**Sample conversation questions**

**(Note: not necessarily in chronological order. These are possible conversation starters and don’t all need to be covered in the same meeting. There are a ‘million cups of coffee’ to be had** – don't' expect them to get engaged from one meeting or conversation no matter how good it goes. Go for another cup of coffee).

* Thank them for their time. **Explain why your core group/leadership team thought it was important to meet with this person – *their* WIIFM.** (e.g., “Bob shared how your agency has just launched an effort to improve youth mental health in our community. This is crucial to our entire community’s well-being – and actually it’s something that our coalition is also prioritizing”).
* Our coalition exists to **help good people do good for the children and youth in our community.** We know that children don’t grow up in isolation, so we’re starting by engaging the people and organizations that influence their health and development. What about that resonates with you?
* What’s the **hope** of investing in upstream prevention? (*we’re working on putting out the fire, rather than trying to deal with the smoke* … *we’re working on turning down the flame on possible substance use issues so the pot doesn’t boil over* …)
* Share **who else is already engaged**, especially others that this person knows and trusts.
* Ask **what they think** about all this. <Listen>.
  + How have you been involved in current or previous initiatives to improve child well-being? (May already have this information — if so, no need to ask.)
  + What other initiatives to improve child well-being are currently going on in the community?
  + How do you see those initiatives fitting with what you’ve heard about our effort?
  + Can you think of other individuals or organizations we should talk to about joining the coalition or other ways of partnering with us?
  + What do you think is most compelling or promising about this coalition effort?
* **Invite to be a part of the coalition.** Explain about the different ways a community member can be involved: coalition member, workgroup member, leadership group, ally, other … (helps to have a handout with roles and expectations, including expected time commitments)
* If needed: Add a **personal story** of someone who has benefited from your coalition or partner’s efforts. Pull on those heartstrings. The personal story can also relate to your involvement with the organization.

Have a handout ready that provides the following details in an easy-to-digest format

* Your coalition **vision** and **mission** – what else do they need to know about your coalition? (for example, who’s already involved …)
* Coalition member roles and expectations
* Key **data** (both positive and negative) that relate to the substance misuse/youth well-being issues in your community
* Your coalition’s **strategies and /or programs** (1 or 2 at most) that will most relate to your audience
* What are the **key goals and outcomes** that the coalition seeks to achieve (that is, why should the audience care?)
* Clearly give your coalition’s **contact information**. Provide a name, phone number, email, website.

**Other language for possible soundbytes (adapted from Evidence2Success) -double check with DBHR reviewers**

This coalition effort was developed to help the State of Washington’s children reach critical developmental milestones in the following five areas: behavior, education, emotional well-being, physical health and relationships. Research shows that communities, schools and public systems have a greater likelihood of helping children reach those milestones if they invest in tested and effective programs and place a greater focus on prevention and early intervention programs, instead of waiting to intervene until after problems occur.

So how can we help children reach those developmental milestones? We know that children don’t grow up in isolation, so we’re starting by engaging the people and organizations that influence their health and development. That includes:

• Families of children from birth to age 18 and those children’s peers

• Members of the community in which children and their families live

• School administrators and teachers who understand the school environment

• Representatives from community-based organizations and public systems that serve the community and its families

As part of CPWI, we’re also committed to applying four interconnected strategies.

• Using a community board that includes public system representatives as well as residents

• Using data that shows how youth are doing across many areas of their lives to set priorities

• Implementing tested and effective strategies and programs, and evaluating for impact