

Community Definition Worksheet

The following questions can help you start the process of defining your community. Your community includes the target audience and those who influence and interact with the target audience. Defining your community is an ongoing process.

1. Who is your target population? (This may be dictated by a funding source or organizational policy. Or it may be determined after the community assessment when you identify a population at particularly high risk.)
2. In what geographic area is your target audience contained? (A state, county, city, or neighborhood?)
3. Describe some of the basic demographics you know about this community. (Rural, urban, high percentage of middle-income or low-income, growing population of Hispanics, aging population, employment, poverty, etc.)
4. What major organizations, agencies, and services exist in this area? (Schools, health, recreation, business, medical support/counseling, religious, media, civic organizations, government, etc.)

5. What are some regularly-scheduled community events that people attend? (Festivals, back-to-school events, fairs, etc.)

6. What are the patterns of social interaction in this area? (Clubs, worksite, neighborhoods, intramural teams, family, etc.)

7. Are there resources outside your immediate community that provide support for your community? (Large supermarkets, shopping malls, recreation centers, worship houses, etc.) For example, a nearby city might draw people from a small town or from a suburb. In addition to local resources, you might need to assess resources in neighboring areas.

8. Who are the opinion leaders in your community? (Individuals, organizations, community groups, key decision-makers, power structures.) Keep in mind that there will probably be different opinion leaders for different segments of the population.

As you gain experience working with the community, revisit these questions periodically and update your responses. Summarize the responses to the questions above into a few sentences that define your community.