

SW Kansas Problem Gambling Task Force

Strategic Planning Session November 05, 2010

Strategic Planning Synopsis from meeting held on November 5, 2010 in Dodge City, KS:

- Introductions –Carol Spiker was introduced to the group by Debbie Snapp. Carol then gave a short background on herself and a discussion of what she can bring to the training. Everyone else then introduced themselves, and spoke to why they were part of the taskforce and what they hoped to achieve.
- Carol discussed the impact of gambling in the area by giving the stats from the VEP for the first year. There are 16 people currently on the self-exclusion list with 2 of them already wanting to get off the list after less than 1 year. The age range of the majority in the group is 35-54, there are an equal number of men and women, and most are Caucasians with Asians in a close second. The individuals are from communities running from Dodge City down to Oklahoma along highway 156.
- Carol spoke to how well the group has done in the short time we have been formed by reading off a list of what all we have accomplished. She then stated that we should pat ourselves on the back and celebrate our achievements often in order to not get burned out or discouraged.
- There are several different types of community organizations. Some are bound by one goal, some are educational or mentoring groups, some are service programs or neighborhood associations and some are concerned with single issues. Carol feels that we are the type that is concerned with a single issue – the harmful effects of problem gambling.
- Community organizations can mobilize neighborhood and community efforts, educate the community on an issue, identify gaps in current services, implement effective solutions, influence change and strengthen individuals/communities.
- A well created organization affects the entire social environment, develops a broad base of support and teamwork, and brings about long-lasting results by involving a mix of the following members:
 - Key leaders
 - Concerned parents
 - Youth
 - Law Enforcement
 - Schools
 - Public health
 - Social service agencies
 - Faith communities
 - Businesses
 - Community members

- A discussion then began in which we were deciding what kind of members we were missing in our current group and where we needed to focus our recruiting efforts in the very near future. We felt we needed a more diverse faith representation, someone representing the Asian and Somalian communities, someone from the DCCC student government and more supporting community members.
- It was determined that we needed a leader/champion for our group. The champion should be a leader in our community and needs to have a clearly defined role. The champion shouldn't be someone that does all the work but rather someone that can facilitate the work instead. Debbie Snapp was unanimously selected by the group as our leader/champion and she accepted the role.
- We then went on to discuss our current operating structure. Are we a taskforce or a coalition? We then went off subject to talk about our name. It was felt that we needed to make it more indicative of what we really are trying to represent – there are more communities and counties involved other than Dodge City and Ford county. It was suggested that we consider renaming the group to Southwest Kansas Problem Gambling Task Force. This was then tabled until the task force reconvenes to discuss it further.
- Discussed whether or not we need officers or leads – determined that we didn't.
- Discussed whether or not we needed to have subcommittees – Carol suggested that we think of having a youth advisory committee, maybe another one tasked with communication, and one for recruitment. Carol stated that we should always be focusing on recruitment and continue to accept new members.
- The question was raised as to whether or not we would have an age limit and if we would even allow kids on the task force. Discussion followed of how they are in school during our meetings and that maybe we should have a youth committee form focus groups to talk to the kids about needed resources in the community.
- Carol raised the topic of how we should self-evaluate our effectiveness and needs often. Do we need funds? How do we think we are doing? Any unresolved conflicts? Without self-evaluating ourselves, we could lose site of the goals and get bogged down in unproductive endeavors.
- Framework for Community Change
 1. Assess the community – when assessing the community, one should look for proof by:
 - a. Analyzing census data
 - b. Assessing a risk factor survey for substance/gambling abuse from the KS communities that care website (shows data sorted by question and county)
 - c. Assessing data from community surveys
 - d. Consulting with Carol Spiker – numerous resources
 2. Build capacity – ensuring the right people are at the table
 3. Plan – strategies and actions needed to reach goals
 4. Implement the plan – carryout of the strategies and actions
 5. Evaluate the outcome – were the results what we wanted?

6. Reassess - circle back to the beginning over and over again as the process never stops
 7. Center of the framework circle of change
 - a. Cultural competence – Are we meeting the community’s needs?
 - b. Sustainability – can we sustain what we have started or implemented?
- Carol discussed that strategic planning is really like building a road map. However, for this project one should start at the end and work backwards. We then did a group exercise that asked us to envision ourselves in our most desirable community if we were able to marvelously create it 5 years from now. We then wrote down words that described what it would be like and what we would see. Those words were then pulled into a short vision statement that was acceptable by the entire group.
 - Carol then had us move on to forming a mission statement by asking us to write down our “job description”. The job description should tell people how we want to be perceived – our purpose, what we do, and our moral compass. It should be one sentence, clear and concise and focus on a common purpose that is specific to our group. We then did a group exercise to form words that described what we wanted to accomplish, what we are, and why do we need to exist. After further discussion, we created the following mission statement: “Southwest Kansas Problem Gambling Task Force are (is) stakeholders raising awareness and providing education to (at risk) individuals, families, and communities to reduce the harmful effects of problem gambling”. This too was tabled until the next meeting to allow for further group discussion.
 - Carol then introduced her Action Plan Template that should be used by the subcommittee members to plan how they will accomplish a goal. As an example, Carol walked us through how to accomplish an increase in membership for the taskforce. In the example, it talked about creating an informational brochure, which the group felt was something that would be beneficial for us to follow through on.
 - Debbie Snapp then asked for Carol’s help in helping us to get started on creating our operating structure. Working together, we completed the following action plan templates:
 1. Establishing subcommittees
 - a. Public Relations/Marketing
 - b. Political Advocacy
 - c. Funding
 - d. Education
 - e. Special Events
 2. Establishing roles/jobs
 - a. For the champion
 - b. Subcommittee leaders
 - c. Secretary/Treasurer
 3. Finalizing our mission/vision statement.

We then tabled any further discussion until the next meeting in order to get group input and to select committee leaders prior to discussing benchmarks and timelines for tasks.

- Carol then spoke about a curriculum that is available for purchase for 9th – 12th graders, the Wanna Bet program for younger children and a book called “Taking Back Your Life”. She feels these are good resources and teaching tools that we should be aware of or maybe even purchase.
- Adjourned the meeting for the day after agreeing to meet next on the 2nd Thursday of December at 1:30pm.