

## **Sustainability: Life After Your Federal Grant**

By: Leslee Unruh, Brandi Gruis  
National Abstinence Clearinghouse

### **I. Federal funding may come to an end, but the need for your program will not.**

A. In the United States, the annual cost of teen pregnancies from lost tax revenues, public assistance, child health care, foster care, and involvement with the criminal justice system is estimated to be about \$7 billion.

B. Although the need for abstinence programs may be obviously clear, the opponents continue to work to decrease funding. This uncertain future of funding causes some program managers anxiety and uncertainty. However, if your program is effective in your community, it will be glaringly apparent that it is something those in your community will not want to live without. Many will be willing to support your organization IF you use the proper techniques to reach a giving audience.

C. It's essential that your organization have a plan in place to replace your federal funding.

### **II. Philanthropy**

A. "We make a living by what we get, but we make a life by what we give." Winston Churchill.

B. To successfully raise funds for a nonprofit organization, you must understand what philanthropy is and how it became an American tradition.

1. The word Philanthropy is Greek and means "love of mankind."

2. "Americans managed without energetic government for so long a time that they came to prefer voluntary public enterprise. If they wanted a college, they built one—and they kept on doing that into the 20<sup>th</sup> century; if they needed a hospital, they raised money for it; if they lacked books, they got together and collected them... because participation is the very essence of democracy, it is difficult to exaggerate the value of this aspect of American philanthropy." Henry Steel Commager.

C. Donors – Who are they and where do we find them?

1. The majority of contributions typically come from individuals, not large corporations or foundations.

2. A study conducted by the American Assoc. of Fund Raising determined that of the \$144 billion given in one year, 81% came directly from individuals.
  3. Identify the target audience you are trying to reach – BEFORE you design your event.
    - a. Average donor in the U.S. is a woman who is middle-aged, married and college-educated.
    - b. 82% of donors who contribute to non-profit organizations also give to churches or other places of worship.
    - c. The most generous donors are those who have named non-profits in their wills.
    - d. People in their 30s, 40s and 50s give at least twice as much as those who are younger and older.
- D. Volunteerism – It’s not a lost virtue!
1. 48% of all adult Americans claimed to have volunteered in a one-year period.
  2. Although millions of people work billions of hours doing volunteer activities, only one-fifth seek out the activity or assignment on their own. Most will do it if they are asked.
- E. Essential that your organization keep a positive reputation. Positive attitudes towards non-profits are associated with higher rates of household giving.
- F. Ideally, board members should be responsible for fundraising, or at least providing the oversight.
1. Many directors inherit their board members and don’t have the luxury of recruiting them.
  2. Provide a packet of information about your organization, including mission, history, goals, etc.
  3. For volunteers, provide the same information, along with a detailed description of their job.
- G. A Development office or position is essential.
1. Duties include:
    - a. Active Fundraising
    - b. Donor Relations and Communications
    - c. Services to the Organization’s other Departments and Staff
    - d. Gift Reports and Donor Record Files
  2. Development office, along with Board, should determine a Strategic Planning Operating Budget (by quarter).
    - a. Categories might include: Community Partnerships / Collaborations.
    - b. Private Foundations and Philanthropists
    - c. State / Federal Grants
    - d. Products / Services Sold
    - e. Fundraising Events / Capital Campaigns

3. May want to invest in a good fundraising software program  
NAC uses Blackbaud's Raiser's Edge

H. Make your group something your community knows they can't live without!

1. Track your program results so your success is documented.
  - a. You may want to use an esteemed evaluator, college or university.
  - b. Track students to document the success of students after completion of the program.
2. Market and promote your program and its successes!
  - a. Use press releases to promote events, success stories interesting anecdotes, national studies, etc.
  - b. Many small-town newspapers appreciate a story already written for their busy reporters.
  - c. Take advantage of PSAs. Many stations offer 2 for 1 purchases for non-profits, and/or will run PSAs at no charge.
  - d. Produce professional, cutting-edge, promotional and collateral pieces.
  - e. Utilize free advertising in community and faith-based publications to promote events and student success.
  - f. Make friends with contacts at radio, TV stations and local newspapers. Send thank you's, notes, etc.
3. Brand your program.
  - a. Take a look at your core characteristics.
    1. Brand yourself as teen health, healthy choices, character building, etc. May be better accepted than just an abstinence program.
  - b. Team up with another local agency.
    1. Choices in Memphis is a program offered through Christ Community Health Services. It's one of several family / health programs offered. Brochure are part of a series describing programs offered at CCHS. Choices name and logo is consistent and recognizable.
  - c. Work with local churches. You can work with churches, even with federal funding if you:
    1. Clearly distinguish the boundaries of when your program starts / stops and another religious program begins.
    2. You do not proselytize.
  - d. Partner with schools, hospitals and other community groups.

1. CCHS held principals luncheon to inform them about program. Received school board approval to get into school system.
2. Truth 4 Youth offices at local pregnancy care center.
3. Appearances at fairs, community events, etc. Piggy back or share booth rental costs w/ partners.
4. Develop an advisory board consisting of important stakeholders that will be an advocate for your program. (NAC uses an international advisory board of more than 100 who are supporters and advocates.)

## I. Building and Maintaining a Donor Base

### 1. One popular method is Direct Mail

- a. Obtain a mailing list. Even if you already have one, you may want to increase your population. There are many mailing list services, separated by demographics. You can even purchase a list of all the churches in your state, parents, etc. NAC has used Martin World Wide. Can find many list services on the Internet. First-time purchase will be the initial investment and will pay off in years to come.
- b. There are so many varieties of junk mail, but direct mail can still be effective. It requires action by the recipient, even if it is to pick it up and throw it in the garbage.
- c. Avoid two common errors: Inadequate Motivation. Create recipient motivation that leads from attention to interest and action. The lead of the letter should capture the reader's attentions or he or she may never read beyond it.
- d. Impersonal Approach. Make sure the signer has some type of connection with the recipient so that the letter can be a personal one.
- e. Make sure it is reader-friendly. State your case. Ask for a specific amount. It's often effective to state exactly what their donation will pay for.
  1. Matches
  2. Goals
  3. Capital Campaigns
- g. Give option to volunteer to build your volunteer base.
- f. Always send a thank you note with their tax record.
- g. Keep their name on your newsletter / email update lists.

- h. Use Internet when possible. Provide option to give online and always provide automatic deduction option.
- i. Code envelopes to track your net return.
- j. Evaluate each appeal to determine if it's worth using again.

J. Event Ideas:

- 1. Banquet
  - a. Check for other community events before scheduling your event.
  - b. Enlist volunteers to sell tickets.
  - c. Offer entertainment or reason to come other than just to raise funds. (NAC has had comedian, Ryan Dobson, singers, etc.)
  - d. Choose a day of the week people will come out.
  - e. Have backup plan.
  - f. Does not have to be fancy – plan for your audience.
- 2. Purity Ball
  - a. Sponsored through churches
  - b. Great media opportunity
- 3. Golf Fundraiser / Walkathon
  - a. Alternatives Group 800.374.8953
  - b. Bikeathon
- 4. Unique for your community
  - a. Teen events
  - b. Seasonal events  
(Lewis Drug)
  - c. Telethon
  - d. Partnerships that benefit both
    - 1. Raffles
    - 2. Sales / coupons, etc.

Remember to use volunteers whenever possible!

Don't rely on federal funding. Your community will recognize your irreplaceable value and the impact you have on their children's future.

**Never doubt** that a small group of committed people can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.

--Margaret Mead