

Partnership Continuum

	Coordinating	Cooperating	Collaborating
Definition	Exchanging information and altering activities for mutual benefit and to achieve a common purpose. Requires more organizational involvement than networking (exchanging information for mutual benefit) and is a very crucial change strategy. Coordinated services are “user-friendly” and eliminate or reduce barriers for those seeking access to them. Coordinating involves more time, higher levels of trust yet little or no access to each other’s turf.	Exchanging information, altering activities, and sharing resources for mutual benefit and to achieve a common purpose. Requires greater organizational commitment than coordinating and may involve written agreements. Shared resources can encompass a variety of human, financial, and technical contributions, including knowledge, staffing, physical property, access to people, money, and others. Cooperating can require a substantial amount of time, high levels of trust, and significant access to each other’s turf.	Exchanging information, altering activities, sharing resources, and enhancing the capacity of another for mutual benefit and to achieve a common purpose by sharing risks, responsibilities, and rewards. Collaborating is a relationship in which each organization wants to help its partners become the best that they can be at what they do. When organizations collaborate, they share risks, responsibilities, and rewards. Characterized by substantial time commitments, very high levels of trust, and extensive areas of common turf.
Example	A school district and school based health center exchange information about how they each support healthy children and youth, and decide to alter service schedules so that they can provide their combined support in a more user-friendly manner.	A school district and school based health center exchange information about how they each support healthy children and youth, and decide to alter service schedules, and agree to share resources for students and families to increase the effectiveness of their services.	A school district and school based health center exchange information about how they each support healthy children and youth, and decide to alter service schedules, and agree to share resources for students and families, and provide skill development training for each other’s staff to enhance each other’s capacity to support healthy children and youth.