DEVELOP VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS

It is essential to take time at the outset to clarify purpose and provide a focus for what you want to achieve by developing vision and mission statements. A vision is important to develop early in the CHNA & HIP process. It helps provide focus for the assessment and helps in framing goals, objectives and strategies. The vision is future-focused. It is a statement to inspire the group about its destination, its outcome, its end product, its finish line. A mission statement is present-focused. It sets priorities and clearly describes how the group will reach a destination or achieve the vision. Both statements should be brief enough to remember, captured quickly, and understood by everyone in the community; they should provide in one or two short sentences why the group exists and where it's headed. Sometimes groups spend considerable time "wordsmithing" without realizing that the statements can be changed when needed.

Setting the vision and mission before conducting the assessment and creating the health improvement plan helps ensure you're asking the right questions and are focusing on solutions rather than problems. For example, instead of asking the question "What are the problems/needs we have related to early childhood?" you might ask, "How do we ensure children are ready to succeed in school?" The first question may result in a plan that simply reacts to problems, which may or may not be related to your vision. The second question focuses more on solutions or required action that is essential to achieving your vision.

Some questions worth asking…VISION

- How would you describe your community of the future? Next Year? In 5 Years? What should your community expect?
- What impact and results do you want to be achieving?
- What will success look like?

Some questions worth asking…MISSION

- What will you do to deliver the results and impact you envisioned?
- How will you do it? How will you act? What will your reputation be?
- What do you need to get there? What is preventing you from getting there?

BRAINSTORMING: TWO POSSIBLE APPROACHES

One of the easiest ways to develop vision and mission is through brainstorming—a freewheeling approach that generates participant excitement and involvement. The objective is to collect ideas from everyone without criticism and to encourage everyone to contribute. Discussion will come later. Two possible approaches to brainstorming:

1

- ✓ Give the group a few minutes of quiet, think-time.
- ✓ Invite everyone to call out his or her ideas.
- ✓ The facilitator or another team member should quickly write down the ideas on a flip chart.

Or

2

- ✓ Ask participants to write their ideas down on post-it notes–one idea for each note.
- ✓ Post the notes on a wall.
- ✓ Without discussion, ask participants to group related ideas together to form patterns.
- ✓ Name each group of notes with a descriptive header phrase.
- ✓ If there is a miscellaneous group of notes, decide where the ideas fit or do not fit.

After discussion, the group can finalize the ideas by placing sticky dots on the ones that are of most importance and reaching consensus. The discussion may lead to draft statements, which can be given to a smaller group for refinement.

DEVELOP VISION AND MISSION STATEMENTS

VISION AND MISSION STATEMENT EXAMPLES

Iowa State Association of Counties (ISAC)

Vision: To be the principal, authoritative source of representation, information and services for and about county government in Iowa.

Mission: To promote effective and responsible county government for the people of Iowa.

Iowa Public Health Association (IPHA)

Vision: A healthy and thriving Iowa because of the strong foundation laid by public health.

Mission: Uniting and strengthening the voice for public health in Iowa.

Sioux County Community Health Partners

Vision: Healthy Sioux County residents living in communities that support and promote active and healthy lifestyles.

Mission: Partnering to promote and improve the health of all who live, learn, work, and play in Sioux County.