



SS/HS Communication University

Participant's Guide:

Community Connections



Community Connections
Participant's Guide

DAY 1 CURRICULUM

Learning Activity/Session

Notes

Introduction: Overview of the Learning Lab

The success of many initiatives can rest, in part, on the positive change that comes from building a genuine community, bringing often disparate populations together in new ways. As an SS/HS grantee, you can benefit from learning how to listen to your community, find the alignments between community priorities and your initiative, then tap into mass communication channels, such as public events and media, to connect with your larger community. This track is not intended as a course in community building *per se*. Rather, it encourages and builds skills in mass communication as a means to create a broad base of support for local SS/HS initiatives.

Key Learnings:

- Key learning #1: Overcoming the barriers is the only way we can reap the benefits.
- Key learning #2: We are united by our differences.
- Key learning #3: To understand the needs of the community, listen and learn.
- Key learning #4: SS/HS connects to our wider community.
- Key learning #5: Events can pull communities together.
- Key learning #6: The media can be a critical ally in connecting community.

Objectives:

- Key learnings #1–4 will introduce the concepts of community dimensions. You will understand how to use research to identify different cultures in your community and will be introduced to tools and resources to assist you in that research. You will work with your peers to analyze differences and similarities in cultures. You will learn to align community cultural dimensions with SS/HS initiatives. You will then learn how to use those cultural dimensions to enhance communication to the community at large.

- Building on key learnings #1–4, you will learn skills to apply the research and understanding of your communities to mass communication techniques. You will understand how to create a plan to develop community-appropriate events. You also will learn how to develop strategies for leveraging traditional mass media in a way that resonates with community cultural dimensions and values.

Key Learning #1:
Overcoming the barriers is the only way we can reap the benefits.

Learning Activity/Session	Notes
<p>What Is “Community Building”?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Builds on the common wish for increased well-being. • Brings together community partners to focus on goals, specific priorities, problem-solving (e.g., safety, economic disparity, health). • Strengthens formal and informal structures, systems (e.g., referral processes). • Often nurtured through events. • Welcomes new community members, organizations. • Creates a palpable feeling/sense/embrace. 	
<p>Benefits To Building Communities</p> <p><i>Garnering broad-based community support can:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Raise awareness of your issues among wider populations who can then be persuaded to take action; • Generate the public impression that “you’ve been there forever and you’ll be there always” (good for sustainability); • Increase demand for your programs and services; and • Bring attention to your work and the work of your partners—increasing reach now and in the future opens the door to potential new partnerships. 	

Barriers To Building Communities

For you/for them:

- Community building takes time;
- Groups do not see a benefit to collaborating with SS/HS;
- There are different groups within your community—each with different cultural attributes, each requiring different messages and outreach;
- Ethnic;
- Gender;
- Socioeconomic;
- Familial;
- Authority orientation;
- History; and
- Organizational time orientation

Your resources are limited, and it is difficult to find time to engage additional subcultures or groups in the community.

Now that we understand the purpose and value of building community—as well as the associated benefits and barriers—we need to learn how our differences actually unite us. The next key learning examines cultures—ethnic, organizational, and more. By recognizing and respecting one another’s cultures, we can discover commonalities amidst a sea of differences.

**Key Learning #2:
We are united by our differences.**

Learning Activity/Session	Notes
<p>Community by the Numbers</p> <p>Prior to coming here, you found information on your larger community by using the Community Profile worksheet. Refer to those numbers for the categories below as we go through this next section. In some cases, these numbers will illuminate a lot about your community; in others, they may obscure information:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Population; • Language; • Place of origin; • Homelessness; • Housing; • Wealth distribution; • Education levels; • Media preferences; • Internet usage; • Crime rates; and • Livability measures. <p>Defining Our Own Common Language Around Culture</p> <p>Any meaningful discussion of culture is as complex and multidimensional as our communities truly are. It helps, therefore, to agree on common language upfront to avoid confusion.</p> <p>For the purposes of this learning lab, use the following definitions:</p> <p>Culture: According to the National Center for Cultural Competence (2004), culture is an integrated pattern of human behavior. It includes the methods of communication, languages, practices, beliefs, values, customs, courtesies, rituals, manners of interacting, roles, relationships, and expected behaviors of a racial, ethnic, religious, social, or political group, as well as the ability to transmit all of the above to succeeding generations. http://sshs.promoteprevent.org/clc-guide/cultural-and-linguistic-competence)</p>	

Cultural dimension: A characteristic that describes a unique aspect of a culture.

Cultural attributes: Cultural attributes include the following descriptors: ethnic, gender, socioeconomic, familial.

Subcultures: A group within a culture that has distinct characteristics (e.g., beliefs, values).

Taking the Pulse of the Nation and Our Communities

The demographic makeup of America is always in flux, and recent census data and projections show a picture of our Nation that indicates we must learn more about many different groups to engage our communities.

The projected rate of increase of youth of Color in the United States from 1995 to 2015:

- American Indian/Alaska Native 17 percent
- African-American 19 percent
- Hispanic/Latino 59 percent
- Asian-American, Native Hawaiian, and other Pacific Islander 74 percent
- Caucasian/White -3 percent

Source: U.S. Census Bureau's National Population Projections Released 2008 (based on 2000 census).

What is cultural and linguistic competence (CLC)?

The ability of individuals and systems to respond respectfully and effectively to people of all cultures, races, ethnic backgrounds, sexual orientations, and faiths or religions in a manner that recognizes, affirms, and values the work of individuals, families, tribes, and communities and protects the dignity of each (Malik & Velazquez, 2002).

What are cultural values?

The commonly held standards of what is acceptable or unacceptable, important or unimportant, right or wrong, workable or unworkable, etc., in a community or society.

They are learned, relatively enduring, emotionally charged, and epistemologically grounded and represented moral conceptualizations that assist us in making judgments and in preparing us to act.

How do we embrace cultural differences?

- Leadership
- Political will
- Commitment and resolve
- Shared ownership
- Dedicated resources
- Self- and organizational assessment of CLC

Overarching Cultural Dimensions and Their Impact on Our Communities and Our Work

Your communities are tremendously multifaceted. Scratch the surface, and you'll quickly see that the *dimensions* of culture are far more complex than a listing of ethnicities.

Looking more closely, you start to see that deeper cultural dimensions paint a truer portrait of your community. Within cultures, a multitude of different cultural attributes emerges. As this complexity is revealed, you may even find some of your own assumptions challenged. For instance:

Ethnic: *Traits based on common religion, race, language, and/or place of origin.* These dimensions may be both the easiest and the most difficult to decipher. For example, individuals from Costa Rica may share a common language, race, and possibly religion—all traits that are relatively easy to observe. However, Costa Ricans may treat elders and peers differently, which can be difficult for an outsider to understand. This is why gatekeepers are often essential.

Gender: *The dominant male and/or female behavior traits that define a culture.* Gender roles in cultures go beyond the number of men and women in a society. Male cultures are often associated with assertive, pragmatic behavior, while female cultures are associated with caring and compassion. Many cultures exhibit a mix of these traits, but most cultures show a dominance of one over the other.

Socioeconomic: *An implied cultural linkage between those of similar social and economic backgrounds.* For example, in your community, a low-income population may share a common set of values and beliefs about the way they interact with others and their expectations for their children.

Familial: *The way in which individuals perceive the role of the family unit.* For example, the students in your schools may be raised in a traditional familial culture. That means that taking care of family members is something they greatly value. They may be willing to forego advanced education or moving out of town in order to take a job that will put food on the table for their immediate, and possibly extended, family; therefore, finding work will be more important than academic achievement.

Organizational: *A shared set of values held by individuals belonging to the same organization.* For example, a local church’s organizational culture may be held together by a shared belief system (formed around a religion). They may also share the value that it is their duty to support parishioners in hard times. The business community may be held together by a common desire for “return on investment” or to see the local economy flourish.

Government/authority orientation: *The way in which individuals perceive the role of government and other authority in daily life.* For example, some parts of the country have a long history of noninterventionist and individual governing. This history may impact how your community views the role of the school and the partners at your site. Conversely, some groups often defer to the authority of government agencies, schools in particular, as an issue of respect.

Communication orientation: *Personal communication patterns that are expected and shared.* For example, what are the norms for touching when speaking, making eye contact, or keeping physical distance? Is small talk part of the communication routine? Are direct questions expected, encouraged, or discouraged? Are there certain people in a family or a community who speak for the whole?

Time orientation: *How time is perceived.* For example, some groups don’t think of time as linear, which can impact your daily interactions as well as their beliefs about the longer term needs of the community. What are the norms for speed of work? What are the norms for arriving on time?

Identifying Different Cultures in Our Community

As you think about the cultures in your community, it’s important to examine your own beliefs about the predominant cultures and the cultural attributes at play in your community. Using the Community Profile worksheet you completed prior to this training, as well as your own knowledge of your community, think about the following questions:

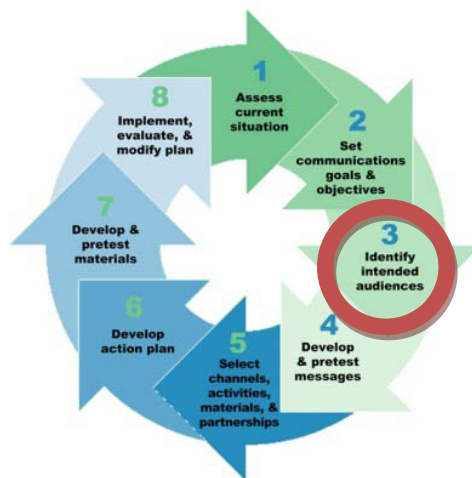
- What are the predominant cultures in your community?
- How would you describe these groups based on their cultural attributes (e.g., organizational, ethnic, socioeconomic)?

Learning About Our Community's Cultures Sets the Stage for Communication

In communication, the groups with whom you wish to speak are your audiences for communication—and, in this case, that would include the different cultures within your community.

While this learning lab explores how to reach a wider community through mass communication channels, you must still research your audiences so you can meet them where they are.

This work aligns with Step 3 of the 8-Step Communication Planning Model with which you are all familiar. By researching your community's cultures, you create a strong foundation for mounting successful events or generating media coverage that will resonate with the many audiences in your wider community.



At this point, you have looked at your wider community through an exploration of culture, cultural dimensions, and the varied factors that impact your audiences. This comprehensive portrait has provided you with the audience research you need to begin your communication efforts.

Key Learning #3:

To understand the needs of the community, listen and learn.

Learning Activity/Session

Notes

Getting To Know Our Community by Conducting a Community Audit

Beyond an examination of different cultures, understanding your community at large will help you craft meaningful messages that will successfully reach wider audiences.

An audit provides you with a more complete picture of your community. It can help you determine the core values, needs, priorities, and preferences of each culture (audience) in your community—information critical to successfully communicating through mass communication.

It also helps you identify forces in your community that may be impacting the behavior of different groups. For example, has the economic downturn created high unemployment? Has that been manifested in higher levels of family stress or increased mobility as people seek jobs elsewhere?

You began your community audit when you completed the Community Profile worksheet. You can expand upon this work to learn more about:

- Population;
- Language;
- Place of origin;
- Homelessness;
- Housing;
- Wealth distribution;
- Education levels;
- Media preferences;
- Internet usage;
- Crime rates; and
- Livability measures.

To start learning more about your audiences (i.e., specific community cultures), use the information you have obtained thus far to consider the following questions:

- What is the primary spoken language? Do most speak English at a functional level? Does this information tell us something about how to best communicate with this audience?

- Do they have a common place of origin? Is there a common set of beliefs and/or values associated with this common place of origin? How can this information be best leveraged when communicating with the audience?
- Is homelessness a problem faced in the community? If so, how do you think this problem affects this particular audience?
- Do their home ownership rates tell you something about their feelings of connectivity to the community?
- Do statistics on wealth distribution tell you anything about this audience? What are their education tendencies? Do most graduate from high school? Do these statistics illustrate the audience's priorities? (See the definition of *familial cultural dimension*, above in the Key Learning #2 section.)
- What do you know about their media and Internet usage tendencies? Where/how can you reach them online?
- Do community crime rates illustrate anything about this audience? What do crime rates help show?
- How do livability standards apply to this audience? Do you know anything about their standard of living that could help define the audience?

**What else do we wish we knew about each culture?
Where/how can we find this information?**

In addition to using the resources suggested in the Community Profile worksheet, you can conduct a more extensive audit of the community to help you delve deeper and find answers to questions like:

- What are the core values associated with different cultures?
- What are each culture's most pressing needs and priorities?
- What do other cultures like most about living in your community? What do they value?
- What are their greatest concerns?
- How does their community view your issues?
- How do different community groups connect with one another?
- Who are the trusted community leaders?

This type of community audit can be conducted in any number of ways, including:

- Reviewing media coverage;
- Conducting formal surveys;
- Conducting focus groups;
- Conducting informal one-on-one interviews;
- Attending and listening to public community meetings/forums;
- Reading local blogs regularly; and
- Looking for other local social media channels (e.g., Facebook groups dedicated to your community).

Your evaluator may be able to help you conduct a community audit. This opportunity to listen and learn will influence your outreach efforts and improve your chances for success.

Looking for the Linkages in Our Communities

As you continue observing, researching, and learning about different cultures, look for the common denominators between cultures—and within your initiative.

It is easy to shine a spotlight on differences, but by focusing on **shared experiences, priorities, and values** across populations, you find the seeds for the messages that will reach many audiences.

With a better understanding of the many types of cultures within any community—and a better appreciation for their dimensions and complexity—we can now stop, listen, and learn from our diverse community. Learning to listen to the voices around us provides us with the clarity and background we'll need to create messages and conduct outreach to wide populations.

Key Learning #4: SS/HS connects to our wider community.

Learning Activity/Session	Notes
<p>Find Common Language</p> <p>Before communication starts, review your research with an eye toward how cultures and groups communicate and interact with one another. For instance:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is a foreign language spoken? • How many ways is information shared within a culture? • What media outlets are meaningful to a culture? Remember, different media outlets may target different ages or genders within the same culture. • Who or what are the trusted sources of information? Don't forget the bridgebuilders, who can straddle two or more cultures. These men and women can be powerful champions and help deliver your message. <p>If possible, request help from members of the culture who make up your audience. As you plan your communication, they can provide guidance about culturally competent translations, offer help in identifying common terminology that will be understood by all, and help you pinpoint the most effective ways to reach the larger community.</p> <p>By understanding and meeting the preferred communication styles of different cultures before outreach, you are demonstrating respect that helps ensure that your message will be heard, and this respect might prove to be the foundation for a trusted community partnership.</p>	

Outline Benefits and Overcome Barriers

Your extensive exploration of your community, and the cultures within it, has set the stage for you to successfully communicate to wider audiences.

Your first step is to link the good work of your local initiative to the needs, priorities, and values of the cultures in your community:

- What problems does your initiative solve or what benefits do you offer your community?
- What barriers might prevent any one culture from embracing your offering?
- Can you improve your communication efforts by being mindful of other cultures' values when speaking of your work?

As an example, you might be offering needed mental health counseling services (your solution/benefits), but your audience may be culturally disinclined to seek out or accept this kind of help (a barrier). Therefore, instead of focusing on your solution, you may need to focus on shared values such as happiness or success.

Day 1 of this learning lab has focused on understanding the diversity of our communities and the cultures in them. Using our research, we are now poised to communicate effectively about our programs, services, and larger mission.

In Day 2, we explore two time-tested methods for connecting to our wider communities: community events and media outreach. Community-oriented events and activities are an excellent way to raise the profile of your initiative, and the media in your community, large or small, can be a powerful resource to get the word out to the masses.

DAY 2 CURRICULUM

Key Learning #5: Events can pull communities

Learning Activity/Session	Notes
<p>Building on Our Research To Reach Our Wider Community</p> <p>Yesterday’s training introduced us to four key learnings:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overcoming the barriers is the only way we can reap the benefits; • We are united by our differences; • To understand the needs of the community, listen and learn; and • SS/HS connects to our wider community. <p>Today’s work builds upon those key learnings and looks at opportunities to connect with your community through wider channels.</p>	
<p>SS/HS Events and Community Building: Naturally Synergistic</p> <p><i>Why host a community event?</i></p> <p>Events allow you to promote your SS/HS initiative to a wide audience. Large or small, public or private, special events can be powerful tools for getting the word out. Hosting an event gives you an opportunity to share information in a meaningful way that can resonate with audiences and leave a positive and lasting impression. Before planning or promoting an event, check with your Federal project officer (FPO) to confirm the expenses that can be covered by SS/HS funds.</p> <p>Events give you an opportunity to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Deepen existing/create new partnerships; • Announce successes; • Garner media support; • Raise public awareness of your overall initiative; and • Provide one-time direct services. 	

Why is event planning important?

Hosting a community event may be your one shot to reach a large number of community members at one time. Effective planning will ensure that you are creating an event that appropriately targets the right audiences. You can achieve a lot by hosting an event, but nothing comes without planning.

Community Building: Sponsorship and Hosting of Community and School-Based Events

Any event can be a tipping point for pulling your community together and building as one. First, brainstorm about types of community events that will attract a diverse range of your community’s members. Then follow the Ten Steps to a Great Event to create an event that will get you there.

Ten Steps to a Great Event

1. Define your purpose.
2. Choose the type of event that will best serve your purpose.
3. Give your planning committee ample time to plan.
4. Set a realistic budget.
5. Identify your intended audience(s).
6. Choose a location.
7. Create your agenda.
8. Promote your event.
9. Revisit your checklist and consider event logistics.
10. Enjoy, evaluate—and recognize accomplishments.

The Appendix to this learning lab provides a fuller look at the 10 Steps to a Great Event as well as an event planning checklist.

Once you have committed to a purpose and plan for a community event, you will need to excite your community and generate interest in the event. One of the most tried-and-true methods for this kind of outreach is through traditional media channels.

Key Learning #6:
The media can be a critical ally in connecting community.

Learning Activity/Session	Notes
<p>Using Traditional Media for Effective Outreach</p> <p>Media can be a powerful and influential ally. These days, however, media are more numerous and more fractured than ever, ranging from traditional media, such as radio, television, newspapers, and magazines, to newer ones, including social media, blogs, and wikis.</p> <p>For community-based efforts such as SS/HS, local traditional media hold the key to generating public awareness, spurring action, and influencing community policy. Although they may not be the best channels for all of your outreach efforts, traditional media remain vital sources of information for our communities and have a huge influence on how the public receives and acts on information.</p> <p>Whether you have extensive or little experience with communication and media—or work through your district’s PIO—it’s important to have an effective, ongoing traditional media outreach strategy for SS/HS. You know your initiative best, so you can help ensure that local newspapers, radio, television, and other mass media become partners in your efforts.</p> <p><i>Traditional Media Exposure—Paid and Earned</i></p> <p>There are lots of ways to have a media presence, but most fall into one of two categories: paid and earned.</p> <p>Paid = Advertising</p> <p>You pay, so you maintain control over message, timing, and placement in these types of media:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Commercials; • Billboards; • Ads; and • Advertorials. <p>Earned = Free Exposure</p> <p>They are more credible, but you give up control in these:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • News; • Programming; • Public service announcements; • Editorials; and • Op–eds. 	

Media outreach usually refers to efforts to obtain free—earned—media coverage.

Media Outreach Basics

1. **Compile a media list** with contact information about your community’s television and radio stations, daily and neighborhood newspapers, special-interest publications, organization newsletters, and other traditional media outlets. Check regularly and often to ensure that your list is up to date.
2. **Develop relationships** with key media personnel. Send them background information about SS/HS, your local programs, your successes, and more. Set up meetings with **top-level management** and **editorial boards** of stations and newspapers to tell them about what SS/HS means to your community. Get to know **journalists** and **producers**. Find out about their needs—how they like to be contacted, the best times to reach them and the times to avoid—and their interests so you can tailor approaches to *them*. Keep notes on your media list about what you learn. Become a resource!
3. **Have basic media materials** always available to help you tell your SS/HS story, and create specific ones for each outreach effort.
4. **Market your story appropriately**. Reach out to the appropriate media for your story. Know each outlet’s needs, interests, and deadlines. Tell them what’s in it for *them* to cover your story.
5. **Have a plan** to help focus your efforts and make the most of time and resources. Having a media plan for each outreach effort will promote a systematic approach and better results.

Is Your Story Newsworthy?

To help determine if your SS/HS story will be of interest to traditional media outlets, ask yourself these questions:

- Is it new and/or timely?
- Is it local?
- Is it on the radar screen?
- Does it affect a large number of people?
- Does it have an intriguing or emotional aspect?
- Is there a “draw”?
- Is it visual?

Then ask:

- What is my message?
- Who needs to know?
- How do these people get information about my topic area?
- What options other than news coverage exist?

Even if your story doesn't qualify as hard news, remember that there are lots of ways to get it out there, from feature stories to op-eds to local program appearances. Be creative!

Your Media Outreach Toolbox

You need to have a variety of tools in your media outreach toolbox to be ready when opportunities arise. You'll find more detail and samples in the SS/HS *Celebration Kit* and in the Appendix, but here are some of the basics that every media guru knows and uses as appropriate:

- **Media advisory:** A save-the-date notice, incorporating the 5Ws and H (who, what, why, when, where, and how), is designed to pique media interest in an upcoming event or announcement.
- **News release:** Also called a press release or media release, it is the backbone of each outreach effort, and it communicates the information you want editors and journalists to know. To maximize the chance that your release will be read, follow the accepted format.
- **Pitch letter/script:** This well-crafted, concise letter with talking points—tailored to each recipient's needs and interests—makes the case for why the outlet should cover your story.
- **Factsheets:** Often in bulleted or short format, these provide quick facts and data about SS/HS or a specific topic and elaborate on information that may be discussed in a news release or other piece.
- **Backgrounders:** These contain more depth and detail about an issue or topic, such as when, why, and how it evolved. Your *Celebration Kit* contains good backgrounders about the SS/HS national and local initiatives.

These items and others (spokesperson biographies, news clips, photos, print collateral, and more) are often compiled in a **media kit**—also known as a press kit or press information package—so that journalists, editors, and producers have everything they need in one place. Keep your kit materials ready to go both in hard copy and electronically.

Marketing Your Story

You have your story or event. You've developed your plan and created attention-grabbing, targeted, and appropriately formatted materials. So how do you get a newspaper or station to use or cover it? That's where marketing—or pitching—comes in.

Marketing starts when you send out your news release or media advisory with a pitch letter or email. But it doesn't end there. It's not enough to simply send out your information and hope that someone will find it interesting. You need to be proactive and creative to cut through all the noise of others wanting media attention. You'll want to follow up by phone to ensure receipt of your materials and see how you might convince media outlets to cover your story or event.

Tips for marketing your story

- Frame your message.
- Ensure plenty of lead time.
- Distribute your materials.
- Follow up by phone:
 - Keep release and messages handy;
 - Use a script; and
 - Make it easy for media to cover the story and make it their own.
- Respect deadlines!

Be sure to see the Appendix to this learning lab for guidelines on pitching your story to the media.

Finally: Monitor Your Coverage

Why?

- Supports evaluation, sustainability.
- What went right? What went wrong?
- Did you achieve goals?

What?

- Collect tapes, print clips, and Web screen shots.
- Get verbatim transcripts.

How?

- Do it yourself.
- Engage a monitoring service.

It's All About Relationships, Relationships, Relationships!

When it comes to media outreach, relationships are everything—and your media list will be your most valuable tool as you build those relationships. Whether it includes a crucial half-dozen local press contacts or whether it is an extensive database of reporters, producers, and programs that cover youth and education issues, you will want to compile and keep an up-to-date list of key contacts at media outlets in your community and use it to promote stories and nurture relationships throughout the year.

How Do You Find Media Contact Information?

The ways to gather information for a media list are many. How you do it depends on your resources—both human and financial—and your community and your media outreach needs:

- **Check with your partners.** If their organizations have an active public affairs department, they may already have a media list that would be suitable for SS/HS outreach.
- Search the Internet. Visit a site such as <http://www.mondotimes.com> for free information. You can also purchase affordable lists at <http://www.easymedialist.com>.
- Visit your **local library**. Libraries often subscribe to commercial media contact guides where you can find complete listings of media in your community. Especially in smaller communities, you may find the bulk of what you need in the **phone book**, listed under newspapers, radio stations, and television stations. With outlets and phone numbers in hand, you can complete the information required for your list.

Who Should Be on Your List?

Start your list by identifying the most important media in your community. Ideally, your list eventually should include all **local media outlets** that reach your target audiences:

- Newspapers and their online versions;
- Radio and television stations and their online versions;
- Local bulletins;
- Neighborhood publications;
- Newsletters of organizations in your area; and
- Specialized media (e.g., those serving communities of color, non-English speakers).

Then add the appropriate people:

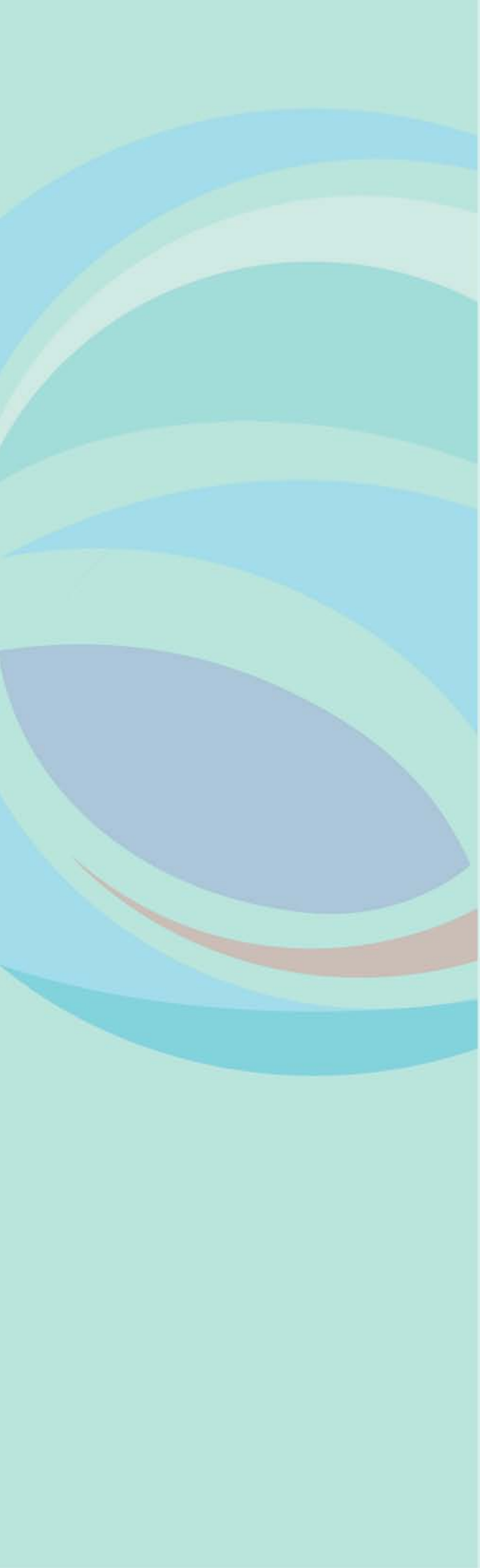
- News and assignment editors/reporters;
- Talk, specialty, or segment producers/hosts;
- Community relations and/or public service director;
- Producers/hosts of specific programs;
- Program director; and
- Station/paper general manager.

Now, use your list as your relationship-building roadmap:

- Make personal visits and phone calls, write letters and emails.
- Get to know journalists and producers, what they need and want.
- Establish connections *beyond* publicity.
- Become a trusted resource!

Be sure to check the Appendix of this learning lab guide for a media list worksheet that can help you keep track of your efforts.

This learning lab has focused on understanding the diversity of your community and the cultures in it and then connecting those many and varied needs with the priorities of your initiative. We have learned to do our research and then to use that knowledge to create appropriate community events. Finally, we've practiced skills for successful outreach to media in your community to help spread the word about Safe Schools/Healthy Students.



Appendixes

Appendix A: Community Profile—Community Connections Pre-University Work for Learning Lab Participants

Cultural Attributes	Resources
<p>Population</p> <p>How many people live in your community?</p> <p>Describe the demographics in terms of age and disability.</p>	<p><i>U.S. Census Bureau American FactFinder</i></p> <p>http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en</p> <p>Instructions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scroll over “People” on the navigation menu (left-hand side of the screen). • Scroll over “Basic Counts/Population,” “Aging,” and “Disability.” • Select one at a time. Type zip code of city/town into the “Population Finder.” Click “Go.” • Open the available data sources.
<p>Language</p> <p>What portion of the population speaks a language other than English? What is the primary other language spoken in the community?</p> <p>What portion of the population speaks English “less than well”?</p>	<p><i>U.S. Census Bureau American FactFinder</i></p> <p>http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html?_lang=en</p> <p>Instructions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scroll over “People” on the navigation menu (left-hand side of the screen). • Select “Origins and Language.” • Type zip code of city/town into the “Population Finder.” Click “Go.” • Open the available data sources for language.
<p>Homelessness</p> <p>What are the reported homelessness rates in the community?</p>	<p><i>National Alliance to End Homelessness</i></p> <p>http://www.endhomelessness.org/content/article/detail/2797</p> <p>Instructions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Click on your State on the map and look to the table below it to see how homelessness in your State compares to the national averages.

<p>Housing</p> <p>What portion of the population rents?</p> <p>What portion of the population owns a home?</p> <p>What is the typical number of individuals living in each home?</p>	<p><i>U.S. Census Bureau American FactFinder</i></p> <p>http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html? lang=en</p> <p>Instructions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scroll over “Housing” on the navigation menu (left-hand side of the screen). • Select “Physical Characteristics.” • Type zip code of city/town into the “Population Finder.” Click “Go.” • Open the available data sources for housing.
<p>Wealth Distribution</p> <p>Describe the income distributions in the community.</p> <p>Describe the unemployment rates in the community.</p> <p>Describe the levels of individual and family poverty in the community.</p>	<p><i>U.S. Census Bureau American FactFinder</i></p> <p>http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html? lang=en</p> <p>Instructions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scroll over “People” on the navigation menu (left-hand side of the screen). • Scroll over “Employment,” “Income,” and “Poverty” on the navigation menu (left-hand side of the screen). • Select one at a time. • Type zip code of city/town into the “Population Finder.” Click “Go.” • Open the available data sources.
<p>Education Levels</p> <p>Describe the average education level in the community.</p> <p>What are the school enrollment rates for youth in the community? (Describe on the basis of most relevant age ranges.)</p>	<p><i>U.S. Census Bureau American FactFinder</i></p> <p>http://factfinder.census.gov/home/saff/main.html? lang=en</p> <p>Instructions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scroll over “People” on the navigation menu (left-hand side of the screen). • Scroll over “Education” on the navigation menu (left-hand side of the screen). • Type zip code of city/town into the “Population Finder.” Click “Go.” • Open the available data sources for education.

<p>Media Tendencies</p> <p>Television, radio, newspaper—who's reading and watching?</p> <p>How many local news media outlets are available in your city or the nearest large city?</p>	<p><i>Mondo Times—Find newspapers, magazines, and radio and television stations in the United States by State or major city.</i></p> <p>http://www.mondotimes.com/world/usa.html</p>
<p>Internet Usage</p> <p>How wired is the community?</p>	<p><i>National Telecommunications and Information Administration State-by-State Home Internet Usage Figures (2007)</i></p> <p>http://www.ntia.doc.gov/reports/2008/Table_HouseholdInternet2007.pdf</p>
<p>Crime Rates</p> <p>Describe the crime rates in the community.</p> <p>What is the most prominent type of crime?</p> <p>Describe average demographic of the individuals committing crimes in the community.</p>	<p><i>Federal Bureau of Investigation, Offenses Reported to Law Enforcement by State by City 100,000 and over in Population</i></p> <p>http://www2.fbi.gov/ucr/06prelim/ucrttable4index.htm</p>
<p>Livability Measures</p> <p>What are the community's leisure activities?</p> <p>What are the community's rankings on national livability scales?</p>	<p><i>Gallup—Healthways Well-Being Index</i></p> <p>http://www.gallup.com/poll/125852/State-States.aspx (State results)</p> <p>http://www.well-beingindex.com/stateCongresDistrictRank.asp (indepth city, State, and congressional district well-being reports)</p>

Appendix B: Cultural Profile

Instructions: Based on what you've learned in this lab thus far and your understanding of your community, identify the predominant cultural groups in your community. Remember to think beyond ethnic cultures (e.g., military, government employees, farmers, youth, belief system).

List the predominant groups in your community.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

What makes each of these groups unique?

Describe these groups based on their cultural dimensions and attributes (e.g., organizational, ethnic, socioeconomic, familial, gender). Note all distinct characteristics of each community group.

Group # 1:

Group #2:

Group #3:

Group #4:

Appendix C: Sketching a Community Synopsis

Instructions: Select the most predominant common group at your table to use as your Community Audience. Using your research, answer the following questions. You may not have all of the answers at this time, but complete as much of the worksheet as possible.

SELECTED COMMUNITY AUDIENCE:

What is the primary spoken language? Do most speak English at a functional level? Does this information tell us something about how to best communicate with this audience?

Do they have a common place of origin? Is there a common set of beliefs and/or values associated with this common place of origin? How can this information be best leveraged when communicating with the audience?

Is homelessness a problem faced in the community? If so, how do you think this problem affects this particular audience?

Do their home ownership rates tell you something about their feelings of connectivity to the community? Or is this more a question of mobility?

Do statistics on wealth distribution tell you anything about this audience?

What are their education tendencies? Did most graduate from high school? Does this information illustrate the audience's priorities? (See the definition of *familial cultural dimension*.)

What do you know about their media and Internet usage tendencies? Where and how can you reach them?

Do community crime rates illustrate anything about this audience? What do crime rates help show?

How do livability standards apply to this audience? Do you know anything about their standard of living that could help define the audience?

Appendix D: Priorities of Values

Swedish	French	American	Malaysian	Japanese	Russian
Freedom	Self-Reliance	Equality	Family Security	Relationship	Family Security
Relationship	Freedom	Freedom	Group Harmony	Group Harmony	Freedom
Cooperation	Openness	Openness	Cooperation	Family Security	Self-Reliance
Family Security	Relationship	Self-Reliance	Relationship	Freedom	Openness
Openness	Time	Cooperation	Spirituality	Cooperation	Material Possessions
Competition	Spirituality	Family Security	Freedom	Group Consensus	Cooperation
Self-Reliance	Material Possessions	Relationship	Openness	Group Achievement	Spirituality
Privacy	Equality	Privacy	Self-Reliance	Privacy	Equality
Equality	Competition	Group Harmony	Time	Equality	Time
Reputation	Group Consensus	Reputation	Reputation	Formality	Relationship
Time	Risk-Taking	Time	Group Achievement	Spirituality	Reputation
Group Achievement	Authority	Competition	Equality	Competition	Authority
Material Possessions	Group Achievement	Group Achievement	Authority	Seniority	Formality
Spirituality	Cooperation	Spirituality	Material Possessions	Material Possessions	Group Harmony
Risk-Taking	Group Harmony	Risk-Taking	Competition	Self-Reliance	Group Achievement
Group Harmony	Privacy	Authority	Group Consensus	Authority	Risk-Taking
Authority	Family Security	Material Possessions	Seniority	Time	Seniority
Seniority	Seniority	Formality	Privacy	Openness	Competition
Group Consensus	Formality	Group Consensus	Formality	Risk-Taking	Privacy
Formality	Reputation	Seniority	Risk-Taking	Reputation	Group Consensus

Appendix E: Event Planning Scenario #1

Background: In one neighborhood of your community, a significant number of youth take care of themselves after the school day ends. Law enforcement data confirm a 15 percent spike in juvenile crime between the hours of 3 and 6 p.m. Store owners in the area are unhappy about the numbers of youth loitering on the commercial strip after school and perceive that the loitering adversely affects business. They have made their concerns known to local media.

Event Purpose: Announce the launch of a new afterschool program, encourage support of the business community, and promote enrollment.

Considerations: The afterschool program is set to launch in January, and you have 8 weeks to plan your event.

The program will serve youth ages 8–16.

Afterschool programs in other parts of your community have been successful at addressing similar issues. One business owner said, “Since this program started, many of my customers have told me they’re no longer worried about coming into the store in the late afternoon.”

The owner of the local sporting goods store has been a big supporter of children in the community and also chairs the local chamber of commerce.

The budget is tight.

Instructions: Using the Event Planning Worksheet, work together in your group to determine and plan the most appropriate event for this scenario.

Event Planning Scenario #2

Background: Recent data show that in your SS/HS community adolescent drug and alcohol use is well above State averages. Incidents of underage drinking are on the rise, and student surveys indicated that adolescents' primary source of alcohol was from their own home or from other adults. The spring break season, in particular, is a time when students engage in drinking, drug taking, and other risky behavior. To address these issues, your initiative has implemented a host of programs. The CMT hopes to increase participation in these programs and underscore the community's commitment to serving youth.

Event Purpose: Identify and showcase existing community assets to support youth, mobilize the community around prevention of underage drinking and drug use, promote the services offered by your SS/HS initiative, and act as a catalyst for community improvement.

Considerations: Spring break is April 18–22.

Youth must play a key role in planning and executing the event.

The event must take place in a large venue.

Faith-based organizations and social service agencies in the area are also concerned about the issues of underage drinking and drug use, but until this point, they have not banded together to address the issues.

The head of the local Interfaith Council has said, "This is not a youth problem or a family problem, it's a community problem. All of us must work together to keep our children safe and healthy."

Local media have covered the story extensively since the release of the data.

Instructions: Using the Event Planning Worksheet, work together in your group to determine and plan the most appropriate event for this scenario.

Event Planning Scenario #3

- Background:** Truancy rates have been a hot-button issue in your community for many years and a top priority for school leadership and local policymakers. Local media have done stories about the community's poor showing in this area. In just 12 months, SS/HS efforts in your community have helped reduce the rate of truancy among the district's middle and high schools by 50 percent. The sharp drop is attributed, in part, to recent agreements among law enforcement, juvenile justice agency, school district leadership, and the courts to share accurate information about truant youth. A committed core group of parents and teachers also supported the effort.
- Event purpose:** Celebrate the success of your SS/HS partnership and their work on reducing truancy rates, ensuring that school leadership and parents remain vigilant about this issue, and helping attract new partners to your efforts.
- Considerations** The recently retired district attorney (DA) has been a key champion of strengthening truancy prevention efforts throughout her career, but she will be leaving for an extended vacation in 2 weeks.
- The new DA has lauded the former DA's record, saying, "I hope to continue in my predecessor's footsteps in trying to reduce truancy rates in our community, and hope our joint efforts will make an impact."
- The school district has agreed to cover costs of the event.
- The school district's PIO will be a member of the planning committee.
- Instructions:** Using the Event Planning Worksheet, work together in your group to determine and plan the most appropriate event for this scenario.

Appendix F: Event Planning Worksheet

Scenario:	Group:
Event Purpose	
<i>What do you want to accomplish as a result of your event?</i>	
Type of Event	
<i>What type of event will best serve your goals?</i>	
Event Committee	
<i>Who needs to help you plan and execute your event's purpose?</i>	
Budget	
<i>Are there any budget considerations?</i>	
Intended Audience(s)	
<i>What are the primary audiences you need to reach through this event?</i>	

Location and Time

What is the most appropriate and accessible location for your event?

Key Activities and Agenda

What are the key activities that will take place during your event? What is your proposed agenda or theme? How do your key activities and agenda support your goals?

Event Promotion Activities

What types of activities will you conduct to let your community know about your event?

Evaluation and Postevent Activities

How will you measure the success of your event? What needs to happen after the event is over?

Other Considerations

Appendix G: Media Outreach Planning Worksheet

In your groups, develop the outline of a plan to guide the media efforts for your event. As grantees of a composite SS/HS initiative, you may make assumptions about the media that exist in your fictitious community.

Event Goal	
Goal(s) of This Media Outreach Effort	
Audience(s)	
Key Message(s)	
Advisory Headline	
Target Media	Angle/Pitch
1	1
2	2
3	3
4	4
5	5
Other Media Strategies	

Appendix H: Ten Steps to a Great Event

Reprinted From the *SS/HS Celebration Kit*

Large or small, public or private, special events can be powerful tools for promoting your initiative. They can target any number of audience segments in any number of ways. They can provide opportunities to deepen partnerships, align with new partners, announce successes, garner media support, and raise public awareness of your overall initiative.

At this point in your grant cycle, you may have already sponsored or cosponsored a special event to bring attention to your initiative. Perhaps you conducted a press conference to announce receipt of your grant or perhaps you hosted a major kickoff event for your school community. Maybe your guest list totaled 20 people representing your community's movers and shakers; maybe you hosted a family fun day for 2,000 district children and their parents.

No matter how large or small, the Communication & Social Marketing Center (CSM Center) knows that unless you or your staff members have lots of experience in event planning, there's an excellent chance you were surprised at the amount of work required to plan, promote, and produce it successfully. You may have even sworn, "Never again!"

Whether or not your initiative has mounted any special events, this guide will help you and your partners navigate this process step by step and become more comfortable planning the kinds of events that can truly celebrate your initiative.

STEP 1: Define your purpose.

Or, in other words, what's your goal? There's no point in planning a special event until you and your partners agree on its value to your initiative. Do you want to inform and educate? Entertain and inspire? Increase awareness and build support? Improve school-community relations? Build support from existing and new partners? A combination of these? Do you want to:

Inform district families about your programs and services? Make an important announcement to the public, such as:

- Your grant award;
- Rollout of a new program;
- An important new community partnership;
- Successful evaluation outcomes;
- Give a big public thank you to your champions, including:
 - Volunteers
 - Staff members
 - Policymakers
 - Partners
 - Teachers
 - Students
 - Parents
- Recommit to your initiative's future.

STEP 2: Choose the *type* of event that will best serve your purpose.

Once you know the purpose of your event, brainstorm with your partners about what kind of event will best serve your needs. Some suggestions to help get you started might include:

Family picnic:

- Promotes initiative programs and services
- Increases public awareness
- Involves existing partners; can attract new ones
- Presents information on prevention/intervention services in “fun” context
- Can include students, faculty, and staff members to increase success
- Can garner media attention

Partnership retreat:

- Provides time together to deepen partnerships, recommit to initiative’s future after funding.
- Opportunity to do strategic planning.

Press conference:

Makes specific announcements to the public via local media

Awards presentation:

Says a public “thank you” to your champions, both big and small

- Deepens relationships.
- Renews commitment to your initiative.
- Can garner media attention.

Piggy-back on existing events:

- Can deepen partnerships with organizations that share your goals; and
- Can raise awareness of your work by connecting to existing observances (e.g., Red Ribbon Week).

STEP 3: Give your planning committee ample time to plan.

Once you’ve decided it’s time to host a special event, we urge you to form your planning committee right away. This committee will be responsible for all aspects of planning and execution from this point forward. Depending on the purpose, size, and scope of your event, you may need to select a chairperson and assign members to subcommittees that are responsible for different aspects of planning.

Whenever possible, give yourselves more time than you think you'll need. Pull out a calendar, put down your target date and, as you proceed through these subsequent steps, work backwards to create a timeline that shows you're really giving yourselves all the time you need to successfully plan the event. Put together a checklist with deadlines for each detail. Assign someone from your planning committee to be ultimately responsible for the completion of each item on the checklist.

Remember that your event isn't happening in a vacuum; there will surely be a number of other events happening concurrently in your community. To the best of your ability, take this into consideration when choosing a date for your event. If you know of annual area events that might pull your potential attendees away from your event, change your date.

If you plan to invite local policymakers, elected officials, or public figures, don't pick a date until you've done a little homework first. Contact them, let them know you would be honored by their presence at your event, and ask them if they know of any conflicts on the date you're considering. Have some backup dates ready to go. You can make your case stronger if you let them know up front what level of participation you're hoping for. (Are you asking them to accept an award? Would you like them to give a keynote speech? Will you be inviting the media to attend?) High visibility and the possibility of media coverage will make your invitation more appealing. And while you may still not get a full commitment from them months in advance, you will at least be on their calendar. As plans move forward, stay in close touch with their office and keep them posted on your continued desire to have them attend.

STEP 4: Set a realistic budget.

How much money do you have for your event? Many great events can be planned on a shoestring, but your planning committee needs to brainstorm about the kinds of expenses you might encounter along the way—and how to offset them.

Can your school district supply an appropriate location for free?

Do any of your partners have access to facilities?

Can you find sponsors to pay for food, marketing, or other expenses? How can you assure them that their sponsorship will be acknowledged?

Can you work through your school district's food service to cater your event for significantly reduced costs?

Consider the time of day for your event. Again, using the example of an awards banquet, your costs may be significantly lower if you host a luncheon rather than a dinner.

Consider the time of year for your event. For instance, you may have difficulty booking space during holiday periods, and rental and catering fees may be significantly higher during those periods. Can you plan your event for a slow time of year?

Consider piggy-backing your event with another planned event in your community or partnering with like-minded organizations to share costs. This can have the added benefit of creating new partnerships.

Consider including raffles or silent auctions in your event. Local businesses can donate products and services in exchange for acknowledgement and the income can offset your costs.

If you can promote these events to your intended audiences (and include a list of the great items they could win), you may be able to boost attendance.

Consider the little things that can cost money and add up over time, such as:

- Invitations or promotional flyers/posters;
- Mailing costs;
- Transportation costs;
- Registration badges; and
- Audio/video requirements.

Whatever you believe your budget is, add at least 10 percent to cover unanticipated costs.

Assessing your budget needs for the event you would like to sponsor might dampen your spirits. If it appears as though your wishes are not aligned with fiscal reality, don't despair—brainstorm! For example, if you would love to hold that ceremony to honor a State legislator who's showing increased commitment to school safety and prevention services, but you can't find the sponsors to cover your costs, consider alternatives. Perhaps it would make more sense to invite your legislator on a walking tour of your schools to view the safety improvements your SS/HS grant has made possible, invite your superintendent and school board to join the tour, hold a joint press conference at school to announce your mutual commitment to investing in your community's youth (where you could also present your award!), and pop in on a class that's implementing an SS/HS curriculum for a "spontaneous" press photo op. It would be a completely different kind of event, but it could achieve many of the same goals for far less money.

Your planning committee will want to keep track of every expense. You'll also want to keep track of any dollars or services from outside sources—especially so you can say a big THANK YOU to everyone out there supporting your initiative's work.

STEP 5: Identify your intended audience(s).

Or, whom do you want at your event? Let your goals from Step 1 inform your decision here. You may have more than one intended audience. A general list of potential audiences for your special events might include:

- Parents (of preschoolers, elementary/middle/high school children, at-risk youth, immigrant students);
- Existing and potential partners;
- Community leaders (business, faith-based, elected);
- Policymakers (local, statewide);
- District leadership (principals, superintendent, school board); or
- Agents of change/influential people (Parent Teacher Association president, key faculty).

Also, consider the specific needs of your special event. For instance, will you need speakers, and do you have any in mind? Be sure to invite them as soon as your date is set so they can get it on their calendars.

STEP 6: Choose a location.

Your answers to Steps 1, 2, 5, and 6 will guide your decision here. Your location needs to be appropriate, available, accessible, and affordable. Questions to consider:

- How much space do you need for the expected number of people?
- Should it be indoors or outdoors?
- Are you affected in your choice by time of year, time of day, or day of the week?
- Will your intended audience(s) feel comfortable and be able to enjoy themselves in the location?
- Are there adequate restroom facilities and parking?
- Is it accessible for the physically disabled?
- Do you need to have an audiovisual setup?

Brainstorm with your planning committee on local options that fit your criteria. If you're unfamiliar with a suggested location, go look at it and ask as many questions as you need to. When you and your planning committee believe you've got the right option for your event—go ahead and book it!

STEP 7: Create your agenda.

Whether planning a strategic planning session for 20 partners or a barbecue for 500 families, you'll want to create an agenda that serves the goals you outlined in Step 1.

Your agenda will cover the timeline (What time will you start and end? When will speakers take the microphone? Will your event include breaks or networking time?), as well as general content (What's the subject for the keynote address? Will students be providing entertainment? What's being announced at the press conference?).

STEP 8: Promote your event.

You've determined the why, what, how, where, and when. With those details in place, you're ready to promote your event to your intended audience(s).

If you've worked with the Center, then you've probably heard us speak at some length about the need to know your intended audience *before* you craft any communication messaging or materials—and that includes all you do to promote your event. In fact, this is one area in which you might want to consult directly with your SS/HS communication specialist for specific assistance.

What should your invitations say?

If you build it, there's no guarantee they'll come. In other words, it's not enough to announce that you're hosting an event on a specific time and date. It's not even enough to tell the world *why* you're holding your event.

That's because everyone's time is precious. So, to encourage a good turnout for your event, consider this: For each intended audience you wish to invite, ask "What's in it for them?" If you're asking families to give up the better part of a Saturday to come to your event, are you sure you're providing an agenda with enough fun built into it to make it worth their while? If

you're asking policymakers to give up an evening to support your event, would you be able to explain why you share common goals that would make their attendance mutually beneficial?

When you can answer “what’s in it” for your target audiences, you’ll have a key part of your invitation figured out. So, in addition to giving your audience the logistical details of your event, be sure your invitations and announcements prominently feature those compelling reasons why your audience would benefit from giving up their time to attend.

Finally, bear in mind that your wording needs to be culturally sensitive to your intended audiences and may need to be delivered in other languages.

What kinds of invitations and/or announcements are right?

The answer, again, starts with your intended audience. What will (or won’t) resonate with them? Your key community leaders (especially those who might be in a position to assist with your sustainability efforts) would probably appreciate a personal phone call, a formal invitation in writing with event specifics, and whatever appropriate follow-up is needed to get an RSVP.

The other consideration, of course, is budget. If you’re trying to reach your entire parent population, formal invitations and personal phone calls would border on the absurd.

Other options include:

- Announcements in school newsletters;
- District Web site events page;
- Email lists/emails;
- Flyers (assuming they actually make it home with students—and they often don’t!);
- Posters placed in supermarkets, Laundromats—anywhere this audience is likely to visit;
- Through local media (use calendar listings, media advisories, press releases);
- School sign marquees;
- Cable access television channel; and
- Partner communication outlets.

When reaching out to large populations, consider using as many outlets as possible to promote your event. One announcement won’t have nearly as much impact as several announcements delivered in a variety of ways. When you’ve finalized your list, you’ll need to find out whom to contact—and when—to make sure your event is promoted in a timely way.

STEP 9: Revisit your checklist and consider event logistics.

With so many details having been put in place since you originally developed your timeline and checklist, it’s time to go back and incorporate the new logistical challenges that will have undoubtedly arisen since planning began. For example:

- Do your speakers have logistical needs to be addressed?
- How will you coordinate delivery of food for the event?
- Will staff members and vendors have access to your event facility to provide ample time for setup?
- If you’re planning on media coverage, have you addressed their specific needs?

- Do you need to frame award certificates or order award plaques?
- Is there access for physically disabled guests?
- If you're having an outdoor event, do you have contingency plans in place in case of inclement weather?
- Is there ample parking?
- Are you having vendor displays? Are their needs being coordinated?
- If you're including a raffle or silent auction, how is it being coordinated? Where will items be displayed? Do you need to get raffle tickets?
- Do you need to create a seating chart of any kind?
- Is anyone in charge of name tags for staff members and/or registrants?
- Will you be providing promotional materials? Have they been ordered, and is the promised delivery date well in advance of the event?
- Are you responsible for cleanup?

Open up this discussion with members of the planning committee. Review your agenda and checklist at every meeting from this point forward. This simple reality check will help you anticipate problems and find solutions—*before* anything goes wrong.

STEP 10: Enjoy, evaluate—and recognize accomplishments.

Enjoy: There comes a point when you can no longer worry about the details. Last-minute glitches—big and small—are inevitable. If you and your planning committee have done your best to foresee potential problems and consider last-minute solutions, you'll be good to go. Truthfully, your guests will probably never know that anything was wrong unless they see you pacing about and wringing your hands. So let go and enjoy!

Evaluate: You've got a fantastic opportunity to work with your evaluator to gauge your event's success. Survey attendees about issues related to your initiative's work. Some of the types of questions you might want to ask your attendees include:

- What are their overall feelings about youth violence in general, in your community, and in your schools?
- What are their overall feelings about alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use in your community and schools?
- Are they aware of your initiative and your specific programs and services?
- How did they learn about your event?
- Would they be interested in learning more about your initiative?
- Would they like to volunteer?
- Do they have children in your schools? How old are they?
- Would they like to be on your email list to stay informed? If so, what's their email address?
- Would they like information on any of your programs or services in particular?

Say thank you: Take time to thank everyone who helped make your event a success—your staff members, volunteers, speakers, and invited guests. Pick up the phone, write a note, send a photo from the event. Your attention to this important detail will be enormously appreciated by all who participated.

After all is said and done, you and your partners will want to meet to review the event. Did your event meet your goals? How did the planning process go? What went well? What could have gone better? Was the event well attended? Were you able to stay within budget? Do your evaluation results offer important information? Would you do it again?

By allowing all participants to honestly assess the experience, your partnership will be in an even stronger position to mount a great event next time around.

Good luck with all your events, large and small. As always, your SS/HS communication specialist is available to help guide you through these steps. Our toll-free number is (800)790–2647.

Appendix I: Use of SS/HS Grant Funds for Incentives and Communications Products

Many SS/HS grantee budgets request funding for incentives for parent, student, and/or teacher participation in grant activities. Budget items that support SS/HS Communications/Social Marketing Plans often include communications products or trinkets with the program's logo. The purpose of this memo is to provide Federal staff; contracted staff from the SS/HS Communications Team and the National Center; and SS/HS grantees with clarification on the inclusion of such items in SS/HS budgets. Questions about a specific SS/HS grantee's budget or items within that budget should be addressed to the assigned Federal Project Officer (FPO) for that grant.

OMB Circular A-87

SS/HS grantees are local educational agencies and are considered local governments. As such, the applicable OMB Circular regarding allowable expenditures and costs is A-87. OMB Circular A-87 "establishes principles and standards to provide a uniform approach for determining costs to promote effective program delivery, efficiency, and better relationships between governmental units and the Federal government."

Incentives

Incentives are not specifically addressed in OMB Circular A-87; however, costs associated with Federal grants must "be necessary and reasonable for proper and efficient performance and administration of Federal awards; be allocable to Federal awards; [and] be authorized or not prohibited under State or local laws or regulations" (A-87, Section C). Grant funds may not be used for entertainment. A-87, Attachment B, Section 18 states: "Costs of entertainment, including amusement, diversion, and social activities and any costs directly associated with such costs (such as tickets to shows or sports events, meals, lodging, rentals, transportation, and gratuities) are unallowable."

Federal staff does not encourage the use of incentives for participation in grant activities unless the use of incentives is a component of an evidence-based program. When barriers to participation in grant activities are identified, appropriate measures to eliminate those barriers may be taken (with approval from the FPO). For example, a grantee may use grant funds to provide transportation or childcare to support attendance at parent trainings. In requesting to use grant funds for incentives, grantees should describe the barrier that exists and how the incentive will assist in removing that barrier. When necessary, grant-funded incentives for students should promote healthy child development and/or be educational in nature. Use of grant funds for cash awards is unallowable. Grantees may also pursue donations or contributions of incentives from non-grant resources, such as community or business partners. When donated from a non-grant source, incentives are not required to be educational or health promoting in nature.

Communications Materials and Products

In accordance with OMB Circular A-87, Attachment B, Section 2, grant funds may be used to communicate with the public about specific activities or accomplishments pertaining to the grant.

Many SS/HS grantees use communications campaigns to increase community awareness of their services. Social marketing campaigns are aimed at behavior change and should support the goals and objectives of the grant. With SS/HS communications or social marketing campaigns, products should provide information that the community does not already have, such as the contact information for the project or its services. When developed as part of an approved social marketing campaign, products such as t-shirts, posters or tote bags that promote the message of the campaign may be approved. Whenever possible, items should be educationally related, such as brochures, pencils, calendars, tote bags or back packs rather than toys. When initially drafting their communications and/or social marketing campaigns and corresponding budgets, SS/HS grantees might consider including a budget line item of “Communications Materials” with a dollar amount as a placeholder prior to finalizing their communications plans. FPO approval is necessary prior to finalizing any changes to the budget.

Appendix J: Event Checklist and Timeline Template

This sample template represents the kinds of action items you might need to plan an event. It is by no means a comprehensive list of possible tasks, and you and your planning committee will want to customize a checklist that’s fully suited to your event. Remove those tasks that aren’t applicable and create new tasks as needed!

EVENT: _____ GOAL: _____

Task	Person Responsible	Due Date	Status
Select planning committee and chairperson			
Assign subcommittee tasks			
Set target date for event			
Assess available budget			
List potential event sponsors			
Contact potential event sponsors			
Evaluate possible event locations			
Book location for event			
Set agenda			
Coordinate food/beverage sponsors			
Invite speakers			
Prepare V.I.P. invitations			
Create marketing plan to promote event			
Design/write announcements			
Write media advisory/pull together press kits			
Contact media to request coverage			
Re-evaluate event logistics			
Follow up with sponsors to confirm participation			
Create awards certificates			
Follow up on important RSVPs still to be determined			
Follow up with speakers to finalize schedule/needs			
Follow up with location coordinator for details on pre- and postevent access			
Coordinate volunteers for day of event			
Contact evaluator about event survey			
Prepare name tags for staff/volunteers			
Hold day-of-event coordination meeting			
Send thank-you notes			
Hold internal debrief meeting			

Appendix K: Media List Helper

Use this helper to ensure that you have the information you'll need on your media list. Create your list in whichever software program works for you, and then be sure to update it regularly. The first entry is an example only.

TELEVISION		
Outlet: Name: Title: Beat/program: Deadline: Mail address: Email: Phone: Fax: Cell: Notes:	KKWW-TV (Mr.) Pat Smith Producer "Education Today" 2 weeks prior 123 Main Street Ourtown, USA patsmith@kkww.com (123) 456-7890 (123) 098-7654 (098) 765-4321 Prefers fax December hiatus No pre-K stories His son Chris plays guard for Ourtown HS varsity team	Outlet: Name: Title: Beat/program: Deadline: Mail address: Email: Phone: Fax: Cell: Notes:
Outlet: Name: Title: Beat/program: Deadline: Mail address: Email: Phone: Fax: Cell: Notes:		Outlet: Name: Title: Beat/program: Deadline: Mail address: Email: Phone: Fax: Cell: Notes:

RADIO		
Outlet: Name: Title: Beat/program: Deadline: Mail address: Email: Phone: Fax: Cell: Notes:		Outlet: Name: Title: Beat/program: Deadline: Mail address: Email: Phone: Fax: Cell: Notes:
PRINT		
Outlet: Name: Title: Beat/program: Deadline: Mail address: Email: Phone: Fax: Cell: Notes:		Outlet: Name: Title: Beat/program: Deadline: Mail address: Email: Phone: Fax: Cell: Notes:
ONLINE		
Outlet: Name: Title: Beat/program: Deadline: Mail address: Email: Phone: Fax: Cell: Notes:		Outlet: Name: Title: Beat/program: Deadline: Mail address: Email: Phone: Fax: Cell: Notes:

Appendix L: Media Outreach Checklist

Use this checklist to ensure that you have thought through the essential elements for strategic media outreach.

ACTION	RESPONSIBILITY	COMPLETION DATE	✓
MEDIA LIST <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop comprehensive list. • Confirm all contact information. • Update list. • Generate targeted sublists for specific outreach. 			
MATERIALS <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Determine stationery to be used/created for all materials. • Have pocket folders available. • Have kits and individual items available electronically. SS/HS Information Package <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop backgrounder about local initiative. • Create factsheet(s) about local initiative and programs. • Gather available photos (ensure that required releases are on file). • Gather press clippings/collateral materials/public service announcements. Media Kit Additions (Announcement-Specific) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Write media release(s). • Create media advisory. • Create pitch letter. • Develop short biographies of spokespersons. 			
OTHER General <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop strategic media plan (including crisis). Announcement-Specific <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create key messages/talking points. • Develop your pitch. • Train spokesperson(s). • Put media monitoring in place. • Develop media outreach plan. 			

Appendix M: Media Pitching Guidelines

It's not enough to send out your release or media advisory and hope the media decide to cover it. Your success or failure can rest on how well you follow up by phone to pitch your story or event. Here are a few tips:

- Keep the release or advisory in front of you;
- Keep your key messages handy to reiterate;
- Never dial without a script:
 - Is this a good time to talk? (If not, when?)
 - Did you receive the information? (No? Let me resend right now and call back!)
 - Here's an angle that I think will interest you.
 - Would you like to interview Mr. Celebrity or Ms. Spokesperson?
 - Can I provide additional information?
 - When will the story run?
- Always say thank you and provide your contact information.

DO

- Send out accurate news releases in a timely fashion and in the correct format.
- Send out a media alert/advisory telling *who, what, why, when, where, and how* about a week in advance and again a day or so before a planned event. Send a release immediately *following* an event to those media that could not attend.
- Follow up by telephone to ascertain interest, see if the outlet would like to interview your spokesperson, and encourage it to cover your event or use your story.
- Tailor your pitch for the needs of each journalist.
- Be prepared to offer visual opportunities for television, human-interest stories for print, and interviews for radio.
- Respect deadlines and time.
- Ensure that you or your designated spokespersons are available and that they have been briefed for this particular interview.

DON'T

- Tell the media what *you* want. Instead, ask them how you can help *them*.
- Forget to look for opportunities to tie your story to others the journalist has been covering.
- Overwhelm reporters and editors with information that isn't newsworthy or timely. They may become desensitized to your information and might ignore an SS/HS story that would be of interest.
- Be a pest. If a reporter seems disinterested, ask who in the newsroom or which program staff members might be good to contact.
- Forget to approach and talk to public service program producers in addition to news personnel.
- Underestimate the importance of media such as community newspapers, cable television, trade journals, and special-interest newsletters.
- Be discouraged if your story is rejected. Keep trying!

Appendix N: Media Event Checklist

Whether you're holding a contained press conference or seeking coverage for a large event, this checklist covers the essential requirements for guaranteeing that any event involving the media will go smoothly.

BEFORE THE EVENT			
Location reserved		Press kits prepared	Statements approved
Parking reserved		Visuals prepared	Timed agenda prepared
Audiovisual equipment ordered		Onsite photographer ready	Media outreach done
Speakers chosen		Media sign-in sheet ready	Refreshments ready
Media advisory sent		Other guests invited	Speaker name cards made
DAY OF THE EVENT			
Podium, seating arranged		All audiovisuals checked	Photo assignments made
Displays, decorations done		Moderator briefed	Refreshments displayed
Logo placed on podium		Media table ready	Security in place, if needed
AFTER THE EVENT			
Conference room restored		Coverage reviewed	Debrief to assess success
Followup information to attending media, as needed		Press release to non-attending media	Photos/captions released to non-attending print press

Appendix O: Sample Press Release Template

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
[Insert date]

Media Contact: [Insert contact name]
[Insert telephone number and email address]

[Insert grant site name] Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative Honors Local Champions

[Your city, State—DATE] The [your grant site] Safe Schools/Healthy Students initiative honored local officials and community members who have demonstrated a commitment to [your community's] children at a public presentation on [date] at [location]. Award recipients included [mention names of key recipients, such as elected officials, community leaders].

The [your grant site] Safe Schools/Healthy Students initiative works to reduce youth violence and substance abuse, increase mental health services, and create a safe environment for all children to learn and grow in [your grant site's] schools. It represents a collaborative partnership among schools, students, parents, mental health agencies, local law enforcement, and other community-based organizations, including [insert names of your specific partners].

The Safe Schools/Healthy Students event celebrated the initiative's successes to date. [Number of awards presented] awards were presented to community leaders, educators, partners, staff members, students, and volunteers who have shown exceptional support for the initiative's programs and services. Additionally, the event included [list any other items of note from the agenda, such as "the middle school choir performed"].

[Insert a sample quote from your SS/HS initiative's spokesperson.] "Everyone at this event understands the value of investing in our children, our schools, our families, and our community, and these awards are our initiative's way of saying a very big 'thank you' to our greatest champions," said [spokesperson's first and last name, title, and relation to initiative]. "We all want our children to grow up safe and healthy. The programs and services made possible by our Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant are helping us make it easier for all children to develop the positive social skills that will accompany them throughout their lives and enable them to make wise choices."

— more —

A 4-year Federal Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant was awarded in **[your grant year]** to address **[primary areas of focus for your initiative. This is an opportunity to elaborate on your site’s specific programs, putting the most important information first. Be sure to describe your programs in language everyone will understand.]**

[This is an opportunity to identify areas in which your initiative is already seeing demonstrated positive outcomes. Be brief, but feel free to acknowledge your successes.]

By reaching out to students and families in our community through Safe Schools/Healthy Students programs, **[your grant site]** is working collaboratively to spread the word that violence prevention can make a difference in the lives of our children and is an investment in our collective future.

[The boilerplate copy below about the Federal SS/HS Initiative is optional.]

The Federal Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative has funded more than 365 urban, suburban, rural, and tribal areas nationwide since 1999. This grant is the result of a unique collaboration among the U.S. Departments of Education, Health and Human Services, and Justice and was created in response to rising concerns about youth violence and school safety. Each grant site determines how funds can best be used within the community to link new and existing services. Partnership between schools and communities creates a coordinated, cooperative effort that recognizes the complexity of youth violence and its root causes. Using programs and services that have a proven track record of success, as well as strategies for both prevention and intervention, the Federal Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative helps reduce the risk factors that come between children of all ages and their ability to learn—and to stay safe and healthy.

For more information on the Federal Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative, visit <http://www.sshs.samhsa.gov>. For more information on **[your grant site’s]** Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant, programs, and services, contact **[insert contact name]** at **[insert contact phone, email address, and Web site address]**.

###

[NOTE: The “###” mark indicates the end of the news release to the reader.]

Appendix P: Sample Media Advisory

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
[Insert date]

Media Contact: [Insert contact name]
[Insert telephone number and email address]

[Insert your grant site name] Safe Schools/Healthy Students Initiative To Honor Local Champions

WHAT: [Your grant site] Safe Schools/Healthy Students initiative will honor local champions who have demonstrated a commitment to the health and safety of our community's children. Award recipients will include local and statewide elected officials, area business and faith-based leaders, as well as local residents, school staff members, and volunteers who have given generously of their time and energy on behalf of area youth. **[Adjust this last sentence to summarize those people set to get awards.]** This event will include remarks by [insert name of spokesperson] and will also feature [Insert any other key agenda items, including special performances, etc.]

WHEN: [Date, time]

WHERE: [Exact location of event]

WHO: [List names and titles of anyone who will be speaking or featured at the event. If different speakers are addressing different topics, mention that as well.]

(Optional)

PHOTO OP: [Use this space if your event will have any opportunities for great print photos or news video coverage. A press conference may not have great visuals, but many events do! Use the photo op to describe accurately what the press can expect to see—and what time they can expect to see it. An example would be, "Congressman Smith will be accepting an award and speaking at 7:30 p.m." Or, "The drama club will perform their original short play on drug abuse from 8 to 8:15 p.m."]

###

[NOTE: A media advisory is the equivalent of a save-the-date notice to let media know you have an upcoming event worth covering. A media advisory can be used for any kind of event, such as a press conference, school fair, or ribbon-cutting ceremony.]

Appendix Q: A Few Resources

All About Public Relations (<http://www.aboutpublicrelations.net>)

Features some well-written public relations articles, toolkits, and templates.

BurrellesLuce (<http://www.burrellesluce.com>) and **Cision** (<http://us.cision.com>)

Offer media monitoring and distribution services (at a cost), as well as free helpful information.

Chase's Calendar of Events (<http://www.chases.com>)

Lists 12,000 holidays, events, and birthdays to which you might connect an event/story.

Mondo Times (<http://www.mondotimes.com>) and **Easy Media List** (<http://www.easymedialist.com>)

Provide contact information to create media lists. Mondo Times has a free basic service, as well as paid membership options. Easy Media List is a paid service.

National Education Writers Association (<http://www.ewa.org>)

The national professional organization of education reporters whose intent is to improve education reporting to the public.

National School Public Relations Association (<http://www.nspr.org>)

The national association of school public relations professionals. This site contains extensive articles and resources.

Public Relations Society of America (<http://www.prsa.org>)

The national association of public relations professionals. The site offers links to local and regional chapters.

Public Relations Strategies (<http://www.prstrategy.net>)

Offers extensive links to public relations organizations, services, and resources.

TVA (<http://www.tvproductions.com/html/mediaoutlets.php>)

Allows you search for a list of media by type of media and by city. You will have to augment the information for your media list.

Voices for Health (<http://www.voicesforhealth.com>)

Provides affordable translation services in many languages.