

Tip Sheet – Presenting Data

The MAPP process will generate a great deal of data. It is important that these data are well understood throughout the community. Presenting data in a clear and concise manner helps emphasize the important findings and results of the MAPP Community Health Status Assessment process.

Data can and should be presented in variety ways. These include:

- written updates of the process (e.g., newsletters, reports, and summaries of findings);
- presentations made to the community and media, and
- the maintenance of an open and public process.

Presenting Data in Written Reports (Newsletters, reports, and summaries of findings)

Helpful Hints:

- ~~✍~~ Use an attractive and colorful layout.
- ~~✍~~ Keep the community and media updated throughout the process. Consider launching a newsletter or publishing information in a report.
- ~~✍~~ Highlight only the important facts or findings. Don't waste space on details.
- ~~✍~~ Use clear, simple charts. The easier they are to understand, the better.
- ~~✍~~ Summarize major findings in as many places as possible.
- ~~✍~~ Write in a clear, simple style that can be understood by readers without a public health background.
- ~~✍~~ Acknowledge community perceptions of public health. If there is a specific area of interest, address it.
- ~~✍~~ Know your audience. Carefully select visual aids and language that will be understandable and interesting to participants.
- ~~✍~~ Double check all data and information presented. Incorrect data can affect the perceived credibility of the presenter and of the entire process.

Oral Presentations

Helpful Hints:

- ~~/~~ Keep presentations **brief** — less than 30 minutes per issue.
- ~~/~~ Invite special interest groups and representatives from all community organizations.
- ~~/~~ Cover only the highlights. What is unusual, either in number or by trend? What finding may be of particular concern to the community?
- ~~/~~ Use visual aids that highlight only important information. Clear, simple charts get the point across better than numbers.
- ~~/~~ Stimulate interaction. Encourage discussion about areas of specific interest.
- ~~/~~ Be organized. Have information on hand that may be of interest to participants.
- ~~/~~ Use everyday language. Scientific or statistical jargon may be unnecessary and confusing.
- ~~/~~ Keep it simple. Be clear and concise.
- ~~/~~ Summarize. Spend the last two minutes reviewing the major findings so that participants don't get lost among all the facts.
- ~~/~~ Give participants summary handouts and fact sheets.
- ~~/~~ Check equipment in advance to ensure they function properly. Have back-ups available in case of equipment failure.
- ~~/~~ Use maps of geographic areas to show what the information means to different communities or neighborhoods.