

# Town Hall Meeting Facilitator Guidelines

The role of the facilitator is to plan, guide, and manage the flow of the event in a way that will achieve its goals or objectives. Goals for a Town Hall Meeting may be to:

- Educate the community about underage drinking consequences;
- Empower the community to use evidence-based approaches, including environmental prevention, to reduce underage drinking; and
- Mobilize the community around underage drinking prevention initiatives at the local, state, and national levels.

## Facilitator Responsibilities

In carrying out this role, the facilitator will:

- Follow the proposed event outline/agenda;
- Keep speakers and events on schedule;
- Allow time for valuable participant discussion, questions, and answers;
- Guide the discussion according to the topic, while remaining neutral;
- Maintain an accurate account of important findings, items tabled for later discussions, and action items; and
- Close the meeting with an indication of next steps.

## Facilitation Tips

The following tips will make facilitation easier and more successful:

- Be prepared. Understand the goals and objectives of the event, and think ahead about the directions in which the discussion might go.
- Consider the audience: What is being asked of them in meeting the event goals and objectives?
- Encourage attendees to participate in the discussions, but at their own comfort level.
- Direct conversations, but ensure that differing opinions are considered.
- Have a way to keep track of time.
- Have materials handy for recording key points to use in concluding the meeting.
- Distribute community-based organization materials.