

Background

What can we learn from social network analysis?

A primary goal of Oregon Project LAUNCH was to increase collaboration among early childhood organizations in Deschutes County. The **Partner Tool** was the social network analysis instrument used to evaluate behavior and connections within the Oregon Project LAUNCH collaborative.

With the Partner tool we were able to:

- Map relationships between members of the network
 - Identify key players, resource exchange, and quality of relationships
 - See how the collaboration has changed over time.
- Capture perceptions of outcomes
- Assess gaps, strengths, and areas for improvement

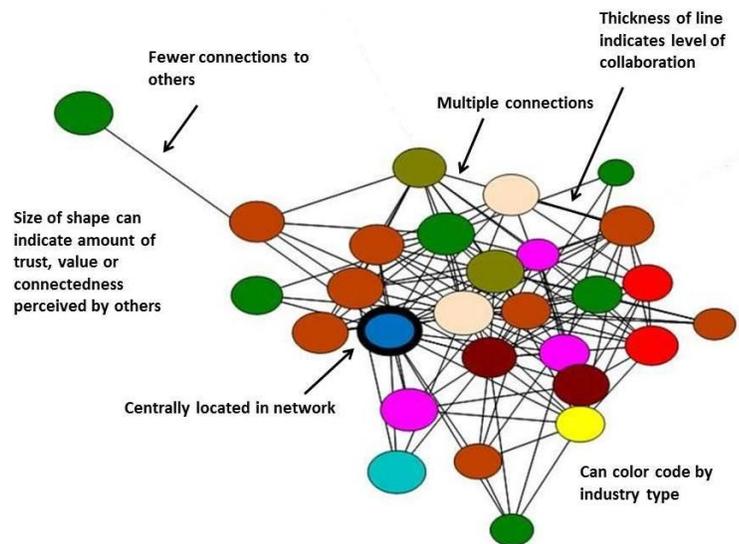


Fig. 1 - LAUNCH Network map. Illustrates number of connections, strength of connections, and location of LAUNCH within network.

LAUNCH is represented by the blue circle outlined in black.

Approach

How did LAUNCH measure collaboration?

LAUNCH council members were asked to complete the **15 minute online survey** in 2012 (n=27) and in 2014 (n=30). Twenty-three of the same organizations completed the survey in both years.

**27 (90%)
members
responded in
2014**

Representatives answered questions about their own organization, as well as other member organizations and programs. Individualized reports were created summarizing **trust, value, and connectedness** for each agency in the network. An overall network report was also created that included all members, even those who had not responded.

"I learned a lot about how the LAUNCH Council works together. It is valuable information."
(Council Member)

The evaluation team presented the information at annual meetings, and this information was used to identify new partners, inform strategic planning and leverage resources.

Technical assistance was provided by PARTNER Tool www.partnertool.net.

Findings

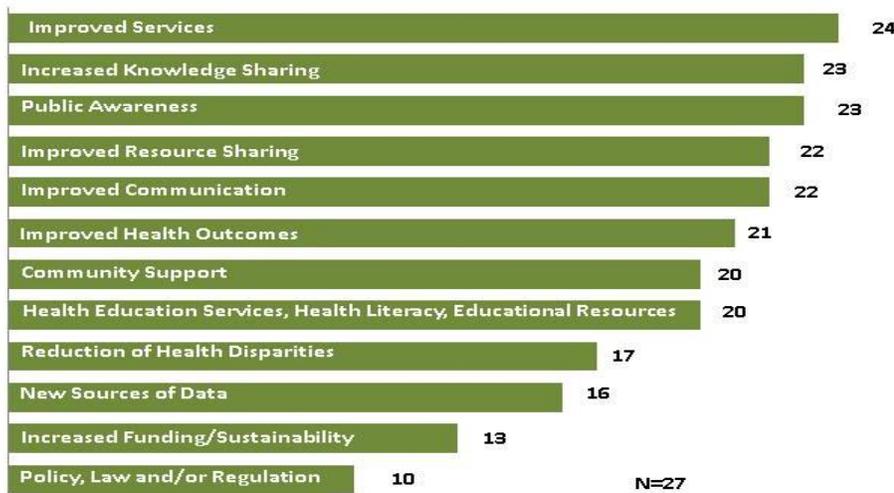
What did we learn about collaboration among our partners?

The organizations (network) associated with Project LAUNCH

- Show a **high degree of connectedness** measured by number of ties
- Show **similarity in the number of connections** with partners, making communication easier
- Show a **growing level of trust**, increasing from 65%-69% 2012-14

42% report **system integration** is the most important outcome of the collaborative (2014)

When asked what outcomes result from the collaborative's work - the following responses were given in 2014:



“Collaboration and partnership allow us to focus on upstream efforts. Together we can do big things. It’s stone soup.”
(council member, 2014)

76% say
The collaborative has been **successful or very successful** at reaching its goals

Implications for Policy and Practice

How can the Partner Tool be used in other reform efforts?

Our experience demonstrates the **Partner Tool** can:

- Visually characterize network collaboration providing feedback for the group and partners
 - Consider providing network and individual partner profiles
 - Keep in mind new members will change network dynamics and impact survey results
- Reveal opportunities to leverage resources and maximize existing relationships
- Measure change in network collaboration over time but should not be administered until the network has stabilized and not be repeated too frequently. Our analysis spanned two years, which provided ample time to see strength, weakness, and overall change.

Nationwide, Project LAUNCH demonstration sites are pioneering new ways to promote young child wellness (prenatal - age 8). In 2009, Deschutes County was selected as the LAUNCH demonstration site for Oregon. For information visit: Deschutes.org/ecwellness

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