Network Building
for Social Change

Your Ideal Network – How to Get There
We envision a world in which all children play, learn and grow with nature in their everyday lives.

— Children & Nature Network
Welcome & Introduction
“[A] network can provide an adaptive and sustainable capacity with unique advantages, something no other organizing method can fully achieve.”

- Connecting to Change the World
This session is about practical ways to be a more effective network.
INTRODUCTION

Three Steps in the Change Process
Every effective network needs five key elements working together.
Relationships & Culture
People in the network are…

- Well-connected, interacting as peers, and building trust
- Everyone is a leader, bringing in new people and connecting others
People in the network…

- Have a network mindset and are aligned around a common purpose

- Value openness, transparency, and letting go of control – also value inclusion, diversity, and new ideas
Mini-Survey

Click on the link in the chat and take the survey
Mini – Survey Results
Discussion: Challenges and Solutions
Challenges with Relationships

Not enough people or energy
Not a diverse group
Conflict
Not enough getting done (talk network)
Difficult to get people to come to meetings
Some members not engaged
Network participants don't understand network culture or approaches

Challenges with Culture

Low levels of trust in network
Network participants don't understand network culture or approaches
Network is not very innovative or collaborative
In the chat, share with us a success your network has had in building relationships, helping everyone cultivate a network mindset, and identifying common purpose.
Actions to take…

● Map the network and identify key individuals and groups who are missing or underrepresented

● Have each individual select someone to reach out to and bring them to a meeting or join an activity

For more directions, see *Activity 1: Map Your Network* in the Toolkit
Actions to take…
Have small group time at all your meetings and gatherings to:

- Have people share their stories
- Build trust by getting to know others in the network better
Action
People in the network are…

- Identifying opportunities for collaboration, pulling together people and resources, and taking action that makes a difference

- Sharing learning and coordinating action with other projects
Mini-Survey

Click on the link in the chat and take the survey
Mini – Survey Results
Discussion: Challenges and Solutions
Challenges to Action

- Problems working collaboratively
- Few people initiate action
- Not enough leadership to get projects going
- Not sure how to get action going
- Not enough getting done (talk network)
In the chat, share with us a success your network has had in self-organized action projects.
Actions to take...

Clustering: Ask people to write an action they’d like to do in the next six months on a PostIt note

● Have someone cluster similar answers

● Have groups meet to discuss future action
Structure & Support
The network has developed a system of support that includes:

- Interactive communications
- Community of Practice
- Small innovation fund that supports self-organizing
- Tracking to identify progress and areas for further work
The network has a well-developed structure for network operations, coordination, governance and decision-making.
Mini-Survey

Click on the link in the chat and take the survey
STRUCTURE & SUPPORT

Mini – Survey Results
Discussion: Challenges and Solutions
Challenges to Structure:

- Not enough coordination so meetings not regular, tasks not followed up on
- People don’t have a clear idea of network structures, strategies, etc.
- Don’t have clear decision-making
- Not sure how to decide what to do

Challenges to Support:

- Lack fundraising capacity
- Not enough money to hire coordination or support projects
- Don’t know who does what
In the chat, share with us a success your network has had in creating support and structure
Actions to take...
Start a virtual or Face to Face (FTF) Community of Practice so people can learn network skills and support each other with challenges that arise

Use Toolkits and/or Network Weaving Handbook
Actions to take...
Set up a seed fund or innovation fund to support new collaborative projects

Often total fund is $5,000 - 15,000 and grants are $1,000 - 2,000

Network Seed Fund

This Network Seed Fund is an experiment in supporting self-organizing across organizations that are interested in learning or working together to benefit summer learning experiences for CA youth. Networks thrive on the initiative of members who see a need or opportunity and step up to do something about it. This fund is intended to support ideas and actions that come from people who see the power of working in more networked ways.
Actions to take…
A coordinator is needed to make sure meetings happen, initiate agenda building, remind and support people with tasks
Actions to take...

Set up and train people to use Google Docs for coordination
Assessment

In the chat, share which area you think might be the highest priority for your network.

There’s a longer comprehensive survey – link to access survey is in the Toolkit and on the Resources slide of this presentation.
Next Steps

1. Share these slides and Toolkit with others in your network.
2. Send out the survey link on the Resources slide to network participants.
3. Set up a meeting to go over results. List the areas with lowest scores on chart paper. Have people put a dot on one they want to work on.
4. Have small groups form around 2 - 4 areas with the most dots. Have each group list on chart paper the actions they will take in the next few months. Have them identify a coordinator and encourage them to meet between meetings. Check in with them.

What will you do?
Resources & Acknowledgements
Tools and Resources

• Webinars 1-3 Recordings, Slides, and Toolkits: http://www.childrenandnature.org/act/webinar/
• Network Weaving Handbook (SPECIAL2): http://www.networkweaver.com/shop/
• Network Weaving Facebook Group: https://www.facebook.com/groups/339757846085496/
• Ask questions and continue the conversation by joining the Networks for Social Change Google Group: https://groups.google.com/forum/?hl=en#!forum/networks-for-social-change-webinar-series
• Access the longer comprehensive survey: https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1E2fdaq7sJzhur6BpmtkchX-qR0yu6ySUMZs4CVyOKsU/edit?pli=1
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