

SWOT Analysis

This method looks at a group or a situation, in this case oral health issues in a community or region, to determine 4 things: internal Strengths, internal Weaknesses, external Opportunities, external Threats. the purpose is to develop a plan that maximizes strengths and opportunities and minimizes the impact of weaknesses and threats that might hinder achievement of a mission. A brainstorming technique can be used to elicit responses to each of these categories, using the following diagram. It can be used for more than one issue or for a variety of potential barriers. Two sample issues are listed.

SWOT Template

Issue	Strengths	Weaknesses
Opportunities		
Threats		

Process

- Identify an issue to be analyzed
- Gather a small diverse group of community members or an existing coalition
- Explain the meaning of the four terms
- Draw the matrix on a white board or label flip chart pages with the four categories
- Brainstorm each of the categories or let people write in their suggestions
- Ask the group if they can think of anything that should be added or combined

Analysis includes asking these questions:

1. How can you we use our strengths to take advantage of external opportunities?
2. How can we use our strengths to minimize threats?
3. How can we overcome our weaknesses to take advantage of oppourtunities?
4. How can we overcome our weaknesses to counteract threats to achievement of objectives?

Record responses to these 4 questions and ask members to rate the strategies according to

1. feasibility
2. potential for benefit
3. urgency.

Ask the group to select their top 5 priorities.

SWOT Example

<u>Issue</u>	<u>Strengths</u>	<u>Weaknesses</u>
<p>Inadequate number of dentists accepting Medi-Cal or Healthy Families reimbursement</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - young dentists moving to area who need to establish practice - agency staff could play case manager role 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - dentists already too busy and are semi-retired - dentists not up-to-date on program changes
<p><u>Opportunities</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - possible enhancements for rural areas or for preventive services to pregnant women and young children - invitations by schools and Head Starts to begin preventive procedures in schools 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - schedule mtg of dental professionals, PH agency staff, WIC/school/Head Start reps to discuss purchase of portable equipment and a plan to provide preventive services onsite 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - dentists do exams in offices and hygienists provide preventive services onsite at Head Starts
<p><u>Threats</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - budget cuts eliminating reimbursement for some dental services for pregnant women - more families losing jobs and having to sign up for public assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - negotiate coverage of non-covered services for certain services using other funding - secure funding for part-time dental case manager to help families seek and follow-up on care 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - schedule Medi-Cal/Healthy Families training session for all dental providers and staff - establish contract with dentists to see a set number of patients who sign up for case management

Resources

SWOT Analysis, *The Guide to Managing for Quality*. <http://www.mnav.com/cligd.htm>