

Meeting with Key Opinion Leaders

I. Identify the key opinion leaders in your community.

Make a list of opinion leaders relevant to the campaign you are planning. This list might include:

- Public Health Department representatives
- School principals
- School Board members
- Religious leaders
- Leaders of voluntary organizations
- City Council members
- Police Chiefs
- Local newspaper editors
- Local celebrities

II. Prepare for your meeting.

How might you gain access?

Think about contacts you may have who could put you in touch with these leaders.

Think about how this meeting would benefit the leader and frame your approach in this manner.

Think about your audience and try to put yourself in their shoes—How does the issue of violence against women relate to their lives or work?

Prepare a short list of open-ended questions that are connected to this person's area of work or interest.

For example, if you want to know how high a priority violence against women is to the Public Health Department's Coordinator of Violence Prevention, you might ask:

What does your office consider the greatest problems of violence in this community this year, and how does your program respond to intervene or prevent those problems?

What percentage of your department's resources are allocated to preventing domestic violence, rape, and sexual harassment?

What social marketing or media messages have you used in your outreach that address these forms of violence?

III. Establish a relationship.

Thank the person for expressing their concern on this issue by coming to this meeting.

Respect time constraints. State your most important questions up front in case time runs out.

Make sure that you get the information right. You may want to tape record the session or take notes. Make sure that you have permission if you plan to use quotes publicly.

Thank the person at the end of the interview. You may also want to ask the person for an endorsement or agreement to participate in future actions.

Follow-up with a thank you letter and/or request for action or support.

IV. Analyze, document and use your findings.

What did you learn from this interview?

How can you apply the new information to your campaign?

What indications did you find that this person is either opposed to or in alliance with your campaign? If opposed, what steps might you take to move this person become more of an ally? If an ally, how might you turn them into a “champion” of your cause?