

## **Client Example: Unlikely Collaborating Partners**

**Project:** Creating a Community Coalition to End Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) in Youth, Salt Lake City, Utah

**Background:** The Utah Health Department, in seeking to address the escalating rate of STDs in youth, developed a community coalition. On May 13, 2009 a diverse set of community partners came together to how to collaborate beyond differences and develop shared initiatives to prevent STDs in Youth. These groups represented the full spectrum of a value stream: from the conservative Eagle Forum Foundation to the more liberal Planned Parenthood, from church leaders to teachers and social service workers. A united and cooperative coalition emerged in a gathering that was thoughtfully designed and skillfully facilitated.

The Department of Health contracted with Colette Herrick of Insight Shift to achieve this outcome. Cheri Torres, an Insight Shift collaborator and the Principal of Collaboration-by-Design, co-consulted and facilitated the project.

**Project purpose:** To foster collaboration across professional and values-based differences to envision and implement strategies for reducing STDs in youth.

### **Process:**

- Prior to the Summit, 60 attendees were briefed on a variety of statistics and local data which revealed the incidence of STDs among different populations (e.g. homeless, prisons, street address, schools, age groups, and gender).
- At the Summit, participants engaged in one-on-one interviews to surface current successful efforts in the community, best practices, and best ideas for working together to impact the issue
- Interviews were followed by small group discussions and large group interaction that allowed the group to:
  1. Develop a framework for their coalition:
    1. design structures for collaborative action
    2. ideas for the vision, mission and principles for collaborating
    3. ideas for communication strategies
    4. commitments to engage effectively with each other across differences
    5. Identify a set of principles that formed the foundation for their projects and programs working with youth and STDS:
      1. Core factors for successful prevention
      2. Trends and opportunities
      3. Ideas for future action

Before the Summit concluded, this motivated, diverse group of people developed action areas, prioritized them, and outlined future actions along timelines. The areas for immediate focus:

- Screening and Testing
- Policy Issues
- Our Utah Collaborative Coalition
- Integrating STD and Unintended Pregnancy
- Increased Testing Among Young Men
- Community-based Education

Participants aligned around their own interests and commitments for action. You can learn about the progress this group is making at their [website](#).