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### SAMHSA's Town Hall Meetings

- Every 2 years, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration sponsors national Town Hall Meetings to educate communities about underage drinking and mobilize them around its prevention.

Source: SAMHSA Town Hall Meetings Website (See References)



How to Host a Town Hall Meeting to Prevent Underage Drinking

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### Underage Drinking Prevalence

- Alcohol is the most widely used substance among teens in Illinois.
  - 44.4% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders report using alcohol in the past 30 days.
- Alcohol use increases with age.
  - 10.8% of 6<sup>th</sup> graders, while 62.8% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders report use in the past year.
- Age of first alcohol use in Illinois is 14.6.

Source: Center for Prevention Research and Development (See References)



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### Underage Drinking Consequences

- Academic failure
- Illicit drug use
- Physical injury & death  
(Alcohol poisoning, homicide, suicide, traffic crashes)
- Brain alterations
- Dependence & addiction

Source: SAMHSA Too Smart to Start (See References)



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## Underage Drinking Progress

- Alcohol use is on the decline.
  - In 2014, underage alcohol use reached an historic low in the U.S.
  - Past year and past 30-day alcohol use among IL 8th and 10th grade youth decreased from 2012 to 2014.
- Increased attention by the media, government and local communities have contributed to reductions in underage drinking.

Source: 2014 Monitoring the Future Study; SAMHSA 2012 Town Hall Meeting (See References)



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## Purpose of Town Hall Meetings

- Educate
- Empower
- Mobilize

**Be a catalyst for change by moving a community beyond awareness to evidence-based action.**

Source: SAMHSA Town Hall Meetings Website (See References)



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## Expectations

- Open the event to the public
- Educate participants about the problem and the solution
- Provide for audience discussion of solutions
- Engage community members in action
- Lead to measurable results

Source: SAMHSA Town Hall Meetings Website (See References)



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## Meeting Types

### Smaller Events

- Held in conjunction with another community meeting
- Shorter time frame (1-2 hours)
- Smaller participation
- Targeted promotion

### Larger Events

- Stand-alone event
- Community venue
- Longer time frame (2+ hours)
- Broader participation
- Encourage media coverage

Source: SAMHSA Community Briefing Prevention Toolkit (See References)



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## Meeting Participants

- Youth
- Parents
- Educators/schools
- Elected officials
- Local government (incl. liquor control)
- Law enforcement
- Public health
- Faith-based organizations
- Businesses
- Media
- Civic groups
- Youth-serving

Source: SAMHSA Community Briefing Prevention Toolkit (See References)



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## Meeting Goals

- Educate the community about the prevalence, effects and consequences of underage drinking
- Educate the community about effective evidence-based strategies to prevent underage drinking
- Engage the community in strategic planning
- Share assessment data related to local use rates, consequences and contributing factors
- Engage the community in prevention efforts



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**Meeting Agenda**

- Panel presentation/discussion
- Presentation
- Roundtable discussion
- Community forum

Source: SAMHSA Town Hall Meetings Website (See References)

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 **Tips for Developing Your Meeting Agenda**

- ✓ Tailor the agenda to your audience
- ✓ Consider your meeting goals
- ✓ Provide opportunities to participate
- ✓ Make connections to state/national efforts

Source: SAMHSA Town Hall Meetings Website (See References)

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**Meeting Logistics**

- Reserve the location
- Develop a schedule
- Identify a facilitator/moderator
- Invite speakers and/or panelists
- Invite participants and key stakeholders
- Prepare handouts

Source: SAMHSA Town Hall Meetings Website (See References)

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## Promotion

<b>Develop a Plan</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Target audiences</li><li>- Key content</li><li>- Registration</li><li>- Information Channels</li></ul>	<b>Identify Channels</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- Personal Invitations</li><li>- Flyers</li><li>- Traditional Media Outlets</li><li>- Social Media</li></ul>
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Source: SAMHSA Town Hall Meetings Website (See References)

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## Media Coverage

- Build your media contact list
- Develop and send a media advisory and/or press release
- Schedule interviews
- Develop and provide a press kit at the event
- Follow-up

Source: SAMHSA Town Hall Meetings Website (See References)

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## Meeting Tips

- Provide signage
- Utilize volunteers
- Register participants
- Promote the coalition
- Promote meeting partners



Source: SAMHSA Town Hall Meetings Website (See References)

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### Follow-Up

- Plan a follow-up meeting
- Acknowledge your event partners
- Disseminate materials
- Maintain public awareness
- Engage the community in strategic planning and implementing evidence-based strategies
- Secure funding

Source: SAMHSA Town Hall Meetings Website (See References)



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### Strategies for Engaging Coalitions in Hosting a Town Hall Meeting



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### Planning Committee

- Follow/implement planning steps
- Develop a budget and a timeline for accomplishing all tasks
- Secure funding and/or in-kind donations
- Promote the meeting
- Staff the meeting
- Conduct follow-up



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# How to Host a Town Hall Meeting

### Engagement Tips

- Hold convenient meetings
- Have an agenda
- Introduce attendees
- Assign roles and tasks
- Appoint a note taker
- Keep a record

Source: SAMHSA Town Hall Meetings Website (See References)

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<https://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov/townhallmeetings/>

STOP UNDERAGE DRINKING | TOWN HALL MEETINGS

Town Hall MEETINGS

GETTING STARTED | TIPS AND RESOURCES | STATE RESOURCES | SUCCESS STORIES | FIND A MEETING | WHAT'S NEW

### Town Hall Meetings To Prevent Underage Drinking

Our Town. Our Health. Our Future.

Host a meeting. Attend a meeting. Add your voice to the call for permission. Use resources on this site to help your community focus on proven solutions to underage drinking problems.

GETTING STARTED

**Register**  
Add event details  
Upload images  
Interested in hosting an event?  
SEE FAQS

**Sign In**  
User Name  
Password  
FORGOT PASSWORD?  
SIGN IN

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**RATING**

Exceptional

Exceeds Expectations

Meets Expectations

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