

# Engaging the Business Community

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Partnerships with businesses provide a great opportunity to reach parents and alert them about the availability of low-cost and free health care coverage. Creating corporate partnerships benefits both your organization and the partners, allowing your organization to reach more potential beneficiaries, while providing corporate partners with information and services useful to their customers and employees. Additional benefits include:

- Raising community awareness about the issue of the uninsured
- Providing your organization or coalition with new communications channels and resources to reach the uninsured with an important health care coverage message
- Increasing the visibility and profile of your organization and the important outreach work being done in your community
- Fostering new relationships for your organization or coalition

Every outreach program is unique, and we encourage you to tailor your business outreach efforts to fit your organization's needs. Building successful business relationships requires time, persistence, creativity and enthusiasm. Here are the first steps in the relationship-building process:

- **Determine your outreach needs.** The first step to success is figuring out what type of outreach you want to conduct with a corporate partner.
- **Set clear and concise goals.** Make sure your goals fit with the aims of your coalition and the participating company. Encourage involvement in a way that makes sense in your community - a way that will spark interest, fulfill needs and match your organization's goals.
- **Research and target the most suitable companies.** Based on your outreach goals, determine which companies you should approach. Take the time to research the companies on your list: Do they have a history of and experience in working with organizations on community events? Do they have a strong reputation in the community? Is there a natural connection between the products and/or services they provide and the audience you need to reach with your health care coverage information? Do you have contacts at the company? Does anyone else you know have contacts?

• **Identify any national partnerships the Communications Team has established that might be helpful in your outreach.** The Communications Team has developed a number of national partnerships of which you may be able to take advantage. Many of these partners have local affiliates that may be interested in working with your organization or coalition.