

FCSOC/SRS/CFS
Social Marketing Brief of SM Institute Work Book
Draft
July 24, 2006

Strategic Planning Process

- Planning should be made up of small group that includes part of your or an evaluation team/members. Everyone should have a meaningful role
- Most communities develop a three year plan
- Many spend too much time trying to determine their goal, then lose steam in the activities and materials section
- Others try and retrofit their existing materials and events into a goal that does not relate
- Families and Youth need to be on your social marketing team (they have a consumer perspective that is invaluable)

Situational Analysis

- This is best place for all to contribute to their analysis/thinking to your plan (ask project directors what they need for success, families and youth for their thoughts on services and barriers they face)
- Use a logic model to determine what other groups you need to engage in the process
- This analysis should include any current list of communications resources (books, materials, relationships) that your plan could use

Goal/Objectives

- Limit your plan to one overall social marketing goal (what success looks like; how your community will change)
- Goal should be concrete and achievable
- SM Goal should be related to overall agency goal(s), ***but not the same***
- Objectives should reflect the incremental communications successes you expect to see along the way
- Objective can be sequential or can reflect various aspects of your program
- Three to five objectives are usually the most any community can plan for at once

Audiences

- Identify every audience the planning group can imagine would help to achieve any/all objectives (write these names down on a list and have planning group vote on top three)
- Unless you have unlimited resources, it is difficult to address more than three audiences
- You can also list all audiences and rank them (this way you are not eliminating, just prioritizing)
- Audience research, whether done with a research firm or on a shoestring budget, will help define who SM campaign should reach. (For example, audience research can help you decide whether to reach all mothers, or only those with children of a certain age living in particular part of state/community)

- Allow members of planning group to break out into groups to create individual audience descriptions on which the rest of the plan will be based

Message Concepts

- Messages are not the same as slogans
- Message concepts are more like arguments or answers to audience concerns, objections, or motivations
- Each audience should have at least one core message (break into groups to identify these)
- Note: Look at local and national systems of care data for messaging ideas

Channels, Activities, Materials, and Partnerships

- It is important to determine what final activities and materials will be than to worry about whether media are a channel or activity
- There are always more good ideas than time to implement. Choose those that will have the most impact on your target audience
- Design materials that are a little different from what that audience is used to receiving
- Don't retrofit plan activities already going on if they don't match your audience. This detracts from chances of long term success.
- Use non traditional ways to communicate that won't have to compete with the dozens of other messages the audience must wade through on daily basis (care package idea, FCSOC Fridays, Incentive based programs, etc..)

Implementation

- **Budgeting is critical**
- Include itemized expenses for your plan.
- List all planned activities (list items needed next to activities you need to budget for)
- Consider staffing resources at the same time as budget. Often this is overlooked

Evaluation

- Work with FCSOC evaluation team to determine how you might measure communications success
- For example: Is your anti stigma effort making it easier for families to access services and supports that they need to avoid "out of home placement/prevention"?
- Revisit objectives laid out in planning process and devise ways that progress could be measured
- Determine how often the plan should be updated and how often

Formats

- Select one that will be of the most use to your community
- Create and post a one page version of your plan to remind your staff and partners of your social marketing agenda

Benefits of Getting Out There

- The best way to help children and families and yourself is to educate the community on issues surrounding child welfare
- People fear what they don't understand and the child welfare system is often misunderstood
- Forums/focus groups/one on one communication is the most effective form of communication. Audiences are able to interact with you and ask questions
- FCSOC cannot work unless people in the community not only understand the concept, but also do their part to help it succeed
- Getting into the community and spreading the word is the best way to help them do that
- Connecting with the community at large shows that you are part of that community. *(Once you are out in the community, people will know more about you and realize you are part of their world. Your work will not be/live in the shadows)*
- Provide testimony to state and local legislatures on FCSOC. This puts a face on the issue. Those who have experienced success b/c of a FCSOC approach to child welfare

Selling the concept of social marketing to internal audiences (project directors, partners, boards, etc.) can be difficult and daunting, whether it's communicating that a plan is necessary in the first place or that the plan should involve more than media relations. Ironically, it is the social marketing process itself that can help you more successfully reach internal skeptics.

Agencies that don't strategically plan are avoiding the accountability bug. If you develop plans with objectives/outcomes/goals then at some point you have to report out on them/live up to them??