



Community Action to Fight Asthma: A Successful Model of Policy Advocacy

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Presentation Overview



- What is Community Action to Fight Asthma (CAFA)?
- CAFA Overview and Structure
- Gearing Up for State Advocacy
- Process...Process...Action
- Multiple Roles, Many Partners
- Successes and Challenges



What is CAFA?

- Community Action to Fight Asthma (CAFA) is a California–based network of asthma coalitions working through policy change to reduce environmental triggers among school-aged children where they live, learn, and play.

CAFA Overview and Structure



- 11 asthma coalitions across the state
- Multiple levels of diversity
 - Geographic
 - Bay Area, Central Valley, Southern CA
 - Membership
 - CBOs, school districts, health departments, lung-health orgs, hospitals, health plans, Environmental Health and Justice advocates, residents, etc.
 - Objectives and Activities
 - Homes, Schools, Outdoor Air

CAFA Overview and Structure

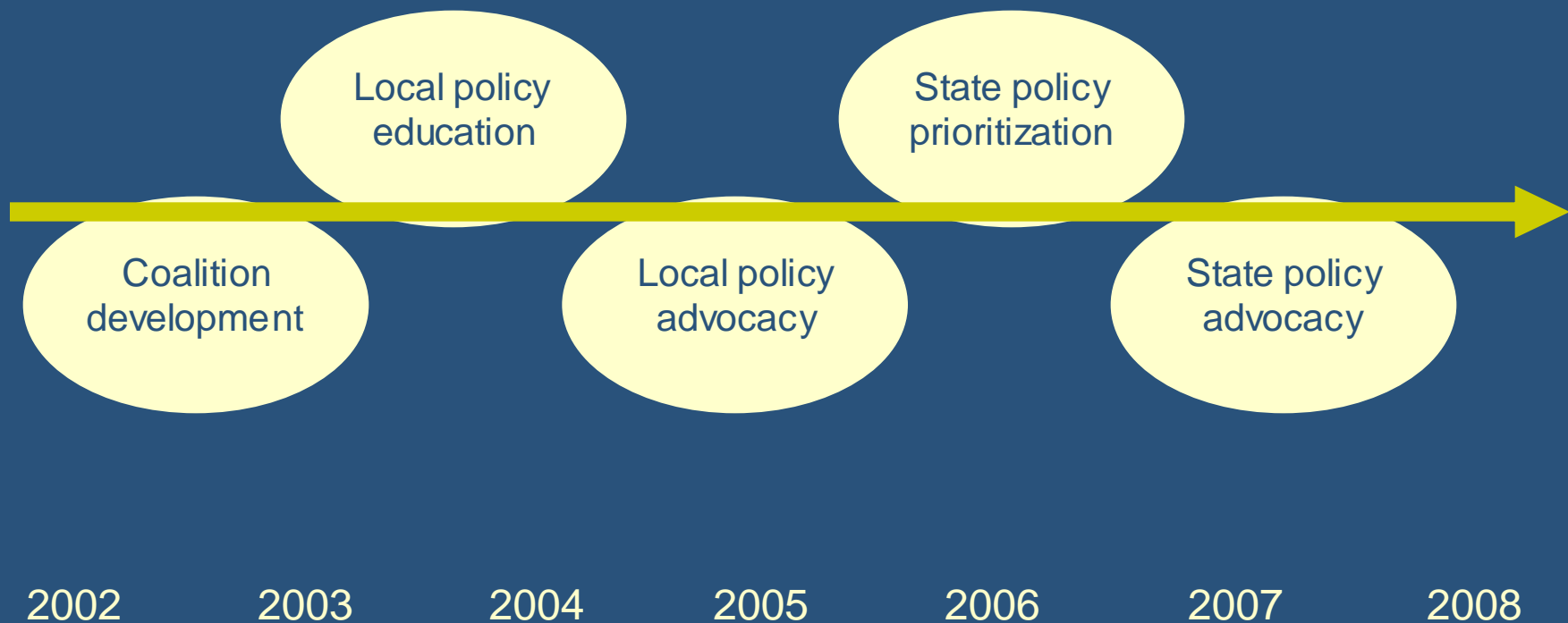


- Technical assistance providers
 - Coalition development, strategic planning and program implementation – RAMP and National Latino Research Center
 - Policy – PolicyLink
 - Media – Public Media Center
 - Evaluation – Inst. for Health Policy Studies, UCSF
- Network coordinated by RAMP
- Funded by The California Endowment
- Year 5 of a 6 year initiative

Gearing Up for State Advocacy



- CAFA has grown, evolved, expanded



Gearing Up for State Advocacy



- Building on multiple strategies
 - Issue awareness, tracking and engagement
 - Ground-up policy prioritization
 - Leadership and implementation

Process...Process...Action



- Issue awareness, tracking and engagement
 - 2005-2006
 - Designed to familiarize coalitions with policy issues
 - Annual Meeting
 - Monthly conference calls
 - Policy tracking from PolicyLink

Process...Process...Action



- Ground-up policy prioritization
 - 2006
 - Policy workgroups for schools, homes, outdoor air quality
 - Issue brainstorm, research, prioritization

Process...Process...Action



- Ground-up policy prioritization
 - At the workgroup level, policy discussion driven by key questions
 - Consistent with CAFA's mission?
 - Make a significant different?
 - Feasible?
 - Workgroups presented their top options to the full Network for consideration and selection

Process...Process...Action



- Leadership and implementation
 - 2006-2007
 - Shaping the Williams Settlement roll-out
 - Indoor air quality incorporated into facility inspection instrument
 - Designing the infrastructure bond program
 - Emphasizing outdoor air and community participation
 - Both priorities relied heavily on two workgroups for strategic guidance

Multiple Roles, Many Partners



- Coalition coordinators and members
 - Provided policy ideas and enthusiasm
 - Researched options, used local connections, connected with other advocates
 - Wrote their own or signed on to letters of support
 - Testified and made phone calls – provided the “on the ground” perspective and authority

Multiple Roles, Many Partners



- PolicyLink and RAMP
 - PolicyLink provided political context, additional research, strategic advice
 - RAMP facilitated entire process, staffed the workgroups, did the day-to-day work

Multiple Roles, Many Partners



- External partners
 - Public health, environmental health, environmental justice advocates
 - Provided more sophisticated expertise, especially for navigating the legislative process
 - Strength in numbers

Successes and Challenges



- There have been ‘ups’ ...
 - Increased Network capacity for policy work
 - More visibility and recognition of CAFA as a voice for asthma/public health policy
 - Deeper, more productive relationships within the Network and with external allies
 - Clearer understanding of connection between state and local policies
 - Long-term policy victories!

Successes and Challenges



- ...and there have been ‘downs’
 - The length and complexity of the process
 - The length and complexity of policy work
 - Limitations of restricted funding
 - The pull of local work

Contact Information



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