



PRINCIPLES FOR SUCCESSFUL PUBLIC-PRIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

The following are strategies, grouped by principle, that public-private partners can follow to help ensure success.

Principle 1: Goals

- Set achievable and sustainable goals early in the process.
- Assess common ground.
- Ensure there is ownership and buy-in among all members.
- Gather data and information before establishing goals.
- Allow for flexibility in achieving the goals.

Principle 2: Partners

Take the time to identify and engage key stakeholders from the beginning.

- Increase effectiveness by including partners with diverse perspectives, resources, and expertise.
- Include less likely allies, such as housing corporations and transportation providers, to capitalize on different but complementary skills, knowledge, and resources.
- Generate greater public and private support by including partners with broad constituencies.
- Identify partners that reflect the diversity of stakeholders in the community.
- Engage in shared work early in the partnership as a means of developing improved relationships.

Principle 3: Supporters

- Collaborate with powerful champions who can communicate the goals of the partnership, build support, and act as change agents.
- Engage prominent organizations that can bring visibility through public events, news, media, and political forums.
- Look to elected officials, corporate executives, and prominent local figures to promote consensus and move the partnership's agenda forward.

Principle 4: Families

- Support parents as the best advocates to identify and communicate the needs of their families.
- Encourage family involvement and input when developing programs and services.
- Allow parents the opportunity to define the role they want to play in public policy.
- Engage families as equal partners.

Principle 5: Governance

- Establish an effective governance structure.
- Build on existing structures or create new structures to meet the needs of the group.
- Develop contracts, agreements, and memoranda of understanding as necessary.
- Define each member's role and responsibilities.
- Identify contributions and resources.
- Ensure understanding and acceptance of the governance structure.

Principle 6: Ground Rules

- Set and adhere to a set of ground rules that guide the work.
- Establish a format for how meetings will be conducted.
- Develop a formal mechanism for communicating.
- Explore various decisionmaking techniques to find what works for the group.
- Determine how to define and measure success.
- Commit to resolving conflict as it occurs.

Principle 7: Flexibility

- Adapt to changing conditions and resources.
- Be willing to broaden your scope to take advantage of new State and Federal funding.
- Explore creating services in response to funders' specific guidelines.
- Consider serving a particular population that is important to public policymakers.
- Be prepared to receive a lot of questions with no easy answers.
- Allow the partnership to evolve.

Principle 8: Momentum

- Build a base of support locally, and use that base to establish a track record to leverage State, Federal, and national foundation dollars.
- Anticipate the need for resources to support the partnership initially and over time.
- Plan for sustainability from the beginning.
- Structure activities to gain a sense of accomplishment from completing interim tasks.
- Celebrate small successes in an effort to draw attention and fuel the partnership's expansion.

Principle 9: Evaluation

- Demonstrate accountability by measuring progress toward goals.
- Define specific outcomes.
- Select indicators and specific performance measures.
- Create a process for measuring progress and results.

- Regularly communicate information about your progress.
- Use data strategically.

Adapted from Child Care Partnership Project, Office Of Child Care, Administration for Children and Families, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (1998). *A guide to successful public-private partnerships for child care*. Washington, DC: Author.