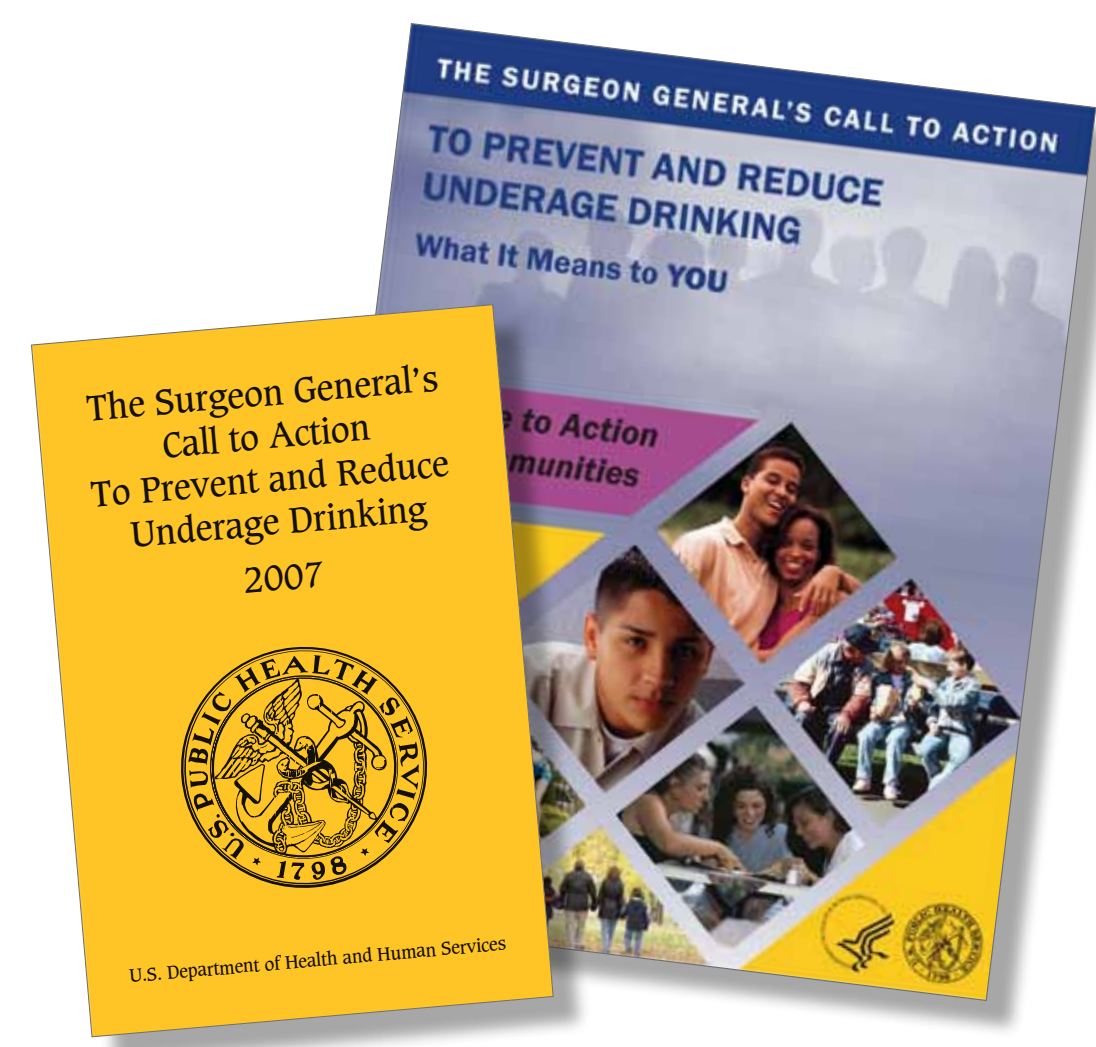


Abstract

In 2006, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration/Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (SAMHSA/CSAP) supported nearly 1,500 national Town Hall Meetings (THMs) on underage drinking (UAD) prevention. Using feedback from THM organizers as a baseline, SAMHSA/CSAP made refinements, including new electronic tools and new measures, that resulted in an increase to more than 1,800 THMs in the 2008 initiative. Additional lessons learned from 2008, combined with the introduction of Web 2.0 tools and other improvements, led to a third round of more than 2,000 THM events in the spring of 2010.

Moving the National Strategy Forward

Underage drinking continues to be a leading public health problem in the United States. Alcohol use threatens the safe and healthy development of more young people than any other substance.



THM Goals

Goals established for each of the THMs are to:

- Focus a national effort to increase public awareness and disapproval of UAD;
- Create widespread, long-term behavior change;
- Encourage environmental and policy-level approaches to address UAD in communities across the Nation;
- Increase collaboration among public and private sectors to target UAD-related issues;
- Nurture and encourage healthy behaviors; and
- Alert and empower communities to join a nationwide movement to prevent and reduce UAD.

Collaboration Is Key for Growth

- On the basis of lessons learned in 2006 and 2008, SAMHSA has since reached out to many new partners in efforts to gain more involvement in a nationwide collaboration to prevent UAD.
- A total of 1,787 community-based organizations (CBOs) conducted 2,021 THMs throughout the United States and four Territories.
- National Prevention Network members continued to play a significant role by recommending CBOs to participate in the THMs.

Look Who's Talking—Youth-Led THMs

There's nothing like the power of peer-to-peer communication. Youth led 300 THMs across the country in 2010. Youth-led THMs are empowering for speakers and keep it real for audiences because:



- The message is more credible;
- Youth's first-hand experiences with UAD in their communities can break the pattern of denial in parents and adults;
- Youth THM participants attract media and make an old topic fresh; and
- Youth involvement helps prepare them for a responsible role in the community.

The UAD Prevention Message Is Getting Out

To date in 2010, THMs received 1,597 media mentions, up from 659 in 2008.

Items submitted included newspaper articles, press releases, proclamations, photos, and videos. Links and text posted on blogs, Facebook and Twitter pages, or other social media sites were also counted.

Tapping Into New Tools

Based on feedback from the 2006 and 2008 THM initiatives, a new and improved Web site was launched that contains innovative tools for CBOs hosting THMs.



The new features include:

- "One-stop shopping" for THM materials, planning, registration, technical assistance, and resources;
- New technology, such as widgets and interactive online tools;
- Locations map of registered THM events;
- Interactive message board;
- Weekly e-alerts; and
- Web-based training videos, available in English and Spanish.

"For a first-time effort by our coalition I think we did a good job getting the word out and making a very positive impression on the community."

—Romeo A. Blackmar, coordinator, Putnam P.R.I.D.E., Partnership to Reduce the Influence of Drugs for Everyone

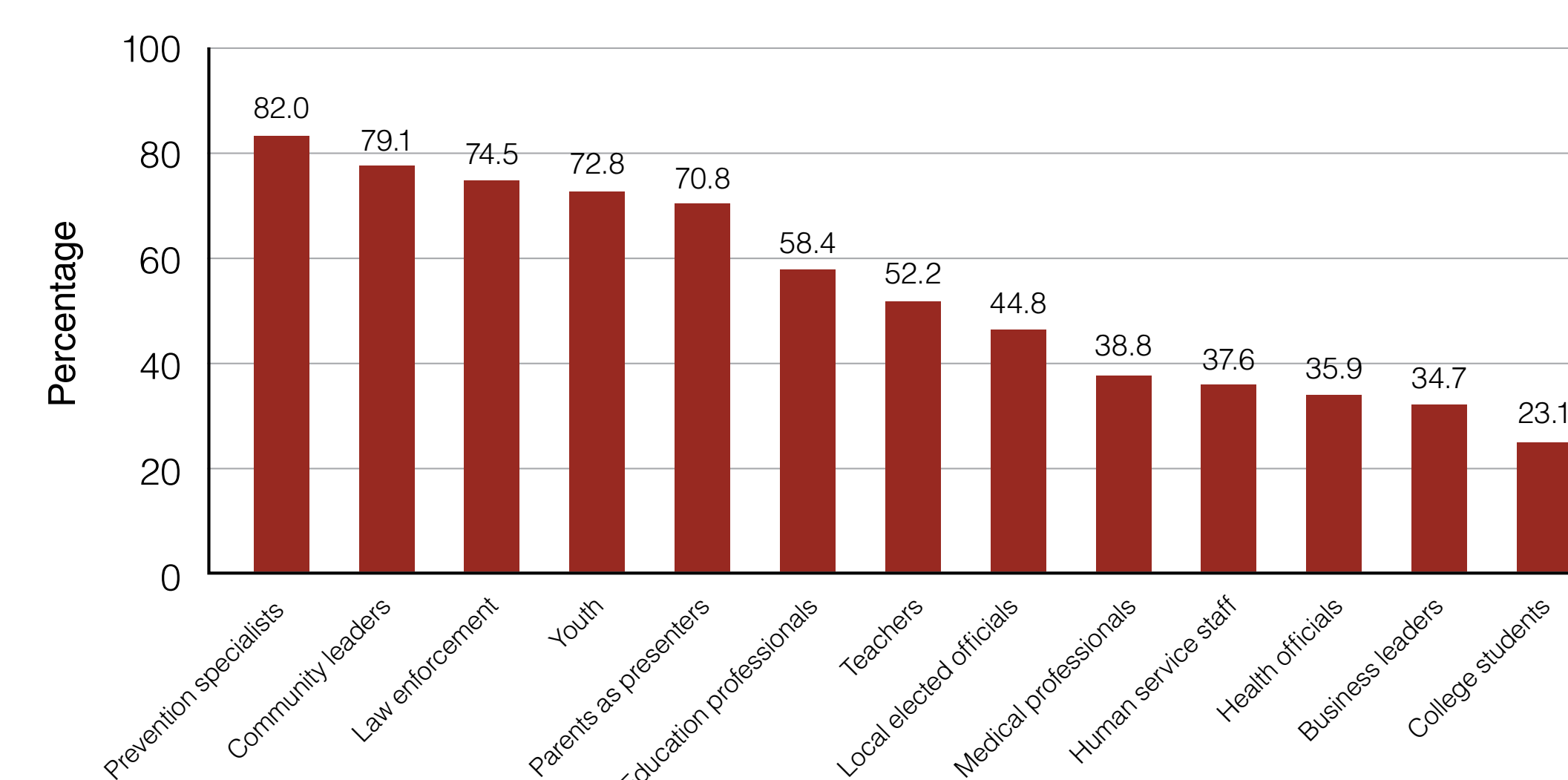
Outcomes

"We use Town Hall Meetings... and invite all the town board members, judges, school board, senior citizens, youth—with or without parents—medical practices, law enforcement...to be the bringing together of the whole community to create change."

—THM Host

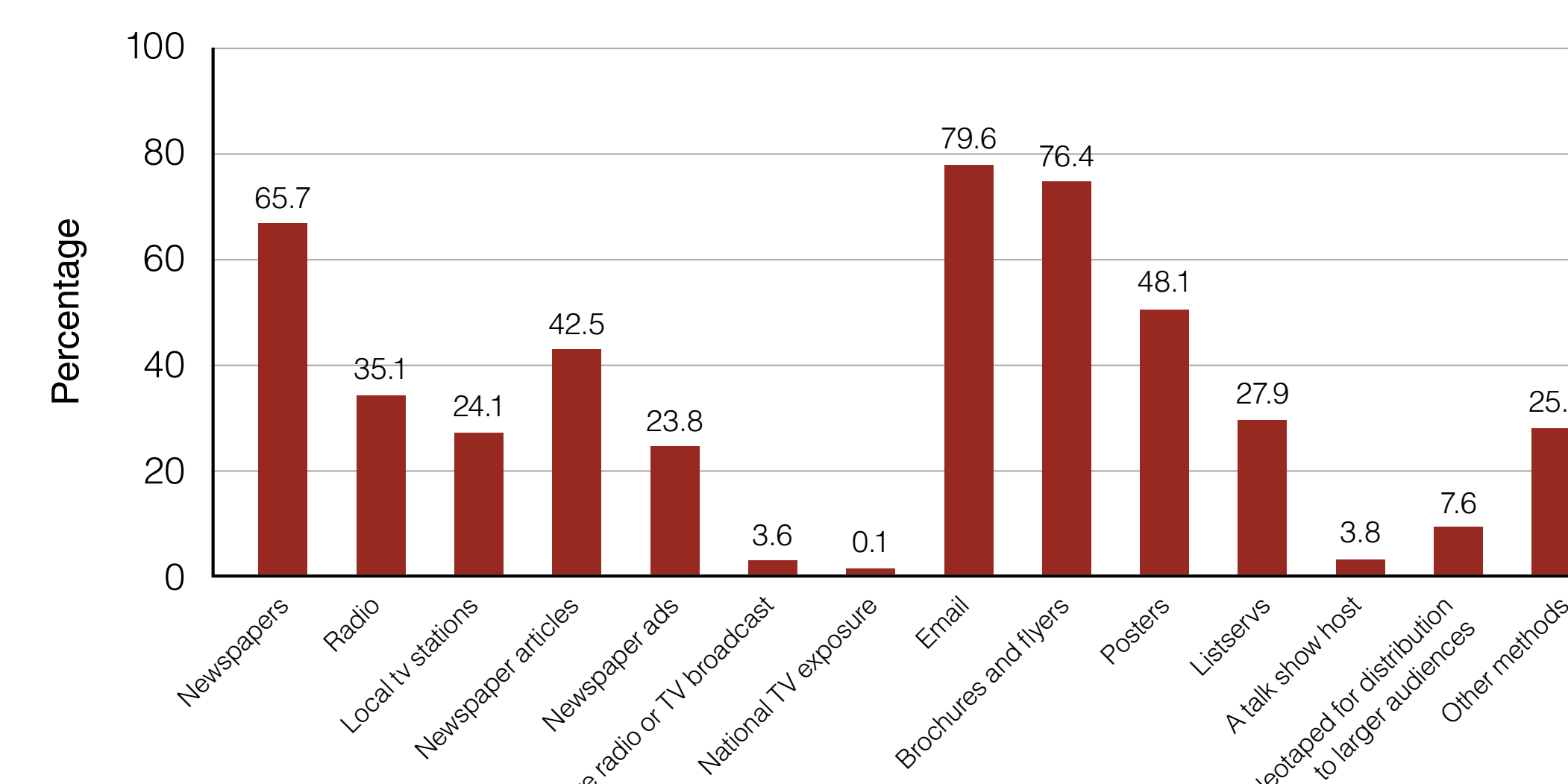
Building on Success: Lessons Learned From 2010

THMs Have Broad Stakeholder Involvement*



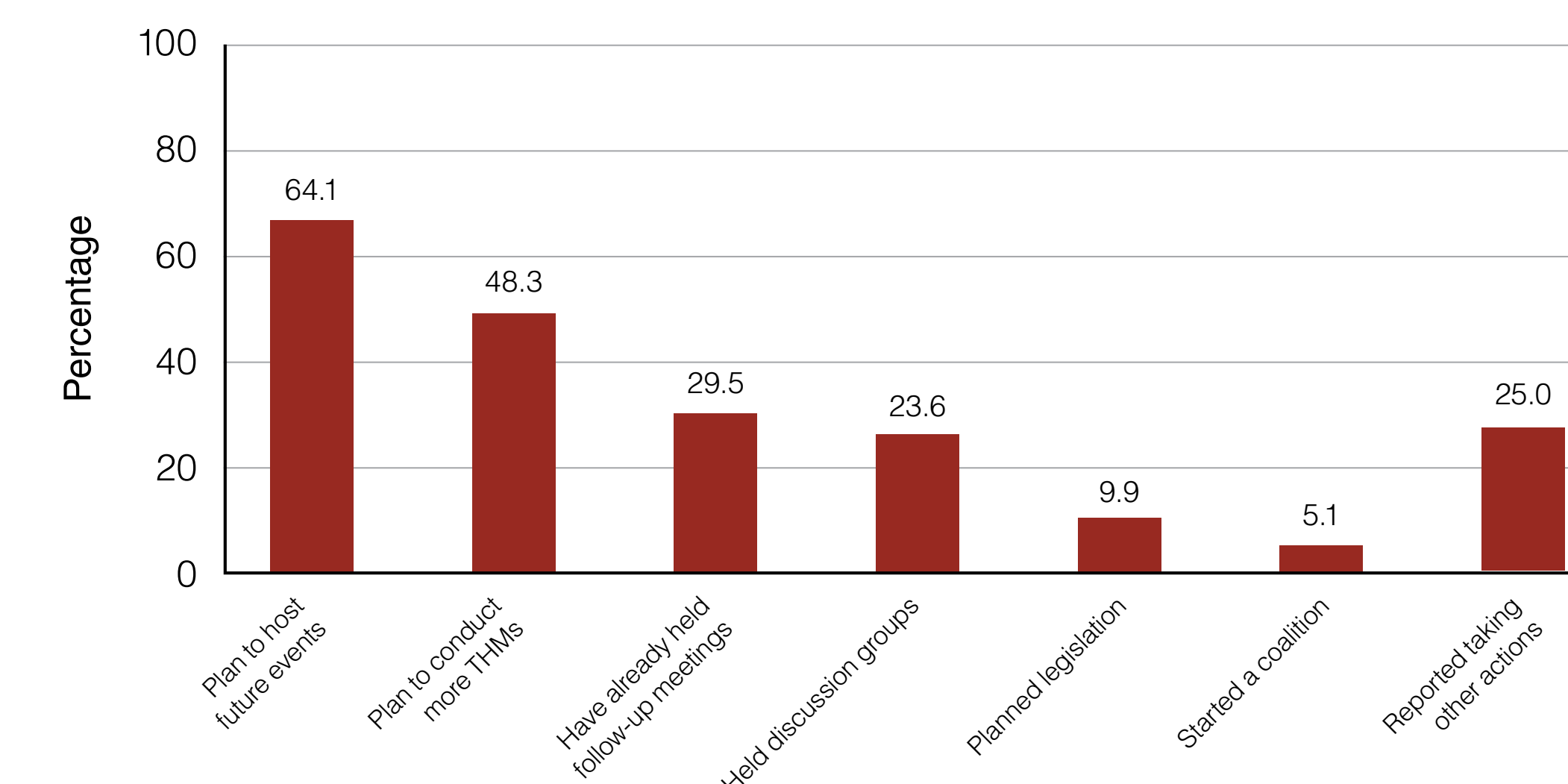
* Percentages total more than 100 percent because a THM could have involved more than one type of presenter, included more than one format, used more than one resource, and resulted in more than one action from the THM.

THMs Garner Wide Media Attention*



* Percentages total more than 100 percent because more than one type of media could have supported a THM.

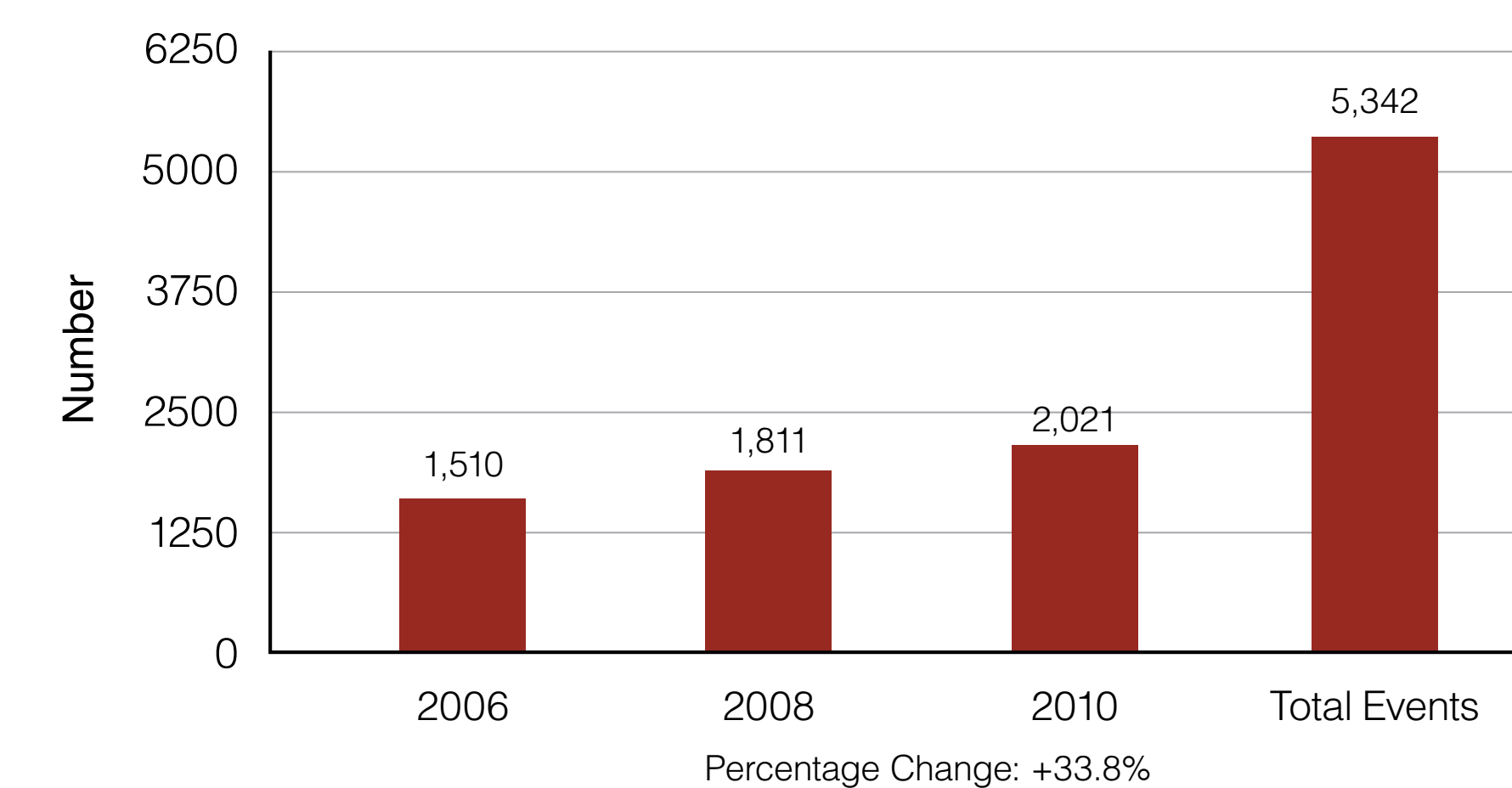
THMs Are Catalyst for Change Within Communities*



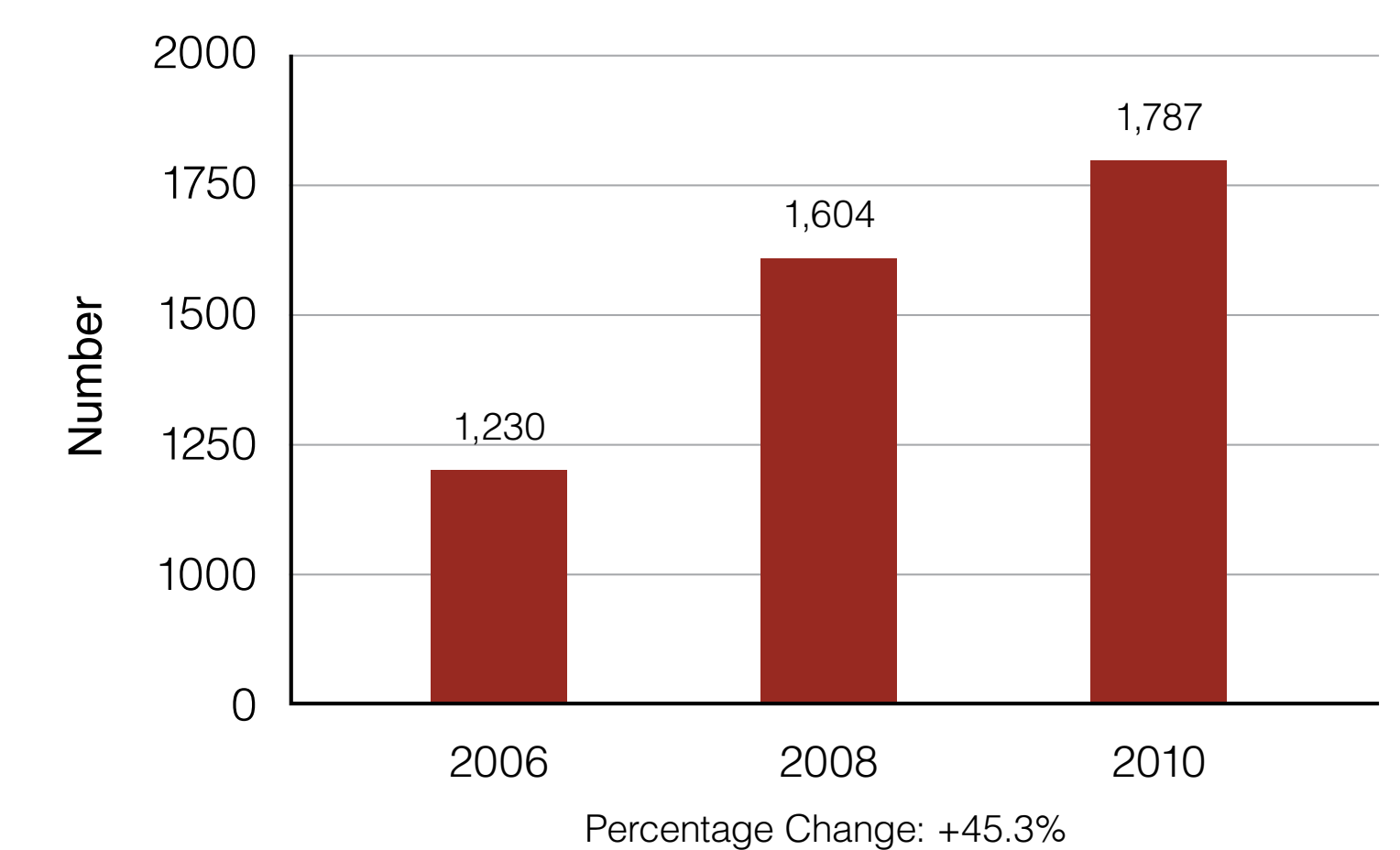
* Percentages total more than 100 percent because more than one major action could have resulted from the THM.

THM Trends

Number of THM Events Have Solid Growth

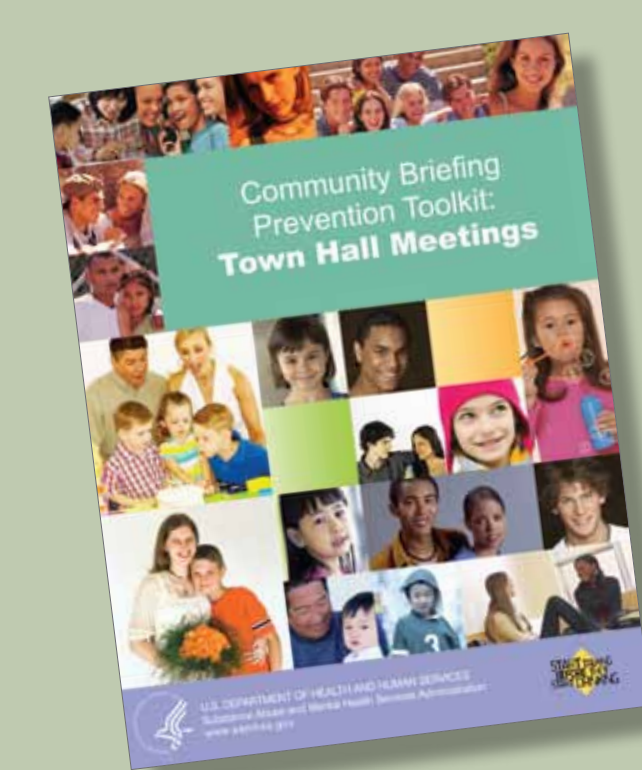


Change Is Good for Communities

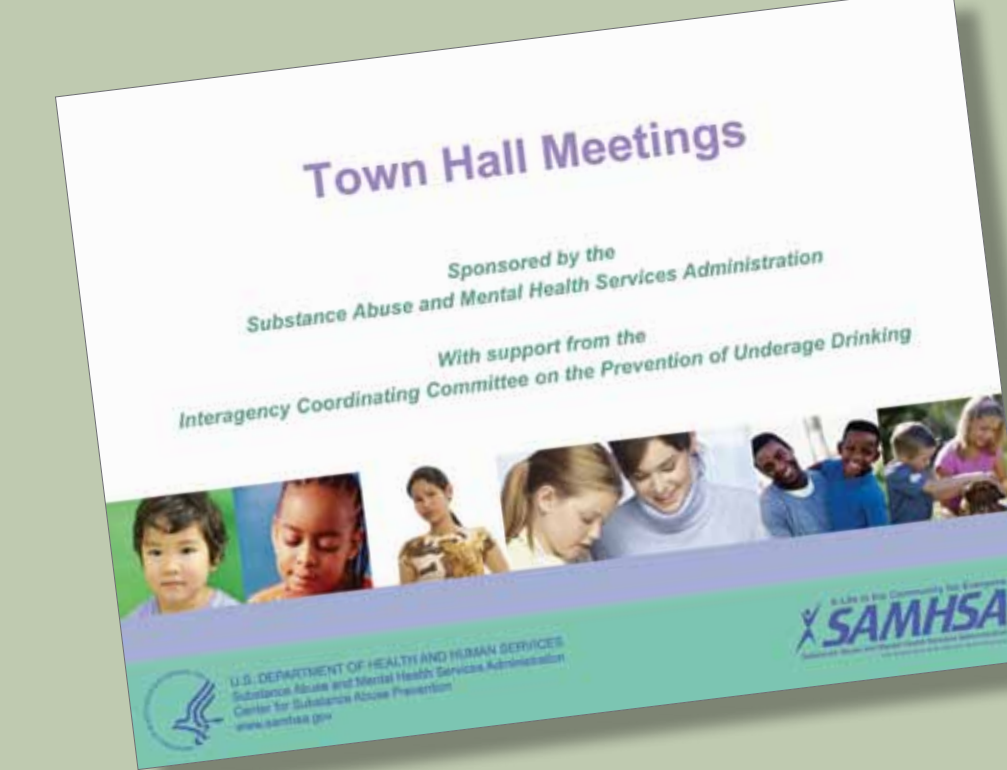


THM Resources

Community Briefing Prevention Toolkit: THM



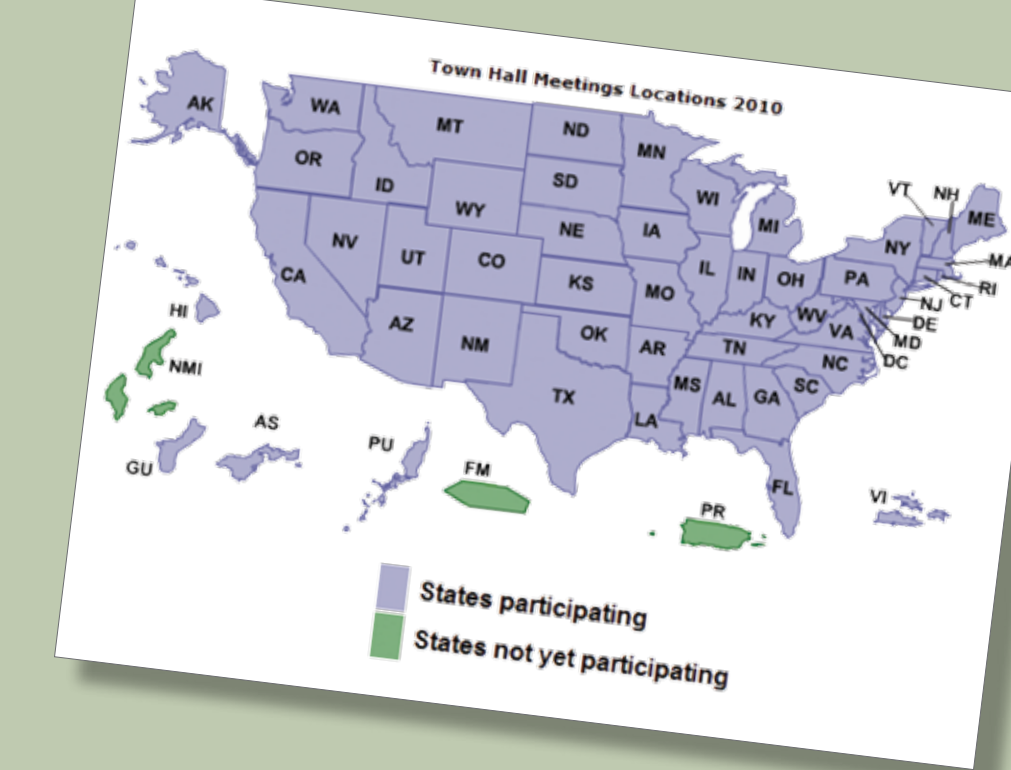
2010 THM PowerPoint Presentation



THM Countdown Widget



THM Locations Map



THM Discussion Board



THM Button



www.stopalcoholabuse.gov