

Assessing Coalition Capacity: The Vermont SPF-SIG Coalition Capacity Checklist

Background

The purpose of this assessment tool is to solicit the views of each community grantee's coalition coordinator and coalition members about the structure and operation of the coalition. It is a checklist intended to gauge the current capacity of the coalition to function effectively in implementing the five steps of the SPF-SIG process. The information gained is intended to be helpful to coalitions in assessing their current capabilities and identifying areas that may need enhancement. It will also be used to inform statewide evaluation efforts with respect to the goal of building prevention capacity and infrastructure at the community level. For community grantees that are not coalitions, please see the note at the end of the instructions on the next page.

In addition to the checklist completed by the coalition coordinator and members, the coalition coordinators are also asked to complete a brief coalition coordinator form. This form is used to collect several pieces of information about the coalition and its coordinator.

The format and some of the content of the checklist were adapted from several different tools available through CADCA's Coalition Institute. Additional items have been added to capture characteristics especially pertinent to the SPF-SIG, and to incorporate suggestions made by grantees at the January 31 training. Thank you for that feedback!

Instructions

The checklist should be completed by the coalition coordinator or director and all coalition members. Larger coalitions, however, may instead ask a randomly selected sample of ten members. If you go with a sample, please be sure to make it a truly random sample by giving all members an equally chance of being selected for participation. (There are ways to generate random lists with a computer, but drawing names out of a hat still works too). The checklists can be completed during a coalition meeting, but if so please be sure to also get the checklist to members who were absent. To encourage candid responses, we recommend that returned checklists not be individually identified. Members can certainly be encouraged to express their individual views openly in follow-up discussions if they choose.

When you have completed the data collection, we ask that you enter the data into the Excel spreadsheet that will be provided to you. The spreadsheet will be formatted in a way that should be useful to you for subsequent review. The checklist and the responses of the coalition members are expected to help facilitate conversation among members and generate ideas about how to move the coalition forward.

We will need to obtain from you the electronic copies of the completed Excel spreadsheets and either an electronic or hard copy of the coalition coordinator form. The coordinator form has been formatted so that it may be easily completed electronically and saved as a new file. It may also be printed out completed with a pencil or pen. Please remember to enter your community grantee ID on this form.

If your SPF-SIG community grantee is NOT a coalition, these tools should still be employed. The "coalition members" should be considered all persons from both within and outside your organization with whom you collaborate on substance abuse prevention efforts in support of your SPF-SIG grant. Both the coalition capacity checklist and the coordinator form have instructions explaining how the forms should be interpreted by respondents for grantees that are not coalitions.

If you have any questions about these forms or procedures to collect the data, please contact Katy Cahill (email: kcahill@vdh.state.vt.us , phone: 802-651-1570).