

Building Safe Communities

A Publication of the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration



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RESOURCES AT THE NATIONAL LEVEL

A number of national organizations can provide Safe Communities programs with resources and materials designed for use in community-based programs. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is one such organization. NHTSA's Buckle Up America! Campaign Kit and Safe and Sober Quarterly Planner series, for example, include camera-ready art, sample press releases, posters, fact sheets, and other materials. Other NHTSA publications include technical reports, data analyses, public education materials, and the Safe Communities Folio and Annual Report series, spotlighted in previous issues of BSC. For more information on NHTSA publications, fax a request for the 1998 Traffic Safety Materials Catalog to (202) 493-2062. This catalog,

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RESOURCES FOR SAFE COMMUNITIES

A self-sufficient Safe Communities program is one that sustains itself primarily through local resources. While federal agencies, national corporations, and foundations may appear to have "deeper pockets" than local groups, they cannot commit themselves as primary and/or permanent funders of community-based groups. Programs that are locally sustained will be much longer-lived than those that depend on outside sources of short-term funding. Many resources can be obtained locally, including funding, office and meeting space, and in-kind services, such as printing.

The first step toward obtaining resources is knowing what your program needs. All programs need two types of resources: (1) resources for basic operations (e.g., office space, materials and equipment, or salaries), and (2) resources for projects and activities (e.g., brochures, data collection forms, or prizes), publicity, and human resources (e.g., observers to stand at intersections and record information on drivers who run red lights). Anticipating a program's need for resources is an intrinsic part of the planning process.

A list of resources and needs should be created at the beginning of a Safe Communities project. There are three basic questions that should be asked about each resource: (1) Is this a resource that will always be needed, or is this a one-time need for a particular activity? (2) Where can we obtain this resource, and can we find it at a very low cost or even no cost? (3) How can we obtain this resource in a way that contributes to our goal of self-sufficiency?

Resources can be found in every community. Smaller regional, state, and local foundations are created for the express purpose of funding local activities and can be an important source of funding. Businesses are fond of paying for items upon which they can imprint their corporate logos. Fraternal or service organizations may also be willing to contribute. However, money is not the only resource available in a community. Schools, community agencies, and corporations have rooms that can be used for trainings. Statistics and psychology classes at community colleges or universities can provide students for use in data collection activities. Volunteers can be found through community service organizations, high schools,

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and senior citizen groups. Local businesses can donate goods (such as prizes and refreshments) and services (such as sound systems or portable toilets) for public events, or pay for printing educational materials.

Obtaining resources requires marketing your program to those within your community who have resources to contribute. The involvement of a broad range of community partners on local injury prevention activities makes Safe Communities a perfect vehicle for approaching local organizations. Safe Communities programs offer a unique opportunity for communities to provide resources to a project that can statistically demonstrate it is making a difference in their community, for example, that it has reduced red-light running or pedestrian fatalities by 30 percent in one year.

The first step in approaching an organization that can provide funding or other resources to your program is making a personal connection. Find out if anyone in your coalition knows someone well-placed in the organization you want to approach. If not, explore whether others in the organizations they represent (or even their spouses) may have such a connection. Failing that, identify someone within your targeted organization who is likely to be interested in traffic safety and injury prevention and will become your “champion.” In hospitals and managed care organizations, this could be the community benefits administrator. In businesses, this could be the public relations coordinator or the risk manager. Make sure that those to whom you go for resources are aware of the goals and objectives set by your program and make sure that they are informed when those goals and objectives are met. Such demonstrations of success can make the difference between a one-time donation and a continuing relationship. Forming an ongoing relationship with those who can provide a Safe Communities program is essential. Local “ownership” can be the difference between a program that fades away and one that continues. A Safe Communities program should think of every person or organization that donates resources as a possible partner and supporter.

GARNERING RESOURCES AT THE LOCAL LEVEL: THE CORTLAND COUNTY EXPERIENCE

In an effort to expand its role in traffic safety, the Cortland County (New York) Health Department sponsored a community meeting and encouraged anyone interested in participating in Safe Communities to attend. One outcome of the meeting was the formation of a committee interested in working on the issue of traffic safety and substance abuse. The Seven Valleys Council on Alcoholism and Substance Abuse expressed an interest in using their puppet ensemble to bring traffic safety messages to schoolchildren; however, they did not feel prepared to do this on their own. Pooling their knowledge and skills, the Safe Communities Committee (which included representatives from the Health Department, the County STOP DWI Program, and the Seven Valleys Council, among others) developed a script appropriate for children in grades K-3 and recruited volunteers from a local halfway house to build a portable stage. A local radio station offered to tape the soundtrack for the show and provide sound-engineering services. Individuals and businesses from the



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community donated props and designed and produced the scenery for the show. The show continues to tour local elementary schools, bringing the messages of bicycle safety and substance abuse prevention to students.

“You need a specific idea in order to bring together a committed core group of people to carry it through,” says Leslie Kannus, of the Cornell Cooperative Extension of Cortland County, and coordinator of the project. “People will come through with resources if they can grasp the purpose. Too often coalitions flounder because their ideas are too broad or too vague. In this case

we had something specific we wanted to accomplish. Because we were clear on what our resource needs were, the community was forthcoming with resources. People don’t respond well to ambiguity. Everyone is stretched for time and resources. But we found that if you are clear on what you need people to do or provide, they are eager to help.”

RESOURCES IN THE STATES I: STATE HIGHWAY SAFETY OFFICES

Each state has a state highway safety office (SHSO) that plays a key role in coordinating Safe Communities and other traffic safety programs. SHSOs offer resources and technical assistance to local programs. Vince Burgess, coordinator of highway safety programs of the Virginia Department of Motor Vehicles, reports the following:

I try to look at communities and programs at every level of development to determine what I can do for them. Grant funds are not always the answer. Information and contacts are often equally valuable. I also try to be proactive in identifying organizations that can provide the technical consultation I have neither the time nor expertise to provide. It takes time to learn what communities need, what their strengths are, and what type of re-

source support would be most helpful. I spend a lot of my time keeping these channels of communication active so that I can be most responsive to my constituency. Each community may be at a different level of evolution regarding Safe Communities. A critical component of readiness, as I see it, is having a clear goal of what they want to accomplish and what resources they need to get there.

Burgess's philosophy is that community readiness and clear objectives are the key to effective use of resources. Some of these resources come in the form of mini-grants. "These mini-grants provide communities with a way to get started, once the commitment is there. As programs become more sophisticated, they can apply for larger grants. These grantees receive more sophisticated levels of technical assistance in response to the broader scope and complexity of their programs," says Burgess.

The SHSO also provided support for intensive, individualized assistance to individual programs. Following the workshop on financial management of federal funds, staff made site visits to programs to help redesign their federal grant tracking systems. "We encourage programs to raise monies in their own communities, matching public and private funding," says Burgess. "However, we felt we would be remiss if we did not provide them with the support they needed to manage those monies. I see it as my responsibility to be responsive to the needs of our grantees and to provide whatever support I can to help them achieve their goals."

Virginia's SHSO also provides technical assistance to other groups. Burgess helped Drive Smart Virginia, a coalition of insurers, incorporate as a nonprofit organization. The SHSO also assisted the Virginia Police Chiefs' Association with a planning process, resulting in a commitment to increase the association's participation in highway safety activities.



Vince Burgess



Safe Communities programs and other traffic safety activities are eligible under the section 402 state and community grant program. Your SHSO can provide more information on this, and also on your state's priorities and planning timetables. A good introduction to this program is the *ABCs of 402*, available from the National Association of Governors' Highway Safety Representatives (NAGHSR),

who can also help you locate your SHSO. NAGHSR can be reached at 750 First Street, NE, Suite 720, Washington, DC 20002-4241. Telephone: (202) 789-0942; fax: (202) 789-0946; WWW: <www.naghsr.org/>. A list of SHSOs is also available on the Who's Who In Traffic Safety website: <www.edc.org/HHD/csn/buildbridges/whoswho/>.

SAFE COMMUNITIES SERVICE CENTER

One important NHTSA resource is the Safe Communities Service Center (SCSC), which describes itself as providing "one-stop shopping for local community needs for information and resources related to strengthening Safe Communities."

Safe Communities Service Center
c/o NHTSA Region VI
819 Taylor Street, Room 8A38
Fort Worth, TX 76102

Telephone: (817) 978-3653; fax (817) 978-8339
E-mail: <Safe.Communities@nhtsa.dot.gov>
World Wide Web: <www.nhtsa.gov/safecommunities>



RESOURCES IN THE STATES II: STATE HEALTH DEPARTMENTS

Injury prevention programs in state health departments are another valuable resource for Safe Communities coalitions. Every state has a designated Injury Prevention Director and many have full-time staff who address traffic safety issues. The New York State Department of Health uses a state traffic safety grant to support a four-person traffic safety program, which includes projects targeting such issues as child occupant restraints, bicycle safety, and drowsy driving; sends monthly mailings to more than 1,500 traffic safety and public health professionals; and presents six annual regional trainings.

These trainings began four years ago as an attempt to encourage county traffic safety and public health professionals to work together. Sixty percent of the counties had a traffic safety and public health representative at the first training, which focused on using local data. The audience for subsequent trainings has expanded to include representatives from trauma registries, hospitals, insurance companies, youth development agencies, and the local cooperative extension program, among others. The theme of the second training was the Safe Communities model. The third training focused on social marketing, including the use of focus groups and how to avoid stereotyping certain populations, such as the elderly and adolescents. The fourth training focused on evaluation.



Susan Hardman

Susan Hardman, director of the New York State Health Department's Bureau of Injury Prevention, points out that "As the state health agency, it is our role to provide these resources to local constituencies, including Safe Communities Coalitions. This gives us the opportunity to meet directly with people and to forge lasting connections that benefit traffic safety programs at every level."

To locate the Injury Prevention Director in your state, contact Claudia Vouden, State and Territorial Injury Prevention Directors' Association (STIPDA), 1256 Cobb Parkway, Suite 201, Marietta, GA 30066. Telephone: (770) 792-8700; fax: (770) 792-8707; e-mail: <vous100w@cdc.gov>; WWW: <www.stipda.org/>. A list of injury prevention staff in state health departments can also be obtained from the Children's Safety Network National Injury and Violence Prevention Resource Center, Education Development Center, Inc., 55 Chapel Street, Newton, MA 02158-1060. Telephone: (617) 618-2207; fax: (617) 527-4096; e-mail: <csn@edc.org>; WWW: <www.edc.org/HHD/csn/>.

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as well as copies of many NHTSA publications, reports, and press releases, interactive access to traffic injury data (including the Fatal Analysis Reporting System), and late-breaking news on traffic safety-related issues, can be found on NHTSA's website (www.nhtsa.dot.gov/). For information on vehicle and child safety seat defects, call the NHTSA Auto Safety Hotline at (800) 424-9393.

NHTSA also offers training opportunities, including a marketing workshop and a Safe Communities workshop. For more information, contact your state highway safety office (see page 3) or your NHTSA Regional Office, which can be located by calling (202) 366-2121 or consulting the online guide to Regional Offices at <www.nhtsa.dot.gov/nhtsa/whatis/regions/>.

Other national organizations can provide materials and assistance to local programs. For example, the National SAFE KIDS Campaign has more than 200 state and local affiliates and is very active on traffic safety issues, including bicycle helmets, child safety seats, and occupant protection. SAFE KIDS can be reached at 1301 Pennsylvania Avenue, NW, Suite 1000, Washington, DC 20004. Telephone: (202) 662-0600; fax: (202) 393-2071; WWW: <www.oclc.org/SAFEKIDS/>. The National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) provides education, information, research, and technical assistance to local health departments and facilitates partnerships among local, state, and federal agencies in order to promote and strengthen public health. NACCHO can be reached at 440 First Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001. Telephone: (202) 783-5550; fax: (202) 783-1583; WWW: <www.naccho.org/>.

QUALITY IMPROVEMENT RESOURCES

Quality improvement (QI) is a movement with roots in the effort to rebuild the economies of both the victors and the vanquished after World War II. In the 1980s, this model was applied to health care. More recently, QI was brought to traffic safety through the efforts of the American Society for Quality and the Institute for Healthcare Improvement, who cosponsored the Breakthrough Series for the Prevention of Motor Vehicle Injuries. The National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) is currently in the process of integrating QI strategies



into the Safe Communities model. These strategies show a great deal of promise in helping Safe Communities programs create and implement effective traffic safety activities. QI strategies can shorten a program's planning phase and determine, through a series of small-scale tests, whether a particular activity is likely to have an impact in the community. Such streamlining is essential to Safe Communities programs, which need to make a real difference in their communities in a relatively short period of time.



For more information on quality improvement and how it can be applied to preventing motor vehicle injuries, contact:

American Society for Quality
P.O. Box 3005
Milwaukee, WI 53201-3005
Telephone: (800) 248-1946

Institute for Healthcare Improvement
135 Francis Street
Boston, MA 02215
Telephone: (617) 754-4800

BUILDING SAFE COMMUNITIES IN CYBERSPACE: RESOURCES ON THE WORLD WIDE WEB

The World Wide Web is rapidly becoming an essential resource for Safe Communities programs. Many federal and state traffic safety agencies have websites. The NHTSA website is described on page 4. Other federal websites include:

- National Center for Injury Prevention and Control (www.cdc.gov/ncipc/ncipchm.htm)
- Federal Highway Administration (www.fhwa.dot.gov/)

Many of the major national organizations and initiatives are online, including:

- Mothers Against Drunk Driving (www.madd.org/)
- National Commission Against Drunk Driving (www.ncadd.com/)

Information on traffic safety research and data is available from the following websites:

- University of North Carolina Highway Safety Research Center (www.unc.edu/depts/hsrc)
- Insurance Institute for Highway Safety (www.hwysafety.org/)
- Crash Analysis Reporting Environment (care.cs.ua.edu/care/introduction.htm)
- Crash Outcome Data Evaluation System (CODES) (www.asri.edu/codes/)

Two comprehensive collections of links to traffic safety sites can be found on the World Wide Web:

- Who's Who in Traffic Safety (www.edc.org/HHD/csn/buildbridges/whoswho/)
- Injury Control Resource Information Network (www.injurycontrol.com/icrin/)

Finally, BSC can be found online at < www.edc.org/HHD/csn/bsc/ >.

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RECENT AND UPCOMING EVENTS



May was both Motorcycle Safety Month and National Bike Month. For more information, contact your state highway safety office (see page 3). Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Week was May 17-23. For additional information on EMS Week, contact your state EMS office, which can be located by calling the NHTSA EMS office at (202) 366-5440.



In conjunction with Buckle Up America! Week (May 18-23), the Air Bag and Seat Belt Safety Campaign held its second annual Operation ABC: Mobilizing America to Buckle Up Children. During this week, law enforcement agencies conducted high-visibility enforcement of child safety laws and used child safety checkpoints to ensure that children were properly buckled. The Air Bag Safety Campaign can be reached by telephone at (202) 625-2570 or by e-mail at <airbag@nsc.org>.



In another Buckle Up America! Week activity, more than 12 million copies of "A Parent's Guide to Safe and Sane Road Trips" were distributed. This guide contains safety tips for parents, travel tips for children, and a family buckle-up pledge card/sweepstakes entry to win a Chevy Venture minivan. For more information about the Safe and Sane Road Trips Safety Program, contact your local McDonald's restaurant or Chevrolet dealer.

The Buckle Up America! Leadership Conference will be held June 14-16, 1998, in Annapolis, Maryland. This conference will set the agenda for the campaign for the coming year.

"Current Issues in Using Crash Injury Data" will be held in Troy, Michigan, on July 20, 1998. For more information on this one-day workshop, call SAE International at (412) 772-7148.