

Lessons from the Field

A newsletter designed for grantees of the California Governor's Program
Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities
Summer 2005

SDFSC TA Project:

The Year in Review 2004-05

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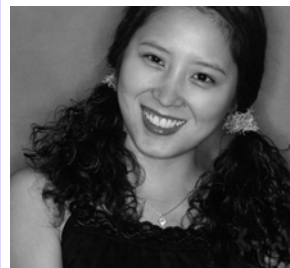
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Greetings

From the SDFSC TA Project Team

Greetings and welcome to the first issue of “Lessons from the Field”, a SDFSC TA publication geared specifically for the California SDFSC Governor’s Program grantees. The goals of the newsletter are to: (1) provide a compilation of relevant tips and strategies that we learn through our field work and trainings; (2) inform you about upcoming TA events and trainings; and (3) foster the cross-sharing of peer learnings.

The past year has been busy with lots of individual TA assignments and a number of training events. We started the year off with a bang! Last summer was spent on the road with the regional workshop series “Effective Strategies for Working with Underserved Youth and Families”, facilitated by the dynamic duo—Bonnie Benard and Carol Burgoa. The summer series was followed by two curriculum specific trainings on Second Step and Toward No Drug Abuse. Shortly thereafter, we introduced the “Workshop-By-Request” series which allows grantees to request trainings they are interested in hosting in their home counties. The first workshop rolled-out was “Painless Program Evaluation: A Step-By-Step Guide to Measuring Outcomes”, developed and facilitated by Christina Borbely, Ph.D. This training was so well received that we asked Dr. Borbely to develop part II in the evaluation series, “Got Data? A Step-By-Step Guide for Making Data Work for You”. In response to your need for more concrete participation strategies, “Recruiting and Retaining Families: Culturally Appropriate Strategies” was developed and facilitated by Rocco Cheng, Ph.D and Martha Madrid. Towards the end of this year, we rolled-out two environmental prevention trainings with our partners at the Youth Leadership Institute including: Environmental Prevention: Strategies for Engaging Youth and Communities Mobilizing for Change On Alcohol.

In this introductory issue of Lessons from the Field, we have compiled a year in review. Including a compilation of tips and strategies around two highlighted topics: program participation and evaluation. Information was gathered from discussions at our regional trainings, workshop-by-request events and from our individual TA consultations. In addition to the workshops, over the past year and a half we have traveled across the state for the TA site visits. We thoroughly enjoyed seeing your prevention efforts in action and thank you again for your hospitality and willingness to coordinate the logistics of our visit. We have integrated successes and challenges we heard from you during the site visits as well.

As always, we are committed to improving our TA and training services and welcome your feedback. We thank you for taking the time to complete our annual satisfaction survey and our TA and training evaluations. We value your feedback and welcome your suggestions.

We hope you find the information helpful and we are looking forward to another successful year of partnership!

Kerrilyn Scott-Nakai
SDFSC TA Project Director
Center for Applied Research Solutions (CARS)

Engaging Underserved Youth and Families

As an SDFSC grantee you and your team are charged with outreaching and providing services to underserved youth and families living in at-risk environments. This is a challenging task and we found out that you are up to the challenge!

Program strengths were readily identified by staff during the SDFSC TA trainings and site visits. Program staff typically have extensive experience working with youth and are committed to the program mission. Program curricula were noted as rich resources and a medium for imparting skills to youth and their families. Program participants are engaged and excited about their program experiences. There is teamwork among staff members, community organizations, and collaboration between parents and school teachers/administrators and program staff. Overall, SDFSC programs are being perceived as effective and valuable resources and contributors to their communities.

SDFSC Program Strengths

- **Meaningful Input:** Opportunities for youth and parents to have a voice in ways that are meaningful to them.
- **Safe Environment:** Offering positive environments for positive peer interaction.
- **Hands-On-Learning:** Many curricula and strategies offer real world experiences which imbue youth with life skills associated with social competence and civic responsibility.
- **Collaboration and Buy-In:** Collaboration with schools, AOD offices, and other local youth and family service organizations is testament to buy-in from the community and key stakeholders.
- **Access to Resources:** Programs have a variety of prevention resources to utilize (i.e. TA services).
- **Sustainability:** A number of programs are reporting plans to supplement funding in years 4 and 5 and to continue services past the grant funding.

All of these positives are assets to the SDFSC mission. Building on program strengths and learning from the successes of respective SDFSC grantees enhances services. The “Effective Strategies for Working with Underserved Youth Families” workshop included a main focus on building strengths and learning from success. Participants at the three regional workshops noted a variety of positive elements that contribute to success in engaging target populations:

- Diversity of staff, including gender and ethnicity.
- Families offer innovative ideas about how to recruit other families.
- Parents are seeking more direction on teaching and raising their children. They view programs as a resource!
- Staff acknowledgement that they cannot expect to be perfect and do not blame themselves if they cannot retain youth and families. Important to maintain morale.
- Programs keeping records of past strategies and activities (noting what worked and what did not work) have a resource for future efforts

We Heard You Say

EMPOWER PARENTS & YOUTH PARTICIPANTS! Empower participants with respect; make them partners or collaborators; assign meaningful roles; encourage input.

BUILD TRUST & RAPPORT! This goes for everyone: parents, youth, and colleagues! Put yourself out their first; don’t crowd; a little at a time; don’t give up.

FOCUS ON THE STRENGTHS! Using a youth and family development and resiliency framework can guide effective programming and enhance the use of curriculum and other prevention activities and tools.

Engaging Underserved Youth and Families

Tips for Recruitment: Issues related to engaging youth and families threaded throughout the workshops. Attendees identified common challenges and shared tested strategies and insight into making progress in this challenging area. Bonnie and Carol provided the framework for understanding and approaching youth and families in typically underserved populations. The following section outlines primary points and summarizes useful suggestions. Input from counties across the three workshop sites yielded diverse and complicated reasons for difficulty in recruiting and retaining parents. Language and cultural differences in underserved populations add another layer of complexity to recruitment and retention efforts. Many tactics reported by workshop attendees involve practical matters. Identify and make every effort to address language barriers and differences in social customs.

ISSUES AND IDEAS FOR GENERAL RECRUITMENT

Challenge	Idea
Program Marketing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Design an attractive flier. ▪ Timing is important when recruiting. Be sure you have adequate assistance and resources in place. ▪ Adequately define your population so that you target your efforts appropriately. ▪ Be conscious that program titles such (i.e. Parenting Education) can be intimidating to potential participants. ▪ Have a student take a letter home to the parent/caregiver. Provide a reward (i.e. extra credit) when the letter is returned. ▪ Send a gift certificate to attend the workshop or session. A gift certificate gives additional value and a positive connotation to participation. ▪ Form an alumni parent group who can recruit other families for services—word of mouth can be your most effective marketing tool!
The staff worker who is recruiting also has multiple other duties and cannot focus on the importance of recruiting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If funding/budget allows, hire extra staff to focus strictly on recruitment. ▪ Take advantage of rare opportunities to be able to catch parents and encourage them to take part in programs. Plan ahead so that program staff has time and place to talk/build rapport with parents when they are enrolling their child. ▪ Write a proposal to recruit families and have staff adhere to the plan. ▪ Share and seek strategies with other programs. When appropriate, share recruitment efforts. ▪ Offer assistance in filling out complicated forms ▪ Not all staff are effective recruiters, make sure that you are identifying your best recruiters within your team.
Teachers are not taking an active role in recruiting youth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Have a presence at community centers, PTA meetings, back-to-school nights, etc. ▪ Build rapport with teachers. ▪ Make it easy for teachers to refer students with the program. Provide clear recruitment guidelines and be pro-active in communicating with teachers. ▪ Have youth alumni and/or current participants do classroom presentations to recruit for the upcoming program year. ▪ Have youth develop a recruitment video that can be shown during school events.

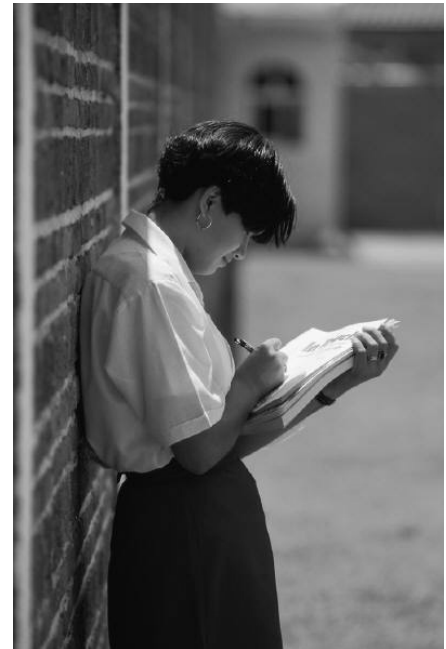
Recruiting and Engaging Families: Most programs use multi-faceted methods for promoting the participation of parents. In addition to specific ideas for non-English speaking populations, workshop participants shared many “universal” strategies. Meeting basic needs (food, childcare, transportation) and developing credibility and rapport were a main focus for both recruitment and retention of families from underserved populations and are considered recruitment essentials. As with youth, empowering participating parents with meaningful program roles was noted as a successful retention tool. A theme across workshops involved parental resistance to participation when programs were a (implied or real) requirement. This issue was noted as potentially having a cultural component to it, as well. Experience-based suggestions were generated by workshop participants, including: focus on and emphasize a “team” approach to participation; provide flexibility in options for making participation possible; give parents empowered roles as collaborators; accept and acknowledge parent input.

Targeting Youth Participation: Recruiting young people presents a unique set of challenges. Often the youth who are the most difficult to reach are the ones who would benefit most from services. Keep this in mind and don't be easily discouraged. Here are a few ideas for gaining youth interest and making it easy or feasible for youth to join programs.

- Provide services during school hours.
- Feed them physically (snacks), emotionally (emotional support), mentally (encouragement), and spiritually (speaking on all levels of communication).
- Offer transportation home.
- Encourage youth to "step out of their neighborhood" and experience something new.
- Have teachers give students free passes to miss a class to attend a program.
- Let students bring their friends along with them.
- Start with students, throw a (pizza) party for them and advertise the program.

Maintaining Youth Participation: Keeping the attention of youth calls for planning ahead and creative programming. The suggestions generated at the workshops map onto some of the main points in the youth development program field: emphasize a human bond; empower youth; and provide diverse and meaningful experiences.

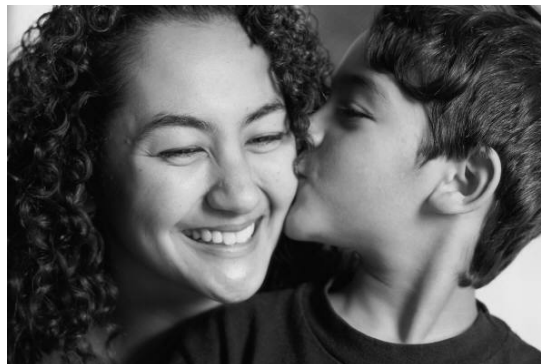
- Develop youth leadership and give youth a voice (e.g. have teens take action on issues meaningful to them).
- Encourage the youth to stay with the program. Encouragement is powerful.
- Create attractive activities such as outdoor adventures.
- Create fun icebreakers.
- Support peer interaction so youth have same-age peers to talk to.
- Let youth create their own work plan so they can identify goals, plan strategies and own their accomplishments.
- Have youth identify the benefits of participating/completing the program --they need to be aware of their stake in the program.
- For students, encourage them to bring in a person whom they connect with other than a parent.
- Include youth in efforts to improve program retention.



Developing Resiliency: In addition to strategies geared towards successful recruitment and retention, the workshop revolved around the concept of developing resiliency. Capacity building insures that youth and parents will experience sustained benefits from program services. Workshop attendees contributed ideas for attitudes and activities that create resiliency.

PARENTS

- Remind staff and families what “typical” teenage behavior looks like – often difficult behaviors are normative during this developmental period. Provide parents a list of “normal” adolescent behaviors to destigmatize teens.
- If making referrals for families, do not automatically contact the referral organization. If capable of calling on their own, allow the parents to do so.
- In starting a parenting group, identify and document parent concerns. Provide handouts on relevant parenting strategies that are research-based.
- Create self-efficacy among families: instill the belief that they are able to make changes for the better in their lives and in their children’s lives. Develop their skills for doing so.



YOUTH

- Be supportive, empathic, accepting, patient, inquisitive, passionate, an active listener, carry no burdens, and have synergy and perseverance.
- Turn their “negative” traits into positive characteristics.
- Recognize and validate strengths and positive qualities in youth.
- Provide youth with a sense of belonging.
- Create opportunities for youth to succeed.
- Recognize that as youth become adults, they will make mistakes.
- Forgive them for their mistakes.
- Let them know that everyone makes mistakes.
- Emphasize the importance of being accountable for mistakes.
- Talk to the youth if s/he makes the same mistake repeatedly.
- Discuss why s/he thinks the mistake is repeated and collaborate to find a solution.
- Create a comfortable and safe environment for youth to grow in.
- Complete the time you have spent with a youth instead of rushing to end the workday.



Evaluation in the Real World

SDFSC projects are underway with services up and running, curriculum delivery out and about, newsletters hot off the press, and public service announcements loud and clear. Logic models are leaping off the page and manifesting into tangible works-in-progress and accomplishments. Congratulations and reflection on (sometimes hard-won) lessons learned are in order. The implementation process entails actualizing program components according to plan, making last minute changes, juggling unexpected turn of events, adjusting to strategic program overhauls, finessing resources, and constantly scanning the horizon for upcoming challenges and opportunities. Implementation may take the form of launching a new program, maintaining existing services, augmenting/extending existing services, or resurrecting sidelined programming. In any case it is a changeable process that keeps us on our toes. Getting a program or service delivery off the ground and into effect is “theory of change” in practice. Practicing “theory” begs the question: “where’s the change?”

The hustle and bustle of prevention activity brings proposed program outcomes into sight. Amidst implementation is a window for assessing progress toward short-term, intermediate, and long-term program goals. This is commonly referred to as “outcome evaluation”, a process that should provide answers to the question: “What is it all for???”

In a free-association exercise, the term “program evaluation” might yield responses from prevention providers such as: “one more thing to do”; “required by the funders”; or “ugh.” Program evaluation may be the misunderstood child in prevention work. The term, though not equivalent to all things onerous, does not usually bring to mind visions of butterflies and cotton candy. This newsletter aims to give program evaluation a fair shake - to debunk the myths, break down ivory tower pedestals, and bring program evaluation into its own as a practical and valuable player in the hands-on, down-to-earth, everyday nitty-gritty of prevention programs.

Tips for Conducting Outcome Evaluation

SDFSC Program Strengths

A number of counties have reported the value of establishing a collaborative relationship between the SDFSC project team and the local evaluator. While a basic understanding of evaluation concepts is helpful, the most important thing is to seek information. Contributing to the evaluation planning process, actively making key strategic decisions, and ongoing dialogue about the progress of the evaluation are likely to yield the following benefits:

- opportunity to manage costs more comfortably since it is possible to identify capacity to support/conduct elements of the evaluation in-house.
- increased likelihood you end up with the product you want.
- (from the TA Project team (we couldn’t resist)): gain in knowledge and experience that can be applied to future project evaluations.

(Compiled by Christina Borbely and Kerrilyn Scott from the 2004-2005 Workshop-by-Request Evaluation Series and individual TA consultations.)

The SDFSC TA Project has provided training or individual consultation related to evaluation in over 14 counties over the past year. Based on the questions asked and issues raised by SDFSC program managers and project staff we compiled a FAQ list and responded with important considerations and strategies on these topics.

Evaluation Design

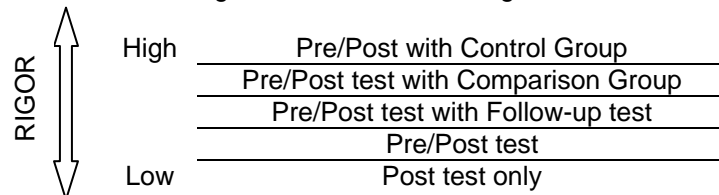
- **Making the most of limited evaluation resources (i.e. funding)**

When considering how to use (limited) resources allocated for evaluation, identify the program component with the highest intensity of services. The area with the highest level of service delivery is the most likely (in most cases) to demonstrate an impact on outcomes. A pre/post evaluation of this program component would be a good use of evaluation resources.

Less service-intensive program pieces may be evaluated using more simple methods. For example, for some SDFSC projects, the environmental prevention component has a secondary or a periphery role in terms of service delivery. Rather than use evaluation resources for a pre/post design here, the evaluation may consist of quantifying the number of letters written to legislators. It is not required that all program components be evaluated. Prioritize evaluation resources according to components most likely to impact participants.

- **Level of Rigor in Program Evaluation**

With regard to level of rigor in program evaluation design, consider the following:



Participation in Evaluation

Promoting participant willingness to participate in the evaluation: Engaging participants in the evaluation process can be difficult. One way to minimize resistance is to build evaluation tasks into expectations from the program onset (e.g. when describing what program participation entails). It can be described as part of the program, not something extra or additional. Letting participants know that you will periodically seek their input or be improving services based on their experiences in the program increases the likelihood individuals will engage in the evaluation. Integrating the evaluation tasks into the participants' expectations of the program promotes "buy-in" from participants.

Effective models for follow up data collection: In general, integrating the "follow up" concept from the get-go will set the appropriate expectation. Referring to it as a "follow up" or data collection point is unlikely to compel participation. When describing/introducing the program, refer to an additional/supplemental/bonus session. The follow up assessment could be part of a "reunion" dinner or a "guest speaker" presenting on the topic of their (collective) choice. This is an ideal time to use incentive strategies, such as providing dinner, coupons, or vouchers for those who attend the follow up session. Phone interviews, especially those conducted by evaluators, often fail to yield a return worth the effort.

Parental consent requirements for program evaluation: Requirements for the parental consent of minor's participation in program evaluation vary by context. Review and follow the standards set by the school, school district, community organization, or county office in which your program operates. In addition to the traditional "send a letter home" approach to obtaining parental consent, consider using the following methods:

- Include a passage related to consent for participation in program evaluation activities as part of each child's program registration paperwork.
- Use "passive consent": Send a letter home describing the nature of the evaluation activities and indicating that consent will be considered granted unless the parent returns a "permission denied" form.

Regardless of how you design the consent process for your program evaluation, it is important to inform participants (i.e. the youth and any involved parent/guardian) that participation is (a) voluntary and (b) confidential. These participant rights can be phrased in order to maximize participation, but it is critical that the information be provided.

Data Decisions

Assigning a cut-off for baseline assessments: Defining the program point after which baseline assessments will not be conducted depends on the duration of a given program (e.g. 6 week program versus 6 month program). In any case, the “cut-off” point for conducting baseline should be close to, if not the same point at which enrollment is closed (i.e. no new participants accepted in the program after an identified point in time/sessions). Applying cut-off points consistently across participants is recommended. The timing of a baseline assessment must balance between developing rapport/trust with participants (perhaps *after* an initial introduction/orientation session) and avoiding “contamination” (*before* the point at which attendance/ program content biases the participant). Using these factors, program directors can determine what cut-off point is reasonable.

Attrition (drop-outs): Attrition is an elusive aspect of tracking programs. In order to nail it down, unambiguously define participation and assessment cut-off points, and assign unique IDs to compare different levels of participation. In order to preserve as much data as possible, those who participate (in any capacity) may be categorized in groups such as “low” “moderate” and “high” level participation. Even if it was not possible to collect a baseline assessment, data collected as part of registration (e.g. age, race, referral source, etc.) may be used if consent for participation was provided. Attrition status may be reserved for extreme circumstances, such as the deceased or those who actively refuse voluntary participation in data collection (as opposed to just never return calls or attend the program anymore).

Minimum sample size: There is no absolute standard, and opinions vary regarding the minimum sample size required for demonstrating statistically significant results. The answer varies according to factors such as the type of data and the type and number of statistical analyses performed. As a rule of thumb, the larger the number of individuals, the more power in the statistical findings. Generally, data for at least 30 individuals must be available to report statistically significant results.

Data Collection Tools

Modifications to existing surveys: Any changes to wording or administration protocol (e.g. reading items from the survey to a youth) should be made with caution. Though we recommend against it, modifications may be necessary for “real world” application. In anticipation of this, it is suggested to:

- Plan ahead. Consider likely scenarios that may occur given your instrument and your population. As much as possible, develop standardized approaches to each scenario. Arriving at “plan B” protocol in advance is a step towards preserving the integrity of your evaluation through minimizing changes and making necessary modifications strategically. By defining modifications to items or proctoring for anticipated scenarios ahead of time, *unanticipated* situations will be handled more effectively.
- Be strategic. Consider the implications of potential modifications. Document modifications and their rationale.

Service rate/dosage variability across participants: Optimally, programs will be able to compare rates of participation (“program dosage”) across participants and across program components. This depends on there being a large enough pool of participants *and* the tracking of participation of each individual (i.e. unique IDs). Having this information allows for evaluation of, among other things, how level of participation (a) affects outcome impacts, (b) varies by program component, and (c) varies by individual characteristics.

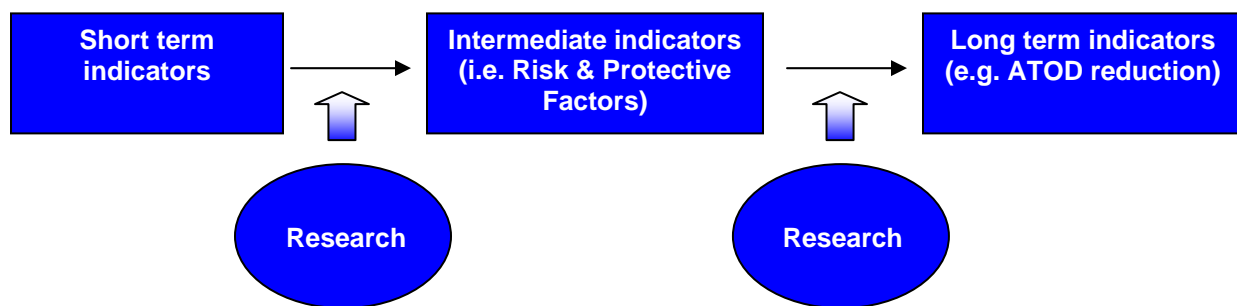
Integrating and/or teasing apart participation in multiple project components evaluation: Multi-component services should be considered in terms of a holistic approach to yield positive impacts, rather than piecemeal components to “cover bases”. This framework applies to the corresponding evaluation plan. Each part of the program evaluation should contribute to a cohesive and meaningful depiction of overall program impact. Assigning unique IDs to individual participants allows tracking across time and across program components.

Evaluating Outcomes

Evaluating youth-led environmental prevention: Strategies for evaluating environmental prevention programs include identifying local policy changes, documenting (changes in) the number of alcohol/tobacco sponsored community events, assessing the (changes in) quantity of alcohol/tobacco promotional items distributed to/in the possession of youth, and reviewing local ATOD-related statistics (crime, injury, health, etc.).

Using Risk and Protective Factors: Core protective factors for youth have been identified in the research literature as: school bonding, bonding to one's community, bonding with an adult

The following diagram depicts how research literature contributes to the link between outcome indicators. Use relevant research literature to inform and support the use of risk and protective factors as measures of progress toward long term ATOD reduction/prevention goals.



We Heard You Say

SDFSC Grantees are not shy about sharing their thoughts and experiences. With regard to program evaluation there has been plenty of buzz in the field. This is what we heard you say:

- **There is pressure to increase program accountability.**

Federal and state guidelines of prevention programs include a new focus on for accountability. There is a call to implement program models or curriculum that are scientifically-proven to have positive outcomes *and* a call for programs to monitor progress toward and achievement of proposed impacts. These guidelines address the need:

- to discern viable programming amidst the proliferation of prevention services over the past 20 years.
- to hone service delivery by prioritizing effective investment of resources into creating desired impacts.
- to encourage local agencies and organizations to focus on the link between services and outcome goals in order to systematically inform program improvement.

While all three elements contribute to the larger picture of more sophisticated and refined prevention services, local prevention providers may want to consider the immediate value of the last item: program improvement. Conducting strategic program evaluation not only satisfies state/federal requirements, it provides a clear and logical mechanism for identifying strengths, areas for improvement, unmet needs, superfluous or duplicate services, and opportunity for innovation or streamlining programs.

- **The focus of outcome evaluation is on quantitative findings. How can qualitative data be effectively integrated?**

Unless otherwise specified, evaluation does not have to be exclusively quantitative or qualitative in nature. Combining the quantitative and qualitative measures can result in a powerful representation of program outcomes. Review any evaluation requirements (including any designated reporting format). The program evaluation plan should be designed to meet funder requirements and assess the program's proposed outcomes. Within the evaluation plan, designate methods of measurement. This may entail doing playground observation (qualitative) to learn about the nature of peer conflict at a given school and a survey (quantitative) to assess risk and protective factors experienced by the school's students. Alternatively, an evaluation may combine findings from focus groups (qualitative) on perceptions of alcohol availability and tally (quantitative) merchant window signage. Incorporating information from multiple sources provides concrete detail and gives it context.

On Common Ground

The SDFSC TA Project Approach: The 2004-2005 program year was busy with on-site visits to programs and the SDFSC TA Project extends a warm thank you to all the grantees. We have been reflecting on what we have learned. The Annual SDFSC Consultants Meeting was held in September 2004 where we brainstormed ideas for the project year. The consultants have gained familiarity with grantee concerns and continue to develop competency in assisting you. In addition, the SDFSC TA Project Team has been active with Friday Night Live and Kerrilyn Scott-Nakai, as Project Director, presented at the 2005 FNL Consortium. In addition to providing individualized consultation, the TA Project Team develops trainings, workshops, and publications. The following is an outline of common challenges you, as grantees, face and what the SDFSC TA Project is doing to address these issues. We continue to monitor grantee needs and concerns and to develop relevant support and strategies for these issues. *Here's what we're hearing from you in the past year and here's what we're doing about it.*

Selecting and Adapting Science-Based Curriculum

Questions & Challenges

- Choosing appropriate science-based curricula for target population
- Finding the appropriate balance between fidelity and adaptation

TA Resources and Trainings Provided: The September 2005 **SDFSC Statewide Community Learning Conference** includes a workshop and curriculum showcase designed to provide information about science-based program models and curricula and strategies for selecting viable options.

The most recent issue of The SDFSC TA Prevention Brief is titled **"Finding the Right Fit: Fidelity and Adaptation in Prevention Programming"**. It provides a review of the research and theory related to fidelity and adaptation, practical strategies for prevention programs, and input from experts in the field. It also provides useful strategies and considerations for science-based program implementation.

Recruitment and Retention

Questions & Challenges

- Applying youth development principles and strategies to new populations and/or in new settings (i.e. continuation schools/juvenile halls)
- Difficulty engaging parents
- Attrition and mobility (particularly in alternative school settings)
- Documenting/articulating specific outreach strategies for "at-risk and underserved populations" (individual level)

TA Resources and Trainings Provided: Last Summer the **Effective Strategies for Working with Underserved Youth and Families** workshop was offered in Northern, Central, and Southern locations. This workshop emphasized the use of a developmental lens in the implementation of science-based programs. More recently, the **Recruiting and Retaining Families: Culturally Appropriate Strategies** workshop has been offered to interested counties. This workshop is intended to assist programs by highlighting applied strategies for increasing outreach success and participant engagement. The workshop has a particular emphasis on parent participation strategies and culturally appropriate techniques for facilitating participation. Additionally, the SDFSC TA Prevention Brief titled **"Principles for Informing and Engaging Parents"**, provides a review of the research and theory related to parental involvement in prevention programming, concrete strategies for engaging families, and input from experts in the field.

Evaluation

Questions & Challenges

- Identifying feasible and measurable short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes.
- What do we do with data once it is collected (i.e. next steps for entering, analyzing and reporting results)?
- Determining the extent to which the chosen survey instruments are appropriate for measuring the specific outcomes identified in the original proposal, strategic plans, and logic models.
- Challenges in defaulting to CHKS data at the school-level to measure program-level impact.
- Choosing and/or developing appropriate measures when it is determined that the originally proposed instruments will not fully measure the identified outcomes for the program
- Maintaining accountability for environmental prevention strategies and programs.

TA Resources and Trainings Provided: A number of workshops have been developed and offered each of which are geared towards different stages of evaluation and build upon one another. The following three-part training series has been developed:

- **Evaluating Prevention Programs: A Guide for Service Provider** a capacity-building workshop designed to provide service providers with an overview of core program evaluation components. Practical and theoretical information for each stage of the evaluation process are reviewed. This is the first in a series of three available workshops to promote active and informed participants in evaluation planning and implementation.
- **Painless Program Evaluation: A Step-By-Step Guide to Measuring Outcomes** Conducting a solid and reliable program evaluation is essential to providing effective prevention efforts and complying with the SDFSC grant requirements. This workshop is designed to support local SDSFC program staff in your efforts to design and implement your SDFSC program evaluation. The focal point of the workshop is geared towards choosing and/or developing appropriate evaluation instrumentation that best measures your specific program outcomes. This is a capacity-building workshop designed to develop your ability to be an informed participant in your program's evaluation process.
- **Got Data: A Step-by-Step Guide to Making Data Work for You:** Collecting, entering, storing, processing, analyzing, and reporting data are essential components of accountability and program improvement. This workshop is designed to support local SDSFC program staff in your efforts to manage the data yielded by your SDFSC program evaluation. This capacity building workshop is designed to develop your ability to be an informed participant in your program's evaluation process. The focus includes theoretical and practical knowledge and skill sets that you can apply independently or in collaboration with a program evaluator.

Environmental Prevention

Questions & Challenges

- Deciding on the degree to which environmental prevention strategies will be incorporated and the types of outcomes that are appropriate to be accountable for.
- Integrating youth led environmental prevention strategies (first time for many counties)
- Deciding on the degree to which environmental prevention strategies will be incorporated.

TA Resources and Trainings Provided: Environmental Prevention: Strategies for Engaging Youth a one day workshop is designed to support local SDFSC staff in their efforts to incorporate an environmental prevention approach – one that seeks to change the settings and messages young people are exposed to, at a community level, that both inadvertently *and* deliberately make drinking and drug use appealing. Additionally, this program is geared towards providing effective strategies for the Governor's Program grantees on integrating youth-led environmental prevention strategies.

Grantee Congratulations and Thank You's

Congratulations to Butte County for applying and being recognized as an Exemplary Program by NPN!

- Danelle Campbell and Amanda Montgomery worked hard on submitting three of their prevention programs for review: Friday Night Live Mentoring, Friday Night Live, and Youth Nexus. Two of these programs are being recognized nationally, with only six programs receiving this national recognition. Wow, what an accomplishment!! Kudos to the Butte team for providing strong leadership and achieving national recognition on behalf of the Friday Night Live system. Be on the look-out for them at the awards ceremony honoring the Exemplary Programs at the National Prevention Network Research Conference this August in New York!!

Congratulations to the Santa Cruz County SDFSC project team for being accepted for the Service to Science Academy offered by the Center for Substance Abuse and Prevention!

- Under the leadership of Brenda Armstrong, the county submitted an application and were awarded a program slot with the current cohort for the Service to Science Academy. The Santa Cruz team will receive a series of trainings and technical assistance to assist them in moving their program towards being recognized as a model or promising program. Way to go Santa Cruz!! We will look forward to seeing you on "the list"!!

The SDFSC TA team would like to say a special thank you to counties for hosting and/or offering to host this year's Workshop-by-Request events:

- Alameda, Butte, Kings, Napa, Orange, Sacramento, San Bernardino, San Diego, and Ventura

We thank these counties for their warm hospitality, assistance with logistics, and let's not forget the food.

- ...and thanks in advance to Tulare County for hosting the September 27th session of Environmental Prevention: Strategies for Engaging Youth.

What's New: Upcoming Events and Notices

Workshop-by-Request Series: Looking for Host Counties

The Workshop-By-Request series allows grantees to host pre-packaged workshops in their own counties and have the opportunity to welcome guests from neighboring counties to join the training event. Please contact us if you would like to offer one of the following workshops in your community:

- Recruiting and Retaining Families: Culturally Appropriate Strategies
- Evaluating Prevention Programs: A Service Provider's Guide
- Painless Program Evaluation: A Step-By-Step Guide to Measuring Outcomes
- Got Data? A Step-by-Step Guide to Making Data Work for You
- Environmental Prevention: Strategies for Engaging Youth

Upcoming Events and Products

- **Statewide Learning Community Conference** – The SDFSC Statewide Learning Community Conference is on the calendar for September 13th and 14th, 2005. The agenda includes workshops, panel discussions, and showcases designed to promote information sharing across SDFSC grantees, the SDFSC TA Team, and ADP representatives.
- **Consultant Planning Meeting** – The Annual SDFSC Consultant Planning Meeting is scheduled for September 15th, 2005. We are looking forward to the opportunity to brainstorm with our consultants to better serve you in the upcoming year.
- **Prevention Briefs** – The SDFSC TA Prevention Brief, “Principles for Informing and Engaging Parents” was distributed earlier this summer. Be on the look out for the second issue of this research-based compilation that focuses on fidelity and adaptation in prevention programming.
- **Grantee Profiles** – In addition to being accessible online, the completed compilation of Grantee Profiles will be distributed to the fields.

Notices

The SDFSC TA Project Website, accessible at www.ca-sdfsc.org, provides details on all workshops and publications. Announcements are listed on the homepage. To access the calendar, simply click to the Learning Community web page and then click on the SDFSC TA Calendar for specific dates. Registration for the listed workshops is also available online.

Grantee E-mail List: If you would like other members of your local prevention team to be on the SDFSC listserv, please email Angela Okamura angela@emt.org with your team's contact information.

We've Moved

The SDFSC TA Project team has relocated! We are excited to announce the opening of an additional Center for Applied Research Solutions (CARS) office in Santa Rosa. Please be sure to update your contact directory with our new information:

**558 B Street, Suite 100
Santa Rosa, CA 95401
Phone: 707 568 3800
Fax: 707 568 3810**

SDFSC Technical Assistance Resources

The SDFSC TA Project offers an array of technical assistance services and resources to help make your programs as effective as possible. We offer on-site sessions, consultations by phone, regional workshops and workshops-by-request, researched materials and documents, as well as an online website offering a variety of resources. For more information on any of these services, or to request TA, please visit www.ca-sdfsc.org

On-site and Conference Calling TA: CARS/SDFSC consultants travel to your location in order to work with you and your program team. Possible topics include: strategic planning; logic model development; effective alcohol, drug, and violence prevention strategies; program evaluation; and other components essential to successful prevention programming.

Regional Workshops and Workshops-by-Request: Regional workshops are designed to address needs that are common to grantees at any given time. In conducting regional workshops, the SDFSC TA team and grantees meet with one another to problem-solve and further build the learning community. These workshops are typically offered in at least one northern and southern California location as well as a central location depending on demand.

Workshops-by-Request are pre-packaged workshops that address specific issues. Any grantee county can request to have the workshop locally at any time and open their doors for other interested grantee counties to come participate. Please see our website for a listing of workshops and to apply to be a Host County.

Researched Materials and Documents: The SDFSC TA Project aims to bring you the latest research in prevention in ways that are easy to understand and, most importantly, that are applicable. “Lessons from the Field” is a grantee-oriented newsletter that provides important points and lessons learned from TA sessions and trainings. The “SDFSC TA Prevention Brief” is similar in that it is grantee-oriented; however, it is a research brief that provides the science behind the practice. Upcoming topics include sustainability and principles for adapting science-based curriculum.

Online Resource: www.ca-sdfsc.org: Our SDFSC TA website is a valuable resource that grantees go to for information on technical assistance, workshops, announcements, upcoming events, data sources, research articles, and more. Grantees can also apply for TA, register for workshops, and provide us feedback on our TA sessions. We aim to make the most of the internet as a readily available resource for you and the learning community.

Technical Assistance Progress

What is your program's utilization of TA services in relation to other grantees?
Here are the TA services in order of frequency:

- Site Visits (provided to all 43 projects)
- Evaluation Consultation (36 counties)
- Logic Model Training (19 counties)
- Strategic Planning (13 counties)
- Recruitment and Retention (9 counties)
- Curriculum Consultation (7 counties)
- Program Fidelity (5 counties)
- Risk and Resiliency (4 counties)
- Environmental Prev. Strategies (4 counties)
- Facilitation (3 counties)
- Sustainability (2 counties)
- Progressing Towards Model Program Status (2 counties)

Training Progress

How many trainings has your team been to?
Here are the participation rates:

- Effective Strategies for Working with Underserved Populations (132 participants)
- Recruitment and Retention: (45 participants)
- Painless Program Evaluation I and II: (68 participants)
- Communities Mobilizing Change for Alcohol: (67 participants)
- Other Curriculum Trainings (Second Step and Towards No Drug Abuse): (56 participants)
- Environmental Prevention Strategies for Engaging Youth: (43 participants)

Lessons from the Field

Lessons from the Field is a publication of the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities Technical Assistance Project, managed by The Center for Applied Research Solutions (CARS) and funded by The California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs (DADP). This newsletter intends to: (1) provide a compilation of relevant tips and strategies learned through SDFSC TA Project field work and trainings; (2) inform grantees about upcoming TA events and trainings; and (3) foster the cross-sharing of peer learnings.

Let's Hear from You

We welcome your feedback, comments and questions about this newsletter and future newsletter topics. If you would like to contact us, please email SDFSC TA Project Director Kerrilyn Scott-Nakai at kerrilyn@emt.org or contact the Santa Rosa CARS office location. Issues of Lessons from the Field and information on the SDFSC TA Project can be accessed online at www.ca-sdfsc.org.

Lessons
from the Field

Safe & Drug-Free
Schools & Communities
Technical Assistance Project
California's Governor's Program



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