Outreach Strategies and Tools for Schools

Objective: To provide valuable outreach strategies, messaging recommendations, tips for finding contacts, and a sample outreach email template to assist with fostering supportive environments in schools and nightlife settings.

Messaging Recommendations (includes emails and other forms of communication):

- Introductions: Always introduce yourself and your relationship to the community.

- Shared Values: Clearly state how your program goals align with theirs (i.e., fostering safer, inclusive spaces for staff and students).

- Share Success Stories: Anecdotes and data go a long way in showcasing the positive impact of your work.

- Customization: Emphasize that specific aspects of the program are tailored to the school's culture or challenges that your program can address.

- Collaboration: Express your interest in working together to bring about this change.

- Call to Action: End with a clear call to action to learn more information or discuss future possibilities (e.g., put a follow-up meeting on the calendar).

Finding Contacts:

- Use Powermaps: Powermaps are a tool to help draw connections in your community. Here is the healthy schools and healthy nightlife powermap.

- Internet Research: Aside from the school's website, use social media and Google to learn more about the school, school events, and potential contacts.

- Attend School Events: Show up to events, including those that may not be obvious. (Part of community engagement means being there when it isn't about us.) Some examples include attending sporting events, plays, concerts, health fairs, block parties, etc. Use these opportunities to make connections with staff, students, and parents.

- Networking Events & Conferences: Attend or even present at local community events outside the school that educators might engage in.

- Local Education Associations: These groups often have contacts within schools and can help you connect. Not sure where to start? Ask folks who are teachers in your network whether they belong to any associations.

- Social Media: Platforms like LinkedIn can be places where educators showcase their expertise.

- University Departments: Contact local universities (e.g., education, social work, psychology, public health) and ask about faculty members or grad students who may be interested in your program.

Engaging School Community Members:

- Principals: Remember to consider building relationships with decision-makers.

- Counselors and Health Teachers: They often deal directly with students' well-being and could see the value in your program.

- Student Affairs or Diversity and Inclusion Directors: If such roles exist, these are often staff concerned with overall student well-being and development.

Other Outreach Strategies:

- PTAs: Engage Parent-Teacher Associations to gain support from parents, who can influence schools' decisions.

- Student Clubs or Extracurricular Sponsors: Look for related clubs or groups to build relationships (e.g., Gender & Sexuality Alliance, Student Council, Peer Mentorship Programs).

- Alumni Associations: Alumni often have a vested interest in improving their alma mater's culture.

- Other Youth-Serving CBOs: Consider meeting with other organizations, like Planned Parenthood, who do in-school programming to discuss ways to work collaboratively.

Outreach Email Example:

Email Draft Template for Schools w.Comments Revised.pdf

For questions, please feel free to reach out the New York State Sexual Violence Prevention Training Center here: https://caiglobal.org/svp