

## Coalition Foundations for Sustainable Community Problem Solving

Mobilizing a community through the Substance Abuse Response Guide (SARG) process requires a community anchored process and brings to reality the Essential in Community Problem Solving.

**AIM 1** First, is to **assess the problem through data** so that over time a forum, generally called a coalition, is developed that can be a repository for new information about the problem as it changes. What we encourage coalitions to do under this AIM:

- **Monitor community trends** affecting quality of life issues; and,
- Collect, analyze, interpret and share **indicator data** with the community.

**AIM 2** Second, is to **organize this community of stewards** so that a gathering is created which encourages inclusiveness (individual agencies and organizations with different frames of reference) and diversity (an atmosphere that encourages and supports civil disagreements and deliberation for problem solving). What we encourage coalitions to do under this AIM:

- **Convene for the purpose of educating and providing networking opportunities** among health and human services and other community stakeholders whose primary mission isn't health and human services; and,
- **Encourage open dialogue** about key community issues.

**AIM 3** Third, from these efforts **a coordinated plan for needed changes and interventions emerges** so that this forum would use a deliberate and transparent decision-making process to address the underlying issues of substance abuse and assure the implementation of effective strategies through its member agencies and organizations. What we encourage coalitions to do under this AIM:

- **Facilitate** impartial and progressive methodologies to positively affect systemic change.
- **Advocate** for the efficient and effective use of community resources and public policy that support public health and community wellness and safety;
- **Mobilize** the community to support measurable outcomes and an effective evaluation of all substance abuse prevention programming; and,
- **Coordinate and/or conduct community level activities (environmental strategies)** to support the reduction in the use and abuse of substances and their related consequences.

**AIM 4** Fourth, there is the need to **evaluate the implementation and results of strategies** carried out, in other words to assess the impact of the decisions made by this forum, and supported through the member agencies and organizations, to determine if they yield valuable results for the community served as well as the community at-large. What we encourage coalitions to do under this AIM:

- **Foster diverse partnerships** among all sectors of the community; and
- **Engage leaders and citizens** by developing and implementing community improvement strategies through priority-setting and consensus building