

Working Effectively in the Community

- Through your attitude, actions and words, be an “ambassador” for homeless people in your encounters with others in the community.
- Promote a spirit of collaboration with shopkeepers, police, clergy, and “natural helpers” in the neighborhood. They are valuable “eyes and ears” to assist you in your outreach efforts.
- Develop and maintain a strong working relationship with at least one staff person from key social service organizations.
- Offer to provide education and training for other organizations about homelessness issues. Likewise, invite them to provide relevant training for your team/ organization.
- Consider setting up an inter-agency consortium to meet training needs. Each participating agency hosts and provides a workshop on a rotating basis. Topics are chosen by a representative planning group.
- Go out on outreach “rounds” at selected agencies on a scheduled basis. This provides an opportunity to maintain regular contact with agency personnel, to accept referrals, make follow-up contacts, and provide consultation.
- Participate in developing formal interagency agreements to address issues specific to the care of homeless people. For example, ways to expedite referrals, homeless-specific admission criteria and discharge planning, sharing of information, etc.
- Provide advocacy on behalf of other community programs that are part of the larger network of services for homeless people.
- Invite others to open houses, celebrations, farewells, fundraisers, and other special occasions. Attend other agencies’ functions.
- Make a special effort to reach out to organizations “on the fringes” of the human services community.