BUILDING COMMUNITY RESILIENCE

Partner Build Grow: Action Guide Tools

March 2017

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The Center for
Health and Health Care in Schools

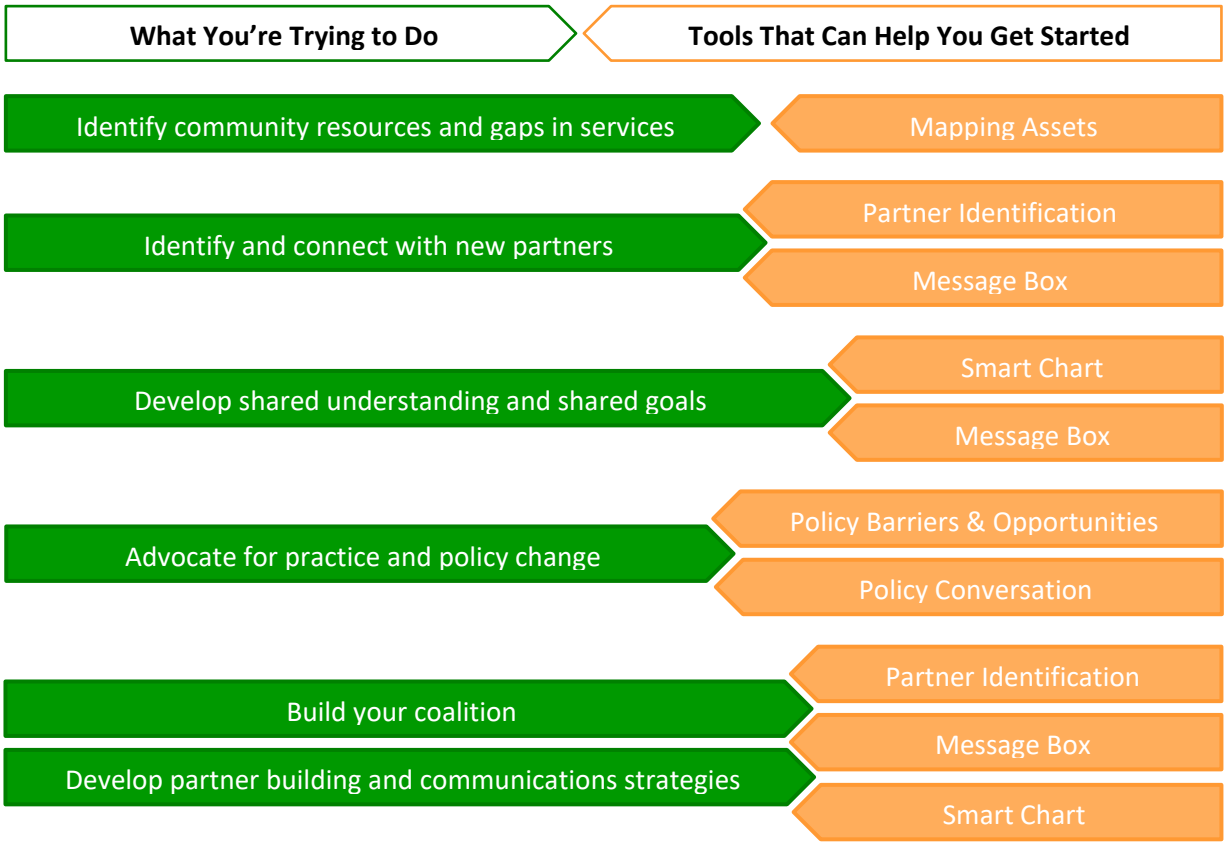
The Building Community Resilience Coalition Building & Communications Guide was developed in partnership with Spitfire Strategies and the Center for Health and Health Care in Schools at The George Washington University.

Overview

The four tools described within provide building blocks for your communication efforts. The Partner Build Grow tools guide you in collecting information that will help identify an audience, articulate that which will be needed from each audience in order to reach your goals, select potential partners, and share your objectives when creating your communications plan and your action plans. They can be used on their own to help inform your initiative or in conjunction with other Building Community Resilience communications tools. They should also be adapted to your specific circumstances. There are no one-size-fits-all strategies for advancing change, but the processes described in this tool can guide your journey and provide you with steps to take along the way.

There is not a precise order for using the tools; they can be worked on in the order makes the most sense to you. However, make sure you use them all, for each one plays an important part in the process of developing a coalition, determining your goals and objectives, and deciding and initiating moves towards a change in policy or procedures. These tools are not meant to be static and should be reviewed, updated, and consulted throughout your initiative. The results from using these tools continuously inform your activities as you move toward achieving communications and program goals.

Putting It All Together



Mapping Assets

Using the Mapping Assets Tool

Asset mapping produces a visual map of the resources and social conditions in a specific region. The process is a critical exercise for you and your partners to undertake when building shared vision and goals. The Mapping Assets Tool provides you with a guide to determine what information to include and where you can find it.

The goal of asset mapping is to collect information on relevant programs, initiatives, demographics, needs, and resources that will assist in allocating services and supports to targeted areas. Using these data points you can create a visual representation of what is already underway in relation to the population and important community resources, such as churches, schools, or health clinics, by physically placing their location on a map. There are numerous ways to map the data you decide to collect, from computer mapping programs to using different colored stick pins to denote various programs, populations, program size, etc. on a large map posted on a wall or poster board. For example, you may want to collect data on substance abuse programs (number of participants and locations), locations of liquor stores and health clinics, and the percentage of high school students who use alcohol. When this information is physically placed on a map, you may see patterns or disconnects between services and needs that you might not have seen otherwise. The Mapping Assets tool has suggested types of information that you may want to collect, but is designed to be adapted to fit your needs.

There are multiple benefits to mapping assets including:

- Assisting in defining goals and objectives;
- Identifying both gaps and overlapping services with community needs and challenges for future planning and implementation;
- Highlighting current successes and an infrastructure of supports to influencers; and
- Undertaking the data collection process necessary for evaluation.

The asset mapping strategy provides information on what programs and data are already available. It helps to identify both gaps and overlaps of assets, and illuminates other aims you may want to target in your efforts. Mapping helps to define next steps, such as whether and how to reorganize resources or what additional resources to look for based on the team's goals. It can also provide a path to determining "asks" of partners and public officials by revealing opportunities for:

- Matching public data about child-serving resources;
- New and innovative linkages among current resources;
- Reinvestment or re-purposing of scarce resources to use them more efficiently;
- Identification of available resources that were previously unknown or underutilized;
- Agreement on priorities for next steps and joint budget requests to pursue.

When it comes time to communicate what you need from each audience, asset mapping helps to frame the conversation around current resources that are already in place and working rather than focusing on deficits, as is traditionally presented. There is considerable research indicating that a strengths-based approach of building on assets generally produces a more positive response from stakeholders than a presentation of needs.

It also clearly lays out the needs and opportunities to stakeholders. As such, asset mapping is a fundamental tactic for harnessing stakeholder support since it demonstrates strength and support for the programs and illustrates the infrastructure already in place that can be used to expand efforts.

Finally, asset mapping encourages collecting population-based data that can show gains over time, thus

starting the data collection process necessary to demonstrate the positive outcomes of your initiative.

Key Actions

Define Boundaries – these questions will also help you define your goal and actions

- What area in the Pair of ACEs are you focusing on? The area of focus will determine the types of information you collect. For instance, if you are focusing on homelessness, you will collect some different information than if you are focusing on maternal depression.
- What physical area are you going to include? Are you looking at the whole city? A single neighborhood? Remember that as you collect data from different sources, they may use different boundaries than those you decide to include. When you request information, be prepared to ask about the geographic boundaries they use and adjust your request to fit what they have available. As long as it covers the area you are focused on, it may not matter if the data they provide covers more of the region than you want.

Determine Logistics

- Decide who will coordinate this activity. The Identifying Partners tool will also be useful for this activity
  - Which Team members have the resources or expertise to oversee an asset mapping activity?
  - What other stakeholders should be involved?
  - How will you identify and keep track of the data? Who will compile the data if not the person coordinating the activity?
- Determine a process for obtaining that data.
- Use the Mapping Assets tool to track available data and collection status.
- Since organizations and systems collect and organize data, and define geographic regions, in many different ways, figure out what information to include and how to integrate the varied data into a visual, uniform map or maps.

Determine Data and Identify Sources

- Decide what data you want to collect and map and how you want to represent it. The Mapping Assets tool has some categories for data to help you start generating ideas. Think beyond your normal networks to data that may be pertinent to the area you want to address. For example, if you are looking at parent training programs, you may want to map day care centers, schools, and public transportation.
  - What data is available that represents interventions to promote the health, education, or wellbeing of youth and families in your community?
  - Is this information publically available and accessible?
  - What organizations or agencies 'own' that information?
  - What state-level agencies or initiatives might be gathering related or helpful data?
- Identify local and state, school and community coalitions, partnerships, and any coordinating entities that are already trying to link the region's efforts. Use the Identifying Partners tool to track organizations so you have them for other efforts.
  - Identify other key stakeholders who should participate in the asset mapping process, such as educators, mental health leaders, various family and child advocacy leaders, representatives from non-profits or community agencies, representatives from public or governmental organizations, practitioners, etc.
  - If there is a local institute of higher education (University, college, community college), consider including them in your efforts. They may have already be working in the communities and could provide valuable resources.

Mapping Community Assets

- Once you have collected asset information, you should create a visual representation of the relationship

between numerous data points and known resources, via Geographic Information Systems (GIS), a wall-size map and push pins, or another method.
    - Determine how you want to create the map
    - Are there Geographic Information Systems (GIS) available in your state and can you build off their existing data sets?
    - Do you want to use a wall map and coded push pins?
- Revisit your asset mapping periodically and be prepared to revise and update your map and data as you progress towards your goal and gather more information. Remember, this is a cyclical process and this tool will help you plan as well as assess your initiatives.

Resources

Data sources for indicators of individual and environmental health by state, county, or zip code:
The Children's Health and Education Mapping Tool (School-Based Health Alliance)
National Neighborhood Indicators Partnership
http://factfinder2.census.gov/faces/nav/jsf/pages/index.xhtml
http://wonder.cdc.gov
http://www.healthindicators.gov
http://diversitydata.sph.harvard.edu
http://www.diversitydatakids.org
http://datacenter.kidscount.org/locations
http://www.epa.gov/myenvironment
http://www.countyhealthrankings.org

Free, Open-source GIS:
http://www.qgis.org
http://udig.refractions.net
http://grass.osgeo.org
http://www.diva-gis.org
http://freegis.org

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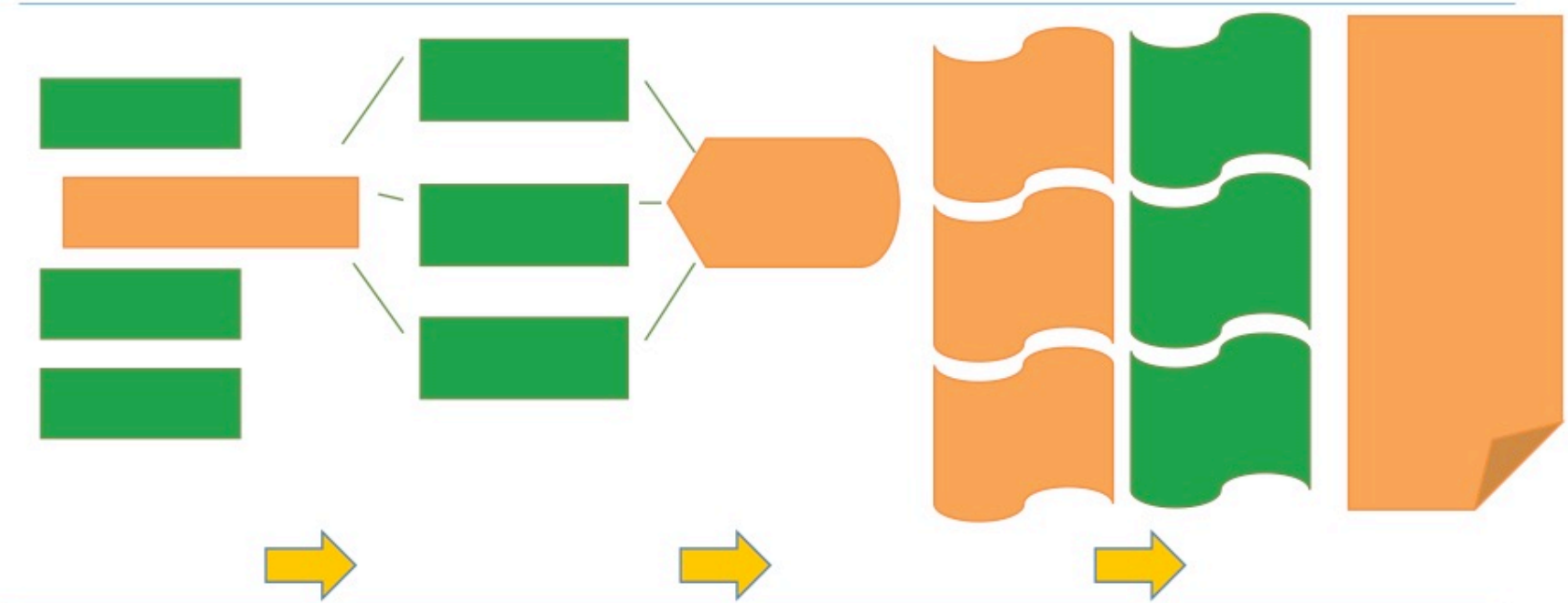
Your Path To Change



List and rank key partnership drivers

1. Map current assets to achieve this policy goal
2. Identify current or new partners to achieve the policy goal
3. Conduct internal and external scans

Determine policy solution that will achieve driver goal (or is an outcome of the driver). Internal and external scan

1. Strategize with partners to determine entry points and decision maker
2. Determine timeline and roles

1. Key decision maker selected.
2. Key audience selected
3. Messaging developed to support the ask.
4. Communication plan to advance policy change
5. Implementation plan with timelines

Broadening Your Network and Identifying Partners

Using the Identifying Potential Partners Tool

Understanding the various organizations, professionals, and community members involved in the community and developing partnerships and networks is key to eliminating adverse childhood experiences. Partnering with a broad network of allies provides valuable information and opens new possibilities for success in addressing complex community-wide issues. From this group of collaborators, you may want to form smaller groups that work on specific areas, such as policy change, communications, and programs. This tool helps you think beyond your usual professional and organizational networks and to track the ways these organizations and stakeholders may help to advance your goals.

There is no one-size-fits-all strategy for determining which relationships will help to advance your initiative, so think broadly. The strategies must be adjusted to your unique set of circumstances, such as the breadth and depth of your current relationships with coalitions and partnerships that work on like minded issues and your community's and state's decision-making processes. Keeping track of and developing relationships with a broad range of stakeholders will make you nimble and flexible as you adjust to the inevitable changes in the community. Continuously update and revisit the Identifying Potential Partners Tool as you advance your initiative.

Within your broader network, one of the smaller groups you might want to create is a Policy Action Team to focus on policy issues and network with people who have the power to make change happen. This group can track how decisions get made in the organization, community, or state; know which officials to approach and how to approach them; watch for opportunities to change policy within an organization or local and state government agency; and exchange information with key officials. This group will want to understand the priorities of the decision-makers or influencers of change and understand the best ways to communicate with them so that asks and communication strategies can be targeted.

What will the Action Team do?

- Devise strategies and tactics for the overall policy advocacy work in conjunction with the ongoing work of other coalitions and partnerships committed to these goals.
- Network with a wide range of state and local leaders to informally and formally convey knowledge about the Pair of ACEs, learn about relevant issues that elected and appointed officials are concerned with, and

find additional allies.
- Execute particular actions that their skills and connections make possible, e.g., certain meetings with senior state officials or opinion influencers.
- Often serve as a public face of the initiative, e.g., at public hearings or with the press.

Key Actions

Identify Potential Partners/Collaborators

- Use the Potential Partner Tools to identify other groups and individuals with whom you share common interests to expand your network.
  - What individuals in your existing networks share your goal?
  - Who can help you identify other important individuals who should be included?

Decide Logistics

- Figure out how best to reach out to potential partners/collaborators (who will call, what will he/she say).
- Introduce yourself by phone or in person to describe what you are trying to do,
  - Do your goals align?
  - Can you help each other?
- Determine how your group will collaborate with the larger networks of activists and supporters of social and children's issues in your state.

Create A Policy Action Team (if desired)

- Identify a small number of individuals whose interests are aligned with the issues you are pursuing and who have the necessary range of skills and connections to advance the initiative.
  - Can you identify a mix of people with diverse skills, key contacts and organizational assets?
  - What individuals in your existing networks share your goal and have influenced a decision-making body?
- Which legislator(s), municipal leader(s), or organization official(s) has expressed interest in making your goals one of his or her priorities?
  - How can you shape your activities in order to link with their priorities?
  - What information might assist that legislator in pursuit of their objectives?
  - Is there a governor's commission, state board of education, or children's council that is addressing a problem for which your goal is a possible solution?
- Convene them for a straightforward discussion about your goals, one that builds trust and commitment to your initiative.
- Use the Identifying Potential Partners tool to pinpoint any other individuals or organizations with which your team should network.

Continue to grow and revise your list of partners and their respective roles as you continue to advance your agenda.

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Policy Barriers and Opportunities

Using the Policy Barriers and Opportunities Tool

This tool was designed to help you determine what potential policies and procedures you may want to focus on based on your goals. Unlike the other worksheets, which provide ways to organize and track information, this spreadsheet will help you think through the actions you might want to take to reach your objective and how you might want to proceed. This tool encourages you to think in a non-linear way about factors you can influence to help you reach your objectives.

When thinking about how to meet your objective(s), you may identify barriers or opportunities. This worksheet helps you think through both and how to link either to existing policies.

Opportunities can be identified through conversations with legislators and policymakers as captured in the "Being Part of the Policy Conversation" tool. Alternatively, some opportunities may emerge from engaging with your partners or Action Team if you have one. One way to think of opportunities is those movements that are already working towards a goal that is similar to yours or that you can connect your initiative to in some way. For example, if your objective is to make it safer for children to play in the neighborhood and you learn about a movement to put new street lights in the neighborhood, you may want to join that movement and push for brighter, more frequent lighting, or better lighting around locations where children gather to play.

Barriers are often easier to identify and may be very broad or very specific (e.g. dark streets or feeling unsafe). Once you have identified barriers, focus on those that you can potentially change. For example, some barriers, such as a procedure that may be loved by the County Commissioner or the Director of an organization, may be too entrenched to change, so pick those that will have the most impact and the most straightforward route to success. The "Policy Barriers and Opportunities" tool, when used in combination with the "Being Part of the Policy Conversation" and "Identifying Partners" and "Mapping Assets" tools, provides a road map to actions and focuses the asks that are a part of your communications strategy.

Key Actions

Review your overall objectives (or determine them if you haven't already done so)

- What are the objectives or drivers for your initiative?
- Are there intermediary steps that must be met to reach those goals?

With your partners, brainstorm both known and potential barriers and opportunities.

- What barriers or opportunities are connected with your objectives?

Determine your Policy Goals

- Once you have a list of potential barriers and opportunities, which one do you think will have the most impact for the least amount of effort if it were enacted?

Think about who you know or what organizations may be the best path to influencing those barriers and opportunities and conduct a cross-walk with the information gathered in the Being Part of the Policy Conversation" and "Identifying Partners" and "Mapping Assets" tools.

- Who do you know (an organization, group or individual) who may be able to influence that barrier or opportunity? What insights do you have about the barrier or opportunity? Think of both traditional and unconventional changes that could impact the barrier or opportunity.

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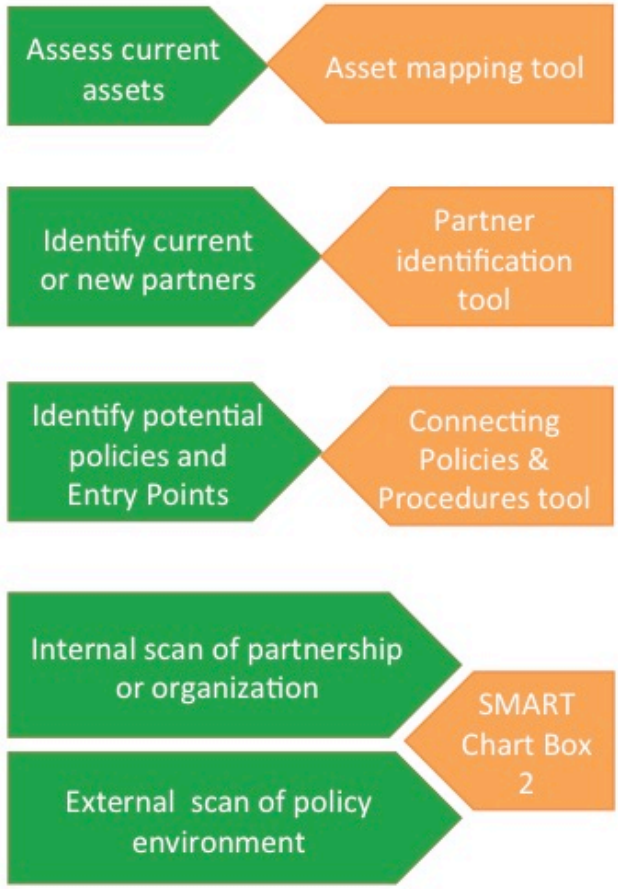
Determining the best policy solution for the driver



Policy decision criteria:

- ❑ **Assets–** What is currently being done in this area? What other organizations are involved? Where are the gaps? What data do you have or need to make your case?
- ❑ **Partnerships**- Who do you know who is working on this. What additional knowledge or connections can they bring to the table?
- ❑ **Policy Environment** – Is this feasible given the political environment? Does it fit officials' priorities? Is there a way to link it to a priority?
- ❑ **Realistic** – Can this really be changed– by anyone?
- ❑ **Timeliness** – What is the time-line for the policy development? Can you deliver the resources and/or get involved within their time frame?
- ❑ **Consequences**– Have you thought through how this will impact operations and processes on multiple levels?

External Scan

- ❑ Planned events
- ❑ Opposition
- ❑ Competition
- ❑ Audience perceptions
- ❑ Media coverage
- ❑ External forces

Being Part of the Policy Conversation

Using the Being Part of the Policy Conversation Tool

In order to have an impact on policies or procedures, you need to know the process for creating, implementing and funding those policies or procedures. Once you know the process, you will know the best time in that process to make your views heard on the issues that you want to change. Therefore, you need to find where and when in the process the issues that affect your goals are being discussed. You need to track them, build relationships with those who influence the discussion or decisions, and be prepared to take action when the time is right. This tool is to help you keep track of the policy landscape, the relationships that should be built and maintained, and the potential legislative or regulatory processes that you might want to influence.

The Key Actions in this section apply to changes in any type of policy or procedure, be it in the state or local government, a school district, or an organization/business. In an organization, look for organizational policies and procedures that require change, rather than bills, legislation, or regulations, but the actions you take will be similar.

To influence policies and regulations, it is crucial to stay up-to-date on the ever-changing policy environment. If you are looking at changing organizational policies and procedures, the tactics are similar – you want to know what is happening and have connections to the people who have decision-making power. In doing so, you will be able to have more influence on a policy. The Policy Conversation Tool provides a framework to track what is happening in a variety of policy areas that you may have decided to target. Whether you have decided to focus on governmental or organizational policies, it is important to also pay attention to state, local, and federal policy changes since they can affect your goal. A change in federal regulations on health insurance for example, could have an effect on the funding for programs you were hoping to involve in your initiative.

An important way to stay on top of policy or legislative changes is through your relationships with key policy-makers or their staff. By having relationships with people who have influence, you can learn about policy opportunities in your state, locality, or organization. You can learn about new initiatives, priorities, and overall

directions being considered. You also learn about the most impactful times to present your information or remind your contact about the aims of your initiative.

To learn more about the policymakers, you should monitor what they mention during public meetings or policy-making session, to the press or on their websites. Gathering this information also provides you with the priorities of your audience so that you can adapt your message appropriately when speaking with them.

In addition to making connections, you need to track what types of policies or bills are being considered and where they are in the process of being implemented. You will need to find out how the process works in your area, but here are some general guidelines. Most policies start as a concept that is discussed and debated by a group of influencers, usually on a committee around a specific topic. Once a policy or bill is made official, it will need to be implemented. The times when you can have the most influence on the effect of the policy are when it is being discussed, when it is being voted on, when the implementation process is being determined, and when the budget for implementation is being created. These are the times when you want to present information or evidence, remind your contacts about your initiative, or demonstrate that your initiative is supported by many. Therefore, you will need to monitor what is happening with a policy once you learn that it is being discussed. This way you will know when the best times are for you to try to influence it. You will want to monitor:

- Is it moving forward in a way that you and your collaborators support?
- Is it stuck somewhere and what needs to happen to get it unstuck?
- Is it being changed in ways that are detrimental to your goal?
- Is it being opposed? By whom and for what reasons?
- Where and how can you intervene?

When looking at state or local bills, understand that unless you have constituent backing in a supportive legislator's home district, you are unlikely to gain traction no matter how excellent your proposal or persuasive your argument. Therefore, it is advantageous to be aligned with a local partnership or coalition in a legislator's district. You should also have support from major leaders and community organizations in the legislator's district. Similarly, when targeting policy changes within an organization, there are times when support from staff or clients may influence an organization's decision. Your work on the "Identifying Partners" tool should be used to expand your network or determine who already in your network you should be working with more closely.

Key Actions

Learn about the process for making changes in your organization or government.

- Use the Identifying Partners tool to see if anyone in your network has or has access to this knowledge already.

Determine where your initiative fits in the political landscape.

- How will you and your Action Team access information on pertinent policies or regulations?
  - What networking will you do?
  - Are there helpful staff people at the state, local, or agency levels who can provide it?
  - Who are your traditional and non-traditional partners that can help promote policy changes? Are there people on the Identifying Potential Partners tool who would be helpful?

Decide logistics

- Who will be responsible within your team for keeping track of legislative progress and networking?

Identify which legislative committees or policy issues could have an impact on achieving your goals.

- What are some of the funding streams for current programs? If you've targeted state or local policies, remember that your interest may be in any number of different departments, such as schools, human services organizations, community-based organizations, and health agencies. Funding streams for current programs will help you identify the areas or committees that you should be tracking.

Gather information about those you want to influence and what current policy or legislation is under consideration

- What are some of the broad issues of concern to your elected officials (Governor, legislators, local/city officials) or Directors?
- Who is knowledgeable about the mechanics of the State or organizational budget or how would you find individuals that are?

Closely track which stage of the process any of the regulations or bills that relate to your initiative are in and decide when and how to get involved.

Build relationships with key decision-makers and their staff throughout the process. You can do this by:

- Understanding the "big picture" and overall processes of state/local legislative bodies, budgets, and regulatory frameworks;
- Being helpful to legislators and staff by giving them fact-based information on your topic that makes their work easier;
- Inviting legislators, executive branch officials, and staff to events that showcase the initiatives you want them to support and, with their permission, documenting their support via newsletters or websites;
- Exercising thoughtfulness and courtesy in your discussions with officials, legislators and staff, i.e., listen to what they are telling you; recognize their constraints if such exist; if you find out that what they have told you is incorrect, be careful how you proceed so you don't burn bridges; be gracious if you lose.

Remember to continually assess the environment and adjust your strategy appropriately.

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