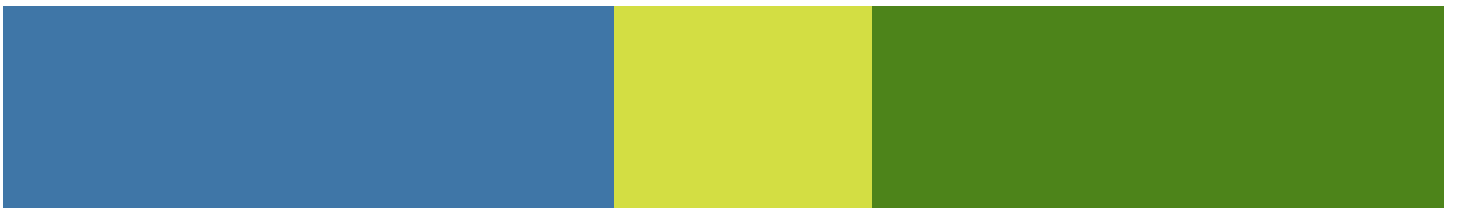


# A Guide to Coalition Activities



# A Guide to Coalition Activities

This guide is for immunization programs (IPs) who want to start, reinvigorate, or engage with an immunization coalition AND provides ideas for collaboration between the IP and coalition. IPs and immunization coalitions can have a mutually beneficial relationship, especially when collaborating on activities. For IPs, coalitions can support grant deliverables and increase the IP's reach. While IPs may have limitations on the type of work they do, coalitions can offer more flexibility in their ability to take on advocacy, education, and outreach events. In turn, coalitions gain a partner (the relevant IP) who provides access to subject matter experts, data, staffing support, funding, relationships with community stakeholders, and more. When IPs and coalitions collaborate on activities together, they can help build public trust, increase vaccination rates, and educate the public and decision makers on policies that support immunization efforts. By participating and evaluating activities, IPs and coalitions can refine their strategies, demonstrate programmatic success, and continue to play a vital role in improving the public's health.

This guide will help immunization program managers (PMs) and new or existing coalitions to generate ideas around how to:

- Define and/or create roles for the IP and coalition
- Develop clear, achievable activities that align with the deliverables and goals of the IP and coalition
- Participate in activities that align with the mission and objectives of the IP and coalition
- Create a sense of pride and engagement among coalition members, including the IP

## Develop a Plan

During the coalition development phase before beginning activities, consider your evaluation plan and utilize [SMART goals](#). What activities will you measure? How will you measure them? Who will measure them? IPs and coalitions can (and should!) work together to identify evaluation needs that support programmatic goals. Keep in mind that some coalition members might be volunteers, and that those working in an IP often “wear a lot of hats.” Make sure assigned tasks are realistic and timely.

## Activity Ideas

Once your evaluation plan is ready, potential activities that immunization programs and coalitions can collaborate on range from advocacy and community outreach to training and evaluation.



## A. Advocacy and Legislative Engagement

Laws, policies, and regulations play a key role in shaping environments that support immunization-related activities. For coalitions and immunization programs, these are crucial because they secure funding and help drive changes that protect and improve public health.

How immunization programs engage with coalitions who conduct advocacy varies by jurisdiction. IP staff must abide by any state rules or regulations that govern how they engage in any advocacy work that could be considered lobbying, as well as restrictions related to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) funds.<sup>1</sup> Some states allow programs to be part of the coalition to serve as a resource but might restrict IPs from either urging decisionmakers to take specific policy actions or participating in any direct lobbying. Always check with your legislative liaison prior to participating in ANY coalition advocacy efforts.

Examples of advocacy and legislative engagement activities include:

- Engaging in state-level legislative education
- Providing testimonies during bill hearings
- Writing educational letters to legislators in support of or against bills involving vaccination- or immunization-related policy
- Finding partners who can share your messages with their members and encourage them to get involved in their community.

### Activity Spotlight: Immunization Advocacy in California

California Immunization Coalition tracks immunization-related bills during the legislative session and advocates by supporting or speaking out against them. Their [advocacy page](#) highlights the bills, their status as they move through the legislative process, and provides fact sheets related to the bill content.

| Role of the IP *  | Role of the Coalition                         |
|---|---|
| Nonpartisan analyses, studies, or research reports  | Tracks immunization-related bills             |
| Provide information upon request by a legislative body or committee for technical advice and assistance | Provide testimony in support or against bills |
| Identify approaches for tracking and evaluating implementation of policy actions                        | Creates fact sheets on bill content           |

\*Be sure to check with your legislative liaison before engaging in any of the above activities

Advocacy and legislative resources:

- AIM’s Policy Toolkit specifically discusses avenues for mobilization in Chapter 3, [Effective Strategies for Educating Policymakers](#)
- AIM’s [Legislative Connecting the Dots](#) is a resource with information pertaining to state legislative systems, including legislative process overview, resources and portals, clear communication guidelines, and peer sharing and assistance
- [NACCHO Advocacy Toolkit](#)
- [National Conference of State Legislatures Vaccine Policy Series](#)

## B. Community Outreach and Engagement

Community engagement is a great way to educate the public, raise awareness, and encourage participation in vaccination/immunization efforts. For both IPs and coalitions, participating in and collaborating on community events helps build trust, strengthen community ties, and increase vaccination rates. IPs should consider utilizing their community engagement/outreach department, if available. Alternatively, coalitions can utilize their team and/or volunteers to support events.

Examples of community engagement and outreach activities include:

- Hosting community or back-to-school outreach events with coalition partners, including faith-based organizations and schools
- Participating in existing community events, like vaccination clinics and health fairs
- Coordinating or hosting vaccination clinics in partnership with a local community clinic, Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), and their immunization program

## Activity Spotlight: Indiana Immunization Coalition. Mobile Clinics

[Indiana Immunization Coalition](#) offers mobile clinic services to address one of the most common barriers to vaccination: access. In the first two months of operation, 4,000 people were vaccinated. The mobile clinic brings the vaccines, supplies, and staff to these events. They accept private insurance, Medicaid, and Medicare. Uninsured patients can receive vaccinations at no cost. Common locations for mobile vaccination events include schools, libraries, and businesses.

| Role of the IP  | Role of the Coalition   |
|---|---|
| Supply vaccine to coalition for mobile clinic or identify a vaccine provider to provide vaccination and services during the event | Coordinate and promote mobile clinics   |
| Provide funding to coalition for mobile clinics as available  | Host mobile clinic and facilitate administration of vaccines  |
| Provide the coalition access to the immunization information system (IIS) for reporting vaccines administered                     | Capture patient information, assess eligibility for publicly funded vaccines, and enter vaccinations into the IIS |
| Promote/support mobile clinics through IP communication channels  | Submit claims to payors as needed for privately purchased vaccine administered                                    |

Community engagement and outreach resources:

- AIM's [iREACH Lessons Learned Report](#) shares success and challenges of working with community organizations to increase flu and COVID-19 vaccination rates
- The [Community Toolbox](#) chapters six and seven are on community engagement strategies

## C. Education and Training

Education and training should be developed for both health care providers and community members. Health care provider training ensures that they share consistent and up-to-date vaccination information with their patients. For the community, access to accurate, timely information helps dispel myths and empowers them to protect themselves and their families from vaccine-preventable diseases.

Examples of education and training activities include:

- Identifying and training speakers and developing presentations for outreach to groups such as civic groups, faith-based organizations, and parent-teacher organizations
- Hosting events, such as public forums, workshops, seminars, and town halls
- Recruiting and training vaccine champions, advocates, or ambassadors
- Offering vaccination education training sessions to health care providers

### Activity Spotlight: South Dakota’s Healthcare Provider Education Series

Immunize South Dakota hosts [Online and in the Know](#), an educational webinar series for health care providers that features speakers and content related to immunization administration, best practices, and health equity.

| Role of the IP   | Role of the Coalition                                       |
|--|---|
| Present at coalition meetings, webinars, and trainings       | Coordinate immunization/ vaccination webinars and trainings |
| Promote coalition webinar/training through IP communications | Host webinars and trainings                                 |
| Provide continuing education for webinars/trainings          | Archive trainings on coalition website for future review    |

Education and training resources:

- [AIM](#) and the [National Network of Immunization Coalitions](#) provides regular webinars appropriate for coalitions to offer members and the community at large
- AIM and iREACH developed a series of six free eLearning modules in [English](#) and [Spanish](#) to increase knowledge and support community conversations about flu, COVID-19, and basic information about vaccines and vaccine safety
- [Vaccinate Your Family University](#) offers free, self-paced online courses for anyone

## D. Communication and Media

Communication strategies and media campaigns can drive awareness, promote vaccine confidence, and amplify timely information about vaccines. Social media, press releases, public awareness campaigns, and newsletters are just a few examples of channels to share and support immunization initiatives. IPs and coalitions can collaborate and share unified messaging to broaden the reach and audience of the media campaign. Coalitions can be uniquely poised to share messaging through their channels that the IP cannot and often do not have the same restrictions in terms of moderated social media content. IPs also have access to immunization data, subject matter experts, and partners who might not be in the coalition (e.g., Special Supplemental Nutrition Program for Women, Infants, and Children (WIC), Medicaid, Department of Education).

Examples of communication and media activities include:

- Creating and sharing materials
- Developing and executing media campaigns or media buys
- Creating content and strategies for social media
- Writing press releases
- Participating in media interviews

### Activity Spotlight: [Vaccine Fears Overturned by Facts](#)

Immunize Kansas Coalition developed the “*Vaccine Fears Overturned by Facts*” series, which includes a booklet, handouts, webinars, social media posts, a podcast, and TikTok videos. The goal was to address common vaccine myths and help build trust in the community. The Coalition partnered with the creators of “[Back to the Vax](#)” to create resources.

| Role of the IP                                    | Role of the Coalition                               |
|---|---|
| Promote coalition resources                       | Develop resources                                   |
| Amplify campaign through IP social media channels | Disseminate and promote resources through coalition |
| Review and edit resources                         | Conduct social media campaigns                      |

Additional communication and media resources:

- AIM’s [Vaccine Confidence Toolkit, Chapter 3: Addressing Incorrect Vaccine Information](#) and AIM’s [Connecting the Dots: Vaccine Confidence Resources](#) provide detailed information on vaccine communication, addressing mis- and disinformation, and recommended resources
- [Public Health Communication Collaborative](#) offers webinars, content on misinformation, and a training hub for health professionals

## E. Data and Evaluation

Collecting, analyzing, and assessing data to measure the effectiveness of immunization efforts is an essential activity for both IPs and coalitions. These activities provide evidence of impact, inform decision-making, and help refine strategies to improve the public’s health. IPs can access their IIS to share data with coalitions. In turn, coalitions can support evaluation efforts for IPs without dedicated staff (or other resource strains) and/or communicate findings to a larger audience.

Data and evaluation activities include:

- Evaluating coalition needs and effectiveness
- Distributing or publishing data for IISs
- Distributing materials to healthcare providers and vaccinators
- Testing resources, materials, and strategies with community members

## Activity Spotlight: Coalition Sustainability in Pennsylvania

The Pennsylvania Immunization Coalition developed [The Building and Sustaining Coalitions Toolbox](#) which includes activities for evaluating and growing coalition membership. The resources and activities in the toolbox are designed to help coalitions identify areas of their organization that they need to strengthen to ensure sustainability.

| Role of the IP  | Role of the Coalition  |
|---|--|
| Survey providers to evaluate effectiveness of coalition's vaccination/immunization promotion, communications, and resources | Design and evaluate coalition activities, campaigns, etc.          |
| Review and provide feedback on surveys and evaluations for the coalition  | Conduct community focus group related to coalition needs           |
| Disseminate coalition surveys to IP networks  | Disseminate evaluation reports to coalition partners and community |

Additional data and evaluation resources:

- [CDC's Framework for Program Evaluation](#) or [How to Conduct a Rapid Community Assessment guide](#)
- [Designing Evaluation for Behavioral Interventions to Increase Immunization](#) provides detailed information on conducting evaluation of immunization related strategies

## References

1. Association of Immunization Managers. (2022). Immunization Program Policy Resource Guide. Policy Toolkit. [https://www.immunizationmanagers.org/content/uploads/2022/03/Policy-Guide\\_033022.pdf](https://www.immunizationmanagers.org/content/uploads/2022/03/Policy-Guide_033022.pdf)

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