

## Handout 7: Are you Ready? Assessing Readiness to Collaborate

“Readiness” describes the degree to which an individual, group, organization, or community is both *psychologically prepared* and *motivated to commit resources* to address a specific problem or engage in a specific activity. Often overlooked, readiness is integral to community prevention success. This worksheet is designed to help you assess whether your prevention team or organization is ready to engage in collaboration.

**Directions:** Have members of the team complete this checklist individually, then review the list collectively and check the statements that apply to the group, as a whole.

- We are supportive of collaboration and think it’s a good idea.
- We understand what is involved in collaboration (e.g., recognize that collaboration will mean a change in the status quo).
- We understand the added value of collaboration (e.g., new knowledge and expertise, additional resources, access to new populations).
- Our leadership supports our desire to collaborate with others (e.g., is willing to provide necessary resources, such as staff time and meeting space).
- We have the right people on board to foster and maintain collaboration (e.g., individuals with facilitation and consensus-building skills).
- We are motivated for partners to join, and we can articulate our motivation in a clear and positive way.
- We have a clear purpose to present to partners.
- We are willing to share control and work for the mutual benefits of all partners.
- We are prepared to engage in genuine, respectful dialogue with partners; use active listening skills; and participate in open and transparent sharing of information.
- We have the organizational capacity to enable partnering (e.g., administrative support, technology tools).
- We have a good record to share with partners (e.g., are fiscally sound, have a good reputation in the community).
- We are committed to continuous quality improvement and are ready for the long haul.

\_\_\_\_\_ Total number of attributes checked

Generally speaking, if you check at least half of the statements, there is a good chance your team is ready to move forward. If you check fewer than half, don’t give up! Instead, choose one or two items to work on, and then reassess your readiness after doing so.

*This tool is included in the Center for the Prevention of Technology's new Prevention Collaboration in Action Toolkit. The toolkit showcases exciting ways SAMHSA's prevention grantees are collaborating across communities and behavioral health fields and includes more than 30 tools and worksheets to help initiate, strengthen and maintain collaborative relationships in the community. The link to the toolkit will be shared as soon as it receives approval in its entirety from SAMHSA.*