

Communicating with Policy Makers: 12 Steps to Success

1. Define who “you” are: Shared Vision, Mission, Goals, Objectives, Strategies
2. Understand and Assess the Issue: Policy change as an intervention strategy. What has been tried before—did it work? What is already happening? Whom will it affect? What do others think of your solution?
3. Create Policy Goals for Your Organization: Policy statements
 - ♥ Credibility and Visibility
 - ♥ Resources
4. Establish Partnerships
 - ♥ Advantages vs. Disadvantages
 - ♥ Develop Criteria:
Example: Are the mission and values of the partnering organization consistent with ours? Will our supporters agree with the collaboration?
5. Refine your message---find the best ways to disseminate it. Frame the issue.
6. Understand the Opposition: state, local, and among the decision-makers.
7. Conduct Community Education: Let the people know---KISS Method...Keep it short and simple
8. Get Media Attention: media training, press releases, newsletters, talk radio, local reporter, paid ads, PSA's, press conference
9. Reach Policy Makers:
 - ♥ Understand the Policy making process---Do your homework: federal, state, and local
 - ♥ Determine which level of the policy process applies to your advocacy strategy---who has the power
 - ♥ Who are the important players-political ties and interests?
 - ♥ Who is your champion(s)?
 - ♥ Lobbying vs. Educating
10. Follow the Policy-making process
 - ♥ Champions
 - ♥ Committees
 - ♥ Hearings
 - ♥ Visits
 - ♥ E-mail
 - ♥ Petitions
 - ♥ Letters
 - ♥ Media Advocacy: press conferences, press releases, individual reporters, editorial boards, letters to the editor, op-ed pieces
11. Mobilize Action: Action Alerts, allies, volunteers, staff
12. Evaluate and Celebrate

Revised from Jim D. Martin, State Advisor on Preventing Teen Tobacco Use, NCDHHS