



Organization: Birmingham Bloomfield Community Coalition in Birmingham, Indiana

Contact: Lisa Machesky

Q: What did you change a law, a regulation, an ordinance, a policy or other?

A: We passed a city ordinance to make parents responsible for house parties that take place under their supervision.

Q: Where did the idea to make the change originate?

A: The city prosecutor and police department felt that the new ordinance would help curb underage drinking.

Q: What elected or other government officials did you meet with to accomplish this change?

A: We attended a public hearing with the city commission, where several parents and a representative of the coalition spoke to the issue.

Q: What materials did you use to make your case that the change was necessary and would produce the desired results?

A: Our statistics showed that alcohol use rates among our high school students were higher than the national average. The research also showed that the most common place to drink was at home, at a party or at a friend's house.

Q: Through what system/process did you make your change?

A: This change was made through the city commission.

Q: Who were your allies in making this change?

A: Our allies were law enforcement officials, the Parent-Teacher-School Association, interested parents and the city prosecutor.

Q: Who opposed this change?

A: Before passing the ordinance, our opposition was the ACLU and some parents. After implementing the change, opposition included students and more parents

Q: Did you testify in front of local boards or state governing bodies?

A: We did testify in front of the city commission.

Q: Did you participate in media advocacy to make your change?

A: There were articles in the local paper prior to passing the ordinance. There was an article in the Detroit News (major metropolitan daily) and a column in the local paper after the ordinance passed.

Q: Please describe in detail the outcome of your change.

A: The ordinance was amended and adopted.

Q: Any other comments you'd like to share?

A: Our example is probably not a good textbook example (although real world) of how to create environmental changes. I do, however, think it is a good example of how being prepared and having the ability to respond quickly can help a coalition influence policy changes, spark community discussion, and raise visibility and influence of the Coalition itself.