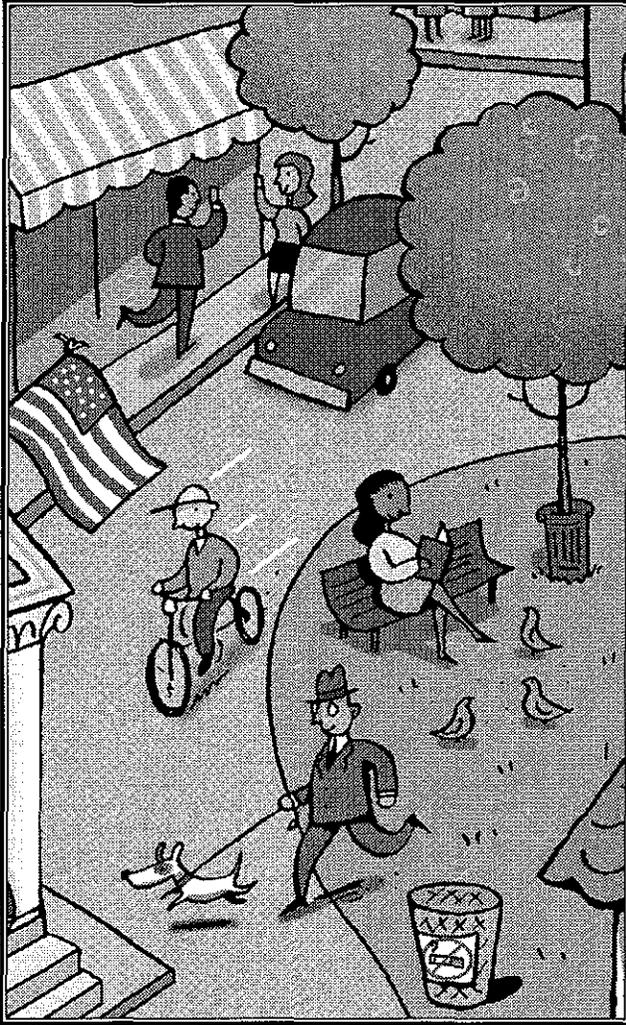


Deciding Where We Want To Go



With an assessment of your community in hand, your tobacco control team is ready to answer the next important question in planning:

Where do we want to go?

Answering this question involves four important activities:

Gathering ideas from the team and the community about what should be done,

Prioritizing those ideas so that the most important get attention first,

Developing action plans, and

Considering resources to implement the plan.

The priority areas for tobacco control have been well established by ACS, CDC, NCI and many other tobacco control experts based on science and the experience of many states and communities. The task for *communities of excellence* in tobacco control is to develop a plan within this broader vision that specifically addresses the needs and opportunities of your community.

As you develop your plan, keep in mind the four priority areas of tobacco control that were part of your community assessment:

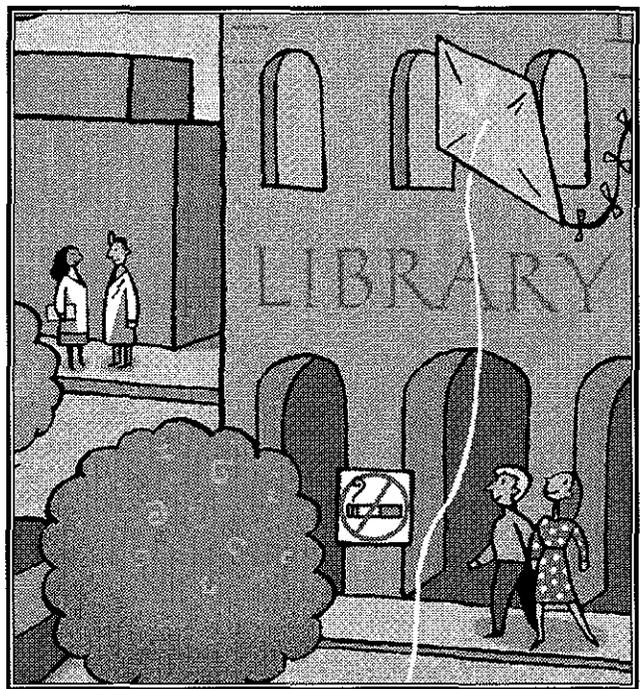
- *Prevent youth from initiating the use of tobacco products,*
- *Promote tobacco cessation services,*
- *Eliminate secondhand smoke exposure,*
- *Reduce tobacco industry influence.*

THINGS TO CONSIDER

Deciding What to Focus on First

From your community assessment, you will have identified some tobacco control indicators that your community is doing well on, some that it is doing poorly on, and some in between. Sometimes people start out planning to correct their weaknesses. Experience in tobacco control has shown that this is not always the way to go. Sometimes making something that is working pretty well even better is more effective than trying to fix something that isn't working at all. For example, if 90% of the schools in your area have smoke-free campuses, you may be more effective concentrating on getting that last 10% than in starting a whole new project from scratch. Similarly, you may be more effective in improving already existing cessation services in your community than in trying to start up new ones.

The decisions about what to start working on are *judgment calls* that your tobacco control team must make. There is no formula to make these decisions, but you can develop some criteria for deciding as a group which indicators to work on. Below are some sample



criteria that could be used as your team looks at all the tobacco control indicators for your community. Your tobacco control team may want to add criteria of its own:

- *There is still room to make a meaningful improvement.*
- *People in this community are interested in this.*
- *People on this tobacco control team believe we can do this.*
- *We have or can likely get the resources we need (expert advice, monies, etc.).*
- *We have some idea of actions we can take.*

It is important as a team to decide which indicators you want to include in your planning process.

Gathering Ideas

After deciding which indicators to include in your plan, it's time to generate ideas about activities you will do to work on that indicator. These ideas can come from the **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES** located at the end of this section, talking to community members formally (e.g., at meetings or in focus groups), and brainstorming with your tobacco control team. You can probably think of some other sources of ideas.

TCS has provided us with another set of tools for generating ideas. The chart in Appendix 1B lists both strategies and example outcomes related to each indicator. Your team should review this chart as it is developing its ideas.

From whatever source, your tobacco control team should develop a list of possible activities for each indicator the team has decided should be worked on. During the list development stage, don't get too concerned about whether the ideas are good or bad. As the group process moves forward, the bad ones will drop out and the good ones will rise to the surface. It's best to put all the ideas on the table at first.

Prioritizing Ideas

There are lots of really good activities out there which could really make a difference in tobacco control. One problem to be avoided at all costs is to try and do too many things at once. We need to work hard on tobacco control, but we must also be able to successfully do what we say we will.

This means that there is a need to decide which ideas to work on *first*. Priority setting is not about what ideas are in the plan or not, but about which ones we need to start with. Priorities should be set across all indicators rather than within each indicator. This means that some indicators will probably not be addressed when you first implement your plan. It is also a good idea to have some quick successes to motivate the team and demonstrate progress.

There are techniques in the **USEFUL TOOLS** section that your team can use to help set priorities.

Developing Action Plans

It is important to have an action plan for each priority activity. A good action plan includes the steps that need to be taken to implement the activity, who is responsible, the deadline for getting it done, and what resources it will take. It also defines the timeframe for the action plan. Action plans are most realistic when they are one year or less in length.

Before your team starts working on the action plan, it must decide as a group how many activities you can work on at one time. Be realistic! Some tobacco control coalitions only work on 1 or 2 activities in their initial year. Then they come back and pick up others.

Write it Down - Briefly!

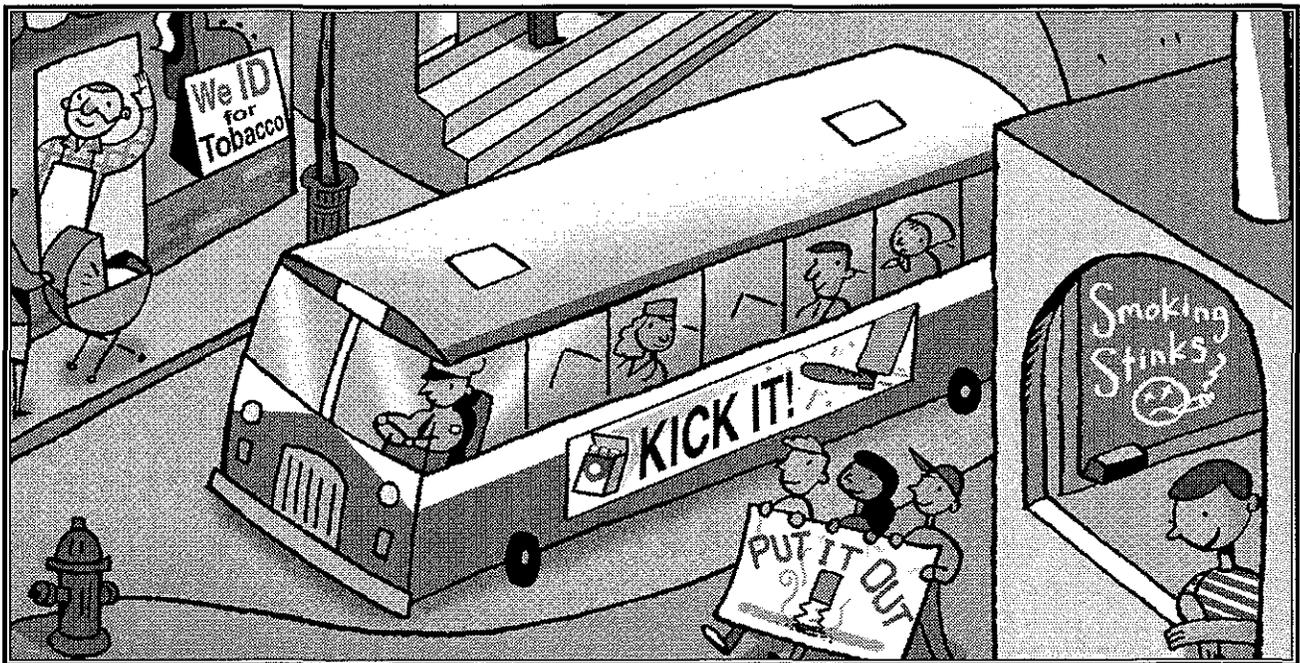
Having a written plan is important. But written plans are only useful if they are read and used. Plans need to clearly spell out which indicators are being addressed, the specific activities your team will be working on, the action plans for each, and what you hope to have accomplished in the initial time frame. This can be used to benchmark and celebrate each successful step.

Generally, the shorter the plan, the more likely it will be read and used.

A Few Words About Resources

You can almost always count on someone raising the issue of resources very early in the planning process. It is pretty obvious that the resources you have available will determine how much you can get done. Deferring decisions about resources until the team has set priorities can help in being more creative both about what can be done and how the resources might be obtained.

When the question of resources comes up, keep in mind that most people think of resources as money available. Often though, human (e.g., volunteers, donated staff) and other organizational resources (e.g., computer, copying, and accounting support) are the most valuable resources that a community has. Having people committed to lending their time, experience, passion, and/or expertise is the key to a community's success in tobacco control efforts. At the same time, multiple sources of new monetary support are becoming increasingly available (e.g., state monies from the tobacco settlement being made available to communities).



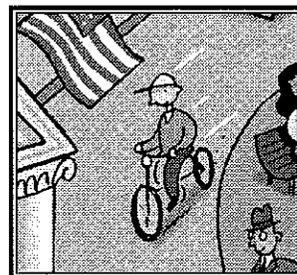
LESSONS LEARNED

About Planning

- *Base the planning process on the needs and gaps that have been identified in the community assessment process. Do not start the planning process in detail until the initial assessment has been completed.*
- *The planning process must result in decisions about what activities, needs and/or gaps are most important or realistic to start with. Sometimes the most important activities overall can't be worked on until something else is in place (trained skilled staff, public awareness/support, system to track and measure progress, etc.) to assure it will be successful.*
- *Some communities have decided they need to work on developing a functional group before taking on specific tobacco control activities, others may decide to do only one or two things initially to get some success and experience under their belt.*
- *Once priorities are established, match the skills and capacities needed to address them with those in the community. Action plans utilize existing skills and capacities fully and account for getting others not yet available.*
- *Avoid trying to work on too many things when you are just starting out.*
- *Prepare participants for the planning process by providing a few sentinel resources in advance, including the CDC Best Practices handbook.*
- *Be prepared to spend time in the planning process educating participants about various aspects of tobacco control. Not everyone will start with the same knowledge base and some people will need help getting up to speed on some issues as they arise.*

About Resources

- *Community tobacco control activities can be accomplished even without substantial financial support. It can be accomplished with a core of committed people and organizations who volunteer their time and skills. Money is very helpful in developing programs, but money changes teams and processes. A community that receives new funding will see changes in its group dynamics, member make up and progress towards its goals and objectives. Some of these changes are desirable; others are not. Be prepared for both!*
- *Community needs and interests, not the availability of money alone, should be the driving force in setting the tobacco control agenda.*
- *If funding is obtained, having a credible and reliable fiscal agent is critical.*
- *Advocacy is not always the same thing as lobbying. Advocacy is more often about educating individuals, groups or the public about an issue, rather than lobbying for a specific law or position. This distinction is important to keep in mind, as it is often easier to obtain funding for advocacy efforts that educate than for supporting lobbying efforts that call for passage of a specific law.*
- *Developing relationships with funding agencies before applying for funding is important in order to understand their philosophies, priorities and operating characteristics. These relationships and understandings can greatly strengthen an application.*
- *It is more powerful and effective to communicate to funding agencies with “one team voice,” rather than multiple organizations asking for resources in a fragmented manner. A plan developed by the tobacco control team in a community shows solidarity and strength on the issue and can be very appealing to a funding agency.*



GETTING STARTED

Here are some things your tobacco control team can do to get started on developing and implementing a comprehensive tobacco control plan for your community. The next section has tools to help you get started on some of these:

- ▲ *Do a SWOT (strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats) analysis to develop a group sense of what is working well for you in tobacco control and what is working against you.*
- ▲ *Pick one of the indicators that your community might be interested in. Have each person on the team write down 5 things that could be done to be more effective on that indicator. Then compare lists. See how many things people had in common. Give an award for the most 'doable' but 'off the wall idea.'*
- ▲ *Develop a plan for communicating to the public your group's top priorities and expected progress for the coming year.*
- ▲ *Agree on the five most important points in your team's plan and then make a 1-page (or less) factsheet describing them.*
- ▲ *Develop a short story of your team's experience in developing the tobacco control plan. Include what went the way you expected and what didn't. Also tell 'lessons' learned from the experience. Find some way to share that story with other community tobacco control groups (e.g., seminars, presentations at professional meetings, publish it in a journal or newsletter, post it on a tobacco control website).*

HELPFUL TOOLS

Five tools are attached to help your team as it decides what to work on.

Identifying Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats - to carry out an analysis of what is working for and against the tobacco control effort in your community.

Warm-Up Exercise on Tobacco Control Activities - to get your team thinking about tobacco control activities before starting the actual process of developing a plan.

Sample Criteria for Setting Priorities - to get your team started on developing its own criteria for setting priorities.

How To Prioritize Activities - provide an example of a simple priority setting process that can be used in your community.

Identifying Resources to Support Tobacco Control Activities - to provide some starter ideas for finding resources to support your community's efforts.

Tool 4 A

Identifying Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats (A 'SWOT' Analysis)

With the community assessment information you have gathered, use the following questions to structure a SWOT discussion. Although the questions may seem rather simplistic, the process is extremely important in ultimately deciding which indicators and activities should be included in your community tobacco control plan.

1. What are the greatest strengths in our community that will support a comprehensive tobacco control program?
2. What are the weaknesses or barriers in our community that might hinder development of a comprehensive tobacco control program?
3. What successes have we had in our community in tobacco control or other health related community efforts? What did we learn from those successes?
4. What failures have we experienced in tobacco control or other health related community efforts? What did we learn from those failures?
5. What current opportunities might be available to the community that could aid our tobacco control program?
6. What threats might the community experience during the planning and implementation of a tobacco control program?

Record the answers to these questions in a bulleted list format - the group will want to refer to them during the development of the community tobacco control plan.

Tool 4 B

Warm-Up Exercise on Tobacco Control Activities

Pick one or more of the following examples. Go over them as a warm-up exercise to get your tobacco control team thinking about tobacco control activities. Briefly discuss these ideas and then ask the group if there are others that would be better for your community. After going over a couple of these, turn to the indicators you have decided to work on as a team.

Outcome: Preventing Youth Initiation

- Encourage local school boards to adopt a policy that prohibits tobacco use on school property and at school events.
- Enforce existing school policies.
- Acquire local data on tobacco sales to minors.
- Conduct a community assessment of tobacco advertising and sponsorships and develop a plan to reduce both.

Outcome: Promoting Tobacco Cessation

- Advocate for insurance coverage for cessation services.
- Promote and support ACS' "Make Yours A Fresh Start Family."
- Train dental providers to adopt office protocols to encourage cessation among their tobacco using patients.
- Participate in the ACS "Great American Smoke-out."
- Publish lists of community cessation resources.

Outcome: Protecting the Public From Environmental Tobacco Smoke

- Advocate for voluntary or mandated smokefree workplace policies.
- Publicly acknowledge smokefree businesses with awards and/ or media coverage.
- Develop programs that encourage parents that smoke to declare their home a smokefree home.
- Promote local news stories on clean indoor air and the dangers of ETS.

Outcome: Identify and Eliminate Population Disparities

- Advocate for funding interventions targeted towards high risk populations.
- Assure that program materials are culturally relevant for high risk groups.
- Develop a media campaign to increase at public awareness of disparities in tobacco use.

Outcome: Counter Tobacco Industry Influence

- Promote policies that prohibit acceptance of tobacco industry dollars and programs by school.
- Advocate for additional advertising and promotion restrictions.
- Sponsor a community forum in tobacco industry tactics.
- Have a youth 'exchange' day where they can swap tobacco products for other items (e.g., gift certificates, t-shirts, etc).

Tool 4 C

SAMPLE CRITERIA FOR SETTING PRIORITIES

Anytime you do a priority setting exercise, the criteria for doing so should be very clear. The following is a sample list of criteria that can be used to start a discussion with your tobacco control team about the criteria you will use in determining which activities to engage in.

1. Will this activity make a substantial impact on the tobacco problem in our community?
2. Does this activity address the need to complement and enhance a comprehensive approach to tobacco control in the community?
3. Are there any organized efforts currently underway related to this activity?
4. Are there 'best practices' or successful approaches that have been used successfully by other communities?
5. Are there ways to track the progress on this activity?

Tool 4 D

HOW TO PRIORITIZE ACTIVITIES

Setting priorities will be easier when you have a simple process that everyone understands. Below is one process that has worked well for many tobacco control groups.

Step 1: The group creates a list of activities as identified by the data collected.

Step 2: The group prioritizes the needs in the list by using a “dotting” exercise in which each member is given stickers and asked to “vote” for their priority items based on a set of established criteria (see Tool 4 C).

Number of Stickers To determine the number of stickers per group member, use the 1/4 rule: Count the number of activities on the list generated by the group. Determine what 1/4 of that would be and give out this number of stickers to each group member. (Example - 24 activities; $24/4 = 6$ stickers per person). **Remind each person in your group to use only one sticker per activity.**

Step 3: Count the total number of sticker votes for each item, identify the top activities (typically 2 to 5) the group has determined to be the highest priorities. Summarize these for the group so that everyone know what the group has decided.

Tool 4 E

Identifying Resources to Support Tobacco Control Activities

There are many types of organizations that fund efforts in communities. It will be important to identify funding organizations that have missions and programmatic interests that closely match those of your tobacco control team.

- **Enlist Experienced People in the Group to Get the Ball Rolling** - Assign someone in the group who has had grant writing or fund raising experience to identify potential funders. Possible sources include:

Local Resources: City / County Government, Major Employers / Businesses, Local Merchants, Community Foundations

State Resources: Foundations, State Government, Major Employers/Businesses

Federal or National Resources: Federal Government, Foundations

- **Develop an Initial List of Prospective Funders** - Develop a list of funders with the following information on each organization:
 - Mission
 - Areas of grant interests
 - Granting process (RFA, unsolicited grant proposals, meeting with funder, etc.)
- **Obtain Additional Information from Prospective Funders** - Call, write or check the website of the organization to obtain additional information on their organization and their interests to determine if they appear to be a good match.

- **Make A Personal Contact with the Funder** - Call the organization and ask for the staff person who would handle tobacco control projects. During the first call you should introduce yourself and your group, explain the mission of the group and the project idea. Keep the conversation short and upbeat. Questions to ask during the first call include whether the organization might be interested in the project, and if so, what next steps are appropriate, upcoming deadlines for proposal, and specific instructions for submitting a proposal to the organization.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Community Toolbox

University of Kansas

<http://ctb.lsi.ukans.edu>

Includes practical guidance for improving community health and development. There over 3,000 downloadable pages of specific and skill-building information on over 150 community topics. Specific sections of this website include:

Community Building Tools

Helpful Links to Other Web Sites

Forums and Chatrooms

Community Troubleshooting Guide

Guide for Writing a Grant Proposal

National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO)

<http://www.naccho.org/GENERAL185.htm>

A good resource to refer to when determining programmatic resource requirements (as well as a host of other considerations). They have a document on line titled, "Program and Funding Guidelines for Comprehensive Local Tobacco Control Programs."