

Organize the community and develop an action plan...

- *In organizing the community determine the kind of influence and leadership the effort needs.*
- *In developing an action plan determine if the agreed upon goals and objectives are met, that participants' time and talents are utilized effectively and that expenses are within the approved budget.*

PURPOSE

- To explore alternate solutions to identified problem(s).
- To open informal communication among various community groups.
- To share information and resources and avoid duplication of efforts.
- To ensure that program improvement and changes are relevant to the community.

STEPS TO FOLLOW

- Consider the probable community response.
 1. Is the political climate receptive to improvements in this area?
 2. Have there been previous efforts?
 3. What is the general community's attitude toward this problem?
- Identify the people to be involved. Make sure the group is balanced and no special interests dominate. Consider representatives from the following groups:
 1. Parents of preschool and school-aged children
 2. Students, teachers and school administrators
 3. School board members
 4. Media representatives
 5. Professionals in the field such as health, welfare, social services
 6. Key people from public and private agencies serving children and families
 7. Business and civic leaders
 8. City, county and/or state officials
 9. Representatives from the religious community
 10. Community volunteers and other interested persons
- Set specifics of initial meeting.
 1. Date, time, place
 2. Identify chairman and secretary
 3. Establish meeting format and agenda
 4. Assign hospitality responsibilities including coffee/tea/sodas, name tags, sign-in sheet
- Prepare and send letters of invitation to potential participants.
 1. Include the following in letters
 - Meeting purpose
 - Invitation to participate
 - Date, time, place and directions
 - Deadline, date and contact person for response
 2. Include the following materials with the letter
 - Preliminary agenda
 - List of invited participants
- At the meeting - *See sample agenda on attached page.*
 1. Review identified problems

2. Determine if any existing school and/or community programs deal with the problem
3. Analyze existing beliefs, attitudes, circumstances, etc., in the community regarding the problem
4. Determine what changes could cause things to be different (i.e., beliefs, attitudes, circumstances, laws, time, money).
5. Develop a tentative action plan
 - Utilize California State PTA resources (e.g., Guidelines Notebook, Leadership Primer)
 - Brainstorm ideas
 - Prioritize action (*may include immediate and future action*)
 - Examine obstacles to plan implementation
 - Are the ideas presented feasible?
 - What group resources are available? (*i.e., people, enthusiasm, dollars*)
 - Identify other obstacles which will prevent effective action
 - Remove obstacles and/or develop alternatives for each part of the plan
 - Determine if additional information is needed
 - If necessary schedule another meeting in order to obtain additional information
 - If any obstacle cannot be removed select an alternative action
 - Assess alternatives for potential obstacles
6. Develop a final action plan - *See sample "Final Action Plan" report*
 - List all steps needed to carry out the plan
 - Identify the person responsible for each step
 - Establish the time frame for each step
 - Identify budget needs including amount and sources. *Obtain necessary approvals. If outside funding is required you will need to obtain letters of support from appropriate community individuals, organizations and agencies.*
 - Identify evaluation method for each step
 - Set deadline date for project completion and final evaluation
7. Take the action plan to the PTA board and general membership for final approval.