

# CHECKLIST



## Getting to Know the Community You Serve

Whether you are starting work in a new community for the first time or doing education in a community you have served for years, it is important to know as much as you can about the community before you begin reaching out to people and organizations about breast cancer.

- Look in the Yellow Pages or use the Internet to find organizations that serve Blacks and African Americans in the neighborhood(s) you are hoping to reach. Start a list of organizations that you can contact to learn more about the community.
- Call each organization and identify the person or people that work on programs that reach your targeted community. Introduce yourself and your work and ask for a meeting.
- Ask your contacts if a community assessment noting the strengths and needs of your targeted community has been done. Use that community assessment to find opportunities to make inroads into the community.

### NOTE

Phone conversations and e-mails are good for doing research and setting up meetings, but face-to-face meetings are important when forming a relationship and building trust.

### NOTE

For example, if there are a lot of children in the community, but no pediatrician in the neighborhood, you might be able to make a connection with a clinic or organization that can provide health screenings or vaccinations. You can then partner with the clinic to conduct an event that meets a need of the community and also allows you to present information about breast cancer.

- If no community assessment has been completed, ask questions about the community's strengths, needs and priorities when you meet with people from community organizations. This will help you to better understand the community and identify opportunities for partnerships. This shows that you are placing the community's needs at the top of your priority list. It also shows that you care about the community.

## NOTE

**Things that you may ask about include: demographics of the community (age, gender, employment status, marital status), reading level, number of children in the community, access to primary care, insurance coverage, major employers in the community, languages spoken, level or organization within the community (i.e., are there block captains or stakeholders/community groups) and how community members like to receive new information.**

- Join community meetings (sometimes called stakeholders meetings). This is a good way to network with community leaders and form partnerships. And, you will be able to meet community members and learn about their needs.
- Contact the local faith-based organizations from different denominations. Meet with the leaders to discuss your program and schedule a date for outreach in those churches.
- Contact national civic organizations with local chapters or affiliates, such as:
  - National Coalition of 100 Black Women
  - National Council of Negro Women
  - Order of the Eastern Star
  - National Association for the Advancement of Colored People
  - National Coalition on Black Civic Participation
  - National Urban League
  - Boys and Girls Clubs of America
  - National Association for Black Veterans
- While you are getting to know your community, you can document services and resources that can be of benefit to your audience using *My Breast Health Resource List*.



**Not every organization you contact will want or need a breast health program. However, if you receive a request for a presentation on some other health condition or need, you can negotiate for time to present on breast cancer, too. For example, if an organization would like a presentation on asthma, and you are able to facilitate through your organization or network, you can agree to help fulfill that request if the organization also makes time for you to do your breast health presentation, too.**

Other organizations in which you may be able to conduct outreach and education include:

- Sororities
- Fraternities
- Chambers of Commerce
- Grocery stores
- Corner stores
- Clothing/shoe stores
- Schools
- Hair/nail salons
- Unisex barber shops
- Human rights organizations
- Senior citizen centers/residential housing
- Public housing establishments/tenant councils
- Neighborhood associations
- Community/recreation centers
- Women, Infant & Children programs (WIC)
- Local health departments/community health centers/clinics
- Laundromats
- African/Caribbean consulates
- Pharmacies
- Unions
- Job training centers



Use the information you learn about your community in the breast health sessions you host to show you are in touch with the community's needs and bring the information closer to home for the audience. Suggestions for where to include community-specific information can be found in: ***Leading a Breast Health Session***, and ***Using Your Educational Materials: Breast Self-Awareness for Black and African American Communities Presentation (Short and Long versions)***.