**Education and Outreach Methods**

| **Method** | **How information is conveyed** | **When to use this method** |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Newsletter** | Written text and graphics presented in the community newsletter. Substantial amounts of information can be conveyed, particularly if the newsletter is devoted to a single topic. Careful editing and formatting is needed. | Newsletters are a good way to keep community members up to date on all band activities. If your community has a newsletter, community members will expect information about the initiative to be included. If your community does not have a newsletter, consider creating one as a way to keep in touch with community members. |
| **Notices and flyers** | A one-page notice or poster that provides information about the initiative or an event. Limited detail can be provided. | Use this method when you are holding an event or requesting public input. Post the notices or flyers in public places in the community, or hand them out before scheduled events. |
| **Brochures (mail outs or emails)** | Information about the engagement initiative can be sent through mail or email. Limit the document to 4 pages or less. Surveys can be included in mailed documents, and links to online survey instruments can accompany emails. | This method is useful to share complex information with members. Mail drops, direct mail or email can be used for distribution. |
| **Website** | Post information about the initiative on the First Nation website or create a new website for the initiative (with a link from the First Nation’s website). Update the website regularly with information and include the website address in all outreach materials. This technique can provide text, graphics and videos. | A website should support your other communication approaches. A website may be your main communication tool for reaching businesses, industry, government and many community members. However, it is important to remember that many people may not have access to the internet or may not visit the First Nation’s website regularly. Regular update and maintenance of a website is essential. |
| **Social media** | Create accounts on social media sites such as Facebook or Twitter. Post updates regularly, invite informal comments, and post links to events and draft documents. The amount and type of information that can be conveyed varies with the type of social medium. | Social media can be a great way to engage youth. It may be best for announcing events, rather than conveying large amounts of information. This method may not be appropriate for communities that have limited internet access. The First Nation needs to decide when, how and for what the use of social media will be sanctioned. Staff will need to be familiar with the rules of the social media and control its management. |
| **Community meeting** | Most communities are familiar with the use of community meetings. To be useful, such events require structure, such as a presentation about the initiative, opportunities for people to share what they think, and perhaps use of written forms. Small-group sessions may be used to allow more in-depth discussion. Food and refreshments are commonly provided. | Meetings can be used at the beginning of a process (to gain information), in the middle (to present and discuss draft documents), or at the end (to explain a decision). Meetings are a common and familiar way to engage communities. Community meetings should not be the only method of engagement, but they allow airing of community views, and discussion of different perspectives. Meetings can offer a good balance of “information out and information in.” Substantial preparation and cost may be required. |
| **Advisory committees** | Advisory committees are generally a small group of between 5 and 10 people who have knowledge of, or interest in, the topics under study. Members may be appointed or may volunteer. It is important that committees represent a cross section of the community. | Committees can provide detailed review comments and information in a planning process, before information is presented to the community, and can help interpret community comments after a meeting. Committees can meet frequently and regularly throughout a long process, or they may have a more limited, short-term function. |
| **Youth committee** | A youth committee can be set up for a specific initiative or meet regularly to assist in preparing laws and plans or provide ideas and feedback. | Use this method when engaging youth is a priority. A youth committee should be considered a type of advisory committee. |
| **Open house** | Open houses are typically held in well-known community facilities. Information displays should be provided, and staff should be on hand to answer questions. Food and refreshments are usually expected by attendees. Structured ways of collecting comments are best, whether survey forms or encouraging attendees to draw on maps. | Use this method when broad community contact is needed, and when opportunities for one-on-one discussions are desired between staff and members. Open houses lend themselves to visual presentations, using display boards to share with the community. Open houses give community members a chance to learn about an initiative, ask questions and provide comments. Open houses are more informal than a community meeting. Similar to meetings, the “fixed schedule” of an open house excludes participation by people who are unavailable for the event. |
| **“Passport” activity** | Hand out “passport cards” as people enter an open house. Participants will get a stamp or sticker on their passports when they participate in each activity. Activities might include picking up a pamphlet or completing a survey. After participants have collected all of the stamps, they hand in their completed passports for a chance to win a prize. | This activity works well for events where community members need to participate in several activities, particularly if the community event presents information on several different projects. |
| **Displays at community events** | Set up tables of board displays at community events. Provide brochures and information for people to take away. Staff may be on hand to answer questions. | Use this method to reach people that may not attend community meetings and open houses. Displays can be considered a “mini open house.” This is a good way to communicate a limited amount of information, advertise upcoming events, and to ask people to fill out surveys. |
| **Surveys** | Surveys can be conducted online, at events, by mail, or in person. Surveys require careful structuring and wording, distribution to targeted groups, and attention to accuracy in collating and interpreting results. | Surveys are more cost effective than interviews, obtain information from large numbers of people quickly and avoid bias from involvement of interviewers. On the other hand, questions must be subject to short answers, and elaboration is difficult. Respondents to mail out or online surveys are “self selected,” which influences interpretation of results. |
| **Community tours** | Conduct a tour of the community. A tour can be conducted by bus, walking or a caravan of cars. Record comments during the tour. At the end of the tour meet for food and refreshments, ask questions and record the discussions. | This method is useful for land use or environmental planning processes, or when visits to areas of concern are important. Organization and transportation require care, and mobility-impaired people may not be able to participate. |
| **Map making** | Prepare maps with information about the reserve. Ask people to write on the maps at open houses or other display locations. | This method is useful for land use and environmental planning processes. The participants can share their knowledge of the community or what they would like to see changed.  Maps help people to understand spatial relationships, and can build greater understanding of reserves. |
| **Interviews** | Conduct interviews of community members. Sessions can be video recorded or transcribed. | This method is useful for obtaining detailed information from knowledgeable community members, such as elders. Interviews are flexible, and allow exploration of points raised during the session.  Interviews require dedicated time by staff (scheduling, conducting, transcribing and interpreting results) and the interviewee. Interviewers should be trained in proper technique. |
| **Video** | Record interviews with elders and other community members. Take footage of community events and the reserve lands. Produce an educational video to increase community awareness. | Videos are a great way to engage community members in learning about complex topics. Video can provide a record of community events, and can be displayed through CDs, Internet or television.  Production and editing can be time-consuming and expensive. Technical skill and access to appropriate cameras and computer hardware and software are required. |
| **Workshops** | A workshop engages participants in discussions of issues, and can impart knowledge and explore concepts. | Workshops are valuable to building understanding about complex issues, obtaining in-depth input, and seeking agreement on solutions. Participants have time to discuss issues with each other and the workshop leaders. Workshop sessions sometimes follow an information presentation. Greater individual participation can be achieved in workshops than in large group presentations or open houses. |