



# Community Readiness Handout

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Have you ever implemented a program or health initiative that didn't succeed as you hoped it would? Do you wonder why some efforts thrive in one setting but fall flat in others? There are a variety of reasons for such outcomes – for example, perhaps the community was just not ready for those efforts. One method to improve the odds of success is the Community Readiness Assessment tool. It's a simple method that helps you gain insights into your community and determine its readiness to tackle an issue, allowing you to more accurately target your work and create real, lasting change.

## What is the Community Readiness Assessment tool?

The Community Readiness Assessment tool (CRA) was developed by the Tri-Ethnic Center for Prevention Research at Colorado State University. It is based on the Transtheoretical Model of Behavior Change. The CRA uses the model to identify

which “stage” a community is in relation to a particular health topic. For example, a community may be in the “Vague Awareness” stage (Fig. 1) in its readiness to address vaping among adolescents. By knowing the current stage of readiness, health educators and other community workers can facilitate community progress. The CRA can be applied to any community or topic.

So where should you start?

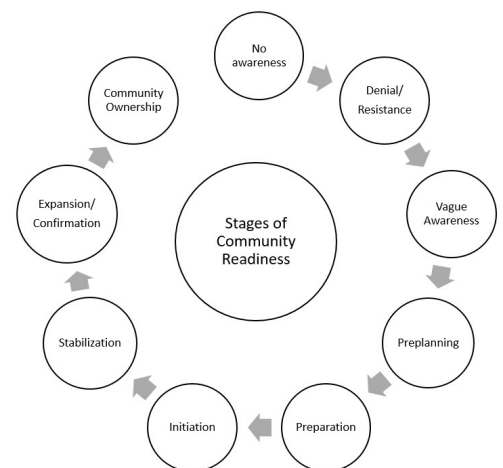


Figure 1

**Make preparations.** First, determine which method you will use to assess your community's readiness and prepare any necessary materials:

Method	Best for	Preparation
Qualitative Assessment (Interviews)	Large-scale community issues where the issue is not "owned" by a single entity	Determine interview questions  Identify interview location (virtual or in-person)  Plan how you will record, transcribe, take notes.  Prepare any needed software  Know your confidentiality protocols
Quantitative Assessment (Surveys)	Situations where the issue is "owned" by one entity	Make the survey  Plan delivery method  Plan scoring (real-time or delayed)

**Conduct the assessments.** As you conduct your interviews or surveys, be prepared for very honest or emotional responses. These may result from pent-up frustrations surrounding the issue at hand.

**Report the results.** Once you have your scores, report the findings to your team and stakeholders. This is an important opportunity to celebrate areas of strength and determine which dimensions could use additional efforts.

**Set goals.** As a team, you will want to set goals and objectives that will effectively raise community readiness levels. The Colorado State Handbook, found [here](#), has suggestions on how to determine those goals and objectives. Remember, you are working toward the "Community Ownership" stage.

**Implement your plan.** Now you're ready to put your plan into action! You can work confidently, knowing your targeted efforts are more likely to be successful.

As you move through this process, you may find these resources to be helpful:

<p><b>Colorado State Handbook:</b> PDF found <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Includes details about the tool, the stages of readiness, and the dimensions of the community that should be assessed.</li> <li>Helpful worksheets for scoring, creating goals and objectives, and conducting a SWOT Analysis.</li> <li>Don't forget to check out Appendices A-D</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Tool Box:</b> Chapter 2, Section 9: Community Readiness. Link found <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Answers many questions about community readiness assessments, including when you should conduct a community readiness assessment and who should be involved.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Community Readiness Series:</b> Link found <a href="#">here</a>.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>This four-part series was hosted by partners at Connections IN Health (Indiana CTSI) and Purdue Extension Community Development</li> <li>The series details (1) what a community readiness assessment is, (2) how to conduct the assessment, (3) how to analyze the results, and (4) how to report the results.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Contacting Purdue Extension:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Donna Vandergraff <a href="mailto:dvanderg@purdue.edu">dvanderg@purdue.edu</a></li> <li><a href="http://extension.purdue.edu">extension.purdue.edu</a></li> </ul>

### Suggested Resources

Coalition Trip. Indiana Clinical and Translational Sciences Institute. Web. <https://coalitiontrip.indianaactsi.org/what-we-do/>

Community Readiness for Community Change. 2014. Tri-Ethnic Center Community Readiness Handbook 2nd edition, Tri-Ethnic Center for Prevention Research, Colorado State University. [https://tec.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/CR\\_Handbook\\_8-3-15.pdf](https://tec.colostate.edu/wp-content/uploads/2018/04/CR_Handbook_8-3-15.pdf)

The Community Tool Box. 2021. Chapter 2, Section 9: Community Readiness University of Kansas. Web. <https://ctb.ku.edu/en>