

communities
talk 
to prevent underage drinking



QUICK START PLANNING GUIDE

#CommunitiesTalk
SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

Communities Talk to Prevent Underage Drinking

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As the lead agency for the Interagency Coordinating Committee on the Prevention of Underage Drinking (ICCPUD), the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is sponsoring the next round of *Communities Talk to Prevent Underage Drinking*, which also focuses on problem drinking and other substances that negatively affect our communities.

Since 2006, thousands of *Communities Talk* events held across the country have helped increase public awareness of and action around the prevention of underage drinking. Community-based organizations and colleges and universities that hold *Communities Talk* events—which take a variety of forms—are essential in leading the conversation and promoting the idea that underage drinking is preventable. The concerted effort communities use is the key to making a difference.

This Quick Start Planning Guide is intended to help you quickly and easily join SAMHSA, ICCPUD, and other national partners in preventing underage and high-risk drinking by hosting a results-oriented *Communities Talk* event in your community.

**For more information, visit www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/townhallmeetings,
or email info@stopalcoholabuse.net.**

**JOIN THE
CONVERSATION
ON UNDERAGE
DRINKING
PREVENTION.**

Follow **#CommunitiesTalk** for
the latest underage drinking
prevention resources and
updates.



PLANNING CALENDAR

Communities Talk events can and should be organized at a time when they can be most impactful. Communities know best where the opportunities lie to bring together strategic stakeholders to start or continue a dialogue on the issue. SAMHSA resources are designed to support events at any time of year. Below are seasonal observances and other key times that communities can leverage to open a conversation or advance existing prevention strategies.

JANUARY	National Drug & Alcohol Facts Week
FEBRUARY AND MARCH	Spring break for colleges and universities
APRIL AND MAY	Alcohol Awareness Month (April), high school prom season, finals period for colleges and universities, National Prevention Week (May), graduation season begins
JUNE AND JULY	A popular time for alcohol use initiation
AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER	Back to school, freshmen orientation at colleges and universities
OCTOBER	National Substance Abuse Prevention Month, Child Health Day, Halloween, homecoming
NOVEMBER	Thanksgiving
DECEMBER	National Impaired Driving Prevention Month

Additionally, a *Communities Talk* event can be held to respond to a timely community policy need or tragedy related to underage drinking.



PLANNING CHECKLIST

1 register

- **First**, obtain your organization's tax ID # and W-9 form from your treasurer or bank/budget manager. If you don't have a W-9 form, we'll provide you with one, along with instructions on how to complete it.
- **Next**, look for your unique invitation via email or request one at info@stopalcoholabuse.net and click on the invitation link. Complete your personalized log-in information and fill out the registration form completely. Save your log-in information and note your password!
- **Finally**, you should receive your stipend within 14 days of completing registration. Cash your check immediately, and start planning your great event!

3 STEPS TO COMPLETING Your Communities Talk Online Profile

2 complete your event profile

- Post your *Communities Talk* event date, location, target audience, and other details so they can be featured on the *Communities Talk* website.

3 submit your event recap

- Log back in to your event profile.
- Answer the brief event recap questions.
- Upload materials including media coverage, flyers, and pictures.
- Please respond to the separate email survey as soon as possible.

www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/townhallmeetings

WINTER/SPRING (January–May)

- ✓ In January, look for an email invitation to participate, or request one from info@stopalcoholabuse.net.
- ✓ During a SAMHSA-supported stipend year, complete your online registration to apply to receive a planning stipend. Have your organization's Form W-9 and Federal Tax Identification (ID) Number ready before you begin registering (see more information below).
- ✓ Go to www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/townhallmeetings and watch the *Communities Talk* webcast from Prevention Day in February 2016.
- ✓ Read the [frequently asked questions and answers](#) on the website and find [tips and resources](#) for ideas to plan your event.
- ✓ *Communities Talk* events take place at any time of the year. Spring can be an attractive time because national conversations on alcohol and other substance use prevention observances increase public interest in underage drinking prevention.

SUMMER (June, July, and August)

- ✓ Registering your event by August will ensure your event is on SAMHSA's radar.

FALL (September, October, and November)

- ✓ Many colleges and universities and their community partners host their events in August, September, or October, when many families visit campuses and students start their freshman year and attend homecoming.

DECEMBER

- ✓ Share your event details, successes, images (we love video!), and more!

10 STEPS FOR COMMUNITIES TALK EVENT PLANNING

1. **Review SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework and assess your community's need.** Consider how you can apply this framework to your *Communities Talk* event. Gather and assess data to ensure that your event is designed for your community.
2. **Define your goals and objectives.** Determine what you want to accomplish with your meeting based on your community assessment. Are you creating awareness about an issue? Are you inviting feedback on public policies related to underage drinking? Are you launching a new prevention tool or program?
3. **Organize a planning committee.** Engage key community stakeholders in planning your event. Consider involving partners from different sectors of the community, including law enforcement, elected officials, youth, faith-based organizations, businesses, schools, parent groups, health care professionals, and local colleges and universities.
4. **Obtain your organization's Form W-9 and Tax ID Number.** Before you start your online registration, get your organization's Federal Tax ID Number (also called an Employer Identification Number) and Form W-9 from your treasurer, fiscal agent, or bank/budget manager. Even if you have registered in past years, you must submit a Form W-9. If you do not have a Form W-9, they are [available online](#). Having these items before you start registering will allow you to start and finish the process uninterrupted.
5. **Register online.** Complete your online registration and provide a Form W-9 by using the URL provided in your unique email invitation. This will allow SAMHSA to post your meeting on the website and recognize your success.



10 STEPS FOR

COMMUNITIES TALK EVENT PLANNING (Continued)

- 6. Determine your event type, day, time, and location.** To be effective, *Communities Talk* event venues should be anywhere a community gathers and can have an open discussion. Some organizations host events online in a webinar format or partner with local television stations. Others host them as part of community health fairs or festivals. Decide which *Communities Talk* event setting and format will best meet your objectives. Read past [success stories](#) for ideas.
- 7. Promote your event.** There are many [tips and resources](#) for promoting your event on the *Communities Talk* website. Resources include a flyer, presentation template, proclamation, news release, certificate of appreciation, social media content, and tips and tools for working with the news media. All are downloadable and customizable.
- 8. Conduct and evaluate your event.** How well did you deliver your *Communities Talk* event, and how successful was it in achieving your desired outcomes? Who participated? SAMHSA does ask all participating organizations to log in to their online registration after their *Communities Talk* event and answer brief questions about their event. Read more about evaluation in SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework and on the *Communities Talk* [website](#).
- 9. Tell us about your event.** We want to know what worked and share it with others! All organizers will receive an email survey following their event. Some participating organizations also may be asked to collect and submit a participants' survey. Please complete and submit these to us as soon as possible, but no later than 30 days after your event. We also ask you to answer brief questions in your online organizer's profile to share the success of your event. Upload flyers, pictures, news clips, and more to share your success in the online portal. You can also share event photos and videos on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram using #CommunitiesTalk.
- 10. Keep the momentum going!** SAMHSA encourages community-based organizations and colleges and universities to hold *Communities Talk* events every year. It's always a good time to talk about prevention.



TELL US ABOUT YOUR EVENT

Begin with the end in mind. Below are several questions that you will be asked when you complete the “Share Success” section of your online profile as soon as possible after your event. Also, don’t forget to upload any flyers, pictures, and media coverage and use #CommunitiesTalk on social media.

CHALLENGE

What challenge was your community facing? Did you have any data to support this challenge?

SOLUTION

How did your event address a solution to this challenge? What goal and objectives did you set? What local prevention strategies (e.g., compliance checks at bars/restaurants, social host laws) did you consider?

RESULT

What changes have you observed since your event? How did your event make a difference to your community? What are your future plans for the prevention of underage drinking?

**Join the conversation on
underage drinking prevention.
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FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT PLANNING STIPENDS

Q. How does my organization obtain a planning stipend?

- A.** SAMHSA issues email invitations to community-based organizations and colleges and universities recommended by state and territory National Prevention Network (substance abuse prevention) representatives and other national partner organizations. Qualified participating community-based organizations may request a planning stipend to help offset the costs of planning an event. Only one planning stipend is issued per community-based organization or collaborative.

If your organization wishes to participate and has not received an invitation, check with your state or territory's National Prevention Network member, or contact us at info@stopalcoholabuse.net.

A limited number of stipends are available. Stipends are distributed on a first-come, first-served basis, so register early. Note that although stipends are only available every other year, SAMHSA resources and materials for having a *Communities Talk* event are always available at www.stopalcoholabuse.gov.

Q. What can my stipend be used for?

- A.** The planning stipend is meant to help offset the costs of planning and holding an event. Stipends can cover costs such as facility rentals, printing, and promotion. If guest speakers are unable to donate their services, the stipend may be used to cover their honoraria.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

ABOUT PLANNING STIPENDS (Continued)

Q. What can my stipend not be used for?

- A.** Stipends cannot be used to pay for food and beverages, entertainment, door prizes, discounts, incentive giveaways, or promotional products (e.g., T-shirts, baseball caps, or coffee mugs), or for anything not specifically related to planning and conducting a *Communities Talk* event for the prevention of underage drinking.

SAMHSA encourages organizations to reach out to other community groups, agencies, and businesses in the community that could supplement the stipend by donating services, supplies, or separate funding. Contact info@stopalcoholabuse.net with questions about how to use the planning stipend. Or check out the [tips and resources](#) and [success stories](#) sections of the *Communities Talk* website.

Q. How should I report my stipend?

- A.** Stipends are **not considered grants** and therefore are not reported in the same way. Each organization submits a Form W-9 through the registration process, and this income is reported to the federal government through the registration process.

