

## **TABLE 1: EXAMPLE ACTIONS FOR RAISING COMMUNITY READINESS LEVELS**

Here are example actions for each stage of readiness.

### **Stage 1: No Awareness**

#### **Goal: Raise awareness of the issue**

- Identify key local stakeholders, including organizations, small groups, community leaders, and community members, within multiple sectors that the issue affects
- Build and maintain a list or database of identified stakeholders, along with their contact information (documenting this information now will come in handy in the future)
- Publish a report that summarizes local and scientific data pertaining to the issue (or find a relevant report that has already been published)
- Conduct brief phone calls or visits with targeted stakeholders to discuss the issue. If there is a report, share it with them. Pay particular attention to the details of these visits (message, communicator, etc.). Also, observe reactions and listen for feedback when providing information
- Get individuals in your social network excited and solicit their support – be creative! Give them ideas and information that they can post on their Facebook page or other outlets.
- Collect stories of local people who have been affected by this issue in this community and find creative ways to disseminate these.

### **Stage 2: Denial/Resistance**

#### **Goal: Raise awareness that the problem or issue exists in this community**

- Continue actions from previous stage
- Scan for media articles that describe local critical incidents. Post them on social media and other places likely to be seen
- Present information to local related community groups.
- Prepare and submit articles for local newsletters, club newsletters, social media posts, etc.
- Reach out to local reporters who report on related issues and start to build a relationship with them
- Assess effective communication channels, messengers, and message. Develop a strategic communication plan to increase general public awareness
- Begin tracking City Council agendas and meetings to get informed on the local decision makers and how they may relate to your issue. Provide public comment about the problem or issue

### **Stage 3: Vague Awareness**

#### **Goal: Raise awareness that the community can do something**

- Continue actions from previous stages
- Conduct informal local surveys or interviews to gauge interest and perspectives on the issue
- Gather key stakeholders to discuss issue together and assess if there is interest in forming a local coalition
- Get on agendas to present information at local community events and to unrelated community groups, using your effective messaging strategy
- Begin to initiate your own small, informal events to present information on this issue. They should tie in with the issue, be fun, and/or have other benefits to potential attendees.
- Publish newspaper editorials, including opinion pieces, letters to the editor, and news releases. Provide general information but always relate the information to the local situation. Utilize relationships with local reporters to get stories published
- Develop a communications plan to address broad public outreach
- Conduct a formal or informal power analysis to recognize the decision makers related to your issue at the local, state and/or federal levels

### **Stage 4: Preplanning**

#### **Goal: Raise awareness with concrete ideas to combat condition**

- Continue actions from previous stages
- Continue periodic meetings of stakeholders to inform and invite discussion about the issue and ideas for solutions. If forming a coalition, decide on an appropriate structure and purpose for the coalition.
- Review the existing efforts in community (e.g., curriculum, programs, activities) to determine who benefits and the degree of success
- Conduct informal surveys of local experience related to the issue by phone or door to door.
- Conduct local focus groups to discuss issues and develop strategies.
- Identify other stakeholder engagement opportunities and recruit volunteers
- Begin to visit local leaders identified through your power analysis to inform and invest them in the cause
- Increase media exposure through radio and TV public service announcements and other forms of social media.

### **Stage 5: Preparation**

#### **Goal: Gather existing information with which to plan strategies**

- Continue actions from previous stages.
- Sponsor or plan an event to kick off the effort. Invite media!
- Compile local stories and statistics
- Conduct public forums or community visioning sessions to develop strategies

- Develop and implement future action plan steps within a coalition
- Reach out to potential or identified opponents of the issue to invite discussion and try to find areas of overlapping interest
- Develop a newsletter to keep public informed of effort, using stakeholder database
- Identify key messengers to speak about their stories related to the issue in the media and to local groups
- Have key messengers speak to public officials and decision makers in support of your issue
- Plan how to evaluate the success of your efforts

### **Stage 6: Initiation**

#### **Goal: Provide community-specific information**

- Continue actions from previous stages
- Continually provide ample avenues for feedback on initiatives, such as surveys, focus groups, input sessions
- Identify legislative priorities (at local, state and/or federal level) and activate supporters in legislative actions through action alerts and petitions
- Conduct in-service training on Community Readiness for professionals and community members
- Plan publicity efforts associated with start-up of activity or efforts
- Conduct consumer interviews to identify service gaps, improve existing services and identify key places to post information.
- Begin library or Internet search for additional resources and potential funding
- Begin some basic evaluation efforts.

### **Stage 7: Stabilization**

#### **Goal: Stabilize efforts and programs**

- Continue actions from previous stages
- Plan community events to maintain support for the issue. Always invite media
- Conduct workshops or educational seminars for community professionals and community members
- Conduct regular coalition or stakeholder meetings to review progress, modify strategies
- Publicly recognize local supporters or volunteers
- Prepare and submit newspaper articles detailing progress, evaluation findings, and future plans.
- Maintain relationships with local, state, and/or federal leaders by providing updates on initiatives and providing input on related issues
- Refine evaluation and continue evaluation efforts

## **Stage 8: Confirmation/Expansion**

### **Goal: Expand and enhance services**

- Continue actions from previous stages
- Prepare a community risk assessment profile
- Publish a localized program services directory
- Maintain a comprehensive database available to the public
- Initiate policy change through support of local city officials
- Utilize existing relationships and grassroots base to initiate policy change, such as submitting a bill, to support expansion or enhancement of initiative
- Use evaluation results to modify efforts, inform media communication pieces, and to use for grants
- Conduct media outreach on specific data trends related to the issue

## **Stage 9: High Level of Community Ownership**

### **Goal: Maintain momentum and continue growth**

- Continue actions from previous stages
- Maintain local business community support and solicit financial support from them
- Diversify funding resources
- Continue more advanced training of professionals and paraprofessionals
- Continue re-assessment of issue and progress made
- Utilize external evaluation and use feedback for program modification
- Track outcome data for use with future grant requests
- Continue progress reports for benefit of community leaders and local sponsorship. At this level the community has ownership of the efforts and will invest themselves in maintaining the efforts