

Identifying Key Community Stakeholders

Worksheet Instructions

The first step in establishing a Drug Endangered Children (DEC) alliance in your community is to identify the key stakeholders who can need to be involved at the ground level for the alliance to succeed. Key stakeholders are those who:

- Come into contact with DEC on a regular basis
- Provide access to resources that DEC require
- Have the ability to affect change in their organization or agency

One of the vital roles of a DEC alliance is to be able to identify DEC in the community. Because data recording practices with regard to substance abuse vary so widely between organizations, children and/or their caregivers are often identified by a primary indicator (i.e. a drug charge for a parent or physical abuse to the child) and the substance abuse in the home – and its resulting impacts – is minimized. These gaps in information lead to gaps in much-needed services for children exposed to drug environments. By identifying the places and situations in a community where we have a chance to discover DEC (**Question 1**), we cast a wider net and close these gaps.

Some of the required resources in a DEC alliance (for example, child advocates, drug court personnel, and in some cases foster parents) do not play a role until after the child has been identified as a DEC. This does not mean, however, that their inclusion in the DEC alliance is not vital, as their services provide a much-needed link in the chain of collaborative care that DEC require for healing. These resources are identified in **Question 2**. There will likely overlap between the answers to the first two questions. The goal is to come up with a comprehensive list of those who play a part in rescuing, defending, sheltering and supporting DEC in your community.

Now that we have a good idea of the community agencies and organizations that need to be involved, our task becomes getting them to the table. **Question 3** deals with identifying the *individuals* who need to be invited to the preliminary meeting. These are the “power players” in their respective organizations and the community – those whose support is necessary to get not only their own agency’s involvement, but others as well. For example, the Sherriff’s Office may not get involved if the District Attorney’s Office is not at the table, or vice versa.

When this worksheet is complete, you will have a comprehensive list of those who need to be contacted and invited to the next step of the process. **Note: While the involvement of all stakeholders is vital to an alliance’s eventual success, it may be beneficial to start with a few key players so as not to have too many voices diluting the core mission of the alliance at the outset.**

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Question 1: Where in our community do we discover drug endangered children?

2. What resources are available to help drug endangered children in our community?

3. Who in our community has the opportunity to affect change in the ways that we intervene on behalf of drug endangered children?

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Question 1: Where in our community do we discover drug endangered children?

Emergency rooms

Drug busts

School nurses' office

Parents' treatment

Concerned neighbors

Classrooms

Advocacy Center

Court

CPS investigations

Traffic stops

2. What resources are available to help drug endangered children in our community?

Medical clinics

Early Childhood Intrvn.

CASA

Family drug court

After school programs

Police

Play therapy

School counseling

Prevention agencies

Foster system

3. Who in our community has the opportunity to affect change in the ways that we intervene on behalf of drug endangered children?

CPS Inv. Supervisor

Police Chiefs

Hospital Dept. Heads

Advocacy Ctr. Exec. Dir.

Civic leaders

Judges

District Attorney

Sheriff

School District Rep.

Treatment Ctr. Ex. Dir.