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About the Report Card

**Texans from all walks of life across the state** are committed to helping create healthier and safer communities in which families live and grow. One key factor in reaching these goals is communities working to improve the effectiveness of prevention services in the areas of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use. Utilizing and replicating the Strategic Prevention Framework process throughout the state is a valuable tool for communities to use in this effort.

The following Strategic Prevention Framework State Incentive Grant (SPF SIG) Report Card will help document that process and provide individuals, communities, and leaders examples of successful implementation of the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF). The Report Card will also demonstrate the power of using this tool to bring about community change, while highlighting local coalition stories from each step of the SPF so the reader can experience “hands-on” examples of the process in action.

Texans Standing Tall (TST) has been commissioned by Behavioral Assessment Inc. (BAI) to produce this Report Card on the Strategic Prevention Framework process in Texas. BAI serves as the statewide evaluator for the Department of State Health Services (DSHS) Strategic Prevention Framework process.

TST, the Statewide Coalition making alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs irrelevant in the lives of youth through safer and healthier communities, produces an annual *Report Card on Youth Substance Abuse Issues: Research and Legislation* and is active in the Texas Department of State Health Services Strategic Prevention Framework process, working with both DSHS and the locally funded SPF SIG coalitions. Additionally TST offers community prevention coordination services throughout Texas.

The information included in this Report Card comes from review of historical and public SPF-related documents from both Texas and national resources, interviews and consultation with individuals who have been involved in the SPF process in Texas at a State and local level, and Texans Standing Tall’s experiences in the field as a provider of SPF coalition training and technical assistance as well as TST’s own experiences implementing the SPF as a statewide coalition.
The State of Texas is a leader in this exciting new initiative, the Strategic Prevention Framework State Incentive Grant (SPF SIG), that offers an opportunity to strengthen and support both statewide efforts and local community efforts to create an effective prevention system around the use and abuse of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, primarily among adolescents and young adults. Texas, awarded funding in October 2004, is one of 34 states, 3 territories, and 5 tribes participating in this program.

As stated on their website (prevention.samhsa.gov), the cornerstone of all of the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Center for Substance Abuse Prevention’s (CSAP) prevention efforts is implementation of the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) process.

The SPF is also a key part of SAMHSA’s public health approach to enable states and communities to build prevention infrastructures and sustainable prevention programs, policies and practices. The SPF is built on the principle that communities must understand the nature, extent and scope of their local substance abuse problem, identify the causes and solutions, and take action. Indeed, the best solutions to substance abuse problems often come from local communities because local people are best equipped to solve local problems. The SPF is based on five essential components that guide the planning and implementation of prevention services. In addition to the five steps of the SPF, sustainability and cultural competence permeate the process and ensure that all prevention efforts are relevant and have an ongoing impact. (Reducing Substance Abuse in America: Building the Nation’s Demand Reduction Infrastructure, SAMHSA)

As described by SAMHSA, the SPF SIG program is one of their infrastructure grant programs that support an array of activities to help grantees build a solid foundation for delivering and sustaining effective substance abuse services. The SPF SIG programs, in particular, provide funding to implement SAMHSA’s Strategic Prevention Framework in order to: prevent the onset and reduce the progression of substance abuse, including childhood and underage drinking; reduce substance abuse-related problems in communities; and build prevention capacity and infrastructure at the state/tribal and community levels.
Overview of the Process

The SPF takes a public health model approach to prevent substance abuse-related problems. This means that in the same way that physical diseases are identified and prevented, substance use prevention problems are identified and addressed. The focus shifts from community or individual beliefs around or about the problem to data-driven identification of the problem.

Thus, the SPF process uses community level (also known as environmental prevention), evidence-based prevention strategies. These strategies are selected based on causal factors or environmental (community) characteristics as determined by the data-driven identification of the problem.

Relevant community data is what drives the entire process. Obtaining accurate data makes it possible to “tell the story” of the community prevention problem and the community’s success in solving it. With data, a community is then able to:

• identify problems and set priorities,
• assess and mobilize capacity around the problem,
• make informed prevention planning and funding decisions,
• help guide the selection of the strategies needed to address the problems and solutions, and
• monitor key milestones and outcomes and adjust plans as needed.

The Strategic Prevention Framework is a process of five steps. These steps are both sequential and integrated. They work like a pinwheel that moves with the wind; all the steps should blend to create the whole. Like a pinwheel, if a piece or step is missing or disjointed the system will not move effectively. Each step, or phase, is distinct yet touching and overlapping. Throughout the process, sustainability and cultural competency are infused in each of the steps. These aspects are essential to the success of the whole. As community needs are met or changed, the steps are reworked to accommodate the fluid life of a community. These steps, or phases, are used sequentially to begin the process and then they become fluid to adapt to the successes, challenges, and barriers.

The icon seen on the next page is the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA) pictorial representation of the Strategic Prevention Framework process detailed in this Report Card. The icons seen on subsequent pages throughout this document were adapted from SAMHSA’s. The larger icon represents the State of Texas and identifies the step it is on in the process; the smaller icon represents the locally funded coalitions and identifies the step they are on in the process. The center of the icon represents sustainability and cultural competency, which are infused throughout all steps in the process.
Overview of the Process

The Five Steps of the Strategic Prevention Framework

1) **Assessment.** Assess local, state, and national data related to the consequences, use patterns, and community factors that contribute to substance use to determine the most critical problem. Assess resources, gaps, and capacity to address the problem.

2) **Capacity Building.** Identify human, financial, technical, social, and cultural resources that comprise the internal and external capacity to both build and implement a prevention plan that is targeting the data-driven problem identified in step one.

3) **Strategic Planning.** Develop realistic short term, intermediate, and long term goals. Logic models are often developed at this stage to visually represent the connection between strategies selected, the data-driven problem identified, and the community contributing factors (also described as intervening variables). In the strategic planning step, evidence-based best practices are selected based on the problem identified in step one and the internal and external capacity to implement the strategies. A written strategic plan is the end result of this step.

4) **Implementation.** Execute the strategic plan through a series of action steps. In the implementation phase effective community prevention programs, policies, and practices test capacity viability.

5) **Evaluation.** Identify and monitor desired outcomes. Evaluation also includes monitoring the process of implementation as well as faithfulness to the strategic plan and the documented “best practices” for implementation of the strategies selected. A written evaluation plan should be a component of the strategic plan. The results from ongoing evaluation inform the other steps making the process fluid.

Together, the steps or phases of the Strategic Prevention Framework are a key aspect in working to develop an integrated prevention system. The SPF addresses the entire lifespan of the population by working on capacity and infrastructure for prevention programs that can be sustained over a long period of time. It focuses on a “systematic process” and not on funding alone. It is a dynamic process that requires communities and coalitions to ask questions and evaluate information along the way for improved decision-making. A data-driven SPF has the ability to recognize that prevention is an evolving process. What is known today may not be all that needs to be known for tomorrow.
In July 2004, an application for funding was submitted by the Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, through the Office of the Governor, to the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration under the Strategic Prevention Framework State Incentive Grant (SIG) program. The Texas Commission on Alcohol and Drug Abuse, now a part of the Texas Department of State Health Services (DSHS), was designated as the lead agency for the grant funds.

Eligibility for funding was limited to the Office of the Governor in states that received a Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment Block Grant and that participated in the previous State Incentive Grant (SIG) program. In October 2004, CSAP awarded 21 SPF SIG five-year continuation grants, 19 of which were awarded to States in the amount of $2,350,965. Texas was one of these recipients with the Community Mental Health and Substance Abuse Division of DSHS designated to implement the grant.

The Texas State Incentive Program Strategic Prevention Framework (TSIP SPF) process provides input to strengthen the prevention infrastructure for development and coordination of a statewide strategy to prevent substance abuse and related problem behaviors in the state. The TSIP SPF is built on the infrastructure of the Drug Demand Reduction Advisory Committee (DDRAC) and utilizes the SPF to meet the following goals: 1) Prevent the onset and reduce the progression of substance abuse, including underage drinking; 2) Reduce substance abuse-related problems in communities; and 3) Build prevention capacity and infrastructure at the state and community levels. The TSIP SPF promotes systems change, led by the State but driven by local communities. The TSIP SPF program maintains a TSIP Advisory Committee whose members are appointed by the Governor, a Texas Epidemiological Workgroup, and a statewide evaluator of the process, as well as funds ten SPF SIG coalitions around the state in seven strategically selected counties.
The State was required to “walk the walk, not just talk the talk” in the federal five-year SPF SIG process. The assessment step of the SPF SIG began with recognizing that a variety of data and information was held within various agencies and organizations throughout the state regarding youth substance abuse, its related problems, and prevention strategies. In November 2004, DSHS invited relevant state agencies and organizations to participate in the Texas Epidemiological Workgroup.

The TSIP Advisory Committee wanted to utilize the SPF grant to begin working cooperatively with other researchers to identify data needs, gaps, establish a baseline, and measure change. The invitations served as an instigator for identifying individuals with information to offer, as well as an interest in participating in the Texas Epidemiological Workgroup (TEW) that would be formed. The role of the TEW would be to inform the TSIP Advisory Committee about the data available on consumption levels of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs and related consequences as well as to identify areas of the state with higher severity levels of consumption rates and related consequences. The TEW helped establish priorities through selection of data and discussion of methodological issues and data limitations. The TEW, guided by national consultants, shifted from a risk and protective factors approach to a public health approach of studying consumption patterns and consequences using available population data and taking into consideration social problems where research shows the problem was correlated and/or attributable to consumption of substances in a community. The first meeting was held on December 15th and from there, the TEW evolved.

The Texas Epidemiological Workgroup (TEW) worked collaboratively on this process from the beginning of the effort until the approval of the strategic plan to collect and analyze data on usage patterns of all age groups, genders, and ethnicities. They selected the following agents for the assessment: alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, inhalants, cocaine/crack, and illicit drugs other than marijuana. The TEW was headed by Department of State Health Services (DSHS) staff Dr. Martin Arocena and Dr. Liang Liu and the members included: Behavioral Assessment Inc., as independent evaluators; the Health and Human Services Commission; Texas Department of Public Safety; Texas Department of Family Protective Services; the Governor’s Office; Texas Department of Transportation; Texas Education Agency; Center for Health Statistics; State Initiative for Higher Education; statewide coalition Texans Standing Tall; Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation; and the Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission.

This epidemiological workgroup collected the data on consumption patterns and prevalence of these substances from several sources. Sources included:

- 2002-2003 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, an annual survey for U.S. citizens age 12 and over
- 2004 Texas School Survey of Substance Use, a biennial survey conducted in a sample of public schools across Texas
- 2004 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey, a federally funded telephone survey conducted on a monthly basis with 500 randomly selected adult Texans
- 2003 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System, a biennial, school-based survey of 9th-12th graders
The TEW considered data sources and indicators in the areas of substance abuse, mental health, health, education, work, criminal involvement, child abuse, and neglect among others. They also collected data on consequences related to substance use by youth and adults. These included alcohol-related motor vehicle fatalities; crime; mortality rates related to alcohol, drugs, and tobacco; and prevalence of substance dependence and abuse. Analysis of the data on substance use and related consequences in Texas resulted in alcohol emerging as the most pervasive in overall use and having a high rate of consumption and harmful consequences.

Texas Epidemiological Profile

Priority Substance Use Consumption Pattern Identified

In Texas, alcohol is used more than any other substance regardless of age, gender, race, or ethnicity. Consumption and consequence data indicate that the population most at risk in Texas is the segment of the population between 12 and 25 years old. Twenty-six percent of Texans age 12-17 and forty percent age 18-25 report binge drinking—five or more drinks in one sitting—in the past month.

Priority Substance Use Consequence Identified

In the TEW needs assessment, alcohol-related motor vehicle fatalities emerged as the priority consequence for targeted prevention efforts across the state. According to the 2003 National Highway Transportation Safety Administration’s (NHTSA) State Alcohol Related Fatality Rates, Texas had the most alcohol-related motor vehicle fatalities (MVF) in the nation—1,709. Alcohol related fatalities made up 47% of all motor vehicle fatalities in 2003, which is higher than the national average of 40%. Seven counties emerged as most at risk: Harris, Dallas, Bexar, Tarrant, Hidalgo, Travis, and El Paso. These counties also had the highest numbers of violent and property crimes reported to law enforcement agencies.

In these seven counties, the segment of the population 12-29 years old had a higher number of intoxicated drivers involved in a motor vehicle fatality (MVF), the number of intoxicated drivers was high during the past three years, and the number of intoxicated drivers was 50 or more. This seven-county area represents:

- 50% of the total state population,
- 36% of the total drivers involved in MVF for all ages,
- 35.6% of the total drivers in MVF were alcohol-involved for all ages,
- 40.7% of the total drivers in MVF in the 12-29 age group, and
- 39.8% of the intoxicated drivers in the 12-29 age group.

On the following page, there is a map and table reflecting the data discussed in the Texas Epidemiological Profile and were included in the State of Texas Strategic Plan. Prior to the allocation of funds to local communities, the State of Texas performed a thorough assessment of the problem as required by step one of the SPF. This process led to the identification of the chosen counties and coalitions.
## Data-Driven Decision Making

### Number of Drivers Involved in Fatal Crashes Who Used Alcohol by County

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>GEOGRAPHICAL AREA</th>
<th>ALL AGES</th>
<th>12 TO 29 YEARS OLD GROUP</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total number of drivers involved in MVF</td>
<td>Number and Percent of drivers involved in a MVF who were intoxicated</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Paso (El Paso)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>31.4 – 44.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travis (Austin)</td>
<td>128</td>
<td>43.1 – 33.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hidalgo (Pharr)</td>
<td>114</td>
<td>36.6 – 32.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tarrant (Fort Worth)</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>45.6 – 28.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bexar (San Antonio)</td>
<td>192</td>
<td>61.1 – 31.8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dallas (Dallas)</td>
<td>340</td>
<td>108.8 – 32.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harris (Houston)</td>
<td>543</td>
<td>198.0 – 36.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7 Counties Total</td>
<td>1,547</td>
<td>524.6 – 33.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Statewide</td>
<td>4,350</td>
<td>1469.7 – 33.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: State of Texas Strategic Plan

### Numbers of Drunk Driver Fatalities

- Age 12-29, 2001-2003

- 50 to 326 (7)
- 10-50 (31)
- 2 to 10 (115)
- 0 to 2 (101)
Identifying Capacity to Address the Problem: Funding Local Coalitions

It is reflected in the Strategic Prevention Framework State Incentive Grant Texas Strategic Plan that the sheer size of the State creates gaps and barriers to effectively provide comprehensive prevention services statewide. Utilizing various information and instruments such as CSAP’s Community Mobilization Scorecard, it was determined that coalitions were highly mobilized and ready for focused action. Given the limited resources and the expected short-time duration of the funds available, the TSIP Advisory Committee was confronted with the dilemma of equally distributing funds throughout the state, as it is usually done, or adopting a severity model approach. The latter was adopted.

The severity approach dedicates resources at hand to the areas where the most severe conditions are found. The severe condition must be a social problem of interest (e.g., preventable death of members of the community) that is reliably measured, that will continue to be measured for the foreseeable future, and that is amenable to change through effective interventions. Such is the case for alcohol-related motor vehicle fatalities as measured by the Fatality Analysis Reporting System. Therefore the seven counties with the most severe problem of alcohol-related traffic fatalities were identified. Based on the TEW needs assessment, DSHS issued a Request for Proposals.

The coalitions in these seven priority counties with a minimum of one year’s experience in community based prevention strategies applied for funding to go through the Strategic Prevention Framework process and implement evidence-based environmental (community-level) prevention strategies. These coalitions were to focus their strategies on solving the state-level problem identified as it presented itself in their communities. The goal is to reduce the underage, binge drinking and traffic fatality rates by concentrating evidence-based prevention efforts on these priority counties with the greatest evidence of the problem. In July 2006, ten coalitions in the seven priority counties were awarded SPF SIG funding to work toward the goals.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>COUNTY</th>
<th>COALITION</th>
<th>FISCAL AGENT</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dallas</td>
<td>ALOUD-Alliance On Underage Drinking</td>
<td>Greater Dallas Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse</td>
<td>Dallas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dallas</td>
<td>IMPACT Grand Prairie</td>
<td>Drug Prevention Resources</td>
<td>Grand Prairie</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tarrant</td>
<td>Community Partners for Alcohol Safety and Awareness</td>
<td>Tarrant County Challenge</td>
<td>Fort Worth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harris</td>
<td>Bay Area Alliance for Youth and Families</td>
<td>Clear Creek ISD</td>
<td>Houston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harris</td>
<td>Coalition of Behavioral Health Services North</td>
<td>Phoenix House</td>
<td>Houston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Harris</td>
<td>Southeast Harris Community Coalition</td>
<td>Bay Area Council on Drugs and Alcohol</td>
<td>Houston</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Travis</td>
<td>Travis County Alliance for a Safer Community</td>
<td>Austin Community Foundation</td>
<td>Austin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bexar</td>
<td>Circles of San Antonio Community Coalition</td>
<td>San Antonio Council on Alcohol and Drug Abuse</td>
<td>San Antonio</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>El Paso</td>
<td>Rio Grande Safe Communities Coalition</td>
<td>R.E. Thomason Hospital</td>
<td>El Paso</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hidalgo</td>
<td>UNIDAD – Uniting Neighbors in Drug Abuse Defense</td>
<td>Rio Grande Valley Council</td>
<td>Pharr</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
These coalitions began the process of understanding and implementing the Strategic Prevention Framework in their respective communities through collaboration and guidance from the Texas Department of State Health Services and the independent evaluation contractor, Behavioral Assessment Inc. In July 2006, initial training was provided to these coalitions on State Incentive Grant requirements and the Strategic Prevention Framework process, environmental strategies, and community change models. SPF SIG coalitions began their on-the-ground work in their communities in September 2006.

As will be illustrated by examples in the State implementation section of this Report Card, the SPF SIG coalitions have diligently applied the SPF process, working through the assessment, capacity building, and planning steps. Now in year five of the SPF SIG, they are in the implementation phase and conducting process and outcome evaluation of their strategies as they implement.

The progress of the coalitions has been monitored by DSHS staff and aided by ongoing training and technical assistance from Texans Standing Tall on the five steps of the SPF and sustainability, as well as on cultural competency by Behavioral Assessment Inc.

Strategic Planning at the State Level

The State created the strategic plan around what strategies and efforts would fit the culture and context of the state based on the findings of the needs assessment and its capacity to create change. The TSIP Advisory Committee, serving as a subcommittee of the Drug Demand Reduction Advisory Committee (DDRAC), provided input to the development of the Texas Strategic Plan. The plan was created to improve the prevention delivery system through implementation of the five steps of the Strategic Prevention Framework. The Texas Strategic Plan is detailed online at the following web site: www.dshs.state.tx.us/sa/SPF/SPFStatePlan.doc.

The State began by assessing the problem (epidemiological profile) and assessing the substance abuse system in Texas (capacity and infrastructure) that involved an extensive discussion of the state-level infrastructure in place, in terms of personnel, resources, and systems to address the problems of substance abuse consumption and its consequences as identified by the TEW. The infrastructure that was in place through the TSIP Advisory Committee was well positioned to carry out the implementation of the Strategic Prevention Framework. The written plan laid out a vision for reducing the State underage and young adult binge drinking problem and the related consequence of traffic fatalities. It is a tool that was designed to inform the reader of the reason coalitions were selected in targeted counties and utilized as a vehicle for implementation of the SPF on a local level to impact the identified use patterns and consequences in the State needs assessment.
The State’s implementation of the Strategic Prevention Framework is executed through the ten SPF SIG funded coalitions working through the process locally. Through local coalitions implementing the SPF, the State will chip away at the problem in counties with the greatest severity and trend towards decreasing underage drinking, binge drinking, and alcohol-related traffic fatalities in Texas.

Introduction to the SPF SIG Coalitions

This Report Card is designed to reflect the cyclical nature of the Strategic Prevention Framework. In this section of the Report Card, each step of the Strategic Prevention Framework will be discussed and community profiles from the SPF SIG coalitions will demonstrate the power of these steps. A description of the step, signs of success, as well as identified successes and challenges addressed in the process will be provided.

The stories will examine how the coalitions have locally assessed their need, addressed capacity, and strategically planned for successful implementation. The coalitions are in the process of implementation, therefore, the evidence-based environmental strategies they have selected and evaluation tools they are using will be identified. However, no community profiles will be provided for implementation and evaluation as these steps of the SPF are still in process.
Step One – Assessment

A key characteristic of the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) is that it is data-driven, therefore the first step of the SPF – assessment – is a critical component of the process. In this step, coalitions gather data that tells the epidemiology, or root cause, of the community’s youth substance abuse problem. Communities are looking for the root cause and evidence of the problem so that appropriate and effective prevention strategies can be selected in the future. In addition to collecting data, it is important that communities develop a comprehensive assessment of needs, resources, and community readiness. This process is typical of the public health model that is followed to identify a disease and work to eradicate it. The information collected will:

• tell the story of the problem in a community,
• show opportunities for creating change, and
• be the base for all the following SPF Steps.

The needs assessment provides a clear understanding of the substance use problem in the community and acts as a foundation as communities move through the steps of the SPF. Just as the Texas Epidemiological Workgroup collected and analyzed data for the State Epidemiological Report, each SPF SIG coalition created an epidemiological (“epi”) workgroup in their community. The epi workgroups brought together gatekeepers of data relevant to alcohol consumption and consequences among ages 12-29. In several cases, SPF SIG coalitions collaborated to create a countywide epi workgroup, exemplifying the collaboration that is inherent in the SPF process. There are several signs of success in this process that indicate that a coalition is on the right path for successful movement through the subsequent steps. The list below highlights some indicators.

Signs of Success:
• An epi workgroup is formed and meets monthly or more in the beginning; quarterly once the assessment is completed.
• Data and information is collected.
• A report of the results is produced and updated annually.
• A user-friendly “highlights” version of the report is developed for laypersons/community members.
• The data and information collected identifies the problem in the community.
• The data is specific enough that goals, evidence-based strategies, and a baseline for evaluation can be determined and prioritized.

Coalition Successes:
• Each coalition coordinated an epidemiological workgroup for their county.
• Each coalition reported success in data collection, including getting information from an unexpected source, to finding a new stakeholder, to gaining access to relevant, up-to-date information databases.
• Several coalitions were able to implement surveys with new populations, generating data that were previously unavailable, particularly with college students.
• Almost all groups described finding a “data champion.”
• Multiple groups work with a community member to utilize GIS mapping technology to create a graphic illustration of their community story.

Coalition Challenges:
• All coalitions described finding some areas of difficulty in locating and obtaining relevant and specific local data.
• All coalitions encountered a lack of available hospital data correlating minor accidents while under the influence of alcohol.
• All coalitions found that some databases were not up-to-date; for instance, there was a greater than two-year lag in the data that was available from some sources.
• Coalitions found that agencies collected data using different methodology, making comparisons difficult.
• Coalitions found obtaining data below the county level difficult.

Community Profiles: Harris County Coalitions

In December 2006, the three Harris County SPF SIG grantees—Bay Area Alliance for Youth and Families, Coalition of Behavioral Health Services North, and Southeast Harris Community Coalition—collaborated with the Harris County Public Health and Environmental Services to create the Harris County High-Risk Drinking Epidemiological Workgroup (Epi Workgroup). The Epi Workgroup included representatives from Houston Police Department, Texas Transportation Institute, San Jacinto Methodist Hospital System, Prevention Resource Center – Region 6, MADD, Region 4 Education Service Center, Institute for Health Policy, Pasadena Police Department, Deer Park Police Department, Harris County District Attorney, Texas Department of Transportation, Texas Alcoholic Beverage Commission, Webster Police Department, Smart Start (ignition interlock company), Lee College (Baytown), Harris County Sheriff’s Department, University of Texas, and the Houston Galveston Area Council. The Houston-Galveston Area Council (H-GAC), the regional Council of Governments, quickly emerged as a champion for the cause of preventing alcohol-related motor vehicle fatalities and provided each coalition with full-color maps of the alcohol-related crash “hotspots” in their target communities and maps of on and off premise licensed alcohol retail outlets. These maps were created with Geographic Information System (GIS) mapping software. H-GAC invited representatives from the three coalitions to join the Reducing DUI/DWI Subcommittee of the Traffic Safety Council for the Houston Galveston Area Council, serving 13 counties in Southeast Texas.

After noting significant overlap in mission and membership, the Epi Workgroup merged with the Reducing DUI/DWI Subcommittee in June 2007. Subcommittee Chair Paul Lassalle, a DWI Taskforce Officer with the Houston Police Department, leads the monthly meetings. This allowed the two groups to maximize their resources around data collection giving them an opportunity to identify gaps in data and look for ways to obtain the missing data to develop effective community as well as countywide strategic planning. The merged group continues to meet and gather data around prevalence rates of underage and high-risk drinking, alcohol-related traffic fatalities, and the intervening variables that lead to those consequences. They collect data at a county level and community level where available. The group also identifies gaps in data and looks for ways to obtain them. The data collected by the
Subcommittee is given to each coalition’s evaluator for analysis and inclusion in each group’s annual needs assessment, also known as an Epi Report. The Subcommittee/Epi Workgroup brings together many different parties with a specific focus on reducing alcohol-related traffic fatalities in Harris County and as they leverage resources, they have been able to create and implement strategic plans that include strategies such as “No Refusal Nights,” a DWI enforcement tactic where search warrants are issued for obtaining a blood specimen from anyone suspected of drinking and driving who refuses to use a breathalyzer. The No Refusal Nights are a component of the Fatality Crash Reduction Campaign, which also includes: deployment of six mobile DWI processing units to be used by local police departments; a media campaign with PSAs, billboards, radio spots, TV spots, newspaper ads, and internet (MySpace ads); youth DWI ride-along program; and media ride-alongs. Not only did the merger of these two groups allow for implementation of such evidence-based environmental strategies, it also ensured sustainability for epidemiological data collection around alcohol-related crashes and the consumption patterns and intervening variables that are correlated with that consequence, as it has been fully institutionalized by the Houston-Galveston Area Council.

Community Profile: Circles of San Antonio Community Coalition

As Circles of San Antonio worked on their needs assessment, they went to local law enforcement agencies to collect data on alcohol-related citations such as Driving While Intoxicated (DWI) and Minors in Possession (MIP). When they approached the Bexar County Sheriff’s Department, they were informed that all records were handwritten and stored in files that were kept stacked in boxes because they did not have the staff to maintain the records electronically. Upon hearing this, coalition members volunteered their time to enter the records into an excel spreadsheet, which the Sherriff’s Department utilized for their database. Each of more than 3,700 records were entered by hand by six coalition members working in shifts. The project took more than 200 hours and was well worth the effort. As a result of this dedication and hard work, Circles of San Antonio collected excellent data on DWIs and MIPs as well as building a solid relationship with the Bexar County Sheriff’s Department. Another result of this was the Sheriff’s Department’s changing their system for collecting and filing data, and they send monthly reports to the coalition. Now there is electronic data dating back to 2004.
Step Two – Capacity Building

Capacity Building involves identifying, developing, and maintaining resources necessary to address identified needs including human, fiscal, technical (physical), and social to meet planning and implementation demands. It takes into consideration all aspects of a coalition’s needs to effectively implement strategies and respond to the problem identified in the assessment. During this phase, community readiness is increased so that the community can respond to the problem, and it allows for recruiting more than the “usual suspects” to achieve goals. It involves development of committees/action teams and organizational structure to prepare and increase opportunities for successful prevention. During this phase, coalitions will examine their efforts, document them as part of their process evaluation, and look for opportunities to sustain their efforts so that when their resources change, their outcomes and products of this step can be maintained. It is the foundation for all the following steps of the SPF.

Signs of Success:
• Clearly defined roles for staff and coalition members.
• Training and education is provided as needed to promote readiness to address the problem.
• Having adequate technical and financial resources to select strategies to implement.
• Creating and continuing partnerships.
• Moving beyond the usual suspects.
• Developing adequate structure to maintain the coalition’s growth and transformation as it moves through the steps of the SPF.

Coalition Successes:
• Coalitions are involved and have “a face” in the community, providing presentations and information dissemination to supplement their environmental strategies.
• They are continually bringing new partners to the table and strategically building capacity based on needs assessment data and the coalition’s strategic plan.
• Most coalitions have formed work groups around strategies, issues, and activities.
• All coalitions have developed partnerships with new sectors of the community.
• All coalitions have involvement with higher education, secondary schools, and law enforcement.
• All coalitions have trained their staff and coalition members in the SPF process as well as how to implement environmental strategies.
• Some have developed written by-laws or guiding documents to provide structure to the coalition.

Coalition Challenges:
• The norms of the communities were more accepting of underage drinking than desired.
• Most coalitions found that certain people, no matter what information was presented, would not invest in the process – even with evidence that the process was working.
• Some coalitions faced their own staffing changes – staff turnover, for example.
• All coalitions found that some stakeholders, while interested and supportive, did not have the capacity within their own agencies to participate as desired.
Community Profile: ALOUD - Alliance on Underage Drinking, Dallas

The ALOUD coalition has been in existence for many years. When it initially received SPF SIG funding, the coalition met quarterly with workgroups that had the potential to be more effective. Spurred by a coalition member, the coalition coordinator began a process of ensuring that all responsibility of the coalition’s growth and success did not remain in the hands of the staff but in cultivating the leadership of the coalition to maintain its efforts – ultimately, with or without funding. Since that time, the coalition began a strategic effort to increase its capacity and organizational structure for long-term growth and sustainability. The coalition began a process of meeting every other month and retooling the workgroups based on their needs assessment, goals, and capacity; they developed workgroups that were strategy, community sector, or coalition activity focused. The coalition meetings are very intentional and focused on action – while the coalition meets more regularly, networking is a component of both the beginning and the end of each meeting and there is also a member spotlight incorporated into the coalition meetings to increase the knowledge and understanding of existing community resources.

Since momentum was gained and there was an influx of new members, a new member orientation has been developed to educate new members on the history, issues of focus, and how the coalition operates. New Member Orientation immediately precedes each bi-monthly coalition meeting. Coalition members self-select the workgroups they join, and workgroups self-select leadership. Workgroups are member, not staff, led. As the coalition expanded, it recognized that an executive committee was needed to sustain the coalition’s growing efforts and decided that each of the workgroup chairs would comprise the executive committee of the coalition.

Once formed, the executive committee determined the need for developing written operating guidelines for the coalition and its membership. While community-based agreements were utilized prior to the SPF SIG funding, the operating guidelines were expanded to address a variety of topics. The sections of the document include: names and offices; mission statement; organizational structure; meetings; decision making; grant review process and fiscal arrangements; dissolution of coalition; dispute resolution; amendments; and reviews of operating guidelines. To accompany the guiding document the coalition developed updated community-based agreements. Additionally, a two-page “about us” informational sheet was developed to garner credibility when recruiting members, making presentations, and attending health fairs. Both the information sheet and the operating guidelines elevated the credibility and sustainability of the coalition.

The most recent addition to the coalition structure is a database. Motivated by volume of data required for grant reporting, the coalition contracted with an outside source to develop a database program to capture all of the information necessary to report. This database serves multiple purposes including tracking membership and coalition volunteer hours. Collectively, these resources have increased the credibility, capacity, effectiveness, and the sustainability of ALOUD.
Step Three – Strategic Planning

This step requires coalitions to develop a strategic plan that includes evidence-based environmental strategies that create a logical, data-driven plan to address the problems identified in the assessment step. The strategies selected are based on the capacity, community intervening variables, and community readiness identified and built upon in step two, capacity building. Strategic planning requires development of goal statements and selecting strategies that are directly linked to baseline data that will show a “moving of the needle” to achieve the stated goals. Strategies are selected if it is determined that they fit the cultural context and readiness of the community and the target population to be addressed. Potential barriers and solutions to those barriers are also identified during the planning process. Strategies are given timelines for completion and an evaluation plan with identifiable measures for both process and outcome evaluation is developed. The SPF SIG coalitions have developed strategic plans with identified evidence-based environmental strategies based on their needs assessment data and their coalition’s capacity to implement the strategies.

Signs of Success:
- Strategies are selected with goals aimed at targeted populations and stated anticipated/desired outcomes.
- The strategic plan is written down with a timeline.
- A logic model is developed.
- Evaluation plans for monitoring the success of the strategy implementation are developed and written down.

Coalition Successes:
- All coalitions based their strategic planning on data from their needs assessment.
- They all selected strategies that are research-based to address the intervening, community focused variables.
- Coalitions had both staff and coalition member involvement in the development of their strategic plans.
- Some coalitions included timelines with action steps in their strategic plans.
- Some coalitions found that developing a strategic plan gave them a greater level of legitimacy and value in their communities.

Coalition Challenges:
- The strategic plans are valued by most coalition members and staff, but the development did not generate a groundswell of excitement for most.
- Identifying baseline data to measure impact was difficult for some strategies.

Community Profile: Community Partners for Alcohol Safety and Awareness, Fort Worth

The coalition has been in existence since 1998 and its fiscal sponsor and coalition staff have been consistent since 2001. Once the coalition received SPF SIG funding, the membership of the coalition was such that it naturally supported the overall efforts of the grant goals - members of the coalition, in the regular course of business, are engaged in activities that are related to the business of the coalition.
For example, the trauma nurses and city staff were collecting data for the benefit of their respective jobs that was also beneficial to the needs assessment of the coalition. The coalition includes representatives from law enforcement, trauma nurses, health care, high school and higher education, and state agency staff, as well as others. Their collective experience also affords them the unique understanding of the effects of underage drinking on individuals and families.

Additionally, data collection, strategic planning, and selecting target populations for strategies has always been how Tarrant County Challenge has designed prevention efforts. Also, many of the coalition’s members in their jobs make decisions and take action based on the collection and analysis of data. These two situations coalesced to create a team that welcomes strategic planning and selecting specific goals and strategies with anticipated outcomes to address defined goals. The coalition has an annual planning meeting, as a part of a regular coalition meeting, at the beginning of the grant year. They use their needs assessment and outcome data to plan effectively. In those instances when data doesn’t provide a clear indication of an outcome or if a strategy has become sustained by another organization, the coalition maintains focus until updated data is received, at which point adjustments are made in defined strategies. They maintain data for sustained strategies to modify as necessary – for example, law enforcement currently conducts compliance checks and the coalition monitors the compliance rates, which are currently at 90% for retailers. However, if that were to change, the coalition would consider the new data and implement appropriate strategies to increase the compliance rate.

The coalition has maintained a written strategic plan with timeline and logic model since inception. The coalition monitors the plan and success of the strategies to determine if goals have been achieved or if modifications are required. Strategic planning has become simply a part of the coalition culture – strategic planning is business as usual.

Community Profile: Rio Grande Safe Communities Coalition, El Paso

A challenge for this coalition in developing its strategic plan arose during a gap in staffing. The original evaluator charged with leading the Epi Workgroup had left, and the coalition was in the process of hiring a coordinator. Therefore, a time gap existed between when the original needs assessment was completed and the project coordinator and evaluation team were hired. The new coordinator joined at the point in the SPF process when it was time to develop the strategic plan. However, the strategic plan could not be adequately developed since during the time without staff, the continuity of the data analysis had been interrupted and the capacity identified had shifted. The tangible need was no longer readily apparent such that the coalition could move forward in the selection of strategies.

The coalition coordinator and evaluation team determined that the most pressing item facing the coalition was to immediately re-vamp the Epi Workgroup. In this process the coalition received training to increase the skill set and understanding of what additional data needed to be obtained to establish more conclusive evidence for selecting strategies to address the underage drinking problem in their community. The coalition began collecting additional data such as Driving While Intoxicated, Driving Under the Influence, and Minors In Possession offences to determine where in the community problems were more prevalent for the development of the strategic plan.
The new data was correlated with information from the original needs assessment to build a whole picture of the nature of the problem. It was determined from the data and coalition member discussions that strategies needed to be selected to address social hosting of parties and social access. The coalition built additional capacity and readiness to address the issue by continuing to collect needs assessment data and holding discussions in the community that continually reinforced that social hosting and access was a problem. At the Texans Standing Tall Regional Forum, local data were presented, a breakout group was held to discuss the evidence-based strategies to address the issue, and a committee was formed to carry out the plans.

The strategic plan was developed at this point as adequate data, capacity, and readiness had been increased to address the problem. The Epi Workgroup, staff, and coalition leadership determined that the strategic plan would focus on strategies to address social access and college student binge drinking. The plan would include actions to begin working with the community college to review its current college alcohol and drug policy as a mechanism to change the behavior of the students attending the campus as well as enforcing social host laws. The strategic plan was written towards these efforts and continues to be updated with the input of the coalition members.

**Step Four – Implementation**

This step of the SPF is focused on taking action guided by the strategic plan and evaluating the process of the implementation. It requires the development of a written implementation plan, if one was not created during strategic planning, with a timeline for each strategy. Each component of the strategy should be identified and written down along with all the associated action steps within each implementation plan. Coalitions members and staff should take on roles of responsibility to ensure the success of implementing the various strategies and their action steps. Once an implementation plan is developed, implementation can begin however, not all strategies will begin and end at the same time. Process evaluation should be monitored along the way to determine if the strategy was implemented as planned or if adjustments were made along the way. The process evaluation ensures documentation of the steps so that in the future, success can be replicated as well as appropriate adjustments can be made to sidestep identified challenges. Following the plans also allows for identifying how the outcomes from implementation are achieved. The SPF SIG coalitions are currently in the implementation phase. They all developed implementation plans and are working with their evaluators to monitor their progress and process.

**Signs of Success:**

- An implementation plan with evaluation component is written down with a realistic timeline for completion for each strategy.
- Strategy action steps can be identified by coalition members and staff.
- Coalition members are leading strategies and are responsible for action steps.
- Strategy progress and process are monitored by an evaluator and coalition members are involved with the strategy implementation.
- Timelines for strategies are met.
- Capacity increases as strategies are implemented.
### State Implementation - Local Coalition Success Stories

**Coalition Strategies:** The chart identifies coalitions by name, type of strategy they are implementing, and the coalition’s name for the strategy.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Coalition</th>
<th>Type of Strategy</th>
<th>Name of Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALOUD, Dallas</td>
<td>Compliance Checks</td>
<td>Compliance Checks</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Facilitate implementation of best practices in prevention</td>
<td>Regional Policy Forum, College/university policy and procedure consulting, BuzzFree PROMises Dress Giveaway, Youth Leadership Summit</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Media Campaign</td>
<td>Those Who Host Lose the Most Media Campaign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Responsible Beverage Service</td>
<td>Responsible Beverage Service Campaign</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Norms Campaign</td>
<td>Social Norms Campaign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bay Area Alliance For Youth and Families, Harris</td>
<td>Facilitate implementation of best practices in prevention</td>
<td>Building Infrastructures to Promote Non-Use Messages Within Sectors Through: Faith Partners; San Jacinto Community College South ADAPT Prevention Team; and Surgeon General’s Call to Action on Underage Drinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enforcement</td>
<td>Fatality Crash Reduction Strategy</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Media Campaign</td>
<td>Parents Who Host Lose the Most</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Norms Campaign</td>
<td>CLEAR and Safe Homes</td>
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<tr>
<td>Community Partners for Alcohol Safety and Awareness, Tarrant</td>
<td>Compliance Checks</td>
<td>Compliance Checks</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Media Campaign</td>
<td>Those Who Host Lose the Most</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Party Patrols</td>
<td>Controlled Party Dispersal Neighborhood Initiative</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Social Norms Campaign</td>
<td>Actuality Project</td>
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<tr>
<td>Circles of San Antonio Community Coalition, Bexar</td>
<td>Compliance Checks</td>
<td>Increase youth decoy participation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Responsible Beverage Service</td>
<td>Increase knowledge among retailers</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>iMPACT Grand Prairie, Dallas</td>
<td>Facilitate implementation of best practices in prevention</td>
<td>Law enforcement capacity building</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Media Campaign</td>
<td>Social Marketing Campaign uses media to increase perceived risk of DWI enforcement</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Policy Advocacy</td>
<td>State and local policy advocacy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enforcement</td>
<td>Shoulder Taps</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Norms Campaign</td>
<td>Actuality Social Norming Campaign</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coalition of Behavioral Health Services - North, Harris</td>
<td>Facilitate implementation of best practices in prevention</td>
<td>Reduce Alcohol Use on College Campuses</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enforcement</td>
<td>DWI enforcement along I-45 Corridor</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rio Grande Safe Communities Coalition, El Paso</td>
<td>Alcohol Policy Development</td>
<td>Alcohol Policy Development</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Social Host</td>
<td>Social Host Ordinance – Failure to Supervise</td>
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<tr>
<td>Southeast Harris Community Coalition, Harris</td>
<td>Compliance Checks</td>
<td>Compliance Checks</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Enforcement</td>
<td>Judges Consortium</td>
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<td>Media Campaign</td>
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<td>Responsible Beverage Service</td>
<td>Responsible Beverage Service Campaign</td>
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<tr>
<td>Uniting Neighbors in Drug Abuse Defense, Hidalgo</td>
<td>Facilitate implementation of best practices in prevention</td>
<td>Education for DWI offenders</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Media Campaign</td>
<td>UAD and binge drinking have consequences, Be Part of the Solution, Risks and Consequences of Underage Drinking and Binge Drinking</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Responsible Beverage Service</td>
<td>Retailers’ Compliance with State Liquor Laws</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The strategy types are from the following evidence-based documents: *Institute of Medicine’s Reducing Underage Drinking, Fidelity Users Guide,* and the RAND publication referenced in Addendum B. “Facilitate implementation of best practices in prevention” is used for strategies which build capacity or support implementation of evidence-based environmental strategies.
Step Five – Evaluation

In this step, a review of the effectiveness, efficiency, and fidelity of implementation in relation to the strategic plan, implementation plans, and outcome measures is conducted. As stated in the implementation step, this includes monitoring the implementation of the strategies. However, it also includes monitoring the progress, problems, and lessons learned regarding putting the Strategic Prevention Framework into action and building collaboration. Evaluation is ongoing. It monitors the process – what a coalition does; how did they do it. It monitors fidelity – did they do it according to the evidence-based practice; was it done according to the implementation plan. It ultimately monitors the outcome – what was the result of the implementation; was the desired goal achieved. All information gleaned from evaluation is used to improve community-based action and determine if strategies are having the intended impact on the target population as identified in the needs assessment and stated in the strategic plan.

At this stage in the process, the SPF SIG coalitions are conducting both implementation and evaluation of strategies. Success stories and coalition profiles will be highlighted along with detailed descriptions of the evaluation processes in subsequent SPF SIG Report Cards.
The Texas SPF SIG evaluation has been designed and implemented by the evaluation team Behavioral Assessment Inc. (BAI). The overall goal of the evaluation effort is to develop and implement a community and state-level evaluation system that empowers local communities to take an active role in their evaluation efforts which identify whether they are successful in “moving the needle” and decreasing alcohol related motor vehicle fatalities and binge drinking among those between the ages of 12 and 29.

The SPG SIG coalitions were required to devote seven to ten percent of their grant award to hire a professional and experienced evaluator for the duration of the project. The evaluators served as the lead for the assessment step and are responsible for the design and implementation of evaluation of the local strategies.

A primary focus of the BAI evaluation effort is to increase the capacity of local coalition evaluators to monitor the knowledge, skills, and practices that relate to each of the five steps of the SPF. BAI also provides training and technical assistance to local evaluators. Each quarter, the local evaluators meet in Austin for training focused on the five steps of the SPF. Detailed information has been presented on assessment, capacity building, and evaluation, including the overall Texas SPF SIG evaluation design.

BAI developed an online database for recording fidelity monitoring ratings, as outlined in the document Assessing the Fidelity of Implementation of the Strategic Prevention Framework in SPF SIG-funded Communities, and provided online seminars, or “webinars,” and live training modules for local evaluators to utilize this tool. Regional in-person, onsite training was provided for local evaluators following the webinars. This training expanded on the topics presented in the webinars and provided information related to use of the online database for recording the fidelity monitoring ratings. Through ongoing training and technical assistance support, BAI has developed a cadre of SPF SIG evaluators that can work alone, in small teams, and as a committee of all the Texas SPF SIG evaluators.

As the SPF SIG coalitions complete their process and outcome evaluations, community profiles will be developed and reported in subsequent SPF SIG Report Cards.
Cultural competency and sustainability are infused throughout the entire Strategic Prevention Framework process. Therefore, in this section a description of the concepts and signs of success will be discussed. Additionally, SPF SIG coalition success story profiles as well as a State profile will be highlighted. As they are ongoing, these aspects of the SPF process will be revisited in future SPF SIG Report Cards.

Addressing Cultural Competency

There are multiple complex, academic definitions for cultural competency. Cultural competency is the ability to acquire the knowledge, skills, and attitudes to enable administrators and practitioners within systems of care to provide for diverse populations. This includes an understanding of that group’s or members’ language, beliefs, norms, and values, as well as socioeconomic and political factors that may have a significant impact on their wellbeing, and incorporating those variables into assessment and treatment (CSAP, 1993). It is also a set of academic and interpersonal skills that allow individuals to increase their understanding and appreciation of cultural differences and similarities within, among and between groups. This requires a willingness and ability to draw on community-based values, traditions, and customs and to work with knowledgeable persons of and from the community in developing focused interventions, communications, and other supports (Orlandi et.al., 1992).

While the theory can be challenging, the application, once practiced, can become more simplistic. For the greatest possibility of success it should be infused into each step of the SPF process. In action, cultural competency means, in basic terms, meeting community members where they are – not where you are or where you want them to be. Many are familiar with the “Golden Rule” treat others as you would like to be treated. For implementation of cultural competency in the community, take the next step beyond the Golden Rule and distill the complex information into the following basic statement: treat others as they would like to be treated. A coalition can begin by collecting facts about its community, then assessing the coalition’s capacity and whether it has the right tools to communicate with and include members of its community. The coalition can deliver its message using stories from diverse members of the community to communicate, focusing on facts, as facts will reflect a commonality. This will demonstrate out of many we are one – one community, one issue, one response, many voices.

Signs of Success:
- The coalition determines the average reading level of the target community and develops appropriate materials.
- Resources are translated into appropriate languages.
- The language and resources the coalition uses to communicate reflect the attitudes and beliefs of the community.
- All sectors of the community are involved in the coalition.
- The coalition understands the current demographic and faith traditions of the community.
- The coalition is identifying and anticipating demographic and cultural changes in the community.
State Profile: Cultural Competency Panel

The Texas State Incentive Program Strategic Prevention Framework State Incentive Grant (SPF SIG) convened a panel of national and state experts on cultural competence in Austin, Texas, in June 2005 and January 2006. The purpose of the panel was to align the Texas SPF SIG with the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention’s (CSAP) view of cultural competence. Presenters included Attiba Coppock, Will Hardy, Cheryl Griggs, Delia Saldana, and Richard Cervantes of BAI. The panel explored the implications of changing demographics within each of the five SPF SIG steps. A subcommittee of the panel produced training materials based on the panel’s recommendations.

Community Profile: UNIDAD, Hidalgo County

The Uniting Neighbors In Drug Abuse Defense (UNIDAD) coalition has been in existence since 1995 but has fluctuated, generating members and working on prevention issues. Since receiving SPF SIG funding the coalition members have shifted to a position of ownership within the coalition and a sense that they contribute to the mission – they are a part of the mobilization and movement of what the coalition is trying to achieve. In partnership with law enforcement and social service agencies, coalition members attended health fairs and gave presentations to educate the audiences about health effects of alcohol use. Not only did this relay additional information that demonstrated the many angles of the problem, it also prompted a shift in ownership of the goals of the coalition to its membership. These presentations and health fairs provided opportunity for people to see their role in the problem and the solution, learn how they can make a difference, and become informed about support services and resources. Through integration and collaborative efforts among community agencies, prevention efforts have been enhanced as well as increased the credibility of the coalition. The coalition created a series of workshops with different prevention providers geared toward parents and community members that has cultivated a sense of connectedness and continuity. A key to their success has been their recruiting members with ties to key stakeholders who then initiate and implement activities in their communities. Additionally, use of appropriate language and interaction, be it for trainings, presentations, group and one-on-one meetings, or advancing a strategy, has resulted in building receptive communities.

Within the coalition membership, they develop subcommittees based upon interests of the members. For example, some members prefer to work exclusively on data collection and interpretation, while others are planners, and others become involved during the implementation phase. Whatever their interests, coalition staff ensures training appropriate to the desires and skills of the members is provided. Coalition members that serve on subcommittees may have a particular language, vocabulary, or jargon that is utilized in their particular area of interest or expertise. However, before a strategic plan, report, or document is presented to the group as a whole or provided to the community, the subcommittee and staff spend deliberate and intentional time making it reader-friendly for the target audience. Coalition members and staff recruit additional members with emphasis on collaborating and supporting each other’s efforts. An example of how the coalition gears its materials and presentations to a target audience is evidenced in their billboard campaign. Currently, UNIDAD is using a series of billboards with companion pieces to reinforce messages targeted to youth, young adults, and parents. They have developed and distribute pamphlets that emphasize risks and legal penalties for engaging in underage
Cultural Competency & Sustaining Prevention Outcomes

or binge drinking appropriate to the culture of the target audience. They have also developed a series of commercials that reinforce educational efforts and are designed to engage the different target audiences. For example, a commercial has been developed to reach out to youth that incorporates a text message component to capture the attention of a youthful audience. Overall, the coalition has given deliberate attention to meeting others where they are in order for UNIDAD to achieve its goals.

Developing Sustainability

Infusing sustainability into each step of the SPF requires an understanding of the concept as well as identifying the key products and milestones that need to be maintained for continued success. Sustainability is the process of ensuring that positive outcomes can be maintained in communities. For instance, a reduction in a substance abuse pattern continues even if funding shifts. Positive outcomes of each strategy must be sustained to reduce and maintain reductions in substance abuse behaviors and related problems. It is beyond building support for the strategy but maintaining the outcomes as well. It is beyond fundraising and maintaining programs. It is the creating and maintaining of a prevention system. True sustainability occurs when the SPF process and the outcomes achieved from a strategy can be maintained regardless of funding. As stated by the Center for Civic Partnerships, “Sustainability is the continuation of community health or quality of life benefits over time.”

The coalitions were provided sustainability training by Texans Standing Tall the summer of 2008 and their sustainability plans are due in April 2009.

Signs of Success:
• Policies or procedures are institutionalized.
• All coalition activities and strategies are identified with a comprehensive list of time and materials needed to sustain the coalition’s efforts.
• A sustainability plan is developed with action steps and timeline for securing resources.
• Basic coalition staffing needs are covered by sources other than grant funding.
• A strategy is valued and continued by other organizations within the coalition (ex: Stings are instigated and continued by law enforcement as a commitment to the community prevention efforts).
• When staff or funding changes, the coalition maintains its function and form through coalition leadership.
• Epi Workgroup continues to meet and update the needs assessment and track evaluation progress regardless of grant requirements.

Coalition Profile: IMPACT Grand Prairie

IMPACT Grand Prairie, an initiative of Drug Prevention Resources Inc. (DPRI), meets monthly to conduct the business of the coalition, discuss strategies, and evaluate their efforts. The coalition has three workgroups – Communications, Policy, and Law Enforcement – that meet to work toward action plans on various strategies. IMPACT Grand Prairie was prompted by the SPF SIG process to seriously address sustainability and capacity issues. Knowing that SPF SIG funding had an end date, the staff
at DPRI shared this information with the coalition members, and the members began the process of asking, “What should we do about sustainability?” The staff utilized training available at conferences to provide members with technical assistance, which initiated a self-assessment of the coalition’s mission, vision, and leadership and an evaluation of the health and function of the coalition internally and within the community. It was from this process that the coalition recognized that they needed to develop a Sustainability Taskforce to identify and prioritize goals for capacity and sustainability.

The Taskforce meets monthly, or as needed, to work towards its goals and has taken huge strides in increasing the capacity and ensuring the future sustainability of the coalition, addressing areas of concern in leadership, infrastructure, communication, and funding. The success of their sustainability planning is evidenced by a shift in the carrying of the burden of planning and strategy selection from staff to coalition members. Now coalition members are eager to select their own strategies, develop and set plans of action within their workgroups, carry out implementation, and even evaluate their efforts. Additionally, training spurred the development of a written sustainability plan by the Taskforce. For IMPACT Grand Prairie, the process of sustainability planning and development led to greater ownership by coalition members in setting and meeting goals and a deeper commitment to the success of the coalition overall.

Community Profile: Travis County Alliance for a Safer Community, Austin

The story of the Travis County Alliance for a Safer Community is an excellent example of sustainability. Although the Alliance was a young coalition when they began the SPF process, the meetings were well-attended by people from different sectors of the community including prevention, law enforcement, higher education, schools, and healthcare. The members were committed to reducing alcohol-related traffic fatalities and binge drinking in Travis County. Just as they were beginning strategic planning (step 3 of the SPF), the coalition lost their fiscal sponsor, leaving them with no funding at all. In spite of this, dedicated community members continued to meet on a monthly basis. In July of 2008, the Austin Community Foundation agreed to fiscally sponsor the Alliance, allowing them to receive SPF SIG funding once more. At the request of the Austin Community Foundation, Texans Standing Tall has provided programmatic and grant management support. Since that time the coalition has begun work on their strategic plan, started to rebuild active membership, and coordinated trainings to engage and energize community members once more to build the capacity of the coalition.
The formation of community coalitions brings social norm change to the forefront of those seeking positive change in one’s community. Positive change can be effectively enhanced through the use of the Strategic Prevention Framework. The Framework helps to build momentum and provides a structure for creating change. There are many resources available to the SPF SIG coalitions through training, technical assistance, communication, regional meetings, enhanced training through webinar technology, and statewide conferences that hone their skills. Each coalition has done a tremendous job in undertaking the steps of the Framework, and in training their staff and coalition members. The coalitions are enthusiastic about their work and have utilized resources available to increase their potential for success.

The current work in each of the communities is unique yet the same – they are all tackling the problem of high rates of alcohol-related motor vehicle fatalities in Texas and the alcohol consumption patterns that contribute to those problems. The SPF SIG process has proven to be an effective means for building the capacity of communities through their local coalitions to increase their skill sets and work towards positive community change that protects young people from alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use and the associated risky behaviors. The coalitions’ efforts are contributing to a statewide trend in addressing the State prevention goals. In subsequent Report Cards the focus will be on the success and challenges of implementation and the process and outcome evaluation of the coalitions’ and State’s efforts.
Addendum A: Coalition Contact List

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www.sacada.org
Vickie Adams, Coalition Coordinator
210-225-4741
coalition@sacada.org

El Paso County
Rio Grande Safe Communities Coalition
Adriana Cadena, SPF SIG Project Coordinator
915-775-2555
ac.rgscc@sbcglobal.net

Hidalgo County
UNIDAD – Uniting Neighbors in Drug Abuse Defense
www.rgvcouncil.org
Melissa Alviar, UNIDAD Coalition Coordinator
956-787-7111 x 234
malviar@rgvcouncil.org

Travis County
Travis County Alliance for a Safer Community
www.traviscountyalliance.org
Katie Clark, Coalition Coordinator
512-442-7501
coordinator@traviscountyalliance.org
Addendum B: Resource Information

Websites:

Behavioral Assessment Inc.
www.bai-eval.com

SAMHSA’s Center for Substance Abuse Prevention
prevention.samhsa.gov

Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration
www.samhsa.gov

Southwest Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies
captus.samhsa.gov/southwest/

Texas Department of State Health Services
www.dshs.state.tx.us/sa/spf

Texans Standing Tall
www.TexansStandingTall.org

Texas Strategic Prevention Framework State Incentive Program
www.txsip.org

Resource Materials

Assessing the Fidelity of Implementation of the Strategic Prevention Framework in SPF SIG-Funded Communities: Users Guide and Fidelity Assessment Rubrics
Developed by a workgroup of nationwide SPF SIG project directors and evaluators, along with evaluation staff from the cross-site evaluation team
www.txsip.org
http://www.txsip.org/ExtSPF/FidelityUsersGuide-FINAL.pdf

Preventing Underage Drinking: Using Getting to Outcomes™ with the SAMHSA Strategic Prevention Framework to Achieve Results
RAND Corporation
www.rand.org

Reducing Underage Drinking: A Collective Responsibility
The Institute of Medicine
www.iom.edu
http://www.iom.edu/CMS/12552/13838/15100.aspx

Strategic Prevention Framework Overview Brief
Carnevale Associates
www.carnevaleassociates.com

For more information about Texas and the SPF

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