



Let's Go! Mid-Course Lessons Learned

At mid-point in the 5 year demonstration project, Let's Go engaged in a process to determine the key lessons learned up until that point in the intervention and individual sectors. This document represents a snap-shot in time during the spring of 2009 and it is not currently being updated regularly. A committee composed of staff and Founding Partner representatives came together to evaluate what the key lessons learned were. A conversation was also held with three sites across the state to discuss their experience in implementing Let's Go in their regions.

Organizational & Staff Capacity

- Each sectors needs to be owned by a staff person as a primary contact.
- From a capacity standpoint, program needs appropriately trained staff with the necessary skills and experience with individual sectors.
- From an organizational standpoint, program needs core capacities. Does it need one home? Key attributes need to be determined. Can you get necessary content and neutrality in one place?

Process

- Need a multi-sector model that provides intervention structure while also allowing for “local flavor” that leverages local assets and resources. Need to meet sectors where they are at.
- Balance the benefits of evaluation and data needs and have clear agreement on scope.
- Manage partner expectations and maintain clear focus.
- Use common messages, look and feel to materials to connect dots across sectors.
- Recognize that everyone has “turf issues” and work through them.
- Choose a region that makes sense & is credible.

Stakeholders

- Need engaged stakeholders and leadership group with clearly defined roles & expectations. Tools for engagement are needed.
- Relationship management, customer relations & stakeholders' relations is important. Staff needs to be flexible and be able to work on all three.

Sectors

- Have 10 things to know about each sector and how it works (flow charts, etc).
- Each sector has its own culture and that needs to be understood and respected in the context of our work. The change needs to occur “within” the culture.

Overall

- Interconnectivity across sectors is key to success.
- Project needs long-term commitment and plan for sustainability.
- Being part of something bigger – national/state/regional – is important and instills pride.
- Need to be evidence based and data driven whenever possible.

- Don't let model confine you – if it's not working try something different.
- Economic factors are driving decisions across all sectors.
- Need to articulate the reason for this work – why is obesity a problem and illustrate its scope and impact.
- Needs to be nimble and consistent.

Mid- Course Lessons Learned: Schools

- Providing a framework & flexibility to make choices results in success and challenges.
- Meeting schools where they are at is part of the success and provides ownership.
- Need to understand challenges and work through it. Often there is no clear line of decision making. Need a school based team and resources (minigrants) in year one.
- Message is easy to use & provides focus that is supported by materials and tools.
- Credibility of BBCH and FP support was important to success in schools.
- The school is often the 'hub' of a community and is a great place to start tapping into the pulse of a community.
- Intervention is different in different grade levels but should start with small, sustainable changes.
- Schools move slowly. It takes a long time to get school buy-in, create the team, develop the plan, and implement the changes. The school calendar year greatly limits the time. There are natural starting points in the year - schools often begin implementation in Jan.
- School Wellness Policy Learning:
 - Look good on paper but teachers / schools don't often know policy, feel invested in, supported by or follow it. Let's Go! (LG) has been helpful in writing / revising policies.
 - LG work needs to be tied to the appropriate level of policy (i.e. handbooks).

Mid- Course Lessons Learned: School Nutrition Directors

- Let's Go provides a peer network & engagement adds credibility.
- Doing good work already, but need help with marketing & unique challenges around revenue and business.

Mid- Course Lessons Learned: Health Care

- Physician champion with content expertise is critical.
- Capacity to deliver interventions is necessary (multiple physician champions).
- Necessary for healthcare providers to feel like they are part of the solution, but not the entire solution & to provide providers and teams with the appropriate tools & scripts.
- Data is important to healthcare providers, especially around their patient population.
- Important to have a coordinated approach: face to face, online, didactic learning, etc.
- National guidelines, endorsed by influential organizations are important.
- Evaluation is challenging.
- Food service in healthcare is similar to school food service:
 - Multiple challenges around revenue & historically hospitals have not had a positive culture around food.
 - Physician leadership has lead to successful changes.
 - Taking small steps creates more sustainable change. They need tools and marketing strategies to advertise and sustain changes.
 - Policy and environmental changes need to follow education to create sustainable changes.

Mid- Course Lessons Learned: Community

- Building and sustaining community teams is labor and staff intensive and need to be owned by the communities. Be clear on role and provide appropriate guidance.

- Community grants need to be focused and clear on goal in funding.
- This is a learning laboratory and special project funds are needed for promising opportunities.
- Mini-grant projects must to be connected with other sector interventions.
- Community needs to clearly defined. It's a generic concept? Schools and worksites are part of larger communities. If community is a standalone sector it needs sustaining.

Mid- Course Lessons Learned: Worksites

- Build from existing assets and resources at the worksites & goal should inform intervention – raise awareness, change behavior, or incorporate 5-2-1-0 into the sector?
- Collecting data from worksites is difficult.
- It's important for employees to understand their company's involvement with Let's Go.
- The size of worksites makes a big difference about the intervention.
- Do not duplicate efforts of others.

Mid- Course Lessons Learned: Media Campaign and Website

- Be clear of goals of the media campaign - to change behavior or raise awareness?
- Need to strategically connect the campaign and website to interventions.
- Need to weigh value of media opportunities with links to program (I.E. is cost of TV ads and sponsorships with intended impact and outcomes).
- Need to leverage the expertise of FPs marketing staff and CDM.

Mid- Course Lessons Learned: Afterschool

- Environmental and policy changes are the goal.
- Offering programming is not enough if environment doesn't support healthy behaviors.

Mid- Course Lessons Learned: YAC

- Having youth involved gives LG credibility, but need clear mission and purpose to most effectively engage youth.
- Composition of the group is important (youth that want to be agents of change).

Mid- Course Lessons Learned: Childcare

- We are still learning in this area. ...Stay tuned!

Mid- Course Lessons Learned: Other Communities Experiences

- Like being part of a something bigger that comes with strong credibility, name recognition and professional looking materials.
- Challenges with resources.
- LG needs specific capacity to support.
- Each community comes with unique set of local assets and challenges.