CO EBPP

# Community Readiness Assessment Overview

**(Developed by Tri-Ethnic Center for Prevention Research, Fort Collins, CO)**

**Readiness is the degree to which a community is prepared to take action on an issue.**

The readiness assessment is an important part of the need's assessment process, providing helpful information about community capacity. A community that is not ready may have:

- Little enthusiasm to provide resources or cooperate with efforts
- Lack of acknowledgment that there is an issue, or denial that the issue is local
- A belief that there is nothing that can or should be done about the issue
- Little or no knowledge about the issue, or there are common misconceptions about the issue
- Resistance that shows up by key community members or leaders erecting barriers or dragging their feet
- Lack of action to help move efforts forward
- A sense that there are more pressing issues in the community that need to be addressed first
- A lack of resources for dealing with the issue, challenges fully utilizing resources available, or lack of support to utilize the resources to address the issue
- Failure. Resources run out, volunteers burn out or dry up, or efforts to address the issue are ineffective

If you are concerned about your communities' readiness to engage in this process, please consult the Community Readiness Toolkit to identify additional strategies to increase readiness. Building readiness is an important and evidence-based process to improve the long-term success of your efforts and is well worth the delay in beginning the EBPP process. Below is a summary of the Community Readiness Assessment.

**Stages of Community Readiness:**

1. **No Awareness:** An issue is not generally recognized by the community or leaders as a problem (or it may truly not be an issue).
2. **Denial/Resistance:** At least some community members recognize that it is a concern, but there is little recognition that it might be occurring locally.
3. **Vague Awareness:** Most feel that there is a local concern, but there is no immediate motivation to do anything about it.
4. **Preplanning:** There is clear recognition that something must be done, and there may even be a group addressing it, however, efforts are not focused or detailed.
5. **Preparation:** Active leaders begin planning in earnest. Community offers modest support of the efforts.
6. **Initiation:** Enough information is available to justify efforts. Activities are underway.
7. **Stabilization:** Activities are supported by administrators or community decision makers. Staff are trained and experienced.
8. **Confirmation/Expansion:** Efforts are in place. Community members feel comfortable using services, and they support expansions. Local data are regularly obtained.
9. **High Level of Community Ownership:** Detailed and sophisticated knowledge exists about prevalence, causes, and consequences. Effective evaluation guides new directions. Model is applied to other issue.

**Dimensions of Readiness:** Dimensions of readiness are key factors that influence your community's preparedness to take action on an issue and help determine the stage of community readiness.

1. **Community Efforts:** To what extent are there efforts and programs that address this issue?
2. **Community Knowledge of the Efforts:** To what extent do community members know about local efforts and their effectiveness, and are the efforts accessible to all segments of the community?
3. **Leadership:** To what extent are appointed leaders and influential community members supportive of the issue?
4. **Community Climate:** What is the prevailing attitude of the community toward this issue? Is it one of helplessness or one of responsibility and empowerment?
5. **Community Knowledge about the Issue:** To what extent do community members know about the causes of the problem, consequences, and how it impacts your community?
6. **Resources Related to the Issue:** To what extent are local resources – people, time, money, space, etc. – available to support efforts?
7. **Community-Related Data:** To what extent is there valid, specific, relevant data to demonstrate the causes and consequences of this issue?