How to Host a Town Hall Meeting
To Prevent Underage Drinking

Webinar Objectives

• Describe the purpose of Town Hall Meetings
• Identify strategies for hosting a Town Hall Meeting
• Identify strategies for engaging your local coalition in hosting a Town Hall Meeting

Overview of Town Hall Meetings
How to Host a Town Hall Meeting

SAMHSA’s Town Hall Meetings

• Every 2 years, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration sponsors national Town Hall Meetings to educate communities about underage drinking and mobilize them around its prevention.

Source: SAMHSA Town Hall Meetings Website (See References)

Underage Drinking Prevalence

• Alcohol is the most widely used substance among teens in Illinois.
  • 44.4% of 12th graders report using alcohol in the past 30 days.
• Alcohol use increases with age.
  • 10.8% of 6th graders, while 62.8% of 12th graders report use in the past year.
• Age of first alcohol use in Illinois is 14.6.

Source: Center for Prevention Research and Development (See References)

Underage Drinking Consequences

• Academic failure
• Illicit drug use
• Physical injury & death (Alcohol poisoning, homicide, suicide, traffic crashes)
• Brain alterations
• Dependence & addiction

Source: SAMHSA Too Smart to Start (See References)
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Underage Drinking Progress

• Alcohol use is on the decline.
  • In 2014, underage alcohol use reached an historic low in the U.S.
  • Past year and past 30-day alcohol use among 8th and 10th grade youth decreased from 2012 to 2014.
• Increased attention by the media, government and local communities have contributed to reductions in underage drinking.

Source: 2013 Monitoring the Future Study; SAMHSA 2012 Town Hall Meeting (See Reference)

Purpose of Town Hall Meetings

• Educate
• Empower
• Mobilize

Source: SAMHSA Town Hall Meetings (See Reference)

Expectations

• Open the event to the public
• Educate participants about the problem and the solution
• Provide for audience discussion of solutions
• Engage community members in action
• Lead to measurable results

Source: SAMHSA Town Hall Meetings (See Reference)
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Strategies for Hosting a Town Hall Meeting

Planning Steps

Select a date
Determine event type
Identify participants
Develop meeting goals & agenda
Manage logistics
Promote the event

Meeting Timing

- April
  - Alcohol Awareness Month
- May
- June
  - June and July are two of the three highest months of alcohol use initiation by children under age 18.
  - By talking with their children now, they have the power to help their children remain alcohol-free.

Source: SAMHSA Town Hall Meetings Website (see references)
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Meeting Types

Smaller Events
- Held in conjunction with another community meeting
- Shorter time frame (1-2 hours)
- Smaller participation
- Targeted promotion

Larger Events
- Stand-alone event
- Community venue
- Longer time frame (2+ hours)
- Broader participation
- Encourage media coverage

Source: SAMHSA Community Briefing Prevention Toolkit [See References]

Meeting Participants

- Youth
- Parents
- Educators/schools
- Elected officials
- Local government (incl. liquor control)
- Law enforcement
- Public health
- Faith-based organizations
- Businesses
- Media
- Civic groups
- Youth-serving

Source: SAMHSA Community Briefing Prevention Toolkit [See References]

Meeting Goals

- Educate the community about the prevalence, effects and consequences of underage drinking
- Educate the community about effective evidence-based strategies to prevent underage drinking
- Engage the community in strategic planning
- Share assessment data related to local use rates, consequences and contributing factors
- Engage the community in prevention efforts

Source: SAMHSA Community Briefing Prevention Toolkit [See References]
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Meeting Agenda

- Panel presentation/discussion
- Presentation
- Roundtable discussion
- Community forum

Meeting Logistics

- Reserve the location
- Develop a schedule
- Identify a facilitator/moderator
- Invite speakers and/or panelists
- Invite participants and key stakeholders
- Prepare handouts

Tips for Developing Your Meeting Agenda

- Tailor the agenda to your audience
- Consider your meeting goals
- Provide opportunities to participate
- Make connections to state/national efforts

Source: SAMHSA Town Hall Meetings Website (See References)
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#### Promotion

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Develop a Plan</th>
<th>Identify Channels</th>
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<td>- Target audiences</td>
<td>- Personal Invitations</td>
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<td>- Key content</td>
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<td>- Registration</td>
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Source: SAMHSA Town Hall Meetings Website (See References)

#### Media Coverage

- Build your media contact list
- Develop and send a media advisory and/or press release
- Schedule interviews
- Develop and provide a press kit at the event
- Follow-up

Source: SAMHSA Town Hall Meetings Website (See References)

#### Meeting Tips

- Provide signage
- Utilize volunteers
- Register participants
- Promote the coalition
- Promote meeting partners

Source: SAMHSA Town Hall Meetings Website (See References)
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Follow-Up

• Plan a follow-up meeting
• Acknowledge your event partners
• Disseminate materials
• Maintain public awareness
• Engage the community in strategic planning and implementing evidence-based strategies
• Secure funding

Source: SAMHSA Town Hall Meetings Website (See References)

Strategies for Engaging Coalitions in Hosting a Town Hall Meeting

Planning Committee

• Follow/implement planning steps
• Develop a budget and a timeline for accomplishing all tasks
• Secure funding and/or in-kind donations
• Promote the meeting
• Staff the meeting
• Conduct follow-up
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Engagement Tips

- Hold convenient meetings
- Have an agenda
- Introduce attendees
- Assign roles and tasks
- Appoint a note taker
- Keep a record

Source: SAMHSA Town Hall Meetings Website (See References)

https://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/townhallmeetings/
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References


References