



QUICK START PLANNING GUIDE

#CommunitiesTalk
SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

Communities Talk: Town Hall Meetings to Prevent Underage Drinking **QUICK START PLANNING GUIDE**

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: Town Hall Meetings to Prevent Underage Drinking*.

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 are essential in leading the conversation and promoting the idea that underage drinking is preventable. A concerted effort made by many community sectors 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 e-mail info@stopalcoholabuse.net.

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

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



PLANNING CALENDAR

Although many *Communities Talk* events are held in the spring, they can be held at any time during the year. Below are seasonal observances and other key times to have a community conversation on underage drinking prevention:

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 e-mail 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 \$750 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 e-mail survey as soon as possible.

www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/townhallmeetings

WINTER/SPRING (January–May)

- ✓ In January, look for an e-mail 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 \$750 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 can be held at any time of the year. Most organizers hold their events in the spring, when national alcohol and other substance use prevention observances increase public interest in underage drinking prevention.

SUMMER (June, July, and August)

- ✓ Keep in mind that stipends are available on a first-come, first-served basis. Registering by August can increase your chance of receiving a stipend.

FALL (September, October, and November)

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

DECEMBER

- ✓ All *Communities Talk* event organizers who received a stipend will have completed their online registrations, cashed their checks, held their events, and shared their results via the *Communities Talk* online profile portal. Even if you did not elect to receive a stipend, please complete an online profile so we can share your success.

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. **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.
3. **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?
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.** If you wish to receive a stipend, you must complete your online registration and provide a Form W-9 by using the URL provided in your unique e-mail invitation. Even if you are not applying for a stipend, please register so we can 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 can be anywhere a community gathers—they do not need to be limited to auditoriums or community centers. Some organizations hold events online in a webinar format or partner with local television stations. 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 Planning 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 e-mail survey following their event. Some participating organizations may also 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. Seeking alternate support for events in non-stipend years can be another opportunity to involve local businesses and other groups in your underage drinking prevention efforts. Keep the momentum going by developing and implementing a solution-focused plan for underage drinking prevention in your community. Use #CommunitiesTalk to share what you are doing year-round on Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram.



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS ABOUT PLANNING STIPENDS

Q. How does my organization obtain a planning stipend?

- A.** SAMHSA issues e-mail 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 \$750 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.

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.



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 goals and objectives did you set? What environmental prevention strategies did you consider? Who did you involve in your event?

RESULT

What were the outcomes of 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.
Follow #CommunitiesTalk for
the latest underage drinking
prevention resources and
updates.**





Communities Talk: Town Hall Meetings IN ACTION #CommunitiesTalk

Below are brief success stories from previous rounds of *Communities Talk: Town Hall Meetings*. Read the latest [success stories](#) and be inspired!



The Coffee County Anti-Drug Coalition in Manchester, Tennessee, hosted parents, law enforcement, and public officials to help gain their support for Tennessee's social host liability law, and to encourage law enforcement agencies and the courts to enforce the law. Engaging key public officials, including three mayors, two police chiefs, one sheriff, and one district attorney, signaled the community's intention to put its combined influence behind Tennessee's social host law.

FLORIDA'S

kids&alcohol

A collaboration among the Florida-based LiveFree! Substance Abuse Prevention

Coalition of Pinellas County (LiveFree!), Lee County Coalition for a Drug-Free Southwest Florida, and Public Broadcasting Service (PBS) television stations WEDU-Tampa Bay and WGCU in Fort Myers provides an annual opportunity to engage a potential audience estimated at 250,000 in a 16-county area. Since 2005, WEDU has worked with LiveFree! and other groups to produce Florida's Kids and Alcohol, a series of live, local *Communities Talk: Town Hall Meetings* in April about underage drinking issues in Florida. WEDU has broadcast events from its Tampa Bay studio and from different high schools in Pinellas County. These televised events have built public support for environmental prevention and law enforcement efforts to stop underage drinking.



Mental Health & Substance Abuse Services
Servicios de Salud Mental y Abuso de Sustancias

"Todo tiene su comienzo" ("Everything has a beginning") was selected as the theme for a series of *Communities Talk: Town Hall Meetings* aimed at addressing underage drinking

problems among Georgia's growing Latino population. Held in Spanish, the events were organized by the Clinic for Education, Treatment and Prevention of Addiction, Inc. (CETPA), and featured State Representative Pedro Marin. Since 2003, CETPA has been holding *Communities Talk* events that focus on using a culturally sensitive approach to educating Latino parents about the laws, risks, and consequences of underage drinking. CETPA now includes five regions in Georgia, creating a statewide effort to combat alcohol use among Latino teens for the first time.



Anadarko Indian Education (AIE) in Anadarko, Oklahoma, held a *Communities Talk: Town Hall Meeting* at the landmark 275-seat Redskin Theater in downtown Anadarko to rekindle established local partnerships and cultivate several new ones. With the help of 10 co-sponsors, more than 260 young people and adults attended a popular movie showing for youth combined with an educational presentation on underage drinking prevention for parents. Following the meeting, AIE began holding monthly and quarterly events to improve tribal relationships and collaboration with community partners.



West Virginia University

West Virginia University (WVU) and the City of Morgantown co-

hosted a *Communities Talk: Town Hall Meeting* as a solution-based dialogue forum on underage and high-risk drinking. More than 100 students, university and community members, and local government officials attended the event. Seven experts offered their professional perspective on the consequences of underage and excessive drinking and potential solutions for the community to consider. WVU posted the *Communities Talk* event online and also provided the hashtag #WVUTownHallMeeting as a way for community members to continue the dialogue.



The state of Massachusetts has gotten behind *Communities Talk: Town Hall Meetings* in a big way. In the 1990s, Massachusetts reported some of the highest rates of underage drinking and youngest ages of first alcohol use in the nation. But thanks to prevention efforts led by the state's Bureau of Substance Abuse

Services and supported by its Interagency Council on Substance Abuse and Prevention, Massachusetts is reporting significant success: More of the state's youth are waiting to take their first drink. State leaders credit *Communities Talk: Town Hall Meetings* with contributing to declining youth access to alcohol and growing public support for environmental prevention measures.