

# KENTUCKY ALCOHOL POLICY ALLIANCE

**KAPA DAY AT THE CAPITOL – THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 27TH, 2014**

## **Advice for Meeting with your Legislators**

### **Have Clear, Limited Goals**

Keep the discussion to one message and one or two main points. Be specific about what you want the lawmaker to do. Repeat your message in as many different ways as possible.

### **Provide Succinct Written Materials and Helpful Visual Aides**

Focus on how prevention and treatment programs meet critical community needs. Point to success stories and to programs that have generated productive citizens and saved taxpayer expenditures. Demonstrate that:

- Prevention programs save money
- Prevention programs work
- Much of the community relies on the prevention services that your program provides

### **Make the Most of Any Opportunity for Small Talk**

Use introductions strategically to create a personal rapport and relationship. Use your knowledge of the member's background to develop common ground.

## **Recommended Structure of the Meeting**

### **Introductions**

Everyone should briefly introduce themselves at the start of the meeting. This is your chance to remind the legislator that you are constituents. No one has more influence with legislators than their voting constituents.

- Designate one person to be the primary spokesperson for the meeting.
- Be polite, brief and specific

### **Local Stories and Statistics**

Provide the legislator with local stories and/or some basic statistics from home. Lawmakers especially appreciate real-life examples that put a face on an issue.

- Discuss the major accomplishments of your program—highlight outcomes, key groups involved, and number of volunteers.
- Use the Cost Benefit Analysis of Prevention Services and KAPA Underage Drinking Prevention Fact Sheet

### **The Request**

Ask how you can continue a working relationship with the member and his/her staff on alcohol issues.

- What you do after the meeting can be just as important as the meeting itself. Follow-up via a thank you letter and persistence will be necessary to achieve your goals.
- Be polite to the secretaries, receptionists, and other staff. They are the key to getting in touch with your legislators in the future.

## **Follow-up**

### **Send a Thank You Letter**

Be gracious and polite. Include in your letter any information you promised to provide the member. Restate your concerns and what you want. Suggest how the member can help you, even if he/she does not entirely support your position.

A relationship is built over time. Continue personal communications with your legislators. In-person contacts, telephone calls, and hand-written notes are the most likely to get a legislator's attention.

**KAPA is a statewide partnership established to identify current statutory issues, increase public support for effective and necessary policies, and formulate solutions to reduce underage and high-risk drinking**

## **CADCA Capitol Hill Communication Tips - The 12 C's**

1. Be Credible
2. Be Convincing
3. Be Clear
4. Be Concise
5. Be Consistent
6. Be Creative
7. Be Committed
8. Build Coalitions
9. Celebrate Victories
10. Cultivate Champions
11. Credit Others
12. Know When to Compromise

Source: [www.cadca.org](http://www.cadca.org)

***\*\*Please follow-up to your legislative contacts with a thank you note.\*\****