SAFE COMMUNITIES ACTIVITIES

Here we list the Safe Community "best practice" activities for the major areas in a highway and traffic safety program. Because a Safe Community uses a systems approach, we have identified both countermeasure and system support activities.

- Administrative Activities
- Data and Analysis Activities
- Alcohol and Impaired Driving Program
- Occupant Protection
- Speed Management and Aggressive Driver Prevention Programs
- Pedestrian and Bike Safety Programs
- Motorcycle Safety Program
- Youth Programs
- Emergency Medical Services
- Roadway Safety Programs
- Railroad Safety
- Program Self-Sufficiency
- Program Evaluation
- Cost Impact of a Safe Community Project

Administrative Activities

The following system support activities are found in most Safe Communities and are needed to build and sustain local support for highway and traffic safety programs:

- A community coalition/task force of public and private partners that includes citizens, government officials, law enforcement, public works, business, education, medical, health professionals, and others interested in highway and traffic safety with input into program planning and implementation activities.

- A community level data and cost analysis and program assessment of the community traffic and other safety problems.

- Active participation and commitment of top community officials.

- A traffic safety plan that outlines highway and traffic safety priorities and activities for the community.

- A Four-Seasons traffic safety events calendar that promotes diverse coalition support for highway and traffic safety programs through public information activity.

Data and Analysis Activities

The following is a beginning list of data files and analysis activities that can be useful in determining the highway and traffic safety problem, setting priorities, building consensus, allocating resources, and measuring progress in a Safe Community:

- Unintentional injury data base.

- Traffic fatal and injury crashes data base.

- High hazard location data base.

- Emergency Department and hospital discharge data file.

- Initial/periodic crash cost analysis and program assessment. (See NHTSA's computer disc program, "Crash Cost Analysis").

- Progress reports to the community on program achievements.

- Insurance claim data when available.

Alcohol and Impaired Driving Program

The following are examples of alcohol and impaired driving program activities found in Safe Communities:

- **Policy and Legislation**
  State Laws on Administrative License Revocation, .08 BAC per se, and Zero Tolerance (.02 BAC or less) for drivers under 21 years of age and Graduated Licensing.

- **Organizational Practices**
  - Frequent sobriety checkpoints with strong community awareness.

  - Multi-agency DWI patrol activity with strong community awareness.

  - School based programs such as Grad/Prom Night, Friday Night Live, Prom Promise, Students Against Driving Drunk (SADD).

  - Youth enforcement programs targeting alcohol sales to minors, keg parties attended by underage drinkers, etc.

  - Training for judges and prosecutors on DWI law issues.

  - Police training in DWI Detection, Drug Evaluation and Classification and Standardized Field Sobriety Testing.

  - Alcohol training programs for servers and sellers of alcohol.

- **Coalitions and Networks**
  - Community coalitions to support activities to stop drunk driving such as Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) or Remove Intoxicated Drivers (RID).

  - Employer coalitions promoting alcohol and traffic safety issues such as Network of Employers for Traffic Safety (NETS).

- **Community Information and Education**
  - Drunk & Drugged Driving Prevention Month (3D Month) program and other public information activity.

- **Evaluate Your Program**
  - To measure progress in your alcohol program look at trend data for the following measures:

    - Alcohol related fatalities and injuries (all ages)

    - Percent of drinking drivers ages 15-19, in fatal or injury crashes (The 15 to 19 age group is suggested to better target the analysis.)

Occupant Protection

The following are examples of occupant protection activities found in Safe Communities:

- **Policy and Legislation**
  - Standard (primary) safety belt law or ordinance (or safety belt usage of 80% or more).

  - Upgraded child passenger safety laws.

- **Organizational Practices**
  - Birthing hospital policy requiring child safety seat usage for discharged newborns.

  - Regular targeted occupant protection enforcement for low usage groups such as children 0-4, teen drivers, etc.

  - Occupant protection checkpoints and clinics on correct use of child safety seats.

  - Community low/no cost child safety seat program.

- **Coalitions and Networks**
  - Coalitions, such as Safe Kids, promoting child safety seat issues.

- ## Community Information and Education
  - Public information for National Child Passenger Safety Week in February and Buckle Up America! Week in May.

  - Public information on law enforcement activity to increase and maintain high safety belt and child safety seat use levels.

  - Correct usage workshops and clinics for child safety seats.

- **Evaluate Your Program**
  - To measure progress in your occupant protection program look at trend data for the following measures:

    - Safety belt and child safety seat usage determined by observational surveys (all ages)

    - Safety belt use percentage in fatalities and injuries (all ages)

    - Child safety seat usage in fatalities and injuries for children 0-4

    - Safety belt use in fatalities and injuries, age 15-19 (The 15 to 19 age group is suggested to better target the analysis.)

Speed Management and Aggressive Driver Prevention Programs

The following are examples of speed management and aggressive driving prevention program activities found in Safe Communities. A speed management program is designed to establish speed management on all roads in a community. The term "aggressive driving" includes driver actions such as speeding, failure to yield, hit and run and many more. Also, it covers unlicensed and suspended drivers.

Policy and Legislation
Vehicle impoundment law or ordinance allowing impoundment of vehicles driven by unlicensed or suspended drivers.

"Double fine" program to reduce persistent speeding and aggressive driving violations.

Organizational Practices
Appropriate design speed and traffic calming measures.

Speed management and aggressive driving enforcement programs.

Red light running intersection safety program.

Commitment to using both traditional methods and state-of the- art equipment in setting and enforcing speed limits.

Systematic program of speed surveys.

Training of judiciary, prosecutors and law enforcement on consequences of speeding and aggressive driving.

Community Information and Education
Public information program on speed management and aggressive driving aimed at increasing driver compliance with traffic safety laws.

Public information and education program on speeding and driving to fast for conditions.

Evaluate Your Program
To measure progress in your speed management and aggressive driver programs look at trend data for the following evaluation measures:

- Number of vehicles exceeding posted speed limits (monitoring)

- Distribution and number of fatal and injury crashes by contributing factors such as speeding, aggressive driving, hit and run, etc.

- Number of crashes in which driver was unlicensed, suspended, or revoked

Pedestrian and Bicycle Safety Programs
The following are examples of pedestrian and bicycle safety program activities found in Safe Communities:

- Policy and Legislation

- Bike helmet law /ordinance.

Organizational Practices
Enforcement of pedestrian crosswalk, bicycle, and right-of-way laws and ordinances.

Comprehensive school-based pedestrian and bike safety education programs.

Helmet distribution programs.

Pedestrian safety programs for older adults.

Use of pedestrian and bike highway design/operation standards.

Coalitions and Networks
Coalitions such as ped/bike coalitions, EMS injury control coalitions, Safe Kids and AAA to promote pedestrian and bike safety.

Community Information and Education

Public information in May, such as "Bike Safety Month," and in September, "Back to School Ped Safety Month."

Public information for school zone and crosswalk safety.

Public information about older adults and impaired pedestrians.

Evaluate Your Program
To measure progress in your bike and pedestrian safety programs look at trend data for the following measures:

- Pedestrian fatalities and injuries by age distribution and location

- Pedestrian fatalities and injuries in intersections, crosswalks and on different roadway types

- Bicycle fatalities and injuries by age distribution and helmet usage

- Bicycle helmet usage determined by observational surveys (all ages)

Motorcycle Safety Program
The following are examples of motorcycle safety program activities found in Safe Communities:

- Policy and Legislation

- Law/ordinance requiring helmets for all riders (universal helmet law)

- Organizational practices

- Enforcement of requirement for motorcycle license endorsement and proper helmet use

- Community motorcycle safety education available for new riders

- Enforcement of impaired driving laws for motorcyclists.

- Coalitions and Networks

- Coalition of persons from law enforcement, medicine, health, injury prevention, education, and safety to promote proper helmet usage.

- Community Information and Education

- Public information promoting licensing, motorcycle safety, dangers of impaired riding, and proper helmet usage.

Evaluate Your Program
To measure progress in your motorcycle program look at trend data for the following measures:

- Motorcycle helmet use in fatal and injury crashes

- License status in fatal and injury crashes

- Motorcycle helmet usage determined by observational surveys (all ages)

Youth Programs

For information on best practices for youth programs, please refer to prior program areas that list youth activities as part of their strategies area.

Emergency Medical Services (EMS)

The following are examples of emergency medical services activities found in Safe Communities:

- **Policy and Legislation**
  - State EMS Authority responsible for overall planning, development of EMS systems and certification of personnel and training.

- **Organizational Practices**
  - All emergency response personnel meet recommended State established training standards.

  - All emergency response vehicles meet State equipment standards.

  - Available rescue resources with extrication equipment.

  - First responder training available to law enforcement, school and public work employees, and volunteers.

  - Established Trauma Registry as well as EMS response and activity data.

  - Communication system capable of on-line medical direction and trans- mission of real-time patient data.

  - Quality improvement throughout the EMS system.

- **Coalitions and Networks**
  - Coalition such as EMS injury control coalition and Safe Kids to promote the EMS goals in the community

  - Collaborative working relationship with law enforcement and the State Highway Safety Office

  - Community Information and Education

  - Public Information supporting National EMS Week in May

  - Public information about preventing injuries, how to access the EMS system, and what to do until help arrives.

- **Evaluate Your Program**
  - To measure progress in your EMS program look at trend data for the following measures:

    - Response time from EMS notification to arrival at crash scene

    - Time of crash to arrival at hospital

Roadway Safety Programs

The following are examples of roadway safety program activities found in Safe Communities:

- Organizational Practices

- Systematic maintenance of signs, markings and signals.

- Systematic process for identifying known and potentially hazardous locations.

- Systematic program of speed surveys.

- Crosswalk and bike lane marking and signal program.

- Work Zone safety program.

- Use of rumble strips.

Railroad Safety

The following are examples of railroad safety activities found in Safe Communities:

- Crossing safety and trespass prevention programs.

- Partnership with local and railroad law enforcement officers.

- Inventory of crossings and signal devices.

- Systematic coordination in maintenance of railroad signs, markings, signals and equipment.

- Priority list for upgrading railroad grade crossings.

Evaluate Your Program

To measure progress in your roadway safety and railroad safety programs look at trend data for the following measures:

- Number of crashes with roadside fixed objects

- Statistics on collisions, fatalities and injuries at rail rights-of-way

Program Self-Sufficiency

The following are examples of support activities found in Safe Communities and are effective in obtaining funds to support highway and traffic safety programs:

- Policy and Legislation

- Penalty assessment on motor vehicle violations.

- Cost recovery program for the cost of emergency response.

- A surcharge on alcohol sales to fund local DWI programs.

Program Evaluation

Analysis of Traffic Safety Impact

To evaluate the impact of your Safe Community program, look at the following evaluation measures over a four- or five-year period to determine change in trend and level of injury. Also, a comparison of community data to the state average and cities of comparable size is recommended as a way to determine impact.

Overall Evaluation

- Total motor vehicle fatal and injury crashes

- Total motor vehicle fatalities and injuries

Individual Countermeasure Activity Areas
Alcohol related fatalities and injuries (all ages)

Percent of drivers, 15-19 (representative of teen age group) in fatal and injury crashes who had been drinking or using other drugs

Safety belt use percentage in fatalities & injuries (all ages)

Child safety seat usage in fatalities and injuries for children 0-4

Motorcycle helmet use in fatal and injury crashes

Observational survey data for safety belt, child safety seat and motorcycle helmet usage

Pedestrian fatalities and injuries in intersections and crosswalks

Bicycle fatalities and injuries by age and helmet usage:

- Number of Hit and Run crashes

- Number of crashes of drivers unlicensed, suspended or revoked

- Number of crashes with roadside fixed objects

- Number of fatal and injury crashes at railroad grade crossings

- Number of fatal and injury run-off-the road crashes

Cost Impact of a Safe Community Project

For those communities successful in showing impact in the program areas addressed in their Safe Community, a cost benefit analysis should be performed. A useful publication is "The Economic Costs of Motor Vehicle Crashes 1994", DOT HS 808 425, available from your NHTSA Regional Office. Also available from the same source is a computer program, "NHTSA Crash Cost Program", to estimate crash costs at the community level.