Creating and Implementing a Communications Plan

A Step-by-Step Approach

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Historically, among Indigenous peoples, communicating important news included smoke signals, sign language, runners who carried the news from village to village or camp to camp, and interpreters who translated news or messages between Tribes. Today, there is the "moccasin telegraph" and the "Indian Grapevine" in which news and messages get relayed informally. Today's technology makes getting the word out even easier, faster and more effectively. Reaching important groups such as youth, parents, elders, health care professionals, educators, and Tribal leadership is critical to the success of your program. Consistent and effective communication with groups such as these can provide momentum to achieving your program goals and can provide a broad based support system for sustainability of your project. But how do you create an effective, realistic plan that helps you get and stay connected with key groups that are essential to meeting your program goals?

How do you create an effective, realistic plan that helps you get and stay connected with key groups that are essential to meeting your program goals?

The tools in this section outline a step-by-step communications planning process. This toolkit was designed to allow Tribal programs like yours to think through the main ingredients of communications planning.

It is organized to help you move through the material on your own or with the guidance of your technical assistance specialist.

Please begin with the **overview,** which explains the purpose of creating a communication plan; then move through the steps, each of which represents a component of the planning process. The five steps have worksheets, PowerPoint presentations and other documents, examples, and resources to help you design your communications plan. We also encourage you to contact your technical assistance specialist for further guidance.

Developing a Communications Plan: An Overview

This section outlines the various components of a communications plan. It includes: a blank worksheet; a sample communications plan, created by a community-based organization; and an index of communications resources, divided into topic areas for further exploration. Once you've reviewed this overview and identified your objectives, you're ready to create your plan.

- **Developing a communications plan**
- **Communications plan worksheet**
- **Communications plan example**
- **Communications resources**

Developing a Communications Plan

Forward-thinking organizations often find it helpful to develop a brief communications plan as a roadmap to help them reach their program goals. Once program goals and the corresponding communications objectives are established, a communications plan can be written for either the whole initiative or a specific aspect of the program, such as participant recruitment, fund-raising, policy change, or advocacy.

This overview will help you fill out the blank communications plan worksheet in Appendix A, as well as provide an example of a communications plan (In Appendix B) for a grantee project similar to yours.

The basic elements of a communications plan are listed below. By answering the questions in each section, you will be able to develop your own plan.

Elements of a Communications Plan

Program Goal(s)

These come from your strategic plan. What is your overarching program goal? You may have multiple program goals, though some may be better suited to communications efforts than others. As you fill out the worksheet, please select one program goal or a short- and a long-term goal on which you wish to focus your communications efforts over the next 12 months. At a later time, you may want to create another communications plan for other program goals.

Communications Objectives

How will communications help you achieve your program goal? For example, do you need to create a strong coalition or collaborative network? Do you need to educate elders, Tribal council, legislators or business leaders about your program? Do you need to find partners to sustain your efforts? Do you need to recruit and retain a broader group of participants? When you're establishing your objectives, try to make them as specific as possible. (For example, "Reach 80% of Tribal juvenile justice related staff with information about your program," or "Recruit an additional 20 families to participate in your cultural event, and retain 80% of youth participants for 12 months.")

Situation Analysis

Situation analysis gives you a picture of where you stand now including your communication goals, what you know about your target audience, and your strengths/resources. What situation are you struggling with in your program (e.g., low program participation, lack of funds)? What do you know about your situation that can help you to create a communications plan to address it? The Situation Analysis Worksheet will help you to navigate this process (see Additional Resources).

Resources Available

What resources are available to help you achieve your program goal(s)? For example:

- Staff and consultants
- Time
- Budget
- In-kind donations
- Free publications or resource material

Target Audience(s)

What individuals or group(s) have the power to create the change you want to see in your program goal? You may identify both a primary and secondary audience. A primary audience is the most important group for you to reach. A secondary audience might be an influential group that has the power to reach this first audience.

Three-Point Messages

What three key points do you want your audience to take away? Your messages should speak directly to your goals and your audience(s).

Strategies

What are the best strategies you can use to communicate a message to your audience? Of the many possible strategies, which ones to use—and whether to use them alone or in combination—depend on your communications objectives. For example, to raise awareness, you may want to choose a combination of media relations and community outreach. To change individual behavior, you might choose social marketing and facilitate communication versus a general informational type of presentation.

Channels

What are the best ways to reach your audience with your messages? The most popular channels will depend on the media habits of the audience(s) you want to reach. They might include e-mail, posters or other print material, radio or TV ads, public service announcements, paid newspaper advertising, or letters to the editor. Alternative channels include church bulletins, flyers, and billboard ads. As you consider the most effective channels, take into account what channels are most relevant, credible, cost-efficient, and popular with your target audience(s).

Evaluation Measurements

How will you measure the effect of your communications efforts? It is essential to consider this question carefully at the outset of your strategic process. You will want to decide up front how you will measure your impact. For example, you might count responses to direct-mail reply cards, or the number of people who come to meetings and/or take action. Or you might want to use some more sophisticated techniques, such as an 800 number to measure phone calls, or web analytics (such as Google Analytics) to count how many people came to your website.

Note: *As you're implementing your plan, you should continually evaluate the effectiveness of your tactics and make any appropriate revisions. One suggestion is to schedule regular reviews as part of your communication plan.*

Step 1: Situation Analysis

Step 1 includes an introduction to situation analysis and two guides for conducting formative research: focus groups and key informant interviews. Please use the situation analysis worksheet in Appendix C.

This step will give you valuable information to inform the remaining steps.

- **Situation analysis**
- **Situation analysis worksheet**
- **Formative research (assists in situation and audience analysis)**
    - **Focus groups**
    - **Key informant interviews**

Situation Analysis

Situation analysis is an important step in creating a communications plan. A situation analysis answers the key question: *Where are we today?* It also looks at demographics of your target audience(s), your program assets, and the behaviors you wish to influence. You may already have much of this information if you have done a recent environmental scan and/or strategic plan. The basic elements of a situation analysis are described below.

Communications Goal

This is your starting point. What is your communications goal? *A communications goal might be "bring awareness of juvenile justice needs to the community".* What are you trying to accomplish with a communications strategy? *If the community becomes aware of the juvenile justice needs, this may create momentum to address the needs.* What action do you want people to take after they hear your message? *Perhaps coordination of services to address juvenile justice needs might be the action taken as a result of the message.*

Target Audience

You will always have multiple audiences in your community. Deciding which one is your primary audience is part of the situation analysis.

Some possible audiences:

- Potential participants in your program; these could be parents, children/youth (in which case, parents are your target audience, as they need to give permission), Tribal program directors, or nonprofit leaders.
- Key stakeholders, including Elders, community and political leaders, child care staff, pediatricians, school boards, PTAs.
- Collaborators, such as mental health or child care agencies, teachers, and service or community agencies.
- Funders: foundations, business leaders, local government leaders.

Who else might you include?

It's also possible that you will have a primary audience *and* a secondary audience. A primary audience is the one you most want to reach. A secondary audience would also benefit from your communication strategies or may be able to influence your primary audience. The primary audience might the youth in the community and the secondary audience might be the parents.

Audience Analysis

If you understand who your audience is and what motivates them, you're better able to tailor your message(s) to achieve your intended response. This is just common sense—your message will have a greater effect if your audience can relate to it and you. For example, if you want to reach youth with your message, you might want to have youth as the messenger rather than older people.

Your audience analysis should include the following:

- The demographics of your audience (age range, gender, ethnic/cultural background, etc.)
- Language issues—the primary language(s) spoken and the vocabulary they will best understand
- The motivations that drive your audience's attitudes and behaviors on this issue
- The attitudes, beliefs, and knowledge of the audience regarding this issue and your mission
- Their stage of readiness for behavior change (referenced below)

Language

Match your vocabulary to that of your audience. How simple or technical does your message need to be? What will your audience understand and relate to? For the types of audiences listed below, what kind of vocabulary do you think you'll need to use?

- Health care professionals, mental health practitioners, and interventionists
- Parents
- Children and youth
- Legislators
- Tribal leadership
- Administrators
- Media
- A broad public audience

Is English the primary language of your audience? Do you need to consider other languages?

Motivation

What drives your audience's attitudes and behaviors? How can you appeal to their motivators to achieve your intended response? Examples:

- A better outcome for their child, family, or community
- Common sense
- Dollars and cents
- Cost-benefit analysis (in other words, what will it cost them to act, and what will be the resulting benefit)
- Evidence-based findings
- Emotional response
- Personal experience or history

Keep in mind that a combination of motivators may be in play.

History

What does your audience already know about your organization, the people you serve, the issue you wish to address, and your program? What are their prevailing attitudes and beliefs about all these issues?

Remember: Positive impressions need to be reinforced, and negative images need to be understood in order to be dealt with effectively.

Stages of Readiness for Behavior Change

Chart A: Stages of Change*

Stage	Definition	Potential Communications Goals
Pre-contemplation	Individuals are unaware of need, have not thought about change, and do not want to change	Increase awareness and personalize risks and benefits
Contemplation	Individuals are thinking about a change in the near future	Encourage and motivate people to make specific plans
Preparation	Individuals have made a plan to change	Help create a concrete plan of action and set short-term goals
Action	Individuals are implementing a specific plan to change	Assist with feedback, problem solving, social support, and reinforcement
Maintenance	Individuals are continuing the desired behavior or repeating a periodic action or actions	Assist in coping with, providing reminders, finding alternatives, and handling relapses

From *Communicating Public Health Information Effectively, A Guide for Practitioners* by David E. Nelson, M.D., M.P.H., Ross C. Brownson, Ph.D., Patrick L. Remington, M.D., M.P.H., Claudia Parvanta, Ph.D. (Washington, DC: American Public Health Association, December, 2002).

Assets

Budget: Have you set aside money to implement your communications plan? If there is no money, can you broker in-kind donations? Have planning costs been estimated? Are the facilities and space necessary to conduct the program available? Are there opportunities to apply for funds to meet staff, equipment, and space needs?
Timeframe: How long do you have to plan, implement, and evaluate your strategy?
People: Do you have capable in-house staff, or will you need to hire a professional or interns from a local university? Will the staff require special training?

Advisory board: Do you have an advisory board that includes some of your target audience or people who can offer you connections to your target audience?
Shared vision/goals: Do your staff, advisory board, and/or collaborating partners share your vision and goals? If not, can you get their buy-in? One strategy to get "buy-in" might be to collectively develop a shared vision.

Next Steps in Situation Analysis

- Complete the Situation Analysis Worksheet in Appendix C
- If you need additional information you may want to:
  - Conduct focus groups
  - Conduct key informant interviews

See Communications Resources section for information about focus groups and key informant interviews.

Formative Research: Focus Groups

Focus groups are an important tool in doing formative research. If you have recently conducted an environmental scan, most likely you will have all the current information you need to complete a situation analysis. If you find that you have many unanswered questions in your situation analysis, you may want to conduct some focus groups. You will find some tips on conducting focus groups in the Communications Resources section.

Step 2: Creating Powerful Messages

The background information you collected in Step 1: Situation Analysis will help you craft your message. Section 2 contains a guide to help you create powerful messages.

- **Creating Powerful Messages**
    - **Guiding Principles**
    - **Building in Meaning**
- **Framing the Message**
    - **SW2C**
    - **Communicating Evaluation Results**

On any given day, the average person takes in hundreds of messages from many different sources. Your job is to make sure that *your* message can break through the clutter of all those other messages. A message that's too complex will be tuned out, and you'll have lost an opportunity to reach your intended audience. Use only a few pertinent words (e.g., "Just Do It") to get to the essence of your message—think "elegant simplicity."

Guiding Principle: The Message Triangle

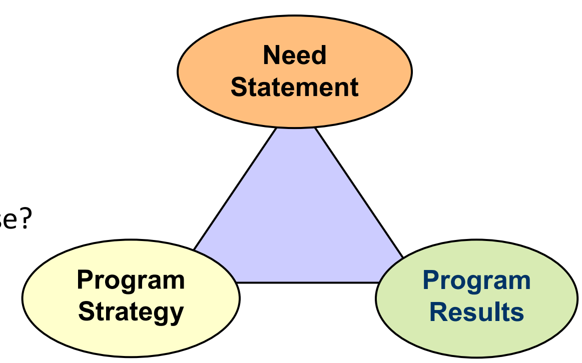
Messages are most effective if they contain no more than three points *at most*. For example, a general message might succinctly answer these three questions:

1. **Need Statement:** What's the *need* that your program addresses?
2. **Program Strategy:** How is your program *addressing* the need?
3. **Program Results/Call to Action:** What *outcomes* do you expect from your program? OR: What *evidence* do you have that your program is succeeding? OR: What more needs *to be accomplished*, and what action can your audience take to *help* achieve these results?

Your message should be simple:
- Can it break through the clutter?

It should strike a chord with the audience:
- Does it have immediate personal use?

It should be repeated frequently:
- Repeat it seven times to be heard!



Build in Meaning
Effective messages should resonate, be memorable, and draw a picture in the mind of each person in your target audience. The idea is to create a mental image that fits with your audience's motivations, beliefs, and attitudes.

Here are some tips for making your message accessible:

- Use specific examples, culled from your own or your audience's experience, in order to "draw a picture" for your audience that reinforces your key points.

- Instead of relying on statistics, percentages, graphs, and charts to get your message across, break down the data into something easier for your audience to capture. Use colorful words, one-liners, and "social math" to illustrate your points and make the intangible more tangible. "One out of four women will eventually be diagnosed with breast cancer" is a better example than "Twenty-five percent of women, all things being equal, are at risk for getting breast cancer." The statement, "College students spend more money on beer than on books," is an example of social math because it uses contrast to illustrate the point.

- Start communicating from a point of consensus—begin with what the audience knows and believes. If you're trying to change behavior, look for the win-win (what's in it for them?). Work with what the audience knows, and show how a shift or a change in behavior can create a win-win situation for everyone.

- Avoid jargon. Using the jargon of social science, psychology, and education is a sure-fire way to lose your audience's attention. Test your message on your neighbor. If your neighbor doesn't understand the point you're making, chances are your target audience will not understand either.

SW2C = So What? Who Cares?

A message will have "traction" if you can answer those two key questions. And your audience will respond if your message is immediate and relevant. Think about the following:

- What *difference* does your program make?
- *Who* should care?
- *Why* should they care?

Communicating Evaluation Results

Some of the best source material for your message comes from the evaluation activities you conduct to measure program effectiveness. Evaluation results in the form of process, outcome, or cost-benefit data may be the most persuasive information you have to relay to your audience. Your data can add muscle to your message and help answer the question, "So what?"

Here are some examples of how to incorporate evaluation results into your Message Triangle:

Need Statement
Very briefly explain the need your program is addressing, using demographics and data collected from your formative research. In other words, paint the picture to answer your two key questions: So what? Who cares?

Example**:** In the past decade, 30% of our tribal youth have experienced negative consequences of substance use.. 21% of our tribal youth are involved with the court each year with substance related arrests. 9% of our tribal youth are incarcerated each year due to substance related crimes.

Program Strategy and Results
Briefly explain one or two things your program is doing to address this need. Describe the program's goals and its accomplishments to date. Describe your outcome, and/or cost-benefit data. Enhance your quantitative data with qualitative data whenever possible. If you don't have complete data yet, you can always use interim results and back up their promise with anecdotal data and proxy measures.

Example**:** There are multiple factors that contribute to the high rate of substance use among our youth including lack of cultural identity and positive role models. The Tribal Youth Program is addressing this need by creating the conditions for youth to thrive and engage in more positive behaviors.

Example**:** In just one year, the Tribal Youth Program has recruited and trained mentors and elders to build relationships with tribal youth and developed a culturally-based curriculum that will build cultural identity and cultural pride.

Call to Action
What do you need from your audience? What do you want your message to ultimately do? What actions do you want your audience to take? Be explicit; don't assume that your audience knows what you want from them. For example you may ask for volunteers, funding, or policy change.

Step 3: Communications Strategies

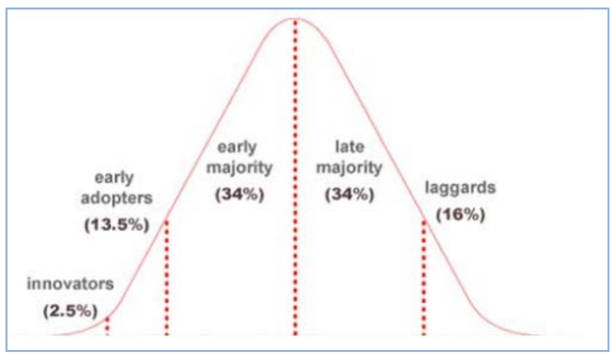
Once you've created your message(s), your next step is to get it to your audience. This section offers three communications strategies to consider when deciding how to get your message out:

Community outreach techniques
Social marketing (Worksheet included in Appendix E)
Media relations

You may decide to use one or several strategies to reach your audience.

- If you are trying to increase participation or enlist businesses or policy makers, consider community outreach techniques.
- If you are trying to change individual behavior, consider social marketing.
- If you are trying to inform or persuade a broader public, consider media relations.

Which one(s) to use depends greatly on your communications objective. For example, to raise awareness, you may want to choose a combination of media relations and community outreach. To change behavior, you may want to choose social marketing.



Community Outreach Techniques

Engaging families, child health experts, non-profit leaders, policymakers, and other stakeholders can be an important strategy to reach your communications goal. While each audience requires a targeted message (see Step 2) based on its own motivators and knowledge of the issue (see Step 1), outreach to any audience is based on some commonly used theories and concepts:

The "Diffusion of Innovation" Theory

Diffusion of Innovation can be helpful when considering how to reach various audiences. The theory refers to how and when individuals change their behavior (in this case, participation). This theory tells us that there are groups of people within our target audience who will be easier to persuade than other groups.

- **Innovators** are those individuals who set trends and who carry the trust of the community. Others may look to this group to see whether it's OK to join your efforts.

- **Early Adopters** are influenced by Innovators. The ideas or actions that Innovators model will appeal most to Early Adopters—those who are in a preparation or action stage of the Stages of Change model.

- The **Early Majority** group holds back a bit longer when a new idea or action is presented to see whether it has been accepted or adopted by the Early Adopters. They may need more "evidence" that it's OK to join or participate.

- The **Late Majority** is the group that doesn't want to be left out. If everybody else is doing it, then they too want to be part of the action.

- The **Laggards** may never take action. They will probably have the most resistance to an idea or action.

Where would you begin your outreach efforts? Certainly not with the Laggards! In other words, go for the "low-hanging fruit". Success breeds success, and if you concentrate your effort on the most difficult group, you'll have very little to show for it. You may want to identify those families, groups, or individuals who you would think of as early adopters and find out what would appeal to them about participating in your program or coalition.

Increasing Participation in Your Program

"Participation" can mean becoming or remaining a program client or member of your advisory board, finding advocates for policy change, or gaining financial or other support from local businesses. There are essentially three ways to increase participation:

- **Diversifying:** Appeal to people who may not even be aware that your program exists. This outreach approach makes sense if you are looking to add members, clients, volunteers, and contributors that bring new energy, ideas, and resources to your organization.(Example: finding a community leader to support your campaign for juvenile justice awareness).
- **Broadening:** Appeal to people who you believe would be interested in your program but who don't have all the information they need to participate. This outreach approach makes sense if you are looking to add more of the same types of members, clients, volunteers, and contributors.(Example: recruiting more parents to sign their youth up for the Tribal Youth Program)
- **Deepening:** Gain greater participation from your current members, clients, volunteers, and contributors. This outreach approach makes sense if you are looking to get greater participation from those who currently participate in your program (Example: encouraging a parent volunteer to become a member of your advisory board).

Targeted Messages

Each audience may need to hear a different message to meet your participation goal. For instance:

- If you're trying to diversify your participation, your audience will need to hear ***why*** they should participate. They need to know:
  - What's in it for me?
  - Why do I need it?
- If you're trying to broaden your participation base, your audience will need to hear ***what*** they'll get if they participate. They need to know:
  - What are you offering?
  - How do I know this is for me?
- If you're trying to deepen your participation base, your audience will need to hear ***how*** they can participate more fully. They need to know:
  - OK, I'm here. How else can I get or stay involved?
  - What else can I do?

Ambassadorship

A critical part of outreach work is knowing who can best deliver your message to which audience and who will have the most credibility with your intended audience. Here are some suggestions for conveying your message to a specific audience:

- Parent to parent
- Educator to educator
- Educator to parent
- Community leader to legislator
- Law Enforcement Official to Tribal Council
- Constituent to legislator
- Youth to youth
- Health care provider to parent
- Spiritual Leader to faith-based group

Outreach Channels

There are a number of ways to reach your audience to increase participation:

- Public speaking forums, for example:
  - Open houses
  - Parent organizations
  - Faith-based organizations
- Printed materials, for example:
  - Brochures
  - Flyers
  - Direct mail
  - Newsletters

- Mass media, for example:
  - Radio Public Service Announcements
  - Cable TV
  - Local newspapers
- Internet
  - Listserv
  - Facebook ads
  - Web site ads

Engaging and Retaining Participants

Strategies for parent or community member participation and retention include the following:

- Parent-to-parent networking
- Stipends or other incentives
- Changing program activities
- Training staff
- Recruiting parents as volunteers
- Developing meaningful relationships with organizations within your community
- Interviewing program dropouts to find out why they left

Outreach to Legislators

It's important that you understand legislative and other government processes so you can work effectively within their constraints. Relationships with legislators are important and are built over time. Outreach can be both ad hoc and through formal opportunities. Know the legislator's background, policy interests, constituency, and committees; it will then be easier to appeal to a common interest. Most legislators prefer simple, credible, fact-based messages that are short and to the point. Legislators receive a lot of information and many appeals; your outreach efforts will stand out if your message is clear, concise, and compelling.

Social Marketing

Social Marketing is a very useful strategy when your communications goal is individual behavior change. Do you want to:

- Attract more parents to a parent training program?
- Recruit elders, law enforcement, health providers, and educators to participate in an advisory council?
- Encourage youth to decrease alcohol and drug use?
- Encourage community members to seek mental health services?
- Recruit a collaborative network of service providers?
- Encourage the community to strengthen and acknowledge traditional values?

Social marketing draws on techniques used by advertisers to entice consumers to buy their products. The difference is that instead of selling products, we are "selling" behavior changes that will improve the health or well-being of a particular group or in general. It is best used to encourage or sustain healthful behavior change, increase program use, or build customer satisfaction with existing services.

Some examples of social marketing programs are promoting high school graduation, encouraging Tribal people to be counted in the Census 2010, recruiting elders to become mentors for youth, advocating for the reduction of smoking among Native youth, encouraging friends to seek help for those who are at risk for suicide.. One example of how a Tribal Youth Program used social marketing is White Earth Tribal youth creating Public Service Announcements on local radio to encourage youth to not drink and drive after prom.

Conventional and social marketing are based on the understanding that behavior is determined by two forces: the degree to which an individual sees the proposed behavior as beneficial AND the extent that new behavior will be supported by one's peers.

Once you develop a social marketing mindset, you might look at your program or organization in an entirely different way. Social marketers ask their clients what t*hey* need in order to adopt a new behavior.

At the heart of social marketing is the exchange principle: "The marketing process attempts to make an exchange that provides the consumer with tangible benefits at minimal monetary, physical, or emotional costs." - Wallack, 1993

DEVELOPING A STRATEGY (THE SOCIAL MARKETING MIX)

To develop a detailed strategy, social marketers need to develop a "marketing mix," which is a process used by advertisers in commercial marketing. This is known as the 4 P's: product, price, place, and promotion.

Product refers to what you are offering your target audience, both the tangible and intangible. Questions to consider when thinking about your product are:

- What is the behavior you are asking the target audience to adopt?
- What are the benefits from adopting the behavior?
- What is the "competition," and why would the target audience prefer it to the behavior you are selling?

Price refers to what the target audience has to give up to adopt the behavior. This can include time, money, comfort, and/or old habits. When thinking about the price, questions to ask include:

- What are the costs the target audience associates with the product?
- What are other barriers that prevent the target audience from adopting the behavior or product?

- How can you minimize the costs or remove the barriers?

Place, in the traditional marketing sense, refers to where the product will be found. In social marketing, place would be where the behavior is available to the target audience. In figuring out the place, think about:

- Where is the target audience making decisions about engaging the desired behavior?
- Where do target audience members spend much of their time?
- To which social or recreational groups do target audience members belong?
- What distribution systems will be efficient for reaching target audience members?

Promotion deals with how you are going to get the message about the product out to your target audience. The focus is on motivating people to try and then to continue performing the behavior.

Examples of methods of promotion include advertising, public relations, promotions, personal selling, special events, and entertainment. When figuring out your promotion strategy, consider:

- Which communication channels do target audience members pay the most attention to and trust the most?
- How can you best package the message to reach the most target audience members effectively and efficiently?
- Who is the most credible and engaging spokesperson on this issue for the target audience?

For our purposes, the **product** might be decreasing drunk driving among Tribal youth. The **price** might be social acceptance. The **place** might be house parties, bars, or pow-wows. The **promotion** might be Tribal newsletter, cable television, local radio, and posters in places where youth frequent (teen centers, community centers, basketball tournaments).

In addition to the four P's of traditional marketing, social marketing adds four more P's: publics, partnership, policy, and purse strings. Publics refer to both the external and the internal groups involved in the program. The external groups include not only the target audience, but also the people who influence the decisions that members of the target audience make such as friends, family, teachers, and physicians. Internal groups are the staff and supervisors involved in the campaign. In order to be successful, the staff members behind the program must "buy in" to the concept and plan the execution before it is shown to the target audience. Forming partnerships involves reaching out to other groups in the community to work with, enabling your program to extend its resources and access to members of the target audience. Policy is effective in shaping the environment surrounding the target audience to enable individual behavioral change. Purse strings refer to the fact that organizations that develop social marketing programs operate through funds provided by sources such as foundations, governmental grants, and donations.

THE SOCIAL MARKETING PROCESS

The stages of the social marketing process are:

- Planning: Understanding the need you're addressing, the audiences you're targeting, and the environments in which the program will operate. This involves analyzing the need you want to address, analyzing the environment of your target audience, as well as analyzing the resources available, which include your organization's resources and resources from your partners.
- Message and Materials Development: Using the formative information learned in the planning phase to design messages to be conveyed, as well as the materials that will carry the messages to the target audience.
- Pretesting: Using various methods to test messages and materials with the target audience to determine what works best to accomplish the program's objectives
- Implementation: The program is introduced to the audience.
- Evaluation and Feedback: Involves assessing the effects of the program as a whole, as well as the individual elements of the strategy.

SIX STRATEGIC QUESTIONS

When developing the message for your social marketing campaign, you must do research on your target audience. Effective and compelling messages take the following into consideration:

Target: Who is your target audience and what are they like?

There is no such thing as targeting the general public. To be most effective, it is best to specify the audience for your program as precisely as possible. This can include the people you want to reach, as well as people who have a strong influence over your primary audience, such as parents, spouses, teachers, and physicians. The objectives of your program will help guide you in identifying the appropriate audience and research will help narrow your approach for that audience. If you have multiple groups in your target audience, a method called segmentation will help divide your audience into different subgroups for one or more of these groups. The goal of segmentation is to identify distinct groups of people who are like each other in key ways and, therefore, are liable to respond to particular messages similarly.

To identify your target audience, consider:

- What are their attitudes, beliefs, values?
- What are their needs, desires?
- What are their current actions?

- What are the barriers and benefits of the “product” for them?

Action: What action do you want them to take after they receive your message?
Actions must be specific, like making a call, talking to someone, signing up for a program, or making an appointment. Key questions to think about are:

- What are the competing actions they are taking? What are they doing INSTEAD of what you want them to do?
- Why do they take these actions – what benefits are they getting?

Benefit: What benefit are we promising them? What is the exchange?
Benefits are in the present and not in the future: they are subjective and personal. We don’t know the specific benefits until we talk to our customers – don’t assume you know.

- What will your audience get in return for adopting the behavior?
- What’s the benefit to them?

Support: What supports do we offer? What can your program offer to support the change in behavior?
Supports can come from research-based facts, testimonials, and/or stories of other people’s experiences. When thinking about supports, ask:

- What makes our benefit promise believable?
- What evidence supports our claim?
- What makes the action feasible?

Image: What is the current image your audience holds regarding the behavior?
An effective image is:

- One that tells the target: “I’m speaking to you.”
- Appealing and relevant
- Consistent with the desired social change
- Original and distinctive

Openings: When is your audience open to receive our message?
The best times to reach your target audience are when they are:

- Ready to hear your message
- Looking for your message
- Can act on your message
- In need of your message

SOCIAL MARKETING CHALLENGES

While we can think of the social behaviors as products we want people to adopt and use, there are some important differences that social marketers run into that complicate the transfer of the business marketing model to selling health and social behaviors:

- **Products are often things most people don't particularly want:** Social marketing campaigns usually promote behaviors that campaign designers want people to adopt, which often means that the target audience would need to change their current behaviors. More often, it is difficult for people to change habits they have had for a long time.
- **Products don't always have personal or immediate benefits:** Preventing health or environmental problems in the future may not be compelling enough to motivate someone to take action now. It's a harder sell to get people to inconvenience themselves for something they may not ever see a benefit from.
- **Products that are intangible pose communication challenges:** It is difficult to depict behaviors you want your target audience to adopt because the products are not actual material products. Also, if you are trying to prevent someone from engaging in a particular behavior, it is challenging to convey that idea without portraying the behavior you don't want.
- **Your organization does not control the product design:** The product (behavior) requires a cost. There's not much that can be done besides trying to position it in a favorable way. For example, we can't change the fact that immunizations must be given as a shot or that cardiovascular exercise requires a certain level of physical exertion to be effective.
- **Some issues are private and may be difficult to talk about in public:** This complicates audience research because people may be less willing to speak frankly about an issue in front of others and societal mores can dictate how explicit the campaign itself can be, despite a desperate need for information. This reticence to speak about potentially embarrassing topics can limit the extent of word of mouth communication.

While the challenges associated with social marketing seem like difficult obstacles to overcome, there are several ways to get around them:

- **Be as specific as possible about the behavior you want people to adopt:** This will make it more concrete and easier to communicate. For example, you don't just want to promote the abstract idea that people with disabilities have a lot to offer society, but it may be more effective to take a constructive step, such as to encourage employers to hire people with disabilities.
- **Redefine the product to align with the values important to your audience:** You can reposition the product to your target audience. For example, to promote child car safety, the product is not the booster seat. The product is being a good parent. Another example would be to prevent broken bones in the elderly, don't sell calcium supplements and safety modifications in their homes, but do

promote the product of independence, which may be one of the things most valued in that age group.

- **Show how adopting the product helps your audience reach who they aspire to be:** While your target audience may not benefit directly, their self-image gets bolstered. A person who sees themselves as socially responsible will do things like recycle, conserve energy, and consider taking public transportation to work. Someone who thinks of themselves as in control of her own fate will schedule a skin check with the dermatologist and an annual exam.

Media Relations

The media can draw attention to your cause through newspapers, magazines, television, radio, and increasingly, the internet. Perhaps more than any other communications strategy you employ, media relations is worth considering. When asked, most people say that they get their health-related news from television and newspaper reports. The internet is rapidly gaining on these two sources – especially for people under age fifty. The media can also play a powerful role in educating and persuading people. Yet, to tap this powerful force, you need to understand how the media work and provide media outlets with information in a format they can use.

So, how do you tap into the power of the media?

Some Fundamentals

First, find out whether and how the media are covering your issue today. Do some research—read, watch, and listen: Is your issue being covered in print and on the web?

- Who is covering it?
- How is it being covered? What framing language is being used?
- Are solutions presented?
- What is missing?

Next, create media lists of key editors and reporters. The best way to do this is to get media lists from other organizations in your state that cover your issue—but you can also read, watch, listen, and create your own.

What Is a Story?
First and foremost, a news story must be compelling, and it should also be useful. However, the definition of a "good" news story is arbitrary—it could be based on a reporter's personal interest or on a business decision, for example:

- Entertainment vs. public service
- What people want vs. what they need

Pitching Your Story
Before you contact a reporter for the first time, you must be very clear about the message you want to convey and how it relates to the story the journalist wants to tell. Also consider your ultimate objective: Is it to have name recognition for your program, or is it to shape the way the issue your program addresses is covered? What do you want to see happen as a result of media coverage?

Here are some elements of an effective pitch:

- A clearly stated **story idea** with a balanced point of view
- Reasons **why it is important**, and why readers will care
- Two or three key **statistics**
- Names of people to contact **for personal stories or expert opinion**

Make sure that you know your pitch well before you pass along your story idea in an introductory e-mail or letter.

Building Relationships
It's important to take the time to build and maintain strong relationships with reporters and editors. Establish your credibility early on, and be a **good source**:

- Know and respect their constraints. Reporters have tight deadlines, and their stories need simple messages and concepts. Speak thoughtfully but succinctly about your issue and why it is important to the community.

- Keep in mind that general-assignment reporters may not have any basic knowledge about the issue, so you'll need to inform them.

- Think like a reporter—what do they need? Clearly state why your story would appeal to:
  - the writer
  - the editor
  - the reader

- Reporters need colorful quotes and balanced stories—be sure to offer both!

- Keep story ideas coming for future use

Step 4: Selecting Channels

Once you've decided what method you're going to use to get your message out, this step will help you decide how the message will get to your audience. This section contains an explanation of what delivery channels are available and how to decide between them.

Selecting Channels

A "channel" is the vehicle that transmits a message from the source (you) to the receiver (your audience). How will your audience get the messages you've created? In addition to determining what communications strategy to use (social marketing, media relations, or community outreach tactics), you'll need to determine where and how your audience regularly receives information and how you can tap into that channel.

Examples of channels:

- Interpersonal or face-to-face interaction (teacher to student, parent to parent, youth to youth, parent to youth)
- Planned group meetings or gatherings (youth groups, classrooms, workplaces)
- Community venues (libraries, Tribal events or gatherings, community centers, shopping centers)
- Mass media (radio, television, newspapers, magazines, newsletters, direct mail, billboards)
- The Internet (e-mail, Web, Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, bulletin boards)
- Tribal newsletters or meetings

Questions to consider:

- Through which channel(s) does your audience usually receive your type of information?
- Will the audience perceive this channel to be a credible source of information?
- Given the budgetary, personnel, and time resources available to you, is it feasible to use this channel?
- Is there any evidence that this channel will successfully reach your audience?

Considerations for choosing between channel types:
Mass media:

- The least interactive format
- Best-suited to simple and easily understood messages that do not need feedback
- Can reach the largest number of people

Interpersonal communication:
- Allows for much greater audience participation (question and answer)
- Well-suited for situations where the audience needs interaction and feedback
- Can be the most labor-intensive

Events:
- Has elements of both media and interpersonal communication
- Reaches large numbers, but gives more opportunity for involvement and participation

Using Social Media

Many people are wondering about several questions: What is social media? Should I use it as part of my communications strategy? If so, how would that work? So here are some considerations.

Social media is online media that encourages feedback, participation, and the formation of communities. Whereas traditional media is often seen as one way communication (from sender to receiver), social media is more of a two-way conversation. For many people, the term “Social Media” is often synonymous with popular forms of it, such as Facebook or Twitter, but it is important to remember that there are many forms of social media and the form you choose largely depends on your target audience.

Choosing an appropriate channel of communication ensures that your message reaches your target audience. If your goal is to generate dialogue and encourage community, which form of social media is best to use? Specific audiences are more likely to use one form of social media over another. Let’s look at some of the most popular social media forms and the audiences that use them.

Social Networks

The most popular form of social media is social networking. People join social networks to create personalized profiles, build networks by connecting to friends, and exchange information. Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, and Bebo are examples of social networks. Facebook, which originated in US colleges around 2004, has quickly attracted a variety of audiences. Among its more than 500 million users[1], Facebook is seeing tremendous growth for users ages 35 to 54, which currently represent more than 30% of the entire user base, followed closely by users ages 18 to 24, at approximately 25%[2]. MySpace attracts a wide variety of audiences and is currently best known for its music services, with millions of bands and musicians joining to post songs, which are accessible to anyone free of charge. Known as the professional social network, LinkedIn focuses on businesses and professional contacts and is the second most popular social network among people aged 25 and over. The less known Bebo, short for Blog Early, Blog Often, is popular among school-aged children and is also quickly growing and attracting millions of young users.

Blogs
Blogs are another popular form of social media. They are online journals that tend to be written in a personal, conversational style. Often, blogs are written by an identified author or group of authors. This form of social media makes it easy for users to host links, post and respond to comments, and follow other blogs via subscriptions. Finding your target audience on blogs can be easy if you are targeting a group with interest in a specific content area because blogs are often grouped according to specific content, like media, fashion, and psychology. To search for relevant blogs, you can use helpers like Google Blogs or Google Reader.

Microblogs
Microblogs are a social media form that allows users to post short updates (up to 140 characters), which other users can comment on. Twitter is the most well-known microblogging platform. It's popular among homeworkers and freelancers, as well as with people who want to stay in touch with a close network of people.

Forums
Forums are online discussions and, like blogs, often bring together people with similar interests.
Discussions are referred to as threads, which can vary widely in topic and are reflective of face-to-face conversations. Just as with blogs, targeting your audience using forums involves identifying your audience's interests and finding ways to entice and continue the conversation.

Content Communities
Content communities are similar to social networks in that you have to create a home page and can add friends. The defining difference is that content communities cater to the sharing of certain types of content. Examples of content communities included Flickr, which holds photo content, YouTube, which hold video content, and del.icio.us, which holds bookmarked links. Content communities encourage audiences to pick their desired content. If you are trying to promote the use of Mental Health Consultation, for example, you might consider using YouTube to create and upload a video explaining it and its benefits for child care providers and primary care practitioners with key search terms (such as "mental health consultation in early childcare and primary care").

Remember to choose your form of social media carefully. Social media interaction requires quick turnaround and frequent maintenance, emphasizing its fundamentals of feedback, participation, and communities. Feeding new discussions, posting new videos or photos, and interacting within online communities can be time-consuming. Make sure to pick a form of social media that your target audience uses if you want to get your message out effectively and efficiently.

Step 5: Evaluating Your Communications Efforts

This section explains why evaluation is important for your communications planning and ways to conduct an evaluation.

Evaluating Your Communications Efforts

Congratulations! You've implemented your communications plan, based on Steps 1 through 4. But was your plan effective? Is it still appropriate for your intended audience? How do you know?

Evaluation creates accountability. See it as an opportunity to demonstrate how your program has made a difference. Positive results might also assist in finding new funding. Evaluation will also help improve the program while it is being implemented.

Go back to your initial objectives and review what you originally wanted to achieve. Remember, in order for objectives to be "real," they need to be measurable.

Measuring Your Effectiveness

Your **measurement of effectiveness** depends on your initial goal:

- Participant outreach: Did you meet your target number of participants? Did participants stay for the entire "dose"? Were the participants (parents, children, youth) the audience you originally targeted? Was your message received by your target audience? Was it understood? How do you know?
- Referrals: Did your referring agencies refer the number and the kinds of youth/families you wanted? Did they join your advisory board?
- Community attitudes: Can you see (or measure) a change in attitudes toward your program or its participants? Did community norms change? How do you know?
- Stakeholder support: Did you get what you wanted? A next meeting? The beginnings of a relationship? Contact names? Policy consideration? Budget consideration? Budget approval?
- Funding: Did you get your grant? Did you get the attention of new funders? What was the outcome?

Other ways to measure success:

- The number of requests for materials or information
- The number of Web visitors (both unique and repeat visitors)
- The number of positive news stories or stories promoting your message
- Verbal or written feedback, negative or positive
- New volunteers, members, or partner organizations
- New funders and/or increased funding levels from existing funders

Documenting Your Efforts and Looking Forward

In addition to assessing the effectiveness of your plan, you should document the process you went through and identify your successes and challenges. This will help you make the case for continuing the work, identifying potential improvements or modifications, and allowing others to follow in your footsteps. Questions to ask yourself include:

- What were the goals and objectives of the plan, and what activities were carried out to accomplish them?
- Was your communications plan implemented as planned? If not, what changes were made to the plan and for what reasons?
- What problems, if any, were encountered when carrying out the plan, and how were they addressed?
- What are the things that worked well?
- What changes, if any, should be adopted for the next iteration?
- Does the plan still address the needs of the target audience?
- Is your plan still appropriate for the intended audience?
- Do the messages still resonate with your intended audience?
- Do you need to reach out to a new audience to broaden or deepen your efforts?

Reference

Formative Research: Focus Groups and Key Informants Surveys

What are focus groups, and when should you use them?

- Focus groups are small-group interviews, typically composed of six to eight people, led by a moderator, and conducted in a relaxed atmosphere that encourages participants to share differing viewpoints.
- The moderator guides the discussion by asking open-ended questions about a specific topic. These questions produce qualitative data about the needs, opinions, and attitudes of this particular audience.
- Focus groups are an excellent way to obtain information about what is important to your audience. Due to the synergy of the small-group dynamics, researchers can often obtain information that would not typically come out in one-on-one interviews.
- Focus groups can range from informal formats to strict research formats. Choose the format that works best for the type of data or input you're seeking.

How do you recruit participants for a focus group?

- Your focus group should be a sample of people from your target audience, that is, as similar as possible to the make-up of your target population. For example, if the target audience is a neighborhood that is 50% African American and 50% white, your focus group of eight should ideally be four African Americans and four whites.
- If there are a few different groups that you want to hear from, consider conducting separate groups, since people feel more comfortable revealing information to people they perceive as peers and equals. For example, if your goal is to improve an early intervention program for preschool children, you may want to conduct at least three different focus groups: one for parents, one for junior-level program staff, and one for senior-level program staff.
- If your budget allows, you may want to give participants a stipend, such as a restaurant gift certificate, a book, or a coupon for a free video rental.
- Figure out the best way to contact your target audience (telephone, mail, e-mail, or other means). Your invitation should mention why they are being asked to participate, the dates and times of the interviews, and any stipend or incentive they will receive.
- The best method of choosing focus group participants is random selection. If possible, randomly choose participants (within the confines of your sample characteristics). If this method is too inconvenient or unaffordable, consider getting referrals from someone who is familiar with your target audience.

- Though the ideal group size is typically 6 to 8 people, you may need to contact 10 to 20 people to get a large enough pool of participants. Also, some people will not come, so, in general, you want to have a third more people signed up than your target number (e.g., if you want 8 people, invite 12).
- Once participants are identified, send a confirmation of the date and time of the focus group, along with directions and a number to contact you in case someone needs to cancel. Contact them the day before the focus group to give a last reminder.

What are the steps in preparing for a focus group?

- Define your objectives. What is the information that is *most critical* for you to obtain or understand? What information would be nice to have if you have the time? Make a list; this will help you prepare and prioritize your discussion questions.
- Create a discussion guide for your moderator to follow in asking questions. Typically, this will be about a dozen questions. Include an introduction question that is intended for everyone to answer (see ***What are some key considerations for moderators of focus groups?***). In developing your core questions, pay careful attention to phrasing. Word the questions in a neutral, open-ended manner so that you will get the maximum amount of information. Figure out approximately how many minutes you want to spend on each question, and include this in your guide. Assign the most minutes to your key questions.
- Select a focus group location—a comfortable room in a convenient location with ample parking. The room where you hold your focus group should be free from distractions and large enough to accommodate all participants in chairs around a table. Possible locations for focus groups are public buildings, private homes, and schools. If possible, choose a location that your target audience visits regularly.
- Take care of other logistics. Bring a tape recorder to record the focus group conversation. Provide refreshments, and arrange for childcare if at all possible. Bring consent forms for participants to sign to allow you to use the discussion data. If participants do not know one another, you may want to bring table tents and markers for writing their first names; this facilitates the discussion by helping the moderator and attendees address one another.
- Think about identifying a person from outside your organization who is not familiar with the participants to be your focus group moderator. A moderator who is seen to have close ties to your organization or who has personal relationships with focus group participants may influence what participants are comfortable expressing. At a minimum, the moderator should not be seen as being in a position of authority over the participants.
- If possible, have an assistant present to help the moderator with the logistical aspects of room preparation and note-taking. The assistant may want to map out the names of people around the table by discreetly drawing a diagram. If the

assistant keeps a rough transcript, this may help in transcribing the recording later.

What are some key considerations for moderators of focus groups?

Moderators should do the following:

- Reinforce the fact that participants have been chosen on the basis of their similar experiences.
- Encourage comments of all types, and refrain from making positive or negative judgments on ideas.
- Ask individual participants to introduce themselves and answer a background question during the introductions. After participants speak once, they are more likely to speak again. The first question should be a brief question that relates to the discussion; for example, if the focus group is for parents, the question might be, "How many children do you have, and what are their ages?"
- To draw additional information from the group, try a short pause (about five seconds) after a participant responds. This may prompt additional comments and reflections from the group.
- Probe for more information by asking follow-up questions. For example, if a participant gives a short answer, such as "I agree," ask a follow-up question, such as "Would you say more? What experiences make you feel this way?"
- Seek a range of viewpoints. If several participants are giving the same opinion, the moderator might ask if anyone has a differing point of view.

How do you get things started?

The first few minutes of the focus group are important for setting the right atmosphere. The introduction should include the purpose of and rules for the focus group discussion without being too rigid or overly informal, which might either squelch participation or create an unproductive environment. Here is a suggested outline for the introduction:

- Welcome participants by introducing yourself (and your assistant, if applicable), describing the purpose of the group, and explaining why the information being gathered is important.
- Explain why participants were invited and what they have in common.
- Tell participants that you will be tape-recording the conversation in case you miss any comments. Stress that no names will be used in the reporting and that their comments are anonymous and confidential. Mention that during the discussion, only first names should be used. Ask participants to sign a consent form.
- Suggest some basic ground rules, such as (1) There are no right or wrong answers, (2) All points of view will be respected, and (3) The goal is to hear from everyone.

- Explain other details: how long the discussion will be, where bathrooms are located, and that participants should help themselves to the refreshments.
- Ask participants to go around the room, giving their first names and answering the first question.

What are some things to keep in mind as the group progresses?

- Keep track of the time. Be clear about the length of the interview, warn people as the end approaches, and finish on time.
- Try to discourage dominating behavior by using body language (e.g., stop making eye contact with the dominator). If these methods don't work, politely redirect the person by saying, "Thank you, Bob. Is there anyone else who would like to respond?"
- If someone has (or is acting as if he or she has) more experience than the others on the topic and is dominating the discussion, reinforce the fact that all participants have important points of view that need to be expressed.
- Place shy participants directly across the table from you so you can make eye contact. This will often encourage shy participants to speak. If all else fails, call on the participant by name and ask for his or her input.
- When a participant is rambling or has gotten off track, try restating the topic to the group and asking for comments.
- At some point, ask if anyone who has not spoken yet would like to have a chance to jump in.

Checklist of Materials for Focus Groups

☐ A list of expected participants
☐ Participant consent forms
☐ Extra pens
☐ Questions for the moderator (discussion guide)
☐ Tape recorder, microphone, and blank tapes
☐ Refreshments
☐ Table tents and markers
☐ Stipends, if applicable

Source for document: Krueger, R. (1994). *Focus groups: A practical guide for applied research.* Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications, Inc.

Formative Research: Key Informant Interviews

What is a key informant interview?

A key informant interview is a one-on-one interview with an individual who is in a position to provide information and insights on a selected topic. It is an in-depth, one-on-one exchange with intensive probing in which the interviewer and interviewee discuss topics related to a project or activity. During the session the interviewer frames the questions and probes the informant to elicit more information. The interviewer remains neutral and does not lead the question in a biased direction. The atmosphere is informal, resembling a conversation among colleagues or acquaintances. The recorder takes extensive notes, which are developed and interpreted after the interview ends.

Key informant interviews typically involve identifying a select group of ten to twenty-five individuals (policymakers, managers, service providers, community representatives, and community leaders) who are in a position to provide information, ideas, and insights about the particular topic of interest. Key informants are selected for their expertise in a given area, status or communication skills, and who are willing to share their knowledge and skills with the interviewer. Interviews may be conducted using interview guides that have a general idea of topics and issues to be covered during the interviews (Hagen 1995).

Appendix A: Communications Plan Worksheet

Program Name:

Timeframe for this Communications Plan:

Program Goal(s) *(short- or long-term)*	
Communications Objectives *(12 months)*	
Situation Analysis *(use Situation Analysis Worksheet)*	
Resources Available *(staff, consultants, budget)*	
Target Audience(s) *(primary and secondary)*	1. 2.

Three-Point Message	1. 2. 3.
Strategies	
Channels	
Evaluation Measurements	

Appendix B: Sample Communications Plan

Timeframe: February 2011 –February 2012

Program Goal	To decrease the rate of juvenile recidivism with a focus on high risk Native American juvenile offenders
Communications Objectives *for juvenile justice related service providers*	1) Reach 80% of juvenile justice related service providers about need for provision of collaborative services for prerelease, reentry, and aftercare for high risk Native American juvenile offenders.
Situation Analysis	1. See Situation Analysis Worksheet
Resources Available	1. See Assets Section of Situation Analysis
Target Audiences *(primary)*	Juvenile justice related service providers that serve high risk Native American juvenile offenders
Three-Point Message	FOR JUVENILE JUSTICE RELATED SERVICE PROVIDERS: A. *Problem*: Lack of collaborative network of service providers serving high risk Native American juvenile offenders B. *Approach*: Formalizing the provision of services among juvenile justice related service providers will create more comprehensive service delivery for high risk Native American juvenile offenders C. *Action*: Consistent participation in a formalized collaborative network

Strategies	Customized community outreach and social marketing strategies will be used to reach juvenile justice related service providers
Channels	1) Community meetings that include service providers, elders, parents, youth, to inform the community about the need for a formalized collaborative network 2) Articles in local newspaper and Tribal newsletter. 3) PSA on local radio station
Evaluation Measurements	1) Percentage of juvenile justice related service providers reached about need for provision of collaborative services for prerelease, reentry, and aftercare for high risk Native American juvenile offenders. 2) Collaborative network for juvenile justice related service providers formalized with MOUs. 3) Percentage of organizations represented at each collaborative network meeting.

Appendix C: Situation Analysis Worksheet

This worksheet will help you think about the questions posed in the section.

Communications Goal

What is your goal? What are you trying to accomplish with a communications strategy?

Target Audience

Who are you trying to reach? Who can help you accomplish your goal?

Audience Analysis

Demographics

Who makes up your primary audience? What basic information do you have about your audience that may influence how they seek information?

- Age range
- Gender
- Ethnic/cultural background
- Occupations
- Where they live and work

History

What does your audience already know about your organization? What are their views on this topic?

Language

What language(s) would be most appropriate to communicate with your target audience? What kind of vocabulary will you need to use?

Motivation

What drives your audience's attitudes and behavior on this issue? How can you appeal to this motivation?

Stages of Behavior Change

Can you determine what stage(s) of behavior change apply to your audience?

Assets	
Budget	
Timeframe	
People	
Advisory board	
Shared vision/goals	
In-Kind Donations/Resources	
Other (e.g., free resources)	

Appendix D: Situation Analysis Worksheet Example

This worksheet will help you think about the questions posed in the section.

Communications Goal

What is your goal? What are you trying to accomplish with a communications strategy?

To create a formalized collaborative network of juvenile justice service providers serving high risk Native American juvenile offenders

Target Audience

Who are you trying to reach? Who can help you accomplish your goal?

Juvenile justice related service providers

Audience Analysis

Demographics

Who makes up your primary audience? What basic information do you have about your audience that may influence how they seek information?

- Age range: **22-65**
- Gender: **Male and Female**
- Ethnic/cultural background: **Native American**
- Occupations: **Judges, Counselors, Social Workers, Behavioral Health Providers, Health Providers, Educators**
- Where they live and work: **On Tribal lands**

History

What does your audience already know about your program? What are their views on this topic?

The program serves high risk Native American juvenile offenders. Corrections and detention is not integrated with human services, behavioral health, and other service provisions. There are negative perceptions of youth involved in corrections.

Language
What language(s) would be most appropriate to communicate with your target audience? What kind of vocabulary will you need to use? **Most people in the community, including the target audience speak the Native language. There may be a need to use a combination of the Native language and English to express certain terms.**

Motivation
What drives your audience's attitudes and behavior on this issue? How can you appeal to this motivation? **A traditional value that sees the youth as the future. Passion to meet the needs of all youth of the community.**

Stages of Behavior Change
Can you determine what stage(s) of behavior change apply to your audience? **Contemplation: Service providers are aware that the services are disconnected from each other and there is a need for a collaborative network but no plan has been put into place yet.**

Assets	
Budget	**Funding can be allocated through the grant to cover communications efforts including staff time, materials, meetings, etc.**
Timeframe	**February 2011 – February 2012**

People	**Tribal Leadership (both elected and community non-elected)** **TYP Coordinator** **TYP Staff** **Translator** **Volunteers** **Elders** **Parents** **Youth** **Advisory Board** **Community Partners**
Advisory board	**Advisory Board can be used to spread the word in the community through their connections and organizations. Many have connections with other agencies as well.**
Shared vision/goals	**Youth are our future. Working together will increase the positive outcomes for our Native youth and communities.**
In-Kind Donations/Resources	**Local radio station will donate free airtime for PSAs.** **Local newspaper will advertise special events at no cost.** **Agencies are willing to donate staff time to participate in collaborative meetings on important issues.** **Boys and Girls Club willing to donate use of office materials and space as well as use of their van.**
Other (e.g., free resources)	**Articles on the importance of collaborative networks.** **Speakers/presenters from colleges/universities and community-based organizations.**

Appendix E: Social Marketing Worksheet

Social Marketing Communication (The SMC Six)

1. Target
2. Action
3. Benefit
4. Support
5. Image
6. Openings

1: Target – Identify your audience.

2: Action – Identify the behavior you would like your audience to adopt.

3: Benefit – What will your audience get in return for adopting the behavior? What's the benefit to them?

4: Support – What can your program offer to support the change in behavior?

5: Image – What is the current image your audience holds regarding the behavior?

6: Openings – When is your audience open to receiving your message?

Communications Resources

Communications Planning

Building NGO/CBO Capacity for Organizational Outreach: Management and Training Design Tools
http://www.unhabitat.org/pmss/getElectronicVersion.asp?nr+1226&alt=1
This manual discusses communications strategies and skills, including development of a communications plan and outreach to the media.

Communicators Guide: For Federal, State, Regional, and Local Communicators
http://www.govinfo.library.unt.edu/npr/library/papers/bkgrnd/communicators.html
This guidebook, written, edited, and published by members of the Federal Communicators Network, offers some general guidance for other federal, state, regional, and local communicators.

Communicating Public Health Information Effectively, A Guide for Practitioners
http://www.medscape.com/viewarticle/461610?rss
David E. Nelson, M.D., M.P.H., Ross C. Brownson, Ph.D., Patrick L. Remington, M.D., M.P.H., Claudia Parvanta, Ph.D. (Washington, DC: American Public Health Association, December 2002)
This book, available for purchase, provides public health practitioners with a comprehensive approach to communicating public health information. It offers valuable information on speaking to and developing materials appropriate for non-scientific audiences. The authors give practical advice and real-world examples of communication in many situations, from one-on-one meetings to working through the mass media and the Internet.

Message Development

How to Communicate Evaluation Findings
http://library.promoteprevent.org/item.html?id=118772
This concise volume shows the reader how to communicate results to users and stakeholders throughout the evaluation process.

A New Way to Talk About the Social Determinants of Health
http://www.rwjf.org/pr/product.jsp?id=66428
A great resource from the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation.

Strategies

Now Hear This: The Nine Laws of Successful Advocacy Communications. With Words of Wisdom from More than 25 Leading Experts
http://library.promoteprevent.org/item.html?id=396410002
This manual describes nine “must haves” for any social marketing campaign.

Prevention Update: Social Marketing for Prevention
http://www.higheredcenter.org/product/socialmarketing.pdf
This newsletter discusses the theory of social norms marketing, provides examples of effective implementation, and offers strategies for initiating informational campaigns on college campuses.

Generating Family-School Partnerships Through Social Marketing
http://www.socialmarketingquarterly.com/archive/Vol%20V(1)V_1_h_family-School.pdf
This paper summarizes a meeting convened by the Harvard Family Research Project, describing social marketing principles and showing how they apply to family-school partnerships.

Communicating Educational Research Data to General, Non-researcher Audiences
http://pareonline.net/getvn.asp?v=6&n=7
This document provides information on how researchers can best present data on educational practices that work and those that don't to various audiences for maximum effectiveness, strength, and influence, and how to keep communication with these audiences open and valuable.

Building Business Support for School Health Programs: An Action Guide
http://library.promoteprevent.org/item.php?id=118601
This guide, available for purchase, was developed to help state and local coalitions communicate effectively with the public about the nature and benefits of coordinated school health programs.

Community Toolbox
http://ctb.ku.edu/en/
This database contains "how to" tools for community health and development, as well as information on leadership, strategic planning, community assessment, advocacy, grant writing, and evaluation. It also provides links to many Web pages and on-line discussion forums on such topics as funding, health, education, and community issues.

The Health Communication Unit (THCU) at the Centre for Health Promotion, The University of Toronto
http://www.thcu.ca/index.htm
Created in 1993 to provide training and support for health communication, THCU works to increase the capacity of community and public health agencies to plan for, conduct, and evaluate a wide range of health promotion programs (within a comprehensive and population-based approach).

The Health Communicator's Social Media Toolkit
http://www.cdc.gov/healthcommunication/ToolsTemplates/SocialMediaToolkit_BM.pdf
This resource is an incredible primer for social media usage and message development.