

# Town Hall Meetings From A to Z

Anita Gaillard, MSPH, Director of Community Programs

Blake Vanderbosch, MPH, Policy Specialist

Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Commission,

Indiana State Department of Health

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# Outline



Why Host a Town Hall Meeting?



Partner Training



Outcomes



Step to Step Process



# Why Host a Town Hall Meeting?

- Educate policymakers (state and local), and the general public
  - Negative health and economic effects of tobacco use
  - Health and economic benefits of implementing smoke free air laws
  - Significance and efficacy of tobacco control programs
- Gain mass support in local communities throughout the state
  - Demonstrate power to legislators
- Recruit a variety of individuals from different sectors who have personal stories to share

# Partner Training



- June, 2010
- TPC held a town hall meeting to demonstrate to local tobacco control coalitions how the meeting should be conducted.
- The partners were provided with materials to assist them in planning and holding a town hall event:



- Step by step instructions for organizing the meeting (toolkit) with sample flyers and news releases, and examples of news coverage
- A checklist to guide their planning and implementation processes

# Outcomes



- Of the 63 local tobacco coalitions, 39 have successfully completed a town hall meeting
- State and local policymakers were in attendance at 76 percent of the town hall events
- All of the meetings obtained newspaper coverage prior to and after the town hall meeting; many of the counties with local radio or television stations received coverage prior to the event

# Outcomes

- The majority of counties have gained support from individuals within their communities who have either joined their coalitions or have agreed to be an advocate for them

- Entertainers
- Businesses
- Churches
- Healthcare providers
- School administrators
- Other organizations
- Local policymakers



# Outcomes

- Two counties have implemented a comprehensive smoke free air ordinance (13 total in Indiana)
  - One covers workplaces, restaurants, and bars
  - One covers workplaces, restaurants, bars, and private clubs
- One county has voted to support an ordinance; several other municipalities have decided to take action on smoke free air
- Several businesses, school districts, hospitals, a soccer league, and restaurants, have decided to go smoke free

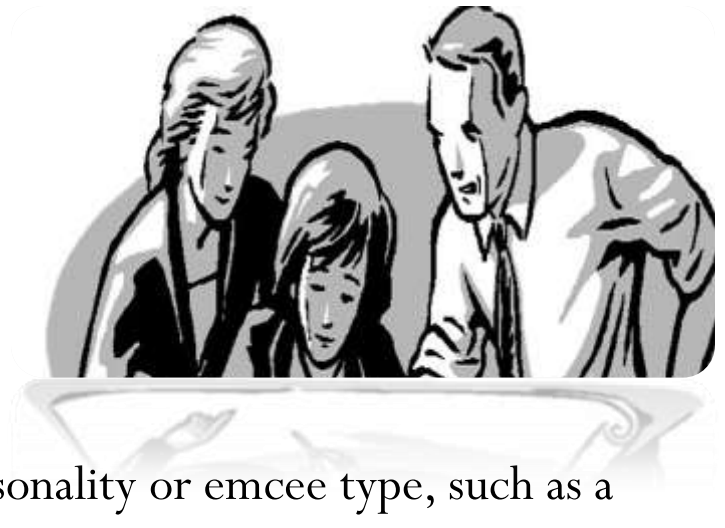


# Planning

- Assemble a planning committee
- Determine the format
  - Panel presentation with a facilitated Q & A
- Select a date and venue (location, size)
- Media outreach
- Identify the objectives of the event
  - Educate local and state policymakers
  - Gain mass support in local communities throughout the state
- Invite state and local policymakers



# Planning



- Invite a moderator and panelists
  - Moderator:
    - Well known and respected media personality or emcee type, such as a radio disc jockey or news reporter
  - Panelists:
    - Academic researchers, health experts, community and political leaders, media representatives
    - Business owners and workers, faith leaders, veterans, individuals who have been negatively affected by secondhand smoke

- Coach the moderator and panelists



# Planning

- Sign in sheet
- Handouts
  - Fact sheets
  - Support cards/coalition information
  - Agenda/panelist bios
  - Reports/case studies
  - Any other relevant material concerning smoke free air



# Promotion

- Promote!
- Promote!
- Promote!



- Utilize various media sources (BE CREATIVE and get the media to attend the event!)
  - Media advisories/press releases to local newspapers, television and radio stations
  - E-mail communications, postcard invitations, posters, flyers, announcements posted on Facebook pages and other social networking sources, newsletters
  - Invitations to state and local policymakers

# Samples

**"SMOKE FREE AIR"**  
**TOWN HALL MEETING**

Sponsored by:  
 WASHINGTON COUNTY TOBACCO PREVENTION AND CESSATION COALITION  
 WASHINGTON COUNTY SUBSTANCE ABUSE COUNCIL  
 In cooperation with:  
 Salem High School 5400  
 West Harrison High School 5400

**Wednesday, March 16, 2011 at 7:00 p.m.**  
**Salem High School Presentation Room**  
 700 North Harrison Street in Salem, IN

Please join us to learn more about the adverse consequences of secondhand smoke, the economic impact to business and how a comprehensive smoke free air law would offer a solution.

**Panelists Include:**

- Dr. Allen Gray - Private Practice Family Physician - "Health Hazards of Secondhand Smoke"
- Ms. Pam Fletcher - Blue River Wood Products - "Saving Your Business Smoke Free"
- Dr. Memorabile Ford Newkirk II - Washington County Superior Court - "How a 28 Becomes a Law"
- Ms. Kelly McGraw - Midwest American Heart Association - "Personal Testimony"
- Ms. May Armstrong-Guth - Indiana Power and Light - "Personal Testimony"
- Ms. Katie Swanson - Indiana Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Executive Director - "Indiana and Secondhand Smoke"
- Major David Deaver - Questions and Comments Moderator

During the meeting, attendees will be able to pose questions or comments to the panelists and learn about the potential statewide smoke free air ordinance currently being introduced in the 2011 legislative session.

Light refreshments available and Door Prizes available voter registration forms

**Hamilton County Tobacco Control Coalition**  
**Town Hall Meeting**

Almost 10,000 Hoosiers die every year from secondhand smoke exposure, making it the third leading cause of preventable death in the United States.

While 76 percent of white-collar workers are protected from secondhand smoke exposure in workplaces, only 43 percent of hospitality workers have the same level of protection.

It's time to protect all Hamilton County workers from on-the-job exposure to secondhand smoke. Nobody should have to choose between a paycheck and their health. Everyone Deserves Clean Air!

Learn the health effects and costs of secondhand smoke at:  
 Riverview Hospital  
 295 Westfield Road  
 Noblesville, IN 46060

**Date: Wednesday, March 16, 2011**  
**Time: 12:00 (noon)**  
**Light lunch at 11:15**  
**Place: Krieg-DeVault Conference Room**  
**Enter at Women's Pavilion (Entrance 11)**

Please R.S.V.P. - 776-8429

**LUNGS AT WORK NO SMOKING**

**Save the Date**  
**APRIL 20, 2011**

**TOWN HALL Meeting**

Information about the Dangers of Secondhand Smoke and what Howard county can do about it....

Sponsored by: Howard County Tobacco Coalition a program of Family Service Association

April 20th @ 6:00pm

ELK Campus Room 130  
 2300 South Washington  
 Kokomo IN 46902

For more information please contact  
 Phone: 766-407-9313 ext. 113  
 E-mail: shirley@fscwa.org

1-800-QUIT-NOW  
 TOLL-FREE 24 HOURS A DAY

**All Workers Deserve Smoke-Free Air**

Nobody should have to choose between their paycheck or their health. Please attend a town hall meeting to hear about how we can support making all workplaces a smoke-free workplace.

Thursday, December 9, 2010  
 2:00 p.m. CST  
 Women's Fun & Party Center  
 3201 Evans Ave, Vesperato, WI

Panelists include:  
 Ms. Charle Brown, D.D.P.  
 Dr. Charles Wilcox, Howard County Health Council Board President  
 Rev. David Deaver, Lufkin County Sheriff and Health Council Board Member  
 Jani Bink, Howard County Commissioner  
 Marilee Dick, Ill. Indiana Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Board member  
 Barbara Tack, Howard County Board of Health  
 Miss President Susan Buehler, Howard County Library Center  
 Moderator: Dan Lowery, Howard County Board of Health

# Media Advisory/Press Release Samples

## Tobacco Control Town Hall meeting Wednesday at Riverview

### The Times

The Hamilton County Tobacco Control Coalition will host a "Town Hall" Meeting starting at noon Wednesday in the Kreig-DeVault conference room at Riverview Hospital, 395 Westfield Road. The meeting will highlight the need for local comprehensive smoke-free workplace ordinances, with the overall objective being

to remind Hoosiers of the importance of setting fresh ordinances that protect the health of all Hoosier workers.

A light lunch will be served at 11:15 a.m. at the conference room.

Secondhand smoke costs the country \$6 billion a year in health care expenses and almost 10,000 Hoosiers die each year from secondhand smoke exposure, making

it the third leading cause of preventable death in the United States. While 76 percent of white-collar workers are protected from secondhand smoke exposure in workplaces, only 43 percent of hospitality workers have the same level of protection.

Panelists will include

- Pat Fox, President of Riverview Hospital
- Dr. Charles Harris, a local physician

■ Jim Ginder, Health Educator with the Hamilton County Health Department

■ Chuck Gillespie, with the Indiana Chamber of Commerce

■ Barbara Franchini, a Noblesville resident.

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For more information and to R.S.V.P. call George Kristo at 776-8429.

### Media Alert

## Community Discusses Emotionally Charged Issue During Town Hall Meeting

**WHAT:** Morgan County residents will be meeting to discuss what is next for a smoke-free air policy in Morgan County, since the Indiana General Assembly's failure to pass a statewide bill. Many health advocates believe Morgan County should move forward to protect residents from secondhand smoke, even though a statewide bill failed in the senate.

**WHO:** **Speakers:** Beverly G. Smith RRT/CPFT, Coordinator of Pulmonary Rehabilitation Services, St. Francis Hospital; Kim Williams, American Cancer Society; Harry C. Genushy, M.D., St. Francis Medical Group Indiana Heart Physicians; Susanna L.K. Aldridge, DVM, Veterinarian, Tender Loving Care Animal Hospital; Darin L. Wolfe, M.D., Pathologist, Morgan Hospital & Medical Center; Paul Broderick, MD, Morgan County Health Department; Alice Curry, lung cancer survivor

**Moderator:** Brian Culp, Managing Editor, Reporter-Times

**WHEN:** Thursday, May 12  
6:30 PM

**WHERE:** Morgan County Administration Building  
180 South Main St.  
Martinsville, IN

**WHY:** The majority of Hoosiers want all workplaces to be smoke-free, and Morgan County residents are no different. Local and state representatives should take responsibility for supporting a smoke-free air law protecting all Hoosiers, including Morgan County residents. This town hall meeting is being held to give the public an opportunity to send a clear message to their representatives on where they stand on this issue.

**BACKGROUND:** Secondhand smoke exposure is a leading cause of preventable death in the United States, killing approximately 50,000 Americans each year. In Indiana secondhand smoke kills over 1,200 people each year and costs Indiana approximately 390 million dollars in excess medical expenses.

While 76 percent of white-collar workers are protected from secondhand smoke exposure, only 43 percent of hospitality workers have the same level of protection.

It's time to protect all Hoosier workers from on-the-job exposure to secondhand smoke. Nobody should have to choose between a paycheck and their health. Everyone deserves smoke-free air!

**CONTACT:** Healthier Morgan County Initiative

## INDYSTAR.COM

### Group hopes to whip up support for tobacco laws



Written by  
Joan Blake  
May 26, 2014

A Hendricks County anti-tobacco group hopes a town hall-style meeting next week will persuade residents to support its call for more local laws to reduce tobacco use and exposure to secondhand smoke.

About four years ago, Avon and Plainfield became the only Hendricks County communities to approve smoking regulations. Brownsburg and Danville don't have any restrictions. The disparity across Indiana communities' borders had led some to lobby for statewide regulation.

"We were hoping legislators at the state level would step up and develop statewide regulations, which they failed to do this spring," said Michael McDonald, coordinator of the Hendricks County Coalition for Tobacco Interventions and Prevention. "So, we want to bring it to the public to find out what they think by helping facilitate and engage that discussion."

A public health officer and a victim of

secondhand smoke will join other panelists in the meeting from 6:30 to 8 p.m. Wednesday at Brownsburg Town Hall's Eaton Hall.

McDonald believes local elected officials won't act until a public outcry exists, so the meeting is designed to generate awareness in hopes of convincing community members to request change, he said.

His belief may have some merit.

Brownsburg Town Council member Gary Hood said the council never considered an ordinance four years ago because no residents came forward during a public meeting with such a request.

"We would have to look at it if it was put in front of us," he said. "That being said, a lot of restaurants have taken away smoking already. If we put something in place similar to what Avon has, I'm not sure there would be a lot of change in Brownsburg."

Avon's ordinance prohibits smoking in

Print Powered By Print Dynamics

# The Meeting

- Video (CDC's Triumphs and Tragedies), Powerpoint presentation, etc.
- Introduction from the moderator
- Personal testimonies from the panelists





# Sample Testimonies

“I am tired of living life like a hermit. I am tired of not being able to breathe in smoking environments. Smokers don’t realize what their choice is doing to others.”

*-Barbara Franchini  
Noblesville, IN*

“I look at the deception of Big Tobacco...you see what products they are selling...those products are designed for teenagers...this is evil.”

*- Reverend Dan Gangler,  
Co-convener of the Hoosier Faith &  
Health Coalition*

“As a vet, it is important for me to be able to get together with other veterans...When I go mingle with veterans for business leisure I have to go to Louisville. I shouldn’t have to go to Louisville. I’m an Indiana veteran.”

*-Amad Ali, Decorated  
veteran of Operation Iraqi Freedom,  
Floyd Co., IN*

“An employer with a smoke free environment sends a clear message to it’s employees, the community, and it’s customers: we care about your health and safety.”

*-Larry Macklin, Executive Director for  
Adams County Economic Development  
Corporation, Adams County, IN*

# The Meeting



- Facilitated Q & A session
- Audience members write their questions on an index card and the moderator asks the panelists each question
- Have questions in place in case the audience does not ask any questions



# Follow Up

- Letters to the editor
- If media not in attendance, send news release
- Thank you cards to panelists and moderator
- Thank you letters to policy makers (if attended)
- Send media coverage of the event to policy makers and key opinion leaders

# Follow Up

- Evaluation
- Next Steps
  - Develop an action plan (i.e., policy recommendations, advocacy campaign, information dissemination, media outreach)
- Use the THM to build your advocacy work
  - Create a database of the names and contact information collected at the event

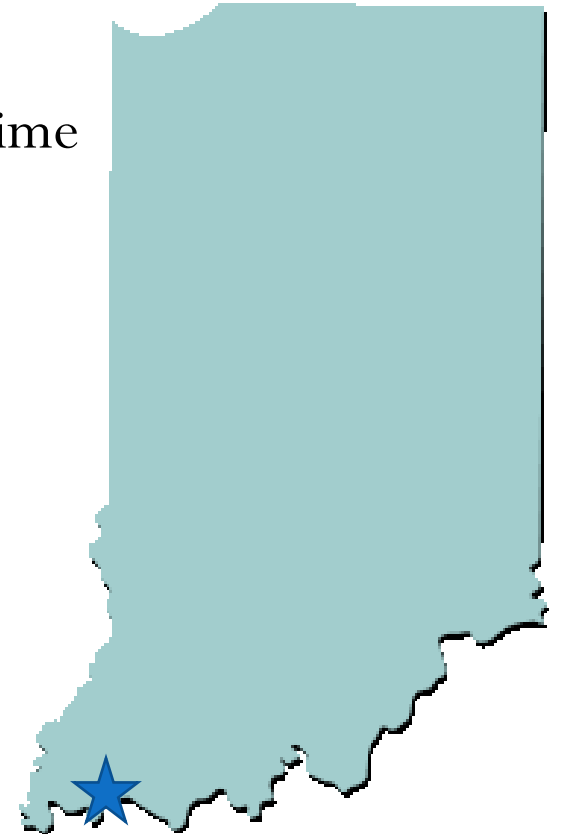
# Local Examples

- Vanderburgh County, IN
  - Martha Caine, MA  
Executive Director, Smokefree  
Communities of Vanderburgh County
- Floyd County, IN
  - Kurt Fetz  
Coordinator, Our Place Drug  
and Alcohol Education Services



# Vanderburgh County

- Planning
  - What is the most important thing you want accomplish with this forum?
  - Who can work the event, and how much time can each person commit? (assign tasks)
  - Who can you collaborate with in the community?
  - What type of budget and resources do we have for this event?
- Call to action
- Evaluation



# Floyd County

- There are 3 major steps:
  - Step 1: Planning (most important)
    - Speakers and Event Date
    - Event Location
    - Media
  - Step 2: Implementation
    - Index card method
  - Step 3: Follow Up
    - Media
    - Letters to the Editor and City Council



# Contact Information

**Anita Gaillard, MSPH**

Director of Community Programs,  
Tobacco Prevention and Cessation  
Commission (TPCC), ISDH  
317.234.1782  
agaillard@isdh.in.gov

**Blake Vanderbosch, MPH**

Policy Specialist  
TPCC  
317.234.1866  
bvanderbosch@isdh.in.gov

**Martha Caine**

Executive Director  
Smokefree Communities of Vanderburgh  
County  
812.303.7378  
itpcsmokefree@hotmail.com

**Kurt Fetz**

Coordinator  
Our Place Drug and Alcohol Education  
Services  
kfet1@insightbb.com