

POLICY CHANGE PROCESS

PURPOSES & BENEFITS

This tool assists the collaborative group in developing important messaging for sexual and domestic violence and community organizing to optimize the related external communication components of their community organizing strategic plan.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOL

The collaborative group can use this tool to develop key messages about sexual and domestic violence and community organizing to promote their community organizing efforts and address common misperceptions around the issues.

Kansas Coalition Against Sexual and Domestic Violence



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POLICY CHANGE PROCESS

The policy change process includes the following steps:

1. **Identify a specific need, answering:**

- Why should this be done?
- Who can help?
- Who will the policy impact?
- Who are potential adversaries? What are their possible counter arguments?

Tips:

- Use data.
- Do your homework.

2. **Gather support by:**

- Educating the community about the issues, using a variety of sources over time.
- Frame the issues in terms of why policy is needed and the risks and results of not making change.

3. **Approach policy makers.**

- Based upon the level at which you wish policy change (i.e., local, regional, state, etc.)
- Meet one-on-one in person.
- Provide data and rational, being clear, specific, concise and focused.
- Make their job to sponsor your issues as easy as possible.

4. **Continue to raise public awareness via:**

- Editorials.
- Messaging throughout the community.

See “External Strategic Communication” for other public awareness messaging avenues.

5. **Stay in contact with sponsoring policy makers.**

- Ask how you can help them.
- Be prepared to answer any questions or concerns.
- Provide data, new information, strategies, etc.

6. **Attend any meetings introducing or discussing the policy.**

- Be prepared to clarify:
 - Why there is a need for policy.
 - What will happen if the policy is and is not ratified.

7. **If the policy gets ratified:**

- Be sure to thank:
 - Supporters
 - Policy-making sponsors
- Send out a press release.
- Monitor policy enforcement.

8. **If the policy isn't ratified:**

- Be sure to thank policy-making sponsors for support.
- Examine process, asking:
 - Why it failed.
 - What can be done differently in the future.

Adapted from FACE (2006) *Common Sense for Community Change Workbook*. FACE: Claire, MI.

