Using Social Network Analysis to Evaluate a Community Coalition

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Introduction

- Social Networking Analysis was used to measure the size and density of Revere CARES, a coalition that enables community members and organizations to collaborate with one another to address youth substance use and to promote healthy living in the community.

- The coalition has more than 350 total members and has representation from multiple community sectors, including residents, parents, youth, the Mayor, the police chief, and representatives from the school system, fire department, parks & recreation department, and multiple local social service agencies and organizations.

- The current study of the coalition's network was conducted in winter 2012 which enabled a comparison to an initial study conducted in 1999-2000, early in the coalition's development.

- Such an analysis reveals the relationship of individuals within a network and how their roles are relative to one another, by identifying the structure and position of members within the coalition.
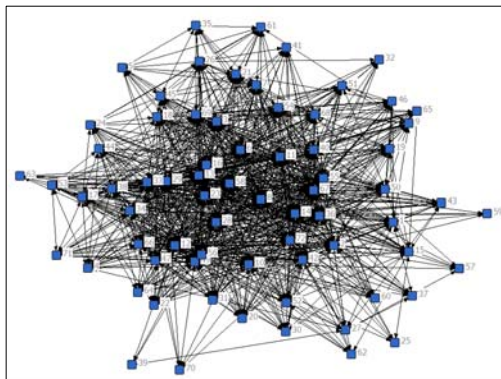
Methods

- To determine the relationship of the coalition members to one another, a survey was distributed to 71 active members in which they were asked to identify which coalition members they do or do not know, and which members they do or do not go to for information, advice or for sharing resources (grants, programming, services) in the past 6 months.

- Response rate = 69% (49/71 surveys returned).

- Data were de-identified and transcribed into five separate Excel matrices (one for each of the four key questions—Know, Information, Advice, Resources, and one for Attribute data).

- Data were dichotomized (1=relationship present, 0=no relationship present).

- Reciprocal relationships could not be assumed for Information, Advice and Resources matrices. However, a reciprocal relationship was assumed for Know (person 1 nominated person 2 but if person 2 did not complete the survey, it was assumed that person 2 also knew person 1).

- UCINET 6.0 and NetDraw were used to analyze and display data (sociograms).
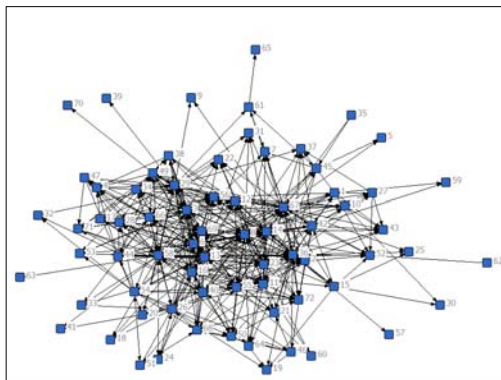
Limitations

- Not all members who received a survey responded.

- We did not ask members to report their affiliations with members or organizations that are not a part of the coalition. This info would further reveal the communication structure and bargaining power that the coalition has within the community.
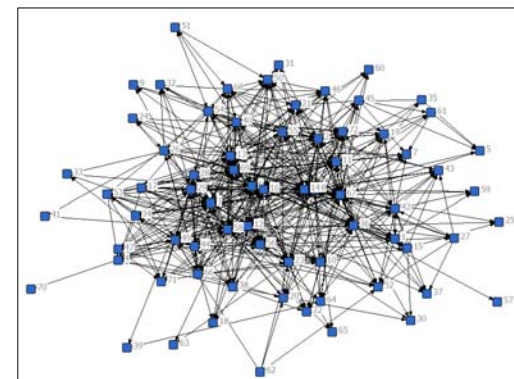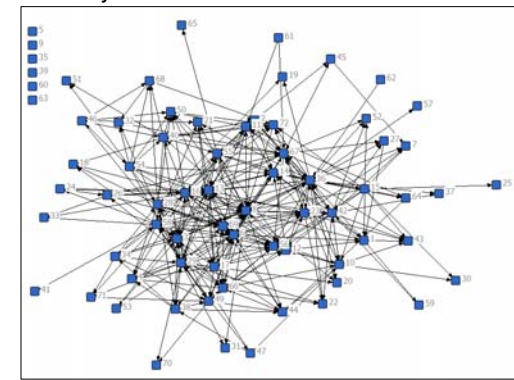
Results

KNOW: Do you know this person?

INFO: Have you gone to this person for information in the last 6 months?

ADVICE: Have you gone to this person for advice in the last 6 months?

RESOURCES: Have you worked with this person to obtain new resources (grants, programming and services) in the community in the last 6 months?

Output Data

Measure (Mean)	Know	Info	Advice	Res.	All
Density (ties)	38% (1,910)	15% (740)	11.2% (554)	8.2% (410)	6.6% (330)
Distance (steps)	1.62	1.87	2.14	2.28	2.38
Centrality:					
Degree (In Degree)	26.9	10.4	7.8	5.78	71.7
Degree (Cent. In Degree)	52.3%	31.3%	26.37%	20.6%	16.3%

The authors would like to thank the Revere CARES Coalition members and leadership for participating in the study.

Conclusions

- Members are well connected (no structural gaps).

- No isolates or cliques in Know, Information and Advice networks.

- Members go to each other for information more than for advice or resources.

- Despite personal attributes, members have communicated with multiple members over the past 6 months.

- The density of members who know one another has remained rather consistent through the continuous expansion of the group (2000 = 44%, 2012 = 38%) suggesting that the Coalition has been successful in keeping members connected to one another as the group grows in size and influential power.