

Ten Action Tips for Building a Multicultural Alliance

1. Create opportunities for alliance members to express their recognition that violence has affected and hurt women across lines of age, class, race, ethnicity, sexual orientation, religious affiliation and ability status. Honor and respect the fact that each person in the alliance wants to work together to change this condition.
2. Look for leadership skills and strengths especially in alliance members who have historically been excluded from leadership roles in society. Take steps to expand opportunities for them to demonstrate or develop their skills within the alliance.
3. Recognize that each group brings a unique set of resources that contribute to the alliance's overall effectiveness. Take time to find a place for each of these contributions to flourish and receive recognition.
4. Build consensus on vision, values, goals and decisions through a process that honors the diversity of experience and perspective present within the alliance. Remember that each group will prioritize and frame issues in accordance with their unique "cultural lens."
5. Formulate flexible campaign goals and strategies that allow alliance members to remain responsive to community concerns and related human rights issues.
6. Give time on a regular basis to relationship-building through small group discussions or cross-training exercises designed to foster safety, equality and mutual respect among participants.
7. Anticipate tension and conflict. Develop ground rules for constructively addressing disagreements in a way that helps alliance members turn tensions into opportunities for new learning and meaningful dialogue.
8. Encourage alliance members to identify the personal and organizational benefits they stand to gain from participating in the alliance.
9. Show respect for the reasons that specific groups—e.g., women of color, lesbian women, immigrant groups—may choose to work almost exclusively within their own communities.
10. Remember that there is no one right way to accomplish the mission of ending violence against women and girls! Listen to everyone's concerns and use democratic decision-making processes to come up with solutions that all alliance members can get behind.