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The *ShapingNJ* Partnership – An Assessment

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Executive Summary

The prevalence of overweight and obesity has been rising steadily in New Jersey and the United States over the past three decades. Obesity is a major risk factor for a number of chronic diseases and its economic impact on health care is substantial. Reversing the obesity epidemic requires a comprehensive and coordinated approach to bring about policy and environmental changes to create environments that promote healthy eating and active living. *ShapingNJ* is a statewide partnership coordinated by the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services' (NJ-DHSS) Office of Nutrition and Fitness (ONF) that focuses on environmental and policy changes related to obesity and chronic disease prevention.

Community collaborations are very valuable in addressing public health problems as they bring multiple perspectives, talents, and expertise together to address issues affecting communities. Collectively a partnership can accomplish more than its members can individually. The NJ-DHSS contracted with Rutgers Center for State Health Policy (CSHP) to assess the *ShapingNJ* partnership to determine how well it is working, identify its strengths and weaknesses, and highlight lessons learned, so that improvements can be made. CSHP conducted a web-based survey in March – April 2010 using the Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory for partnership assessment. Supplemental questions related to benefits of participation in the partnership, use of partnership resources, suggestions for additional members, and leadership assessments were added. Overall, 121 partners participated in the survey for a response rate of 73.3 percent.

The partnership was assessed on a number of factors that are associated with successful collaborations. The results indicate that overall the partnership is doing well and is progressing in the right direction. The factors indicative of the strength of the partnership are – favorable political and social climate; members see collaboration in their self interest; unique purpose of the partnership; and skilled leadership. The factors indicative of weakness are – history of collaboration and cooperation in the community; and availability of sufficient funds, staff, materials and time. A number of other factors that scored in the borderline range indicate that some effort and attention is needed in those specific areas to achieve full potential of the partnership.

Overall, 62 percent of the responding partners use the *ShapingNJ* web-portal on a regular basis and even more find the information on the portal to be very or somewhat useful. Nearly

three quarters of the members find their participation in the *ShapingNJ* partnership, as well as the *ShapingNJ* strategic plan, to be helpful for their organization's work in obesity prevention. Involvement in this partnership provides the participants opportunities to network with New Jersey stakeholders; to share educational resources; and to identify potential funding sources. The leadership assessment scores indicate a need for additional efforts to develop stronger leadership skills among the ONF staff.

This assessment helps identify the strengths and weaknesses of the *ShapingNJ* partnership to see how well it is working and also to identify corrective actions. It enables the partnership to receive and reflect upon an honest feedback from its partners. The results are pivotal to the future direction of the partnership as it moves from the planning to the action phase, and from the "target behavior" focused workgroups to the "settings" focused groups.

The *ShapingNJ* Partnership – An Assessment

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Background

The epidemic of obesity continues to rise among children and adults in the nation and in New Jersey (BRFSS, 2009; YRBS, 2009; Ogden, et al., 2010, Flegal, et al., 2010). Obesity is a major risk factor for a number of chronic diseases such as type 2 diabetes, hypertension, heart disease and stroke (Biro & Wien, 2010; CDC, 2009) and the economic impact of overweight and obesity and associated health problems is substantial (Finkelstein, et al., 2009). Experts are promoting community-based public health approaches to prevent this epidemic so that large numbers of individuals can be impacted in multiple settings (CDC, 2009; IOM, 2005). Experience from tobacco control initiatives shows that coalitions can play a significant role in community-based prevention efforts by bringing multiple perspectives, talents, and expertise to address issues that affect members of a community (Khan et al., 2009).

In 2008, under the Nutrition Physical Activity, and Obesity Program, the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) awarded the New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services' (NJ DHSS) Office of Nutrition & Fitness (ONF) funding for an initiative to develop, implement and evaluate a state plan to prevent and control obesity and other related chronic diseases through healthful eating and physical activity. This goal was to be achieved through policy and environmental change approaches in partnership with state and community partners. *ShapingNJ*, – a coalition of public and private partners at state and local levels was created to develop and implement a strategic obesity prevention plan for New Jersey. The *ShapingNJ* partnership currently includes 96 organizations (as of August 9, 2010) from a wide range of sectors including health, education, non-profit, state and local government, and businesses.

Consistent with the CDC's mission, the *ShapingNJ* partnership is using a multi-layered approach to bring about changes in individual level behaviors by affecting the policies and environments that surround individuals. The success of this approach depends upon creating highly engaged long-term partnerships where, through a collaborative process, people and organizations bring their knowledge, skills and resources together so they can accomplish more together than they can individually. During the planning stage – the period under assessment in this report, the partnership was organized around seven workgroups, five focusing on each of the CDC recommended target behaviors, one on partnership development and sustainability, and one for evaluation and surveillance.

The NJ-DHSS contracted with the Rutgers Center for State Health Policy (CSHP) to assess the *ShapingNJ* partnership to determine its effectiveness, identify its strengths and weaknesses, and highlight lessons learned, as the partnership moves from the planning to the implementation phase.

Methodology

The Wilder Collaboration Factors Inventory, an established instrument for assessing coalitions, was used to collect input from the members of the *ShapingNJ* partnership (Mattessich, et al., 2001). This instrument allows the coalition members to do a systematic, careful examination of where they stand on the factors that have been shown to influence the success of collaborations. Twenty such factors are included in the inventory and have been grouped into 6 categories including: environment; membership characteristics; process and structure; communication; purpose; and resources. Each factor includes a set of questions scored on a scale of 1-5. These scores are averaged to calculate the factor score. There is no single score on overall collaboration status, instead individual scores are calculated for each factor.

Interpreting the Wilder Collaboration Factor Inventory scores:

4.0 or higher : Strong score; does not call for special attention

3.0 to 3.9: Borderline; discussions among the members is recommended to see if the areas covered by the factor deserve attention

2.9 or lower: Weak score; calls for attention by the group to understand the reasons for the weakness and to take remedial actions.

Supplemental questions for partner organizations were developed with input from the NJ-DHSS. Additional items included were related to benefits of participation in the partnership, use of partnership resources, and suggestions for additional members. Questions for leadership assessment were selected from the Partnership Self-Assessment Tool (Center for Advancement of Collaborative Strategies in Health, 2002) to assess the effectiveness of the *ShapingNJ* leadership provided by the ONF.

Interpreting leadership assessment scores:

4.5 - 5.0: Target zone; indicates that the leadership excels

4.0 - 4.5: Headway zone; indicates that the leadership is doing reasonably well but has potential to progress even further

3.0 - 3.9: Work zone, indicates that more effort is required from the leadership

1.0 - 2.9: Danger zone; indicates that a lot of improvement is needed

The online survey was programmed and administered using SurveyMonkey (Appendix A). A list of the *ShapingNJ* partners was obtained from NJ-DHSS and the survey link was sent via email. The respondents had two weeks to respond to the survey and repeated (5) e-mail reminders were sent to non-responders only to encourage participation. The data collection was completed during March – April, 2010.

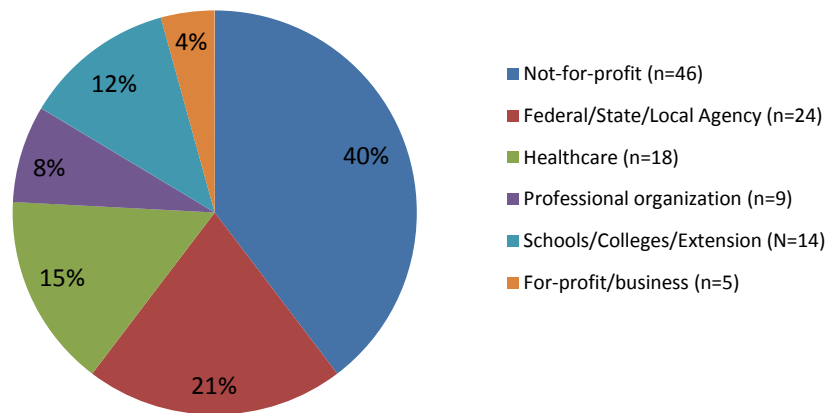
A human subject’s protocol for the study was reviewed and approved by Rutgers University’s institutional review board (IRB).

Results and Discussion

Data were analyzed using SPSS. The scores for the Wilder Inventory factors were calculated for the whole partnership and for each of the workgroups.

The survey link was e-mailed to 165 individuals, and 121 responses were received (111 complete and 10 partially complete) yielding an overall response rate of 73.3 percent. Among the respondents, about 40 percent represent not-for-profit organizations, 24 percent represent federal/state/local agencies and 16 percent represent healthcare organizations. The for-profit organizations and businesses are least represented in the partnership (4 percent) (Figure 1).

Figure 1: Organizations Represented in *ShapingNJ* Partnership (total number of respondents = 121)



Among the partners who responded to the survey, more than three quarters agree or strongly agree that their organization is actively involved in the partnership, and 22 percent report that their organization is not active in the partnership (Table 1).

Table 1: Level of Involvement

Organization Actively Involved	%
Strongly Agree (n = 29)	25
Agree (n = 62)	53
Disagree or neutral (n = 26)	22

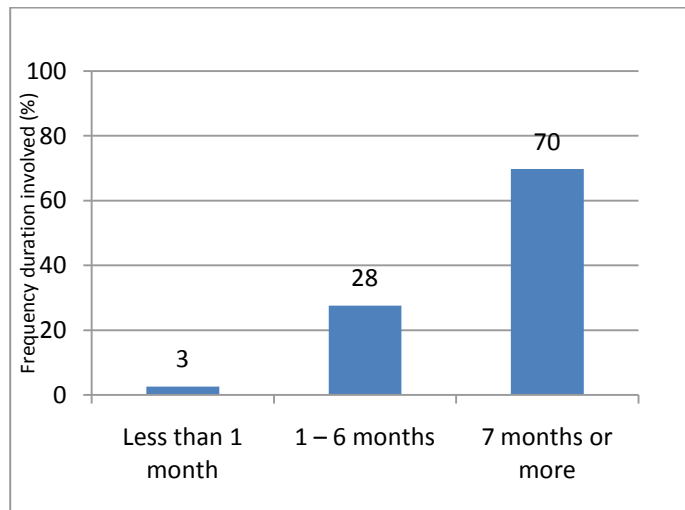
All except four survey respondents are involved with at least one **ShapingNJ** workgroup. Since the workgroup involvement is not restricted to one group, partners could be involved with multiple workgroups based on their organization’s work and area of interest. Workgroup membership of survey respondents is presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Number of respondents from various *ShapingNJ* workgroups

Workgroup	Number of Respondents
Executive and Sustainability (E&S)	22
Surveillance and Evaluation (S&E)	8
Physical Activity (PA)	27
Sugar Sweetened Beverages and Energy Dense Foods (SSB&ED)	21
Breastfeeding (BF)	21
T.V. Viewing	11
Fruits and Vegetables (F&V)	24
No Work Group	4

Overall, more than two-thirds (70 percent) of the partners have been involved with the **ShapingNJ** partnership for seven months or more, indicating that a vast majority of the respondents have been a part of the coalition from the time of its inception in September, 2009. A little more than one quarter (28 percent) of the respondents have been involved for six months or less. Only 3 percent of the participants are new to this partnership (< 1 month) (Figure 2).

Figure 2: Length of involvement in the Partnership



Assessment of the ShapingNJ Partnership – The Wilder Inventory

Average scores for factors within each of the six categories are discussed below.

Factors related to the Environment

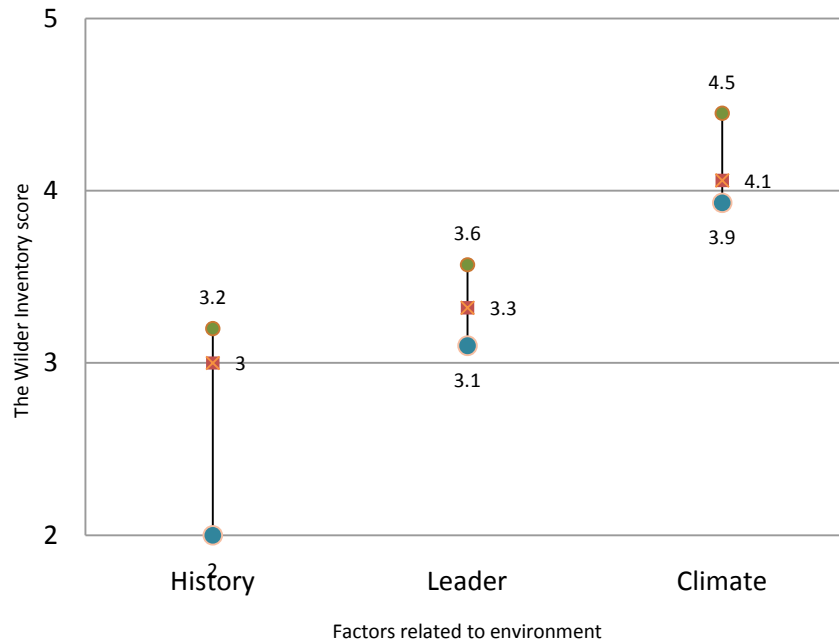
The environmental characteristics consist of the geographic location and social context within which a collaborative group exists. There are three factors in this category: (1) history of collaboration and cooperation in the community, (2) collaborative group seen as a legitimate leader in the community, and (3) favorable political and social climate in which the group functions. For this category, the average overall score for all respondents and for each of the workgroups is presented in Table 3.

Table 3: Factors related to environment

Factor	All respondents	E & S Workgroup respondents	S & E Workgroup respondents	PA Workgroup respondents	SSB & ED Workgroup respondents	BF Workgroup respondents	T.V. viewing Workgroup respondents	F&V Workgroup respondents
History of collaboration and cooperation in the community	3.0	3.2	2.8	3.0	3.1	2.9	2.0	2.9
Collaborative group seen as a legitimate leader in the community	3.3	3.5	3.3	3.3	3.6	3.1	3.5	3.4
Favorable political and social climate	4.1	4.0	3.9	4.2	4.2	3.9	4.5	4.1

The strongest factor reported in this category is the “favorable political and social climate for the partnership”, with a score of 4.1. The respondents feel that the time is right for this partnership, its goals are realistic, and they have support from all the key stakeholders. The score for the factor “collaborative group seen as a suitable, reliable and competent leader” falls in the borderline category indicating that the group should deliberate to assess if this area requires further attention. The weakest factor in this category is the “history of collaboration and cooperation in the community”. This area of weakness should be explored to assess if the partners have a clear understanding of their roles and expectations and if they trust the process. Figure 3 provides the range of scores for each of the factors in the environment category. The “history of collaboration” factor is weakest among workgroups where relatively new issues are being addressed, as in the case of TV viewing workgroup, or where partners do not have a history of working together.

Figure 3: Workgroup score ranges for factors related to environment



Factors Related to Membership Characteristics

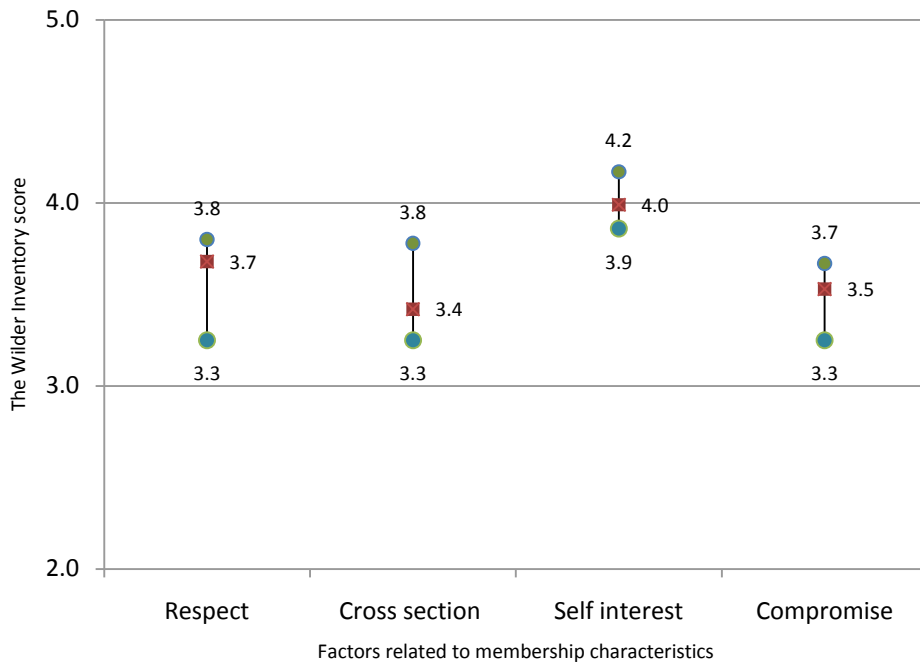
This category includes factors that focus on skills, attitudes, and opinions of the individuals in a collaborative group, as well as on the culture and capacity of the organizations that form the collaborative groups. There are four factors in this category: (1) mutual respect, understanding and trust, (2) appropriate cross section of the members, (3) members see collaboration as in their self interest, and (4) ability of members of the partnership to compromise. For this category, the average overall score for all respondents and for each of the workgroups is presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Factors Related to Membership Characteristics

Factor	All respondents	E & S Workgroup respondents	S & E Workgroup respondents	PA Workgroup respondents	SSB & ED Workgroup respondents	BF Workgroup respondents	T.V. Viewing Workgroup respondents	F&V Workgroup respondents
Mutual respect, understanding and trust	3.7	3.6	3.3	3.87	3.6	3.8	3.5	3.8
Appropriate cross section of members	3.4	3.3	3.3	3.4	3.8	3.6	3.7	3.4
Members see collaboration as in their self interest	4.0	4.1	3.9	4.1	3.9	3.9	4.1	4.1
Ability to compromise	3.5	3.5	3.3	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.7

The scores for all the factors in this category fall in the borderline range indicating that these factors should be discussed within the partnership as well as among the workgroups to see if they need attention (Table 4 and Figure 4). The strongest factor in this category is “members see collaboration as in their self interest”, (4.0) indicating that the respondents believe that their organization will benefit from involvement in this partnership. Developing “mutual respect, understanding and trust for each other and their respective organizations” (3.7) is important as conflicts may develop due to lack of understanding among partners. The partnership may wish to allow time for building this trust. Such understanding will also help improve partners’ ability to compromise on important project-related decisions. The partners should carefully examine themselves to see if all the key organizations needed to accomplish their goals are part of this partnership and that any missing organizations are outreached.

Figure 4: Workgroup score ranges for factors related membership characteristics



Factors Related to Process and Structure

This category includes six factors related to management, decision-making and operational systems of a collaborative effort. They include: (1) members share a stake in both process and outcomes, (2) multiple layers of participations, (3) flexibility, (4) development of clear roles and policy guidelines, (5) adaptability, and (6) appropriate pace of development. For this category, the average overall score for all respondents and for each of the workgroups is presented in Table 5.

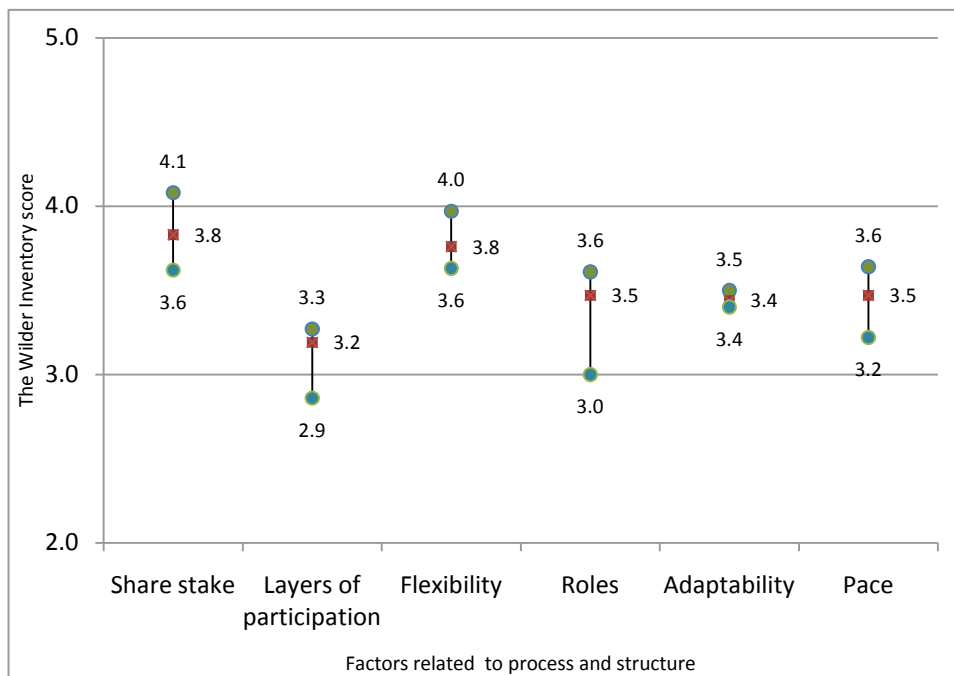
Table 5: Factors related to process and structure

Factor	All respondents	E & S Workgroup respondents	S & E Workgroup respondents	PA Workgroup respondents	SSB & ED Workgroup respondents	BF Workgroup respondents	T.V. viewing Workgroup respondents	F&V Workgroup respondents
Members share a stake in both process and outcome	3.8	3.7	3.6	3.9	3.9	4.1	3.9	3.8
Multiple layers of participation	3.2	2.9	3.0	3.2	3.2	3.3	3.0	3.3
Flexibility	3.8	3.6	3.7	3.7	3.9	4.0	3.8	3.8
Development of clear roles and policy guidelines	3.5	3.4	3.0	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.0	3.6
Adaptability	3.4	3.5	3.4	3.4	3.5	3.5	3.4	3.5
Appropriate pace of development	3.5	3.2	3.4	3.6	3.5	3.6	3.6	3.4

The scores for all the factors in this category fall in the borderline range indicating that these factors should be discussed within the partnership to assess where action may be needed for improvement. Overall, the strongest factor in this partnership is “members feel ownership of both the process and outcomes” (3.8). This score, at the high end of the borderline category, can be easily improved with some effort because the members are already quite committed to the process and outcomes of the partnership. Multiple layers of staff in each organization should be recognized and measures should be taken to involve them. The scores for the “multiple layers of participation” factor is weaker (3.2) compared to other factors in this category indicating that the partners do not feel that they can speak for their parent organization and need more time to discuss the information with colleagues at their institutions. It may be helpful for the partnership to identify appropriate staff from partnering organizations, and / or engage other non-members in decision-making positions at these institutions so that they are aware of the activities of the coalition. Factors associated with “clear understanding of roles and responsibilities” (3.8) and “flexibility” (3.8) are important in sustaining the partnership as it goes through changes, whether deliberate or unforeseen. Figure 5 shows the distribution of the range of scores among different workgroups and it is evident that for some workgroups, the issues of clearly defined roles and decision-making processes was more critical for some (surveillance and evaluation and T.V. viewing workgroups) than for others. It is important to note that both the surveillance and evaluation and the T.V. viewing groups were among the smallest workgroups. Almost all the workgroups scored the same for the “adaptability” factor (3.4-3.5) indicating that all the workgroups were similarly poised to adapt to changing conditions (political, economic, leadership) and in their ability to survive in the face of major changes. The “pace

of the development” (3.5) should be monitored to ensure that the partnership takes on the right amount of work to keep the coalition strong and moving forward.

Figure 5: Workgroup score ranges for factors related to process and structure of the *ShapingNJ* partnership



Factors Related to Communication

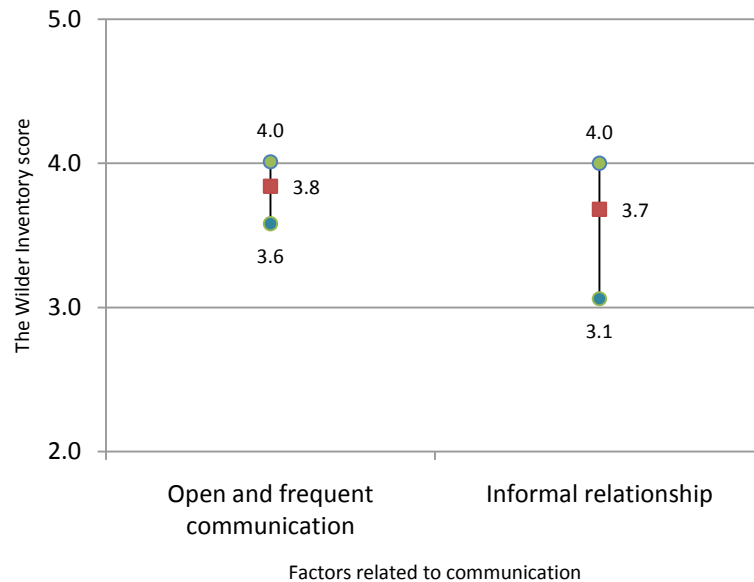
The factors related to communication refer to channels used by collaborative partners to send and receive information, keep one another informed and convey opinions to influence the group’s actions. There are two factors in this category: (1) Open and frequent communication, and (2) Established informal relationships and communication skills. For this category, the average overall score for all respondents and for each of the workgroups is presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Factors related to communication

Factor	All respondents	E & S Workgroup respondents	S & E Workgroup respondents	PA Workgroup respondents	SSB & ED Workgroup respondents	BF Workgroup respondents	T.V. viewing Workgroup respondents	F&V Workgroup respondents
Open and frequent communication	3.8	3.8	3.6	3.8	3.9	4.0	3.8	3.9
Established informal relationships and communication links	3.7	3.7	3.1	3.9	3.7	4.0	3.6	3.6

The scores for both the factors in this category fall in the upper borderline range indicating that there was strong and effective communication between partners in most workgroups. Effective communication strategies are required from the beginning to avoid conflict by encouraging partners to interact more often, update each other and convey all the necessary information. In addition to formal communication, partners established informal relationships and communication links. The surveillance and evaluation group scored lower (3.1) on the “informal relationships and communication” factor compared to other workgroups (Figure 6), perhaps because this group did not meet as often as the other groups. These informal relationships are just as important as the formal communication among partners as they further facilitate the understanding of partners’ work and enhance cooperation, coordination and transfer of information.

Figure 6: Workgroup score ranges for factors related to communication



Factors Related to Purpose

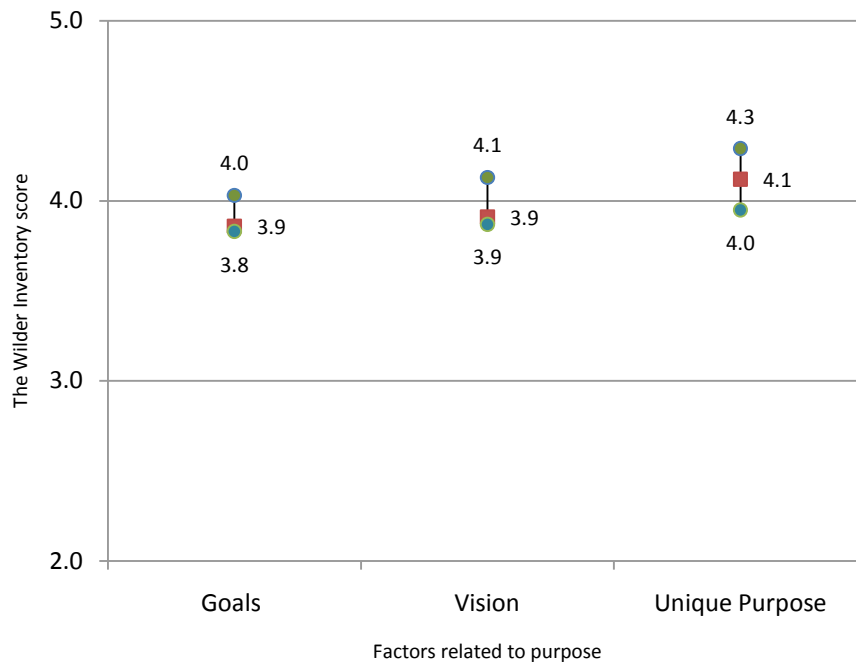
This group of factors refers to the reasons for the development of a collaborative effort, the result or vision the collaborative group seeks, and the specific tasks or projects the collaborative group aims to accomplish. The purpose is often driven by a need, crisis, or opportunity. There are three factors in this category: (1) concrete attainable goals and objectives, (2) shared vision, and (3) unique purpose. For this category, the average overall score for all respondents and for each of the workgroups is presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Factors related to purpose

Factor	All respondents	E & S Workgroup respondents	S & E Workgroup respondents	PA Workgroup respondents	SSB & ED Workgroup respondents	BF Workgroup respondents	T.V. viewing Workgroup respondents	F&V Workgroup respondents
Concrete, attainable goals and objectives	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	3.9	4.0	3.9	3.9
Shared vision	3.9	4.0	3.9	4.0	3.9	4.1	4.1	3.9
Unique Purpose	4.1	4.2	4.0	4.3	4.0	4.3	4.0	4.3

While all the factors related to purpose scored high, the “unique purpose of the partnership” is the strongest factor (4.1) in this category (Table 7) indicating that the partners believe that the mission and goals of this partnership are unique and would be difficult to achieve by any single organization. Higher borderline scores for “concrete attainable goals” (3.9) and “shared vision” (3.9) suggest that the members are clear about the partnership’s mission. It would be helpful to periodically report on the progress of different aspects of the partnership to the whole group to heighten their enthusiasm. All the workgroups scored in the high borderline or strong range (Figure 7) indicating that all respondents, irrespective of their workgroup affiliations, have a well defined vision for the partnership.

Figure 7: Workgroup score ranges for factors related to purpose



Factors Related to Resources

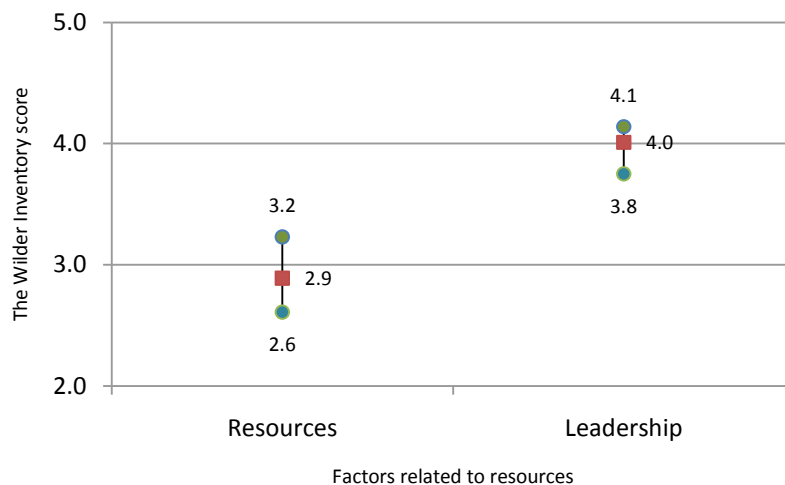
This set of factors includes the financial and human “inputs” necessary to develop and sustain a collaborative group. There are two factors in this category: (1) sufficient funds, staff materials and time and (2) skilled leadership.

Table 8: Factors related to resources

Factor	All respondents	E & S Workgroup respondents	S & E Workgroup respondents	PA Workgroup respondents	SSB & ED Workgroup respondents	BF Workgroup respondents	T.V. viewing Workgroup respondents	F&V Workgroup respondents
Sufficient funds, staff, materials and time	2.9	3.0	3.2	2.6	3.1	2.9	3.2	2.8
Skilled leadership	4.0	4.0	3.8	4.1	4.0	4.1	4.1	4.0

Overall, partners believe that the leaders have strong organizing and interpersonal skills and carry out their role with fairness (4.0). Most workgroups fell within the upper borderline or strong range for this score. It is important for the leaders to give serious attention and care to their role and maintain a balance between process and task activities. The lowest scoring factor in this assessment was the one related to availability of resources (2.9). All individual workgroups also scored lower on this factor. Even though the respondents felt that the partnership was timely, had a unique mission, and was taking place at an opportune time, there seems to be a consensus that the resources, both fiscal and manpower, were lacking in the current environment to accomplish the goals of the partnership.

Figure 8: Workgroups score ranges for factors related to resources



The ShapingNJ Portal

The ONF has developed a web portal which is the central communication hub for all **ShapingNJ** activities. Members of the partnership can sign up for access to the web portal which allows them a convenient way to access documents, communicate with other partners, and post documents. Respondents were asked to assess their use and usefulness of the **ShapingNJ** portal. Slightly over a quarter (28 percent) of the respondents reported using the portal at least once a week. One third (34 percent) of the respondents reported using the portal at least twice a month, and about 16 percent reported using it once a month or less. Only 4 percent of the respondents reported not using the portal at all.

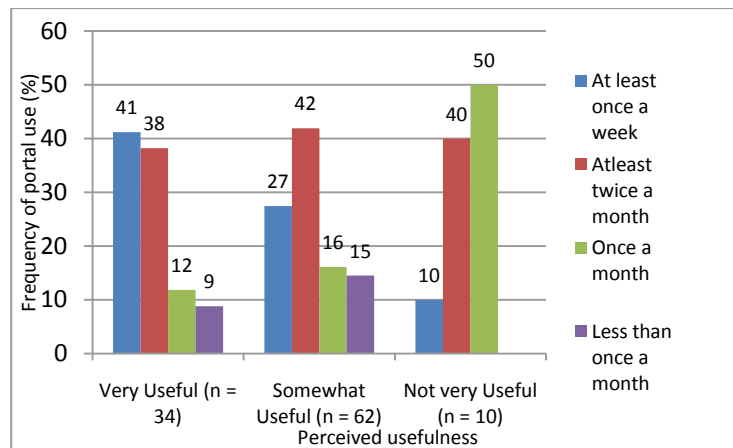
The perceived usefulness of the portal also varied among respondents. Eighty-two percent of the respondents found the portal to be very or somewhat useful. Only a small percentage of respondents (9 percent) did not find the portal to be very useful.

Table 9: Portal use and perceived usefulness

Frequency of Use (%)		Perceived Usefulness (%)	
At least once a week	28	Very useful	29
At least twice a month	34	Somewhat useful	53
Once a month	16	Not very useful	9
Less than once a month	16	Not applicable	9
Do not use	4		
Not applicable	2		

The increased frequency of use of the portal is associated with increased perception of usefulness. Respondents who find the portal very useful are more likely to use the portal at least once a week (41 percent) compared to those who find it somewhat useful (27 percent) or not very useful (10 percent) (Figure 9).

Figure 9: Frequency of portal use



(*percentages do not round to 100 because of rounding and graph does not include “do not use” category)

Perceived benefits of participation in the ShapingNJ partnership

Respondents were asked if participation in the *ShapingNJ* partnership has been helpful in their obesity prevention work. Nearly three quarters (73 percent) report that their participation has been very helpful or somewhat helpful to them, and another 12 percent report that their involvement has not been very helpful. Only 3 percent report that their participation has not been helpful at all (Table 10).

Table 10: Perceived benefits of participation in the ShapingNJ partnership

	Participation helpful (%)
Very helpful	20
Somewhat helpful	53
Not very helpful	12
Not at all helpful	3
Don't know	5
Not applicable	7

When asked to give examples of how participation in the *ShapingNJ* partnership had helped their work, the respondents provided a variety of reasons (see Appendix B for a complete list). Among the most frequently mentioned reasons are:

- Great networking opportunities with NJ stakeholders
- Increased awareness of action plans. Connection with statewide strategic plan
- New partnership opportunities
- Actively supporting the breastfeeding program and the baby friendly hospital initiative
- Collaboration with RWJF/YMCA/Rutgers cooperative extension
- Educational resource sharing
- Potential funding opportunities
- Engagement with schools
- Great way to strengthen relationships across state

Respondents were also asked to share reasons for why their participation had not been very helpful. These reasons included lack of resources; lack of support from their organization; organization not involved in obesity related work; and *ShapingNJ* still in the planning phase.

Perceived benefits from strategies emerging from the ShapingNJ partnership

Respondents were asked to share the extent to which the state plan/ selected strategies emerging from the *ShapingNJ* partnership have been helpful to them or to their organizations. Almost three quarters (75 percent) reported that the strategies have been very or somewhat helpful. Ten percent of the respondents reported that the strategies have been not very helpful (Table 11).

Table 11: Extent strategies reported to be helpful

	Strategies helpful (%)
Very helpful	21
Somewhat helpful	54
Not very helpful	10
Not at all helpful	1
Don't know	10
Not applicable	4

Some of the ways respondents found the *ShapingNJ* strategies helpful include:

- Offering great opportunity for networking

with stakeholders

- Coordinating our efforts with the state and recognizing areas that complement each other
- Adding fruit and vegetable requirement to state school nutrition policy. Improvement of school lunches
- Educating children in good nutritional choices. Addressing school wellness policy
- Breastfeeding initiatives and support
- Increasing awareness and interest in the problem
- May open up opportunities for community outreach and partnering
- New funding opportunities
- Advocating for more physical activity that is ‘fun’
- Creating opportunities to use our organizational skills

Additional grants received attributable to participation in ShapingNJ

Overall, 9 percent of the respondents report receiving one grant and 3 percent report receiving two grants because of their participation in *ShapingNJ* partnership. A majority of the participants (89 percent) did not report receiving additional grants (Table 12).

This survey was conducted 7-8 months after the initiation of the collaborative. It will be interesting to track how the *ShapingNJ* partners perceive the benefits of participation and their acquisition of additional funding change over the course of this initiative.

Table 12: Additional grants received by ShapingNJ partners

Number of Grants Received	Percent
0	89
1	9
2	3

*percentages add to more than 100 because of rounding

Suggested Additional Partners

Respondents provided names of organizations/ individuals they think are missing from this partnership. Some of the suggested names are (see Appendix C for a complete list):

- PTA, school administrators, teachers
- The New Jersey Education Association
- The New Jersey School Boards Association
- Child care centers
- County health department
- Insurers
- The New Jersey Economic Development Authority
- The New Jersey Farm Bureau
- Police chiefs

- The New Jersey League of Municipalities
- Pharmaceutical industry
- Business Associations

The Office of Nutrition and Fitness (ONF) leadership assessment

The Office on Nutrition and Fitness has provided leadership to the **ShapingNJ** coalition building process as well as to each of the specific workgroups. A set of 11 questions that assessed the overall effectiveness of the leadership were included in the survey. Figure 10 presents the leadership effectiveness scores based on responses obtained from all respondents and then from respondents in each of the workgroup categories. Overall, the average score for all the partners is 3.6 and that of the workgroups ranges from 3.4 – 3.8. All the scores are in the upper range of the “work zone” and indicate that some additional efforts are needed to make the leadership stronger and more effective to help maximize the collaborative potential of the partnership.

Figure 10: ONF Leadership assessment scores



Conclusion

The Wilder Collaborative Inventory is used to identify the strengths and weaknesses of collaborative groups with an aim of seeing how well the partnership is working and identifying corrective actions. It enables the partnership to collect comprehensive feedback from its partners.

The results indicate that the overall partnership is doing well and is progressing in the right direction. The partners **strongly** believe that they have support from the key stakeholders and are working in a positive political and social climate. The mission and goals of this partner-

ship are considered unique by the respondents and their involvement in this initiative is seen as a benefit to themselves and their organizations. The leadership has strong interpersonal and organizing skills and carries out the role with fairness. The partners indicated **concern** in terms of availability of resources in the current economic climate to sustain their work. The history of collaboration and cooperation among the partner organizations is also on the weaker side and appropriate measures should be taken to ensure that partners have a clear understanding of their roles and expectations from the process. Finally, the partners appear to be very involved and committed to the **ShapingNJ** partnership and perceive their participation to be beneficial to them and to their organization for new funding opportunities, networking, resource sharing and collaboration with other initiatives.

The results of the survey are critical at this stage as the partnership moves from planning to action and from “target behavior” focused workgroups to “setting” focused groups. New partners will be coming together and new formal and informal networks will be created. This presents an opportunity for the **ShapingNJ** leadership to help create groups that can benefit from past experience as well as take deliberate steps to strengthen weak areas.

The partnership evaluation assessment should be undertaken every year to track changes over time; determine how well the partnership continues to work together towards common goals; identify any issues and concerns early in the process; and to assess the impact of participation on partner organization efforts.

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Appendix A

**Center For State Health Policy
Rutgers University**

**Assessing *ShapingNJ*: The State Partnership for Nutrition, Physical Activity and Obesity
- A partner survey**

This survey is designed to get your opinion about the *ShapingNJ* Partnership. Your responses will help the partnership identify its strengths and weaknesses with respect to factors that research has shown are important to the success of collaborative projects. There are no right or wrong answers. Your opinion is important, even if it is very different from the opinions of others. The survey will take approximately 15-20 minutes to complete. Your participation is completely voluntary and confidential. Our report will include only aggregated information and no individual survey respondents will be associated with specific responses. The results of the survey will be shared with all the members, giving everyone an opportunity to see how others feel – whether all feel the same or different about the questions. We will work with you to use the results for continuous improvement.

A. Please follow the simple instructions below:

1. Read each statement carefully.
2. Click on the circle that indicates how much you agree or disagree with each statement.
3. If you feel you *don't know* how to answer an item, or if you *don't have an opinion*, click on the “neutral” response.
4. If you feel that your opinion lies between two responses, pick the one to the left.

	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral, No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
1	Agencies and organizations in our community have a history of working together	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
2	Trying to solve problems through collaboration has been common in this community.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
3	Leaders in this community who are not part of <i>ShapingNJ</i> seem hopeful about what we can accomplish.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
4	Others (in this community) who are not a part <i>ShapingNJ</i> would generally agree that the organizations involved in <i>ShapingNJ</i> are the “right” organizations to do the work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral, No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
5	The political and social climate seems to be “right” for starting a partnership like this one.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
6	The time is right for <i>ShapingNJ</i> .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
7	People involved in <i>ShapingNJ</i> always trust one another.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
8	I have a lot of respect for the other people involved in <i>ShapingNJ</i> .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
9	The people involved in <i>ShapingNJ</i> represent a cross section of those who have a stake in what we are trying to accomplish.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
10	All the organizations that we need to be members of <i>ShapingNJ</i> have become members of the group.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
11	My organization will benefit from being involved in <i>ShapingNJ</i> .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
12	People involved in <i>ShapingNJ</i> are willing to compromise on important aspects of our project.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
13	The organizations that belong to <i>ShapingNJ</i> invest the right amount of time in our collaborative efforts.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
14	Everyone who is a member of <i>ShapingNJ</i> wants this project to succeed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
15	The level of commitment among the collaboration participants is high.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
16	When <i>ShapingNJ</i> makes major decisions, there is always enough time for members to take information back to their organizations to confer with colleagues about what the decision should be.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
17	Each of the people who participate in decisions in <i>ShapingNJ</i> can speak for the entire organization they represent, not just a part.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
18	There is a lot of flexibility when decisions are made; people are open to discussing different options.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
19	People in <i>ShapingNJ</i> are open to different approaches to how we can do our work. They are willing to consider different ways of working.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
20	People in <i>ShapingNJ</i> have a clear sense of their roles and responsibilities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
21	There is a clear process for making decisions among the partners in this collaboration.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
22	<i>ShapingNJ</i> is able to adapt to changing conditions, such as fewer funds than expected, changing political climate, or change in leadership.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
23	<i>ShapingNJ</i> has the ability to survive even if it had to make major changes in its plans or add some new members in order to reach its goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
24	<i>ShapingNJ</i> has tried to take on the right amount of	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	Statement	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral, No Opinion	Agree	Strongly Agree
	work at the right pace.					
25	We are currently able to keep up with the work necessary to coordinate all the people, organizations, and activities related to this collaborative project.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
26	People in <i>ShapingNJ</i> communicate openly with one another.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
27	I am informed as often as I should be about what goes on in the collaboration.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
28	The people who lead <i>ShapingNJ</i> communicate well with the members.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
29	Communication among the people in <i>ShapingNJ</i> happens both at formal meetings and in informal ways.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
30	I personally have informal conversations about the project with others who are involved in <i>ShapingNJ</i> .	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
31	I have a clear understanding of what <i>ShapingNJ</i> is trying to accomplish.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
32	People in <i>ShapingNJ</i> know and understand our goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
33	People in <i>ShapingNJ</i> have established reasonable goals.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
34	The people in <i>ShapingNJ</i> are dedicated to the idea that we can make this project work.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
35	My ideas about what we want to accomplish seem to be the same as the ideas of others.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
36	What we are trying to accomplish with <i>ShapingNJ</i> would be difficult for any single organization to accomplish by itself.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
37	No other organization in the community is trying to do exactly what we are trying to do.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
38	<i>ShapingNJ</i> has adequate funds to do what it wants to accomplish.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
39	<i>ShapingNJ</i> has adequate “people power” to do what it wants to accomplish.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
40	The people in leadership positions for <i>ShapingNJ</i> have good skills for working with other people and organizations.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
41	My organization has been actively involved in <i>ShapingNJ</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

B. What type of organization do you represent? (**Check one best answer**)

- Not for profit organization
- State Government Department / Agency
- Local Government Department / Agency
- Health Care
- Philanthropy
- Professional Organization
- Community Based Organization
- Faith Based Organization
- Schools / School system
- University / College
- Other (specify)_____

C. Which *ShapingNJ* workgroup do you participate in (**Check all that apply**)?

- Executive & Sustainability
- Surveillance & Evaluation
- Physical Activity
- Sugar Sweetened Beverages & Energy Dense Foods
- Breastfeeding
- T.V. Viewing
- Fruits & Vegetables
- Do not participate in any work group

C1. How long have you been involved in *ShapingNJ*?

- Less than 1 month
- 1 – 6 months
- 7 months or more
- Not applicable

D. How often do you use the *ShapingNJ* Web Portal (BoardEffect)?

- Everyday
- 2 or more times a week
- Once a week
- 2 or more times per month
- Once a month
- Less than once a month
- Do not use
- Not Applicable

E. How useful do you find the *ShapingNJ* Web Portal (BoardEffect)?

- Very useful
- Somewhat useful
- Not very useful
- Not applicable

F. Have you ever visited the *ShapingNJ* website (www.shapingnj.gov)?

- Yes
- No

G. Do you receive the Office of Nutrition and Fitness newsletter?

- Yes
- No

H. To what extent has your participation in *ShapingNJ* been helpful to you and / or your organization's work related to obesity prevention?

- Very helpful (Skip to H1)
- Somewhat helpful (Skip to H1)
- Not very helpful (Skip to H2)
- Not at all helpful (Skip to H2)
- Don't know (Skip to I)
- Not applicable (Skip to I)

H1. Please indicate up to three ways in which your participation in *ShapingNJ* influenced your and / or your organization's work as it relates to obesity prevention? For example, describe any new partnerships, collaborations, or funding opportunities etc that may have resulted because of your involvement with *ShapingNJ* (**This question is only for Very helpful or somewhat helpful response to Question. H**).

- Not applicable

H2. Why do you think participation *ShapingNJ* has not been helpful to your and / or your organization's obesity prevention work? **(This question is only for not very helpful and not at all helpful response to Question H).**

- My organization does not do much obesity related work
- Not relevant to my organization's mission
- Lack of resources
- Lack of support from my organization
- Other _____
- Not applicable

I. To what extent has the state plan / selected strategies emerging from *ShapingNJ* for preventing obesity been helpful to your and / or your organizations current or future work?

- Very helpful
- Some what helpful
- Not very helpful (Skip to J)
- Not at all helpful (Skip to J)

- Don't know (Skip to J)
- Not applicable (Skip to J)

II. Please indicate up to three ways in which the *ShapingNJ state plan / strategies* influenced your or your organization's work as it relates to obesity prevention? For example, describe any new partnerships, collaborations, or funding opportunities etc that may have resulted or are being planned because of the *ShapingNJ state plan / strategies*?

(This question is only for Very helpful or somewhat helpful response to Question I).

Not applicable

J. How many grants or other types of funding has your organization applied for or received where your participation *ShapingNJ* played an influential role?

Number of grants (enter 0 if no grants or funding meet the criteria)

The following set of questions will be repeated based on the number entered above

Grant 1

Funding Source _____

Goal _____

Amount _____

Duration _____

Status Applied, awaiting results

 Received

 Rejected

Grant 2

Funding Source _____

Goal _____

Amount _____

Duration _____

Status Applied, awaiting results

 Received

 Rejected

K. What organizations and/or individuals do you think are missing from *ShapingNJ*?

Name of Organization	Name of Individual	Contact Information

L. The next set of questions ask about effectiveness of leadership provided by the Office of Nutrition and Fitness (ONF) staff. Please rate their effectiveness as excellent, very good, good, fair, or poor in the following areas:

Statement	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Fair	Poor	Don't Know
Taking responsibility for <i>ShapingNJ</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Inspiring or motivating people involved in <i>ShapingNJ</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Empowering people involved in <i>ShapingNJ</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Communicating the vision of <i>ShapingNJ</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Working to develop a common language within <i>ShapingNJ</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Fostering respect, trust inclusiveness and openness in <i>ShapingNJ</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Creating an environment where differences of opinion can be voiced	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Resolving conflict among partners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Combining the perspectives, resources, and skills of partners	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Helping <i>ShapingNJ</i> be creative and look at things differently	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Recruiting diverse people and organizations into <i>ShapingNJ</i>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

M. Please provide any other comments or feedback on *ShapingNJ*.

Thank you for completing the survey. Your responses will help strengthen *ShapingNJ*.

Appendix B

Perceived benefits of participation in the *ShapingNJ* partnership

- Great networking opportunities with NJ stakeholders
- Increased awareness of action plans. Connection with statewide strategic plan
- New partnership opportunities
- Actively supporting the breastfeeding program and the baby friendly hospital initiative
- Collaboration with RWJF/YMCA/Rutgers cooperative extension
- Educational resource sharing
- Potential funding opportunities
- Engagement with schools
- Great way to strengthen relationship across state
- Addressing the delivery of fruits and vegetables
- Greater awareness of problems facing in urban areas
- Networking with other organizations with similar goals and agenda
- Increased awareness of wellness policies in schools. Support of the NJ school nutrition policy
- Encouraging partners to keep the work going
- Sharing of resources
- Great way to strengthen relationship across the state
- Linkage with diverse groups
- Support with grant proposals
- Learning how to make policy changes
- Raising awareness of importance of physical activity
- Allowed me to inform colleagues in other organizations and coalitions that work in related areas
- Developed child care best practices- re snacks/activity
- Made us realize the importance of addressing this through many parenting programs that are not specifically focused on health and nutrition
- Planning of the statewide obesity conference- 2009
- Provides a venue for registered dietitians, who regularly work to address obesity, usually on an individual basis, to share ideas on needed policy and environmental changes as well
- Working with Head Start Association explaining the goals and objectives of *ShapingNJ*
- Helped us hear more view points and other sectors
- Learning about Food Trust organization
- Tightened up our vending best practices
- We are applying for funding for a program on diabetes and pre-diabetes prevention and treatment
- Clarifying goals/mission
- Understand the connection between obesity and reaction to stress situation and its impact on variety of childhood behaviors
- Used the research in our Mayors Wellness Campaign Committee

Appendix C

Suggested Additional Partners

- PTA, school administrators, teachers
- The New Jersey Education Association
- The New Jersey School Boards Association
- Child care centers.
- Child care director- Tynesha McHarris (with the Children's Defense Fund)
- County health department
- Insurers
- The New Jersey Economic Development Authority
- The New Jersey Farm Bureau- Peter Furey
- Police chiefs/ Law enforcement
- The New Jersey League of Municipalities
- Pharmaceutical industry
- Business Associations- Active representations from corporations and private industry
- After school program representatives
- Civil engineers for community planning that supports walking & other access to PA & healthy food
- Clinton Foundation
- Community based and Faith Based Organizations
- Food manufacturers
- More hospital systems
- National alliance on Mental Health- Sally Osmer
- New Jersey Dietetic Association
- New Jersey School Age Care Association
- New Jersey State Nurses Association
- Parents and school nurses
- Physical education teachers/health teachers
- Supervisor health, physical education, dance and school nurses- Judy LoBianco,
- Politicians
- School administrators
- County health departments
- Hispanic Family Center of New Jersey- Elsa Condaleirio, Camden, NJ (Phone no. 856-541-6985)
- Supermarket operators
- New Jersey Conference of Mayors
- NJ Department of Children and Families Office of Licensing
- All food banks in the state- MonOc, Neptune
- The boys and girls club of Camden county - Milford Liss
- Catholic Charities of Camden County- Vincent Ajuk (Phone no. 856-342-4149)
- Division of Highway Traffic Safety
- Federally Qualified Health Centers



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