THE POLICY PROCESS: STEP 2

BUILD THE CAMPUS/COMMUNITY COALITION

The goal of Policy Step 2 is to build the campus coalition and the abilities of it's members to improve the health of those on their campus and in their community by eliminating the presence of tobacco through a tobacco-free policy.

Many campuses already have an existing coalition in place and operating. An early assessment should determine if an existing coalition is the "right" vehicle to move the tobacco-free campus policy forward. Some campus/community coalitions exist to provide education about the risks and harms associated with tobacco use, but may not be comfortable actively spearheading a policy campaign. In other instances, an existing coalition that has previously focused on other health issues may have a long history of actively working for policy change and is ready, willing and able to work on a tobacco-free campus policy.

Coalition Structures

There are a number of different forms a campus coalition may take. The examples below, while by no means exhaustive, can help assess whether an existing structure can move the tobacco-free campus policy campaign forward, or whether it would be beneficial to create a new structure.

1. *New campus personnel-driven coalition solely focused on adoption of a tobacco-free campus policy.* This type of coalition tends to have a clear mandate to adopt a specific policy and then disband. Often the membership consists of various representatives from campus faculty, administration, health services and students. It has responsibility for both adoption and implementation of a policy. The scope of the membership may be limited or broad, in large measure depending on if the policy mandate already has top administration support or not. The less the explicit support for the policy under consideration, the greater the need to broaden membership and implement the policy steps suggested in this manual.

2. *Existing health-focused coalition working on many issues, one of which is or could be campus tobacco policy.* Many campuses have some form of health coalition already in place.

To assist in decisions on the appropriate coalition to work within, here are some considerations:

- What is the mission of the existing coalition? Does the group have a well-defined mission that supports the selection of their interventions? Does the mission clearly frame and confine the scope of their work? Does it implicitly or explicitly limit the focus on policy work?

- How long has the coalition been active?

- What kind of interventions has the coalition actually implemented? Are they mostly aimed at individual or community education, or have they engaged in some policy work? If they have worked on policy, were they successful in seeing their policy adopted and implemented?

- What is the reputation of the coalition on campus and in the broader community? Is the group perceived as a "do nothing" group, or is it seen as a mover and shaker? A "do nothing" group may be rehabilitated, but it may take more work than building a new coalition.

- How is the existing coalition viewed by the campus decision makers, those who will ultimately be asked to vote for a tobacco-free campus policy? If an existing coalition has mainly focused on education campaigns, the group may be more favorably perceived by the campus leadership than one that has been advocating for policy change. In this instance, it might make sense to retool and enhance the policy capacity of an existing well-respected group than start over.

- How functional is the coalition? Does the group have regular meetings? Is there a strong membership core? Who does the work, the members or the coalition staff? Do the members fight among themselves, or is there a collaborative work ethic? Does the group have broad representational membership?

3. *Campus/community coalition whose mission is to adopt on- and off-campus policies, including (but not limited to) a tobacco-free campus policy.* The key factor that differentiates this type of coalition from the first one is the inclusion of community members in the coalition. Campus/community coalitions can be complicated entities, in part because of the merging of campus and community tobacco policy priorities. The policy process can also be quite different, for example:

    •   *Decision makers* — the campus decision makers are often on the board of trustees, while at the community level it could be the city council or county board of supervisors.

    •   *Policy focus* — the highest priority on campus is the tobacco-free campus policy. At the community level, it can range from reducing tobacco promotions to restricting the density of tobacco outlets.

    •   *Membership* — campus/community coalitions by definition have a range of community members and community organizations as key members, so accommodating everyone's agendas can be challenging. A guiding principle of community organizing is that the people who experience or are concerned about the problem are most likely to work to solve it; their strength comes from their collective power. This principle may help to conceptualize the best coalition. Should the campus/community coalition be mostly grassroots — that is, involving the residents and other people affected by issues associated with tobacco use? Is a goal to involve the leaders and decision makers on campus and in the surrounding community (sometimes referred to as the "grasstops") who may be in a position to change policies and norms? Perhaps the coalition requires a mix of both leaders and grassroots members.

    •   *Decision-making structures* — Who has more power in the coalition, campus or community representatives? Is it shared equally? This affects how policies are prioritized. It is also important to consider how decisions are made providing strategic advantage going forward. Three important factors related to coalition deliberations are:

1. *How should the coalition set up a decision-making process that is inclusive and, at the same time, gets things done?* Coalitions need to think about how to structure the involvement of their members. How can the group both facilitate broad involvement of its members and captures the deeper thinking that comes from smaller working groups addressing specific issues?

2. *How will the coalition resolve differences of opinion?* Struggling through issues without a method of resolution can breed conflict, and conflict can scare members away. Conversely, some conflict, if managed and understood as healthy, can strengthen the group. How the group handles difficult issues and comes to a decision should be discussed fairly early in the group's formation.

3. *To what degree does the coalition have independence to work on campus and community tobacco policies?* As indicated throughout, the goal of this manual is to assist in the passage of a tobacco-free campus policy or some other campus/community tobacco policy. The focus of the intervention, primarily on campus but potentially in the surrounding community as well, has implications for who participate in the coalition and the scope of work adopted by the group. The coalition's ability to make decisions that affect both the campus and community environments will play a major role in its success.

Each campus will determine which coalition structure is best for the policy work at hand. Sometimes a group may form as a "new campus-personnel driven coalition." After completing the tobacco-free campus policy campaign, it may change into a new group with a broader focus, such as a "campus/community coalition." The point is to be intentional in considering which coalition structure can best change tobacco policies on campus and, when appropriate, in the community.

CULTURAL COMPETENCY REMINDER

Invite students, faculty and staff from diverse backgrounds to be part of the coalition. This includes representatives from LGBT organizations, campus athletics, Greek-letter organizations, racial/ethnic student groups, staff and faculty, as well as women's organizations.

Recruiting Coalition Members

Whether working within an existing coalition or developing a new one, the group should be built to effectively implement policy. Given that the primary goal of the coalition is adoption and implementation of a tobacco-free campus policy, its membership should be recruited with this goal in mind. The most effective coalitions are those in which the members have clearly defined roles and responsibilities from the beginning. This will be particularly true if the coalition charged with implementing the policy campaign is one with a previous history of primarily doing tobacco education strategies. The membership of a group with this history may not have the capacity and familiarity with tasks associated with doing policy work. Recruiting new members with the necessary skills is essential to ensure success of such an existing tobacco coalition.

Implementing a tobacco-free campus policy will require individuals from many different organizations who have diverse interests and backgrounds. The following is a partial list of potential members and their potential roles/contributions:

1. *Campus police*
   - Provide data to make the policy case and explain impacts of policy implementation.
   - Provide input on the enforceability of policy.

2. *Student leaders*
   - Assist in defining the campus tobacco problem and its impact on students.
   - Provide input on the polices and their scope, scale and core elements.
   - Serve as effective spokespeople for the benefits of policy adoption.

RECRUITMENT TIP

Recruit coalition members to a specific task required to carry out the strategies of the coalition, rather than to the group in general.

   - Organize other students to support policy adoption.
   - Provide guidance on how students can use social media to inform others about policy change.

3. *Student health representative*
   - Provide health impact data.
   - Provide science and lend credibility to the evidence-base of proposed policy.

4. *Greek representative(s)/athletic organizations*
   - Defuse potential opposition from this campus sector.
   - Provide data on use and impact of tobacco.

5. *Respected faculty, staff and administrators (including public health and allied health faculty who may have an interest in this topic)*
   - Reflect importance of policy to college decision makers.
   - Assist in framing the policy rationale.

6. *Local media representative*
   - Provide access to local print and broadcast media.
   - Assist in developing framing of issue for media consumption.

7. *Student affairs*
   - Act as an enforcement body for disciplinary action surrounding tobacco use in banned locations.

WHAT IS AN EVIDENCE-BASED POLICY?

"An evidence-based policy helps people make well-informed decisions about policies, programs and projects by putting the best available evidence at the heart of policy development and implementation." (Davies, 2000)

8. *Local Chamber of Commerce representative*
   - Serve as spokesperson for importance of on- and off-campus tobacco-free policies.
   - Essential to future off-campus retail tobacco policy development.

9. *Parents of local college student*
   - Bring other parents into the organized voice of support.

10. *Campus Custodian/Groundskeeper*
    - These individuals are typically responsible for the cleaning up of tobacco related trash around campus as well as cleaning dorm rooms and other areas of smoke.
    - Provide valuable data and information on time and cost spent on cleaning tobacco-related litter.

Policy work requires specific skills, such as strong public speaking skills, the ability to develop relationships with neighborhood groups, strong writing skills, developing media contacts, a passion for the work, and time to dedicate to the project.

Look for people who can fill some of the specific needs your group may have as it assesses its capacity to move a tobacco-free campus policy forward.

Making the "Ask"

The skills involved in doing a one-on-one session to collect data are the same as those needed to recruit members. In fact, some of the people with whom one-on-one sessions were conducted are candidates for participation in coalition activities.

The recruitment process involves strategically identifying who can offer concrete assistance in carrying out the tasks associated with moving forward the policy campaign. Things to consider about a potential coalition member:

- Role on the campus and/or in the community.
- Interest in the issues of tobacco.
- Comfort with the proposed policy solution.
- Skill set and how they align with the needs of the coalition.
- Willingness to participate in the group.
- Personal or professional connections to those who could further the policy campaign, and willingness to provide access to those individuals.

Collecting this information through a one-on-one session may take one or more meetings with the potential candidate. It is important not to rush to the "ask," which is usually framed as: "Would you like to join our coalition to do the following_____?" The depth of the relationship to that point increases the likelihood that the person will join the group. It is essential to match the person's skills and interests to the needs of the coalition. Doing this will deepen the new member's commitment to the coalition and the likelihood that the person will follow thought on any agreed-upon tasks.

Building Coalition Capacity

The goals of capacity building are to strengthen the coalition and the competencies of its members to facilitate their understanding of tobacco policy, as well as to set the stage for actively engaging in advocacy in support of specific tobacco policies. The extent to which a coalition focuses on capacity building will vary by the coalition structure adopted and the extent to which the membership perceives the work as time-limited. A campus coalition charged by the university president to draft a tobacco-free campus policy for adoption is probably unlikely to spend time on long-term group capacity building. Conversely, a coalition focused on both campus and community policy adoption with a vision of long-term changes may be willing to invest in developing its members' capacity. Generally,

the success of a coalition is strongly linked to the group's capacity to carry out the development and implementation of tobacco policies. Building capacity of individuals binds members to the coalition in ways that not only increase the group's overall effectiveness, but also enhances the efficacy of the individuals, thereby building their leadership skills.

Building capacity is an investment in the group that takes time, and the process is ongoing throughout the life of the coalition. Coalition training not only builds the skill sets of the coalition to "do the work" but also helps engender commitment to the group, thereby enhancing its sustainability. Examples of training and training providers to support both coalition development and tobacco policy work include but are not limited to:

- *Overview of community organizing approach:* This training includes a focus on the models of community organizing with a specific emphasis on how the classic organizing approach translates into the Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drug (ATOD) prevention field. Central to this training is the understanding of the importance of building a community voice that has influence and community power, the importance of developing relationships as a basis of community action, and the use of advocacy as a tool to influence decision makers. See www.CADCA.org.

- *How to conduct a one-on-one session:* One-on-one interviewing is central to the process of building meaningful personal relationships that serve as a core community organizing activity and is essential to the core training of a coalition. The process requires practice in "listening," asking open-ended questions, eliciting interests and passions from the person being interviewed, and creating a sense of shared commitment to campus/community tobacco problems. For additional training beyond what was provide in Policy Step 1, see www.piconetwork.org and www.CADCA.org.

- *Building and running coalitions:* This is a pivotal training that focuses on building skills associated with running and managing a coalition. Skills such as group facilitation, agenda setting, effective decision-making structures and leadership development should be included in

this training. See www.CADCA.org, www.center4 tobaccopolicy.org, and learningcenter.ttac.org.

- *How to develop a strategic plan:* Given the importance of the strategic planning process to successful coalition action, the provision of training on strategic planning and activities associated with developing a well-crafted strategic plan is important. This training can also serve as a tool for assisting coalition members to assess what parts of the work best fits their passions and interests. See www.CADCA.org.

- *How to conduct a policy advocacy campaign:* There are concrete steps, such as those discussed in this manual, that a coalition should take to effectively advocate for tobacco policy change. This training covers topics such as how to develop a case statement, prepare model ordinance language, cultivate public support and ensure enforcement of newly adopted policies. See www.CADCA.org, www. ttac.org, www.center4tobaccopolicy.org.

- *Health communication strategies:* This training includes tools to influence policy and environmental change, including how to develop a health communication plan, working with the media and evaluating the efficacy of your health communication campaign. This training also provides information on the best times to employ health communication strategies and how they can be used with policy makers. See http://www.dttac.org/services/ health_communication/index.html.

- *Content on specific tobacco policies:* As specific policies are selected group members will require content-specific training. The content training describes both the evidence base for the strategy as well as the activities and steps associated with successful implementation. Examples of content trainings include but are not limited to: tobacco-free campus policies, limiting tobacco products in local stores, reducing campus and community tobacco promotions, the role of price in reducing tobacco problems and reducing the availability of new smokeless tobacco products. See www.ttac.org, and www.center4tobaccopolicy.org.

State and local health departments may be the first "go to" place to assess the available training resources. Other non-profit organizations also have considerable experience with the trainings described above (see links provided). It is important to keep in mind that training is a key element of coalition capacity building and central to the success of the group. See the coalition-building factsheet in Appendix 10 for further trainings and coalition-building opportunities.

Summary of Policy Step 2

At the end of Policy Step 2, your coalition will be well on its way to playing an important and successful role in the tobacco policy process. Ideally, the following will be accomplished:

✓ A core coalition will be in place with members committed to and skilled in developing and implementing tobacco policy.

✓ Based on you coalition structure, thoughtful consideration will have been given to who will be involved in coalition decision-making and how those decisions will be made.

✓ Appropriate trainings will have been conducted to provide core skill sets to support planning and to create a baseline understanding of the tobacco-free campus policy and potentially other best-practice tobacco policies to be implemented at a later time.

Careful and strategic selection of core coalition participants, provision of trainings to teach needed skills, and an eye toward recruiting the future members needed to select and carry out best-practice tobacco interventions will provide a solid foundation for moving to Policy Step 3.