

Pitching Prevention National Webinar Series

Anticipating Barriers to Stakeholder Engagement

When “pitching” prevention to new stakeholders, you may encounter different types of resistance. Some stakeholders might not yet fully grasp how substance use affects their community, while others may not understand the role they can play in prevention efforts. This lack of understanding often creates barriers to engagement. To make an effective pitch, it’s important to anticipate potential barriers to engagement and tailor your pitch to address those concerns head on.

This worksheet can help you think through different ways to acknowledge and reduce barriers to stakeholder engagement. Having prepared responses will help you anticipate, and more effectively address, these barriers should they arise.

In the table below, identify the stakeholder you are trying to engage. In the first column, brainstorm some potential barriers to engaging this individual. In the second column, develop a targeted response that addresses this concern.

As you make your pitch, make sure to listen to your audience’s responses. Tune into why a particular individual may be reluctant to engage, and how you can refine your message to address his or her concerns.

Remember, it can take a long time to bring certain stakeholders to the prevention table. People often need to be presented with the same explanations several times before they begin to “hear” them. So be patient and respectful, but don’t give up!

Stakeholder/Stakeholder Group:

Potential Barrier	Your Targeted Response
<i>My kids don't even drink! Why should I get involved in your underage drinking prevention efforts?!</i>	<i>Even if your child isn't drinking, underage drinking affects the environment where your children are growing up. If 20% of high school students are drinking, then 1 out of 5 kids that your child interacts with at school, during lunch time, or while playing sports is potentially drinking. Reducing underage drinking will improve health outcomes for all youth in our community, including your kids!</i>

Potential Barrier	Your Targeted Response

