

COMPONENT 3:

Community Engagement Guide

Purpose

Community engagement and awareness activities support all Healthy Brain Community efforts. The tools and strategies in this component may be used to promote activities, recruit participants, engage partners, and communicate progress throughout Components 4–8.

Why It Matters

Community engagement and awareness activities help increase knowledge, reduce stigma, connect people to resources, encourage participation, and build support for Healthy Brain Community initiatives.

Expected Outcomes

- Identify target audiences
- Develop key messages
- Select communication channels
- Create a communication plan
- Schedule outreach activities
- Increase community awareness and engagement

Key Actions

- Select Target Audiences
- Choose Appropriate Outreach Channels
- Use Consistent Brain Health Messaging

Estimated Time to Complete

Ongoing throughout implementation. Communication and outreach activities should continue as Healthy Brain Community initiatives are developed and expanded.

Who to Involve

Steering Committee Members • Healthcare Organizations • Public Health Agencies • Aging Services Organizations • Community-Based Organizations • Libraries • Senior Centers • Faith Communities • Schools • EMS and First Responders • Local Businesses • Caregivers • Individuals with Lived Experience

Tools Included in this Component

Tool Number	Tool Name
3.1	Communication Plan Template
3.2	Outreach Calendar Template
3.3	Brain Health Messaging Guide
3.4	Community Event Checklist
3.5	Community Awareness Activity Ideas Guide

Step 1: Develop Your Communication Plan

Purpose: Create a communication strategy that identifies who you want to reach, what messages you want to share, and how you will communicate them.

Tool to Use: Tool 3.1 Communication Plan Template

Recommendations for Success:

- Focus on 2–3 communication goals.
- Align activities with community priorities.
- Keep goals realistic and achievable.
- Consider audiences identified in Component 2.

Step 2: Identify Target Audiences

Purpose: Determine who you want to reach through outreach and awareness activities.

Tool to Use: Tool 2.4 Start with priority populations identified

Recommendations for Success:

- Focus on a few key audiences initially.
- Consider who can help spread messages to others.
- Tailor messages to audience needs and interests.

Step 3: Use Consistent Brain Health Messaging

Purpose: Ensure outreach efforts provide accurate, evidence-informed information.

Tool to Use: Tool 3.3 Brain Health Messaging Guide

Recommendations for Success:

- Use positive language.
- Avoid stigma.
- Keep messages simple and easy to understand.
- Use the same core messages across communication channels.

Step 4: Plan Outreach Activities

Purpose: Schedule outreach activities and identify partners, timelines, and communication channels.

Tool to Use: Tool 3.2 Outreach Calendar Template

Recommendations for Success:

- Build on existing community events.
- Coordinate activities with partners.
- Update the calendar regularly.
- Focus on activities that match community capacity.

Step 5: Implement Outreach Activities

Purpose: Conduct presentations, workshops, health fairs, awareness campaigns, and other outreach activities.

Tool to Use: Tool 3.4 Community Event Checklist

Recommendations for Success:

- Leverage community partners.
- Prepare materials in advance.
- Gather participant feedback.
- Share resources during activities.

Step 6: Explore Awareness Activity Ideas

Purpose: Identify outreach activities that fit your community's needs, interests, and capacity.

Tool to Use: Tool 3.5 Community Awareness Activity Ideas Guide

Recommendations for Success:

- Select realistic activities.
- Build on existing events.
- Involve community partners.
- Focus on activities that support Healthy Brain Community goals.

Tips for Success

- Use multiple communication channels to reach different audiences.
- Keep messaging consistent across all partners and activities.
- Focus on positive and empowering messages.
- Leverage trusted community organizations and leaders.
- Start small and build outreach efforts over time.

Component Completion Checklist

- ☐ Communication goals identified
- ☐ Target audiences selected
- ☐ Key messages identified
- ☐ Communication Plan completed
- ☐ Outreach Calendar completed
- ☐ Outreach activities implemented
- ☐ Community partners engaged

Additional Resources (Component 9)

- CDC Healthy Brain Initiative
- Dakota at Home
- National Institute on Aging
- South Dakota Alzheimer's Association
- South Dakota Department of Health Head Forward

Next Steps

Communication and outreach activities should continue throughout implementation. After completing this component, communities may continue with Component 4: Brain Health Education & Risk Reduction, Component 5: Dementia Awareness & Early Recognition, Component 6: Caregiver Education & Support, or Component 7: Dementia-Friendly Community Practices. Progress and evaluations can be tracked using Component 8: Implement, Evaluate, and Sustain.