

WORKSHEET

The First Meeting

Still not sure what to say at the first meeting? Ask yourself:

“What would I want to know at the first meeting?”

Remember to incorporate short, fun activities for the meetings that can help members get to know one another. It may be as simple as a two-minute description of a member’s accomplishments since the last meeting. Or, have the group break into two’s. Have the pair interview each other and, after the interview, introduce each other to the group.

Issues to be decided at the early meetings:

- Choose facilitator
- Determine decision-making process
- Organizational structure
- Meeting dates
- Purpose of the Coalition-Mission Statement
- Goals of the Coalition
- Objectives

At the first meeting:

- Ask a person who is good at leading a group, who can facilitate group discussion and encourage participation, and who can stimulate the group to action, to serve as temporary chairperson.
- Have the room organized for the meeting in advance-chairs, descriptive information, flip charts, etc.
- Encourage discussion and participation, but keep the meeting moving through the agenda. Ask everyone to list name, affiliation, email address, phone number, address, and primary interests.
- Review the facts about the problem in the community.
- Have a guest speaker explain the problem and need for action.
- Outline what the organizing group needs to do during the coming months.
- Make specific assignments to group participants.
- Ask people to suggest names of other who can contribute to the group’s activities.
- Be sure to send everyone copies of the meeting’s minutes.