



# QUICK START PLANNING GUIDE

**SAMHSA**  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health  
Services Administration

[#CommunitiesTalk](#)

*Communities Talk 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 to Prevent Underage Drinking*, which focuses on problem drinking and other substance misuse that negatively affect our communities and our youth.

Since 2006, thousands of *Communities Talk* events and activities 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 organize *Communities Talk* activities—which take a variety of forms—are essential in leading the conversation and promoting the idea that underage drinking is preventable. The concerted effort of communities on this issue 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* activity in your community.

In 2021, prevention activities will look a bit different as we continue to deal with the impacts of COVID-19. That said, there are many ways to hold virtual activities while adhering to local health guidelines. Check [www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/communitiestalk/](http://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/communitiestalk/) for new materials to help you maneuver the ever-changing prevention landscape as a result of COVID-19.

**For more information:**

Visit: [www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/communitiestalk/](http://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/communitiestalk/)

Email: [info@stopalcoholabuse.net](mailto:info@stopalcoholabuse.net)

Sign up for the SAA.gov newsletter at

<http://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/subscribe.aspx>

**GET INFORMED. BE PREPARED. TAKE ACTION.  
TO PREVENT UNDERAGE DRINKING.**

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

# PLANNING CALENDAR

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 such activities 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.

<b>FEBRUARY</b>	SAMHSA's Prevention Day; <i>Communities Talk</i> launch
<b>MARCH</b>	National Institute on Drug Abuse's National Drugs and Alcohol Chat Day
<b>APRIL</b>	Alcohol Awareness Month; World Health Day; National Alcohol Screening Day
<b>MAY</b>	Graduation season
<b>JUNE</b>	Summer break (middle, high schools; IHEs)
<b>AUGUST</b>	Back to campus (IHEs); back to school (middle and high schools in western and southern states); NPN conference
<b>SEPTEMBER</b>	Back to school (middle and high schools in northeastern states); SAMHSA National Recovery Month
<b>OCTOBER</b>	National Substance Abuse Prevention Month, National Child Health Day, Red Ribbon Week, Halloween, Homecoming
<b>NOVEMBER</b>	Safe driving and holidays (National Highway Traffic Safety Administration)

**A *Communities Talk* activity can respond to a timely community policy need or a crisis related to underage drinking.**



# PLANNING CHECKLIST

*Communities Talk* activities can take place at any time of the year. Consider timing that makes sense for your goals and your community. But no matter when you plan to hold your activity, register for your stipend as soon as possible.

## Sign up for the [StopAlcoholAbuse.gov](https://stopalcoholabuse.gov) Email Newsletter!

Receive monthly updates on alcohol and substance use prevention news and resources from the federal agencies and national organizations that make up the ICCPUD.

## REGISTER

- Look for an email invitation in January or request your invitation from [info@stopalcoholabuse.net](mailto:info@stopalcoholabuse.net).
- Complete your online registration to apply and receive a planning stipend. Please be sure to have your organization's [most recent W-9 Federal Tax ID form](#) on hand.
- Read the [frequently asked questions and answers](#) on the website for information on registering and planning for your activity.
- Review the graphic on page 6, "[3 Steps to Completing Your Online Communities Talk Profile](#)."

## PLAN AND PROMOTE

- Review the *Communities Talk* [webpage](#) to learn more about planning an activity.
- Watch our [video](#) to find out how holding a *Communities Talk* activity can make a difference in your community.
- Visit the *Communities Talk* [Success Stories](#) page to see how other organizations across the country mobilized their communities.

# PLANNING CHECKLIST (Continued)

- Go to the [Tips and Resources](#) page for additional ideas to help plan an effective activity.
- Use the Planning Calendar on page 3 to align your activity with monthly observances or important events in your own community.
- Involve as many different community groups as possible, including prevention specialists, parents and caregivers, policymakers, law enforcement professionals, and local business leaders in planning and conducting a *Communities Talk* activity.

## SHARE OUTCOMES

- Update the activity details in your *Communities Talk* profile to feature your activity on our [Find an Activity map](#).
- Look for an invitation to share your own *Communities Talk* [Success Story](#). Your story could be featured on the *Communities Talk* website!

Join the conversation on underage drinking prevention. Follow [#CommunitiesTalk](#) for the latest underage drinking prevention resources and updates.



# 3 STEPS TO COMPLETING Your *Communities Talk* Online Profile

**1**

## Register

- First, obtain your organization's tax ID # and W-9 form (you must use the latest version of the W-9 form from 2018) 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 your invitation at [info@stopalcoholabuse.net](mailto:info@stopalcoholabuse.net). When you receive your email, click on your unique URL. Complete your log-in details, create a *Communities Talk* profile, and fill out the registration form completely.
- Save your log-in information and note your password so you can update your activity details!
- Finally, you should receive your \$750 stipend within 21 days of completing registration. Cash your check immediately and start or continue planning your activity!

**2**

## Complete Your Activity Details

- Post your *Communities Talk* activity date, goals, and other details so it can be featured on the *Communities Talk* [Find an Activity map](#).
- You can log in at any time to update your details. You must enter your activity date to be considered for a [Success Story](#).

**3**

## Share Your Success

- Log back into your *Communities Talk* profile and review your activity details to ensure you have entered a date (or date range) for your activity.
- Keep an eye on your email for an invitation to share your Success Story. You should receive an invitation within a few weeks of your activity date.



# 10 STEPS FOR *COMMUNITIES TALK* ACTIVITY 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* activity. Gather and assess data to ensure that your activity is designed for your community and its unique needs.
- 2. Define your goals and objectives.** Determine what you want to accomplish 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 activity. 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 W-9 Form 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 W-9 form from your treasurer, fiscal agent, or bank/budget manager. Even if you have registered in past years, you must submit a W-9 form. If you do not have a W-9 form, they are [available online](#). Having these items before you start registering will allow you to start and finish the process in a single session.
- 5. Register online.** Complete your online registration (please answer all of the questions!) and provide a W-9 form by using the URL provided in your unique email invitation. This will allow SAMHSA to post your meeting on the *Communities Talk* website.

# 10 STEPS FOR *COMMUNITIES TALK* ACTIVITY PLANNING (Continued)

6. **Determine your activity type, day, time, and location.** To be effective, *Communities Talk* activity venues should be anywhere a community gathers, virtually or in-person, to have an open discussion. Some organizations host activities online in a webinar format or partner with local television stations. Others host them through social media campaigns and virtual gatherings. Decide which *Communities Talk* activity setting and format will best meet your objectives. Read past [success stories](#) for ideas.
7. **Promote your activity.** There are many [tips and resources](#) for promoting your activity 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 activity.** How well did you deliver your *Communities Talk* activity, 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* activity and answer brief questions about their activity. Read more about evaluation in SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework and on the *Communities Talk* [website](#).
9. **Tell us about your activity.** We ask you to answer brief questions in your online organizer's profile to share the success of your activity. Upload flyers, pictures, news clips, and more to share your success in the online portal. You can also share photos and videos on Facebook, Twitter, or Instagram using #CommunitiesTalk. Organizers who share their success with us are usually featured as a success story on the *Communities Talk* website and inspire future activities.
10. **Keep the momentum going!** SAMHSA encourages community-based organizations and colleges and universities to hold *Communities Talk* activities every year. It's always a good time to talk about prevention.

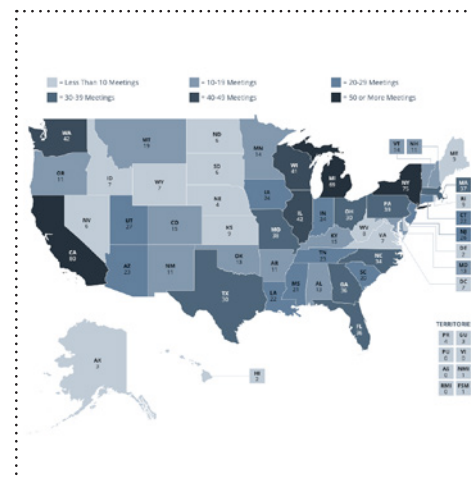




# TELL US MORE

Once you have held your activity, get ready to showcase your great work! Below are several ways that you can make sure your activity is included on the [Find an Activity map](#) and even be featured as a *Communities Talk* [Success Story](#). And be sure to use #CommunitiesTalk on social media!

## UPDATING YOUR ACTIVITY DETAILS



Once you complete your activity:

- Revisit your *Communities Talk* profile and share some key activity details in the “Activity Details” section.
- Your details will be displayed on the [Find an Activity map](#). This allows other activity organizers to browse activities happening near them for inspiration and potentially future collaboration.

## SHARING YOUR SUCCESS STORY

**Featured Success Story**

**Community Partnerships to Help Communities Talk**

Date of Event: July 17, 2019  
Location: Laughlin, NV

Hosted by: Mohave Area Partnership Promoting Educated Decisions (MAPPED)



Mohave Area Partnership Promoting Educated Decisions (MAPPED) partnered with various community stakeholders to organize their Communities Talk event. Unfortunately, due to COVID-19, they had to reschedule, but they were able to shed light on the underage drinking and substance misuse issues in their community through electronic billboards and flyers.

[Read Full Story](#)

- The *Communities Talk* team will email you instructions on how to share your Success Story after your activity is completed.
- Be sure to include photos, links to your social media posts, or data that your organization collected.

**NOTE:** To be invited, you must enter your activity date and details (or dates, if your activity is more than a single day such as a social media campaign).

## HAVE MORE TO SHARE?

Email us anytime at [info@stopalcoholabuse.net](mailto:info@stopalcoholabuse.net) to share additional media coverage, photos/video, or social media promotion. We can help link them to your activity details and Success Story!

# QUICK START GUIDE FAQs

## HOW DOES MY ORGANIZATION OBTAIN A PLANNING STIPEND?

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SAMHSA issues email invitations to community-based organizations, colleges, and universities recommended by National Prevention Network (substance abuse prevention) representatives, as well as other federal and national partner organizations. Qualified community-based organizations interested in participating may request a stipend to help offset the costs of planning an activity. 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](mailto: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* activity are always available at [www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/communitiestalk/](http://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/communitiestalk/).

## HOW CAN THE PLANNING STIPEND BE USED?

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The planning stipend is meant to help defray the costs of planning and holding an in-person or virtual activity. Stipends can be used to cover:

- Honoraria
- Facility rentals
- Costs related to hosting a webinar, live stream, or other virtual activity that may require special software or equipment
- Event equipment rentals or purchases (e.g., tables, chairs, monitors, cameras, etc.)
- Promotion/Printing (e.g., posters, flyers, billboards, postcards, printers, ink, paper, etc.)
- Yearly subscriptions to design software and/or email marketing platforms (e.g., Canva Pro, Adobe Suites, Mailchimp, etc.)

# QUICK START GUIDE FAQs

(Continued)

- Costs related to hosting a webinar, live stream, or other virtual activity that may require special software or equipment

## WHAT CAN MY STIPEND NOT BE USED FOR?

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- Food and beverages
- Door prizes
- Giveaway items/Promotional products (e.g., masks, T-shirts, baseball caps, coffee mugs, or anything not specifically related to conducting your activity)

For additional ideas on how to use your stipend, please contact [info@stopalcoholabuse.net](mailto:info@stopalcoholabuse.net).

## ARE COMMUNITIES TALK PLANNING STIPENDS FEDERAL GRANTS, FOR ACCOUNTING PURPOSES?

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Planning stipends for registered host organizations are not federal grant or program funds and have no CFDA ([Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance](#), now called Assistance Listings) number. Instead, planning stipends come out of the budget for the SAMHSA Underage Drinking Prevention Education Initiatives contract.

