



Definition

“...a process that systematically surveys and interprets relevant data to identify external opportunities and threats that could influence future decisions.” -SHRM

Environmental scans are a straightforward strategy that provides communities with information that will have an effect on its present and future community members. This strategy can help coalitions assist with initiating change for years to come.

Environmental scans give coalitions the tools to identify community strengths. Strengths are important to highlight because it allows the opportunity to further improve areas of greatness, such as resources or policies.

Oppositely, environmental scans can be crucial in identifying areas of environmental growth within a community. Illustrating any external threats to health is important for a community’s wellness and the safety of their vulnerable communities, such as their youth.

At its core, this strategy aims to collect data. The data can be gathered from various mediums (social media, physical sites, fairs/events, etc.) and should be unique to the community at hand.

Environmental scans can be instrumental in building a case for specific program implementation. In other words, this strategy can help prove a point to those in power and in turn, aid in decision making.

Youth will have the opportunity to become involved with their communities on a different level and can be a part of positive change. Not only can this strategy empower local youth but can allow them to become a greater asset to their community.