Planning and Implementing Policy, Enforcement, and Media Strategies:
A User Guide

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Disclaimer

Northeast & Caribbean (HHS Region 2)

PTTC Prevention Technology Transfer Center Network
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

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About the Northeast and Caribbean PTTC

The Northeast & Caribbean Prevention Technology Transfer Center, administered through the Center for Prevention Science located in the Rutgers University School of Social Work, serves prevention professionals working in New Jersey, New York, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands. Its purpose is to strengthen the substance misuse prevention workforce through the provision of technology transfer activities, including the delivery of multifaceted training and intensive technical assistance to improve knowledge and skills in prevention science and evidence-based prevention practices. To learn more, visit our website:

https://pttcnetwork.org/centers/northeast-caribbean-pttc/home

The use of affirming language inspires hope.
LANGUAGE MATTERS.
Words have power.
PEOPLE FIRST.

The PTTC Network uses affirming language to promote the application of evidence-based and culturally informed practices.

About the Guide

This User Guide offers substance misuse prevention professionals working in agencies and coalitions a set of practical tools to support the implementation of three foundational environmental prevention strategies—policy, enforcement, and media. Working together, these strategies have been shown to be effective in reducing substance misuse by changing the conditions of a community—that it, by creating an environment that makes it easier for individuals to make healthy lifestyle choices.

Because effective implementation begins with planning, this resource contains a collection of worksheets, brainstorming questions, and checklists practitioners can use to guide their planning efforts. These tools are meant to be used in tandem with existing syntheses of evidence-based strategies such as the following:

- **Environmental Strategies to Prevent Underage Drinking Prevention** (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)

  https://preventionsolutions.edc.org/services/resources/environmental-strategies-prevent-underage-drinking

- **Environmental Strategies to Prevent the Non-Medical Use of Prescription Drugs** (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)

  https://preventionsolutions.edc.org/services/resources/environmental-strategies-prevent-non-medical-use-prescription-drugs

- **Prevention Tools: What Works, What Doesn't** (Washington State Health Care Authority)

  https://www.theathenaforum.org/best-practices-toolkit-prevention-tools-what-works-what-doesnt

This guide is divided into two parts:

- The first part of the guide presents an introduction to environmental strategies, the benefits of a comprehensive prevention approach, and the importance of cultural humility when planning and implementing environmental strategies. It also introduces the concept of fidelity to strategy design.

- The latter part of the guide contains tools and practical examples to guide the implementation of policy, enforcement, and communications strategies, including a list of addition resources and references.

Introduction to Environmental Strategies

What are Environmental Strategies?

Environmental prevention strategies are interventions that modify or change the environment in which individuals make choices. The focus of environmental strategies is to change the environment in ways that encourage people to make healthy choices (Frieden, 2010; Pettibone, Friend, Nargiso, & Florin, 2013). Environmental strategies for substance misuse prevention are rooted in a public health approach that targets change across entire populations or communities. This approach is in contrast to traditional individual-level approaches that focus solely on changing the knowledge, attitudes, and motivations of the individual, with little attention given to the broader community context that promotes or constrains that individual's lifestyle choices.

Environmental strategies can be used to decrease the incidence of substance misuse as well as the harmful consequences of misuse (e.g., motor vehicle accidents, crime). Examples of environmental strategies that have suggested promise include merchant training to reduce illegal sales to minors, media campaigns to change community norms tolerant of underage drinking, and social host liability laws that impose civil liability for adults who host parties where underage drinking is allowed. Benefits of implementing environmental versus individual-focused strategies include improved sustainability, broader reach, and in many cases, better cost efficiency.

To be successful, environmental strategies must be supported and implemented by multiple constituencies within a community. The Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF), developed by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA) is a five-step model designed to help practitioners engage in a collaborative, data-driven planning process in order to implement strategies to create behavior change and reduce the harmful consequences of substance misuse (Orwin, et al., 2012). The SPF is one example of a model that supports prevention professionals to implement environmental strategies.

What Do We Mean by Population Change?

Population-level change describes the effectiveness of a program, policy, or strategy to influence the behaviors of an entire group or population. To produce population-level change, prevention practitioners must look beyond the individual. Early prevention models typically measured success by looking at individual program outcomes or changes among small groups. For example, a prevention program aimed at middle-school students might look for individual increases in resiliency or changes across one grade level. By comparison, environmental strategies require practitioners to implement multiple strategies with the potential to

collectively produce more *broad-scale* or *population-level* change—in this case, among *all* participating 7th and 8th graders, instead of just one grade level. Population-level change forces practitioners to look at the constellation of factors, across related fields, that influence and determine health.

When thinking about population-level change, it is important to remember that populations can be defined in a variety of ways, including but not limited to geography (rural dwellers or a specific town), culture (new immigrants), religion, sexual orientation (LGBTQ+ youth), socio-economic class, or shared experience (family members of people in recovery).

The Value of a Comprehensive Approach

Environmental strategies are most effective when implemented as part of a comprehensive prevention approach—that is, in conjunction with other strategies, working together toward a common goal. When prevention programs and practices are planned and implemented in a strategic, coordinated, and comprehensive manner, they can support and reinforce one another and produce stronger outcomes for individuals, families, and communities. In fact, the greatest evidence of effectiveness in addressing substance misuse and related behavioral health problems comes from studies of prevention strategies working in concert with one another—making a strong case for taking a comprehensive approach to prevention when and where possible.

This toolkit focuses on three environmental prevention strategies—policy, enforcement, and communications—which, when implemented effectively, can work synergistically to produce population change. It's helpful to think of these strategies as cogs in a prevention wheel: policy is only effective when properly enforced, and both policy and enforcement strategies require clear communication, through the media and other channels, to raise awareness and gain support. Therefore, the "gold standard" of prevention planning includes implementation of all three strategies (Friend, et al., 2015).

Key Principals for Planning and Implementation

Prevention practitioners must engage in prevention planning and implementation processes with cultural awareness, competence, and humility. They must also work to ensure that prevention programs and practices are implemented with fidelity. Each of these important principles are described below.

Cultural Awareness, Competency, and Humility

Cultural competency and humility must be the foundation for all the work we do. CADCA describes cultural competence as the "ability [of an organization or coalition] to bring together different behaviors, attitudes, and policies and work effectively in cross-cultural settings to produce better results," (2018, p. 8). Henderson and colleagues (2018) propose that cultural competence occurs "when one is sensitive and embraces openness, has a desire to want to know other cultures, and actively seeks cultural knowledge," (p.599). Evidence has shown that cultural competence improves health outcomes and individuals' satisfaction with care (Henderson et al., 2018).

Cultural competence is an important first step toward cultural humility, which involves "having an accurate view of self, the ability to restrain self-focused emotions and behaviors in socially acceptable ways, and the ability to cultivate other-oriented emotions and behaviors," (Davis, et al., 2013; p.60). Cultural humility requires an awareness of the values and structural factors that affect a community or group of people, and how these values and factors affect how they navigate and experience their environment (Fisher-Borne, Cain, & Martin, 2015). Practicing cultural humility means reflecting on one's own culture and actively listening to the needs and experiences of those being served in the community.

Cultural competence and humility requires the dedication and commitment of all members of your prevention team. The resources below provide a starting point for building the cultural competence of your coalition or organization.

- **Building Health Equity and Inclusion: Resource List**
  https://pttcnetwork.org/centers/global-pttc/cultural-responsiveness
  Developed by the Prevention Technology Transfer Center Network's Culturally & Linguistically Appropriate Practices Work Group, this site contains numerous resources to help individuals understand the impact of culture and identity in prevention efforts.

- **Tips for Ensuring a Culturally Competent Collaboration**
  https://pttcnetwork.org/centers/northeast-caribbean-pttc/product/tips-ensuring-culturally-competent-collaboration
  Developed by the Northeast and Caribbean Prevention Technology Transfer Center, this resource includes some tips for prevention stakeholders to begin a process of increasing the cultural competence of your collaborative efforts.

- **A Prevention Guide to Improving Cultural Competence: A Literature Review**
  https://pttcnetwork.org/centers/central-east-pttc/product/prevention-guide-improving-cultural-competency
  Developed by the Central East Prevention Technology Transfer Center, this resource includes a literature review and resources to help prevention stakeholders improve cultural competence and capacity to serve minority and vulnerable populations.

Implementation Fidelity

Implementation fidelity is the level to which an intervention is delivered as intended. Implementing a strategy with fidelity increases a community's chances of reproducing the positive outcome the strategy produced elsewhere. However, implementation fidelity can be challenging in the real world. According to Janevic and colleagues (2016), "The need to modify evidence-based interventions when they are implemented in new practice settings is somewhere between common and universal" (p. 1). Durlak and DuPre (2008) emphasize the importance of fidelity and also state that it is unrealistic to expect perfect implementation in real-world settings and that positive outcomes can be achieved even at implementation levels well below 100 percent. In fact, some changes, or adaptations, can even improve the potential of a strategy to produce positive outcomes—in particular, those adaptations that are carefully planned and executed.

Planned adaptations can help improve a strategy's potential effectiveness by addressing recognized deficiencies related to fit. For example, if you find a strategy that was designed to address a community's priority problem among members of a different focus population, consider ways to improve its cultural fit—that is, the relevance of the language, attitudes, beliefs, values, and experiences reflected in the strategy's design. When planning adaptations, it is important to strive to retain its core components—that is, those specific elements that are required and responsible for producing positive outcomes.

It is important to consider issues of fidelity early in your planning processes. What are the core elements you must maintain in order to ensure the effectiveness of your strategy? How easy—or difficult—will it be to do so? Which stakeholders should you involve to help you implement

selected strategies with fidelity? And if complete fidelity is not possible, what types of adaptations will be necessary?

Much of the research literature and guidance focuses on the fidelity of interventions and curricula versus practices or strategies. Fidelity of environmental strategies can be challenging because the core elements that contribute to strategy effectiveness are not always clearly spelled out. Fortunately, the two resources that accompanying this toolkit, *Environmental Strategies to Prevent Underage Drinking Prevention* and *Environmental Strategies to Prevent the Non-Medical Use of Prescription Drugs*, provide detailed information on the core components of all of the strategies included. If you don't find your strategy in either of these two toolkits, there is a list of additional resources at the end for further reference.

Throughout strategy implementation, it is important to monitor implementation closely to ensure continued fidelity. For example, using *Environmental Strategies to Prevent Underage Drinking Prevention* toolkit, you might develop a plan for documenting how you carried out the core components of a social marketing strategy (as listed in the referenced toolkit):

- completing a comprehensive needs assessment to identify the specific problem and focus population;
- clearly considering your focus population and perceived benefits and barriers of the desire behavior change, readiness for change, and preferred media channels;
- developing a message based on your research and needs assessment and which emphasizes the benefits of desired behavior change;
- ensuring your message is using culturally appropriate language;
- conducting research to test your message before your full launch;
- consistently deliver your message(s) frequently, using your key selected media channels to maximize exposure;
- monitoring and documenting how and when your message is delivered.

Work with your evaluator to include fidelity measures in your process evaluation plan. By documenting how you are implementing the core components of your environmental strategies, you will be able to monitor the degree to which your strategies are being implemented as planned and determine necessary course corrections along the way.

Understanding Policy

Overview

Policies are formalized rules, regulations, and procedures—usually written—that establish standards for behavior. Policies aim to provide structure to community norms, resulting in improved behavior choices (Imm et al., 2007). There are several key benefits to develop policies to prevent substance misuse:

- **Policies have far-reaching effects.** Compared to prevention strategies that focus on individuals or families, policy changes can reach entire populations and produce behavior changes across large numbers of people. A skills-building program might help a classroom of students resist early initiation of alcohol use, but a law restricting alcohol sales to minors has the potential to prevent an entire group of retailers from selling to this population.

- **Policies can reinforce programs directed at individuals.** Communities can achieve more substantial reductions in substance use when environmental influences are consistent with and reinforce the prevention messages already directed at individuals. In other words, an education program that teaches youth about the dangers of alcohol consumption will be more effective when coupled with policy initiatives restricting billboards that promote alcohol use by glamorizing drinking.

- **Policies can be relatively inexpensive and easy to sustain.** Even when taking into account the costs of implementation, monitoring, and political action, the costs of policy efforts can be considerably lower than those associated with educational and therapeutic efforts aimed at individuals. Because policies affect large numbers of people, the cost per person is lower than more traditional prevention programs. Also, once established, a policy can continue to have an impact with relatively low maintenance costs. This increases the likelihood of making sustainable change.

Once a policy is adopted, it is important to regularly assess public awareness of the policy, the effectiveness of enforcement efforts, and the extent to which the policy is still appropriate or may need to be amended given changes in the prevention landscape. For example, policies that apply to cigarette use were written before electronic cigarettes came on the scene and may have been written in such a way that does not apply to those items. In this case, it would be

necessary to revisit the policy and include new language inclusive of e-cigarettes, or to draft another policy specifically to govern e-cigarettes.

Policy strategies can be organized into four categories: (1) organizational; (2) school; (3) community, and (4) local ordinances. These categories help us understand the scope of a given policy.

- **Organizational policies** dictate how members of a single organization—such as a service institution or business—operate. Organizational policies often seek to prevent substance misuse by acting as a safeguard or barrier to public access and availability of a target substance. For example, alcohol retailers might adopt a 100% proofing of age policies or institute mandatory server training to prevent youth access to alcohol. Similarly, a pharmacy may restrict access to certain over-the-counter medications (e.g., by storing them behind the register) to prevent misuse.

- **School policies** dictate how students—and, at times, family members—behave. School-based policies to prevent substance use typically focus on creating a set of established expectations for behavior and norms within the school that govern the entire school community and create a safe place for learning to occur. Examples of school policies include "zero tolerance" policies prohibiting smoking or vaping on school grounds, prohibition of alcohol at school athletic events, and prohibition of beer kegs on college campuses.

- **Community polices** are agreements reached by an entire community that limit, monitor, or otherwise control access to substance use in community areas or at community events. Examples include policies that dictate when and where alcohol beverages can be served in public, or that restrict alcohol sponsorship of community events.

- **Local ordinances** are statutes (laws) passed by a town, city, or county government. Ordinances govern matters not already covered by State or Federal laws, such as zoning, safety, and building regulations. Examples of local ordinances include social host liability laws, which allow a host of a party or other gathering to be held liable when a guest becomes intoxicated and causes harm; or capping liquor retailer licenses age. Local ordinances have the capacity to elevate organizational policies that might have gained traction locally. For example, several individual alcohol retailers might have adopted organizational policies to mandate server training. A local ordinance could build on this momentum by mandating more widespread training implementation.

Preparing for Policy Change

The decision to implement a policy needs to be based on a thorough assessment of community needs and a clear understanding of the factors that contribute to identified problems. In addition, a policy can only be effective if it is a good fit with organizational or community context—that is, if (1) there are ample resources to support it and (2) it complements (rather than competes with or undermines) other policy initiatives. To determine fit, policymakers must understand factors such as awareness of and attitudes towards the problem to be addressed, norms related to substance use, and community readiness to act, before initiating policy efforts.

Here are some questions to consider:

- What policy solution is most likely to affect the substance misuse problem you are targeting?
- Which policy solution is the best fit for your community?
- What organizations and key players will need to be involved in policy efforts?
- Are there already policies in place that address your priority problems? Why or why not?

The tools that follow can help you answer these questions and ultimately engage in a policy change process that is effective, productive, inclusive, and appropriate.

Getting Ready: Surveying the Policy Landscape

Multiple factors influence a community's ability to plan and implement policy, including community attitudes toward the problem to be addressed, readiness to act, and policies already in place. The success of any policy initiative will depend on the degree to which a proposed policy aligns with these factors.

The following questions can help you assess the role these factors may play in *your* community. The answers may be revealing. For example, you may discover that the time isn't right to take on policy change—that other things need to happen first. Or that policy development is in fact the right move—just not the specific policy you had in mind.

Use the chart at the end of this resource to document your responses. Keep in mind that this exercise may take some time and will require the input of multiple community members. Consider it an opportunity to engage key stakeholders in your planning processes and begin building the buy-in you will need for successful policy implementation.

✓ **What does substance misuse look like in your community?** Understanding the nature, extent, and impact of the problem you want your policy to address is important for several reasons. First, the more you know and understand about the problem in your community, the more likely you will be to select the right policy strategy. Second, the more relevant and specific the information you collect, the better prepared you will be to raise local awareness of the issue, motivate allies, and influence opponents.

✓ **What makes your community unique?** For example, is the population disproportionately young—or old? Is it highly transient— characteristic of a college town or vacation destination? The answers to these questions will help you both define your policy and the action steps needed to enact it. For example, if yours is a college town, you will need to consider the unique challenges of addressing substance use on campus and work with college officials to address those head-on. If yours is a tourist spot, you will need to engage the business community in any policy decisions.

✓ **What are your community's norms around substance misuse?** Understanding community norms around substance use will help you gauge potential support for policy change. Public acceptance and support are necessary for several reasons. First, you will need both to get any policy passed. Second, you will need both to ensure that the policy is enforced. And finally, widespread support will increase the extent to which individuals voluntarily comply. This is critical, since it's nearly impossible to enforce a policy with which people are

unwilling to comply. In fact, enforcement is only effective when most people comply willingly, since forcing everyone to do something they don't want to do is unfeasible.

✓ **What are the current attitudes toward the problem to be addressed?** Are community members on the same page as you regarding the need for the problem to be taken seriously and addressed? Understanding community attitudes will help gauge potential support for your policy; this support is crucial for getting your policy passed, enforced, and assuring compliance.

✓ **Is your community ready to act?** Community readiness describes the extent to which a community is adequately prepared to implement a prevention effort. It is a measure of a community's willingness and ability to address a particular issue. Whereas norms reflect attitudes, readiness reflects potential for action. So even in a community where pervasive norms mitigate against policy change, you may find a committed group of individuals willing to move your initiative forward. So consider questions like these: Do community leaders support the prevention effort? How much does the community know about the key issue you are trying to address? Are community resources available to support the effort?

✓ **Who are your potential allies—and opponents?** Successful policy change hinges on the support of key allies—individuals willing to help move forward the policy development process and eventually, take ownership of it. At best, they are influential people, invested in seeing change happen and willing to demonstrate that support in highly visible ways. Every policy effort should involve a unique set of allies: the more specific, the better.

✓ **What policies already exist?** Knowing what policies are already on the books—and the degree to which they are recognized, supported, and enforced—can help you determine whether new policy development is warranted. Remember that policy does not function well in a vacuum. In the absence of effective enforcement, public education, and related community-based services, the impact of any policy will be negligible.

✓ **What is feasible?** Be realistic with what is achievable based on your community. Perhaps jumping straight into policy change is unrealistic, but you have plenty of resources to work on raising awareness and influencing attitudes or making revisions to and strengthening an existing policy will benefit you more than creating a new one. Try to flush out all possibilities before embarking on a policy change process.

Document your answers to the questions from above in the chart below. Make sure your responses are informed by local data and the input of multiple stakeholders.

Question	What's the Landscape?	How Do You Know?	Implications?
What does substance misuse look like in your community?			
What makes your community unique?			
What are your community's norms around substance misuse?			

Question	What's the Landscape?	How Do You Know?	Implications?
What are the current attitudes toward the problem to be addressed?			
Is your community ready to act?			
Who are your potential allies— and opponents?			
What policies already exist?			
What is feasible now?			

Policy Stakeholder Engagement Checklist

Stakeholder involvement is critical to the success of policy change processes because engaging the correct stakeholders will help ensure your policy idea is supported, implemented, and enforced. Questions such as the following can help you determine who the correct stakeholders are for your policy efforts: Who is directly affected by the problem? Who else cares enough to want to solve the problem? Who benefits if the problem is resolved? And what individuals or groups can solve the problem?[1]

Key stakeholders will vary depending on which policy strategy your community decides to implement. Use the checklist below to identify stakeholder groups/sectors that should be part of your policy change process.

- Place a check mark (✔) next to stakeholders who are already engaged.
- Place a capital "**N**" next to those you still need to engage.
- Next to each selected stakeholder, jot down what each group brings (or could bring) to the table.
- Complete the Policy Engagement Worksheet that follows to begin developing an engagement plan.

Community:	What They Bring to the Table:
Community-based Coalitions	
Community organizer/mobilizers	
Community members/volunteers	
Faith community	
Media	
Members of target population	
Parents/Family/Guardian/Caregiver	
Youth-serving organizations (e.g., YMCA, 4H, Boys & Girls Clubs, sports/recreation programs)	

Healthcare:	What They Bring to the Table:
Physicians	
Nurse practitioners and nurses	
Emergency room staff	
Behavioral healthcare providers	
Substance misuse prevention organizations	
First responders	
Pharmacists	
Health depts., public health depts.	
Hospital administrators	
Recovery/peer specialists	
Treatment providers	
Community health centers	

Business:	What They Bring to the Table:
Chamber of Commerce	
Employers	
Union leaders	
Alcohol/tobacco retailers	
Other business owners/managers	

Education:	What They Bring to the Table:
School district staff	
School principals	

School administration/board	
Teachers	
Other school staff (social workers, nurses, inclusion facilitators, etc.)	
Parent associations (e.g., PTO, PTA)	
Coaches	
College and university leaders	
Student groups, associations, etc.	

Government:	What They Bring to the Table:
County or local government representatives	
State government dept./representatives	
Elected officials	
School administration/school board	
Veterans and Military	

Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement:	What They Bring to the Table:
Police and/or sheriff	
High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area representatives	
Drug Enforcement Agency representatives	
Public safety/community officers	
Law enforcement prevention program liaisons	
Prison officials	

_____   Judges/court professionals   _____

_____   Parole/probation/re-entry support   _____

Other Stakeholders	What They Bring to the Table:
Other:	_____
Other:	_____
Other:	_____
Other:	_____
Other:	_____

Policy Stakeholder Engagement Worksheet

As you develop a clearer sense of the type of policy you'd like to enact or strengthen, and those stakeholders you may want to involve in your policy efforts, complete the table below for the 3-5 stakeholders you consider most important to policy success.

Type of Policy: _____

Potential Stakeholder	Current Connection	Engagement Strategy	How Would the Project Benefit?	How Would They Benefit from Participation?
List stakeholder name or organization	*List level of potential, interest (including concerns)*	*List who is responsible for outreach*	*What would the stakeholder do/or what role they will fill?*	*Describe why the stakeholder might want to be part of this effort.*

Choosing a Policy Path

Once you've completed the *Surveying the Policy Landscape* tool and assessed the degree of support you can expect from critical stakeholders, it's time to choose a policy path. You have three options:

- Should you do nothing because an appropriate policy is already in place and working well?
- Should you move toward strengthening an existing policy?
- Should you develop a new policy?

The first section of this tool is designed for practitioners who choose the path of strengthening an existing policy. The second section is for practitioners who decide to develop a new policy. The final worksheet provides a template for developing an implementation action plan for either option.

Strengthening an Existing Policy

Not all policy efforts need to start with new policy development. An existing policy might already be in place that simply needs to be enhanced in order to strengthen its impact. Consider the questions below to determine how to move forward when a policy already exists that addresses your priority prevention problem. *If an appropriate policy does not exist, skip to the next section.*

Directions. Answer the following questions about the existing policy you intend to strengthen. Record your answers in *Worksheet A: Existing Policy Action Plan*.

- **Does the policy need to be rewritten to improve its clarity? Is its intent clear? If no, how could its clarity be improved?** *Describe what about the language may be compromising its impact.*

- **Does the policy need to be enhanced to address an emerging need? If so, what types of enhancements are needed?** *For example, does the policy needs to include more or new restrictions? A broader scope of focus?*

- **At what level is the policy being enforced? Who are the enforcers?** *Be as specific as possible. Consider multiple levels of stakeholders who are and/or should be involved in enforcement efforts.*

- **How aware are stakeholders of the policy? To what degree is it supported?** *Are critical stakeholders supportive? How about community members? Why or why not?*

Worksheet A: Existing Policy Action Steps

Question	Current Situation	Next Steps / Solutions
Does the policy need to be rewritten to improve clarity?	**If yes, note what section(s) is not clear:**	**How would you improve the clarity?**
Does the policy need to be enhanced to address an emerging need?	**If yes, describe the emerging need:**	**What enhancement is needed?**

Question	Current Situation	Next Steps / Solutions
At what level is the policy being enforced? Who are the enforcers?	**If low enforcement, describe potential reasons for this:**	**How would you increase enforcement?**
How supported is the policy among critical stakeholders and/or community members?	**If support is minimal, describe potential reasons for this:**	**What steps would you take to build support?**

When No Relevant Policy Exists

Your assessment of the policy landscape may reveal the need to create a new policy to address current or emerging prevention needs. If this is the case, you can begin policy development. Be sure to reference your completed *Surveying the Policy Landscape* and *Stakeholder Engagement* tools to verify that your community is ready to engage in this process, and that you have the necessary resources and readiness to support it.

<u>Directions</u>. Answer the following questions about the new policy you plan to develop. Record you answers in *Worksheet B. New Policy Action Plan.*

- **To what extent is your community aware of the substance misuse problem that the new policy will address?** *If awareness is limited, you may need to consider media strategies to increase awareness before moving forward.*

- **To what extent are critical stakeholders, including key decision makers, engaged in your policy development efforts?** *If engagement is limited, continue to work your stakeholder engagement plans as you work on policy development.*

- **What data is available to help you make your case for new policy development?** *Policy adoption will ultimately depend on your ability to clearly describe the problem and make a strong, data-informed case for your policy solution.*

- **What types of research and policy language/examples are available to inform policy development?** *This is a good time to engage stakeholders with experience writing policies. Doing so will not only strengthen your policy but also help to gain their buy-in.*
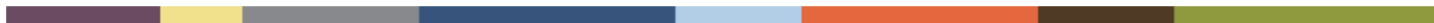
Worksheet B: New Policy Development Action Steps

Question	Current Situation	Next Steps / Solutions
To what extent is s your community aware of the substance use problem the new policy will address?	**If awareness is limited, describe potential reasons why, potential community sectors that may be unaware:**	**How will you increase awareness?**
To what extent are critical stakeholders/ decision makers engaged in policy development?	**If engagement is limited, explain potential reasons why (specifying which stakeholders are/are not engaged):**	**How will you increase engagement?**

Question	Current Situation	Next Steps / Solutions
What data is available to help you make your case for policy development?	**List available data/data sources here:**	**Describe how you will use these data to develop talking points:**
What types of research and/or policy examples/language can you access to inform policy development?	**List research/examples here:**	**Who will start drafting policy language?**

Policy Implementation in Practice: Social Host Liability Law

This tool follows the Anytown, NY Prevention Agency as it proceeds through the steps of implementing a social host liability law in their community. We will revisit this example as the agency pursues enforcement and media strategies to bolster this strategy.

What is the Problem? After reviewing state and local data to assess the Anytown's prevention needs, the Prevention Agency decided to focus its efforts on reducing binge drinking among 15- to -17-years-olds by reducing youth access to alcohol at private residences.

How Do They Know? The agency's decision was informed by a review of data from multiple sources including community and state youth surveys; key informant interviews with stakeholders including parents, high school teachers and coaches, and youth; and arrest data. Below is a summary of what these data revealed.

- Risk and protective factor data:

  - High school youth did not consider underage alcohol use as harmful (low perception of harm)
  - Parents did not consider underage drinking as risky (low perception of risk)
  - High school youth reported easy access to alcohol (e.g., increased home delivery options, social availability through friends and family at private residential parties)

- Consumption pattern data:

  - Increased rates of binge drinking among 15- to -17-years-olds in the county compared to neighboring counties and national rates
  - Increased rates of binge drinking following athletic events

- Consequences data:

  - Community disorder (e.g., public urination, beer can/cups litter)
  - Increased rates of underage youth driving while under the influence

What is the Policy Landscape? The Prevention Agency conducted strategic planning activities with their data group and narrowed their focus on policy change. After conducting individually-based prevention programs to address the issue of high school students binge drinking in private homes in the past, the Prevention Agency and their data group decided to embark on efforts to impact their community through environmental strategies. Since this was their first time focused on possible policy change, the Prevention Agency used the Surveying the Policy

Landscape to prepare. After examining Anytown's policy landscape, they came to four important conclusions:

1. Readiness for policy change to address the target problem within the community is mixed. After key informant interviews with elected officials of Anytown, there seemed to be moderate readiness to consider policy change to target the problem of youth access to alcohol at private home parties. Because data showed that parents were not concerned about underage drinking, education on the consequences of underage alcohol use would be needed to change attitudes and norms prior to policy implementation.

2. The Prevention Agency has attempted to address parents' low perceptions of risk around hosting parties for underage through town hall discussions with no progress. Efforts were needed to increase awareness among parents about the dangers of the current practice of private party hosting.

3. The Prevention Agency learned through meetings with law enforcement that they feel frustrated with all of the recent neighborhood calls to report rowdy parties at private residences. Additionally, law enforcement and others in Anytown feel concerned about the increase arrests of youth for driving under the influence.

4. No local ordinances currently existed that addressed underage drinking in residential settings. In their surveying of the current landscape, the Prevention Agency also determined that there were no competing initiatives that might impact their policy planning.

The Policy Choice. The Prevention Agency identified **social host liability** as a possible policy option to pursue. Social host liability laws hold adults who provide alcohol to individuals who are underage or to individuals who are obviously intoxicated legally liable for any resulting injury or death.[6] This option is a good fit for Anytown because it addresses one of the key substance misuse issues identified in the community: easy access to alcohol at private house parties.

Who to Engage? The Prevention Agency identified the following stakeholders as critical to the success of their policy efforts:

- **Law enforcement.** Law enforcement support of this local ordinance will help to get it passed. This sector would be key to planning and implementing enforcement strategies once a successful law is adopted in Anytown. The Prevention Agency believes one law enforcement officer in particular, who has championed previous prevention efforts in the community, with be instrumental in working to pass this ordinance and support compliance plans.
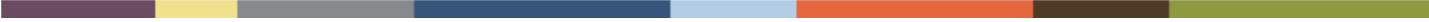
- **Parents**. Because parents are not concerned with underage alcohol use, efforts to increase their understanding of the target problem is needed. Once this local ordinance gets passed, it will be important that parents understand the substance misuse consequences it will address as opposed to parents seeing this policy change strictly as a punitive action.
- **Elected officials**. The Prevention Agency needs to increase readiness among the elected officials who will be critical to pass this ordinance. The Prevention Agency decided a media advocacy strategy might be needed in order to build support from elected officials and parents.
- **High school athletic department**. Since anecdotal evidence revealed that many of the parties where underage drinking occurred took place following athletic events, in the homes of athletes, coaches and athletic department staff would be important allies in their policy change process. This stakeholder group could specifically help to spread the message to parents about the consequences of hosting parties where underage drinking is allowed.

Choosing a Policy Path. Because no social host law exists at the state level, the Prevention Agency focused its efforts on developing a **local social host liability ordinance** for Anytown. To prepare, the Prevention Agency drafted an action plan to outline next steps and who is assigned tasks with a detailed timeline to begin building their case for the new policy. Some of their actions included the following:

- The Prevention Agency researched other communities where similar local ordinances had been passed. They found out who was involved in helping to craft and pass the ordinance in a neighboring town and gathered sample language from their policy team.
- The Prevention Agency planned a policy review process, which included a legal expert and a coalition member from the neighboring town who helped to write the ordinance and agreed to review a draft of the proposed ordinance for Anytown.
- The Prevention Agency developed talking points that described the problem and why the proposed ordinance was the solution. They tailored these talking points to address the potential concerns of different stakeholders, using their data collected about the rates of binge drinking among youth, the access of alcohol at private home parties, and youth arrests for driving while under the influence. The message to parents focused on the dangers of hosting parties for underage youth and the recent increases in youth arrests. For coaches, the message focused on how they might help to encourage healthier weekend activities.
- The Prevention Agency developed a monitoring system to track efforts from start to finish, including anticipated outputs, or work accomplished such as number of meeting

held; number of stakeholders in support of the policy change; and all iterative drafts of the policy itself.

- They outlined steps for increasing awareness and support for the proposed policy through a proposed a media advocacy strategy, which includes plans for a public hearing about passing the law and a series of press releases. Plans for rollout once the policy is passed was included in their media strategy planning.
- The Prevention Agency began to incorporate efforts towards working with law enforcement to prepare for steps to support compliance this policy is adopted.

After much effort, the agency is well on its way to getting a new policy passed!

Understanding Enforcement

Overview

Having the right policy in place won't take you far if it's not enforced. Enforcement increases the likelihood of compliance, which in turn leads to the health-promoting environmental changes the policy is intended to create. For these reasons, enforcement must be part of the policy planning process from the start. Without planning and dedicated resources for compliance and enforcement, even the most comprehensive and well-thought-out policy is doomed for failure.
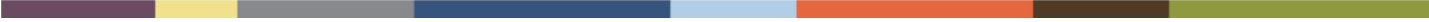
How a given policy should be enforced, and who should do the enforcing, will differ depending on policy type. As described earlier, policy strategies can be organized into four categories: organizational, school, community, and local ordinances. So, for example:

- Enforcement of organizational policies, such as required participation in mandatory beverage server training, might include monitoring by restaurant management to ensure that all wait staff and bartenders attend.

- Enforcement of school policies, such as zero tolerance policies, might include immediate student suspension, enforced by the school principal.

- Enforcement of community policies, such as restricting alcohol use to a specific area of a town celebration, might be enforced by the event organizers.

- Enforcement of a social host liability law to reduce underage drinking at residential parties would be enforced by local police officers.

The success of enforcement efforts depends on the buy-in and support of the people doing the enforcing. A local social host liability law is unlikely to be effective without the support of local law enforcement. Similarly, a school policy that prohibits alcohol use on school property won't make a difference if the vice principal looks the other way and does nothing to enforce it. It is therefore critical to involve from the outset those agencies and individuals who will be responsible for enforcement efforts, and ensure that they have the knowledge, skills, and resources necessary to implement the chosen enforcement strategies. Early buy-in from key stakeholders can also help to ensure alignment between policy and enforcement expectations.

It's also important to remember that policy and enforcement are designed and implemented by two different systems–and often, systems that are unaccustomed to working together. So take

time to build trust, develop a shared understanding of policy goals, and appreciate the differences in how each system operates.

Finally, keep in mind that enforcement alone won't work if the original policy isn't appropriate for or accepted by the people for whom it is designed. So make sure that your enforcement planning efforts complement your policy assessment work.

Types of Enforcement Strategies

Enforcement strategies fall into two categories: those that promote compliance with organizational, school and community policies, and those that promote compliance with local ordinances. Organizational, school, and community policies are typically enforced by stakeholders, such as supervisors, coaches, or parents, who have the authority to hold non-compliers accountable when a policy is violated. Examples of enforcement strategies that fall under this category include:

- Loss of privilege (e.g. suspension for drinking on school property; benched by coach if caught using marijuana during season)

- Loss of employment or suspension (e.g. fired for serving alcohol to a minor)

- Loss of access (e.g. denied entry to a community event due to past failure to comply with rules)

By comparison, local ordinances are typically enforced by law enforcement officials, such as police officers, campus security agents, and other designated legal authorities. There are four types of enforcement strategies that involve law enforcement officials: surveillance, penalties and fines, detention, and incentives.

Surveillance. There are two types of surveillance strategies: purchase surveys (also referred to as compliance surveys) and compliance checks. Both aim to limit the commercial availability of substances to underaged persons.

- *Purchase surveys* provide information about the commercial availability of a particular substance, such as alcohol, marijuana, or tobacco, to underaged persons and are used to determine how easily young people can obtain them. They are also used to identify retailers who are selling to minors. In most cases, surveys involve the use of young adults as decoys to attempt to purchase illicit substances. This strategy has been associated with a reduction in the sale of alcohol to minors (Lewis et al., 1996) and in sales to minors without proper age identification (Huckle, Greenaway, Broughton, & Conway, 2007).

- *Compliance checks* use underage decoys to attempt to buy substances from retailers. The implementation of compliance checks has been associated with a reduction in retail sales of alcohol to minors (Arnott, 2006; Elder et al., 2007; Reilly, Moore, & Magri, 2004; Scribner & Cohen, 2001), reductions in alcohol consumption among underaged persons (Reilly et al., 2004), and a rise in requests for age identification from people attempting to purchase alcohol (Moore et al, 2012).

Penalties and Fines. These strategies help to reduce substance misuse by issuing fees or restrictions when a policy is violated. Often, the fines collected through these strategies pay for the law enforcement efforts. Two notable examples of penalties and fines to reduce underage drinking are party controls and juvenile diversion.

- *Party patrols* are designed to limit the social availability of controlled substances. They are performed by law enforcement officers responding to complaints about unruly parties in residential areas. Law enforcement officers ticket anyone in possession of an illegal or controlled substance as well as whoever who supplied the substances if known (e.g., party host, older siblings). The cost of enforcement is covered by fines levied against property owners when police respond to this kind of disturbance. When this strategy has been implemented as part of a multi-component environmental strategy on college campuses, it was associated with a decrease in heavy episodic drinking by college students (Saltz et al., 2009); and reduced incidence of intoxication at off-campus parties, bars, and restaurants (Saltz, Paschall, McGaffigan, & Nygaad, 2010).

- *Juvenile diversion programs* aim to promote the appropriate care and treatment of young people and reduce young offender exposure to other justice-involved youth. These programs typically apply to first-time youth offenders who have been arrested for drug and/or alcohol-related crimes like driving while intoxicated, underage possession of alcohol, and disorderly behavior. Youth in diversion programs typically receive sanctions and services designed to address risk factors contributing to alcohol-related offenses.

Detention. This strategy entails placing in official custody, and potentially prosecuting, violators of laws. Strategies that fall under this category include cops-in-shops and sobriety checkpoints.

- *Cops-in-shops* engages undercover law enforcement officers in arresting or issuing citations for underaged purchases or purchase attempts, and the purchase of alcohol for underage persons. This strategy is designed to limit the commercial availability of alcohol to underage people and prevent purchase at local outlets by and for underaged persons.

- *Sobriety checkpoints* are used to evaluate drivers for signs of alcohol or drug impairment, and to enforce driving under the influence (DUI) or driving while intoxicated (DWI) laws. These checkpoints increase the perceptions of getting caught while driving under the influence and also increase the actual likelihood arrest by the police. (Dash et al., 2015). The focus populations include youth under the age of 21 who drive and adult drivers.

Preparing for Enforcement

Just as it was discussed with policy, the decision to implement an enforcement strategy needs to be based on a thorough, data-informed understanding of community needs and resources; strong community support; and a fairly strong assurance that the people who will be doing the enforcing are on-board. In planning whether to implement an enforcement strategy and to help you decide which one(s), consider the following questions:

- What policy needs enforcing?
- What is the most effective way to enforce the identified policy?
- Who will be responsible for enforcing the policy?
- Is this sector/group on board? Why or why not?
- Who else might need to be involved to support your selected enforcement strategy?
- Are there already enforcement efforts already in place to address your identified problem? If so, what are they?

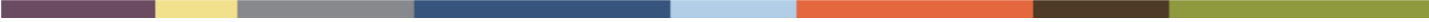The tools that follow are designed to help you answer these questions.

Getting Ready: Surveying the Enforcement Landscape

A community's ability to enforce policies to prevent substance misuse depends on a variety of factors, including the extent to which enforcement is necessary, the willingness of those charged with enforcement to take action, the availability of resources to support enforcement efforts, and community and stakeholder attitudes about the importance of enforcement. The success of enforcement efforts will depend on the degree to which the selected strategy aligns with these factors.

The following questions can help you assess the potential impact of these factors on your enforcement efforts. Use the chart at the end of this resource to document your responses. Keep in mind that this exercise may take some time and will require the input of multiple community members. Consider it an opportunity to engage key stakeholders in your planning processes and begin building the buy-in you will need for successful enforcement.

✓ **To what degree are existing policies enforced?** Understanding the degree to which policies are currently enforced can help you anticipate potential roadblocks to new enforcement efforts. For example, are certain policies enforced while others are not? Are some enforced more consistently than others? Is degree of enforcement tied to focus population? To a lack of understanding or commitment on the part of the enforcers? To a lack of awareness among community members?

✓ **What enforcement strategies are already in place?** Understanding current enforcement efforts can help you determine what is working well and where there may be need for improvement. Will your new efforts complement these strategies or duplicate them? If no enforcement strategies are in place, why or why not?

✓ **Who is involved in current enforcement efforts?** Knowing who is involved in current enforcement efforts will help you assess the degree to which these players may be willing to engage in new enforcement efforts. Are they the "right" enforcers? Are they well-supported? Do they have the bandwidth to take on something new? Are there new players who need to be engaged to improve the likelihood that new efforts will be successful?

✓ **What are the unique features of your community that might impact enforcement efforts?** For example, if you live in a college town, you will need to work closely with campus police to enforce policies that restrict the behavior of college students—even those who live in off-campus housing. If you live in a vacation community with a transient community, efforts to enforce public drinking policies may be perceived as unwelcoming to vacationers. Conversely, community members may embrace enforcement efforts as a way of making the community more family-friendly.

✓ **Who are your potential allies—and opponents?** Successful enforcement hinges on the support of key allies. These are individuals who are willing to help move forward the enforcement process, and eventually own it. These are your community's influencers—the chief of police or school principals, for example—who are invested in seeing change happen and willing to publicly support your efforts. Every enforcement effort will involve a unique set of allies based on the policy's focus and scope.

✓ **Is your community ready to act (enforce)?** Community readiness is the extent to which a community is adequately prepared to implement or enforce a prevention effort. It is a measure of a community's willingness and ability to address an issue. It explains why a social host ordinance is more likely to be enforced in a community where parents understand the dangers of underage drinking than in a community where parents consider underage drinking a part of growing up. Fortunately, readiness is not static. It can be built through education, information dissemination, and the support of local champions.

✓ **What level of enforcement is feasible given the current resources?** Does your community have the resources to enforce local policies—and to do so consistently? Will you be competing with other enforcement efforts? Surveying available resources will allow you to choose a realistic enforcement strategy. If resources are lacking, you may want to take time to acquire the necessary resources before moving forward.

Use the chart below to document your answers to the questions above.

Question	What's the Landscape?	How Do You Know?	Implications?
To what degree are existing policies enforced?			
What enforcement strategies are already in place?			
Who is involved in current enforcement efforts?			
What are the unique features of your community that might impact enforcement efforts?			
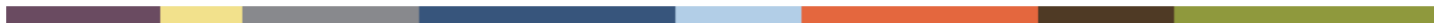
Question	What's the Landscape?	How Do You Know?	Implications?
Who are your potential allies— and opponents?			
Is your community ready to act (enforce)?			
What level of enforcement is feasible given the current resources?			

Enforcement: Stakeholder Engagement Checklist

Stakeholder involvement is critical to ensure successful policy enforcement. To identify the appropriate stakeholders for your enforcement efforts, you will need to ask yourself questions such as: Who are the enforcers? Who has the authority to support compliance efforts? Who cares enough to want to help support your efforts? Who will benefit from successful enforcement? Who you engage will first and foremost depend on the type of policy you are enforcing. For example, to enforce a law or ordinance, involvement of local law enforcement is a must. But if your policy is organizational or school-based, enlisting law enforcement may not only be inappropriate for but also undermine your policy goals.

Use the checklist below to help brainstorm a list of potential stakeholders to engage in your enforcement efforts.

- Place a check mark (✔) next to stakeholders who are already engaged.
- Place a capital "**N**" next to those you still need to engage.
- Next to each selected stakeholder, jot down what each group brings (or could bring) to the enforcement "table".
- Complete the Enforcement Engagement Worksheet that follows to begin developing an engagement plan.

Criminal Justice/Law Enforcement:	What They Bring to the Table:
Police and/or sheriff	
High Intensity Drug Trafficking Area representatives	
Drug Enforcement Agency representatives	
Public safety/community officers	
Law enforcement prevention program liaisons	
Prison officials	
Judges/court professionals	
Parole/probation/re-entry support	
Campus security/resource Officers	

Community:	What They Bring to the Table:
Community-based coalitions	
Community organizer/mobilizers	
Community members/volunteers	
Media	
Members of focus population	
Parents/family/guardian/caregiver	
Youth-serving organizations (e.g., YMCA, 4H, sports/recreation programs)	

Education:	What They Bring to the Table:
School district staff	
School principals	
School administration/board	
Teachers	
Other school staff (social workers, nurses, inclusion facilitators, etc.)	
Parent associations (e.g., PTO, PTA)	
Coaches	
College and university leaders	
Student groups, associations, etc.	

Healthcare:	What They Bring to the Table:
Physicians	
Nurse practitioners and nurses	

_____ Emergency room staff   _____

_____ Behavioral healthcare providers   _____

_____ Substance misuse prevention
      organizations   _____

_____ First responders   _____

_____ Pharmacists   _____

_____ Health depts., public health depts.   _____

_____ Hospital administrators   _____

_____ Recovery/peer specialists   _____

_____ Treatment providers   _____

_____ Community health centers   _____

Business:	What They Bring to the Table:

_____ Chamber of Commerce   _____

_____ Employers   _____

_____ Union leaders   _____

_____ Alcohol/tobacco retailers   _____

_____ Other business owners/managers   _____

Government:	What They Bring to the Table:

_____ County or local government
      representatives   _____

_____ State government representatives   _____

_____ Elected officials   _____

_____ School administration/school board   _____

_____ Veterans/military   _____

Other Stakeholders	What They Bring to the Table:
_____ Other:	_____
_____ Other:	_____
_____ Other:	_____
_____ Other:	_____
_____ Other:	_____
_____	_____

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Enforcement Stakeholder Engagement Worksheet

Choose 3-5 stakeholders you've identified above as integral to the success of your policy enforcement efforts. Complete the table below to develop a plan for engaging them in your work.

Enforcement Strategy: _____

Potential Stakeholder	Current Connection	What Role Will They Play?	How Will They Benefit from Participation?	Engagement Strategy
List stakeholder name or organization	*What is your current relationship with this individual/sector?*	*What would the stakeholder do?*	*Describe why the stakeholder might want to be part of this effort.*	*How will you reach out? Who will do the outreach?*

Enforcement Implementation in Practice: Party Patrol Strategy

This tool continues to follow the Prevention Agency working in Anytown, NY, as it proceeds through the steps of implementing and enforcing a social host liability law in their community. We will revisit this example as the agency pursues media strategies to complement its comprehensive approach.

What is the problem? The Prevention Agency in Anytown, NY, recently began crafting a social host liability law to reduce binge drinking among 15- to -17-years-olds during parties at private residences. As the agency makes progress on its policy change efforts, it is at the same time working to outline a robust enforcement strategy. The agency wants to be sure that it has a compliance and enforcement plan ready to roll out once the policy is enacted.

What do they know about the current enforcement landscape? The Prevention Agency studied the community and used data from community surveys and conversations with stakeholders to get a sense of their pending enforcement needs. Here's what they learned:

- Parents did not consider it risky to allow their teens to drink alcohol at residential parties. In fact, data from community surveys indicated that many parents believed that it was safer for teens to drink in their own homes than in a public space. What they did not consider was the risk to teens and other community members of teens travelling in cars to and from these parties while under the influence of alcohol. The Prevention Agency determined that they would need to continue awareness-raising efforts to help parents understand the consequences of residential binge drinking, their role in affecting this behavior, and the role of social host liability in supporting this change.

- Several years earlier, the Anytown Police Department received a grant to implement sobriety checkpoints. At the time, the checkpoints led to more DUI arrest and fewer youth driving under the influence. This information helped the Prevention Agency determine that the department might be willing to support this new policy initiative, as well.

What's the best enforcement solution? After reviewing the research literature, the Prevention Agency determined that **party patrols** would be the optimal enforcement options for the social host liability law. As part of this strategy, law enforcement patrols neighborhoods where parties are presumed to be held or have been held in the past (Imm et al., 2007). Party patrols help to ensure compliance with the social host liability law because law enforcement agents are authorized to subject adults caught providing alcohol to underage individuals to prescribed penalties. Party patrols alone have also been proven effective in limiting the social availability

of alcohol to underage persons. Party patrols typically involve creating a mechanism for reporting underage drinking parties (PIRE, 2010) and outlining procedures for processing partygoers, such as the administration or breath tests, and issuing citations (Saltz et al., 2010).

Who to engage? To successfully implement the party patrol strategy, the Prevention Agency first and foremost needed the buy-in and support of the law enforcement sector. They also identified the following stakeholders as critical to the success of their efforts:

- **Parents**. Because of the low perception of risk among parents regarding underage drinking (and especially at parties hosted in homes), the Prevention Agency needs to continue to engage this stakeholder group. Once the policy is enacted and enforcement strategies are rolled out, it will be critical that parents understand the need for party patrols as opposed to seeing this initiative as unnecessary or solely punitive.

- **Community members**. While party patrol efforts fall largely to law enforcement officers, much of the initial reporting of suspected underage drinking will need to be conducted by responsible/accountable community members, including parents. Therefore, community members will need to play an integral role in the party patrol effort.

- **Elected officials.** The Prevention Agency will need to continue to partner with the same elected officials responsible for enacting the social host liability law in order to foster their support and facilitate access to necessary resources (elected officials have the authority to allocate enforcement resources).

What to do next? The Prevention Agency set out to complete implementation activities for the party patrol strategy: they worked with elected officials and law enforcement to develop written procedures for intervening at parties; established a hotline where community members could report underage drinking parties; created a monitoring system to identify hot spots for alcohol citations in the community; and developed a media strategy to educate stakeholders and the community about the new policy and corresponding enforcement efforts, and communicate how these strategies have benefitted similar communities (Dash et al.).

Throughout the process, the Prevention Agency ensured that law enforcement, parents, community members, and elected officials were involved in every action related to this enforcement strategy.

Understanding Media Strategies

Media strategies can be used to help increase knowledge and awareness of a substance misuse problem or can help influence community norms. When media strategies are combined with policy and enforcement strategies as part of a comprehensive approach, they can be effective in producing community change (Dash et al., 2015).

Media strategies can support your prevention efforts in the following ways:

- **Increase awareness of local substance use problems and related consequences.** For example, you may use media channels to disseminate information about rising rates of underage drinking among local teens, or about the number of teens accessing alcohol from local retailers and restaurants. This information would help to build support for new policy and enforcement efforts to address these issues.

- **Increase support for a new policy initiative.** Messaging might focus on the benefits of the policy and why it is the best solution for identified problems. Galvanizing public support for policy efforts can be especially helpful if/when progress is stalled around proposed policy changes.

- **Increase awareness of enforcement efforts related to your policy change.** Key to the success of enforcement efforts is public awareness of consequences of non-compliance. For example, in a community that supports party patrolling, some parents will top hosting underage parties because they were caught and fined, but many more parents will stop because they are *afraid* of being fined. That's where media strategies come in.

- **Encourage desirable behavior change or reinforce community norms.** For example, if the goal of your prevention effort is to reduce underage drinking, and you live in a community where parents allow drinking at teen parties to celebrating athletic "wins", you might design a media campaign that includes messaging that counters this norm by promoting safe celebration alternatives.

Types of Strategies

There are three types of media strategies typically included in comprehensive prevention efforts: media advocacy; social marketing; and social norms campaign.

- **Media advocacy** is the strategic use of media to promote a prevention initiative, generate support for changes in the community, and advance prevention policies (Dash, et al., 2015). If your goal is to increase support for a policy, this media strategy can help to increase media coverage and public debate around your priority substance misuse issue. Ways to promote this strategy include developing press releases and letters to the editor, and/or pitching stories to local journalists who are sympathetic/supportive of prevention efforts. Media relationships and partnerships are key to this strategy in order to generate media attention around your policy effort (Wilbur & Stewart, 2011).

- **Social marketing** is the use of commercial marketing techniques to persuade people to change their behavior for the benefit of themselves and the community (University of Kansas, 2020). Social marketing strategies present the trade-off between changing and not changing behavior. For example, a social marketing strategy to increase compliance with a social host law would present the benefits of complying with the law (safer teens) with the consequences of not complying (being fined, dangers to teens and others). the

- **Social norms campaigns** use marketing techniques to disseminate positive messages that promote desired social norms (National Social Norms Institute, 2020). These strategies use reliable data to influence perceptions and reshape mistaken assumptions. The theory behind this approach is that an individual's own behavior is influenced by their perceptions of how their peers behave (Prevention First, 2017). These campaigns emphasize the healthy behavior in order to impact and eventually correct misperceptions that foster problem behavior.

Key Considerations

Below are four considerations for planning and implementing media strategies:

- **Develop clear goals and objectives.** What behavior(s) do you wish to change? Around which issues do you want to increase public debate? Are you trying to raise awareness of an existing policy, or build support for a new one? Determining your goals also means articulating the outcomes you hope to achieve. Use the *Media Planning: Developing Clear Goals and Objectives* tool in the next section to help you get started.

- **Define your audience.** Be specific: consider variables such age, gender, ethnicity, education, and socioeconomic status. Explore how attitudes toward your substance misuse and your policy initiative differs across groups. Knowing your audience will help you to tailor your messages appropriately. *Defining your Audience* tool in the next section will help you plan further.

- **Selecting a 'best fit' strategy.** Your selected strategy should be tied directly to your goals, objectives, and audience. For example, if your goal is to build support for new policy legislation among legislators, your 'best fit' strategy would be media advocacy. If your goal is to change assumptions about peer alcohol use among teens, your choice might be to launch a social norms campaign. If your goal is to increase parent compliance with a new social host law, your choice might be social marketing.

- **Identifying appropriate media channels.** Different audiences access information in different ways. Some may rely on *traditional media channels*, such as newspapers, radio, and television. You can use these outlets to distribute public service announcements, press releases, letters to the editors, and ads. Others may rely on social media, such as Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and Instagram. Social media platforms allow prevention professionals to disseminate media messaging in real time, and often at low cost. However, a low-cost dissemination strategy is still too expensive if it fails to reach its target. So before launching a campaign, take time to do the research and find out how and where your audience goes to get its information and connect with one another.

Media Planning: Developing Clear Goals and Objectives

Developing clear goals and objectives will not only help to ensure that your media strategy stays on track, but will also provide a clear roadmap for communicating to stakeholders what you want your strategy to achieve, how it aligns with your overall prevention approach, and the steps you plan to take to achieve your intended outcomes.

<u>Directions</u>. Answer the following questions to help define your overall purpose, goals, and objectives for your media strategy. Then record your answers in the worksheet that follows. Keep in mind that this exercise will require the input of multiple community members. A good media strategy takes time and research in order to successfully reach your community.

✓ **What characteristics of your community might pose a challenge to your policy change efforts?** Understanding the barriers to your specific policy change can help guide your media goals. For example, if parties to celebrate athletic "wins" are a tradition, community members may be reluctant to embrace any move to shut them down. In this case, the primary goal of a media advocacy strategy might be to raise awareness of the dangers of this tradition and how appropriate policy strategies could reduce the risks. A social norms campaign might focus on increasing awareness of current attitudes about these events and/or promoting new and healthier traditions. A social media campaign might help parents weigh the benefits of complying with the new social host liability policy against the drawbacks.

✓ **Are there community characteristics that might pose a challenge to enforcement efforts?** Understanding how community members perceive compliance and enforcement of an intended policy change is also important when determining your media goals. For example, if yours is a tight-knit community that may be uncomfortable embracing a party patrol approach, you may want to focus a media advocacy effort on increasing the public discussion around how these enforcement efforts help the community at large; or a social marketing campaign designed to help parents weigh the benefits and drawbacks of embracing a prevention approach that keeps the community's young people safe.

✓ **What current attitudes toward the substance use problem or consequence might your media strategy address?** For example, if conversations or surveys reveal that parents are concerned about underage drinking, but assume that other parents think it is acceptable, the goal of a social norms campaign might focus on correcting these misperceptions so parents are more comfortable embracing prevention efforts. If your community is aware that underage drinking is a problem but unaware of existing policies to address it, you may way to focus a media advocacy strategy on raising policy awareness.

✓ **What aspects of culture does your prevention agency need to understand?**
Understanding the cultural aspects of your community will be important as you shape your media strategy goals. Your community represents diversity with respect to race, ethnicity, language preference, gender identify, religion, and so much more. To ensure that your prevention efforts are culturally responsive, it is critical that you engage diverse stakeholders in all aspects of prevention planning.

✓ **What are the intended outcomes of your media strategy?** For each of the questions above, you will need to frame out what your intended outcomes are. This will help you to narrow and refine your goals and objectives and provide a clear direction for your efforts. For example, if your goal is to raise community awareness of the dangers of athletic "wins" parties where alcohol is served, one intended outcome might be to engage parents as partners in working to change this tradition.

Document your answers to the questions from above in the chart below. Make sure your responses are informed by local data and the input of multiple stakeholders. Some questions might not be relevant to your community and that information can help narrow your media strategy choice.

Question	How does this impact your media strategy goal?	How does this relate to your intended outcomes?
What characteristics of your community might pose a challenge to your policy change efforts?		
Are there community characteristics that might pose a challenge to enforcement efforts?		
What current attitudes toward the substance use problem or consequence might your media strategy need to address?		

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Question	How does this impact your media strategy goal?	How does this relate to your intended outcomes?
What aspects of culture does your prevention agency need to understand?		

What media strategy best fits your goals?	How will this strategy address your goals and outcomes?
☐ **Media Advocacy** ☐ **Social Marketing** ☐ **Social Norms Campaign**	

Defining Your Audience

Adapted from the Center for Strategic Prevention Support, Communications Toolkit: Worksheet B Profiling your Audience. https://csps-ma.org/sites/default/files/2020-07/CommToolkit%20Worksheet%20B.pdf

Clearly defining your focus audience will help you develop and communicate messages that will resonate with them. Understanding your audience's attitudes, knowledge, and culture can help to shape your message to successfully engage your audience.

Directions: Answer the following questions to define the focus audience for your media strategy. Be sure your responses are informed by local data and the input of multiple stakeholders.

Type of Media Strategy_____

Who is your focus audience(s)? *(e.g., community leaders, business owners, decision-makers, parents/caregivers, teachers, coaches, etc.)*
How aware is the focus audience of the following? • **the substance misuse problem?** • **the policy you are developing/strengthening to address it?** • **the corresponding enforcement strategy?**

What cultural or linguistic considerations related to your focus audience do you need to address?

What is your level of connectedness to your focus audience? (e.g., does your prevention agency have a positive influence within this focus audience? Do they know and respect your prevention work? Have they worked with you in the past?)

How does your focus audience currently obtain information? (e.g., newspaper, TV, radio, social media platforms, etc.)

Develop your message

Adapted from the Center for Strategic Prevention Support, Communications Toolkit: Worksheet C Profiling your Audience. https://csps-ma.org/sites/default/files/2020-07/CommToolkit%20Worksheet%20C.pdf

Now that you have your goals and audience clearly defined, developing the components of your media message is next. Staying relevant and culturally responsive to your audience is important. Part of developing your message will include efforts to get feedback from a pilot audience. You can use feedback to continue to shape your message that will make the best impact. This worksheet is meant to get you started in developing your message. Remember these key tips for developing your message:

- ☐ Clear, concise message
- ☐ Compelling message!
- ☐ No jargon

<u>Directions</u>: Answer the following questions to start your media message development work.

What is your media strategy core message? Depending on which media strategy you have chosen, your message might focus on: correcting a community norm; supporting a new policy or enforcement strategy; encouraging a specific behavior change among a focus group most likely to change; or increasing awareness around a substance misuse problem or consequence.
Problem statement (what and why): List what substance misuse problem or consequence you are addressing and why it is important?

Environmental strategy approach (how): List selected media strategy and other relevant components of your environmental, such as policy or enforcement.
Call to action: List what you hope to ask the intended audience to do (e.g., asking teens to choose an Uber instead of getting in a car with a friend who has been drinking).

Your Dissemination Plan

Once you have completed *Media Planning: Defining your Goals and Objectives* tool and the *Defining your Audience* tool, you are ready to plan out what media channels to use for dissemination.

Type of Media Strategy_____

Task	Summary	Next Steps
State overall purpose. (summary of goals and objectives from previous tool).		
State primary outcome.		
Describe audience (from previous tool).		

Task	Summary	Next Steps
Describe resources and assets		
List potential champions.		
Identity media channels. ☐ **Traditional (e.g., newspaper, tv, etc.)** ☐ **Social media (e.g., Facebook, Twitter, etc.)**		

Media Strategy Implementation in Practice: Media Advocacy for a Social Host Law

The Goal. The Prevention Agency of Anytown, NY recently began working to enact a new **social host liability law** to reduce binge drinking among teens. They chose this policy strategy because local YRBSS data revealed that most binge drinking among teens occurred at private residence parties. Discussions with law enforcement related to enforcement of the law have been productive; law enforcement officers have begun thinking about how they might implement party patrols once the policy is passed. However, the Prevention Agency has not been able to generate much support from elected officials who will have decision-making power to create this policy change. Additionally, the Prevention Agency still doesn't have support from parents, who don't recognize the importance of advancing the policy. Given these challenges, the Agency's media goals are to build support for the law among these two key audiences.

Defining the Audience. The Prevention Agency determined that the focus audience is among two groups: (1) elected officials, who will ultimately decide on this policy change and who currently only express moderate support in moving it forward; and (2) parents, who don't fully understand the dangers and consequences of hosting youth parties in their homes. The Prevention Agency is hopeful that their past experience working with some current elected officials will help their efforts. The Prevention Agency plans to build upon their past partnerships to build support for this new strategy. The Prevention Agency determined that the parent group has a strong public school presence so engaging the schools might also help with dissemination methods.

Media Strategy. The Prevention Agency selected **media advocacy** as the best way to advance their policy change efforts. Media advocacy is the strategic use of communication vehicles/mass media to promote a prevention initiative and generate public support for a policy change. They recognize that they may want to revisit this strategy once the policy is passed and they assess the community's response to their selected enforcement approach. At that point, they might need to adopt a social marketing strategy to build compliance with the new policy.

Dissemination Channels. Building on their established relationship with the Prevention Agency, the local news station has agreed to air regular public service announcements about the policy effort. The news crew also agreed to cover an upcoming town hall event focused on the new law. Several staff members from the Agency will also submit letters to the editor to the town's two local papers. To reach parents, the Prevention Agency received permission from the public schools to share messages on the schools' Facebook pages. The messaging includes a call to action for parents to write letters of support of the policy to elected officials who will decide on this policy change. The Prevention Agency provided letter writers with clear talking points that

include how to frame the issue, the intended change, what is required to get to the change, and how the elected officials can help make this change through their support of the policy.

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Resources for Additional Learning

General Resources

- **Tips for Ensuring a Culturally Competent Collaboration** (Northeast and Caribbean Prevention Technology Transfer Center) https://pttcnetwork.org/centers/northeast-caribbean-pttc/product/tips-ensuring-culturally-competent-collaboration

- **Incorporating Cultural Competence into Your Comprehensive Plan** (Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America, National Community Anti-Drug Coalition) https://www.cadca.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/cultural_competence.pdf

- **A Prevention Guide to Improving Cultural Competency: A Literature Review** (Central East Prevention Technology Transfer Center) https://pttcnetwork.org/centers/central-east-pttc/product/prevention-guide-improving-cultural-competency

- **Focus on Prevention: Strategies and Programs to Prevent Substance Use** (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) https://store.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/d7/priv/sma10-4120.pdf

- **Community Readiness for Community Change** (Tri-Ethnic Center for Prevention Research) https://tec.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/CR_Handbook_8-3-15.pdf

Environmental Strategies

- **Environmental Strategies to Prevent Underage Drinking Prevention** (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) https://preventionsolutions.edc.org/services/resources/environmental-strategies-prevent-underage-drinking

- **Environmental Strategies to Prevent the Non-Medical Use of Prescription Drugs** (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) https://preventionsolutions.edc.org/services/resources/environmental-strategies-prevent-non-medical-use-prescription-drugs

- **Prevention Tools: What Works, What Doesn't** (Washington State Health Care Authority)
  https://www.theathenaforum.org/best-practices-toolkit-prevention-tools-what-works-what-doesnt

- **The Coalition Impact: Environmental Prevention Strategies** (CADCA)
  https://www.cadca.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/environmentalstrategies.pdf

- **Catalog of Environmental Prevention Strategies** (Wyoming Survey & Analysis Center)
  https://www.wishschools.org/resources/Catalog%20of%20Environmental%20Prevention%20Strategies_Final4%20Wyoming.pdf

- **Prevent Underaged Drinking** (RAND Corporation)
  https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/technical_reports/2007/RAND_TR403.pdf

- **Environmental strategies: Selection Guide, Reference List, and Examples of Implementation Guidelines**. (Pettibone, K., Kowalczyk, S., & Laestadius, L.)
  https://www.ok.gov/odmhsas/documents/Environmental%20Strategy%20Guidance.pdf

- **The Community Tool Box.** (University of Kansas, Center for Community Health and Development)
  https://ctb.ku.edu/en

- **Environmental Strategies Tool** (Wyoming Prevention Depot)
  https://www.wyomingpreventiondepot.org/strategies/

Policy Strategies

- **The Community Tool Box: Influencing Policy Development (**University of Kansas, Center for Community Health and Development)
  https://ctb.ku.edu/en/influencing-policy-development

- **Alcohol Policy Information System** (National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism)
  https://alcoholpolicy.niaaa.nih.gov/

Enforcement Strategies

- **Tips for Engaging with Law Enforcement** (Closson, D., Campus Drug Prevention)
  https://www.campusdrugprevention.gov/views-from-the-field/tips-engaging-law-enforcement

Media Strategies

- **Ten Steps for Developing a Social Marketing Campaign** (Education Development Center)
  https://preventionsolutions.edc.org/sites/default/files/attachments/Ten-Steps-for-Developing-a-Social-Marketing-Campaign_0_0.pdf

- **Developing a Social Media Plan to Support Substance Misuse Prevention Efforts** (Education Development Center)
  https://preventionsolutions.edc.org/sites/default/files/attachments/Developing-a-Social-Media-Plan-to-Support-Substance-Misuse-Prevention-Efforts_0.pdf

- **Tip sheet: Strategies for Working with the Media** (Education Development Center)
  https://preventionsolutions.edc.org/sites/default/files/attachments/Strategies-For-Working-with-the-Media_0.pdf

- **Making the Case for Health with Media Advocacy** (Health ExChange Academy's Communicating for Change)
  https://berkeley-public-health-archive.s3-us-west-1.amazonaws.com/sites/default/files/Communicating-for-Change-Making-the-Case-for-Health-with-Media-Advocacy.pdf

- **Communications Toolkit (**The Massachusetts Technical Assistance Partnership for Prevention, MassTAPP)
  http://masstapp.edc.org/sites/masstapp.edc.org/files/MassTAPP%20Communications%20Toolkit%2010.1.15%20FINAL.pdf

- **National Social Norms Institute**
  http://socialnorms.org/

- **Strategic Media Advocacy for Enforcement of Underaged Drinking Laws** (Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation)
  https://www.pire.org/documents/UnderageDrinking.doc

- **The Community Tool Box.** (University of Kansas, Center for Community Health and Development)
  https://ctb.ku.edu/en

- **Digital Media Best Practices** (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)
  https://www.samhsa.gov/childrens-awareness-day/resources/digital-media-best-practices

PTTCnetwork.org

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Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration