

Guidance on the Role and Training of Site Champions

A site champion is someone who will be dedicated, enthusiastic, and engaged with the SNMC. Site champions should include at least one school employee and may include other dedicated individuals, such as local coalition or prevention organization staff. The school site champion will likely be a member of the Implementation Team, although additional site champions who are not members of the Implementation Team may be recruited for this role. At least one school site champion should be someone who is able to make decisions within their school or has direct access to the authority figure within their school. This can include a principal, assistant principal, counselor, or many others.

Site champions can set the SNMC up for success by paving the way for successful implementation. In their roles, they fulfill essential responsibilities including:

- Removing obstacles related to implementation
- Regularly conveying to other staff the importance of the SNMC
- Speaking with community members about the campaign
- Encouraging other community members to participate and support the campaign
- Working to mitigate any opposition (disbelief) or critics of the campaign
- Being knowledgeable about the key elements of the social norms approach:
 - Substance use by youth is overestimated by youth and adults.
 - Youth want to behave in the way they perceive the norm.
 - Exposure to positive social norms increases healthy behaviors and decreases substance use.
 - Understand the data for their school.
 - Use positive norms messaging (e.g., 92% of youth at our school do not think vaping is a good thing to do) to reinforcing the true norm that most middle school students do not use any pills, tobacco, alcohol, or other substances.
- Supporting the Implementation Team with message dissemination
- Offering suggestions for improvement

Site Champion Training

The following resources and activities may help prepare site champions for their role.

- Introduction letter describing the role of the site champion, as described above.
- Orientation to the campaign
 - Informational video on the social norms campaign
 - Overview of the social norms approach
 - Examples of campaign materials
- A copy of this implementation guide
- Site champion preparation meeting to cover:
 - The importance of site champions
 - Their role
 - Sample scenarios representing any disbelief, pushback, etc., and responses
 - List of positive norm messages from the social norms survey that they can be equipped to share. For example:

- Students at XYZ school disapprove of using substances.
 - Many students at XYZ school incorrectly assume most other students are using substances.
 - Students at XYZ school who incorrectly assume other students are using, are at greatest risk for using substances.
- Q&A