Step 1: Assessment

Understanding the needs assessment process and utilizing data

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The SPF Five Steps...

Enable communities to build the infrastructure necessary for effective and sustainable prevention

- Assessment
- Capacity Building
- Planning
- Implementation
- Evaluation

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Step 1: Assessment

WHAT - A comprehensive community assessment will help you identify:

- The problems you would like to address in your community
- Where those problems occur
- Which youth and families are most affected by those problems
- What resources and strengths your community has to address those problems

HOW – Critical steps for a comprehensive community assessment:

- Compile and assess available data
- Collect and analyze data to determine main AOD issues
- Create list of AOD problems; write problem statements
- Conduct assessment of resources and assets
- Share AOD rankings and data with communities

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Take an inventory of:

- The demographics of your community
- The perceptions of people regarding your issue
- The power relationships (influences) that will help you create change
- Potential supporters and opponents
- The self-interest of stakeholders
- The composition of local decision-makers such as city councils and administrative agencies
- Existing evidence and data that will support your cause
- Any arguments expected from opposing forces

Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol: Lessons and Results From A Community Randomized Trial. Journal of Community Psychology, Vol. 27, No. 3, 315-326 (1999)

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Data Sources to Include

- Healthy Kids Survey
- School (ATOD suspension, expulsions, etc.)
- Law Enforcement
- Treatment
- Hospital Admissions
- Geographic data

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What data do we have to review today???

Are we missing anything???

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Questions...Comments...

Risk and Protective Factors

- **Risk Factors** are conditions that increase the likelihood of young people becoming involved in substance use, delinquency, teen pregnancy, school dropout and/or violence.
- **Protective Factors** are conditions that buffer young people from exposure to risk, by either reducing the impact of the risk or changing the way the young person responds to risk. Protective factors promote positive youth development

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The Stories Must Be Told

- *People who solve problems must somehow first arrive at the belief that they can solve problems. This belief does not emerge suddenly. The capacity to cause change grows in an individual over time as* ***small-scale efforts*** *lead gradually to larger ones. But the process needs a beginning a story, an example, an* ***early taste of success*** *something along the way helps a person* ***form the belief*** *that it is possible to make the world a better place. Those who act on that belief spread it to others. They are highly contagious.* ***Their stories must be told.*** *" (p. 282)*

David Bornstein, author of How to Change the World: Social Entrepreneurship and the Power of New Ideas

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- **Examine the issues**
- **Underlying risk and protective factors**
- **Current services and prevention strategies**

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Examine The Issues

- The nature, extent and specific types of existing AOD problems in your county – with a particular focus on consequences and consumption

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Risk and Protective Framework

- Identifying risk factors tells us why we have the problem, and where to intervene.
- The needs assessment tells us what level of problems we have **right now**.
- We are preparing to change the future.
- We cannot change the past.

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Risk Factors

- Identify the factors that predict future problem behaviors.
- Predict points to interrupt the course leading to problem behaviors.
- Specify the interventions to prevent onset of problem behaviors (Interventions fit the situation).

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Risk Factors

- Research-Based
- Have proven to be predictive in multiple longitudinal studies (Studies of 15+ years)
- Influence in all domains: community, family, school and individual/peer
- Focus on young people (under 20), during the developmental continuum
- They are measurable
- Buffered by **protective factors**

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Risk Factors

- Easier to collect data.
- We generally do not have readily available data on the "positive stuff".
- Data for negative and/or problem behaviors are well documented.
- Relate to underlying causes.
- Protective factors must be intentional, and will mitigate impact of risks.

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Community Risk Factors

- Availability of alcohol/drugs
- Community laws and norms favorable toward alcohol/drug use
- Transitions and mobility
- Low neighborhood attachment and community disorganization
- Extreme economic deprivation

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Family Risk Factors

- Family history of substance abuse
- Family management problems
- Family conflict
- Parental attitudes and involvement in drug use

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Individual/Peer Risk Factors

- Alienation/rebelliousness
- Early and persistent antisocial behavior
- Friends who engage in substance abuse
- Favorable attitudes towards alcohol/drugs
- Early initiation of alcohol/drug use
- Constitutional factors

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Current Services and Prevention Strategies

- What is currently being provided – or available – to address the problems?
- What are the unmet needs or underutilized resources to address the problems?
- What are the "gaps" in resources and services for the targeted community?

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Data

- **Archival Data** – data that already exists, usually quantitative (statistics, numbers)
- **Survey Data** – data that may have to be created; collected from local sources, may be more qualitative data
- **Supplemental Data** – data created to capture specific information – focus groups, observations, key informant interviews

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Archival Data

- Archival data may be available on line
- Available at national, state, county and local levels, some also available by zip codes
- Reported in raw numbers, rates and percentages
- Collect similar data across levels for comparison; rates/%

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Survey Data

- Types of surveys include:
  - -Written surveys
  - -Telephone surveys
  - -Face to face surveys

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Survey Data

- School/student surveys (Standardized, such as the CHKS)
- Surveys can measure attitudes, behaviors, and perceptions
- Some surveys provide information on protective factors/resiliency

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Supplemental Data

- Additional resources for local data from:
  - -Focus groups (to check availability, perceptions)
  - -Key informant interviews (to help identify community norms
  - -Observations (count cigarette butts, beer cans/bottles), to document behavior

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Data Analysis

- Data analysis will assist you:
  - To give you meaning to number and interviews
  - To identify the priority risk factors in the community
  - To provide justification for targeted efforts
  - To provide assistance in selecting new prevention programs or to justify existing programs

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Data Analysis

- What does the raw data tell you? Do the numbers raise any red flags?
- How do the numbers compare to previous years? Any trends?
- How do the data compare with other data – state, similar counties, national
- What can be interpreted from the data?
- Are their trends in the data?

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Contributing Factors

- Some youth are obtaining and drinking alcohol in their own homes and homes of friends
- Some parents provide alcohol to youth for consumption in social settings
- Many adults and parents are unaware of new and existing research on the impacts on youth who drink alcohol
- Youth have easy access to alcohol at some events

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Let's Get To Work

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Data Analysis Process

- Divide into small teams by topic area – select a recorder and a presenter
- Study the data of your topic area – once you have looked over the data, describe what you see. Do not jump to interpretation (why) or solution (what to do). The purpose is to identify areas of great interest and/or concern.
- Record your main observations on the easel paper – Chances are that you will not have room for everything your discover in the data. Place your main concerns on the easel paper.
- Prioritize – As a group, select your three key concerns/problems (circle or highlight from your list). Select what's troubling you the most. Select what you think is unacceptable and needs to be changed. Make sure you site the data source next to the concern/problem.
- Identify any of the contributing factors for each issue problem – list next to the problem.
- Present your findings to the group.

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THANK YOU

- Questions???
- Next Steps
- Next Meeting: May 15th

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