by X% by X date. By keeping this goal broad, you may develop strategies for increasing access, but without specificity you may miss who you are increasing access for and who continues to be left out, unintentionally perpetuating an inequitable system that prioritizes the needs of white, able-bodied folks over others.

Taking the time to distill your goals in this way can help your coalition test assumptions, build initiatives that result in meaningful change, and address the systemic roots of the problems older adults face.

Strategy Building:

Once you've established some SMARTIE goals, you can zoom in on an action plan using either a theory of change or a logic model process to identify strategies, actions, and potential outcomes along the way to reaching your goals. During your planning, it is important to provide time and a process to reflect and assess whether your strategies and goals remain relevant, test for assumptions, and adjust for any changing external factors that may require you to shift course.

Strategies, Activities, and Outcomes:

Strategies are bigger-picture ideas, activities are the actions taken to accomplish those ideas, and outcomes are the changes made due to those actions. An example of a strategy for an EJC is developing an advocacy campaign. Activities to support that strategy may include educating policymakers, developing policy solution recommendations, or providing educational and awareness-building opportunities to elder justice system professionals and other community organizations, etc.

With your strategies and activities in place, describing anticipated outcomes helps to check over time whether you are moving towards your goals and identify where adjustments need to be made.

Outcomes traditionally comprise three elements:[66]

1. The desired direction or change you expect to see (i.e., increased, decreased, maintained, improved, etc.)
2. A description of what changes (behaviors, systems, policy, knowledge, etc.)
3. Who experiences the change (individuals, organizations, groups, communities, or systems).

There are several reasons to map out your goals, strategies, actions, and outcomes using a theory of change or a logic model:[67]

- Articulating each clearly provides transparency and helps to build trust among the communities your EJC hopes to impact.
- Your goals, strategies, actions, and outcomes can serve as reference points for tracking your EJC's work, assessing it, and communicating when adjustments are needed.
- They provide a framework for the evaluation of your coalition's effectiveness, and
- They communicate progress and intentions to coalition leadership, stakeholders, board members, and funders.

RESOURCES AND TOOLS:

- SMARTIE Goals Worksheet
- Goals Bank – SMARTIE Goal Examples
- Developing a Theory of Change Practical Guide Part 1: Overview of Theory of Change Concepts and Language
- Developing a Theory of Change Practical Guide Part 1: Step-By-Step Guidance and Examples
- Developing a Theory of Change Template
- Resource Brief: E-MDT Logic Models
- Ford Foundation Organizational Mapping Tools for Coalitions

Evaluation

Evaluation can support the sustained growth and impact of your EJC. It provides information on impact, successes, and challenges and helps establish priorities. It also helps track whether initiatives remain mission-aligned and whether resources were appropriately utilized. The information synthesized from evaluations is critical when communicating impacts and needs to current and

potential funders, policymakers, stakeholders, potential partners, community members, and coalition leadership.

When your EJC begins any initiative, or even at the beginning stages of building an EJC, it is smart to plan evaluation strategies early on. With an early-developed evaluation plan, you can ensure you have resources in place to identify stakeholders, design data collection methods, collect and analyze data, and put the information gathered to good use.

In general, three types of evaluations can be helpful throughout the lifecycle of an EJC:[68]

- **Process Evaluation:** Evaluation of a coalition's infrastructure, functions, and processes.
- **Impact Evaluation:** Evaluation of strategies and initiatives implemented to meet the coalition's goals.
- **Outcome Evaluation:** Evaluation of high-level impacts of the coalition's work over time.

Once you decide what type of evaluation is needed, the following resources can help you streamline your evaluation plan and execution.

RESOURCES AND TOOLS:

- A Field Guide to Ripple Effects Mapping
- Guiding Questions to Advance Equity in Evaluation and Research
- Evaluating Coalitions and Networks: Frameworks, Needs, and Opportunities
- Basics of a Data-Informed Approach
- CDC Evaluation Resources
- NSVRC Evaluation Toolkit

Facilitation Techniques

> "A facilitator is someone trained in the skill of shaping group dynamics and collective conversations. My job is to put the right people in a room and help them collectively think, dream, argue, heal, envision, trust, and connect for a specific larger purpose."[69]
> — Priya Parker

One of the more important skills needed to lead a coalition toward successful collaboration and outcomes is effective facilitation. Often, the responsibility of executive leadership or the coalition coordinator, facilitating coalition meetings not only sets the tone and culture, but directly implicates workflow, decision-making, problem-solving, conflict resolution, and outcomes.

In her book Emergent Strategy, adrienne maree brown says, "There is a conversation in the room that only these people at this moment can have. Find it."[70] A facilitator's job is to create a container in which meaningful, respectful, and productive conversations can be had.

Often, people believe that the ability to facilitate is a personality trait. While personality certainly plays a role in the tone of one's facilitation, facilitation is a skill that can be learned rather than something that is solely innate.

Good meeting facilitation often includes:

- **A clear plan with a thoughtful agenda.** An agenda can be either co-created with the group or based on group feedback that accounts for the group's needs and time. Providing agendas ahead of time, asking for additions, and reviewing agendas at the beginning of each meeting helps participants understand the meeting goals and allows them to help shape the meeting.

- **Preparation and planning to have the best conversation for the specific need at hand.** There is a plethora of ways to prepare and plan for productive meetings and discussions. Open dialogue can often be a generative way to brainstorm ideas or troubleshoot; however, sometimes problems require a structured process to untangle solutions. For example, for complex problems, it may make sense to split a larger group into smaller ones, each of whom tackles a piece of the issue deeply and then comes back for a larger conversation using everyone's honed perspectives. Or it may make sense to break a problem into pieces and facilitate a consensus or consent process to make decisions along the way towards a well-formed strategy. The technique you use is dependent on the goal you are trying to achieve in each meeting and the makeup of the group convening.
- **Mindfulness of power dynamics and personalities.** There is a clear power dynamic between the facilitator and the rest of the group. A facilitator needs to understand their own positionality in the group and be mindful of how it implicates participation from members. Additionally, there are always unique power dynamics when different organizations come together for a common goal. For example, government representatives hold more positional power than social workers at a service organization. This does not mean one is more important than the other. It is the facilitator's job to identify when power is being held over the group and when power can be utilized to meet the needs of the group and the EJC's objectives. Lastly, power dynamics come into play related to race, gender, disability, sexual orientation, etc. A good facilitator will have tools in their toolbox to handle prejudice and discrimination when it occurs and does the pre-work to establish an equitable and inclusive meeting space (in-person and virtually) so that everyone can participate fully, and have their voices valued equally.

Generative facilitation technique for problem-solving:

Generative facilitation is a process for action planning and decision-making adapted from The Interaction Institutes for Social Change. It's used to organize discussions that include all perspectives in the room, with clear opportunities to find clarity, brainstorm solutions, troubleshoot, and establish action plans.[71] This technique can also help foster a culture of innovation for your EJC. It is designed to help members develop new ideas with the freedom to do so without judgment, leaving more space for creativity and identifying opportunities that may otherwise be overlooked. This is one of many facilitation techniques, but it is helpful, particularly for EJCs working to establish priority areas among a large list of areas needing attention.

Generative Facilitation Steps for Building Solutions:

1. Present all information to the group related to the problem you are trying to solve. This ensures everyone has all the information needed to make informed decisions and come up with creative solutions.
2. Make a list with the group of the goals and outcomes desired if the problem is solved.
3. Spend 15-20 minutes sharing and listing all the possible strategies/solutions without discussing whether they will work.
4. Spend 5 minutes reviewing the list and asking if anyone needs anything clarified.
5. Remove all duplicate ideas.
6. On their own, each person will prioritize the list of strategies/solutions as they see fit and report back to the group on why they came up with their order.
7. Facilitate a discussion with the group on what strategies/solutions stood out for everyone.
8. Open the floor for members to advocate for their positions.

9 Reground the group by reading the goals and outcomes identified in step 2.

10 Narrow the list of ideas down to an agreed-upon action plan.

11 Facilitate a discussion on any changes to the plan. What is missing? What should be eliminated or adjusted?

12 Ask the group for a final agreement either by vote, consensus, or consent.

RESOURCES AND TOOLS:

- Community Tool Box – Group Facilitation and Problem Solving
- Emergent Strategy
- Holding Change
- Leading Groups Online
- Training for Change Facilitation Tools
- Liberating Structures – Meeting Facilitation Tools
- Collective Impact Forum – Making Meetings Work

Building Culture and Navigating Team Dynamics

The beauty and challenge of an EJC are navigating the different personalities, priorities, and perspectives that have come together for a common goal. Often, we will see that coalition members want the same outcome but believe there are different ways to achieve it. For example, a police officer may prioritize carceral approaches to elder abuse, whereas a victim advocate may want to explore transformative or restorative justice solutions. There is power in having each person's perspective at the table and it can also sometimes result in contentious or difficult conversations.

Two approaches to handling ongoing team dynamics include:

1. Focus on members' strengths in addition to the expertise they bring.
2. Welcome conflict and use it as a tool to dig deeper into problem identification and strategizing.

Members' Strengths:

The ultimate goal for any coalition is to effect meaningful change. To do this, you need members who bring different strengths and traits that complement each other, as well as have the capacity to navigate conflict in a generative and respectful way. To establish a team culture where this is possible, it is helpful for everyone to understand their roles and have permission to bring their unique strengths and perspectives to the table without judgment.

There are seven roles often present in any type of movement or change work, all of which complement each other to get the job done. If you realize there are gaps in your coalition with any of these roles, it's an opportunity to be strategic about membership recruitment to develop the most well-rounded coalition possible. These roles include:[72]

The Advocate: A charismatic person who is vocal about the issue, able to raise awareness, and add momentum to an initiative.

The Educator: A person who can change minds through increasing knowledge. They can break down information and communicate it clearly to stakeholders (i.e., funders, the public, legislators) in order to impact systems change.

The Organizer: An organizer is often the person at the helm of coalition building. They are skilled at seeing a problem from multiple angles and convening people to build right-fit solutions.

The Strategist: A person who takes a bird's-eye view of a problem and insists on answering the questions of *why* and *how* to drill down to the root causes and effective solutions. They are good at planning and facilitating movement towards the coalition's goals.

The Backer: Often an influential person who can help bring the coalition from the peripheral to the mainstream view. They may not participate day-to-day but can help legitimize an EJC's work to stakeholders. This may be a government official, a well-resourced or respected agency lead, or a well-respected leader in the community.

The Builder: The builder is skilled at taking ideas and turning them into action. This person often has the capacity to establish processes, policies, and interventions. They tend to be quite detail-oriented and can strengthen a coalition's ability to move from theory to action.

The Reformer: The reformer often thinks long-term about a coalition's sustainable health. They are committed to assessing processes and strategies along the way and are skilled at identifying where adjustments are needed.

Many people likely align with several of these roles at once. What can be helpful for team cohesiveness is recognizing who has what strengths and utilizing them when it makes sense to do so. This allows members to show up as their whole selves, not just as representatives of their organizations or experts. It also can break down contentions between groups that may not historically work well together by recognizing that each person has specific things to bring to the table, all of which are needed to reach the EJC's goals.

Navigating Conflict:

An indicator that you have built a healthy team is how the team handles conflict when it arises. EJCs do not exist in a bubble; members are coming together

while political and social turmoil is happening all around us, impacting each of us directly or peripherally. Members of an EJC may have political and philosophical differences, different relationships to power and access, and different lived experiences all of which dictate how each shows up in the EJC space. This then requires time and energy spent on building trust, forming strong relationships, and having a process for not only handling conflict when it comes up but intentionally welcoming it in order to get the diversity of voices shared in an equitable and productive way.

A tool for navigating conflict before it even starts is allowing for time and encouraging members to get to know each other on a personal level. The better we know a person, the more willing we are to hear them out when we don't agree with them. For an EJC this could look like including some networking time before or after calls, providing time for members to do a check-in before you get started on each meeting to share how they're feeling as they're coming into the space, designing some meetings to be a bit more casual, leaving time for members to share stories about their lives and experiences, and even planning social opportunities like encouraging members to meet for coffee, hosting happy hours, or unstructured networking events, etc. This may sound simple, but many leaders in the field have shared that we cannot underestimate the power of personal connection when it comes to collaborating, especially when there is a potential for conflict.

Another tool for navigating conflict is utilizing group agreements and having a strong facilitator who can model how to hold the group accountable to them. A strong facilitator will be able to note when an agreement is being broken and intervene. This can look like the facilitator (or other members) interrupting a conversation and pointing out the agreement that is broken. Give the parties an opportunity to course correct. If that's not possible, suggest you bring the conversation to a smaller setting where the facilitator can act as a moderator between the arguing parties, or they can have a one-on-one to work out differences.

If your group agreements do not work as a framework for managing conflict, one strategy is to use specific agreements about managing group differences. N'Tanya Lee, a Black feminist leader and strategist, developed the concept of Principled Struggle for just this. Principled Struggle recognizes that difference is not only inevitable but necessary for any change-makers to reach meaningful goals. She created the values of Principled Struggle that can serve as a framework for your coalition to use when navigating differences:

Principled Struggle:[73]

- We struggle for the sake of deepening our collective understanding and getting to greater unity.
- Be honest and direct — while holding compassion.
- Take responsibility for your own feelings and actions.
- Seek deeper understanding (ask questions, read information before offering a critique).
- Consider this venue may not be the container to hold what you need to bring.
- Side conversations / one-on-ones should help us get better understanding, not check out. Test whether your side conversation is productive by asking "Could I bring the essence of this conversation back to the larger group?"

Lastly, an effective strategy for handling conflict and differences is to intentionally let them in and use them as opportunities to generate more meaningful solutions. This means using facilitation techniques such as consensus/consent decision-making or generative facilitation techniques, both designed to invite all opinions and welcome a healthy debate from various viewpoints to get to solutions that have considered all possible options. When using facilitation strategies that intentionally welcome difference, it is also critical to set up agreements from the group around recognizing that discomfort is likely inevitable, and not something to be avoided. Often, it is easy for people to

recognize discomfort as a lack of emotional safety, but this is not always the case. It can feel uncomfortable when we are challenged philosophically, when our values are questioned, or when our ideas about the world around us don't reflect another person's lived experience. But it is in that discomfort where the most opportunity lies for generative dialogue towards meaningful change.

RESOURCES AND TOOLS:

- Reconstructing DEI: A Practitioners Workbook – Chapter 32 "Bringing People Together"
- Visible Network Labs; Conflict Resolution in Coalitions – Causes and Solutions
- Prevention Institute: The Tension of Turf – Making it Work for the Coalition

Community Engagement

Traditionally, when one thinks about community engagement, what comes to mind is attending community events, informing community members about services, or finding ways to connect with people face-to-face. For state and tribal EJCs, whose communities span large geographic areas, it is helpful to think of community engagement as a foundational strategy for including impacted people in your coalition's work as partners in creating systemic change. There is a spectrum of community engagement that spans from ignoring community input to having community members and impacted people as active decision-makers in your coalition. It is helpful to assess where your EJC currently sits on that spectrum and identify where you want to be. This can help you establish strategies and action items for community engagement that move your EJC toward impactful outcomes.

The following resources are included to help your EJC develop meaningful community engagement strategies. These strategies help get information to

communities and build relationships with community champions and people with lived expertise who can bolster your advocacy, education and training, and public awareness strategies overall.

Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership:[74]

STANCE TOWARDS COMMUNITY	IGNORE	INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	DEFER TO
	0	1	2	3	4	5
IMPACT	Marginalization	Placation	Tokenization	Voice	Delegated Power	Community Ownership
COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT GOALS	Deny access to decision-making processes	Provide the community with relevant information	Gather input from the community	Ensure community needs and assets are integrated into process and inform planning	Ensure community capacity to play a leadership role in implementation of decisions	Foster democratic participation and equity through community-driven decision-making; Bridge divide between community and governance
MESSAGE TO THE COMMUNITY	*Your voice, needs and interests do not matter*	*We will keep you informed*	*We care what you think*	*You are making us think, (and therefore act) differently about the issue*	*Your leadership and expertise are critical to how we address the issue*	*It's time to unlock collective power and capacity for transformative solutions*
ACTIVITIES	Closed door meeting Misinformation Systematic	Fact sheets Open Houses Presentations Billboards Videos	Public Comment Focus Groups Community Forums Surveys	Community organizing and advocacy House meetings Interactive workshops Polling Community forums	MOU's with Community-based organizations Community Organizing Citizen advisory committees Open Planning Forums with Citizen Polling	Community-driven planning Consensus building Participatory budgeting Cooperatives
RESOURCE ALLOCATION RATIOS	**100%** Systems Admin	**70-90%** Systems Admin **10-30%** Promotions and Publicity	**60-80%** Systems Admin **20-40%** Consultation Activities	**50-60%** Systems Admin **40-50%** Community Involvement	**20-50%** Systems Admin **50-70%** Community Partners	**80-100%** Community partners and community-driven processes ideally generate new value and resources that can be invested in solutions

RESOURCES AND TOOLS:

- Facilitating Power – Spectrum of Community Engagement to Ownership
- Inspire – A Roadmap for Effective Community Engagement in Healthcare
- Leading Inside Out & Collective Impact Forum – Community Engagement Toolkit
- Urban Institute: Community-Engaged and Participatory Methods Toolkits
- Urban Institute: Tools and Resources for Project-Based Community Advisory Boards

Communications

Communications are both a tool for an EJC to meet its aims and a necessity for sustaining it over time. Communications are used for recruiting new members, emboldening advocacy campaigns, delivering public awareness campaigns, positioning the EJC as a trusted resource, bolstering the work of coalition members, building partnerships, contributing to the framing of issues on a broader scale, and fundraising.

Effective communications involve many elements. This section provides resources for brand development, communications strategy building, message development, and storytelling techniques.

Branding:

Branding communicates your EJCs personality to stakeholders. This includes visual aspects (logo, color schemes, material design and layout, website design), as well as what emotions, attributes, or feelings you want people to associate with

your EJC (trustworthy, expert, accessible, connected, influential, people-centered, trauma-informed, etc.). A brand communicates what sets your coalition apart and clearly communicates why, how, and for whom your EJC exists. It helps build recognition and can be a tool for meeting your coalition's goals by helping you streamline communications materials, messaging, and outreach strategies.

Often, and if resources are available, it is helpful to hire a marketing or communications firm or consultant to help a coalition build a comprehensive and impactful brand. If that is not possible, here are some resources and tools to help you develop a solid brand identity for your EJC:

RESOURCES AND TOOLS:

- How to Create a Visual Brand Style Guide
- A Complete Guide for Creating a Strong Nonprofit Brand in 2024

Communications Strategies:

A communications strategy is a roadmap for a coalition to follow throughout a communications campaign. It can help you be intentional about identifying the purpose, audience, resources, mistakes, and successes of your communications. This allows you to better predict when adjustments must be made and adequately resource your communications to meet the EJC's needs.

When developing a communications strategy, it is helpful to form a subcommittee to be charged with this work. Communications are simultaneously strategic and creative; collaboration makes it easier (and more fun) to develop compelling and persuasive strategies and messaging.

Once your team is formed, you want to answer the following questions:[75]

- **What is our purpose for communicating?** (fundraising, awareness campaign, member recruitment, advocacy, coalition promotion, etc.). While communications can often do multiple things at once, it is helpful to be clear and intentional about a purpose to help streamline your audience, messaging, and tactics.
- **Who is our audience?** (general public, older adults, caregivers, policymakers, funders, services, etc.) When thinking about audience, focus on your specific purpose for communicating rather than the broader audiences of your coalition. Think about demographics, geography, professions, and what attitudes or behaviors you're trying to influence.
- **What is our message?** (What is the point you're hoping to get across?) With your audience in mind, developing your messaging includes thinking about content that makes sense for that group, what emotions you want to appeal to or evoke from the group, and what language or tone will be most effective.
- **What are the different communications outlets we could use?** (Newsletters, email, website, social media, brochures, newspapers, word-of-mouth, training and events, radio, television) In robust communications strategies, you will often utilize multiple outlets to reach your goals. Again, your audience will be a key factor in which outlets you decide to use. Where are they already looking for information? What is the easiest way to get their attention? What type of outlet will result in the most engagement with your audience and stakeholders?
- **What is needed to use those outlets?** (How do you engage with each outlet, and what resources do you need to do so?) Communications outlets require different skills and resources to access them. For example, social media strategy requires creating succinct and relatable messaging that is image and video-heavy.

Brochures and website development require graphic design and knowledge about keywords and search engine optimization. Grassroots communications require searching for and executing speaking events, networking events, and educational opportunities. It's helpful to understand what resources and skills you have available to you, and where you need to fill in gaps depending on which outlets make the most sense for your communications strategy.

RESOURCES AND TOOLS:

- Smart Chart: free online tool for mission-driven organizations to create actionable communication plans
- Prevention Institute: Communicating with the Media – How to Elevate Your Successes
- Planning Before You Communicate Tool
- RoadMap: Communications Resources

Storytelling:

Storytelling is a very powerful tool to incorporate into your EJC's communications strategies. Using stories helps people connect empathically to the issues your EJC is working to address. A well-told and well-placed story can help build a sense of belonging among your stakeholders from funders to older adults, and can move policymakers into action and change. How, why, and when you tell a story or develop a message all influence its impact. We've provided resources and tools on how to effectively develop and frame stories that will help move the needle in your EJC's initiatives.

RESOURCES AND TOOLS:

- Framing 101
- Story-Telling Strategies for Elder Abuse
- Storytelling Canvas Template
- FrameWorks Institute: Talking Elder Abuse Communications Toolkit
- FrameWorks Institute: Reframing Aging Through Images
- FrameWorks Institute: Framing Strategies to Advance and Address Ageism as Policy Issues
- Storytelling as a Catalyst for Equitable Well-Being
- Advocating with Personal Stories – An Evaluation Toolkit

Equity Pause: Considerations for Accessibility

As you develop your communications products and plan events, prioritize accessibility to ensure everyone can participate fully in your content.

RESOURCES AND TOOLS:

- Creating Accessible Print Materials
- Language Access Planning for Deaf People: A Toolkit
- Tips for Working with Remote Sign Language Interpreters
- Accessibility Tip Sheet for Virtual Meetings and Events
- Tips for Using Accessible Social Media
- Zoom Accessibility Features
- Organizing Information: An Introduction to Reading Order
- Creating an Accessible Meeting Environment
- Budgeting for Access

Change Assessment

Over time, your EJC's goals and needs may change. It's an inevitability but it does not always need to be a surprise. A coalition's capacity to be adaptable is as important as its capacity to be strategic. It can help to take stock annually of whether your membership is meeting the goals you set out to accomplish, whether those goals are still aligned with your mission, and whether your mission is still aligned with the needs of the field and older adults.

We've included several assessments below to help your EJC evaluate whether your membership is right-fit and whether your mission, vision, values, and goals are still relevant and meaningful.

These resources can help you answer whether:

1. Are the right people and organizations participating as members or partners?
2. Are there different people/organizations to recruit based on new/emerging needs?
3. Are any perspectives being missed that the group has yet to consider?
4. Is the EJC still moving towards the goals it set out to meet?
5. Is the EJC meeting its outcomes in the timeframe you hoped, or do milestones need to be adjusted?
6. Have new needs emerged that require a shift in priorities?
7. Are there pain points in how the coalition is operating?
8. Is your mission still reflective of the vision the coalition hopes to achieve?

RESOURCES AND TOOLS:

- What Makes an Effective Coalition? Evidence-Based Factors of Success
- Ford Foundation Organizational Mapping Tool for Coalitions
- Prevention Institute Collaborative Effectiveness Assessment
- Field Guide to Ripple Effects Mapping
- What To Do When Things Go Wrong
- Strategic Planning for Coalition Work

Navigating Transitions

Membership Turnover:

Membership turnover is inevitable at any stage of an EJC's lifecycle. Members may leave because they've changed roles, they no longer have the capacity to participate, they do not feel valued, or they no longer see the value in the EJC. There are, however, strategies coalition leaders can use to mitigate unnecessary and avoidable membership turnover.

Techniques for member retention and transition include:

- Form relationships with multiple people at an organization so the responsibility of coalition participation can be shared with or passed to other interested people.
- Offer different levels of participation to meet the member's capacity and interests. Leadership should talk with members to understand their needs and priorities and help establish a good fit between those and the coalition's goals. This may mean a member steps back for a short time and returns to active participation later, or it could mean the coalition provides support for the member, helping to address their challenges, therefore increasing their capacity to participate.

This can help build relationships and connections to the coalition as a whole and reinforces the idea that the group is there for each other as much as for the EJC's broader goals.

- Provide value and resources. Offering learning opportunities, networking, and access to mentorship can all be good ways to reinforce that there are multiple layers of value offered by a coalition.
- Be responsive to evaluation outcomes. If you conduct a capacity evaluation over time, you will likely identify pain points that may be contributing to membership turnover. Left unaddressed, these organizational challenges can grow and impact member retention and new recruitment. It's important to be responsive to critical feedback and ask for support when needed to adjust accordingly.

Leadership Change:

While leadership change may not happen as often as membership transitions, it is also an inevitability. It does, however, not need to be a crisis. The best time to plan for leadership transitions is before they happen. Having a succession plan in place allows for the stability of a coalition to remain while a leadership search and onboarding occur.[76] Forward-thinking succession planning enables an EJC to develop new leaders, have a system for identifying gaps in leadership, seek new talent in an organized and equitable way, and implement a process for visioning for the future when a transition is imminent.

RESOURCE AND TOOLS:

- Member Retention/Participation Resource Tip Sheet: The 6 R's of Participation
- Sustaining Coalition Engagement
- Leadership Success Planning Resources

Chapter 6

Sustaining an Elder Justice Coalition

Many of the resources, tools, and suggestions in this guide are designed to help grow your EJC into a collaborative that is resilient, responsive, and sustainable. We have outlined the groundwork, strategic planning, evaluation, community engagement, communications strategies, and leadership skills that serve as foundational building blocks for an EJC to have far-reaching and long-term impacts for your state or tribal community.

The following section will provide resources and tools for sustainable funding, positioning your coalition as a trusted resource, and identifying champions to keep the work moving forward.

Resources for Effective Fund Development

When establishing a plan for fund development, start by researching and developing a list of potential funders including foundations, government agencies, corporate giving programs and sponsorships, philanthropic institutions, and individual donors. The more numerous and complex the list you develop, the more you will need to establish a system for tracking opportunities and action steps. A fund development system can help track potential and active funding opportunities, deadlines, tasks for proposal development, and awards received. We have provided several templates to help you organize all fund development activities. Regardless of process, coalition leadership must be clear about the reasonable capacity for fund development and who is responsible for the work. Understanding the timeline for decisions and providing a clear and transparent plan for fund development can ease the many months of work needed to raise funds from diverse sources successfully.

TOOLS:

- Grant Tracking Sheet
- Grant Management Pipeline Template
- Grant Tracking Calendar Template

As you move forward with soliciting funds, keep in mind what each funder may be looking for as you develop your grant proposals. Funders often consider the following when considering supporting a coalition:[77]

- Do the coalition's goals align with the funder's goals?
- What programs or services will the funder not support (i.e., research or advocacy)?
- Can the coalition clearly define its value?
- Is the coalition representative of the diversity of its constituents, and does it make clear efforts to ensure equity and inclusion in its approaches?
- Has the coalition demonstrated success, and or can they demonstrate the capacity to reach its goals?
- What are the coalition's non-financial resources (relationships, status, influence, proven strategies, etc.)
- Is there a commitment to equity and transparency?

Finding the Right Funding Sources:

Your EJC will benefit from having a diversified funding structure, bringing in funds from multiple sources to guard against the over-reliance on one, putting your coalition at risk should that one funding stream cease. There are several ways to build out your EJC's funding structure:

- **Federal Grant Opportunities:** Federal grants are a common place to go for initial funding, but they can potentially be challenging to sustain over time, as many offer 2–3-year funding opportunities with limited renewal. However, they do provide a good foundation and excellent resources for building a long-term sustainability plan. To successfully access federal (and state) funds, it's important to understand the timing of grant cycles, the current budget conditions, and political leadership to assess viable options.

To find federal funding opportunities search:

- Grants.gov
- Administration for Community Living (ACL)
- Office on Violence Against Women (OVW)
- Office for Victims of Crime (OVC)
- Department of Health and Human Services (HHS)

- **State, County, and Local Government funding opportunities:** Build relationships with "champions" for the cause of the coalition in state and local government and ask for funding from state and local government agencies connected to your coalition's aims.
- **Foundations and Philanthropic Support:** Foundation grants and philanthropic support can sometimes be less restrictive than government funding. Incorporate building relationships and establishing relevance based on funders' priorities into your communications strategies for fund development.
- **Corporate Partnerships:** Businesses and corporations may want to sponsor your EJC's programs and initiatives. Before soliciting support, be strategic about framing a win-win relationship with businesses. Research corporate social responsibility initiatives and find alignment between their goals and your EJCs.
- **Membership Fees:** Many EJCs include membership fees in their financial structure. There are several ways to structure membership fees. It is important to consider what the cost/benefit is for organizations joining, what the incentives are for membership, and mechanisms for equitable access. Some coalitions use a formula based on an organization's budget, geography, or population they serve, others have a set small fee ($25 - $50) for all participants, and others establish a sliding scale. How to organize membership fees should be based on the coalition's needs, the value you offer to members, and equity considerations.[78]

RESOURCES AND TOOLS:

- Beyond the Grant: A Sustainable Financing Workbook
- Crafting Compelling Grant Proposals Course (free)
- OVC Sustainability Toolkit
- Funding Toolkit for State Courts and Justice System Partners
- Developing a Plan for Financial Sustainability
- A Guide for Building a Sustainable and Resilient Collaboration
- Grant Research Tools
- Finding Your Funding Model
- Sustainability Self-Assessment Tool
- Potential Donors Worksheet

Advocacy

Advocacy is critical work often at the center of an EJC's strategic initiatives. Advocacy can also play a vital role in a coalition's sustainability plan. A comprehensive advocacy strategy means recognizing changing population needs and policy trends. Moreover, it requires forming and maintaining relationships with policymakers and influential leaders and understanding the who, when, and how of lawmakers' decisions while positioning the EJC as a trusted source for older adults and the systems that serve them.

Effective advocacy involves using a multifaceted approach to raise public awareness, and to support research and data collection to accurately define and understand an issue, create compelling messaging and storytelling to gain support from constituents, policymakers, and leaders, and foster relationships to establish your coalition as a trusted resource. Many of the strategies and tools provided in this guide (i.e., communications strategies, storytelling, community engagement, and evaluation) can help you bolster these advocacy efforts as you approach them

to meet the aims of your coalition and to solidify your coalition as an institutional fixture to be trusted by leaders, policymakers, and community members.

Maintaining Relevance

An element of sustainability and developing a strategic advocacy initiative is having a plan for identifying emerging issues, staying on top of current events, and pending policy challenges. Lisa Nerenberg, Director of Special Projects, California Elder Justice Coalition, aptly points out in her recent book, *Elder Justice, Ageism, and Elder Abuse*, that policy work and advocacy for older adults do not need to stay within the confines of laws and regulations specifically designed for older adults, and in fact, would benefit from taking a wider view. *"'Aging Policy' has traditionally meant policies and programs that were specifically designed for older people, including Medicare, Social Security, and Older Americans Act programs. But older people are significantly, and often disproportionately, affected by other policies and programs. These include policies pertaining to such far-ranging issues as natural disasters, immigration and migration, food policy and programs, transportation, zoning laws, housing, and many others. Elder justice policy, therefore, needs to include 'mainstream' policies to the extent that they affect older people."*[79]

By critically examining the impact of broad policies on older adults, coalitions can increase their potential to drive meaningful change. Further, this broader look aids the EJCs' efforts to remain relevant and up-to-date and catch the eye of funders and policymakers who may not otherwise prioritize elder justice.

Identifying and Supporting Champions of the Work

Identifying champions to support your coalition's work is necessary to support advocacy initiatives, build a coalition's reputation, and broaden its reach. Champions can be influential leaders, policymakers, elected officials, state and

local administrators, aging experts, emerging leaders, and community members. The aim of building relationships with and bringing champions into the fold of a coalition's work is to gain their expert perspective from their specific vantage points and to harness their impact for change at whatever level they sit. Champions can help foster the sustainability of a coalition because they are charismatic, influential, and dedicated. They often excel at recruiting and influencing others, are skilled at finding pressure points on issues, and are passionate.

RESOURCES AND TOOLS:

- Tool: State Law Practical Guidance Series – Nonprofit lobbying – understand lobbying laws in your state to make sure your work is aligned with state regulations
- What is Advocacy
- Advocacy vs. Lobbying
- Advocacy Capacity Tool
- Campaign Strategy Workbook
- Tips for Advocates: Decision-Maker Advocacy
- Champions for 'Life': How to Identify, Support, and Evaluate Advocates for Social Change

Special Considerations: Coalition Work Through Uncertain Times

Certain levels of instability and uncertainty are inevitable, whether it's a pandemic, natural disaster, or political unrest. For coalitions, working during more stable times to develop plans for pivoting priorities, remaining financially secure, developing mechanisms for member support, and building a process into your collaborative for resilience can help weather impending storms.

COVID-19, for example, taught all of us that the capacity to make quick pivots is integral to the sustainability and effectiveness of any coordinated effort. The pandemic shined a stark light on the pervasiveness of ageism, racism, and ableism across the United States and throughout tribal communities, requiring many organizations, collaboratives, and initiatives to reprioritize quickly and with much uncertainty. What came out of this perilous time was recognition from aging and peripheral systems that we all need to have a level of preparedness to address systemic failures, oppression, and social biases strategically and urgently.

Some recommendations from the field for doing this include:[80]

Focus on justice. Addressing ageism is a fundamental mission of an any elder justice advocacy group. Develop messaging that appeals to the value of justice and highlights ageism as a justice issue that intersects with racism, homophobia, transphobia, ableism, and other oppressions. This messaging can draw a broader appeal to professionals and the general public and help connect the dots for people who may not recognize ageism as an oppressive structure.

Define and talk about ageism. Repetitive and strategic messaging on ageism can help dispel stereotypes, biases, and public perceptions about aging and older adults. Over time, this can have lasting impacts on cultural responses to older adults, and hopefully shift the narrative around disability, aging, and worthiness when future national emergencies like COVID-19 disproportionately impact people with marginalized identities.

Work against "othering". A prevalent dynamic of "us vs. them" occurred between younger able-bodied populations, and older, disabled populations when COVID-19 emerged and is still present today. Communications experts believe that the way we speak about older adults can shift perspectives to build solidarity across generations. This includes shifting from using words like "elderly" or "seniors" and using "older adults" instead.

Whatever the source of instability or uncertainty, preparedness and thoughtful strategic planning can help provide a foundation for EJCs and the elder justice field more broadly while navigating tumultuous times. The following resources are provided to support EJCs' resiliency efforts for the long haul.

RESOURCES AND TOOLS:

- How to Lead Through Uncertainty
- 3 Ways to Manage Through Uncertainty
- Strengthening the Structure of Justice to Prevent Elder Abuse
- FrameWorks Aging Resources

Chapter 7

Moving Forward:

Building, maintaining, and sustaining a resilient and effective EJC requires thoughtfulness, strategic planning, effective collaboration techniques, team building, community engagement, advocacy, creative solution-building, and a commitment to operationalizing equitable practices. The hard work involved in establishing a good foundation for your EJC is felt across disciplines, professionals, systems, communities, older adults, and their families.

There is real and measurable power in collective and collaborative change-making. The history of EJCs throughout states and tribes has shown us the impact this work has on a systemic level. Moving forward, EJCs will play a vital role in

recalibrating the elder justice field, shifting from siloed organizations and disjointed systemic approaches to a more cohesive, collaborative approach that centers the unique needs of all older adults and the professionals that support them.

We hope this guide has provided good foundational support for EJCs at every point in their lifecycle and can be used to bolster the impact of the elder justice field as new and emerging EJCs strengthen their own capacities to do this vital work.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

- The Care and Feeding of Community-Based Multidisciplinary Teams
- Strive Together: The Training Hub – Free and accessible training on a variety of topics on leadership, facilitation, collaboration, and data collection
- A Resource Guide for Elder Financial Exploitation Prevention and Response Networks

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