People Power: Mobilizing Communities for Policy Change

Beyond the Basics: Topic-Specific Publications for Coalitions

About this Publication

The CADCA National Coalition Institute's seven publication *Primer Series* helps coalitions navigate the elements of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)'s Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF), providing a solid base from which coalitions can develop and implement community-specific strategies to create healthier and safer communities.

The *Beyond the Basics: Topic-Specific Publications for Coalitions* series works in conjunction with the *Primer Series* to move coalitions closer to their goals. As is true with the primers, they work as a set; however, each also can stand alone. This publication provides an overview of the steps associated with engaging in community mobilizing to implement environmental strategies with a particular emphasis on adopting alcohol, tobacco, and drug (ATD) policies at the community level. While there are numerous schools of thought and practice on how to engage in community mobilizing, this document presents a proven framework that incorporates the lessons from many approaches and has been successfully implemented in communities across America.

Community mobilizing may be unfamiliar to many coalition staff and volunteers. While it is often talked about, it is far less frequently practiced. With this in mind, concrete steps are described in this publication that will strengthen your community coalition, turn it into a powerful change agent, and enable engagement in a successful policy campaign. Community mobilizing will bring your coalition into relationships with new individuals and new segments of the community. It will take you into neighborhoods where alcohol and drug problems occur and enable you to understand them in deeper ways.

Topics covered in this publication include:

WHAT is community mobilizing and how it differs from community organizing?

HOW does community mobilizing strengthen the capacity of coalitions to engage the community and build membership?

HOW does community mobilizing enhance the community assessment?

HOW do you move people from a place of inaction to a place of action?

HOW do you engage in one-on-one interviews with community members to build relationships and collaboratively work on coalition issues?

HOW do you use community mobilizing to adopt ATD policies?

CADCA's National Coalition Institute

The National Community Anti-Drug Coalition Institute (Institute), a part of the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA), serves as a center for training, technical assistance, evaluation, research and capacity building for community coalitions throughout the United States. The Institute was created in 2002 by an Act of Congress and supports coalition development and growth for Drug Free Communities Support Program (DFC) grantees and other community coalitions.

The Institute offers an exceptional opportunity to move the coalition field forward. Its mission and objectives are ambitious but achievable. In short, the Institute helps grow new, stronger and smarter coalitions.

Drug Free Communities Support Program

In 1997, Congress enacted the Drug-Free Communities Act to provide grants to community-based coalitions that serve as catalysts for multi-sector participation to reduce local substance abuse problems. As of 2011, more than 2,000 local coalitions have received funding to work on two main goals:

- Reduce substance abuse among youth and, over time, among adults by addressing the factors in a community that increase the risk of substance abuse and promoting the factors that minimize the risk of substance abuse.

- Establish and strengthen collaboration among communities, private nonprofit agencies and federal, state, local and tribal governments to support the efforts of community coalitions to prevent and reduce substance abuse among youth.

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CHAPTER 1: OVERVIEW OF COMMUNITY MOBILIZING

What can communities do when faced with issues such as underage drinking, drinking and driving, misuse of prescription drugs, proliferation of medical marijuana dispensaries and other similar concerns? As a result of the growing body of research demonstrating the effectiveness of population level interventions, also called environmental strategies, funders in the alcohol, tobacco, and drug (ATD) field are increasingly looking to community coalitions to adopt these strategies as a central part of their work.

Coalitions are the perfect vehicle for implementing community-level environmental strategies specifically because their implementation requires a wide range of people taking on many tasks. However, focusing on these strategies requires a new way of thinking about the role of a coalition. Traditionally, coalitions may be more familiar with offering programs by providing education and training focused on individuals. With the understanding that implementing environmental strategies requires a wide array of people carrying out many tasks simultaneously, it is reasonable to ask, "How does a coalition make this happen?" The answer is… by engaging in *community mobilizing.*

Community organizing vs. community mobilizing

Groups working to improve community conditions often use the terms "community organizing" and "community mobilizing" interchangeably. Community organizing is described as:

"A process that draws on the power and persuasion of diverse stakeholders to identify and define common problems, mobilize resources and work together to improve health and quality of life"[1]

Community mobilizing is defined as:

"A process through which action is stimulated by a community itself, or by others, that is planned, carried out, and evaluated by a community's individuals, groups, and organizations on a participatory and sustained basis to improve health"[2]

Generally speaking, community organizing is considered more of a long-term process in which issues surface directly from the grassroots community. In this model, the "organizer" is generally issue neutral and engages in a structured listening process to surface and define an issue. This process focuses heavily on developing lasting personal relationships among community members that yield a consensus on the issue to be addressed. It can be described as an "inside-out" process.

Community mobilizing is often considered more short term in nature. Specific issues or concerns are brought to the community and action is urged. The mobilizing process is generally driven by a subject "expert" who has predefined the issue, has a solution in mind, and is trying to encourage the people in the community to support the solution by working together for change. It can be described as an "outside-in" process.

Figure 1. Community Organizing v. Community Mobilizing

Community Organizing "Inside → Out" Process

Community Organizing "Out → Inside" Process

Long term
Neutral organizer
Bottom up/ consensus

Short term
Subject expert driven
Pre-defined issue
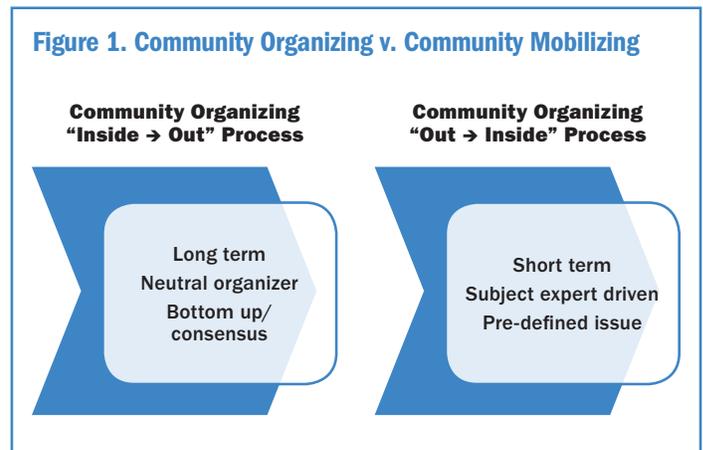
It may be helpful to think of community organizing on one end of a continuum reflecting a "bottom up" process of building consensus and unified action on an issue that has been commonly defined. Community mobilizing sits at the other end of the continuum, being more subject-expert driven and focused on encouraging people to "buy-in" to a predefined issue or solution.

The research on organizing

Much has been written about the theory and practice behind community organizing and community action. A unifying framework of community organization is offered by Rothman[3]. In this model there are three strategies:

1) *Locality development:* This framework for action focuses on developing a commitment to use the group process in reaching consensus on action. It is assumed that the community has the resources to address its own needs, and the existing local power structure is considered as a resource.

2) *Social planning:* This is a more task-oriented approach that relies on the local power structure to set the agenda for change and sponsor related activities. Social planning is usually a top-down approach that makes only limited use of community involvement.

3) *Social action:* Social action relies on the development of new power centers in the community. Individuals who are usually denied access to power or institutions are organized to challenge the power structure that is seen as either partly or wholly responsible for their oppression. Confrontation and direct action are the primary mode of operation. Much of the work of Saul Alinsky[4] and Pablo Freire[5] falls into this mode of community action.

The ATD field has borrowed from the theory and practice of community organizing and community mobilizing to construct a flexible approach well-suited for community coalitions. Some of the earliest work blending community organizing and mobilizing was done by Wechsler, who identified four key facets of community-based approaches in implementing alcohol environmental strategies:

1) *The work should address the social and environmental causes of the problems identified thereby moving away from individual-based solutions;*

2) *The work is active rather than passive, relying on people's experience as the basis of understanding and change;*

3) *The work places the professional in the role of facilitator as opposed to expert – recognizing the value and wisdom of residents who will actively participate in implementation of solutions.*

4) *The work promotes ownership of decisions and solutions.[6]*

Today communities across the country are engaged in the ongoing process of moving people into action to solve ATD issues in their own communities. And while this work is referred to in many ways, for the purposes of this document, we will refer to this process as *community mobilizing*.

Community mobilizing and the strategic prevention framework

If your coalition is funded through the Drug Free Communities Support Program (DFC), you are probably familiar with the elements of SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF). The framework identifies five key elements—assessment, capacity building, planning, implementation and evaluation—that help communities create the infrastructure needed to develop a community-based approach for effective and sustainable population-level change.

Figure 2. SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework

Engaging in community mobilizing enhances the coalition's ability to implement the SPF in the following ways:

- Assessment – At its core, community mobilizing is about listening to people tell their story about who they are, their relationship to issues of substance abuse, and their willingness to do something about it. Conducting one-on-one conversations is a powerful way to understand what ATD issues exist in the community, their consequences, and what resources exist to address them. "One-on-ones" (one-to-ones) provide ground-level data. They provide context to both quantitative sources such as surveys, as well as qualitative sources, such as town hall meetings and focus groups.
- Capacity – Community mobilizing builds the capacity of the coalition to implement environmental strategies by actively supporting coalition and community members to engage in the civic process through training and direct participation.

- Planning – Community mobilizing supports the identification and recruitment of individuals enabling a coalition to effectively identify problems, root causes of these problems, and the ways they manifest at the local level – the local conditions.
- Implementation – Community mobilizing is part of the implementation process. Coalitions alone can rarely move policy. Implementation of community-level strategies is best accomplished by mobilizing the broader community to support the work.
- Evaluation – Part of the mobilizing process is engaging in reflection on the policy work of the coalition and community. While this process is not outcome oriented evaluation, it does contribute to understanding the factors that led to winning or losing the policy campaign. In this way, it is part of the evaluation process.

The SPF also incorporates two overarching elements—cultural competence and sustainability — which should be considered at every stage of the process (See Chapter 5 for more information on cultural competence and sustainability).

THE VAN BUREN COUNTY SAFE COALITION

In 2010, The Van Buren SAFE Coalition, a Drug Free Communities coalition located in Keosauqua, Iowa, responding to its local data about alcohol use at school activities, launched a campaign to encourage the Van Buren School Board to adopt a "Good Conduct Policy." The intent of the policy was to strengthen student conduct guidelines for eligibility to participate in extracurricular activities at Van Buren Middle/High School.

The SAFE Coalition began mobilizing the school community to implement the conduct policy. With a membership of 60, the coalition formed a smaller school policy subcommittee with 15 members to drive this campaign. The subcommittee undertook the tasks of community mobilizing, developing the policy language, and monitoring the policy implementation. The subcommittee included youth, who would be subject to the new conduct standards.

The subcommittee's initial outreach included key school personnel such as the school principal, athletic director, and coaches. The group determined that "buy-in" from these individuals was important because without their support the School Board would be less likely to adopt the policy. Engaging school personnel represents the "top-down" mobilizing that is essential to a successful campaign. But the group did not stop there; it also conducted meetings with parents and youth groups to build a base of support. This represents the "bottom-up" *base building* that enabled the School Board members to support the policy with confidence that the entire school community was onboard.

The mobilization consisted of one-on-one meetings where the subcommittee listened to the concerns of individuals about the issue and their thoughts on possible solutions. Asking for support for the policy was easier as a result of the relationships established through the one-on-one meetings and support was given by nearly all the individuals who the subcommittee approached. The subcommittee also conducted meetings with larger groups of people, building a large base of support.

After gaining "top-down" and "bottom-up" support, the group turned its attention to developing the language of the policy. The subcommittee felt it was critical to build a policy that reflected the needs, desires and ideas of the people who took the time to meet with them. They examined policies from other schools and developed an initial draft that reflected the positive proactive framing that was important to the group and community. Once completed, the policy was submitted for review to the School Board, which included a member of the SAFE Coalition. Ongoing communication about the policy occurred at coalition meetings and was disseminated in the meeting minutes to keep stakeholders current with the progress of the policy development.

The SAFE subcommittee, as well as a handful of parents wishing to express their thoughts, attended the first School Board hearing on the policy. The Principal of Van Buren Middle/High School, who supported its adoption, submitted and introduced the policy with minimal opposition. The subcommittee reworked the policy with suggestions from the Board and re-introduced it at a second hearing a month later. The policy was finally adopted without opposition from the School Board or the school community.

Lessons Learned:

⌘ **The level of support/opposition determines the extent of community mobilizing needed.** In the case of the SAFE campaign, there was little opposition. The mobilizing took place in a rural county where people knew one another and the coalition accurately gauged the level of support and mobilized enough people to demonstrate support. This provided adequate justification for the School Board members to adopt the policy.

⌘ **Relationships matter.** The front-end one-on-ones that the group conducted resulted in strong relationships that enabled the implementation and compliance to occur smoothly with little or no opposition from the community.

⌘ **Reflection is ongoing. A major part of the campaign occurred after the School Board voted.** The subcommittee found itself reworking parts of the policy to make it more effective and made adjustments to the policy based on on-going conversations with the school personnel.

⌘ **Community mobilizing is a powerful process well suited to facilitate the implementation of environmental strategies.** The process of mobilizing is central to building the membership, hence the capacity, of a community coalition. Let's look at some of the important benefits of using a community mobilizing approach to building and strengthening your coalition.

CHAPTER 2: THE BENEFITS OF COMMUNITY MOBILIZING

Building the volunteer base

Community mobilizing builds a volunteer base in two ways:

- By supporting the recruitment of people to the coalition who both "fit" the group and are likely to stay engaged; and
- By broadening the reach of the mobilizer to interact with more people who may engage in the group, but not necessarily become a "member."

Experienced mobilizers will tell you that getting people engaged is driven by listening to people describe their interests, concerns, history, skills, and relationships to ATD issues in the community. These meetings are called "one-on-ones" (*a discussion on how to conduct a one-on-one is included in chapter 4*). Connecting with people at this level requires time spent building a relationship before making any sort of "ask" or request on behalf of the coalition. As a coalition leader or member, how often do you meet people in the community and quickly invite them to join your group? Little, if any, effort is made to understand how the person aligns with your coalition's vision and mission or the tasks he or she could undertake upon becoming a member. The result of moving too quickly is that group membership often drops off with people quitting or becoming inactive because they are unclear about their role and/or their particular skill sets are being underutilized. Bringing new members into the group works best if you *recruit to a specific task* versus simply recruiting to the coalition as an entity. Recruiting to a task helps the person understand how their involvement will move specific strategies forward. This approach sets the stage for a meaningful experience with the group.

Engaging in community mobilizing also helps you identify others in the community who could be a good fit for the coalition. A successful one-on-one generally leads to the identification of other people to approach and talk with about the ATD issues in the community. A one-on-one may not lead to an immediate *ask* to join the group. It may take a second or third meeting before inviting someone to participate in the coalition. Other times, after listening to a person, it may become clear that there is no fit and no "ask" is made. The more one-on-ones are conducted, the larger the volunteer base will grow. And, more importantly, the base will grow with people committed to the coalition and engaged in the actual work.

> *Actively recruit leaders that may not fit traditional leadership definitions and put them to work!*

Enhancing member participation

One of the most challenging aspects of coalition development is finding ways to keep the members actively involved. Development of the coalition involves recruiting, conducting a community assessment, building the logic model and workplan, carrying out strategies, planning for sustainability and conducting an evaluation. With this wide range of activities and tasks, it is essential to identify people who are both interested in the mission of the coalition as well as specific coalition activities.

Fortunately, the one-on-one process provides the foundation for linking coalition members to meaningful activities that can propel the work of the group forward. Mobilizing is an on-going process for coalitions. Members may have changing life circumstances requiring them to take a break or leave the group. Without a consistent mobilizing effort and conducting regular one-on-ones, membership may dwindle, tasks may be left undone and group morale may suffer. It is a cycle that, if not broken, will lead to a significant decline in group functioning. A successful formula for enhancing member participation is to take the time to know the skill sets of your existing members, recruit new members to assist with needed tasks of the group, and engage in ongoing one-on-ones to ensure a constant flow of active members.

Building leadership

Strong leadership is essential to a well-run coalition. Leadership is often thought to rest on the shoulders of the president/coalition chair and officers. Certainly, those selected to "lead" the coalition are serving in leadership roles. But leaders are also those who chair subcommittees, speak to decision-makers about coalition work, write fact sheets on coalition strategies, facilitate meetings and many other tasks associated with making the group successful.

> ### Drug Free Communities Program
> Consider the Drug Free Communities model of recruiting 12 key sectors as your coalition core. Sectors include:
> · Youth (18 or younger)
> · Parent
> · Business
> · Media
> · School
> · Youth-serving organization
> · Law enforcement
> · Religious/Fraternal organization
> · Civic/Volunteer groups (i.e., local organizations committed to volunteering, not a coalition member designated as a "volunteer")
> · Healthcare professional
> · State, local, or tribal governmental agency with expertise in the field of substance abuse (including, if applicable, the State agency with primary authority for substance abuse)
> · Other organizations involved reducing substance abuse

Because coalitions are sometimes comprised of members who are already considered community leaders, it may be easy to fall into a pattern of only recruiting similar "formal leaders" to the coalition. Such individuals may themselves hold official roles of authority (for example, police chief, school superintendent, newspaper editor, hospital CEO), or may have relationships with such community leaders. They are often the most sought-after people for coalition membership. However, groups comprised primarily of these members may unintentionally inhibit the recruitment of more grassroots community residents who fear their voices will not be heard in a group with so much "power" sitting around the table. It is important to build a group comprised of a wide array of community segments including neighborhood members, youth, parents and others who may not initially see themselves as having anything to offer. Conducting one-on-ones facilitates the identification of non-traditional or informal leaders with latent leadership skills who may not yet realize their leadership abilities.

Providing a community voice on ATD issues

Who gives a voice to community residents about ATD problems? Coalitions are a vehicle that residents can use to voice their opinions on issues that matter to them. Engaging in community mobilizing through conducting one-on-ones allows people to express their feelings about what is happening in their own lives, the lives of their families, their neighborhoods and the broader community. Understanding the views and feelings of community members informs the coalition about ATD issues, uncovers possible solutions, and builds a core membership of active participants.

Encouraging residents to talk is a core tenet of community mobilization. People need an outlet to discuss their community concerns. Nearly everyone is touched by some ATD issue. How they frame and understand the issue and their proposed solutions may not fit your coalition's mission, but it is still important to know what they think. Allowing people to tell their own story about living in the community, and listening instead of talking, enables them to relax into the conversation without having to stay on the alert for an "ask." It is important to stay flexible in the one-on-ones and allow the conversation to go where the community member takes it before trying to make the connection to the coalition work.

Increasing civic engagement

Fostering civic engagement on ATD issues is one of a coalition's core functions. Town hall meetings and other similar gatherings are key activities that bring the community together to hear people's thoughts. These meetings should also be opportunities to identify additional people for one-on-ones to assess potential contributions to the coalition membership or volunteer base and, at a future time, be mobilized into action.

But large community meetings are not the only vehicle for increasing civic engagement. The one-on-one process also builds, one person at a time, the community voice on ATD issues and creates future opportunities for community members to speak out, giving a boost to coalition efforts to implement environmental strategies. As the coalition becomes identified as the voice of the community's ATD issues, the inherent power of the group is increased with corresponding capacity to implement key strategies.

Providing ground-level information about the community

Each community member sees ATD issues through his or her own eyes and circumstances. The community mobilizer attempts to understand as many of these perspectives as possible. One of the real benefits of conducting one-on-ones is the knowledge about the community that comes from talking with people and encouraging them to tell their own story. This is particularly true when talking to residents about their neighborhood and the ways in which ATD issues play out around them. There are always people who serve as gatekeepers in their neighborhood. They have a wealth of information and can often mobilize the rest of the residents around an important issue. This kind of *on-the-ground information* about the issues your coalition is concerned about is invaluable when you are gathering information as part of a community assessment. Capturing this kind of rich detail tells a story of the community that isn't revealed from survey data alone. Also, building relationships with a wide range of people who understand and have personal experience with community ATD issues increases the pool of individuals who may be able to assist in carrying out future work of the coalition.

Building coalition power

Implementing environmental strategies requires your coalition to hold and exercise power. While having a broad, diverse and well-connected membership sets the stage for building and using power to address community ATD issues, it does not guarantee it. Many a coalition has built a group composed of movers and shakers only to hold meeting after meeting where nothing of substance is accomplished. The result is member lethargy and attrition.

Coalition power is a composite of three factors:

- A broad and diverse group membership;
- The extent to which the coalition has established deep and lasting relationships with large numbers of individuals in the community; and
- The coalition's willingness to take necessary action to improve community conditions on important ATD issues.

These three factors are interdependent and reciprocal. People want to participate in a coalition when their opinions and skills are valued and the group is perceived as effective. This, in turn, builds the coalition membership base, enhancing the group's ability to be a powerful agent of community change. If any one of these factors is ignored or underdeveloped, it is difficult to be effective.

Normalizing the concept of exercising coalition power should not be ignored. In fact, the process of building power should be an intentional coalition process. In doing so, the community perception of the coalition will shift, positively affecting the one-on-ones, member recruitment, and coalition communications.

CHAPTER 3: COMMUNITY MOBILIZING TO IMPLEMENT ENVIRONMENTAL STRATEGIES

Coalitions are designed to impact problems at the community level. In an environmental change model, the coalition's efforts shift from implementing programs focused on changing individual behaviors to changing the environment in which decisions and behaviors about substance abuse are shaped. In this approach, the work is less about changing the personal control of behavior and more about addressing the issues that determine behavior. And while we are concerned with risky behavior, our attention focuses instead on the social, political, and economic contexts in which ATD problems occur.[7]

Extensive research demonstrates the effectiveness of environmental strategies that target alcohol problems among teenagers as well as the general population.[8] [9]

> **Environmental Strategies:** Environmental strategies enhance public health by altering the physical, social, legal, and economic conditions that influence behavior (Stokols, 1996).

For example, alcohol control policies that increase product price, limit the density of retail alcohol outlets, lower the blood alcohol concentration (BAC) limit for impaired driving, and raise the minimum legal drinking age have been shown to be effective at reducing youth access to alcohol and drinking-related harm.[10]

CADCA has identified seven change strategies that, when implemented together, increase the likelihood of effectively reducing problems at the community level. A general overview of each is provided in the box below.

Seven Strategies to Affect Community Change

Individual Focused Strategies

1. Provide information—Educational presentations, workshops or seminars, and data or media presentations (e.g., public service announcements, brochures, billboard campaigns, community meetings, town halls, forums, web-based communication).
2. Enhance skills—Activities designed to increase the skills of participants, members and staff (e.g., training, technical assistance, distance learning, strategic planning retreats, parenting classes, model programs in schools).
3. Provide support—Creating opportunities to support and encourage people to participate in activities that reduce risk or enhance protection (e.g., providing alternative activities, mentoring, referrals for services, support groups, youth clubs, parenting groups, Alcoholics or Narcotics Anonymous).

Community Environment focused Strategies

4. Enhance access/reduce barriers —Improving systems and processes to increase the ease, ability and opportunity to utilize systems and services (e.g., access to treatment, childcare, transportation, housing, education, cultural and language sensitivity).
5. Change consequences (incentives/disincentives)—Increasing or decreasing the probability of a specific behavior that reduces risk or enhances protection by altering the consequences for performing that behavior (e.g., increasing public recognition for deserved behavior, individual and business rewards, taxes, citations, fines, revocations/loss of privileges).
6. Change physical design—Changing the physical design or structure of the environment to reduce risk or enhance protection (e.g., parks, landscapes, signage, lighting, outlet density).
7. Modify/change policies—Formal change in written procedures, by-laws, proclamations, rules or laws with written documentation and/or voting procedures (e.g., workplace initiatives, law enforcement procedures and practices, public policy actions, systems change within government, communities and organizations).

**This strategy can be utilized when it is turned around to reducing access/enhancing barriers. When community coalitions establish barriers to underage drinking or other illegal drug use, they decrease its acceptability. Prevention science tells us that when more resources (money, time, etc.) are required to obtain illegal substances, use declines. When many states began to mandate the placement of pseudophedrine-based products behind the pharmacy counter, communities experienced a significant decrease in local clandestine methamphetamine labs. Barriers were put into place that led to a decrease in the accessibility of the precursor materials for meth production.

The list of strategies was distilled by the University of Kansas Work Group on Health Promotion and Community Development - a World Health Organization Collaborating Centre. Research cited in selection of the strategies is documented in the Resources and Research section of the CADCA website, www.cadca.org. The Institute uses this list by permission of the University.

Why focus on modifying or changing policies?

Environmental strategies enhance public health by altering the physical, social, legal, and economic conditions that influence behavior. In the Seven Strategies to Affect Community Change, Strategies Four to Seven are considered environmental strategies because they change systems, practices, and policies. Community mobilizing is a central ingredient in their implementation. While each of the CADCA change strategies are important, Strategy Seven–modifying/changing policies - is perhaps the most powerful for fulfilling the coalition mandate to make long-term change at the community level. It is also one of the most challenging strategies to implement for coalitions not familiar with the policy campaign process. While CADCA Strategies One to Six can often be carried out by a coalition staff person or a few coalition members, the policy process requires broad coalition and community participation to be successful. This is where community mobilizing comes into the picture. Moving your coalition and broader community to participate in a policy campaign requires strong community mobilizing skills that engage a large number of people in the many tasks associated with the campaign. If your coalition has been built for action with members recruited into specific tasks, your work will be far easier than for a group who finds they need to "convince" their members that they should get active.

Moving people from inaction to action - choosing your issue

When considering the adoption of a policy as part of the coalition's work plan, engaging in community mobilizing contributes in two ways:

1. It informs the selection of an issue or local condition on which to focus; and
2. It stimulates action on the part of the community to influence those who have the power to enact the policy (decision-makers).

When we mobilize, we talk about addressing specific issues or improving "local conditions" in the community. Local conditions describe the community in terms of specific problems. These problem descriptions should be:

- *Specific*—reflect features of the community that are producing risk;
- *Identifiable*—community members can describe how, when and where problems exist; and
- *Actionable*—are of a scope and scale on which local communities can have an impact.

Local conditions translate a problem like "high levels of alcohol availability" to "too many bars in the downtown between 6th and J Street." Understanding the specifics of these conditions facilitates the development of related policies to create environmental changes around high-risk drinking.

There are many ATD issues or local conditions that require community action. How do you choose which to address? ATD issues need to be of sufficient magnitude and concern that real change can be measured and felt in the community when addressed. People need to be impacted by or connected to the issue. The closer physically or emotionally a community member is to an issue, the more likely they are to participate in addressing it.

To determine if an issue resonates with community members, the coalition needs to be able to answer the following fundamental questions:

Does your issue:

- **Result** in real improvements in people's lives?
- **Give** people a sense of their power?
- **Alter** the relations of power such that your coalition is perceived as being able to impact key decision-makers who hold the power to address your issues?

The answer to each of these questions should be "yes". And the answers must be specific, "How does it result in real improvements to people's lives?" "How does it enable people to feel their power as a community member?" and "In what ways does your coalition become more powerful and capable of fulfilling your mission and changing community conditions?"

There are more questions that you as a mobilizer need to answer concretely (see page 10). The answers signal the extent to which your coalition will be able to mobilize others to engage in your issue or address your local conditions. How do you get

answers to these questions? By engaging in community mobilizing. Specific information comes from talking with people. This is one way the mobilizing process helps inform both the issue selection and the process.

Policy domains—Big P and Small p

Policy-making can occur at all the domain levels below:

- Home
- Neighborhood
- Institution
- City
- State
- National

These domains are sometimes called *"small p"* and *"big P"* to differentiate between policies that require formal adoption as opposed to those that are more informally adopted. The *small p* domains of home, neighborhood, and institution often require policy strategies to reduce the high-risk behaviors that occur in these settings. But these policies can often be informally determined and are not focused on passing public laws and ordinances which are reserved for the city, state and national domains.

Big P policies are more formal and usually have a legal component associated with their adoption. The adoption of these policies may require a group or body to formally pass the policy. At the municipal level, examples of formal policies include cities passing social host ordinances, counties deciding to limit the number of alcohol outlets, city councils requiring that police departments have on-site prescription drug drop boxes,

or cities requiring merchants to train their staff in responsible alcohol beverage serving practices. Each of these examples requires a formal decision by a city or county body and the process usually includes a public hearing to debate the pros and cons of the proposed policy. Formal policies are very amenable to being supported through community mobilizing. Institutional polices can be both *big P* and *small p* depending on the entity. School board policy is usually formally adopted while a service club may have a much less formal process for setting policy.

Policy campaign steps

Your most efficient tool to make change at the community level is often through policy. And who better to implement a policy campaign than a community coalition with diverse membership and strong links to the community?

Implementing a policy campaign, while complex, is completely within the reach of coalitions. The ATD prevention field understands the policy process. For example, the tobacco field has a long history of supporting local, state and national level policy work. Since the 1970's the alcohol field has been building its understanding of evidence-based policy work as well as developing the skills required to mount and succeed in a policy campaign. Those working on illicit and prescription drug prevention have a less robust evidence base about what works, but are incorporating the lessons from tobacco and alcohol and applying them to drugs.

There are ten steps associated with implementing a policy campaign (see page 11). While the steps are listed in a sequential order, the actual policy process is more fluid, requiring the coalition to be flexible as to when they take each step. In

fact, some of the steps may occur concurrently. The estimated time required to carry out the step will vary from policy to policy, but the timeframes provided below should serve as a general guide to construct an action plan for a policy campaign.
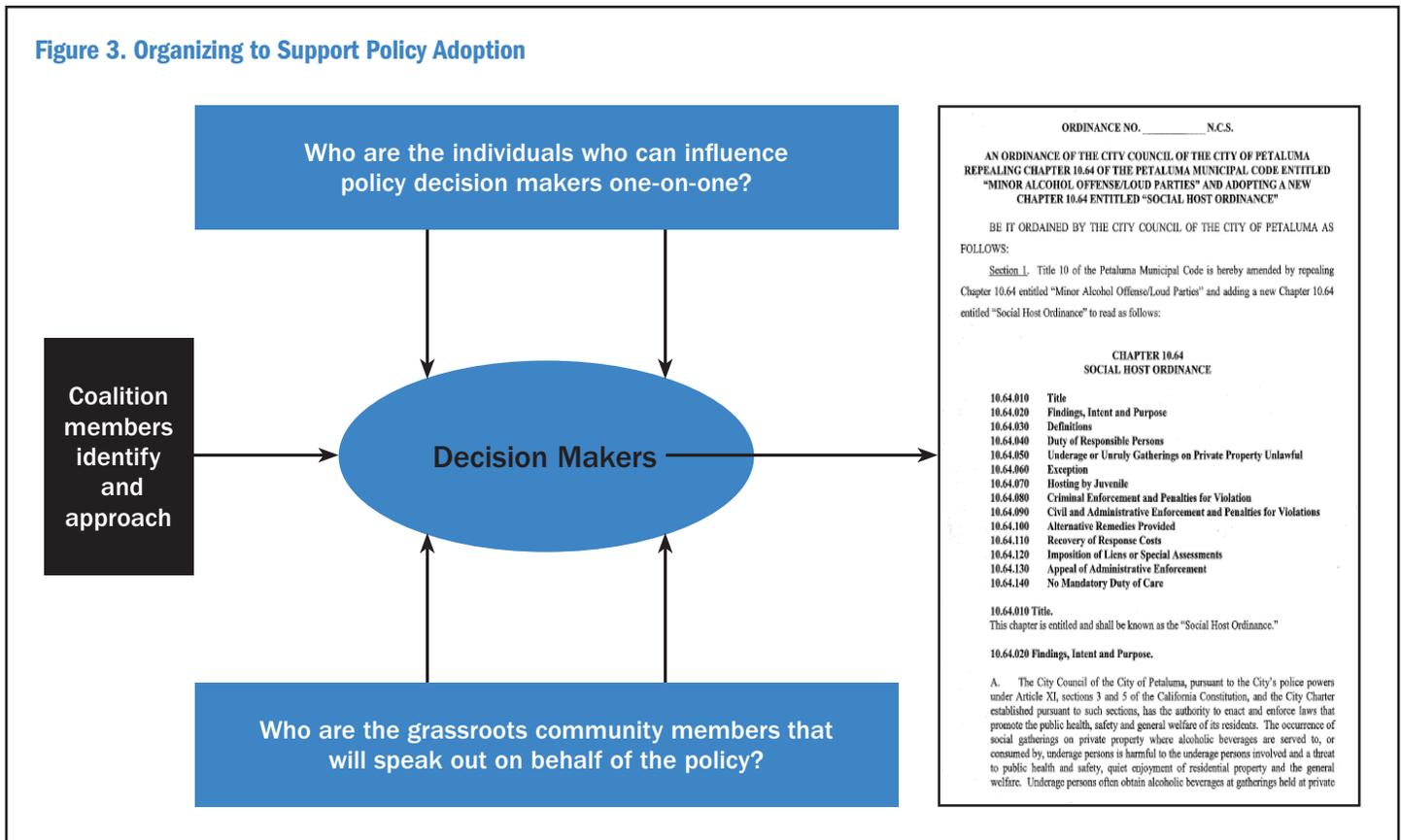
The ten policy steps are:

1. Clearly state the problem (1 month)
2. Engage person or organization responsible for enforcement (1–2 months)
3. Collect data to establish a legal basis for the policy (2–3 months)
4. Make your case (2–3 months)
5. Draft policy language (2–3 months)
6. Use media advocacy (3–6 months)
7. *Mobilize support and provide community education (4–8 months)*
8. Get the policy adopted (1–2 months)
9. Ensure enforcement of the policy (4–6 months)
10. Evaluate campaign effectiveness (1 month)

Community mobilizing is most closely tied to Step Seven–*Mobilizing support and providing community education.* At this phase of the policy cam-

paign, the goal is to successfully move people to exercise their individual and collective power to influence the decision-makers to adopt the proposed policy. Figure 3 reflects a mobilizing process that can be considered both top-down and bottom-up.

Top down mobilizing involves identifying individuals or groups who already have a relationship with one or more of your policy decision-makers and are willing to use their influence to seek policy adoption. Bottom up mobilizing is building the base at the grassroots level to acquire sufficient power and voice so decision-makers will decide to support the coalition policy. This bottom up mobilizing is sometimes called base building in that the coalition is building a large powerful base of people to influence decision-makers to take the action requested by the coalition. The implication, even if left unsaid, is that decision-makers may not retain their position of power if they fail to adopt the policy.

Figure 3. Organizing to Support Policy Adoption

Who are the individuals who can influence policy decision makers one-on-one?

Coalition members identify and approach

Decision Makers

Who are the grassroots community members that will speak out on behalf of the policy?

The Vallejo Fighting Back Partnership

The Vallejo Fighting Back Partnership (FBP) is a community coalition operating since 1990 in the City of Vallejo, California.

In the early 2000's, "smoke shops" became the largest upstart business in Vallejo. These small shops sold "tobacco smoking devices" that were often used to smoke cocaine, methamphetamine, and marijuana. As a result of illegal and nuisance-related activities occurring near the smoke shops, the quality of life in many neighborhoods declined with residents becoming increasingly fearful to venture outside their homes. The solution was the Vallejo Police Department's (VPD) Civil Nuisance Abatement Program (CNA).

The CNA process involves groups of neighbors taking owners and/or landlords of nuisance properties to Small Claims Court to sue for deterioration of quality of life. For a CNA to be effective, a large group of residents must come together to threaten, and potentially follow through with a lawsuit.

VPD and Vallejo Fighting Back Partnership partnered to mobilize the community to sue the landlord of a smoke shop that drew the ire of nearby residents and the attention of the police department with over fifty police calls for service each week for over seven months. The calls included loitering, fights, shootings and drug sales making it a major public nuisance and safety problem.

First, FBP mobilizers went door-to-door to the residents living near the smoke shop to hear about the problems they were experiencing. FBP mobilizers held one-on-one meetings with neighbors in their homes to build trust, understand how their quality of life was deteriorating, and discuss the power of resident action.

Next, VPD and VFB held a meeting at a police substation that over 55 concerned residents attended. In this meeting the *challenge* to act was put to the community and accepted. The first step was organizing the neighborhood into Neighborhood Watch groups.

VPD provided training on how to document the problems occurring in the neighborhood. After residents documented, they moved on to the next step, direct *action.* At first, as expected, many refused to participate, citing fears of retaliation.

After several months of addressing their fears, 47 of the initial 55 residents filed small claims lawsuits against the smoke shop for the decline in their quality of life. A "demand letter" was sent to the smoke shop from the VPD on behalf of the 47 residents stating that the business had 30 days to abate the issues that were documented by the police and area residents or the neighborhood group would sue. After the 30 days had elapsed, and the problems had not been abated, all 47 sued for the maximum amount California allows ($7,500.00 per person). The residents completed court paperwork with the assistance of the Vallejo Police Officers trained in the Civil Nuisance Process, and a joint court date was set.

At the small claims court hearing, the landlord submitted to the demands of the neighborhood after thirty minutes of questioning by the judge. Had he lost the court case, the landlord would have been responsible for all court fees and the monetary award to all the residents. This sum would have totaled over $350,000. Within two weeks, the smoke shop closed its doors. A new store has since reopened as a corner grocery catering to the neighborhood.

This successful lawsuit spurred mobilizing in other neighborhoods with smoke shops. Soon, many of them closed their doors, creating an improved quality of life for residents across the city.

Lessons Learned:
- ⌘ **Partnerships matter.** The work of both the Vallejo Police Department and Vallejo Fighting Back Partnership was enhanced by working together. FBP mobilizers were able to move in and out of the neighborhoods to build relationships with residents with much less attention than officers. FBP benefitted from the VPD's knowledge of the CNA process.
- ⌘ **Building trust was essential to the mobilizing process.** The CNA process can appear intimidating and risky at first. Conducting the one-on-one meetings in homes formed the foundation of trust that enabled the process to continue.
- ⌘ **Mobilizing is using "people power."** The convening of 47 people to implement a single small claims action demonstrated the power of collective action.

CHAPTER 4: ENGAGING IN COMMUNITY MOBILIZING

The process of engaging in community mobilizing is well defined. The community mobilizing wheel below shows the steps associated with the work.[11]

Figure 4. Community Mobilizing Wheel

Each of the steps is important when carrying out a policy campaign designed to impact your local conditions and address your identified issues. Mobilizing is a circular process where engaging in one step naturally leads to the next one. The process begins with the step of *listening.*

Figure 5. The Mobilizing Process
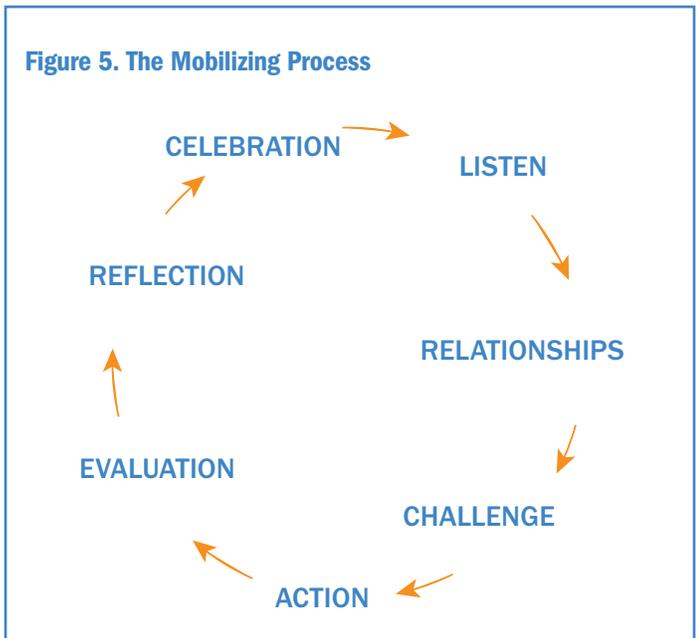
In considering the mobilizing process, keep two domains of focus in mind:

1. The individual whom you are targeting for the purposes of better understanding the community, linking to the coalition, or recruiting into a specific task associated with a policy campaign; and
2. The full coalition you are moving into action.

Let's talk about each of the mobilizing steps.

## Steps 1 & 2 – Listening and relationship building

If you have been building your coalition membership using the one-on-one process, there is a good chance that the listening process has already been taking place. The simple graphic below reflects the kind of topics a one-on-one conversation should focus on to collect data and/or assess a person's potential as an ally in advocating for policy change. An effective one-on-one is conducted by asking open-ended questions and engaging in active listening. The process differs from traditional key informant interviews in that building relationships is a higher priority than collecting information on the nature of the community ATD issues. Seeking information about the person and sharing information about you establishes the foundation of a relationship. It paves the way for gathering information about ATD problems and the individual's level of interest in working to address them.

Figure 6. One-on-One Relationship Building

Basis of One-on-Ones

Relationship Building

An on-going process of deepening understanding of the community and its members

- What is important to her/him?
- What are her/his priorities?
- What are her/his joys?
- What are her/his concerns?
- Whate makes her/his tick?
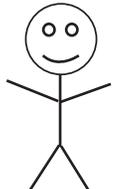
- What does she/he like to do?
- What does she/he want to accomplish in the next:
  » 3 months?
  » 1 year?
  » 5 years?

What did you learn about the person that can further your work?

Deciding who should conduct the one-on-one

One-on-ones can be conducted by anyone with the interest and training to carry out the process. Prevention coordinators and prevention coalition members are good candidates to conduct one-on-ones. All that is needed is a commitment to building relationships with the people that will extend beyond the initial meeting.

Deciding where to hold the one-on-one

One-on-ones can take place anywhere both parties are comfortable – in living rooms, in coffee shops, in an office, even just taking a walk. The important consideration is, "Is the setting conducive to an easy conversation in which both parties are getting to know one another better?"

Setting the meeting

Generally speaking, meetings should be set up through voice communication, such as a phone call or a face-to-face conversation. While email is convenient, it tends to be impersonal and not the best way to begin a new relationship. Remember that many of the meetings will likely be held with individuals who are not "professionals" in the prevention field. Rather they are community members who have concerns or experiences with ATD issues but make their living in other areas.

Conducting a One-on-One

Conducting a one-on-one is not difficult, but the process is different than what most coalition coordinators or prevention workers are used to. While the interviews are open-ended, they do have structure. There are three elements to a successful one-on-one:

1. *The Credential.* The credential tells the person why you are meeting. It provides a framework for the person to understand who you are and why you want to talk. This part could sound like: *"Hi, I am _____ from _____ and I am working with the _____ coalition to prevent alcohol and drug problems. I am talking with a lot of folks in the community to understand how these problems impact all aspects of community. I would like to talk with you for 15 or 20 minutes to hear your thoughts and any concerns you may have."*

2. *The Conversation.* The conversation is about encouraging the person to speak as much as they can about themselves, and their interests, joys, and concerns. Stories are a great way to get the conversation going. Sharing your own story can make it safe for the other person to also open up and describe something of importance. This conversation is NOT initially about recruiting the person to a coalition or into a coalition role or task. The conversation could begin with: "How long have you lived in this town? Has it changed much since you have lived here? What do you like about living here?" *Keep in mind, if you are doing most of the talking, the conversation has gone astray.*

3. *Closing and Next Steps.* Closing the one-on-one is as important as the opening. The goal is to keep the relationship going. It's important to carefully listen and then assess how to proceed as the conversation comes to a close. Ideally, you would like another meeting at some future point. A second or third meeting can be where the relationship is both deepened and a potential connection to the work is established. You also want to see if the person knows other people with whom you can talk. A typical closing looks like: "Well, I really appreciate the time you have spent with me. I have learned a lot about this neighborhood. I will be having conversations like this with many other folks. Would you be open to being contacted again as our work progresses? Is there anyone else you think I should talk to who might be interested in sharing some of their thoughts and views on this issue? Thanks… I'll look forward to talking with you again in the near future."

Door-to-door mobilizing

Sometimes it is important to talk with community people in the neighborhoods where they live. This venue becomes necessary when you need to get information that is *close to the ground* about what's happening on the streets or in neighborhoods. The outreach to residents in neighborhoods usually takes the form of a listening process called a *knock and talk (door knocking).* The intent of this process is to go door-to-door to talk with residents about key issues and/or to solicit their participation in your policy campaign. For example, the knock and talk process is used:

• To find out about how loud and unruly underage drinking parties in homes are affecting nearby neighbors and potentially to solicit support for the adoption of a social host ordinance; or

- To understand the ways in which problem alcohol outlets are impacting nearby families or businesses and to seek support for a conditional use permit that would regulate new and existing outlets; or
- To determine if residents are aware of nearby street level drug dealing and to ask for support for increased law enforcement.

> ## Knock and Talk
> **Key Considerations:**
> 1. *Work in pairs*
> 2. *Pay attention to the surrounding environment*
> 3. *Be culturally competent*
> 4. *Recognize the first 30 seconds are critical to success*
> 5. *Listen and focus on the relationship building*
> 6. *Once contact is made, continue to build the relationship*

Each of these and other similar examples requires talking with residents who are being negatively impacted by the problems occurring in close proximity to their residence. This type of outreach may be both unfamiliar and potentially uncomfortable to you. While it is not the kind of mobilizing with which most coalition staff or members are familiar, it can be a very effective way to both gain information and recruit support for your policy campaign.

There are some key considerations associated with this type of mobilizing:

- Work in pairs, unless you are very familiar with the area where the work will occur. While this process may not be inherently dangerous, it is prudent to travel in pairs. This "buddy system" also allows for multiple sets of ears and eyes in the neighborhood and when talking to residents. Consider working in a female/male pair. Staff and coalition members can engage in knock and talks. In some instances you may want to practice the process in the neighborhood of one of your coalition members and have that person team up with you.
- Pay attention to your surrounding environment. Keep your eyes open for potential trouble and stay away if you feel threatened or uncomfortable. If you have a relationship with law enforcement, you may want to let them know you are going to the area to conduct knock and talks. Police may want to escort you. Determining if this is a good idea should be made on a case-by-case basis.

- Be culturally sensitive and competent in your outreach. If English is not the first language for the majority of residents, be sure to pair up with someone who speaks the dominant language and understands the local culture.
- The first 30 seconds are crucial to initiating a relationship with a resident standing behind a front door or working in their yard. Dress thoughtfully, not too formally, but also, not too casually. It may be a good idea to have your card or organizational ID on a lanyard around your neck. People are trained not to talk to strangers, so don't take it personally if someone does not want to talk at first. Recognize that as you are around the neighborhood more and more, residents will start to trust you and be willing to speak to you at a later time. It may take two or three outreach attempts before someone is willing to talk with you.
- Understand that listening and relationship building are the primary goals of the initial outreach. People may not be used to having others care about how they experience their neighborhood. You will need to build trust with them. The best way to do this is to listen and encourage them to talk.
- Once you make contact, be prepared to go back as many times as necessary to build the relationship.

First – Getting ready to knock on the door
Step one is all about preparation. Scan your environment as you drive or walk through the neighborhood. Do you see signs of street-level drug dealing? Are the homes run down? Are there abandoned cars in the street or in front yards? Do you see anyone out walking? Are all the shades drawn? While no one condition defines a neighborhood, you do want to assess your comfort level with walking around the area knocking on doors. If it doesn't seem right for you, if you are frightened, for example, this process may not be a good fit for you.

Bring a pad and paper to keep notes of your conversations. Be sure to track the following information:

- Date and time of day;
- The name(s) of the people doing the knock and talk;
- Address of the residence where the conversation(s) occurred;
- Names of the person(s) you talked with, if they are willing to provide it;

- Phone number, if the person is willing to share it;
- Notes on who was home and who was not; and
- Notes on the information shared and your sense of next steps.

As you approach each and every residence, do a quick risk assessment. Are there dogs present on the other side of a fence? Is there a bin full of beer cans or liquor bottles? Do you smell marijuana smoke? What shape is the house in (i.e. is the grass cut, is it painted, is there trash and debris all around?) The criteria that apply to the overall neighborhood also apply to each residence. If you are uncomfortable, pass on this location.

Second – Conducting the knock and talk conversation

At the front door, be prepared to ring the bell no more than three times. Remember to make a notation if no one answers, you may want to come back to this location in the future. When the door is answered, be friendly and smile. You are there to share the possibility that a problem or issue impacting their neighborhood or community can improve. Be sure to share the following information:

- Identify yourself and the organization you are representing right up front. Show your ID and if you have one, and a business card;
- Tell them you are not selling anything;
- Tell them you want to learn more about their neighborhood and that you have some information to share about what your coalition is doing that might interest them;
- If they are not able to talk with you at this time, ask if you might be able to come back at a more convenient time. If a date and time are agreed upon, give them your card and ask them to call you if they need to change the appointment. Ask if they would be willing to share their phone number in case you have a change in your availability.
- Be sure to explain what your coalition does in the community. You are not pitching your policy in doing this. Rather you are providing some sense of your credential. You are saying you are legitimate. Talk about your role, and let the person know part of your work is to better understand how ATD issues impact this neighborhood. At this point, you have to assess if there is any interest on their part to go further in the conversation. If they seem to want to hear more, keep going. If, however, they

are clearly anxious to disengage with you, thank them for their time and move on. There may be another opportunity to talk in the future, so leave on the best footing possible. In some cases, the entire conversation may occur with the person being behind a screen door or from a crack in the front door. It is also possible you may be invited inside. Once inside, scan for features that can provide information about who they are. For example, are there obvious signs of children? If a rental property, such as an apartment, are there signs of landlord neglect? Is there evidence of alcohol or drug use? This information is to assist you in establishing your comfort level as well as provide cues that could further your relationship building with the resident.

- At some point, the person will want to know what you actually want from them. This may be one minute or one hour into the conversation. Your answer will depend on your assessment of the situation. If you feel that another meeting would solidify the relationship then you may want to ask if you could come back next week to learn more about the neighborhood. If this doesn't fit the context of the conversation, you can share the policy work and where the coalition is headed in their policy campaign.
- Once you sense it is time to leave, assess if another meeting would be beneficial to the resident or to your policy campaign. Was the person interested enough to keep talking with you? Did they express an interest in assisting with your campaign? Did they not finish telling you about the neighborhood issues? Do they just want to be heard? Do they want to be kept informed about how your work is progressing? Close out the conversation in as pleasant a manner as possible and be sure to leave with a next step, if any, clearly defined.

Third – Wrapping up the knock and talk process

Once the door is closed and you have left the property, you need to log your impressions and the agreed upon next steps on your knock and talk form. If you promised to call or come back at a specific time, it is essential you keep that commitment or be proactive in rescheduling. If you breach the newly established trust formed in the initial knock and talk, it may be difficult to regain it.

The knock and talk process can only be scripted to a point. As you engage in this rewarding community mobilizing process, you will establish your own

style. Recognize that it takes a little time to feel comfortable with this type of outreach.

Step 3 – The challenge

There comes a point during each one-on-one when you have to decide whether or not to make "the ask." This is also true for the coalition, as a whole. At some point in time you must ask the question: "Do we want to take on this policy campaign?" The process of the community mobilizer asking an individual to engage in the work or asking a coalition to move from planning to action is called the challenge. Issuing the challenge does not necessarily mean the person or group immediately jumps into the action, rather it is that point in the process when a person's status can change from potential supporter to actual supporter. Issuing the challenge to a coalition occurs when the discussion about undertaking a policy campaign shifts from simply talking about the policy to actually making it happen. It is an intentional process; rarely does it occur on its own. Before issuing the challenge to individuals, consider the following:

- Have you developed a relationship where there is mutual trust and respect?
- Do you have a good sense of the interests, passions, concerns and goals of the person and his/her family? Have you been able to match them to the goals of the coalition?
- Do you see a fit for the person in terms of specific activities she/he could do to move the policy campaign forward? Are you comfortable that the person will follow through on agreed upon tasks?
- Does the person have connections to other people that you could talk with to build the base and is there a willingness to share those contacts?

While this is not an exhaustive list, it does provide guidance to help determine when to issue the challenge.

Once the challenge is issued, responses are "yes," "no," or "maybe." An affirmative response is good news and requires that you have a clear plan of how this person will engage from the moment the commitment to participate is made. Remember you have been building a relationship with the person. That relationship requires on-going nurturing to ensure the person stays connected. A "maybe" simply means that you have more relationship building and

exploration to do with the person. A "no", while disappointing, can be expected in some percentage of the one-on-ones. Not everyone is ready to work with the coalition. A "thank you" and request for other people to talk to is in order. Be sure to leave on good terms with a clear expression of your appreciation for time spent. You never know when a person will change his/her mind and decide to engage with the coalition in the future.

Issuing the challenge is a key area where coalitions can get stuck. There are two key reasons for this:

1. The relationship building through one-on-ones doesn't occur in a meaningful way. One sign of this is when people are being asked to join the coalition with little or no time spent in the relationship-building process and finding the right fit with the tasks of the group.
2. The coalition leadership is unable or unwilling to end the ongoing discussion about what to do or how to do it by asking the question…"Are we ready start implementing this policy?" Coalitions commonly fall into the trap of thinking everyone has to be heard on a particular issue. This can be an excuse for never making a decision. Once the one-on-ones have occurred, the group should have adequate information about the issue and "permission" to move into action.

Step 4 – Action

Once the challenge has been accepted by individuals to engage with the coalition and by the group itself to begin the policy campaign, it is time to get to work.

The policy steps on page 16 describe the elements of a successful campaign. There are specific skills and tasks associated with implementing each of the 10 policy steps. Community mobilizing is principally about step Seven - *Mobilize support and provide community education.* Failure to fully implement this step can make the difference between winning and losing your policy campaign.

Keep in mind the two facets of successful community mobilizing: 1) Base building, bringing the grassroots community into the action, and 2) Working with the community to educate and influence decision-makers about the issues and policies the coalition is concerned about.

Base building – bottom up community mobilizing

Conducting one-on-ones is the key to building the base of support for a policy campaign. Now is the time to put to work all the people who expressed interest and concern about the issues your policy addresses. Examples of the many ways your membership can support the policy campaign include:

- Participating in working on one or more of the policy campaign steps;
- Writing letters to the editor supporting the policy;
- Holding neighborhood or living room meetings to discuss the policy and its importance to the community;

> Remember: Both "top-down" and "bottom-up" mobilizing is necessary to get your policy adopted.

- Writing Op Ed pieces for local newspapers;
- Asking organizations for resolutions of support;
- Getting petitions of support signed by community members;
- Emailing decision-makers urging their support;
- Meeting face-to-face with decision-makers to urge their support, and
- Attending all hearings and meetings where the policy is being discussed to show support.

Influencing decision-makers – top down community mobilizing

Top-down mobilizing is an essential element of a policy campaign. Simply put, you are trying to influence decision-makers by having those key individuals they listen to become your supporters and spokespersons. This is sometimes a multi-step process in which you may need

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Chart 1. Power Analysis Chart

Assess the Individuals Who Can Give you What you Want
Who has the power to adopt your policy

Who are the most important individuals?	To whom must you talk before you approach them?	How do you influence them?	What is the self-interest of each?	Who will approach each?

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to find people who can convince key influencers to speak to the decision-makers. For example, if you are working on a social host ordinance or an ordinance to require mandatory responsible beverage service training, the final decision-makers may be the city council. To reach the council members, you may need to find someone who knows the city manager or city attorney to bring them on board and to let council members know of their support. Or you may need to talk to a close friend or ally of the decision-maker so they can pitch the policy directly. Central to the process is understanding how decisions are made by the people who have power to adopt your policy.

A tool to facilitate "unpacking" the decision-making process is called the power analysis. This process concretely identifies who needs to be approached and who best to make that contact. Chart 1 (see page 18) is a tool coalitions can use to carry out the analysis.

In completing the power analysis you may again find your one-on-ones paying off. It is possible that through the one-on-ones you met and built relationships with people who not only support your work but also know one or more of the decision-makers. Otherwise, you may have to independently identify individuals who support the policy work and who also know influencers or decision-makers.

The action component of the community mobilizing work is where the "rubber hits the road." It is very difficult to move policy work forward without spending adequate time focused on putting people to work ensuring that decision-makers are supporting your coalition policy. There are so many opportunities for supporters to engage in the policy work - from simply signing a petition of support to speaking at a hearing on the policy - that there should be no reason for failing to bring people into the action of the campaign.

Step 5 – Evaluating the community mobilizing effort

Evaluate Your Campaign Did the Group:

- Hit their benchmarks
- Build power and coalition capacity
- Build coalition unity
- Set up next actions

Coalitions understand the value of evaluation to demonstrate the success of the group and its effectiveness in reducing ATD problems and local conditions. However, evaluation from a mobilizing perspective is a little different than the overall coalition evaluation. Here we are talking about evaluating the success of the community mobilizing effort itself. Examples of evaluation questions for a community mobilizing campaign include the following:

- Did you hit your mobilizing target numbers? How many people did you bring into your base of support? Was it as many as you hoped? Did you find people willing to influence decision-makers, were they outside the core membership of the coalition? How many people turned out when the policy was being discussed in public meetings? Was it enough?
- Did your coalition build power as a result of the mobilizing? Is the group perceived differently now than it was before the policy campaign? Is the group now viewed as a "player" when it comes to addressing ATD issues in the community? Will decision-makers consult the group before making future policy decisions on ATD issues? Do members feel more competent to engage in policy work? Did new leadership emerge in the group?
- Did the mobilizing build coalition unity? Is there greater clarity about the organizational mission and a sense that the coalition can make a difference in the community?
- Is the coalition ready to move to the next policy campaign? Can the base be mobilized to address a new issue? Do you have enough information about each one-on-one that you can reach out to community mem-

bers to engage at a future time? Do decision-makers now expect the coalition to be an agent of change? Are coalition members asking to move to the next policy campaign?

Unfortunately coalitions sometime move from one campaign to the next without taking the time to evaluate what worked and what could have been improved. Try not to make that mistake. Talk about how the policy campaign affected your coalition and make any adjustments required to be more effective.

Step 6 – Reflection

Reflection differs from evaluation. Reflection is about explicitly linking back to why this work is important and reaffirming the role your coalition plays in the community. Talk about:

• How the campaign was important to *coalition members;* their sense of contributing to improving the quality of life in the community; their feelings about being part of an effort that is larger than any one person; their feeling of competency, etc.
• How the campaign was important to the *community;* how will the community im-

prove as a result of the campaign? Did it give voice to those who didn't have a way to express their concerns? Did it build connectedness between community members?

Reflection is also about reaffirming the core values of the coalition and celebrating the work. Revisit why the coalition took on the campaign. Discuss the ways in which the mobilizing may have changed how the coalition interacts with community. Discuss the ways in which the accumulation and exercise of power has affected the coalition and the broader community. Is the power being used to improve the lives of other people or has that been lost in the day-to-day work? Find time to celebrate the work of the group by having a potluck, giving recognition to members or spending time together in a fun activity.

Community mobilizing is but a means to an end. The end is about successfully seeing your policy adopted. But it is also a means to build "community." Reflect on the extent to which your coalition has contributed to the broader goal of connecting people to one another.

Antidrug Community Coalition of Malconga Huánuco Department, Perú

The Malconga Community Coalition is located in an agricultural rural zone in the middle of the Peruvian Andes. The Coalition identified alcohol consumption by adults and adolescents in and near convenience stores (bodegas) as a major problem in their community.

Peruvian laws establish that convenience stores can sell alcohol but that customers are not allowed to drink at the point of purchase. To change the practice of onsite consumption, coalition members (*coalicionarios*) organized "TocaBodegas", a form of the *knock and talk* process, where they knock (*toca*) on the doors of businesses (*bodegas*) with the goal of providing information about the laws.

In 2009, the Coalition initiated the "TocaBodegas" after deciding in their coalition meetings that the best strategy to stop onsite consumption was to reach the merchants. The Coalition President partnered with the Amarilis Municipal District Officer to coordinate resources, an activity schedule, transportation, materials, routes, and responsibilities.

The first "TocaBodegas" were done on a weekday morning with visits to 15 bodegas in the Sariapampa, Malconga and Llanquipampas localities. The municipality provided a mobile unit, officers, and municipal personnel to support the effort. The Manager of Economic Development also joined the team.

On each visit the municipal police were responsible for informing merchants of the laws and the risks involved with selling alcohol to minors. They then shared a copy of the municipal ordinance with the merchants. Additionally, *coalicionarios* disseminated a coalition bulletin that provided information about their community work and invited the merchants to join the coalition. The municipal police officer completed paperwork and issued the merchant a *Preventive Notice.* Community police (Serenazgo) then displayed two posters in each establishment stating that the establishment was prohibited from selling alcohol to minors and that customers were prohibited from consuming alcohol on the premises and on the streets.

Many merchants indicated that they were not aware of the local laws and that they were very appreciative of the effort made by the municipal officers and *coalicionarios* to come to their rural communities. As expected, there were some merchants that did not believe that consumption at their stores and on the streets was a problem in their community. They also resented that fact that enforcement of the laws was prohibiting their business practices.

Because many people sell alcohol from their home, the coalition continued providing information not only to the business, but also to residents about the problem of drinking in public and the importance of complying with the local laws related to underage drinking. The *coalicionarios* and municipal officers knocked on 200 doors of homes and businesses.

"TocaBodegas" are done every month, increasing the number of merchants complying with the local laws. The efforts of the coalition led to noticeably less people drinking in the streets on holidays like Labor Day and Mother's Day.

The "TocaBodegas" have allowed the community to realize their "power." Residents now know each other, work with law enforcement, support initiatives, empower their youth, and identify resources within their own community.

Lessons Learned:

⌘ **Not everyone will be ready at the first knock.** The coalition allowed time for merchants to see how other merchants in compliance were supported by the community and law enforcement. Most merchants were not complying with the laws simply because they did not know the laws. Connecting with key people (government, law enforcement) was crucial to gaining compliance from some merchants.

⌘ **The knock and talks provide valuable assessment data.** The coalition was able to gain information on community problems, hot spots, and local resources.

⌘ **The knock and talks built coalition membership.** The coalition collected information on the skills and time that residents could devote to the coalition. They also created a directory of the community leaders.

CHAPTER 5: COMMUNITY MOBILIZING, CULTURAL COMPETENCY, AND SUSTAINABILITY

Cultural competency

Community mobilizing, when done comprehensively, is a culturally competent process. Mobilizing takes you to areas of the community where ATD issues are occurring to talk to those who are most impacted. Engaging in knock and talks in neighborhoods where open-air drug markets are flourishing will naturally bring you into contact with people from all walks of life. In this context, soliciting diverse opinions will happen as a natural part of the outreach process.

There is an intentionality associated with being culturally competent. Know who lives in your community. Purposefully seek them out to do a one-on-one. Reach out to organizations and groups that may have a connection to ATD issues. Finally, be cognizant of who is doing the outreach. Can the person speak the language of the community where the mobilizing is occurring? Is she/he familiar with the customs and norms of the group? Building relationships stands a better chance if the mobilizer has a working knowledge of the community. The Institute's *Cultural Competence Primer: Incorporating Cultural Competence into Your Comprehensive Plan* provides additional information on cultural competence and is available in PDF format online at www.cadca.org.

Sustainability

In much the same way mobilizing contributes to being culturally competent, it also contributes to building a foundation for coalition sustainability. On-going mobilizing brings more and more people into the group thereby building the base for long-term community action. Funder support often flows to groups perceived as effective at implementing evidence-based policies. Always keep your membership growing and responsive to issues occurring in the community. Doing so will greatly increase the probability of coalition sustainability. The Institute's *Sustainability Primer: Fostering Long-Term Change to Create Drug-Free Communities* provides additional information on sustainability and is available in PDF format online at www.cadca.org.

CHAPTER 6: LEGAL CONSIDERATIONS

Some non-profits mistakenly believe they cannot engage in lobbying for policy change. And by extension, they may question the use of community mobilizing on behalf of policy measures. Coalitions and non-profits may lobby within specific expenditure levels, but *not* with restricted federal, state or foundation dollars. The federal guidelines for 501(c)(3) organizations and the coalitions they facilitate, clearly spell out lobbying guidelines. To support coalitions, CADCA has produced a valuable document called *Strategizer 31: Guidelines for Advocacy: Changing Policies & Laws to Create Safer Environments for Youth* (available in PDF format online at www.cadca.org) that provides excellent detail on the elements of lobbying and how it differs from advocacy. There are no restrictions on engaging in advocacy.

There are two ways for non-profits to engage in community mobilizing for policy change without fear of running afoul of federal restrictions:

- Diversify the coalition funding such that any lobbying activities are paid for with non-restricted dollars. There are many sources of non-restricted dollars including private donations, membership dues, event revenues, etc.
- With or without federal dollars, coalition members and supporters, acting as individuals, have a constitutional right to lobby. If you happen to belong to a local coalition that receives federal funding, you are free to testify at any city council meeting on behalf of an ATD policy, if you are not being paid to be there.

These general guidelines also apply to direct lobbying and grassroots lobbying. Direct lobbying is any attempt to influence a legislative body or representative that: 1) refers to specific legislation and 2) reflects a view on this legislation. Grassroots lobbying is any attempt to influence legislation by affecting the opinions of the general public. In order to be considered grassroots lobbying, the communication must: 1) refer to specific legislation; 2) reflect a view on the legislation; and 3) encourage action on the legislation. Recall that talking with community members about policy as volunteer coalition members is not lobbying. This is one of the key benefits of having a diverse membership with broad sector representation. In most instances, the individuals can lobby for the group as "volunteers."

Remember, coalitions can lobby, just be careful what dollars are used to pay for any lobbying-related activities. Finally, much of the work of community mobilizing is advocacy, not lobbying, and there are no restrictions on advocacy work. This is especially true when advocating for polices that are not laws, such as many school board policies.

Conclusion

Community mobilizing is the engine that drives policy work. Coalitions have the ability and responsibility to engage the community in deliberations about policy as well as the campaign process required to pass the policy. Engaging large numbers of supporters is the only antidote communities have available to combat the entrenched economic interests that wish to keep alcohol, tobacco, and drugs as available, cheap, and prominent as possible. Policies designed to moderate the negative influences of these substances may generate resistance and push-back manifested as direct and indirect economic influence on decision-makers. Our response to the exercise of economic power is the exercise of people power. Without it, we can't compete.

Community mobilizing presents coalitions with an essential way of doing business. It has the potential to make your coalition relevant to the community, broaden your membership, and distribute the workload. Mobilizing enables coalitions to become what they were envisioned to be – an "agent" of community change.

ENDNOTES

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GLOSSARY

ATD: Alcohol, tobacco and drugs.

Base building: Garnering sufficient community support to influence decision makers to adopt a policy.

Civic engagement: Participation in the deliberations on community issues.

Community assessment: A process of gathering, analyzing and reporting information, usually data, about your community. A community assessment should include geographic and demographic information, as well as a collective review of needs and resources within a community that indicates what the current problems or issues are that could be addressed by a coalition.

Community mobilizing definition: A process through which action is stimulated by a community itself, or by others, that is planned, carried out, and evaluated by a community's individuals, groups, and organizations on a participatory and sustained basis to improve health.

Community mobilizing - listening: The process of conducting one-on-ones with community members to understand the ATD issues they may have concerns about.

Community mobilizing - relationship building: The process of getting to know a community member well enough to discuss shared concerns and personal history in the community as well as assess their interest in your issues.

Community mobilizing - challenge: Putting forth the question whether an individual or group is ready to move forward with implementing strategies.

Community mobilizing - action: Working on best-practice strategies to reduce alcohol and other drug problems.

Community mobilizing - evaluation: Discussing the success of coalition action in terms of the impacts on the coalition itself and the community.

Community mobilizing – reflection: Assessment of the manner in which the coalition has held true to its core values in the course of action.

Community organizing: A process that draws on the power and persuasion of diverse stakeholders to identify and define common problems, mobilize resources and work together to improve health and quality of life.

Community voice: The individual and collective expression about a community issue.

Conditional use permit: Local ordinance that regulates when, where and how alcohol can be sold and/or served in retail alcohol premises.

Environmental strategies: Prevention efforts aimed at changing or influencing community conditions, standards, institutions, structures, systems and policies.

Ground-level information: Information that reflects rich detail about the community, often provided by neighborhood members or others who are very familiar with activities occurring on a day to day basis.

Grassroots community members: Individuals comprising the bulk of the community, who have views on issues but are rarely sought out.

Knock and talk: Going door-to-door to talk with residents about key issues and/or to solicit their participation in your policy campaign

Local conditions: Specific, identifiable, and actionable issues at the community level.

One-on-ones: A structured process to build relationships with community members, assess their concerns, and recruit them into action on coalition issues and local conditions.

Policies: Procedures, rules or laws that structure the behavior of individuals.

Policy campaign: The process of carrying out the steps necessary to adopt policy.

Policy domains: The settings in which policy is adopted.

Power analysis: A tool to facilitate the understanding of a group's decision making process.

Social host law: Prohibits the provision of alcohol to individuals under the legal purchase age or the hosting of underage parties where alcohol is consumed. In some states or communities, it can also mean that individuals who provide alcohol can be held liable if the person who was provided alcohol is killed or injured, or kills or injures another person.

CADCA RESOURCES

CADCA National Coalition Institute Primer Series
http://www.cadca.org/resources/series/Primers
A collection of publications that provide guidelines for coalitions navigating the Strategic Prevention Framework.

The Coalition Impact: Environmental
Prevention Strategies
http://www.cadca.org/resources/detail/coalition-impact-environmental-prevention-strategies

CADCA's Policy Change Toolbox
http://www.cadca.org/CoalitionResources/PP-Toolbox.asp
CADCA's Policy Change Toolbox was developed as a public policy tool to provide coalitions with a catalog of environmental policy changes implemented at the local level by community anti-drug coalitions from all over the U.S.

CADCA TV –The Art of Community Mobilizing
http://www.cadca.org/cadca_tv/art-community-mobilizing
A no-cost hour-long CADCA TV program "The Art of Community Mobilizing" is available on demand through the CADCA website. This broadcast is made possible through a partnership with the Multijurisdictional Counterdrug Task Force Training Program (MCTFT), St. Petersburg College and the Florida National Guard.

Strategizer 31: Guidelines for Advocacy: Changing Policies and Laws to Create Safer Environments for Youth http://www.cadca.org/resources/detail/guidelines-advocacy-changing-policies-and-laws-create-safer-environments-youth

ORGANIZATIONS

Center for Community Change
http://www.communitychange.org
The Center for Community Change strengthens, connects and mobilizes grassroots groups to enhance their leadership, voice and power. Founded in 1968 to honor the life and values of Robert F. Kennedy, the Center is one of the longest-standing champions for low-income people and communities of color.

Highlander Center
http://highlandercenter.org/
Highlander serves as a catalyst for grassroots organizing and movement building in Appalachia and the U.S. South. Through popular education, participatory research, and cultural work, they help to create spaces where people gain knowledge, hope and courage, expanding their ideas of what is possible.

Industrial Areas Foundation
http://www.industrialareasfoundation.org
The IAF builds a political base within society's rich and complex third sector - the sector of voluntary institutions that includes religious congregations, labor locals, homeowner groups, recovery groups, parents associations, settlement houses, immigrant societies, schools, seminaries, orders of men and women religious, and others.

Midwest Academy
http://www.midwestacademy.com/
The Midwest Academy advances movements for progressive social change by teaching strategic, rigorous, results-oriented approach to social action and organization building. The Academy provides training (introductory and advanced) and consulting, equipping organizers, leaders, and their organizations to think and act strategically to win justice for all.

Organize Training Center
http://www.organizetrainingcenter.org/
The Organize Training Center builds and strengths people power by training labor and community organizers, consulting with labor and community organizations, and providing workshops and consulting for community and labor leaders.

Pacific Institute for Community Organizations
http://www.piconetwork.org
PICO is a national network of faith-based community organizations working to create innovative solutions to problems facing urban, suburban and rural communities. Since 1972 PICO has successfully worked to increase access to health care, improve public schools, make neighborhoods safer, build affordable housing, redevelop communities and revitalize democracy.

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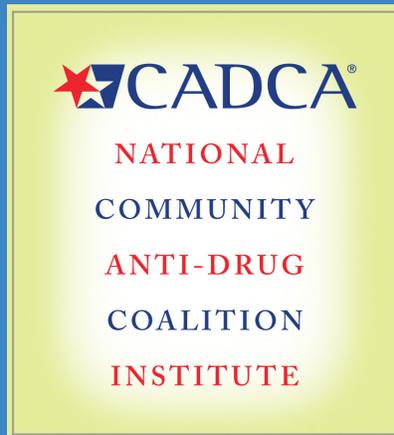
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