

TOGETHER FOR LIFE

Community Building Toolkit

for Community Coordinators

A pilot project to increase seat belt
use in Utah's rural communities



www.togetherforlifeutah.org

TOGETHER FOR LIFE *Community Building*

Community building media helps community coordinators cultivate community values, establishes a sense of connection among community members, and promotes awareness that working together will result in positive changes. “A sense of community is akin to a feeling of belonging”¹ and when addressing challenging problems such as drug and alcohol use, traffic safety, and violence, it is critical to create an environment where everyone in the community feels a sense of ownership in these critical issues. A sense of togetherness and trust assists in addressing problems and helps overcome critical misperceptions. Connecting the community based on shared and common values builds trust, and may reduce reactance and resistance to future efforts. When people feel threatened or feel as though ideas are being imposed upon them, their reactance can illicit responses opposite of what is intended.^{2,3}

Community building media is a catalyst for community conversations. Anchored with the common desire for improved health and safety, community building efforts can promote community involvement to address the challenging health problems of communities.

Community building media is the first media presented/placed in communities to introduce and set the tone of the project. The goal of the community building media is to connect community members and generate awareness around the shared and common values of caring, health, and safety, in preparation for issue-focused (campaign) media/messaging that will follow. The media is designed to

elicit a positive first impression, and to establish credibility and trust in the brand.

The community building media contains three essential design elements:

- it cultivates community values;
- builds trust; and
- is positive.

Constructing the community building media around these elements creates a strong, positive foundation for future campaign efforts.

Community building media promotes the values and behaviors that give life or energy to a community. Often, this involves connecting with core values that fundamentally motivate people – caring for health and safety, the well-being of youth, etc.⁴ Community building media promotes the shared and common values toward caring, health, and safety. By starting the campaign with community building media that is framed positively, a strong foundation for future campaign efforts is established. “What we focus on becomes our reality”⁵, and so by focusing on the positive communities can create possibility and elicit change.

Tools

1. Video

Suitable for television or web placement.

3. Print Media

Pieces to coordinate with video/audio.

2. Audio

Suitable for radio or web placement.

References

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