



EnVision Center Demonstration Webinar Series

WEBINAR 4: COMMUNITY OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

WHAT IS COMMUNITY OUTREACH?

It is a set of activities from delivery of services to distribution of information. Successful outreach efforts are accommodating and adaptable to meet specific community needs. Outreach can raise awareness about existing services and/or involve direct service delivery.

BENEFITS OF EFFECTIVE OUTREACH/ENGAGEMENT STRATEGY

- ✓ Increases the number of participants receiving services
- ✓ Incorporates resident voice can help ensure programs are meeting community needs
- ✓ Expands collaboration and partnerships
- ✓ Marketing - more people learn about your organization
- ✓ Data collection/evaluation to demonstrate impact

ELEMENTS OF A SUCCESSFUL COMMUNITY OUTREACH PLAN

- **Establish Clear Goals**
Specific and measurable
Identify target communities
- **Define Targets**
Set numerical targets
Define possible activities and services to engage participants
- **Identify and Leverage Community Assets**
Updated needs and assets assessment
Understand existing resources, assets, and allies and enlist them in your outreach efforts
Religious institutions, schools, nonprofits, neighborhood groups, etc.
- **Tailor Outreach Plan to Specific Communities**
Identify ways to connect with multiple community members
Identify key stakeholders within target communities
Type of contact: One-on-one, events, social media, flyers
- **Evaluation - Measuring the success of the outreach effort**
Track participation rates, number of families contacted
Include qualitative and quantitative metrics to track progress and demonstrate impact
- **Seek Community Input in the Planning and Implementation of Outreach Campaigns**
Incorporate participant feedback into program planning
Follow up to let residents know the impact of their input on program improvement

Economic Empowerment

Empowerment through improved economic outlook

Educational Advancement

Educational opportunities

Health and Wellness

Access to better healthcare outcomes

Character and Leadership

Productive, caring, responsible citizens

KEYS TO SUSTAINED, LONG-TERM COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT

- **Cultural Competence**

Ensure communication and services are culturally sensitive and language-specific
Hire staff from the target communities
Target outreach to specific, hard to reach constituencies

- **Keep it Simple**

Use relatable speech
Summarize key points and focus on essential information
Create materials from viewpoint of how they benefit community members
Use photos and other graphics

- **Mix “Old School” and “New School” Methods**

One personal contact is worth 100 flyers
One-on-one contact is just as important as emails and social media posts
Locations: grocery store, laundromat, beauty salon, daycare, events, etc.
Targeted use of social media combined with personal contacts is the most effective approach to reach people of all ages

- **Repeat, Repeat, Repeat**

Saturation marketing works
Marketing Rule of 7: People need to hear or see your message at least 7 times before they buy a product or use a service

- **Build Long-Term Relationships with Community Partners**

Relationship investment is critical to the success of the outreach efforts
Build close relationships with resident leaders, property managers, and service providers
Trust is key to overcoming obstacles in building relationships and it takes time
Be honest about strengths and limitations of particular programs

- **Strive for Positive Word of Mouth**

Seek out the “Gatekeepers”
Positive word of mouth is based on quality programming that is responsive to community needs
Embrace program changes based on community feedback to ensure buy-in
Incentive for referrals to your program, “Tell a Friend”

SPECIFIC OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES OF OUTREACH TO PUBLIC HOUSING RESIDENTS

- Public housing can feel like an island, isolated from the rest of community. It’s important to understand community dynamics at each housing development.
- Build relationships with resident leaders, both in the resident association and informal leaders
- In larger buildings, the Floor Captain model can have success with proper organization and follow-up. In scattered buildings, consider the Block Captain approach
- Participate in community events consistently
- Build relationships with property managers and housing authority staff, while maintaining confidentiality and relationships with residents

Remember to Keep it Simple, Honest and Consistent!