



Creating Your Social Marketing Plan

One of the RFA requirements is to develop a social marketing plan that will serve as your road map to communications and outreach. Answering the following questions will ensure you create a plan that clearly identifies the steps required to develop partnerships that will strengthen your system of care and lead to sustainability.

While these questions are straight-forward, the process has many layers so be sure and include representatives from the audiences you want to reach, as well as your Social Marketing TA Provider to help you with your plan.

1. What Is My Social Marketing Goal?

With only a year to develop a plan that complements your overall strategic goal, time is of the essence! For most system of care communities, one of the primary goals will be obtaining tangible support for expanding the program. How you use social marketing to achieve that goal will be unique to your community and based on your answers to the questions in this worksheet.

2. Who Is the Primary Audience?

Systems of care engage multiple groups for the benefit of children, youth, and families, but reaching all of these groups, particularly within the period of 1 year, is not practical or realistic. Think about the one or two key audiences that you need to get on board to obtain the support necessary to facilitate State, Tribal, or region-wide implementation. Although there are multiple audiences that would be helpful in this endeavor, it's important to select the top few to determine which might be most likely to partner with you and move forward on the social marketing continuum. Don't forget to include internal audiences in this mix.

3. Who Are the Most Influential People Within This Audience?

As the saying goes, it's not what you know, it's *who* you know. Who are the key people within your audience(s) that can open doors and create new opportunities or strengthen existing relationships to help you reach your goal?

4. What Do You Want This Audience to Do?

Now that you know who you want to reach, what exactly do you want them to do? It is important to keep this as simple and easy to accomplish as possible. You also need to think about why this audience isn't already doing what you want them to do. What are the barriers? When you develop messages in the next step, think about why this audience might refuse and incorporate into your message information or data that might overcome the refusal.

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5. What Are the Three Most Compelling Messages for This Audience and These Individuals?

If you were in an elevator with the individuals listed in Question 3 and had time to share only three sentences, what would they be? Keep them short, simple, and compelling. Make sure they address what your audience cares about and show the relevance of the issue. What can you say that will overcome the barriers mentioned in the Question 4? If the barrier, for instance, is funding, then your message should incorporate data about the cost-effectiveness of systems of care. You can help ensure that your messages are effective by soliciting input (informally) from members of your audience to determine what messages will resonate with them.

6. What Are the Best Ways to Reach This Audience (Channels) and Its Influential Members?

Unfortunately, you are not likely to be in an elevator with all of the people listed in Question 3. Instead, you need to find out where they are and how to reach them. What are the best ways to reach your audience, and particularly the individuals whom you have identified as being the most influential members of that audience? These are your channels.

7. How Will You Use These Channels to Reach Your Audience and Its Influential Members?

Now that you have identified which channels are best for reaching your audience, how will you use those channels to do it?

8. What Are the Activities, Events, and Materials That Will Support Your Outreach?

What are the activities, events, and/or materials—to be used in your selected channels—that will most effectively carry your message to the intended audiences? The activity might be a community event to raise awareness, or it might be a one-on-one meeting with a policymaker, depending on your social marketing goal. The event might be an awareness-raising event in celebration of National Children's Mental Health Awareness Day. The material could be a fact sheet on cost savings or online article that conveys your messages to this audience and addresses their barriers.

Consider:

- Appropriateness to audience, goal, and message
- Relevance to desired outcomes
- Climate of community toward the issue/activity
- Cultural competence (including language)

Before you commit to activities, events, or materials, plan to pre-test them with the intended audiences and, in some cases, with people who manage message channels—elders, community

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leaders, communications professionals in key stakeholder organizations. This will ensure the message is both effective and conveyed in a culturally competent way.

9. How Will You Evaluate Your Plan?

Your social marketing plan is a living document and, once you begin implementation, it's likely to evolve. Be sure to account for this process evaluation in your original plan to quantify your social marketing by assessing what was done; when, where, and how it was done; and who was reached. Process evaluation is also a good time to make mid-course corrections.

Ongoing evaluation and mid-course corrections also allow you to:

- Identify milestones
- Determine strengths and weaknesses
- Identify obstacles
- Create and implement new approaches for success
- Consult with communications technical assistance advisors

Questions? Need more information? Reach out to your social marketing technical assistance provider at any time at marketing@vancomm.com.

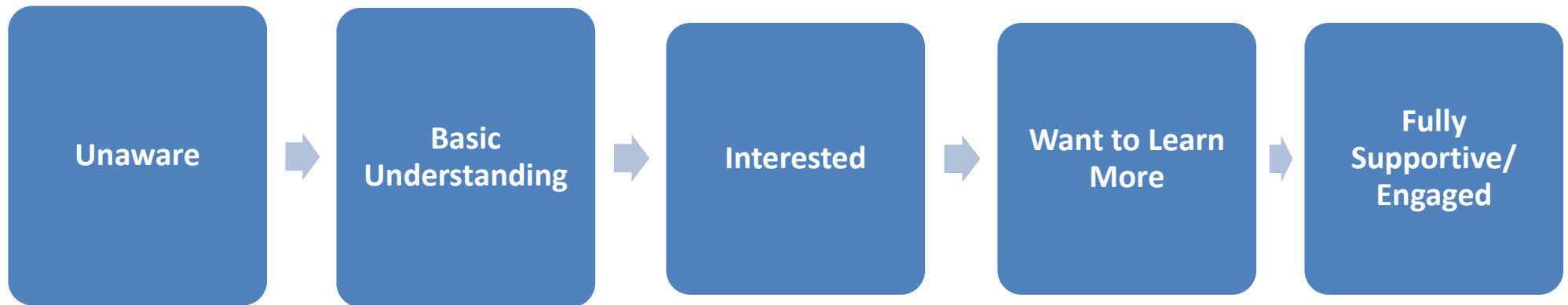
Social Marketing Planning Summary

Who Is Your Audience?	What Do You Want the Audience to Do?	What Are the Messages?	Which Channels Will You Use?	How Will Each Channel Be Used?	Who Will Do This?	What Activities, Events, or Materials Will Support This?	How Much Money is Available to Do This?	What Is the Start and Ending Date?

Social Marketing Planning Summary

Social Marketing Continuum

**Audience Understanding & Acceptance of System of Care Values
and Principles**



Social Marketing Plan

Name of Community:

Vision and Mission:

Program Goal:

Social Marketing Goal:

Audiences:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Messages:

-
-
-

Channels:

-
-
-

Tactics (*Activities, Events, and Materials*):