Prevention Brief

AIN'T NO MOUNTAIN HIGH ENOUGH

Taking Prevention Program Design and Evaluation to the Next Level

by Christina J. Borbely, Ph.D

WHAT COMES NEXT? The grantees of the Safe and Drug-Free School and Community (SDFSC) Governor's Program are looking ahead and asking this question. For many programs, the basic mechanics of successful programming are already in place including logic models, services implemented, and evaluation plans. With programs in progress and on course for excellence, the next step is to determine **HOW FAR TO GO.**

HOW DOES PRACTICING MORE SOPHISTICATED PREVENTION BENEFIT CALIFORNIA'S SDFSC PROGRAMS?

This prevention brief is designed to support prevention providers in advancing program sophistication. It aims to build capacity in prevention program best practices by enabling programs to initiate steps towards the sustainable advancement of SDFSC projects. The focus of this brief includes both theoretical and practical information. It highlights options for progressive program design and program evaluation, as well as opportunities for recognition and replication within the field. In addition, it provides detailed information on refining program design through marketing and packaging of program materials, defining the need for prevention services, increasing evaluation rigor and applying relevant evaluation strategies. Examples of program excellence in action are illustrated in SDFSC project profiles. Furthermore, prevention experts offer recommendations on scaling grassroots prevention practice from molehills into mountains of success. Overall, the topics are pertinent to local SDFSC projects that are striving to exceed in program excellence.

Service providers are ideally passionate about their programs and dedicated to providing benefits to their program population. Thus, the value of advancing the practice of prevention is intrinsic in facilitating better programs and better benefits for participants. There is more to it than intrinsic value, however. Taking the practice of prevention to optimal levels of operation has a host of benefits that includes the following:

- Replicating innovative strategies
  - fills in gaps on the service spectrum
  - integrates latest science and/or practice
  - identifies cutting edge prevention methods

- Making contribution through dissemination
  - participates in and informs the science-service dialog
  - advances the field in theory and practice
  - provides effective program to other service providers and the communities they serve (i.e., replication).

- Program expansion
  - demonstrates the need/value of new or additional funding
  - bolsters capacity to sustain programming
  - increases opportunity for program replication

- Recognition
  - achieves validation from the field
  - increases program awareness/familiarity within target communities
  - increases potential for supplemental support/ resources (e.g. Service to Science Academy)

OPPORTUNITIES FOR PROGRAM RECOGNITION	
Recognitions	- Local/State recognition or honors - Acknowledgment by professional organizations both in the field (e.g. foundations) or not (e.g. corporations)
Awards	- NREPP Status - Exemplary Program Award - Service to Science Award
Publications	- media, peer-reviewed academic journals and other related publications in the field

WHAT ASPECTS OF PREVENTION PROGRAMS CAN BE TAKEN TO THE NEXT LEVEL?

The science of prevention is translated into practice through effective programming, which blends "front of the house" with 'back of the house' operations. In the frontline, prevention programs display its content, design and delivery (e.g. the program curriculum, the participant recruitment flyers, banners, etc.). Back of the house operations include behind the scenes planning, preparation, and tinkering; its infrastructure, in short. Key examples are program needs assessments, strategic planning and program evaluation.

The process of designing, implementing, and sustaining prevention programs can be a matter of cobbling together a hodgepodge of available resources, often influenced by personal or management politics. It can be the product of a windfall of funding, or the result of strategic planning that is both multi-dimensional and meticulously executed. Whatever the approach, room for improvement puts all prevention practitioners in the same boat. It also puts prevention practitioners at the distinct advantage of learning as well as teaching one another more sophisticated means of practicing prevention.

The vast number of components that comprise program design and program infrastructure can be overwhelming. This brief will focus on a subset of topics considered fundamental to successful prevention programming and program excellence.

BASIC PRACTICES OF SOPHISTICATED PREVENTION PRACTICE	
Logic Model	- clearly defines what the program is, what it's expected to do and what measures of success will be used - provides a research-based theory behind prevention strategies - promotes communication and a common understanding amongst staff and funders
Core Components	- program structure (e.g., the sequence of sessions or context of delivery) - program content (e.g., specific concepts or skill sets) - method of delivery (e.g., "homework" assignments, classroom infusion, or youth-led group activities)
Quantifiable Outcomes	Defines expectations and progress in clear, concise numeric values via: - proposed outcomes including target or threshold numbers - Evaluation and analysis that produce precise values indicative of impact or change

FRONT OF THE HOUSE:
TOOLS OF SOPHISTICATED PROGRAM DESIGN

Social Marketing is the use of techniques similar to those used by commercial marketers to address health and social issues. It focuses on an identified target audience, and attempts to persuade that audience – mainly through various media, messages, and materials – to adopt an idea, a practice, a product, or all three.

When it comes to marketing, materials don't have to be glossy and expensive. That just isn't affordable at our grassroots level. However materials do need to be concise and professionally presented.

- Rosemary Tisch,
Director of
Prevention Partnership International

Marketing savvy may seem a foreign concept to prevention providers, but in fact it is common practice. Providers naturally undertake efforts to make their SDFSC program attractive to potential and active participants. The logo, letterhead, newsletters, mascots, pencils, water bottles and other giveaways marked with the program slogan, are all part of the program's social marketing strategy. Refining marketing savvy and techniques makes for more effective use of resources devoted to promoting the program.

Social marketing, unlike commercial marketing, focuses on addressing issues or concerns that affect individuals and communities. There is no shortage of professional agencies that provide this service, as well as prevention experts who adopt social marketing principles and strategies in promoting grassroots projects. For this purpose, it is useful to consider and review common marketing methods or products, including basic concepts of social marketing theory.

In prevention programming, social marketing strategies can take many forms. Whether it be a catchy program name, a memorable slogan, a sign on the door, or a t-shirt, consistency is important. Colors, fonts, images, and formatting should be consistent across all program "products." This amounts to "branding", which allows the program to evolve into a visible and easily recognizable presence, and eventually build familiarity and trust among active and potential participants.

Whether starting from scratch or improving existing marketing strategies, two key principles inform, or re-inform social marketing practice: 1) identifying the target audience with a specific and detailed definition of the target population; and 2) gathering as much information as possible about the audience. Research informs the development of marketing strategies, an ongoing process which ensures that information about the target population is regularly updated and current. Knowing the audience and doing the "homework" on that audience serve as the foundation for a powerful program promotion.

Knowing the Audience

The audience is the group of individuals for whom the specified message is targeted with the purpose of communicating some knowledge, attitude, or behavior. For example, high school students may be the audience for a program that aims to reduce school drop out rates. Within the field of social marketing, there is controversy over whether or not to segment populations. Segmentation is the categorization of an audience into strategic subgroups. Using the previous example, this would entail narrowing the audience from all high school students to those attending schools with high drop out rates or only students aged 16 years and older. This allows for the development of different marketing strategies for individual groups of people. This technique is considered highly effective as subgroups may resonate more or less with specific marketing messages and medium. This approach, however, may be considered contradictory to principles of equality and the concept that all individuals should be treated the same. A universal audience approach entails developing a single marketing strategy that can be applied to the entire population.

SDFSC Governor's programs are designed to target vulnerable at-risk/underserved youth. To this extent, the audience is already segmented. This segmentation is based on demographic characteristics. Audience segmentation can be defined by demographic variables, such as geography, gender, age, race, or socioeconomic status. It may also be defined by attitudinal and behavioral characteristics. For instance, high school students who score low on a school bonding measure or those who have high rates of unexcused absences may be the segmented audience for a drop-out prevention program. Alternatively, audience segmentation may be a product of demographic traits and attitudinal/behavioral characteristics. In a nutshell, information gathered about a particular audience contributes to understanding the target population and developing effective marketing messages.

Jump Start, a substance abuse prevention and life skills program for economically disadvantaged, high sensation seeking African American teens, addressed a target audience at risk based on both demographic (low SES) and psychological (sensation seeking) factors. The program's designers reasoned that because high sensation seekers are attracted to varied, novel, and complex stimuli to meet their sensation needs, they would be attracted to prevention messages that have these same qualities. The high-sensation-value classroom-based program, which included video and interpersonal elements, proved effective for both high and low sensation seekers. Most telling, however, was that significant pretest differences between high- and low- sensation seekers in attitudes toward drugs and use of alcohol and marijuana were neutralized, indicating a greater effect on the high sensation seeking target audience.
- *Health Education and Behavior, 1997; 24(5): 568-586.*

Doing the Homework

Once a target audience has been identified, it is important to gather as much information as possible about the nature of this particular population. Referred to as "market research", this allows insights into the factors that motivate individuals and catalyzes the desired effect of influencing the target audience to adopt the knowledge, attitude or behavior the program promotes.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

● Begin with existing research and literature
  - academic journals
  - government or official publications
  - online references
● Conduct original research:
  - Focus groups
  - Surveys
● Shoulder-tap interviews
  Use original research to:
  - confirm the existing research; and
  - supplement existing research with depth and
    nuance specific to the target audience.

REPLICATION

The following information should be made available to individuals and groups interested in implementing an existing program with integrity:

● Resources
  - Staffing
  - Partnerships
  - Funding
● Protocol
  - Program curriculum
  - Training process
  - Evaluation
● Packaged program materials
  - Curriculum
  - Evaluation
● Strategic replication
  - Success in varied populations
  - Success in varied context

Packaging Programs

Establishing a cohesive and effective marketing strategy is one element that elevates the sophistication of program operations. Social marketing generates program appeal by refining the program's presence with an attractive polish. Another aspect of program design is the "packaging" of the program into a product. That is, strategically developing program materials to capture content and delivery essentials in a concise, accessible, and replicable manner. This aspect of program design can be refined along with social marketing initiatives or as an independent target to improve the program.

> Social marketing generates program appeal by refining the program's presence with an attractive polish.

BACK OF THE HOUSE:
TOOLS OF SOPHISTICATED PROGRAM EVALUATION

What Role does a Needs Assessment have in Advancing Infrastructure of SDFSC Programs?

Ultimately, a strategic and thorough needs assessment serves as the rationale for program curriculum as well as strategies selected for implementation. The process involves the following:

● Developing an objective profile of the community
● Identifying geographic and demographic areas that are at greatest risk
● Ensuring resources are allocated where they will have the greatest impact
● Demonstrating need for funding
● Guiding optimal selection of research-based prevention practices

Ideally, the needs assessment occurs as part of the planning phase of program development. It is a tool that promotes informed, logical, and strategic decision-making. As such, programs that incorporate needs assessment to their program are more likely to have successful and sustainable prevention services. Basic steps for conducting a needs assessment include:

● Identifying risk and protective factors in the community
  - Collecting data about each risk and protective factor
  - Integrating key stakeholders in process
        o Bonus points for youth
        o Representative of community
  - Using archival (existing) data
  - Using original (generated) data

● Analyzing the data
  - What trends are observable in the raw data?
  - How do local compare to state or national statistics?
  - What are possible explanations for existing "risk factors?"
  - Is the risk factor a priority in the community?

> Needs assessment is a tool that promotes informed, logical, and strategic decision-making

A community [needs] assessment is a systematic process that examines the current conditions of a situation (such as substance abuse) and identifies the level of risk and protection in (the) community.

- Western CAPT (July, 2006)
http://casat.unr.edu/bestpractices/needs.htm

● Establishing priorities
- Referring to data to determine any constellation of risk factors
- How effectively can the risk factor be addressed? Do effective methods exist?
- Is there a deficit of protective factors?
- Who are the populations affected by the presence of risk factors/lack of protective factors?

● Assessing available resources
- Are there resources in place? What are they?
- What are the overlaps in services?
- What are the gaps in services?
- How accessible are services and to what populations?

● Identifying evidence-based strategies
- What are research-driven best practices?
- Are resources culturally appropriate for the target population?
- What outcomes can be expected from implementation?
- What is required for successful replication in the community?

DATA COLLECTION PLANNING WORKSHEET B
CSAP's Western Regional Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies

(This form is used to develop the data collection plan, with one form to be completed for each risk and protective factor.)

Risk/Protective Factor(s)	Archival Indicators	Who/What are potential sources of this data? (e.g., schools, social services, law enforcement, local government, state government)	Who will collect the data?
1.	1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.	3.
4.	4.	4.	4.

It is not uncommon for programs to incorporate a post hoc needs assessment component. In this scenario, programs review the circumstances and factors that motivated programmatic choices. For example, a spate of ill-fated teen "house parties" in one year could prompt structured and supervised sober events for high school students in the following years. Alternatively, it may be a county-level campaign focused on gang prevention that prioritized the

program's funding application for violence prevention. In any case, the post hoc needs assessment means re-discovering the context in which the program plan was originally forged. This may entail:

- reviewing documents of program history
- interviewing original staff associated with program development
- collecting local news or any information published in the timeframe of program inception
- conducting archival research on local statistics compiled near the time of program inception

Establishing an additional needs assessment component of the program delivers the following benefits:

- preserves the logic and rationale (the program's foundation)
- contributes to ongoing strategic planning
- provides a benchmark by which to assess program progress towards original goals/needs
- indicates whether or not a program should be sustained based on the original purpose versus current community needs or priorities
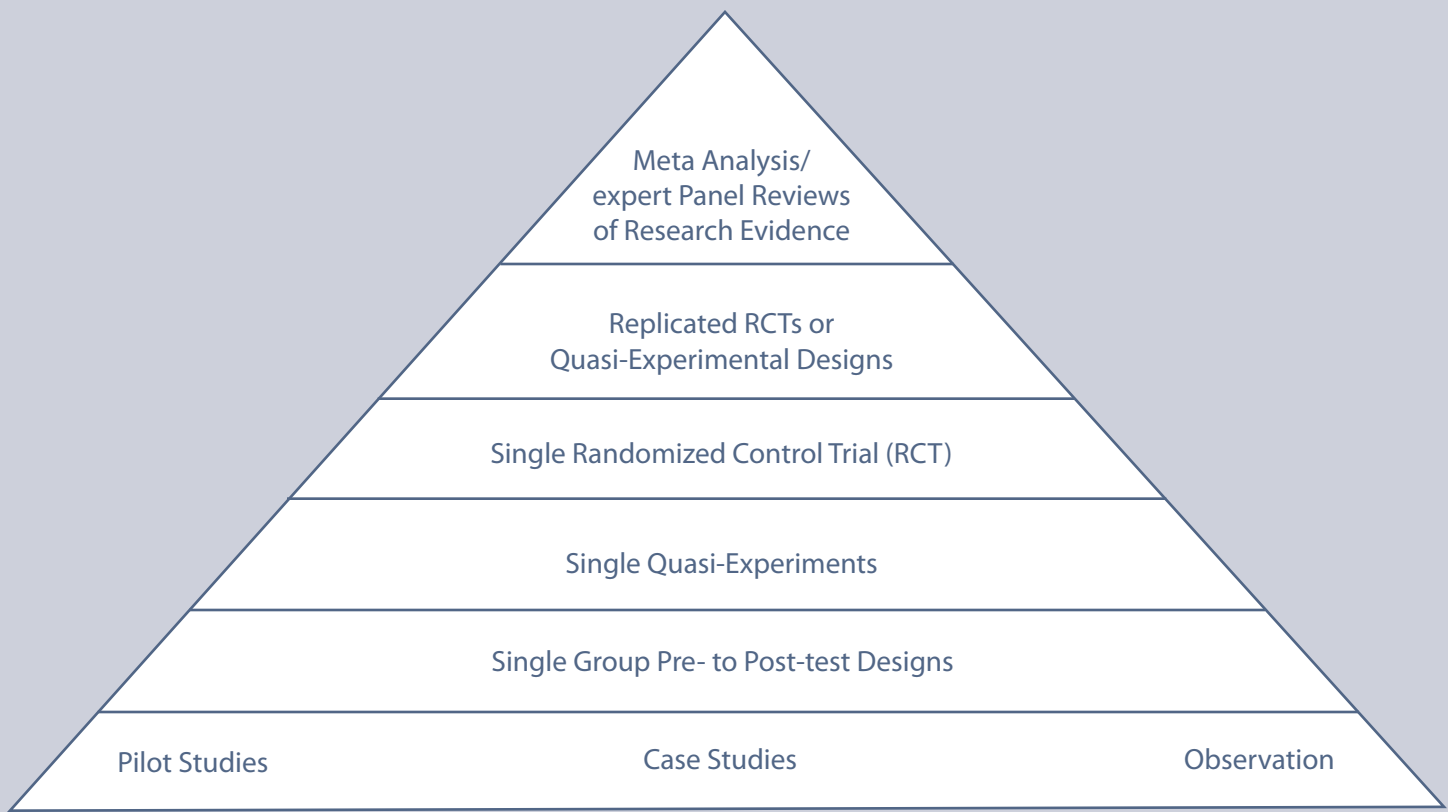
WHAT CONSTITUTES RIGOROUS PROGRAM EVALUATION?

Evaluation Design

As a hallmark of sophisticated prevention programming, rigorous program evaluation offers two-fold benefits: first, the findings generated from advanced evaluation methods improve programming. The more exact the evaluation, the more viable information is produced that can be integrated to optimize the program. Second, rigorous evaluation allows the dissemination of evidence-based (i.e., scientifically proven) program outcomes. The more advanced the program evaluation, the stronger the evidence that supports the link between program participation and desired impacts.

STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS

Use external evaluator to lend credibility
- Especially valuable for publishing findings
Conduct evaluation of replication sites
- Evidence of impact in varied settings; populations
Evaluate program effect and sustainability of effect
- Pre/post demonstrates immediate effects
- Follow up (longitudinal) proves how those effects are sustained

NREPP offers the following hierarchical model in implementing program evaluation rigor:

Meta Analysis/
expert Panel Reviews
of Research Evidence

Replicated RCTs or
Quasi-Experimental Designs

Single Randomized Control Trial (RCT)

Single Quasi-Experiments

Single Group Pre- to Post-test Designs

Pilot Studies   Case Studies   Observation

HOW DOES THE TIMING OF DATA COLLECTION IMPACT PROGRAM EVALUATION?

The majority of SDFSC programs use a pre/post assessment schedule with follow-up points contingent on program duration. Longer programs require a longer follow-up data collection schedule and vice versa for short-term programs. Programs with continuous enrollment vs. cohorts of youth benefit from strong tracking systems and continuous evaluation schedule (e.g., every three or six months). A follow-up data collection point after completion provides additional comparison point for measuring change (especially useful if participants did not provide accurate or complete baseline information) and an opportunity to assess the sustainability of the program's impact.

WHAT EVALUATION DESIGNS EMPHASIZE THE REAL IMPACT OF THE PROGRAM?

Program evaluation design may be structured to highlight specific aspects of program success. Various strategies for comparing program impacts within or beyond program participants enable sophisticated interpretation of evaluation findings. Comparison groups can sometimes be fairly easy to develop. "Internal" comparison groups may be structured according to the level of participation (e.g., high to low) or a variety of participant characteristics such as participant's gender or level of "risk". For instance, low dosage service groups may be utilized for comparison to program "regulars" or those with high or consistent levels of participation. This entails defining distinct categories of participation rates for evaluation, and not necessarily for programmatic purposes. This strategy allows the program to gain insight into the types of impacts associated with who and how participants are served. In addition, findings may be used to inform strategic planning and hone program services, adding a level of nuance and complexity to data analysis and interpretation.

Evaluation design may also be structured to make comparisons that are external to the program, particularly valuable in providing a backdrop for interpreting program outcomes. Rather than being limited to self-referential findings, the program can report on how findings compare in a broader context. For example, access to school records generally provides convenient opportunity to design a comparison group of non-participant peers. In this case, information collected from the school records (e.g., attendance, academic, or discipline data) of participants may be compared to those of non-participants. Similar to this method, use of standardized measures in the program evaluation may allow for program comparisons to school, district, and state results on the same instrument. Specifically, it can compare the outcomes of participating youth to their counterparts who did not participate. This level of comparison will illustrate how program impacts fit into "the big picture."

It is important to note that while randomized control groups are desirable for evaluation purposes, this design requires considerable resources and may deter participants due to random assignment to participating and non-participating groups. The latter may be resolved by providing program services at a later date.

TIPS FOR ADVANCING PROGRAM EVALUATION DATASETS

- Grow your sample over time.
  - Repeated measures accumulate data
  - Aggregate samples are powerful

- Resource limitations? Consider using a strategic or smaller sub-sample.

- Calculate necessary sample size for appropriate statistical power.
  http://www.surveysystem.com/sscalc.htm
  http://www.macorr.com/ss_calculator.htm

- Leverage variability in data/dosage to program advantage.

  (Youth who completed the program were more likely to have negative attitudes toward use than youth who did not complete the program.)

WHERE DOES THE PROGRAM FALL ON THE SPECTRUM OF SOPHISTICATION?

Program evaluation begins with an active reflection and honest assessment of the program's status, its design or infrastructure. It outlines immediate and long-term goals for program development and sustainability. Instead of expecting every aspect of the program to summit the mountain, it is more appropriate to pick and choose areas in which to excel based on resources and program priorities. Each area is a mountain to climb in and of itself. While summiting may not be the ultimate goal, there are no shortage of scenic vistas and vantage points to aim for.

Striving for program excellence is a deliberate process with progress typically occurring in fits and starts. To stay motivated and on course, it is important to define the program strategy for advancement. For instance, one strategy may be to advance in areas where the program is already strong by using momentum and existing assets to propel the program forward (e.g. if someone on the program staff has a background in marketing, it may make sense to leverage that available resource rather than focus on an area in which there is no or limited internal capacity).

Alternatively, a program may prioritize increased sophistication in a weak area that has been previously neglected. This is an opportunity to explore new dimensions of the program using creative thinking and innovation. For instance, if the current program staff is unfamiliar with the logic model process, yet the program logic model requires updating for a new grant proposal, it may be appropriate to seek out advisors, technical assistance or training in this area.

In any case, programs that rely on feedback and input from key stakeholders to advance the program strategy are at an advantage, making commitment and collaboration of program management, staff, volunteers, participants, and partners critical to success.

HALLMARKS OF SUSTAINABLE PROGRAMS

- Program alignment with agency/department mission and service focus

- Service infrastructures in place to facilitate service continuity

- Agency/department has history of and focus on providing services to the program target population

- Program successfully built partnerships with other agencies, service providers, or schools

ASSESSING
PROGRAM STATUS

Regularly assessing program status assists in keeping the program focus and allocation of resources on track.

Prevention programming is multi-dimensional. It considers a variety of programming aspects and perspectives in gauging where a program is and where a program wants to be on a given dimension. The following examples may serve as a guide to the process:

PARTICIPATION
  Recruitment
  - Are target numbers being met consistently?
  - Are recruitment methods being used strategically?
  - Is the targeted population being engaged?

  Retention
  - Are sufficient completion rates available?
  - Are there clear definitions of graduates and drop-outs?
  - What steps are being taken to encourage retention?

FIDELITY
  - To what degree are core components consistently implemented? Is this sufficient?
  - What system(s) is used to reflect areas of challenge? How does that inform the process?
  - What method is being used to monitor implementation across sites? Is ample vigilance being practiced?
  - Does feedback get incorporated?

INNOVATION
  Degree to which program is novel, cutting edge, innovative
  - How is this different than what's already available?
  - What aspects of the program are unique?

  Grounded but Innovative
  - Is the program aligned with already-proven models of service?
  - What proven methods are incorporated?
  - Are evidence-based strategies taken to the "next level" or used in a novel way?

SERVICES ARE CULTURALLY APPROPRIATE TO IDENTIFIED POPULATION
  - Are program content and materials (e.g., text and images) tested and effective with target population?
  - Are program protocol, staff training, and designated staff appropriately focused on the language, customs and culture of the target population?
  - Is there a link to evidence-based strategies with demonstrated success across ethnic/cultural groups or the target population?

ALLIANCES
  - Does the program maintain active participation in local coalitions or collaboratives?
  - Has the program established strong partnerships (i.e., with formal Memos of Understanding)?
  - Is there a designated person(s) engaged in networking to promote and advance the program agenda?
  - Does the program seek and find support within the community?

NEEDS ASSESSMENT
  - Is there a documented need for the program?
  - What is the rationale for implementing this specific program or strategy?
  - Do program outcomes address the original intended purpose?
  - Is this still the optimal approach to addressing the intended purpose?
  - Has the need been met or have priorities changed? Is it logical to sustain, adapt, or discontinue the program?

EVALUATION
  - Are participants individually monitored using confidential identifiers?
  - Is individual participation monitored across program streams/components?
  - Does the evaluation design allow for assessment of change over time?
  - Are the evaluation instruments evidence-based and sound for the intended purpose and population?
  - How can available data be optimally leveraged in analysis?

SDFSC
GRANTEE CASE STUDIES

Butte County SDFSC:
Butte County Friday Night Live/Club Live

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: The Butte County Friday Night Live Partnership (BCFNLP) integrates science-based prevention into its existing programs and services. BCFNLP supported the California Friday Night Live Partnership transition to a youth development model. The Butte County programming enhances the statewide FNL model by infusing innovative youth-led environmental prevention strategies into the standard program model. BCFNLP aims to reduce youth alcohol, tobacco, and drug use by mobilizing young people to address environmental factors that influence use within the community. BCFNLP goals are to: (1) provide skill building of chapter members in environmental prevention, (2) decrease youth use and exposure to ATOD and violence, (3) implement projects that elicit community or neighborhood-wide social, norm, or policy change, and (4) engage youth in opportunities that promote young people as agents of change.

PROGRAM ADVANCEMENT STRATEGY: The BCFNLP prevention process uses a youth-led implementation of needs assessment, community readiness, interventions/strategies, and evaluation. The concept is based on the five-step Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF). At the time of inception, there were no environmental prevention strategies targeting adolescents that incorporated youth development practices. To address this gap, BCFNLP prioritized a focus on advancing program evaluation in order to prove the effectiveness of the novel approach.

HONORS/AWARDS: FNL Character Counts Award; California State Association of Counties Challenge Award; National Association of State Alcohol/Drug Abuse Directors, National Prevention Network, CSAP, SAMSHSA, USDHHS Exemplary Substance Abuse Prevention Program for Innovative Program that Implemented Environmental Prevention Strategies; Service to Science Academy.

KEY ADVANCES: In order to advance the program evaluation toward a higher level of sophistication, BCFNLP identified a comparison county to compare specific environmental prevention indicators (e.g., parent attitudes toward youth alcohol use). This element of the evaluation allows the program findings to be measured against an independent set of findings derived in a similar context and lend credibility and objectivity to the "proof" of program effectiveness.

In advancing program evaluation, BCFNLP has experienced the benefit of drawing from a diverse pool of evaluation experts. Through various opportunities and means, BCFNLP has engaged five different evaluators (including, for instance, internal evaluators, Youth Leadership Institute and WestCAPT). The result is a rich source of input and ideas from experts engaged in furthering the *quality of the program.*

ELEMENTS OF PREVENTION PRACTICE	IN PLACE	IMPORTANT TO PROGRESS
Definition of core program components	√	!!!
Logic Model	√	!!!
Replication manual (or protocol manual)	√	!!!
Collaboration with the developer on some aspect of replication	n/a	
Replication at other school or sites	√	!!!
A "branded" program identity (e.g. use of logo)	√	!!
Packaged training materials	√	!!!
Packaged curriculum (impact guide)	√	!!!
Packaged activities	√	!!!
Packaged evaluation tools	√	!!!
Summary of key findings/executive summary report	√	!!!
Program video for marketing	x	!!
Program brochure	√	!!
Program website	√	!!
Use of or collaboration with outside evaluator(s)	√	!!!
Use of randomized control group for evaluation	√	!!!
Use of comparison group for evaluation	√	!!!
Application for field recognition (e.g. exemplary program status, service to science academy, journal articles)	√	!!!

SDFSC
GRANTEE CASE STUDIES

(Butte County SDFSC: BCFNLP Continued)

LESSONS LEARNED: Developing BCFNLP into a more formal and sophisticated prevention program involved addressing many issues at the same time. It required coordination of complicated factors and expertise in many areas. Operating in a rural county with limited program resources, BCFNLP pooled together any and all available support for the process by building partnerships and collaboratives. The BCFNLP's progress is the result of a collective effort. It had to be both - collective and a huge amount of effort - to be possible.

NEXT STEPS TOWARD BETTER PREVENTION: Developing the Program Manual. BCFNLP is currently developing the program's manual or "Impact Guide." It will provide a structured, week-by-week program implementation guide. In addition to and distinct from the Impact Guide is a replication manual. The latter will represent the core elements of the program that are essential for success as well as pieces that can be adapted to suit the specific community.

Advanced data analysis. BCFNLP was recently awarded an augmentation grant that will be used to track individual participants across multiple program streams. This opportunity will add more sophistication on evaluating program impact based on types and levels of participation (e.g., frequency, duration). The result will be the ability to indicate how specific aspects of participation are associated with program outcomes.

Santa Cruz County SDFSC: Abriendo Puertas

PROGRAM DESCRIPTION: Abriendo Puertas (AP) is designed to strengthen existing school-based programs through the introduction of evidence-based strategies and expanded services to underserved populations. The program specifically focuses on providing support and opportunities with an emphasis on social bonding, individual skill development and promotion of healthy beliefs and clear standards through life skills training, and environmental prevention strategies. AP targets middle and high school youth in conventional and alternative track school and community settings. It adopted FNL practices and youth development principles as a guide and began site testing activities and strategies. The AP curriculum is a result of what worked in the field.

PROGRAM ADVANCEMENT STRATEGY: The impetus for developing the sophistication of the AP program was the SDFSC requirement to select a model program. Santa Cruz County (SCC) was unable to find an existing program suitable given circumstances and resources. "How do we prove that what we're doing is valid?" SCC SDFSC team examined the structure and content of existing and successful programs. They all were curriculum-based. To meet local needs and promote successful implementation, SCC SDFSC decided to use a prescriptive structure, rather than emulate the principal/strategy-driven approach of more general programs. SCC SDFSC estimated that manualizing the adopted FNL practices would allow them to test what they were doing and prove it was effective.

ELEMENTS OF PREVENTION PRACTICE	IN PLACE	IMPORTANT TO PROGRESS
Definition of core program components	√	!!!
Logic Model	√	!!!
Replication manual (or protocol manual)	√	!!!
Collaboration with the developer on some aspect of replication	√	!!
Replication at other school or sites	√	!!!
A "branded" program identity (e.g. use of logo)	√	!
Packaged training materials	√	!!!
Packaged curriculum (impact guide)	√	!!!
Packaged activities	√	!!!
Packaged evaluation tools	√	!!!
Summary of key findings/executive summary report	x	!!!
Program video for marketing	x	!
Program brochure	√	!!!
Program website	√	!!!
Use of or collaboration with outside evaluator(s)	√	!!!
Use of randomized control group for evaluation	√	!/!!!
Use of comparison group for evaluation		!/!!!
Application for field recognition (e.g. exemplary program status, service to science academy, journal articles)	√	!

SDFSC
interview with the Experts

● **Andrea Taylor** on Advancing Prevention Programs

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Andrea Taylor, Ph.D.
is the Director of
Training at Temple
University's Center
for Intergenerational
Learning.

ON STRATEGIC ALLIANCES...

There are curriculum-driven model programs such as Botvin's Life Skills Training, and relationship-driven model programs such as Across Ages). As regard to the latter and Across Ages in particular, success is a function of adapting to the culture of the community, developing strong community partnerships, serving as a resource for participants and volunteers, and building trust with parents and teachers. A key factor in securing these relationships is publicizing the positive impact of the program. The opportunity to do so lies in whom you know and laying the foundation to expand from there. Working with key political figures who are pro-prevention is a great way to start (though this is easier to do in smaller communities than in large urban areas).

(Santa Cruz County SDFSC: Continued)

HONORS/AWARDS: Chamber of Commerce Organization of the Year (nominated by program chapters); West CAPT Regional Service to Science Academy; CSAP National Service to Science Academy; Robert E. Neff Award Outstanding Service to Alcohol & Drug Community Award (local); United Way of Santa Cruz County Community Hero Award; Friday Night Live Partnerships Character Counts Awards.

KEY ADVANCES: Abriendo Puertas (AP) honed in on one program method. Initially, individual program chapters were allowed the option of including community service learning projects in addition to the required environmental prevention project. Ultimately, the program eliminated community service learning in favor of exclusive focus on environmental prevention projects. This allowed the program to consolidate improvement efforts and focus on perfecting that element. Due to the history of the program team, the transition to the prescriptive approach was a challenge. Many longtime program staff were accustomed to other methods of program delivery. Consistency and adherence in implementation were improved by developing a curriculum that detailed week-to-week guidance. This ensured that same programs were being tested across chapter sites.

SCC SDFSC examined the types of skill development strategies and activities in each curriculum segment. It then streamlined a large number of program components into "core" components according to priority for outcomes. Ultimately, the core components were directly linked to measures used to evaluate specific impact.

AP advocates for youth-driven change by focusing on a philosophy that is integrated into staff action, program activities and procedural elements, which in turn, determines how the program is refined. AP makes sure this

fundamental principle pervades every element of what they do.

LESSONS LEARNED: Undecided on which direction to take in Year 2, the SCC SDFSC team accessed technical assistance support to help link existing research to what they were doing in the program. Establishing this connection guided AP back on track.

Adequate staffing as a necessary progress was made possible with the incorporation of sufficient staff to effectively monitor, measure, and integrate feedback on chapter implementation in the field.

At a certain point, AP realized ensuring program success was not always a matter of what they were doing, but identifying what they were not doing. Simple rapport-building activities were formalized and included in the staff manual. AP discovered that brief but meaningful interactions with youth and their families were key to facilitating positive impact by engaging the participants more actively.

NEXT STEPS TOWARD BETTER PREVENTION: Refining the curriculum by referring to colleagues for inspiration and advice on how to promote more advanced projects within the program curriculum

Developing summaries of program outcomes and key findings after the replication year is completed

Replication of the program in a new county to widen the development of AP outside their "silo" and confirm that the protocol and curriculum content translate to a variety of contexts

Another aspect of relationship-building opportunity comes with establishing an advisory board. An advisory board should be comprised of diverse individuals who represent the community. Our advisory board, for instance, includes local state representatives, school principals, teachers, parents, figures in local urban leagues, and representatives from the health and human services department and non-profit organizations that are interested in prevention and have a stake in the outcomes for youth. Once your advisory board is in place, really listen to what they have to say.

ON REPLICATION...

When a prevention program is in a position to consider replication, the focus is usually on dotting the "I's" and crossing the "T's" of curriculum or implementation manuals. In addition to program materials, it is critical to establish assessment criteria by which to evaluate potential replication sites. Program advancement is not a product of replication, but an outcome of good replication. Assessing a potential replication site – whether it be local, state, national or international – requires a definitive understanding of what circumstances are essential to program success. Look to the relevant research for guidance. Research of mentoring programs, for example, provides clear recommendations for infrastructure, implementation of best practices,, characteristics of mentors, and sustainability. As a program developer, use research and practice to determine what is essential to a successful replication. For Across Ages, replication sites must:

• Use all program components
• Mobilize mentors who are 55 years or older & provide them with stipends or reimbursement
• Implement state- or agency-approved screening & training

• Provide training and orientation to all participants
• Vigilantly monitor the mentor-youth matches
• Prepare written agreements among collaborating organizations
• Staff the program adequately (part-time clerical support; full time coordinator with minimum of three years of education/social work counseling/related field experience; outreach coordinator)
• Obtain family consent for youth participation
• A classroom and one or more central meeting locations.

Without these pieces in place, Across Ages implementation will not be successful. Many of these components are associated with adequate funding. Program developers should establish costs associated with program implementation - overall expense and itemized program costs - and share this information with potential replication sites. It is really important to be certain that the program is adequately funded and staffed. Trying to implement a program with insufficient funding is like blowing into the wind. It may be a challenge initially to identify any replication sites, let alone replication sites that meet the identified program standards. Maintaining standards for replication will ultimately ensure that both the program and the program site are a success.

ON FUNDING...

How to secure program funding - the eternal question; the elusive answers. There is no sure bet, but explore the following potential sources:
• Federal sources (not great at the moment)
• Explore dimensions of your state website, including, for instance, pages on health, education, alcohol and drug prevention.
• Private/corporate foundations can be a great source of funding if they are interested in the program
• Develop the program as a business and generate income.

> **"It may be a challenge initially to identify any replication sites, let alone replication sites that meet the identified program standards. Maintaining standards for replication will ultimately ensure that both the program and the program site are a success."**

● **Rosemary Tisch** on Advancing a Program Targeting the Reduction of Substance Abuse and Violence

Rosemary Tisch, M.A., M.M. is the Director of Prevention Partnership International.

ON PROGRAM CHAMPIONS...
Taking a program to higher levels of sophistication takes the perseverance of a champion and the support of a dedicated team. When it comes to growing a local program nationally or internationally, there has to be a program champion. This is someone who feels passionately about the project and is willing to stick their neck out. However this person must also have a team to support or even catch them, if they begin to fall.

The program champion strategy has implications for all aspects of advancement. For example, when it comes to replication, it is imperative to stay local first! Local replication allows time to learn where potential problems are. Solving them builds a trusting team. This complete process creates new program champions and results in momentum and strength to drive program advancement to higher levels.

ON DEVELOPING PROGRAM MANUALS...
Another aspect of creating a replicable program is translating it into a product. Program materials must be precise. They can not be simply expanded lecture notes. There must be detail that captures the nuance of what to deliver and how. It is the subtle pieces that make the program. Without them the essence is lost.

It is useful to have someone involved who has experience in curriculum development. Clearly, the development team benefited from my previous curriculum writing experiences. Because we replicated first locally, we had input from clients and program staff who knew us (well) and felt comfortable providing honest feedback. We also built trust on the writing/editing team, so

that what was said by each person was respected and all had equal say (including me, the program champion!). Anyone could say anything – just put it out there. The team was composed of people in recovery, children of alcoholics/addicts, and individuals unaffected by substance addiction. Together we brainstormed, clarified, and referenced successful, evidence-based strategies. Most importantly, we listened, listened, listened to all feedback. And then for the final product, we used a single, trusted editor (who had been at all our editing meetings) to produce a consistent product.

ON REPLICATION...
Celebrating Families! ™ is targeted for a specific population (families in early recovery) and developmentally appropriate for each age group (from preschool through parents). We believe it is possible to adapt it for use by other populations, but this requires rewriting. University-developed curricula seem to be more universal in application and research based. Celebrating Families! ™ is different in that it was developed in the field. We took advantage of the materials available from universities, conducting extensive research into the need and evidence for the program and implementation strategies. We did do our homework! We listened to clients and to staff from pilot sites, who trusted each other. Then we referenced current research from NIAAA, NIDA, The Search Institute, and the universities. The resulting product is client-focused, user friendly and effective with preliminary evaluation data showing significant effect size changes. Celebrating Families! ™ is now ready for nationwide replication!

SDFSC
interview with the Experts

ABOUT THE EXPERTS

Andrea Taylor is the Director of Training at Temple University's Center for Intergenerational Learning. Throughout her career, she has been active in recruiting, training and supervising volunteers for private and non-profit organizations, universities, school districts and federal and state agencies. In connection with this interest, she serves on the Research and Policy Council for MENTOR/National Mentoring Partnership. Andrea developed Across Ages, the grassroots-to-CSAP model program of intergenerational mentoring,. The model program is a mentoring initiative targeting youth 9 to 13 years of age. It includes four components: (1) age 50+ adults mentoring youth, (2) youth performing community service, (3) youth participating in a life skills/problem-solving curriculum, and (4) monthly activities for family members. The goal is to enhance the resiliency of children in order to promote positive development and prevent them from engaging in high-risk behaviors such as substance use, early sexual activity, or violence

Rosemary Tisch is the Director of Prevention Partnership International. She founded Kids Are Special (KAS) and Family Education Foundation (FEF), which focused on the prevention of substance abuse in high-risk populations: children of alcoholics/addicts, sexually active teens, individuals with learning differences and those exposed in utero to alcohol and other drugs. Prevention Partnership International (PPI) develops programs which break the cycles of addiction and abuse in families.

In Santa Clara County, California, she was chair of the Fetal Alcohol Syndrome Clinic Development Committee and the Co-Chair of the Santa Clara County Community Learning Assessment Task Force. Group models created by KAS and FEF have been successfully replicated throughout the US, Mexico, Ukraine and Russia.

Rosemary's current initiative is the development and advancement of Celebrating Families! -- an innovative, cognitive-behavioral group model for families in which a parent/caregiver is in early recovery from alcohol/drug abuse and where there is high risk for child abuse/neglect and domestic violence. The model integrates the latest research regarding children of alcoholics/addicts, life skills, risk and resiliency, 40 Developmental Assets, learning differences, brain chemistry and fetal alcohol spectrum disorders.

In advancing better prevention practice, any time is a good time to review priorities. Gaining sophistication in programming is a process that involves determining what is viable given the program priorities and circumstances for it to be able to move forward at a suitable pace. Below are points to consider to keep the program on track:

- identifying programs and colleagues who can serve as mentors or inspiration (it is not a matter of "keeping up with the Jones'")
- determining aspects of prevention programming that are viable areas for improvement
- establishing level of sophistication in prevention practice as a viable goal.
- marking milestones along the way and celebrating progress toward better prevention programs.
- accessing support and resources from program partners, program developers, technical assistance, and SDFSC TA project.

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SDFSC TA
Prevention Brief

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The **SDFSC TA Prevention Brief** is a publication of the California Governor's Program 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 (ADP).

The SDFSC TA Prevention Brief Series provides information on topics relevant to grantees grounded in your experiences and explained through research. A copy of this publication can also be found on our website at www.ca-sdfsc.org. If you would like to suggest a topic, contact Kerrilyn Scott-Nakai, Project Director, at kerrilyn@emt.org.

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