

STRATEGIC PLANNING GUIDE TO A SMOKEFREE COMMUNITY

THE SMOKEFREE PROCESS *(simplified)*

- Identify potential coalition members for community smokefree coalition
- Form local coalition
- Draft action plan & timeline (i.e. community education*, media, grassroots)
- Begin community education campaign (at least 6 months)
- Educate/lobby governing body, identify champions for smokefree
- Introduce model smokefree ordinance and start campaign for passage
- Pass model ordinance
- Promote implementation
- Protect ordinance from legal challenges, etc. ...

COMMUNITY EDUCATION – 4 REASONS TO DO IT

1. **Community buy-in:** They have to know what it is in order to want it
2. **Strong volunteer base:** An understanding of the issue builds grassroots support
3. **Partnerships:** Helps you find which organizations want to help
4. **Sustainability:** Provides a solid & stable foundation to work from

COMMUNITY EDUCATION - 4 HOW-TO STEPS

1. Educate yourself on the issues

- a. Know responses to arguments, ventilation, economic impact, regulation.
- b. Know the extent of the secondhand smoke problem in your community.
- c. Understand how the community views secondhand smoke and if they think it's a problem.
- d. Memorize key messages of arguments for and against smokefree air – be prepared to defend your ideas.

2. Get your message out into the community

- a. Make public presentations to a wide variety of organizations – civic clubs, parent-teacher organizations, youth groups, health agencies, professional societies, and other community groups.
- b. Educate the local business community about the health effects of secondhand smoke exposure, and the potential legal liability of businesses to their employees and customers before misinformation is spread.
- c. Create a simple fact sheet about the dangers of secondhand smoke and distribute them at large public events like fairs, festivals, etc.

3. Educate key players and decision-makers

- a. Don't assume that community leaders and elected officials understand the health hazards of secondhand smoke and the potential means of protecting people from those hazards.
- b. Educating them from a health perspective (not a political one!) can help eliminate false claims and myths down the road.

*TIP – When giving information to **electeds** keep it brief!*

4. Build a list of supporters

- a. Create a grassroots database of people who don't necessarily attend meetings but are updated, educated and can be alerted for hearings, etc. The goal is to have 10% of the population identified as supporters.
- b. Hold dine-outs or other community events to educate the community about secondhand smoke and add them to your list of grassroots supporters.

OVERALL - Have a strong presence in the community

Sample Activities/Goals to Create a Strategic Plan

The group should have monthly goals to meet, activities to conduct to reach those goals, ways to measure the goals and individuals responsible for each activity. Below are some example activities used in other coalitions around the state.

Activities for First Three Months

- Draft strategic plan with timeline and monthly goals
- Begin a 6-month community education plan (see more details below)
- Gain individual support via the supporter sign-up sheets (goal of X # of individuals per month)
- Gain organizational support from area groups (goal of X # of organizations per month)
- Create a calendar of key city events to have a presence at & collect supporter names
- Create and update a website for the group
- Create and regularly update a Facebook page for the group
- Research current ordinance, history and council legislative procedures
- Take inventory of coalition members' skills, time, commitment, etc.
- Identify potential spokespeople and subcommittees
- Recruit and train smokefree experts (doctors, nurses, etc.) to act as spokespeople for events
- Make a list of local groups that will let you speak on the subject (Rotary, Kiwanis, etc.) and sign up supporters while you're there
- Begin doing a monthly electronic newsletter to supporters

Activities for Next Three Months

- Finalize subcommittee and leadership structure of the coalition
- Develop media messages and protocol to follow if media calls group members
- Make a list of local talk shows or news shows that cover local issues like this one
- Get volunteers to start sending personal letters to the editor
- Outreach to database supporters regarding their time, commitment, skills, activities, connections in the community, etc. (phone calls!)
- Identify compelling community speakers, such as youth working as wait staff, people with asthma or other health problems that restrict their dining at smoke-filled restaurants, and, of course, restaurant and bar owners who are favorable to the issue.
- Attend key neighborhood association and community organization meetings to educate, collect signatures, recruit volunteers and gather opinions (add to calendar of events)
- Find community key leaders (5-10+) to speak on behalf of the coalition
- Paid media for community education
- Begin developing your council education/advocacy plan: study how the council works and each members' preferences, committee assignments, meeting attendance, etc.

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Activities for 6+ Months and beyond

- Coalition agrees on **dealbreakers** & model ordinance -- agree on specific items willing to negotiate on (private clubs, outdoor areas, patio dining, parks, reasonable distance, cigar bars, retail tobacco stores) – everyone has signed a copy of agreed **up on dealbreakers**
- Build an informational document about each city council member (term, address, phone, family, job, education, etc.)
- Have initial educational meetings with all council members to determine where they stand
- Do one-on-one educational meetings with key reporters/media outlets

ADDITIONAL LATER PHASES TO COMPLETE THE POLICY CHANGE PROCESS

Public Phase

In this phase, it's announced to the public – and to the Council – that there is a strong coalition that wants to see a policy change to establish 100% smokefree public places.

- Expand the grassroots recruitment and petition drive
- Launch the media campaign
- Identify and start working with a council champion
- Begin educating other council members
- Start letter writing campaigns and other pressure on decision-makers

Countdown to the Vote

This is the final phase of the campaign in the weeks leading up to the Council vote. It is time to kick the effort into high gear and shine a spotlight on the City Council.

- Demonstrate strong public support for 100% smokefree public places
- Privately continue to educate Council members on the issue
- Keep a watchful eye on efforts to weaken ordinance
- Publicly pressure Council to pass ordinance
- Editorial support from paper
- Increased media
- Press conferences and public appearances
- Radio/television shows

After Passage

- Publicly recognize elected officials and individuals involved
- Begin implementation planning
- Plan a celebration
- Plan a one-year anniversary celebration