

# You Have the Power!

*Achieving Success through Effective Communication with Elected Officials*

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“All politics is local.”

Thomas O’Neill, Sr.



# Just do it!

Do you know who your members/senators are?

If not, [www.congress.gov](http://www.congress.gov)

Look at campaign material, the local grapevine,  
Internet,  
your personal network.



# Craft the Message and Your One-Page Leave Behind

- Introduction - Who are you?
- Description of the program/grant
  - What action are you taking
- What do you hope to accomplish at the end



# One-Page Leave Behind

- It needs to be one-page
- Brief Description of program/grant/issue
- What action are you taking
- What are you hoping to accomplish/outcomes/successes
- White space all the way around
- Congressional District Map
- Contact Information



# Building Health from the Neighborhood Up in Southwest Washington

## Issue

Clark, Cowlitz, Skamania, and Wahkiakum Counties in southwest Washington are home to 542,817 people.<sup>1</sup> The communities are diverse, from the City of Vancouver to the rural town of Cathlamet. Yet each county faces risks for chronic disease. One in five adults in Clark County does not get any physical activity.<sup>2</sup> In Cowlitz County, 25 percent of adults currently smoke cigarettes.<sup>3</sup> A third of all adults in Skamania and Wahkiakum Counties are obese.<sup>4</sup> Being physically active, eating healthy, and quitting tobacco reduce the risk of heart disease, stroke, cancer, and diabetes.

## Intervention

The Healthy Living Collaborative of Southwest Washington is a partnership of over 30 members representing public health, mental health, housing, transportation, education, and other sectors in Clark, Cowlitz, Skamania, and Wahkiakum counties. The collaborative was formed to figure out ways to improve the health and wellness of people in southwest Washington. It is based on the premise that community leaders can help identify the root causes of chronic disease and propose solutions.

A current strategy of the collaborative is to find and train natural leaders as Community Health Workers. These leaders will help community members make connections to existing health services, foster collaboration between partners, and identify barriers to preventive care. Community Health Workers will also help the collaborative identify and inform strategies that can make their neighborhoods healthier. This will help the collaborative think about larger changes they can make across the region.

## Impact

The collaborative is partially funded by the Community Transformation Grant and the Preventive Health and Health Services Block Grant. By leveraging a small amount of these federal dollars to raise additional public and private funds, the collaborative now has dedicated staff and secured funding for up to three years. So far, the collaborative has held three community forums and received input and ideas from over 90 community members about the Community Health Workers project. By listening to these voices, the collaborative is creating opportunities for healthy changes that respond to neighborhood and community needs.

**Contact:**  
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Washington State Department of Health  
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360-236-3782  
Region population: 542,817  
Clark County Public Health  
Vancouver, Washington  
www.clark.wa.gov/public-health



### Data sources:

- <sup>1</sup> U.S. Census Bureau, 2010 Census
- <sup>2</sup> Washington State Department of Health, Clark County Chronic Disease Profile, 2013
- <sup>3</sup> Washington State Department of Health, Cowlitz County Chronic Disease Profile, 2013
- <sup>4</sup> Washington State Department of Health, Skamania County and Wahkiakum County Chronic Disease Profiles, 2013



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HEALTHIER WASHINGTON

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To submit a request, please call 1-800-525-0127 (TTY/TDD 711).



# Initial Meeting

- Decide who will attend
- Comfort in numbers
- Choose 1-2 spokespeople
- Practice, practice, practice



# The Appointment

- Call District Office
- Ask for the staff who handles health issues
- Get key info, name, e-mail address
- Make the appointment
- Leave your contact info, including cell number
- Send an e-mail confirming appointment, who will be attending, topic, and one-pager
- Arrive 15 minutes early
- Practice, practice, practice





# The Meeting

- Introductions
- Make the Pitch
- Listen
- Ask about what staff/member is interested in/needs help with
- Find out how they like to receive information their information
- Always follow-up
- Always send a thank you



# Building the Relationship

- It's not one and done!
- Build the relationship building into your work-plan
- Invite members/staff to events you host
- Send your newsletter/or media releases
- Schedule a short visit or meeting to provide updates
- Always reintroduce yourself in the community
- Sign up for e-news, Facebook, Twitter from your members



“Alone we can do so little;  
together we can do so much.”

-Helen Keller



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# Thank You

