

Sustainability Planning in Prevention Guidebook



March 2024



Great Lakes (HHS Region 5)

PTTC

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

SAMHSA
Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

Published in 2024 by the
Great Lakes Prevention
Technology Transfer Center (PTTC).
1513 University Avenue, Suite 4127
Madison, WI 53705

This resource was prepared for the Prevention Technology Transfer Center Network under a cooperative agreement with the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). All material appearing in this publication, except that taken directly from copyrighted sources, is in the public domain. Do not reproduce or distribute this publication for a fee without specific, written authorization from the Great Lakes PTTC and other contributors. For more information on the dissemination of this resource, email events@chess.wisc.edu.

At the time of this publication, Miriam Delphin-Rittmon, PhD, served as Assistant Secretary for Mental Health and Substance Use in the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services and the Administrator of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. The opinions expressed herein are the views of the speakers and do not reflect the official position of the Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS), SAMHSA. No official support or endorsement by DHHS, SAMHSA, for the opinions described in this resource is intended or should be inferred.

The *Sustainability Planning Guidebook* and accompanying toolkit were originally developed and published by SAMHSA's Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies (CAPT) task order in 2018 (Reference # HHSS283201200024I/HHSS28342002T). The 2023 versions of the guidebook and toolkit were developed with the support of the DHHS, SAMHSA, under cooperative agreement H79SP080995.

You can find many more helpful tools like this in the [Great Lakes PTTC's Products and Resources](#) catalog!



Sustainability Planning in Prevention Guide

This planning guide is designed to help substance misuse prevention providers, coalitions, groups, organizations, and training and technical assistance providers develop sustainability plans. Sustainability planning is a process of looking critically at the current prevention infrastructure, processes, and strategies with an eye toward developing the necessary partnerships and resources to sustain meaningful prevention outcomes beyond current funding.

There are many things to consider when planning for sustainability. This document describes the four steps for developing a comprehensive plan:

- **Take Inventory and Identify Priorities** (p. 5)
- **Complete a Resource and Feasibility Analysis** (p. 11)
- **Develop a Communications Plan** (p. 14)
- **Implement Sustainability Actions** (p. 17)

Read the information and related tasks for each of the components and use the sample templates provided in each section to develop a sustainability plan.

PRE-PLANNING

To prepare for sustainability planning, preventionists and prevention partners should do the following:

- **Understand sustainability basics.** Develop a shared understanding of what sustainability means and looks like, how it's defined, the different sustainability approaches, and the factors that contribute to success. For help on this, see ***Sustainability Resources and Tools*** (p. 19).
- **Integrate sustainability across SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF).** Engage in a collaborative, culturally appropriate, and data-driven approach to strategic planning. This approach can help you establish prevention practices worth sustaining. How have you joined your partners in their prevention efforts? How have they joined you in your prevention efforts?
- **Document lessons learned across the SPF.** Capture and file critical information and insights about prevention practices. These lessons learned can help you make sound sustainability decisions later on.
- **Form a sustainability planning team.** Responsible for spearheading the development of a written sustainability plan, this team should include members who have access to, or can access, expertise in the following areas: prevention, research, budgeting, fundraising, and communication.

LEVERAGING PARTNER SUPPORT

Evaluate your current networking, cooperating, coordinating, and collaborating relationships and think about who else you might engage in sustainability planning. Consider the following steps:

- Prioritize these partners and collaborators: What skills do you need at the table for your sustainability work? Do you have media contacts? Communication expertise? Strong fiscal management? Social media expertise?
- Think about all the partners and collaborators who have been engaged up to the present and identify what it will take to continue that support. What will they need, and the coalition need?
- Review and update memoranda of understanding (MOUs) or memoranda of agreement (MOAs) so that all parties have a current, clear understanding of each other's needs and potential skills, assets, and contributions, as well as the fiscal and other resources that may be shared. (See **Tool 14: Memorandum of Agreement** for an example of a template.)
- Identify those that have not been reached out to yet. What would it take to bring in these new partners? How will they benefit from the partnership? What might they be able to contribute to the work with little effort or additional resources on their part?

RELATED TASKS

- ✓ Think about skills needed and partners who might fill those needs.
- ✓ Keep strong, up-to-date, and well-documented agreements and contracts.
- ✓ Use various media outlets and social media platforms to ensure broad community awareness of your efforts.
- ✓ Stay relevant. Connect publicly to current events and emerging trends.
- ✓ Build relationships continually.
- ✓ Obtain consent (e.g., signed media release forms) from partners to eventually use photos, videos, interviews, and quotes in your organization's promotional materials.
- ✓ Document your fiscal process carefully. Keep track of in-kind contributions, such as donated time (e.g., volunteers), meeting and event spaces, and materials.

Community Example

The following is an example of community collaboration and partnership.

In one state, various departments within the state—including education, law enforcement, public health, mental health and substance misuse, and economic development—recognized their missions were not only similar, but also that the successes of one department were significantly dependent upon the successes of the other departments.

These groups came together in a series of top-level state department meetings and created a shared vision, mission, and goals with connected objectives, strategies, and programs. Each department even contributed a percentage of their budget to a shared “pool.” They then used the SPF to draft a shared strategic plan and used the pooled resources to fund evidence-based interventions in partnership with one another across agencies.

The partnership led to some innovative and collaborative approaches to community problems. The norm changed from one of protectionist competition to one of shared partnership and collaboration supported by interdepartmental policies and guidelines.

When the state legislature proposed a very significant budget cut for one department, their state-level partners testified on their behalf. Funding was cut, but not nearly to the level it was proposed, and strategies were sustained because of the shared funds from the partnerships.

This story is a great example of sustainability built on the foundation of strong partnerships and collaborations, a shared data-driven planning process, common goals, and supportive norms and policies.

1. Take Inventory and Identify Priorities

The first step to developing a written sustainability plan is to take inventory of your prevention programs, processes, and outcomes. Key questions to address when examining the inventory:

- What is working well?
- Which are still developing or being refined?
- What is not working?

This will help prioritize what to sustain and how. Programs that are running smoothly and showing promising results could be adopted by a partner. Programs or processes that are still taking shape and have the potential to impact outcomes can be sustained through further funding lead by one's agency, grant funding, coalition support, fund raising, etc. Programs that are not working or have been a struggle to get off the ground should not be a priority or consideration in a sustainability plan.

Prevention partners work together and across a community to move prevention efforts forward through a strategic planning process. Many communities use the SPF to guide these processes. Establishing guidelines will help focus the analysis on what's important to the community.

To identify local processes that support effective strategic planning, the guidelines below can be used to review the community's processes. Feel free to adapt them as needed.

For each step of the SPF, do the following:

- Identify past processes that helped your community complete key tasks. By documenting what worked well, you can help your community continue to use these successful strategic planning processes over time.
- Identify past processes that did not help your community complete key tasks. By documenting what did not work well, you can help your community improve or discard any unsuccessful processes.
- Identify new processes that will help your community complete key tasks moving forward. To be truly successful over time, you can't just look at processes from the past. Your community is always changing, and your processes will need to change along with it.
- Determine your coalition's level of responsibility. Your larger prevention task force may – or may not – be the right group to sustain the processes needed to support effective strategic planning. In some cases, others in the community may be better positioned to keep successful processes going over time.

Once the sustainability planning team has its process guidelines in place, it's time to begin gathering the information needed to review. Sources of information about strategic planning processes include various forms of documentation such as task force membership/attendance lists, meeting minutes, and feedback forms; partnership agreements (e.g., memos of understanding); and community outreach and awareness-raising materials. By reviewing the structure, process, staffing, and programs, you can identify what is completed and what is not effective or not essential.

This includes the need for the continual assessment of partners and collaborations by asking the following questions:

- Who is fully engaged?
- Is the focus population actively involved? How?
- Who needs to be at the table that currently isn't?

- Do partners and collaborators have clear roles and understand what they have agreed to do?
- Are the people who can continue to support the most effective prevention efforts trained sufficiently so they can move forward on their own with minimal mentoring and support?
- Are agreements up to date and reflective of what is really happening in the community?

RELATED TASKS

- ✓ Document your data and assessment agreements, list readily available data, identify data gaps, and determine how you measure capacity. (Assessment)
- ✓ Track efforts to build local prevention partners, resources, and readiness; identify workforce needs as they emerge. (Capacity)
- ✓ Capture what you have learned, what you will do again, and where you need to adapt your process. (Planning)
- ✓ Track fidelity in your strategies and key program elements. (Implementation)
- ✓ Capture what you learned to inform the next assessment cycle. (Evaluation)
- ✓ Document and continue to monitor effective policy adoption and enforcement of cultural and linguistic competency practices. (Cultural Competence)

Document lessons learned for each step of the SPF. (See **Tool 1: Process Review Worksheet.**) Below is an example of what this review might look like.

SAMPLE: Process Review

SPF Steps	What Worked	What Did Not Work	New Processes Needed	Group Role
Assessment	Establishing data-sharing agreements with health centers Partnering with a research team for data collection and analysis	Cold-calling prescribers for interviews using the phonebook	Find ways to learn about the growing immigrant population	Drove this step, and is still responsible for assessing prevention needs and capacity

Next will be to identify the evidence of effectiveness of the interventions. The goal is to focus on those interventions that have been shown to have the greatest outcomes.

Examine Interventions

Use the guidelines below as a starting point for identifying interventions that are worth sustaining in the community—as well as who should keep them going. For each intervention, do the following:

- **Determine if it is achieving desirable outcomes now or moving in the right direction.** Effectiveness is one hallmark of intervention success. Yet even the most effective interventions can take a long time to produce outcomes, so it's also important to recognize any signs of progress.

Sustainability Planning in Prevention Guide

- **Determine if it is well equipped with staff, supplies, and space.** Interventions that have adequate resources now are more likely to attract the support they'll need to continue.
- **Determine if it is valued by community leaders, key stakeholders, and the public.** Even the most effective and well-resourced interventions should only continue if they remain a good fit for the broader community.
- **Determine your task force's level of responsibility.** Your larger prevention task force may—or may not—be the right group to sustain successful interventions. In some cases, others in the community may be better positioned to keep them going over time.

It can be helpful to construct an at-a-glance summary chart of your review. (See **Tool 2: Intervention Review Worksheet.**) Below is an example of what this might look like.

SAMPLE: Intervention Review

Prevention Interventions	Evidence of Effectiveness	Evidence of Internal Capacity	Evidence of Community Support	Group Role
Intervention 1	✓	✓	✓	X
Intervention 2	X	X	X	✓
Intervention 3	✓	✓	✓	✓

Link Effort to Outcomes

An important next step is to clearly show how the group's efforts are linked to the desired outcomes. Showing these links is important when making a sustainability case to supporters that are not engaged yet. If a logical, clear link between the efforts and community-based outcomes cannot be made, it will be a real challenge to find support for the priority strategies that were chosen. A good place to start is by reviewing **the logic model and outcomes.**

Outcome evaluation data can help the team understand the degree to which interventions are producing anticipated results, including: (1) changes in knowledge, attitudes, beliefs, and skills (short-term prevention outcomes); (2) changes in behaviors and negative consequences related to substance use and misuse (long-term prevention outcomes).

Evaluation data on the process can help the team understand the implementation of interventions. For example, are the interventions attracting qualified and dedicated staff? Are they reaching intended audiences? Are they achieving high levels of participant satisfaction? When it's too early to see and measure prevention outcomes, process evaluation data can reveal whether interventions seem to be moving in the right direction. (See **Tool 3: Outcome Data Chart.**) Below is an example of what this chart might look like.

SAMPLE: Outcome Data Chart

Strategy	Process Data	Outcome Data
<i>Alcohol compliance checks</i>	<i>Law enforcement tracking the number of compliance checks and enforcement data.</i>	<i>Healthy Youth Survey data showing a reduction in reported retail access</i>

RELATED TASKS

- ✓ Review your logic model regularly and keep it up to date and at the center of all your efforts.
- ✓ Document and monitor your outcomes (process, short-term, and long-term).

Develop Criteria to Determine Which Efforts to Continue

Identify the criteria your coalition, group, organization, or program will use to decide what efforts are core to sustaining your outcomes at the local level. The following categories are suggested by the Sustainability Toolkit from the Center for Civic Partnerships (Public Health Institute, 2001¹).

- **Impact** – Does the effort increase community collaboration, improve partnerships, enhance community health, build community capacity, or result in other significant benefits to the community?
- **Community Support** – Is the effort already recognized in the community, and does it have the support of the community, including key community leaders and decision-makers?
- **Resource Potential** – Does the effort fill a community resource gap, have the potential to leverage additional resources, have a successful track record, have adequate resources, or generate community commitment?
- **Still a Need** – Does the effort support a long-term community goal or fill a continuing need, and would discontinuing it have negative impacts on the community?

Your group may choose other criteria, but you will want to justify how you chose the criteria and consider what specific questions you will need to ask to determine your priorities. (See **Tool 4: Priority Checklist.**) Below is an example of one based on the Center for Civic Partnership’s criteria.

¹ Originated from the Center for Civic Partnerships. Sustainability Toolkit: 10 Steps for Maintaining your Community Improvements (Public Health Institute, 2001). This program ended in 2016. Can now be found at <https://www.cbprcurriculum.info/ccph/cbpr/u7/u73.html>

SAMPLE: Partnership Criteria

Impact	Community Support	Resource Potential	Still A Need
<input type="checkbox"/> Increased community collaboration <input type="checkbox"/> Measurable improvement in community health <input type="checkbox"/> Improved health policy <input type="checkbox"/> Increased community capacity to deal with issues <input type="checkbox"/> Benefits (short-term and long-term) justify the cost of doing the work	<input type="checkbox"/> Community support <input type="checkbox"/> Key decision-makers' support <input type="checkbox"/> Recognition: community members identify specific accomplishments/activities with our work	<input type="checkbox"/> Filling a gap or niche in the community <input type="checkbox"/> Currently leveraging additional resources <input type="checkbox"/> Potential to secure additional funding <input type="checkbox"/> Effective track record <input type="checkbox"/> Existing capacity to implement strategies <input type="checkbox"/> Community commitment	<input type="checkbox"/> Long-term community goal (i.e., tobacco free by 2020). <input type="checkbox"/> There is still a community need <input type="checkbox"/> Discontinuing will have a negative impact <input type="checkbox"/> Value relative to other problems in the community

Set Sustainability Goals

Once the priorities have been identified—the **components of the work that must be sustained to continue to make progress on the outcomes**—we are ready to set clear sustainability goals. (See **Tool 5: Setting Goals Worksheet.**) Sound sustainability goals have these characteristics:

- **Data-informed.** Make sure each goal is clear and based on objective data about what's working well in and for your community –not on personal assumptions, opinions, or preferences. By engaging in a systematic and critical examination of prevention practices, you will be able to support every decision with data.
- **Realistic.** Make sure that, when taken together, the goals reflect what the community can reasonably hope to accomplish. It's best to set no more than 2-3 goals in total; even just a few goals will give everyone plenty of work to do!
- **Shared.** Make sure the goals are approved by the full prevention task force and any other key community partners. Their early buy-in will help to ensure that the planning team has the help and support it needs when working to achieve these goals later on.

Always keep the long-range goal in sight (e.g., decreasing underage drinking or decreasing binge drinking), even while you are focusing on sustaining short-term strategies and changes in risk and protective factors.

Writing Concrete Objectives

Objectives are the concrete milestones needed to complete to achieve each of the sustainability goals. Developing concrete objectives for each of the sustainability goals will inform the selections of fiscal strategies needed to achieve those goals. When writing objectives, make sure they have the following characteristics. (See **Tool 6: SMART Objectives Worksheet.**)

Sustainability Planning in Prevention Guide

- **Essential.** Objectives should address only those activities that are fundamental to achieving sustainability goals. For example, if the goal is to sustain the prevention coalition, then the objectives should focus on such essential activities as convening regular meetings and building member capacity. One may choose to hold a potluck celebration from time to time, but this less essential activity would not require an objective.
- **Specific.** Objectives should include clear language and concrete, measurable details –such as numbers and time frames– helps to identify when a milestone has been achieved. For example, objectives that focus on convening regular coalition meetings and building member capacity should specify how often (e.g., monthly meetings year-round) and/or how many (e.g., at least three capacity-building opportunities each year).
- **Realistic.** Objectives should be reasonable and achievable. When objectives are overly ambitious, goals become impossible to achieve. For example, the coalition has a better chance of being able to offer 3 than 10 to 12 capacity-building opportunities each year. Remember, it's better to under-promise and over-deliver than vice versa!

Examples: Sustainability Goals and SMART (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Time-Oriented) Objectives

Sustainability Goal: Maintain MOUs

Objective: Have signed MOUs detailing the terms of partnerships with 12 primary community data sources three months after initiating the partnership

Sustainability Goal: Maintain quality and frequency of compliance checks.

Objective: 75% of retail vendors complete compliance checks at least once every six months, with trained police and youth

RELATED TASKS

- ✓ Review tools and best practice models in sustainability. (See ***Sustainability Resources and Tools***, p. 18.)
- ✓ Engage partners and collaborators in goal setting now so they will be on board when it is time to implement the plan.

2. Complete a Resource and Feasibility Analysis

After setting goals and writing concrete objectives, your sustainability planning team will need to determine exactly what actualizing each of your sustainability goals will require. This involves using the objectives to identify required resources and documenting projected costs for each resource. Conducting a resource and feasibility analysis will help you select strategies to secure required resources and cover projected costs. In this analysis, you will do the following:

- Identify the resource needs for the goal including human, fiscal, and organizational. (See **Tool 7: Identifying Resources Worksheet.**)
- Assess current partners and identifying new ones. (See **Tool 8: Potential Partners.**)
- Identify existing resources that could support the goal (human, fiscal, and organizational); remember to include in-kind support.
- Determine the feasibility of potential funding and support strategies.
- Create a sustainability budget.

After completing a feasibility analysis of each goal, you will:

- Have a clear overall target for your sustainability efforts (e.g., our coalition, group, or organization needs \$30,000 a year to sustain critical strategies to reduce underage drinking)
- Have a clear idea of the feasibility of achieving each of the sustainability goals and what actualizing each goal will require.

Now you are ready to develop the sustainability budget and create a funding and support strategy. (See **Tool 9: Projected Sustainability Budget Form.**)

SAMPLE: Projected Sustainability Budget Form

Line Item (Resource)	Goal 1	Goal 2	Goal 3	TOTAL
Staffing				
# of FTEs				
Benefits/Fringe				
Consultant costs				
Program materials				
Training				
Travel				
Space				
Administrative				
In-kind				
TOTAL				

SAMPLE: Budget Narrative

It is very helpful to have a budget narrative that more fully explains each line item. The following are some examples:

Staffing: One full-time equivalent (FTE) employee to coordinate and facilitate the substance misuse prevention activities and to complete all grant and community reporting requirements at \$____ per year.

Program materials: Program curriculum and material cost for 60 high school participants is \$50 per student x 60 students = \$3,000.

In-kind: School to provide staff time and coordination to display media campaign posters at all sporting events.

Feasible Fiscal Strategies

Consider which fiscal strategies will be most successful for sustainability. A strategy is only feasible if these two conditions are met: It's a good *fit* for what you want to accomplish and you have access to a *partner* willing to deliver what you need. Fiscal strategies may include the following:

- Full or partial program adoption by a community partner
- Systems or policy change that are fully integrated into an existing structure
- A variety of strategies to raise revenue, including grants, donations, and in-kind commitments

To select the right set of fiscal strategies, consider both **long-** and **short-term** options. (See **Tool 10: Selecting Strategies Worksheet.**)

- **Long-term fiscal strategies** provide access to stable, recurring sources of resources and revenue. These strategies (including securing line items in existing budgets, promoting the adoption of programs and services, and changing community guidelines) represent long-term sustainability solutions.
- **Short-term fiscal strategies** provide limited or temporary access to resources and revenue. These strategies (including soliciting in-kind support, applying for grants, and earning/raising money) can help keep successful prevention practices afloat while you work toward your long-term solutions.

Feasibility Checklist

To determine feasibility, your organization, prevention group, or coalition can use a feasibility checklist for each sustainability goal. (See **Tool 11: Feasibility Checklist.**) For this process, as a group, discuss and vote on the fiscal strategies believed to be feasible and then gather ideas for the development of the action plan.

A sample feasibility checklist is provided below. Not all strategies will be equally applicable to every goal, so tailor the feasibility checklist as needed.

SAMPLE: Feasibility Checklist

Goal 1: Maintain quality and frequency of compliance checks				
Objective 1: 75% of retail vendors complete a compliance check with trained police & youth per year.				
Type	Strategy	Point Person	Feasibility	Ideas for Action
Ask	Acquire public funding			
	Apply for grants			
	Develop and implement fundraisers			
	Pursue third-party funding			
	Secure endowments/planned giving arrangements			
	Solicit in-kind support			
Charge	Develop fee-for-service structure			
	Establish membership fees/dues			
Earn	Make a business plan			
	Market your coalition			
	Sell products/services for programming funds			
Share	Become a line item in existing budget			
	Incorporate activities/services with similar mission			
	Promote the goal among partners			
	Share positions and resources			
	Tap into personnel resources			

RELATED TASKS

- ✓ Determine the fiscal strategies that are best suited for pursuing for each component.
- ✓ Develop an action plan for the implementation of fiscal strategies, including a timeline and a note of who is responsible for each task.
- ✓ Track your fiscal process carefully: Keep track of in-kind contributions such as volunteer and donated time and materials. (See Sustainability Resources and Tools: Value of Volunteer Time.)

3. Develop a Marketing and Communications Plan

Once it is clear about what needs to be sustained; what resources are needed (e.g., partners, training, materials, collaborative space, volunteers); and what the most feasible resource development strategies are, the next step is to focus on developing a communication plan for requesting resources and revenue from potential sources of support. To prepare, consider (1) establishing a framework to guide your communication efforts and (2) creating a case statement that describes your sustainability efforts.

The framework starts by identifying the different sectors, audiences, and/or partners to engage, and customize the communications accordingly. Think about how marketing messages are crafted for each audience.

Create a Case Statement

Start by developing a one-page case statement. A case statement is a clear and concise summary that explains why sustaining your community efforts matters.

The case statement should tell the reader the following information:

- Title: Who the coalition, group, or organization is.
- Hook: What the focus is and why it matters. Use a compelling quote, question, or statistic.
- Goals: The sustainability goals and supporting data.
- Capacity: What are the collaborating organizations and how are each group's priorities mutually supported.
- Need(s): Describe why the coalition is seeking new partnerships/funds, and how the reader can help.
- Accomplishments: What has been accomplished to date and core prevention strategies.
- Contact information: Give potential supporters a way to get in touch.

The case statement should convey how your coalition's efforts are clearly associated with your desired outcomes. It should also show how these successes are linked to your community partnerships. This is an important step in making your sustainability case to additional supporters who are not yet working with you.

- When developing a case statement, keep the following tips in mind:
- Limit the case statement to essential information/details; if it is too long people won't read it.
- Pull essential information from the sustainability planning process.
- Include a nice balance of narrative, charts, and photographs.
- Make the case statement appealing to a broad range of audiences; you can always customize it later on.
- Case statements don't need to be fancy or expensive to be useful, but they must be well-crafted.

Effective Elevator Pitch

Train and support your coalition, group, or organization members in giving a pitch. Good elevator pitches are carefully geared to their intended audiences. (See **Tool 15: Developing an Elevator Pitch.**) They should tell the listener:

- **The Three W's:** The who, what, and why of your message or request
- The **benefits** of collaboration to both you and your partner, and any **barriers** you've identified that could make it challenging to work together and how you plan to get past them.
- A **call to action** clearly identifying what you are asking potential partners to do if they say yes.

Quality pitches are audience specific and tailored to address the audience's unique needs, values, and priorities.

Once there is a clear idea of whom to engage with and what is needed to communicate with them, it is time to move forward with a communications plan. (See **Tool 12: Sustainability Marketing & Communications Plan Matrix Table.**) The following matrix table can help to outline your marketing and communication plan. This should include the audience, tasks required to communicate the value and importance of the work to the identified audience, and resources and technology needed to implement the strategy.

SAMPLE: Sustainability Marketing & Communications Plan Matrix Table

Audience	Communications/Marketing	Resources Needed or Activated	Technologies Used
<i>Local businesses, banks, and financial institutions</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Develop Case Statement</i> • <i>Develop outreach list.</i> • <i>Engage through interviews, at networking events and through social media.</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Up to date data and information on accomplishments</i> • <i>Contact information, names, and personal contacts</i> • <i>Publishing/editing/graphics support</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Social media</i> • <i>Grant applications</i> • <i>Brochures</i> • <i>Newsletters</i>
<i>Anytown Community</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Use yearly Town Hall Meeting as an outreach event.</i> • <i>Develop press release/editorial</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Expand participation in Town Hall Meeting</i> • <i>Coalition members and youth to develop content</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Local newspaper, local cable, social media</i>

RELATED TASKS

- ✓ Gather photos and quotes from partners and participants and get permission to use them in promotional materials.
- ✓ Gather examples of press and other media releases related to the work of your coalition, group, or organization that you want to highlight in the sustainability plan.
- ✓ Develop a simple, clear, and short case statement for all your outreach efforts.
- ✓ Build technology and communication capacity.
- ✓ Build relationships with your local media.
- ✓ Develop or expand your social media presence.
- ✓ Develop a good elevator pitch that is carefully geared to its intended audience. (See **Tool 15: Developing an Effective Elevator Pitch.**)

4. Implement Sustainability Actions

Once your team has developed a written plan, you can move to step four by implementing sustainability actions. This is the culmination of previous steps and establishes the sustainability action plan. (See **Tool 13: Sustainability Action Plan.**) It should include the following:

- The sustainability goals.
- The chosen resource strategies based on the feasibility assessment.
- Who will take the lead on the identified tasks and who will support the action.
- What tasks need to be accomplished to implement the plan and achieve the goals.
- The resources and technology needed to implement the fiscal strategy.
- When you hope to complete each task.

Integration and alignment of your sustainability plan with the current prevention implementation plan will help tap into any potential synergies. For example, an already scheduled town hall meeting is also a potential outreach strategy for engaging local funders.

Consider developing a sustainability-specific action plan to identify timelines and the point-person responsible for accomplishing each fiscal strategy. This will be an important working document to help you begin to implement your sustainability plan and keep it forward focused.

SAMPLE: Sustainability Action Plan

Prevention Goal	Strategy	Who Will Lead/Who Will Help?	Tasks	Materials/Resources	Due Date
<i>Expand Partnerships</i>	<i>Build on existing partnerships and relationships with key community partners</i>	<i>Program Director, Lucia Blackhall</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare initial communication • Identify potential partners • Make proposals • Formalize partnerships (e.g., MOU/MOA) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communication expertise • Lists of existing partnerships and key partners • Meeting schedule 	<i>June</i> <i>July</i> <i>August</i>
<i>Compliance Checks</i>	<i>Incorporate into law enforcement standard procedures</i>	<i>Community coalition lead</i> <i>Department champion</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify department champion • Prepare background and request • Present to chief and admin team 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Compliance check research • Local evaluation results 	<i>August</i> <i>June</i> <i>October</i>
<i>Media Campaign</i>	<i>Ask for community and corporate donations</i>	<i>Coalition members</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare donation letter • Develop contact list for each task • Submit requests 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Donation letter • Two-page case statement • Corporation guidelines 	<i>June</i> <i>July</i> <i>July</i>

Provide Updates

It's important to keep the full prevention task force updated on the progress of the sustainability efforts. Here are some reasons why:

- **Sustainability is part of a broader strategic planning process.** Sustainability is integral to the entire SPF process, so it's important for everyone involved strategic planning to know what's going on.
- **People are invested.** Members who have played a role in establishing strong prevention practices are going to care about the future of their efforts.
- **Everyone appreciates results.** Sustainability updates that reveal progress and results can increase members' confidence about their continued participation in prevention efforts—and help them justify to their supervisors the time they spend attending your group's meetings.
- **People may be able to help!** When members know what's going on, they can jump in with just-in-time information, insight, and support.

Respond to Changes

Your sustainability plan is a working document. Update and revise it regularly in response to such changes as the following:

- **Sustainability setbacks.** Not every request for support is going to work out! When initial requests prove unsuccessful, record the reasons why, as well as your new strategies for filling the resource gaps that remain.
- **New possibilities.** Opportunities for support that were not available when you first developed your sustainability plan are likely to emerge over time. As new and appropriate opportunities appear, record which you intend to pursue and how.
- **Shifting priorities.** Sustainability efforts may be influenced by the activities and findings of your broader strategic planning process. For example, people may be pulled away from sustainability efforts to help advance other strategic planning efforts—in which case you'll need to find others to take their place and update your plan accordingly. Or evaluation findings may reveal that an intervention that seemed to be moving in the right direction is actually failing to produce positive outcomes. If sustaining this intervention was one of your goals, you'll need to revisit this part of your plan.

Celebrating Success

It takes a long time and a lot of hard work to achieve sustainability goals in prevention. Early on, those involved will likely feel invested and excited to be part of such an important initiative. But maintaining people's energy, involvement, and momentum over time takes effort. Celebrating success is one important way to do this.

Each time a piece of work is completed, and each time a new source of support is secured, acknowledge that success. By celebrating successes, both large and small, your team may actually breed further success. For example, if you publicly announce a new grant award, you will show your community that someone believes in you enough to invest in you—which often spurs others to do the same. Equally important, your team will help keep people engaged and positive as your community continues its long sustainability journey.

SUSTAINABILITY RESOURCES AND TOOLS

The following are resources to help you in your quest for achieving sustainability.

- *Great Lake PTTC's Sustainability and the SPF*
- *Great Lakes PTTC's Prevention Learning Portal*
- *CDC's Healthy Communities Program: A Sustainability Planning Guide for Healthy Communities*
- *Leaving a Legacy: Six Strategies for Sustainability*
- *NYHealth Foundation's Sustaining Improved Outcomes: A Toolkit*
- *Prevention Institute: Collaboration Multiplier*
- *Program Sustainability Assessment Tool (PSAT)*
- *PSAT Planning Resources*
- *Value of Volunteer Time*



Great Lakes (HHS Region 5)

PTTC

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

pttcnetwork.org/greatlakes

SAMHSA

Substance Abuse and Mental Health
Services Administration

samhsa.gov