

***EXTENSION ROLE
IN COMMUNITY GROUPS***

Evaluation Report

August 2000

Program Development and Evaluation
University of Wisconsin-Extension
Cooperative Extension
Madison, Wisconsin

Background

In 1995, UW Cooperative Extension Family Living Programs embarked upon a newly developed four-year plan of work structure that included four theme groups, each organized around a major programming emphasis. One theme group, called Parent Support and Community Partnerships, met several times to plot a mission and strategy for accomplishing program goals. In March 1996, the theme group met specifically to address the issue of how to evaluate the outcomes of its four-year plan of work. The meeting focused on the big questions that needed to be answered in order to demonstrate accountability and effectiveness to a variety of stakeholders both inside and external to Cooperative Extension.

The present report, Extension Role in Community Groups, is one example of the evaluations developed and carried out by members of the Parent Support and Community Partnerships Theme Group between 1995 and 1999. It developed because of the growing number of hours that both county and state staff were spending in community groups and because of frustration about the lack of a systematic method to report or "capture" the accomplishments of such groups.

Acknowledgements

Special recognition goes to the members of the Family Living Program Theme Group who had the vision and interest to ask about evaluation and to design an instrument and process for documenting the contribution Extension is making in community groups. This proved to be complex and required additional time on the part of already overextended Extension educators. It demonstrates the professionalism and commitment of UWEX-Cooperative Extension educators. In 1995, when this initiative emerged, membership of the Family Living Program Theme Group: Community Partnerships included Mary Fran Lepeska and Ann L. McLean, Co-chairs; Karen Bogenschneider, Bob Bright, Gay Eastman, Kathy Eisenmann, Mary Gruenewald, Karen Hintz, Mary Huser and Robert Young.

Many thanks go to the forty-four Extension educators who completed the survey that produced the results for this report. It takes time and effort to participate in a survey such as this. Their participation indicates their interest and commitment to sharing information and building our collective knowledge. They include: L. Anderson, J. Anez, N. Baumgartner, N. Boatman, L. Boelter, D. Brion, L. Bruce, P. Cira, J. Cismoski, N. Coffey, R. Deniger, K. Dickrell, D. Doll-Yogerst, K. Deupree, K. Ehle-Traastad, K. Eisenmann, J. Felthous, N. Franz, F. Fulleylove-Krause, S. Futterer, B. Gleason, L. Heppner, M. Hilliker, C. Jacoby, K. Joos, S. Koca, M. Kooiker, J. LeFevre, M. Lepeska, A. McLean, K. Metzenbauer, K. Miller, C. Nelson, M. Novak, P. Olive, P. Packer, G. Peavey, B. Roder, P. Rychter, R. Schriefer, K. Smith, P. Thomas, M. Tidemann, T. Vizenor and L. Zierl.

Several faculty members reviewed the draft report. Special thanks goes to Mary Gruenewald, Ann Keim, Mary Fran Lepeska and Mary Roach for their thoughtful comments that improved the report. Final appreciation goes to Joan Palmer who ably oversaw the final editing and production of this report.

Report Prepared by

Ellen Taylor-Powell
Evaluation Specialist

Carol Hermann
Research Analyst

Ann McLean
Human Development Specialist

EXTENSION ROLE IN COMMUNITY GROUPS

INTRODUCTION

The 1990s saw renewed interest in collaboration as a way to enhance public participation in problem solving and to reduce expenditures, duplication and fragmentation. We came to realize that the complex problems facing families and communities require the joint effort of agencies, sectors and people working together. Consequently, an increasing number of community groups emerged, either as local grass-roots initiatives or in response to funding mandates as required by several major federal-state initiatives including Family Preservation and Support (FPS), Community Health Assessment (APEX) and Welfare-to-Work.

As interest in collaboration spread, the faculty and staff of the University of Wisconsin-Cooperative Extension saw their familiar Extension role change from being subject matter experts to being facilitators and partners in a variety of community groups. In 1997, a number of Family Living educators identified the need to evaluate this new and growing role working in community partnerships. They were interested in gaining a better understanding of the groups with which Extension Family Living educators work and the investment Family Living educators make to local community groups. They were also interested in exploring the difference Extension involvement makes. The following report presents the results of this evaluation.

METHODOLOGY

Drawing on published research and their own experience working in community groups, a team of Extension faculty designed a survey for Family Living educators (Appendix A). After pilot testing and revisions, the instrument was mailed to approximately 125 educators in late 1997. Each person was asked to complete one questionnaire for each community group in which s/he played a significant on-going role. Questionnaires could be submitted throughout the 1998 calendar year. Groups in which educators worked on an ad hoc or onetime basis were not to be included. The survey was designed to address three principal questions:

1. What are the community groups like in which Family Living educators work?
2. What do Extension educators contribute to these groups?
3. What difference does it make that Extension is involved?

Forty-four Extension educators completed and returned questionnaires. They included 36 Family Living educators, six Wisconsin Nutrition Education Program educators and one state specialist. One 4-H Youth Development Agent also completed a questionnaire.

These educators reported on 127 different community groups in 41 different counties. On average, each Extension educator reported on three different groups.

Most reported on one or two groups. One educator reported on eight groups. Since the purpose of the survey was to collect information only about groups in which Extension educators play a significant ongoing role, the number of community groups educators actually participate in is expected to be much higher.

RESULTS

Description of Community Groups

The survey included a number of questions about aspects that research and experience indicate are important when describing community-based initiatives. These aspects include group focus, history of working together, rationale and process of group formation, group membership and level of integration. The following results help describe the groups in this particular sample and provide information for understanding how they function.

Group Focus. Community groups in this sample are working on a range of family issues, from housing and elder care, to parent education and family support (Table 1). The high percentage of parent/family support groups is largely due to the key role UW-Extension began playing in 1994 when federal funds became available through the Family Preservation and Support (FPS) initiative. Specific names for these groups are found in Appendix B further clarifying the local focus of these groups around the state.

Table 1. Primary focus of community group (n = 127 groups)

	#	%
Parent/family support (including parenting education)	38	30.2
Prevention networks/programs	18	14.3
Youth development (including at-risk youth and teen pregnancy)	10	7.9
Child abuse and neglect/family violence	9	7.1
Welfare-to-Work/low-income families	9	7.1
Health	8	6.3
Early childhood education	7	5.6
Alcohol, tobacco and other drugs	5	4.0
Child care	5	4.0
Community service/education	5	4.0
Nutrition/hunger	3	2.4
Hmong community issues	2	1.6
Housing	2	1.6
Schools	2	1.6
Women's issues	2	1.6
Aging	2	1.6

Group History. Eighty-one percent of these groups had been working together for at least 2 years at the time of the survey (Table 2). On average, groups had been in existence for five years, with a range of less than one year to 56 years. Three of the groups traced their beginnings to early Home and Community Educator (HCE) groups of the 1940s and 1950s. Seventy-one percent of the groups were formed since 1994, consistent with the upswing in interest in collaboration.

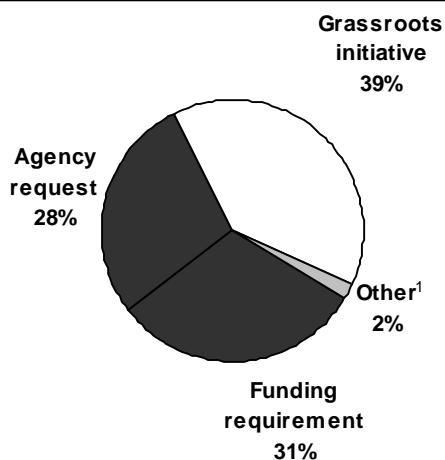
Table 2. Date group formed (n = 119 groups)

	#	%
1942-1950	3	2.5
1980-1989	12	10.1
1990-1999	19	16.0
1994	12	10.1
1995	23	19.3
1996	27	22.7
1997	21	17.6
1998	2	1.7

Of the 127 groups, 22 (18 %) are incorporated. Of those, nearly all (20 of the 22 groups) have tax-exempt status. Incorporation of a group usually signifies a developmental milestone for the group as it moves from a less formal, often voluntary status, to a legal entity that is capable of executing contracts and receiving funds such as grants.

Reason for Group Formation. The impetus for group formation can be seen in Figure 1. Almost 40 percent of the groups formed due to a locally driven, grassroots initiative. The remaining 61 percent formed largely as a result of externally driven initiatives, including agency requests and funding. Of the groups that formed since 1994, nearly half (46%) formed in response to funding guidelines that required the creation of community groups.

Figure 1. Reason for group formation (n = 127 groups)



¹Other: Healthy Babies Initiative; preventing use of alcohol and drugs by pregnant mothers; education

Group Initiation. About half of these groups were started by one organization. The other half was initiated through the joint efforts of two or more organizations. Extension educators and public social service representatives most frequently were involved in group formation often working together (Table 3). This is probably due to the family focus of the groups in this sample, the large number of FPS groups, and the leading role Extension and public social services played in the FPS initiative. Health professionals and employees of public schools and local governments also were frequently involved in group formation. Of note is the range and variety of interests that are represented within this listing of people and agencies involved in community group initiation.

Table 3. Constituents involved in group initiation (n=127 groups)

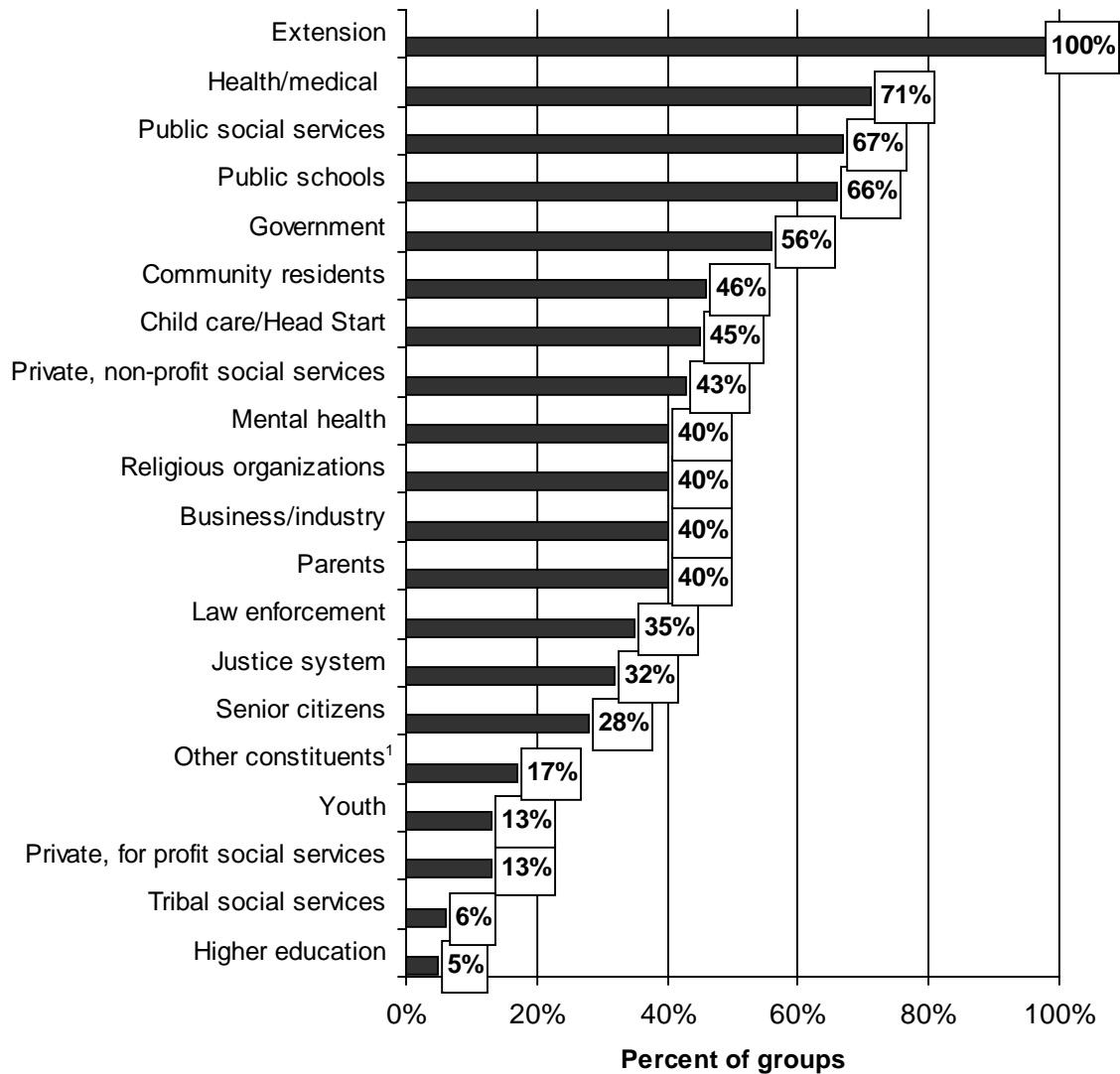
	#	%
Extension	53	41.7
Public social services organization	53	41.7
Health/medical	28	22.0
Public schools	27	21.3
County or local government	26	20.5
Private, nonprofit social services organization	16	12.6
Mental health	14	11.0
Child care/Head Start	13	10.2
Community residents	13	10.2
Law enforcement	9	7.1
Parents	9	7.1
Religious organization	5	3.9
Tribal social services organization	5	3.9
Business/industry	4	3.1
Justice system	4	3.1
Private, for-profit social services organization	4	3.1
Youth	4	3.1
Other ¹	4	3.1

¹ Other: Adolescent Task Force, Family and Children Coalition, housing, small group of professionals

Group Membership. On average, each group has about 16 active members, with a range of four to 50 active members. These members represent a variety of community sectors and constituents involved in family and community life (Figure 2). Because the purpose of the survey was to look at groups in which Extension participates, Extension is present in every group. The other major participants include the health and medical professions, social services and public schools. These are the same organizations most often involved in group initiation. Business and industry are represented in 40 percent of these groups.

Building a broad base of support is often linked to successful community groups. The Family Preservation and Support (FPS) initiative required broad representation as part of its funding guidelines. While the number of constituents a group includes is influenced by the size and diversity of the community, the groups in this sample, by and large, have been able to attract a wide membership. On average, they have members representing eight different constituencies, ranging from 1 - 20 different constituencies per group (Table 4). More than one-third of the groups have members representing ten or more constituents. More than 90 percent of these groups include at least four or more constituents in their membership. A significant positive correlation was found between the number of active members and number of constituencies represented in these community groups ($r=.378, p<.01$).

Figure 2. Membership within community groups (n = 127 groups)



¹Other: Foundation, other civic groups, other public agencies, utility companies, media and multicultural

Table 4. Number of constituencies within community groups (n = 126 groups)

Number of constituencies	# of groups	% of groups
1 – 3	10	7.9
4 - 6	37	29.4
7 – 9	35	27.8
10 or more	44	34.9
Average	8.4 constituencies	
Range	1 – 20 constituencies	

Level of group integration. Not all community-based initiatives function in the same way. The following definitions were used in this survey to differentiate groups by type of relationship:

Collaborative: groups whose members work toward a common vision and who share resources, authority and decision-making within the group.

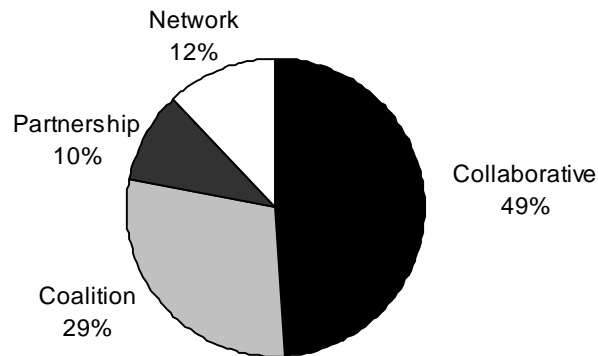
Coalition: groups that work toward complementary goals rather than common goals and share some resources.

Network: groups in which members interact primarily for the purpose of exchanging information, with minimal coordination of activities or sharing of resources.

Partnership: groups whose members engage in some joint planning and activity, but whose resources are separate.

About half of these groups (49%) were said to be functioning as collaboratives (Figure 3). Another 29 percent were characterized as coalitions. Collaborative signifies the highest degree of integration and resource sharing, followed by coalitions. This finding may be related to the high percentage of FPS groups in this sample and the emphasis FPS placed on sharing and collaborative development. Two-thirds of the FPS groups were classified as collaboratives while another 20 percent were classified as coalitions.

Figure 3. Description of community group (n = 126 groups)



The Contribution of Extension Educators to Community Groups

A major purpose of this evaluation was to describe the contribution Extension educators make to community groups. Various questions explored the educators' roles, activities and time commitment within the group.

Extension Roles. For a community group to function, a variety of roles and responsibilities have to be carried out. Based on the research literature and personal experience, the evaluation team created a list of possible roles played in community groups. These are listed in Table 5. Roles may change over time or an individual might engage in more than one role simultaneously.

Extension educators report that they most frequently provide information to help the group function and make decisions (Table 5). They also provide access to resources such as specialist support, computers and the Internet, assessment tools, administrative support, financial assistance with fund-raising and grant writing. Likewise, Extension educators provide leadership, develop specific projects, facilitate group process and help initiate action. These results indicate the variety of roles Extension educators play in community group work and the type of skills

required of these educators. Many of the activities involve 'doing with' versus 'doing to' or 'doing for,' requiring a more collegial rather than a pedagogical relationship.

Table 5. Roles played by Extension educators in community groups (n = 127 groups)

	%		
	Never	Sometimes	Often/Always
Provide information	1	16	83
Provide access to resources	5	20	75
Provide leadership	12	39	49
Develop specific projects	19	36	45
Facilitate group process	17	42	41
Initiate action	22	39	39
Convene the group	49	17	34
Serve as spokesperson	40	28	32
Write reports, etc.	24	47	29
Communicate with media	28	43	29
Provide evaluation assistance	22	49	29
Coach/mentor the group	46	28	26
Coordinate events	35	41	24
Recruit volunteers	35	43	22
Serve as group evaluator	48	31	20
Teach subject matter	26	56	18
Train others	46	41	13
Develop curriculum	56	33	11
Raise funds	54	36	10
Provide technical assistance	61	30	9

Time contribution. Community group work also requires a lot of time. Extension educators report that they contribute about 13 hours per month per community group (Table 6). Time commitments vary widely depending upon the group, its needs and the educator's role in that group. In this sample, educators were contributing anywhere from 0.3 hours per month to 92 hours per month. For two-thirds of the groups, time contributions amounted to less than 10 hours per month. Time investments increased for the other groups.

Table 6. Total hours per month spent in community group work (n = 122 groups)

Number of hours per month	Number of groups	Percent of groups
0.3 – 10	78	63.9
11 – 20	25	20.5
21 – 30	8	6.6
31 – 40	1	0.8
41 – 60	4	3.3
61– 92	6	4.9
Average	13.0 hours	
Range	0.3 – 92 hours	

The amount of time spent in community group work differs depending upon the group and its stage of development. If one educator is involved in several groups, the amount of time spent in community group work may be significant. Also, the activities as reported here do not represent all of an Extension educator's work with community groups and time investments are difficult to recall over a year period. Thus, it is likely that time actually spent in community group work is higher than reported. Some of the typical activities that demand on-going time investments are listed in Table 7 with average hours reported per month. Most time is allocated to meetings, followed by networking, communicating outside meetings,

preparation and subcommittee work. As stated above, these are retrospective data for a year so should be viewed as suggestive, not actual.

Table 7. Average hours per month Extension educators spend in selected activities (n = 122 groups)

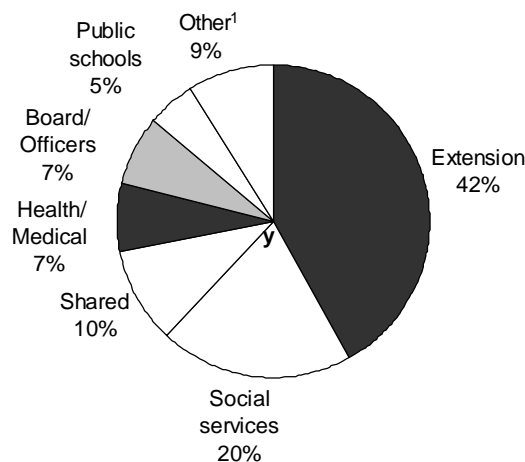
Activity	Average # of hours/month/group
Regular group meetings	3.3
Networking and communicating outside of meetings	2.4
Preparation for meetings and activities	2.4
Subcommittee work outside of meetings	2.1
Group-sponsored activities outside of meetings	1.5
Administration and paperwork	1.5
Teaching	1.1
Facilitating group process	0.9
Fund-raising	0.5

The Difference Extension Involvement Makes in Community Group Work

An analysis of the quantitative and qualitative data suggests a number of ways in which Extension’s involvement is making a difference for these community groups. Three central areas of impact emerged related to leadership, level of collaboration and access to resources.

Leadership. Extension, more than any other single agency or group, provides primary leadership for these community initiatives. In 42 percent of the groups, Extension provides leadership, followed by Social Services who provides leadership in 20 percent of the groups (Figure 4).

Figure 4. Leadership of community groups



¹Other: community groups, paid staff, government, Head Start, technical college, Hmong women

When asked about particular leadership activities for the 12 months prior to completing the survey, Extension educators reported that they were serving as the leader in over one-quarter of the community groups (Table 8). In nearly half of the remaining groups, Extension educators were providing leadership for particular activities or committees. In total, Extension educators were carrying out significant

leadership activities in about 75 percent of these community groups during the year preceding this survey.

Table 8. Particular leadership responsibilities of Extension educators in community groups (n = 116 groups)

Leadership role	#	%
Provide primary leadership for community group	34	29.3
Provide leadership for particular activities or committees	58	50.0
Active member with no leadership responsibility	24	20.7

A significant relationship exists between leadership responsibility and the number of hours Extension educators contribute to community group work ($p < .01$). Educators who are involved in leadership spend significantly more time in community group work, particularly in subcommittee work outside meetings and in administration and paperwork. A significant positive relationship also exists between leadership and involvement in group initiation. In two-thirds of the groups where Extension was involved in initiation, Extension provides primary leadership ($p < .001$).

Level of collaboration. A number of findings suggest that Extension makes a difference in terms of how a group is formed, how it works together and its collaborative potential.

Groups with Extension leadership are functioning more often as collaboratives than groups with other sources of leadership (Table 9). Collaboratives represent greater resource sharing, cooperation and the commitment to a common mission.

Table 9. Type of group and source of leadership

Type of group	Source of leadership			
	Extension (n=48)		Other (n=77)	
	#	%	#	%
Network	2	4.2	13	16.9
Partnership	5	10.4	8	10.4
Coalition	13	27.1	22	28.6
Collaborative	28	58.3	34	44.2

Extension is most likely to partner with others during group initiation (Table 10). In nearly 80 percent of the groups where Extension is involved in group initiation, at least one other initiator is also involved, most often a public social service organization. When other agencies and individuals are involved in getting the group started, they are more likely to act alone. Partnering during group initiation is a recommended aspect of collaborative development.

Table 10. Initiation of group and source of initiation

Initiation of community group	Source of initiation			
	Extension (n=52)		Other (n=75)	
	#	%	#	%
Group initiated alone	11	21.2	52	69.3
Group initiated with others	41	79.8	23	30.7

Groups that are initiated with Extension help are more often functioning as collaboratives (Table 11). Nearly two-thirds of the groups that Extension helped form are classified as collaboratives compared to 41 percent of the others. It is expected that this finding relates to the fact that Extension educators work with others during group formation and continue to facilitate a shared commitment during group work.

Table 11. Group type and source of group initiation

Type of group	Source of leadership			
	Extension (n=52)		Other (n=74)	
	#	%	#	%
Network	3	5.8	12	16.2
Partnership	5	9.6	8	10.8
Coalition	12	23.1	24	32.4
Collaborative	32	61.5	30	40.5

Access to resources. The findings also suggest that Extension makes a difference in helping groups access resources necessary for group work. Because assessing needs and assets is an important preliminary step in community group work, a question on the survey asked specifically about this. Nearly 60 percent of the groups had conducted a needs/asset assessment. Of these, two-thirds (43 groups) used a UWEX assessment tool. Table 12 lists the main UWEX assessment tools used as reported by 27 groups. Many groups used more than one assessment tool. Groups initiated or led by other organizations are just as likely to use UWEX assessment tools as those initiated or led by Extension.

Table 12. UWEX assessment tools used by groups (reported by 27 educators)

	#	%
Community Program Assessment	15	55.6
Parenting 1st Year Evaluation	13	48.1
Employee Child Care Survey	12	44.4
School Readiness Survey	12	44.4
Teen Assessment Program	12	44.4
School Age Child Care Survey	10	37.0
Tapping into Parents	7	25.9
UWEX demographic and strategic planning data	5	18.5
Educators developed tool	2	7.4

Extension educator perceptions of contributions and impact. The most significant contributions Extension educators feel they are making to these community groups are listed in Table 13. A content analysis of several open-ended questions provided these findings. Leadership was most frequently mentioned, consistent with the quantitative data. Educators also mentioned several other major contributions they feel they are making to community groups: providing access to resources and group process skills such as facilitation and conflict management. Of interest in open-ended questions as reported here is not the number in any one category but the range and types of contributions educators feel they are making. Providing a different perspective and continuity for the group are but two of these other important contributions educators mentioned.

Table 13. Major contributions to community groups (n = 125 groups)

	#	%
Leadership	45	36.0
Access to resources	31	24.9
Group process skills	22	17.6
Different perspective	19	15.2
Education	13	10.7
Networking	13	10.7
Information	13	10.7
Knowledge/technical expertise	12	9.6
Getting things started	11	8.8
Publicity for groups and UWEX	7	5.6
Specific outcomes	6	4.8
Continuity	3	2.4
Administrative support	3	2.4
Helping to acquire funding	2	1.6
Other	2	1.6

Extension educators were also asked what impact they felt their contributions have on community groups. In an open-ended response, “improving group process” was most frequently mentioned (Table 14). Respondents used such phrases as “helping the group get started,” “providing leadership” and “facilitating strategic planning.” In one-third of the cases, Extension educators mentioned that their contributions directly influenced the group’s outcomes. They included such remarks as helping the group “secure funding,” “achieve nonprofit status” and “hire paid staff people to achieve the group’s goals.” Extension educators also mentioned their impact in terms of educating community and group members, sharing evaluation and assessment practices with the group and helping to increase community collaboration.

Table 14. Impact of contributions to community groups (n = 125 groups)

	#	%
Group process has been improved	86	68.8
Desired outcomes have been achieved	42	33.6
Members and community have been educated	29	23.2
Specialized knowledge has been shared	26	20.8
Community knowledge of and involvement with group has increased	20	16.0
Too early to tell	4	3.2
Little contributed	1	0.8

CONCLUSIONS

Community groups are numerous and diverse. The results reported here reflect a small sample of community groups across Wisconsin and the nation. Extension educators are playing a variety of important roles in helping these groups form, set and achieve their objectives, and evaluate their impact. What have we learned from this evaluation?

Description of groups. The results support the observation that Extension educators are spending large amounts of time working with community groups. These groups bring together diverse constituencies to address issues and con-

cerns facing families and communities. Many are spontaneous grassroots initiatives but a larger proportion have formed due to external mandates, principally the Family Preservation and Support initiative for this sample of community groups. Most have a fairly broad base of support that suggests high levels of commitment and interest. The majority of these groups are said to be functioning at the highest levels of resource sharing and integration, either as collaboratives or coalitions.

Extension contribution. Extension educators are making numerous contributions to these groups, in some cases, playing roles and providing assistance that would otherwise not be available. In particular, Extension educators provide information to help groups function and make decisions, provide access to resources, assist with fund-raising and grant writing, provide leadership, develop specific projects, facilitate group process and help initiate action. Such contributions are essential aspects of group process and prerequisites to the achievement of group goals. Extension agents are engaging in a different type of teaching role than has been their tradition, serving as facilitators and collaborators rather than as content specialists. As leaders and members of community groups, they are teaching and modeling process skills that are necessary for accomplishing group outcomes and for social capital development within communities.

Impact of Extension involvement. Extension, more than any other organization, provides leadership for these community groups. Without Extension involvement, many of these groups would not have the necessary leadership to get started, set direction or achieve outcomes. Committed and effective leadership is fundamental to group success and it appears that Extension is making the leadership difference for many of these groups. Extension's involvement also seems to make a difference for how a group functions. Groups with Extension leadership and/or involvement at group start-up more often function as collaboratives, representing the highest form of resource sharing and integration. Collaboratives are being promoted as a mechanism for leveraging resources, reducing duplication, building local capacity and creating more successful initiatives for solving problems. In various cases, Extension is fulfilling roles, making resources available and providing assistance that no one else provides. If community groups like these are to be sustained, Extension will continue to have an impact on their operation and outcomes. Given Extension's educational orientation, it is well positioned to provide the leadership and support necessary for collaborative development. It may be one of few community resources that can do so.

Limitations of this evaluation. The purpose of this evaluation was to obtain information easily and directly from Extension educators working in community groups. Self-reports such as this provide valuable information but represent the perceptions of individuals at one point in time. Other community members might have different views and opinions of the group and/or Extension's impact. Also, perceptions are likely to vary at different points in time. This sample included a large number of Family Preservation and Support initiatives and so the results need to be interpreted with this in mind. Despite its limitations, this study adds to the growing knowledge base about community-based initiatives and Extension's role in these efforts.

EXTENSION ROLE IN COMMUNITY GROUP

I. BACKGROUND

A. Educator Name _____ County/Location _____ Date _____

B. Name of Community Group _____

C. Primary focus/purpose of community group (Check ONLY ONE):

- a) Alcohol, tobacco, other drugs
- b) Teen pregnancy
- c) Housing
- d) HIV/AIDS
- e) Child abuse and neglect
- f) Day care
- g) Early childhood education
- h) Health
- i) Nutrition/hunger
- j) Eating disorders
- k) Learning disabilities
- l) Run away youth
- m) Juvenile justice/delinquency
- n) School truancy/drop out
- o) Prevention networks/programs
- p) Aging
- q) Parenting (or parent education)
- r) Family violence
- s) Parent support
- t) Other (please name) _____

D. Name of program (Check ONE if appropriate):

- a) Youth Futures
- b) Teen Assessment Project (TAP)
- c) School Age Child Care
- d) Employee Child Care
- e) School Readiness
- f) Family Preservation and Support
- g) Goals 2000 (DPI)
- h) Community Health Assessment (APEX)
- i) Child Care Coordinators (4 C's)
- j) Choices
- k) Alliance for a Drug-Free Wisconsin
- l) W2
- m) Other (please name) _____
- n) No program name

II. GROUP HISTORY

1. Date group started (mo/yr): _____

2. Who initiated the community group (check all that apply):

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a) Business /industry | <input type="checkbox"/> g) Child care/Head Start | <input type="checkbox"/> n) Religious organization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> b) Law enforcement | <input type="checkbox"/> h) Public schools | Social Services Organization: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> c) Justice system | <input type="checkbox"/> i) Youth | <input type="checkbox"/> o) Public |
| <input type="checkbox"/> d) County or local government | <input type="checkbox"/> j) Parents | <input type="checkbox"/> p) Tribal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> e) Health/medical | <input type="checkbox"/> k) Community residents | <input type="checkbox"/> q) Private, nonprofit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> f) Mental health | <input type="checkbox"/> l) Senior citizens | <input type="checkbox"/> r) Private, for profit |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> m) Extension | <input type="checkbox"/> s) Other _____ |

3. Does Extension provide the primary leadership for this group?

- a) YES
 b) NO c) Who does? _____

4. Membership

- a) Number on mailing list _____
b) Number of people "active" in community group: _____
c) Number of members (from total membership) representing each group (place number on appropriate line):

- | | | |
|--|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> a) Business /industry | <input type="checkbox"/> g) Child care/Head Start | <input type="checkbox"/> n) Religious organization |
| <input type="checkbox"/> b) Law enforcement | <input type="checkbox"/> h) Public schools | Social Services Organization: |
| <input type="checkbox"/> c) Justice system | <input type="checkbox"/> i) Youth | <input type="checkbox"/> o) Public |
| <input type="checkbox"/> d) County or local government | <input type="checkbox"/> j) Parents | <input type="checkbox"/> p) Tribal |
| <input type="checkbox"/> e) Health/medical | <input type="checkbox"/> k) Community residents | <input type="checkbox"/> q) Private, nonprofit |
| <input type="checkbox"/> f) Mental health | <input type="checkbox"/> l) Senior citizens | <input type="checkbox"/> r) Private, for profit |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> m) Extension | <input type="checkbox"/> s) Other _____ |

5. Is this group incorporated?

- a) YES
 b) NO

6. If YES, does the group have tax exempt: 501(c)(III) status?

- a) YES
 b) NO

7. Why was this group formed initially? (Check ONLY ONE)

- a) in response to a funding requirement
 b) in response to an agency request
 c) as a grassroots initiative responding to a locally identified need
 d) other (please specify) _____

8. Which of the following *best* describes this community group (check ONLY ONE):
- a) Members interact primarily to exchange information and to communicate.
 - b) Members provide helpful resources to support each others' interests and goals; there is some joint planning and activity but resources are separate.
 - c) Members work together on complementary goals; there is coordination and some sharing of resources.
 - d) Members share (or are working toward) a common vision that links diverse interests; actions are jointly created, and resources, authority and decision making are controlled within the group.

III. YOUR ROLE IN THE COMMUNITY GROUP

9. Please check the statement which *best* characterizes your membership and level of leadership in the community group for each time period. (Check AS APPROPRIATE in each column, under each time period.)

- | | Past 12 Months | Before Then |
|---|-----------------------|--------------------|
| a) Not a member | | |
| b) Ex officio member | | |
| c) Inactive member | | |
| d) Active member; no leadership responsibility. | | |
| e) Active member; provide leadership for particular activities or committee(s). | | |
| f) Active member; provide primary leadership for the group. | | |

10. During the past 12 months, about how many hours, *in an average month*, have you given to the community group in carrying out the following activities? (Please fill in the number of hours for each activity).

- a) hours for regular community group meetings
- b) hours for subcommittee work outside of meetings
- c) hours for group-sponsored activities outside of meetings
- d) hours for preparation for meetings or activities
- e) hours for administration, paperwork
- f) hours for networking and communicating outside of meetings
- g) hours in facilitating group process
- h) hours in teaching of subject matter
- i) hours in fund raising, including grant writing
- j) hours in other activities not mentioned above (please list) _____

11. Was a needs/asset assessment conducted by this group?

- a) YES
- b) NO

12. If YES, were UWEX tools or results of a tool used in the group's needs/asset assessment?

- a) YES
- b) NO

13. If YES, indicate which tool(s) were used by checking all that apply:

- a) Teen Assessment Program
- b) School Readiness Survey
- c) Tapping Into Parents
- d) Parenting First Year Evaluation
- e) School Age Child Care Survey
- f) Employee Child Care Survey
- g) Community. Program Assessment Tool
- h) Other UWEX tools _____

14. The following are roles that UW-Extension faculty and staff play in community groups. Which of these roles do you play in this community group? Circle ONE NUMBER for each role. In the last column, place a check if you are the ONLY ONE who provides this role for the group.

	<u>Never</u>	<u>Sometimes</u>	<u>Often</u>	<u>Always</u>	<u>ONLY ONE</u>
a) facilitate group process (e.g., team building, conflict resolution, visioning, consensus building, etc.)	1	2	3	4	_____
b) teach subject matter within the group	1	2	3	4	_____
c) train others/volunteers	1	2	3	4	_____
d) provide information	1	2	3	4	_____
e) convene the group	1	2	3	4	_____
f) coach/serve as a mentor	1	2	3	4	_____
g) provide leadership	1	2	3	4	_____
h) develop/implement specific project(s)	1	2	3	4	_____
i) coordinate event	1	2	3	4	_____
j) initiate action	1	2	3	4	_____
k) write grants/raise funds	1	2	3	4	_____
l) provide evaluation assistance	1	2	3	4	_____
m) serve as the group's evaluator	1	2	3	4	_____
n) develop curriculum	1	2	3	4	_____
o) provide access to resources (UW and other)	1	2	3	4	_____
p) recruit volunteers	1	2	3	4	_____
q) serve as the initial contact/spokesperson for group	1	2	3	4	_____
r) communicate with external constituencies/media	1	2	3	4	_____
s) write reports, communication pieces	1	2	3	4	_____
t) provide technical assistance (e.g., set up tax exempt status)	1	2	3	4	_____
u) other (please specify below)	1	2	3	4	_____

15. What have you accessed or made possible for this group that otherwise would not have been available (e.g., UWEX specialist, another colleague, demographic data, Internet access, assessment tools ...)?

16. How have the roles/resources you've contributed affected the group's functioning and/or outcomes?

17. What do you think has been your major contribution to this group?

Thank you for contributing to this evaluation!

Appendix B

Name of program (n = 107 groups) ¹	#	%
Family Preservation and Support	38	35.5
Wisconsin Works (W-2)	10	9.3
Community Health Assessment (APEX)	5	4.7
Child Care Coordinators (4 C's)	3	2.8
School Readiness	3	2.8
ATOD Prevention/Education	3	2.8
Home and Community Education	3	2.8
Child Care Resource and Referral	2	1.9
Family Resource Center	2	1.9
Teen Assessment Project (TAP)	2	1.9
Other program names	36	33.6
About Bringing Change (ABC)	Partnership Project United Way/	
Affordable Housing Coalition	Community Foundation	
Alliance for a Drug-Free Wisconsin	Refugee Women Program Development	
Art & Play	Regional Council	
Chilton Community Coalition	Resource Directory	
Council for Nurturing Families	Right from the Start	
Family Forum/Head Start, Inc.	Salvation Army Board	
Financial Education Resource Network	Senior Family Fest Steering Committee	
Forest County Partnership	Strengthening Families	
4-H	Stress Management Workshop	
Head Start Health Advisory	3-O-Day (Our bodies, Ourselves,	
Healthy Babies Initiative (Department of Health)	Our responsibility)	
Healthy Teen Coalition	UFIP/Parent to Parent	
Hunger Prevention Council	Underage Drinking and Driving Prevention	
Juneau County Community Education Center	United Way Start Smart	
Juneau County Hunger Task Force	Vernon County Domestic Abuse Council	
Maternal & Child Health Grant	Women's Financial Information Program	
New Partnership	YMCA	
Parent Teacher Association	Youth Futures	

¹ Respondents for 20 groups did not specify a program name.



Cooperative Extension
University of Wisconsin-Extension

Program Development and Evaluation

432 North Lake Street, Room 613

Madison, WI 53706

Phone: (608) 262-9940

Fax: (608) 262-9166

Authors: Ellen Taylor-Powell is an evaluation specialist for Cooperative Extension, University of Wisconsin-Extension. Carol Hermann is an evaluation associate. Ann McLean is a human development specialist.

Issued in furtherance of Cooperative Extension work, Acts of May 8 and June 30, 1914, in cooperation with the U.S. Department of Agriculture, University of Wisconsin-Extension, Cooperative Extension. An EEO/Affirmative Action employer, University of Wisconsin-Extension provides equal opportunities in employment and programming, including Title IX and ADA requirements. If you need this information in an alternative format, contact the Office of Equal Opportunity and Diversity Programs or call Extension Publishing at (608) 262-2655.

© Copyright 2000 by the Board of Regents of the University of Wisconsin System doing business as the division of Cooperative Extension of the University of Wisconsin-Extension. Send inquiries about copyright permission to: Director, Cooperative Extension Publishing, 201 Hiram Smith Hall, 1545 Observatory Dr., Madison, WI 53706

This publication is available in PDF format on the Internet on the Program Development and Evaluation web page at <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/Evaluation/estudies.htm> To see more Cooperative Extension publications visit the web site: <http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pubs/>

Extension Role in Community Groups: An Evaluation Report by Ellen Taylor-Powell, Carol Hermann and Ann McLean