

Checklist of Steps to Forming a Coalition

STEP 1: Get a small group of people together.

- Identify specific events that have recently heightened awareness of the problem within your community.
- Develop a list of individuals and groups in the community who are affected by the coalition's main issue: substance abuse.
- Target existing and potential resources for launching the effort.
- Set up the next meeting.

STEP 2: Define the problem and its impact on the community.

- Define the problem as you think it exists.
- Collect any available data on the problem from schools, police, health departments, and other data sources.
- Prepare a fact sheet for distribution at your first meeting.

STEP 3: Identify key stakeholders.

- Develop a list of groups currently working on the issue as well as a list of which groups will benefit from coalition activities.
- Make sure organization representatives that you invite to the coalition meetings have decisionmaking power.
- Be sure that the coalition has the involvement of key community leaders and their representatives.

STEP 4: Convene a first meeting.

- Have convenient meeting times and places been selected?
- Have decisionmaking procedures been instituted that include: consensus, democratic voting, working consensus, organizational vetoes, and weighted decisions?
- Have letters been mailed; phone calls assigned for follow-up?
- Is the meeting location accessible by public and private transportation resources?
- Is childcare, food, and parking available?

STEP 5: Begin the process of strategic planning.

- Has the purpose of the strategic planning committee been established?
- Have the rules of participation been delineated? (i.e., commitment, time, and responsibilities)
- Has a process been established and a calendar set not only for the initial strategic plan but also for those in future years?
- Have resources been identified and made available to the committee?