

The Art & Science of 21st Century Communications

Generating Buy-in for Change

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Welcome

✎ Thank you for your interest in this webinar. Our telephone lines are maxed at 125 participants. We apologize if you are not able to access the audio portion of the webinar.

✎ The webinar will be recorded and transcribed and made available via the Child Welfare Information Gateway (<http://www.childwelfare.gov>)

Learning Objectives

- ✎ Identify and understand what social marketing and communications brings to your system of care
- ✎ Identify key activities within a communications process
- ✎ Learn from the shared wisdom of others who have undertaken a communications process within their system of care
- ✎ Assess where your communities strengths and challenges are within your communications process

Participants will explore the following questions:

- ✎ How are we addressing communications in our child welfare led system of care?
- ✎ Why is communications/social marketing important in a system of care?
- ✎ What are the barriers to fully implementing your communications plan within your system of care infrastructure?
- ✎ What are some solutions to the implementation of your communications planning process?

System of Care Principles

- ✎ Child, Youth and Family Involvement/Partnership
- ✎ Cultural and Linguistic Competence
- ✎ Home and Community Based
- ✎ Individualized and Strength-based Care
- ✎ Interagency and Intra-agency Collaboration
- ✎ Accountability

System of Care Infrastructure Components

- ✎ Planning
- ✎ Governance
- ✎ System Management
- ✎ Coordination of Services and Service Array
- ✎ **Communication**
- ✎ Policy
- ✎ Finance
- ✎ Continuous Quality Improvement
- ✎ Training, Development and Human Resources

Webinar Format

- ✎ Definition
 - ✎ Key Partners
 - ✎ Pre-Planning Phase (Activities/Wisdom Shared)*
 - ✎ Planning Phase (Activities/Wisdom Shared)*
 - ✎ Implementation Phase (Activities/Wisdom Shared)*
 - ✎ Continuous Quality Improvement Phase (Activities)*
 - ✎ Sustainability Tips*
 - ✎ Lessons Learned
 - ✎ For More Information
- * Opportunity to send questions for panel response

Communication Definition

Communication is a strategic activity designed to raise awareness, inform, enlighten, and guide stakeholders and key decision-makers in understanding, supporting, and sustaining a system of care. Both external and internal communication strategies are important (Pires, 2002). External communication informs the public about the system of care and generates support, while internal communication ensures an ongoing exchange of information among key stakeholders within the system of care, including staff at all levels of each agency involved.



Definition Continued

Areas of focus include:

- ✎ The service array and coordination of services to children and families.
- ✎ Infrastructure components to support systems of care.
- ✎ Increased understanding of the needs of the population of focus.
- ✎ The effectiveness of systems of care in improving child and family safety, permanency, and well-being.

Key Partners

- ✎ Communication director
- ✎ Public affairs officer
- ✎ Interagency communication committee
- ✎ Intra-agency communication committee
- ✎ Social marketing consultant or agency (contracted)
- ✎ Neighborhood leaders
- ✎ Youth and family members
- ✎ Evaluator
- ✎ Others?

Communication Principles

Communication materials:

- ✎ Are culturally and linguistically competent.
- ✎ Reflect the views of stakeholder groups, especially families involved with child welfare.
- ✎ Address the population of focus.
- ✎ Avoid abbreviations and acronyms.
- ✎ Reflect a fifth-grade reading level to ensure understanding by all audiences.

Messages:

- ✎ Feature people-first language that focuses first on the person and then special needs or circumstances. For example, a “youth involved with child welfare” versus a “child welfare youth.”
- ✎ Have consistency and articulate the goals and outcomes of systems of care.
- ✎ Position the system of care in a positive manner, even if leadership or personnel change.

Key Communication Activities

Pre-Planning Phase

- ✎ Establishing a communication committee or workgroup to develop a social marketing and communication plan.
 - ✎ Is there an existing communication committee with interagency and family involvement?
 - ✎ Are you scheduling early focus groups to identify the kind of information needed and how to present the information?
- ✎ Researching and evaluating existing communication campaigns in order to develop an informed communication strategy based on lessons learned from other efforts.

Wisdom Shared

Pre-Planning Phase

“Develop an early concept paper. Use grand strokes in what you intend to accomplish. Take time to do a good literature review to develop messages that will engage people. There was a parallel process happening. We were developing our communications plan as the larger strategic plan was being developed. A large amount of consensus building took place around our communications plan. We had a high amount of feedback from drafts. Needed to reign in the communication plan to fit resources we had. You need to develop your communication strategy to fit each community...System of Care principles were basis of the communication plan. Plan rested on the principles.

More Wisdom

Pre-Planning Phase

Put principles into contracts, encourage providers to put principles into their contracts; we integrated principles as deeply as we could... Think big and outside the box!!! Unless you push the envelope and possibly fail you may miss the gem. Having fun, engaging community partners in their sphere of influence, continually updating your social marketing strategy, being intentional with marketing products are all ways we approached our communications work."

Communications Coordinator, Kansas



Key Activities

Planning Phase

- ✎ Creating a communication structure throughout the system of care and among stakeholder groups and constituents (i.e., interagency, intra-agency, internal for project staff and the governance body, external for the community).
- ✎ Establishing culturally appropriate communication protocols.
- ✎ Conducting internal (agency) and external (public) focus groups
- ✎ Specifying communication methods (e.g., newsletters, brochures, articles, radio, television, flyers, and Internet marketing).
- ✎ Developing a social marketing and communication plan.
 - ✎ Are data incorporated into messages?

Wisdom Shared

Planning Phase

“Having a strategic marketing plan was very helpful. Create professional material: brochure, flyers, Compact Disks’ and a media campaign strategy to sustain the work. The more educated your audience, the more receptive they will be to the idea of continued funding of the effort.”

Project Director, Clark County, Nevada



Key Activities

Implementation Phase

- ✎ Customizing communication with various audiences, including families and youth.
- ✎ Developing media relations protocols.
- ✎ Writing newsletters
- ✎ Writing letters to editors.
- ✎ Administering satisfaction surveys regularly to families involved in the system of care.
- ✎ Preparing and distributing press releases.
- ✎ Holding press conferences.
- ✎ Implementing marketing strategies.

Wisdom Shared

Implementation Phase

“Make sure not to do things unilaterally without building support. Don’t do it at someone – Do it with people. Do researches about what people want. Seek input and investment from leadership, team and stakeholders.”

Communications Coordinator, Kansas

“We make an effort to reflect our diverse population in our materials. Consider having a couple of different flyers. The information can be the same, but change the graphic. We have about 7 versions of our flyers: All ethnicities, single mothers and fathers are represented. Again, consider having your printed materials in the language of the families that you serve.”

Supervisor Family Engagement Unit, Contra Costa County, California – Parent Partner Program

Key Activities

Continuous Quality Improvement Phase

- ✎ Involve your evaluation team in all aspects of the communication plan development and implementation to help ensure information is managed appropriately.
- ✎ Develop outcomes that can be measured as you implement your strategic communication plan.
- ✎ Ask the question, “How can communication activities be enhanced?” frequently and incorporating new approaches systematically.
- ✎ Hold regular communication committee meetings to review campaign performance.
- ✎ Gather and document feedback from all stakeholder groups, including frontline staff, youth, and families, about individual communication activities and events.

Wisdom Shared

Continuous Quality Improvement Phase

“We relied on feedback from local site directors, family partners, stakeholder’s, steering committee members. Evaluators on grant looked at impact. Could have been a survey – More quantitative development could have been helpful.”

Communications Coordinator, Kansas



Sustainability Tips

- ✎ Develop a comprehensive strategic communications plan.
- ✎ Make sure all stakeholder groups contribute to the plan's development.
- ✎ Once implementation of the communication plan is underway, keep all key people informed about your progress.
- ✎ Be open to new ideas and the possibility of adjusting your communication plan. It should be an evolving document.
- ✎ Establish and nurture relationships with various media channels, including newspapers, television stations, radio stations, Internet, and public cable television.
- ✎ Invite youth, parents, and individuals and organizations outside of the agency to play a significant role in the external component of your communication campaign because, in many cases, they may be more effective than agency insiders in delivering messages to the public and other key groups.
- ✎ Do not underestimate the work and training required to make successful presentations to stakeholder groups. Repeated practice in public speaking is very helpful.

More Sustainability Tips

- ✎ Communication and social marketing campaigns can be difficult to sustain outside of grant funding sources. Any communication effort started by grant funds must show results that answer the question, “What difference did the campaign make for the systems of care effort?”
- ✎ Concentrate on campaign methods that are budget-friendly and cost-effective. Consider communicating about your system of care through your Web site, presentations, and e-mail.
- ✎ In communicating results, try to provide testimonials from people positively affected by the system of care in addition to discussing quantitative data you collect.
- ✎ Select one or more highly visible locations to display copies of the press releases, newspaper articles, newsletters, and other campaign materials you develop

Lessons Learned

- ✎ Spreading the message of “goodwill.”
- ✎ The importance of Social Marketing in Child Welfare and Systems of Care.
- ✎ Transparency – The good and bad news.
- ✎ Take advantage of “leverage points” (data and findings) by providing information about systems of care principles and visions for families, agencies and communities.
- ✎ Celebrate successes.

For More Information

Information Gateway

✎ <http://www.childwelfare.gov/management/reform/soc/>

System of Care Infrastructure Toolkits

✎ <http://www.childwelfare.gov/management/reform/soc/communicate/initiative/soctoolkits/index.cfm>

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