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Diabetes: A Family Matter **Let's Get Musical**

Overview:

This activity can be useful for a community awareness campaign. In this activity, a local competition occurs that invites everyone to share what they know, believe, and their personal experiences with diabetes through a musical or more artistic event. This is an excellent way to get conversation about the topic of diabetes started and obtain participation of community people that might not usually take part in a health-related activity. This activity encourages young and old to share ideas about diabetes in creative, imaginative, and fun ways.

Brief Description:

In the past, it was common for community groups to sponsor talent shows of all kinds. Now with television, big theatres, home movies, and video games, people are less inclined to think about having a talent show. However, great fun can be had by everyone if this is done well. Getting the right people involved with putting the event together is important.

This activity could be done in cooperation with local schools, churches, non-profit groups, and civic organizations. The idea can provide ways for young and old to be involved. This activity could be used as an annual fund raiser for your *Diabetes: A Family Matter* program. *SUGAR Helpers* and local diabetes coalitions or diabetes project teams could be the organizers. A special task force might need to be formed that is comprised of people with musical and/or artistic abilities. Local musicians, artists, actors, directors, and those that teach music or art at local schools would be good people to get on your project task force.

The primary idea is to use facts, ideas, or experiences about diabetes to create a local public competition through music, dance, theatre, story-telling, and humor. The messages should include facts about the diabetes, prevention, self-management, and personal experiences that have resulted from living with diabetes. Local people are invited to creatively use songs, music, and other talents to make diabetes visible and inform the local people about diabetes and its risks.

This event provides a way to educate a broad sector of those living in your community about diabetes in many different ways. As you involve local individuals and groups in the planning and competition you will have many chances to give people information about diabetes. Both those participating and those attending the final event will learn more about diabetes. This activity is a wonderful way to increase the visibility of diabetes and share together in some local fun as you make it happen.

Objectives:

1. To make diabetes visible in the community.
2. To increase awareness that diabetes can be prevented and managed.

- 3. To inform local people about family risks.
- 4. To share intergenerational experiences of living with diabetes with local people.
- 5. To enhance local understandings about the impact of diabetes on individual and family lives.

Participants:

In planning this event you will basically have three groups of people to consider:

- The Planning Committee
- The Performers
- The Audience

A team of people will be needed to plan, organize, and carry out the event. You will need to decide who will do what and get organized as you plan different aspects of the event. Persons of any age can take part; include the very young and very old. While having some musical or other talent is a benefit for performers, those with imaginations and creativity can also participate. This is an event that can be locally planned and presented and involve many sectors of the community. Getting many community groups, schools, churches, civic organizations, businesses, and health professionals involved will assure the success. Of course, if you get many participants, community people, organizations, and the media involved then you are sure to have a good audience to attend and support the event.

Duration of Activity:

The main event can be a single evening performance or an event that expands over an entire weekend if you have enough participants for the competition. However, the planning will likely take several months. You will also need to allow adequate time for potential participants to create and practice their pieces for the competitive event. Preparation time can vary depending on the size of your planning or work team, size of the community, and the size of the event planned. A first time event might take 5 to 6 months to plan and implement. Be sure to evaluate how things turned out just in case you want to try it again next year.

Planning the Event:

The first task will be to put together a team of worker-bees! As already mentioned, it will be good to enlist a broad group of people from your community. This is an activity that can involve many if not all of the volunteer *SUGAR Helpers*. Some coalition or program members may also want to take part in the planning. Then do not forget to put together a task force group of people that are talented and creative. You might also want to ask this group to serve as judges for the event. As you begin thinking about your activity, a first task might be to give it a name. Get everyone in your workgroup involved and brainstorm until you agree on a name.

In the planning stage, you will need to decide the following things:

- Where the event will occur (Be sure to reserve it before you do any advertising).
- The date and time for the event.
- The categories for the competition.

- The criteria for judging and deciding the winners.
- Amounts you will charge for those attending (youth and adult price).
- Where you will get prizes and whether these will be medals or trophies or some other award.
- Who will assist with stage and technical set-ups.
- Set-up and clean-up committees.
- Whether refreshments will be sold and if so how will they be provided?
- Who will be the Master of Ceremonies for the event?
- Ways you will recruit community performers.
- What the program will look like, information it will contain, who will print it, and what costs might be involved.
- What kinds of information about health and diabetes to give performers to help them plan their performance.
- Things you will do to attract the audience for the event (advertisement).

Someone will need to be in charge of many of these things, a good reason to have enough people on your committee so that the work will get done. You can probably think of other things to add to this list. It is good to figure most of these things out in the first meeting or two so that you can quickly begin to start getting potential performers interested in the competition.

Partnering with a local school, university, churches, or other groups can heighten interest and involvement. This can also suggest good places to look for people to compete. Many people are talented and enjoy this kind of performance, whereas others need to be coaxed a bit to take part. Keep in mind that some of those that need coaxing are likely talented people.

Let's think about the competition! It might be interesting to have a variety of categories where people can compete:

- Story Telling
- Singers (solo, groups)
- Types of music (country, hip hop, blue grass, rock and roll, etc.)
- Comedians
- Dance
- Skits

You do not need to include everything, but a wide range of categories gives more opportunities for the competition.

Once you have decided on the categories, you will need to consider how the talent will be judged. Because one of the goals for this event is to inform people about healthy lifestyles and diabetes prevention, each participant may need to choose which of these areas they will use as they put together their original work. What criteria will the judges use for picking the winners? Once you have identified who will serve as judges, their first assignment can be to figure out

the criteria to use for judging. You will need this information as you begin to advertise the event.

As you think about who will participate in the talent show. Be sure to try to involve your local doctors, nurses, and other health professionals. Local people will enjoy seeing another side of those they often only see in an office giving care. The *Diabetes; A Family Matter* coalition or program team and volunteer *SUGAR Helpers* should also consider sharing their talents. Local people are most likely to attend an event like this if they know the people who will be in the competition.

After you have the details for the who, what, where, when, and how of the event figured out then you are ready to begin recruiting participants. You might want to consider what a registration form will look like and when you need that turned in. You also want to be sure that people will follow-through and show up on the night of the competition. A small registration fee might help. This money could also be used to set off the cost of the prizes to be given or other costs for the event.

If the event is going to run for several hours, then having some refreshments for sale might be a good idea. Remember, you are trying to promote health and so it might be a challenge to think of a healthy snack that you might prepare and sell. While the door receipts and the sale of refreshments will not guarantee that the event will make a great amount of money, it is good to keep in mind that a main purpose is to raise awareness about health and diabetes. Of course, having some fun will be the other big reward. One other thing to consider is asking local businesses, local hospitals, and physician offices to sponsor the event and get recognized in the program is another way to be sure you at least break even financially. Also, you will need someone to design the program and be sure all of the information is correct

You will need someone to keep track of the registrations as they come in and a plan for follow-up to be sure that people do not drop out. The first time you do an event like this it can be a bit overwhelming. However, once you know how to get things done then following years can be much easier. The first year, you may want to start a bit smaller and then add to the event in years to come. Once you begin a community tradition and it turns out successful, then people will be eager to take part in years to come.

Be sure to allow plenty of planning and organization time prior to the actual advertisement for talent show participants. Having a clear plan for what needs to be done each step of the way can assure that the event occurs without any major problems.

Materials Needed:

These will vary based upon the kind of community event you plan to conduct. You will definitely need to arrange early on for the place where the final event will occur. You might also want to arrange for a dress rehearsal event as well.

Costs:

If the place you use for the event does not cost you to rent and people are willing to volunteer their time and energy then the cost of this event will not be high. You might have some costs with the posters, flyers, and advertisements. The costs of printing programs and the prizes could be covered by local sponsors and donors that you can recognize in your program. Be careful in your planning so that you will know your costs ahead of time. With good management, this could be an event where some money is raised. However, the amount may be small unless you have a large attendance at the performance or are successful in getting some larger donations.

Extend the Event:

One way to extend this event is to have a table set up at the entrance where people are walking in to the event. You might have a diabetes educator, a wellness coordinator, or other health professionals available to answer questions. A nice display of health promotion and diabetes materials might be of interest to some attendees. Have a list where those attending the event can sign up for more information or future contact. Give community people information about who to contact to learn more about wellness, health, and diabetes care.

Another table set up could have information about the *Diabetes: A Family Matter* program. This is a good way to not only tell people about the program, but also invite them to consider becoming volunteer *SUGAR Helpers*. Associating *SUGAR Helpers* with a fun event such as this one might be appealing to other potential volunteers. At an event such as this, you will have visibility and interaction with some people that you may not always meet.

Final Word:

If your community completes a community musical event or talent show where health or diabetes is the focus, please be sure to go to the *Diabetes: A Family Matter* website <www.diabetesfamily.net> and share with others what worked and what did not work. A place on the **Communicate** Section of the website will be available for sharing your ideas. Others will be interested in learning about what you have done and what the outcomes were. If you have a website, please be sure to post the link so that others can take a look.