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NARCOTIC OFFICERS MAGAZINE

EMPOWERING LAW ENFORCEMENT: YOUR TRUSTED POLICE MAGAZINE

Our communities rely on dedicated law enforcement officers to keep us safe. These men and women put their lives on the line daily, facing dangerous situations to protect citizens and deserve our unwavering support. Let's show our appreciation for their service. A strong bond between the public and those who serve is vital for a safe and thriving community.

Personal Statement from the Editor...

Welcome to the summer edition of the 2024 Narcotic Officers Magazine, Volume 13 Issue 2. We extend our sincere gratitude to all of you for your support, commitment, and unwavering dedication. This publication would not be possible without your continuous support. Our primary objective is to enlighten both the general public and the law enforcement community about the critical issues surrounding narcotics, drugs, and other substances with addictive properties. Additionally, we strive to actively promote initiatives that educate children, parents, and law enforcement personnel on the subject of drug usage.

Our primary focus remains on supporting programs that aim to educate about drugs, provide equipment donations, and support K9 initiatives. Additionally, we are dedicated to producing a top-notch magazine that serves as a platform for the exchange of ideas and information among law enforcement agencies and support groups. It is worth noting that our publication, Narcotic Officers Magazine, continues to be highly regarded for its educational value and assistance to both public safety officials and individuals interested in drug safety and education.

In our previous edition, I discussed the topic of Effective Communication, as highlighted by helpguide.org. Effective communication encompasses more than mere information exchange. It entails comprehending the underlying emotions and intentions behind the conveyed information. In addition to effectively delivering a message, it is crucial to actively listen in a manner that captures the complete meaning of the message and makes the other individual feel acknowledged and comprehended. Moving forward, in the current edition, I intend to explore the indicators of substance misuse within the professional environment. Please refer to the following page for further details.

Our publication has consistently received exceptional support from both the general public and influential members of the business community nationwide. In recognition of this support, our sponsors express their gratitude by advertising in the esteemed Narcotic Officers Magazine, showcasing their decals on their vehicles or establishments. We kindly encourage you to support these advertisers whenever feasible, as they provide a wide range of goods and services that cater to a nationwide audience. Additionally, we invite you to stay informed about the latest equipment donations and news by following us on Facebook. By working together, we have the power to bring about meaningful change.

"Your mindset is the compass that guides you towards success. With a positive mindset, you'll overcome obstacles, embrace challenges, and unlock your true potential. Cultivate a mindset of growth, resilience, and possibility, and watch as your dreams become your reality."

“When you change your thoughts, remember to also change your world.” —Norman Vincent Peale

Matt Neelley
- Editor

Recognizing the telltale indicators of substance misuse in a professional setting is crucial for maintaining a safe and productive work environment. Here are some common signs to be aware of:

1. Changes in behavior and appearance: Employees who are struggling with substance misuse may exhibit noticeable changes in their behavior and physical appearance. This can include sudden mood swings, irritability, decreased personal hygiene, bloodshot eyes, or unexplained weight fluctuations.

2. Decline in job performance: Substance misuse often takes a toll on an individual's ability to perform their job effectively. Frequent tardiness, absenteeism, decreased productivity, errors in work, and missed deadlines are all red flags that may indicate a problem.

3. Unexplained financial difficulties: Substance misuse can be financially draining, and employees who are struggling may experience financial hardships. Look for signs such as borrowing money from colleagues, frequent requests for salary advances, or unexplained financial difficulties.

4. Social isolation and secretive behavior: Individuals dealing with substance misuse may withdraw from social interactions with colleagues, isolate themselves, or exhibit secretive behavior. They may avoid team events, lunch breaks, or work-related social gatherings.

5. Physical symptoms and health issues: Substance misuse can have adverse effects on an individual's physical health. Look out for symptoms such as frequent illnesses, unexplained injuries, tremors, or noticeable changes in energy levels.

6. Poor relationships with coworkers: Substance misuse can strain relationships with coworkers. Employees may exhibit conflicts, increased arguments, or difficulty collaborating with others due to impaired judgment or erratic behavior.

It is important to remember that these signs alone may not conclusively indicate substance misuse, as they can also be attributed to other factors. However, if you notice multiple signs or a significant change in an employee's behavior, it may be necessary to address the situation and provide appropriate support.

Substance misuse can manifest in various physical symptoms, which can vary depending on the specific substance being used. Here are some common physical symptoms that may indicate substance misuse:

1. Bloodshot or glazed eyes: Red or bloodshot eyes can be a sign of alcohol or drug use. Dilated or constricted pupils may also be indicative of certain substances.

2. Changes in appetite or weight: Substance misuse can lead to changes in appetite and weight. It can cause significant weight loss or gain, as well as irregular eating patterns.

3. Slurred speech: Impaired speech, including slurring or difficulty articulating words, can be a sign of substance misuse, particularly alcohol or certain drugs.

4. Tremors or shakes: Uncontrollable trembling or shaking, especially in the hands, can be a physical manifestation of substance misuse, such as alcohol or certain stimulants.

5. Poor coordination and unsteady gait: Difficulty with balance, unsteady movements, stumbling, or lack of coordination may indicate substance misuse, especially with substances that affect the central nervous system.

6. Changes in sleep patterns: Substance misuse can disrupt normal sleep patterns. It can cause insomnia or excessive sleepiness, leading to noticeable changes in energy levels and alertness.

7. Skin changes: Certain substances can affect the appearance and condition of the skin. Look for signs such as unusual paleness, flushed or blotchy skin, chronic skin infections, or sores that take longer to heal.

8. Nausea, vomiting, or gastrointestinal issues: Substance misuse can cause digestive problems, including recurring nausea, vomiting, abdominal pain, or changes in bowel movements.

9. Changes in body odor: Some substances can alter body odor. Unusual or pungent smells on an individual's breath, sweat, or clothing may be indicative of substance misuse.

It is important to note that these physical symptoms can also be caused by other factors, and the presence of these symptoms alone may not definitively indicate substance misuse. If you suspect substance misuse in the workplace, it is important to handle the situation with sensitivity and seek appropriate professional guidance or support.

Substance misuse can have a significant impact on relationships with coworkers. Here are some ways in which it can affect these relationships:

1. Decreased productivity: Substance misuse can lead to decreased productivity and poor job performance. This can cause frustration and resentment among coworkers who have to pick up the slack or deal with the consequences of the affected individual's actions.

2. Unreliability and missed deadlines: Substance misuse can result in missed deadlines, incomplete tasks, or frequent absences from work. This can create a sense of unreliability and frustration among coworkers who rely on the individual to fulfill their responsibilities.

3. Poor communication and misunderstandings: Substance misuse can impair cognitive function and communication skills, leading to misunderstandings, misinterpretations, and difficulty in conveying thoughts or ideas effectively. This can strain relationships and hinder effective collaboration.

4. Conflict and tension: Substance misuse can contribute to conflict and tension within the workplace. It may lead to erratic behavior, mood swings, or inappropriate actions that disrupt the work environment and create a hostile or uncomfortable atmosphere for coworkers.

5. Trust and reliability issues: Substance misuse can erode trust among coworkers. If an individual's substance misuse leads to instances of dishonesty, stealing, or breaking company policies, it can undermine trust and make it difficult for coworkers to rely on or work effectively with that person.

6. Increased stress and emotional strain: Coworkers may experience increased stress and emotional strain when dealing with a colleague who is struggling with substance misuse. They may be concerned for the individual's well-being, feel burdened by the extra workload, or experience emotional distress due to witnessing the negative effects of substance misuse.

7. Safety concerns: Substance misuse can compromise workplace safety. Impaired judgment, coordination, and decision-making abilities can increase the risk of accidents or errors that can harm not only the individual but also coworkers. This can create a sense of unease and concern among colleagues.

It is important for employers to address substance misuse in the workplace and provide support and resources for affected individuals. Open communication, education, and access to treatment programs can help mitigate the negative impact on relationships with coworkers and promote a healthier work environment.

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NARCOTIC OFFICERS MAGAZINE SUPPORTS D.A.R.E. AMERICA: EMPOWERING COMMUNITIES AGAINST SUBSTANCE ABUSE

Introduction:

In a significant display of support for the fight against substance abuse, Narcotic Officers Magazine, one of the leading publications in the law enforcement community, recently continued its support for D.A.R.E. America. This support signals a powerful message in the mission to educate and empower communities to combat the growing challenges posed by drug abuse. With their shared commitment to prevention and intervention, Narcotic Officers Magazine and D.A.R.E. America are poised to make a impact on the lives of individuals and families across the nation.

D.A.R.E. America's Mission:

D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education) America is a renowned nonprofit organization that has been at the forefront of substance abuse prevention for over three decades. Its mission is to equip students with the knowledge, skills, and tools needed to make informed decisions and resist the pressures of drug abuse, violence, and other dangerous behaviors. Through collaborative efforts with law enforcement agencies and educational institutions, D.A.R.E. America has reached millions of young people, empowering them to lead healthy and drug-free lives.

Narcotic Officers Magazine's Commitment:

Narcotic Officers Magazine has long been a trusted resource for law enforcement professionals, providing valuable insights, training, and support in the ever-evolving battle against illicit drugs. By aligning with D.A.R.E. America, the magazine reaffirms its dedication to making a positive difference in communities affected by drug abuse. The collaboration allows Narcotic Officers Magazine to amplify its impact by promoting D.A.R.E. America's evidence-based curriculum to its extensive network of readers, which includes law enforcement officers, educators, parents, and concerned citizens.

The Power of Collaboration:

The support between Narcotic Officers Magazine and D.A.R.E. America holds immense potential in strengthening the fight against substance abuse. By utilizing similar resources and expertise, both organizations can create a more comprehensive and impactful approach to prevention, intervention, and education.

Through the pages of Narcotic Officers Magazine, law enforcement officers will gain deeper insights into the effective strategies and initiatives offered by D.A.R.E. America. This knowledge will enable officers to better engage with their communities, foster positive relationships with students, and promote drug-free lifestyles. Additionally, the magazine will serve as a platform to share success stories, research findings, and best practices from D.A.R.E. America, inspiring other communities to implement similar programs.

The Ripple Effect:

The support between Narcotic Officers Magazine and D.A.R.E. America extends beyond the pages of the publication. It has the potential to create a ripple effect, influencing communities nationwide to take a united stand against substance abuse. By harnessing the collective power of law enforcement agencies, educators, parents, and concerned citizens, this support aims to build a safer and healthier future for generations to come.

Conclusion:

Narcotic Officers Magazine's recent support of D.A.R.E. America marks a significant milestone in the collective fight against drug abuse. With their shared vision, expertise, and resources, these two influential entities are poised to make a lasting impact in communities across the nation. By equipping individuals with the knowledge and skills to resist the allure of drugs, they are empowering communities to create a brighter and drug-free future. Together, Narcotic Officers Magazine and D.A.R.E. America serve as beacons of hope, reminding us that a united front can overcome any challenge.

DARE AMERICA: EMPOWERING YOUTH FOR A DRUG-FREE FUTURE

Introduction:

Dare America, also known as Drug Abuse Resistance Education, is a nonprofit organization dedicated to empowering young people to resist drugs, violence, and other risky behaviors. With its evidence-based curriculum and community engagement initiatives, Dare America has been instrumental in shaping the lives of millions of students across the United States. In this article, we will explore the mission, impact, and programs offered by Dare America in its relentless pursuit of a drug-free future.

1. The Mission of Dare America:

Dare America's mission is to provide students with the knowledge and skills necessary to make informed decisions and lead healthy lives. By fostering positive relationships between law enforcement officers, educators, students, and parents, Dare America aims to create a supportive environment where young people can thrive and resist the pressures of drug abuse.

2. Evidence-Based Curriculum:

At the core of Dare America's success is its evidence-based curriculum, which is continually updated to address the evolving challenges faced by today's youth. The curriculum covers a range of topics, including drug awareness, decision-making skills, self-esteem, and communication techniques. Through interactive lessons, role-playing, and open discussions, students gain the necessary tools to navigate the complexities of adolescence and make informed choices.

3. Community Engagement:

Dare America understands that the fight against drug abuse requires a collective effort. The organization actively engages with communities, partnering with local law enforcement agencies, schools, and community organizations to create a comprehensive support system. Dare America encourages collaboration among these stakeholders to implement prevention strategies, raise awareness, and support students in their journey towards a drug-free future.

4. Specialized Programs:

In addition to its core curriculum, Dare America offers specialized programs to address specific needs and challenges faced by different groups of students. These programs include Dare Keepin' it REAL for middle school students, Dare to Resist Drugs and Violence for high school students, and Dare Parents for parents and caregivers. These initiatives ensure that Dare America's impact extends beyond the classroom and into the homes and communities of its participants.

5. Impact and Success Stories:

Over the years, Dare America has made a significant impact on the lives of countless students. Through rigorous evaluation and research, the organization has consistently demonstrated positive outcomes, including reduced drug use, improved decision-making skills, and increased self-confidence among program participants. Numerous success stories from students who have benefited from Dare America's programs serve as a testament to its effectiveness in shaping a drug-free future.

Conclusion:

Dare America's commitment to empowering youth and creating a drug-free future is commendable. Through its evidence-based curriculum, community engagement, and specialized programs, the organization continues to make a lasting impact on the lives of students across the United States. By equipping young people with the knowledge and skills to make informed choices, Dare America is playing a vital role in preventing drug abuse and fostering healthier communities. Together, we can support Dare America's mission and ensure a brighter future for our youth.

Please visit www.dareamerica.org to support their mission.

NARCOTIC OFFICERS MAGAZINE EXTENDS SUPPORT TO K9S OF VALOR

Introduction:

Narcotic Officers Magazine, a leading publication in the law enforcement community, has recently continued its support with K9s of Valor, a non-profit organization dedicated to supporting police K9 units. This support showcases the magazine's commitment to recognizing and appreciating the vital role played by K9 officers in combating narcotics and ensuring public safety.

The K9s of Valor Program: A Beacon of Support

Their mission is to support K9 officers by providing life-saving and essential equipment to help keep them safe.

They donate trauma kits, Narcan overdose reversal kits, Hot-N-Pop vehicle heat alarms, care packages, bullet resistant vests and other essential supplies to law enforcement agencies at no charge.

K9 officers put their lives on the line every day to keep us safe, now it is our turn to thank them by providing them with the proper equipment they deserve. Join their mission, donate, and become a sponsor to help protect our K-9 officers. https://www.k9sofvalor.org/

The Essential Role of K9 Officers:

K9 officers are an integral part of law enforcement agencies, utilizing their exceptional scent detection abilities, agility, and unwavering loyalty to assist officers in numerous ways. These highly trained dogs play a pivotal role in locating narcotics, tracking down suspects, and safeguarding communities. By leveraging their extraordinary sense of smell, K9 officers can identify hidden drugs, sniff out explosives, and even locate missing persons. Their skills and dedication make them an invaluable asset in the fight against crime.

Narcotic Officers Magazine: A Catalyst for Change

Narcotic Officers Magazine has long been recognized as a reliable source for law enforcement professionals seeking the latest news, insights, and resources. By extending their support to K9s of Valor, the magazine further solidifies its commitment to the entire law enforcement community, including the remarkable K9 officers who serve alongside their human partners.

The Synergistic Benefits of the Partnership:

The support between Narcotic Officers Magazine and K9s of Valor brings forth numerous benefits. Firstly, it raises awareness about the critical role played by K9 officers in fighting narcotics and upholding public safety. By referencing the website of K9s of Valor, readers can gain a deeper understanding of the organization's initiatives and the challenges faced by K9 units.

Furthermore, this support provides an avenue for Narcotic Officers Magazine to highlight the inspiring stories of K9 officers and their exceptional achievements. By featuring these canine heroes in their articles and publications, the magazine not only pays tribute to their contributions but also inspires others to offer their support to K9 initiatives.

Conclusion:

Narcotic Officers Magazine's recent support for K9s of Valor reflects their unwavering dedication to the law enforcement community. By supporting this non-profit organization, the magazine not only acknowledges the invaluable work of K9 officers but also encourages others to rally behind them. Together, Narcotic Officers Magazine and K9s of Valor strive to ensure the welfare and effectiveness of these extraordinary canine officers, ultimately creating a safer and more secure society.

For more information on K9s of Valor and their initiatives, please visit their website at https://www.k9sofvalor.org/

K9S OF VALOR: UNLEASHING HEROISM AND COMPASSION

Introduction:

K9s of Valor is a remarkable organization dedicated to honoring and supporting the courageous canines who serve alongside our nation's heroes. Founded with a mission to provide assistance, recognition, and care for these remarkable four-legged warriors, K9s of Valor plays a crucial role in ensuring the well-being of both the dogs and their human partners. In this article, we will delve into the incredible work done by K9s of Valor, highlighting their initiatives, impact, and the heartwarming stories that inspire their cause.

1. A Bond Like No Other:

At the core of K9s of Valor's mission lies the recognition of the unique bond between military and law enforcement personnel and their K9 partners. These highly trained dogs serve in a variety of roles, including explosive detection, search and rescue, patrol, and therapy support. The partnership between these brave dogs and their handlers is built on trust, loyalty, and an unwavering commitment to protect and serve.

2. Support and Assistance:

K9s of Valor understands the physical and emotional toll that these service dogs experience while on duty. They provide vital support to ensure the dogs receive the care they need. This includes medical assistance, training, equipment, and retirement plans to ensure a comfortable life after their service. K9s of Valor also offers counseling and therapy programs to support the mental well-being of the dogs and their human partners.

3. Recognition and Appreciation:

K9s of Valor believes in giving these exceptional animals the recognition they deserve. Through various events and ceremonies, they honor the bravery and sacrifice exhibited by these K9 heroes. The organization also promotes public awareness and education about the vital role these dogs play in our society.

4. Heartwarming Success Stories:

K9s of Valor has countless heartwarming success stories that showcase the impact of their work. From stories of dogs detecting explosives and saving lives on the battlefield to therapy dogs bringing comfort to veterans suffering from PTSD, these stories highlight the life-changing impact these dogs have on individuals and communities.

5. How to Support K9s of Valor:

If you are inspired by the incredible work done by K9s of Valor, there are several ways you can show your support. You can donate to help cover the costs of medical care, training, and equipment for these service dogs. Additionally, volunteering your time or spreading awareness about their cause through social media can make a significant difference.

Conclusion:

K9s of Valor is an organization that exemplifies the true meaning of heroism and compassion. By providing support, recognition, and care for these remarkable service dogs, they ensure that the bond between the dogs and their human partners remains strong. Through their initiatives, K9s of Valor continues to make a lasting impact on the lives of both dogs and humans, reminding us of the selfless dedication and unwavering loyalty of our four-legged heroes.

Please visit www.k9sofvalor.org to support their mission.

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Evaluation Tool—Providing Evaluation Technical Assistance: Questions to Guide Evaluation Planning

The following tables include a series of questions to help prevention practitioners plan for program evaluation. By responding to the proposed questions, practitioners can begin to think through how to select appropriate evaluation measures, address data collection challenges, and collect quality data. The questions are organized according to the following seven themes:

- Defining the target population
- Reviewing existing data
- Selecting a sample
- Increasing response rates
- Addressing ethical considerations
- Administering a quantitative survey
- Following up and sharing results

DEFINING THE TARGET POPULATION

Prevention efforts should focus on a population that demonstrates risk for substance misuse based on data. During evaluation planning, it's important to understand this targeted population and the changes you hope to expect as a result of programmatic efforts.

Key Questions	Follow-up Questions	Considerations
Which population group(s) are your prevention efforts targeting?	• Is this population group at increased risk for substance misuse? • What characteristics place them at increased risk? • How did you determine that this population group was at increased risk? • Are there subgroups within your target population who are at even higher risk?	• Depending on data findings, target populations might include, for example, adolescents, emerging adults, college students, alcohol retailers, prescribers, or specific racial/ethnic groups.

Developed under the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies task order. Reference #HHSS283201200024I/HHSS28342002T. March 2018

Key Questions	Follow-up Questions	Considerations
How large is your population of interest?	• Is it feasible to survey at the individual level or is your sample so large that it would make sense to survey at a higher level, such as the school level?	• The larger the sample, the more expensive it becomes to collect the necessary data. • Power analysis can help determine the sample size required to detect an effect with confidence. It may be appropriate to consult with a statistician before selecting a sample. For more information on sample size, see *Selecting a Sample*.
Are you expected to demonstrate change at the state or local level?	• How many subrecipients are funded? • What is the total number of units from which you can potentially sample?	• Some grantees may be working with every county in the state, or they may fund only one agency, county, or town. • Units can be, for example, individuals, schools, organizations, or communities.
What changes do you expect to see in that population?	• What performance outcome(s) are you measuring and monitoring? • Do you have access to measures that include indicators relevant to your outcomes?	• For example: PFS grantees must submit at least six measures for each sub-recipient to the cross-site evaluation (PEP-C): three underage drinking and three prescription drug measures.

REVIEWING EXISTING DATA

Before deciding to collect original data (which can be resource intensive), it can be helpful to look into what data are already being collected and whether those sources can be used for evaluation purposes.

Key Questions	Follow-up Questions	Considerations
Are you able to monitor change in your population of interest using indicators from existing datasets?	• Does the existing data include information at the level for which you want to show change (i.e., local, state, or national)? • What is the quality of the existing data?	• Be sure to understand the psychometric properties of the survey and the methodology used to collect the data in order to determine the quality and rigor of the data set and have confidence in the findings.

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Key Questions	Follow-up Questions	Considerations
Are you able to monitor change in your population of interest using indicators from existing datasets? **(cont.)**	• How accurately do these data represent the population you are trying to study? • Who is collecting the information? • Are data collected consistently in standard intervals (e.g., annually, biannually, every 3 years)? • Are the same questions asked each time the survey is administered? • Have the response categories remained consistent or have they changed?	• Example of local data: school district suspension/expulsion data • Example of state-level data: state-level youth surveys and state-level adult surveys • Example of national-level data: U.S. census data to access population and demographic information about the country
Will these datasets provide available baseline data on outcomes of interest in your timeframe?	• What outcomes do you expect to change in your population of interest? • Over what time period are you expected to show change in those outcomes? • Does the timing of the existing data collection align with the timing of your reporting needs? • How long is the delay in accessing data? • Will you have access to all of the data you need with the demographic breakdowns required for reporting? • Do these data sources provide accurate indicators of outcomes? • Is the sample size large enough to produce a stable estimate? • Can the data be disaggregated in order to draw conclusions about the population of interest?	• Examples of outcomes: prevalence of binge drinking, number of heroin deaths

Developed under the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies task order. Reference #HHSS283201200024I/HHSS28342002T. March 2018

Key Questions	Follow-up Questions	Considerations
Are these datasets part of ongoing collection efforts that will provide (timely) future outcome data on your population of interest?	• How often are data collected? • How sustainable is the data source? In other words, if you are considering using a student survey, you may want to ask stakeholders about the likelihood that this survey will continue to be used to collect data in the future and the likelihood that the dataset will be made available in the future.	• Examples of ongoing data collection: annual town census, 11th grade youth survey • Data may be collected weekly, monthly, biannually, or annually. The more data points, the better when showing trends over time. • If a survey is only administered once every two years, but yearly data are needed, then that dataset may not be appropriate. • Fiscal constraints can sometimes mean surveys are discontinued. It is important to check in with key stakeholders on the sustainability plans of existing surveys or measures.
Do existing data sources provide information on sample representativeness and response rates?	• Is the sample represented in the existing survey data set reflective of your community demographics? • Do you have a minimum response rate that you need to meet for grant requirements?	• Response rates for national surveys are often available on websites or in methodological reports. For example, in 2015 the YRBSS[1] reported a school response rate of 69%, a student response rate of 86%, and an overall response rate[2] of 60%.[i] • If sample representativeness or response rate information is not provided, consider using other data sources.
Will datasets provide (timely) baseline and subsequent data for a control or comparison population?	• Some existing data sources may allow you to gather data for comparison purposes—in which you compare individuals or groups who have been exposed to intervention activities to others who have not	• Consider comparing data (e.g., YRBSS, NSDUH,[3] BRFSS[4]) from your state or community with data from another state, community, or the nation. • Comparisons should be made only with states or communities that share

[1] YRBSS: Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/index.htm)
[2] Overall response rate = (number of participating schools/number of eligible sampled schools) x (number of usable questionnaires/number of eligible students sampled)
[3] NSDUH: National Survey on Drug Use and Health (https://www.samhsa.gov/data/population-data-nsduh)
[4] BRFSS: Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (https://www.cdc.gov/brfss/index.html)

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Key Questions	Follow-up Questions	Considerations
Will datasets provide (timely) baseline and subsequent data for a control or comparison population? (cont.)	(controlling for possible alternative explanations).	key relevant characteristics (e.g., similar on demographics, core risk factors, and political and legislative climates).

SELECTING A SAMPLE[5]

Once it is decided that original data will be collected, various decisions need to be made regarding choosing a sampling frame.

Key Questions	Follow-up Questions	Considerations
Will you collect data from all members of your target population (a census) or a sample of the target population?	• How large is the entire population of interest? • Is it feasible and necessary to collect data from everyone considering that number?	• For example, it may be feasible to collect census data from a whole grade within a school and include all the students, but it may not be feasible to collect data from all high school students within a district because of the size of the student body; therefore, surveying a random sample of high school classrooms may be more feasible if you want to capture data from multiple grades that is representative of the district
Will a statistician help you create a sampling strategy?	• Have you selected a population or subset that you'd like to target for data collection? • Do you know a statistician who can help you think through your sampling needs?	• Examples of sampling strategies: stratified random sampling, cluster sampling, systematic sampling

[5] For further discussion on selecting a sample, see *Sample Representativeness and Nonresponse Bias: Frequently Asked Questions*.

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Key Questions	Follow-up Questions	Considerations
What is your sampling unit?	• Are you interested in outcomes at the individual level? At the school level? At the community level?	• For example, sampling units could be individual people, classrooms, church congregations, or young adults across a community.
What steps will you take to recruit participants?	• Where are you likely to find potential participants? • Where do your potential participants like to congregate? • What media platform might catch their eye and entice them to participate?	• Include your target population in discussions (if possible) concerning recruitment efforts, because they'll know the social norms and have insights to inform your methods. • If you are working with a specific population, it may be helpful to have someone from that community act as a liaison/facilitator.
How large does your sample need to be?	• Have you conducted a power analysis to determine the likelihood that your data collection activities will include enough participants to understand whether there is a significant effect?	• Studies of outcomes with larger effect sizes, larger sample sizes, and higher significance levels ($p<.01$ vs. $p<.05$) are more likely to detect a statistically significant effect if the intervention works as intended. • There are many online calculators available to help conduct power analysis. Examples include: http://statpages.info/#Power, http://www.gpower.hhu.de/, and http://www.ncss.com/software/pass/; however, these may not take into account all factors involved in your research. • It is recommended that you work closely with a statistician when conducting power analyses.

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INCREASING RESPONSE RATES[6]

Often the greater the response rate, the more trust that the sample is representative. There are ways to plan ahead as well as methods that can be employed to increase survey response.

Key Questions	Follow-up Questions	Considerations
Do you plan to send out frequent reminders and/or additional surveys to respondents in order to increase participation?	• What type of reminders would be most effective for respondents? Post-cards? Emails? Text messages? • What time intervals would be most effective for reaching your target population without overtaxing them?	• Mail-back Surveys: Some general guidance regarding follow-up for mail-back surveys includes the following: After one week of nonresponse, send a reminder postcard; if still no response, send out the initial mail-out with a replacement survey 3 and 7 weeks after the initial mail-out.[ii] Additional postcards and/or follow-up postcards might be necessary. The actual schedule for follow-up depends on your resources and the level of response to each wave of the survey. • Online surveys: Consider sending up to three reminder emails for online surveys, personalizing each message, and including the average time to complete the survey.[iii]
Do you plan to provide incentives?	• Will you compensate individual participants and/or organizations helping you access those individuals (e.g., schools)?	• Some research participants may receive monetary compensation before or after completing a survey. Others may be given non-monetary incentives, such as a "free homework pass" for students or a free meal. • Consider connecting with an appropriate IRB to consider the ethical implications of the incentives to make sure participants do not feel coerced into participation.

[6] For further discussion on increasing response rates, see *Sample Representativeness and Nonresponse Bias: Frequently Asked Questions*.

Key Questions	Follow-up Questions	Considerations
What information is useful for assessing the representativeness of the final sample?	• What information will you be able to collect on non-respondents? • Does the final sample represent the target population proportionally?	• For example, if you want to find out what percentage of males responded to the survey, you can compare the proportion of male non-responders to the proportion of males in the final sample. • Many times a sample should represent the larger population of interest demographically. For example, if 90% of the entire school district is female, but your school district survey responses include a sample of 20% females and 80% males, then there might be bias in your sampling strategy.
What steps will you take to promote the survey?	• What is your purpose for promoting the survey? • Will you involve the community to convey the value of the survey? • Who are key opinion leaders in the targeted community? • What media channels does the target population access most frequently?	• Consider conducting focus groups or key informant interviews to determine what media channel(s) would be best to reach the targeted sample population (e.g., radio, T.V., social media). • Examples: Consider setting up a booth at a community event where you have information about the upcoming survey and intent for the research. It also may be helpful to write the local newspaper or campus newspaper to see if the survey could be explained in a news story.

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ADDRESSING ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Ethical considerations must be taken into account when conducting evaluation, especially when collecting data from vulnerable populations such as youth.

Key Questions	Follow-up Questions	Considerations
What human protections requirements must be met before data collection can begin?	• Will you be required to submit your data collection procedures and instruments to an institutional review board (IRB), a college/university research office, university board of trustees, college president, dean of students, department chair, or classroom instructors? Or, if working with Native American populations, the Tribal Council? • If so, how long does the approval process take and what deadlines might be relevant for submission? Can the instrument be an amendment to an existing IRB-approved application?	• Design a protocol to ensure the confidentiality of data. • Design a protocol to make sure that all respondents understand the purpose of the survey and that they have a right to not participate.
Are there any questions included in your data collection instruments to which community members might oppose? Are there questions about illegal behaviors?	• Are there any questions on the survey that might be a "red flag" for key stakeholders or participants? • What steps will you take to engage key stakeholders and secure stakeholder buy-in for the survey? • What procedures can you put in place to ensure that participants feel comfortable providing sensitive information?	• Examples: Some key stakeholders may not approve of asking youth about topics like sexual orientation, sexual behavior, suicide, or other sensitive topics.
Will you be collecting data from one of the following population groups: youth under age 18, prisoners, or military personnel (or any others that require special clearance)?	• Who has the authority to grant permission to collect data in the target area (e.g., tribal council, school district, and/or school principal)? • Is there a special application process researchers are required to complete? If so, what is the timeframe for this process (e.g., weeks or months)?	• Buy-in at the community level and from the population you are targeting (e.g., youth) can assist in successful data collection. • To conduct a school survey, permission may need to be granted through the school district superintendent, school board and/or principals. This may require making a presentation to the school board describing the purpose and intent of

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Key Questions	Follow-up Questions	Considerations
Will you be collecting data from one of the following population groups: youth under age 18, prisoners, or military personnel (or any others that require special clearance)? **(cont.)**	• If you don't obtain permission to collect certain types of data/survey certain populations, what alternative plans exist to meet any grant-specific reporting requirements?	the data collection, as well as sharing drafts of survey items. It may also require notifying parents in advance of the survey to provide them with the opportunity to permit or refuse their child's participation.
Does your state/school/district require active[7] or passive[8] parental consent for surveying youth under age 18?	• If you are collecting survey data from minors, how will you obtain parental consent? Keep in mind that passive consent might be allowed at the state or district level, but individual schools may require active consent.	• Requirements regarding passive or active consent vary by state, by school district, and sometimes by school. Passive permission is usually preferred because it requires the fewest resources and does not often lead to many refusals. • Response rates may be substantially lower when active consent is required. This also requires many more resources to track which students have receiveved parental permission to participate. • It is important to create a plan for contacting parents and following up with them to address questions and make sure that they return the active consent form.

[7] Active consent: Requires distributing a form to parents explaining the study and having parents sign it in order to allow their child(ren) to participate.
[8] Passive consent: Requires distributing a form to parents explaining the study and having parents sign it if they refuse having their child(ren) participate.

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ADMINISTERING A QUANTITATIVE SURVEY

Administering a quantitative survey can be resource intensive, but there are ways to be efficient and ethical while still collecting high quality data.

Key Questions	Follow-up Questions	Considerations
Have you (or others you know of) collected data on outcomes of interest from the same population?	• How often are these data collected? • Who collects it? • Do you have a good relationship with that individual, agency, department, or stakeholders?	• For example, a survey that is administered through the state's department of education may already include data on the outcomes of interest; therefore, it may be unnecessary to conduct another survey. • Data-sharing agreements may need to be formalized depending on the protocols to which the data owner needs to adhere.
Can you build on other surveys that target population(s) may complete during your timeframe?	• What surveys are currently being implemented with your target population? • What are the content of the surveys? • How long or burdensome are the surveys for participants? • How will time of data collection be managed so that staff and participants are not overburdened?	• Consider adding items to an existing survey that the school district or other entity is conducting. This may not be an easy task and may require some negotiation and discussion with the survey originator.
Is the population defined by, and therefore reached in, specific settings?	• Are there specific places where the survey can be administered that are frequented by the target population?	• Consider meeting the population at the locations they normally patron to administer a survey. For example, meet students at their school or college; meet community members at their faith-based organizations, out-of-school community groups, or clubs. • If you are working with specific populations, it may be helpful to have someone from that community act as a liaison/facilitator.

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Key Questions	Follow-up Questions	Considerations
Do you plan to use a standardized questionnaire already being used out in the field?	• Does its use require permission? If so, do you have permission? Is there an associated fee? • Are the questions worded in the survey sensitive enough to capture change (i.e., lifetime vs. past-year vs. past 30-day substance use)?	• For example, the Communities That Care Youth Survey and the YRBSS are free and readily available, while the Monitoring the Future Survey may not be used widely without permission from the developers. • If designing a new survey, try to create/craft items that parallel (or duplicate) the national surveys to allow some comparability of results, especially if the national survey is used as a baseline measure. It's helpful to double check wording to make sure the same question is asked with the same response options, and that the national survey methodologies haven't changed over time.
What method will you use to administer your survey?	• How will the mode of administration affect your ability to implement the survey and obtain an adequate response rate?	• Methods may include: in-person interview, pencil-and-paper, audio-assisted computer, online, telephone interview, mail, or combination. In general, web-based surveys typically have lower response rates than in-person interviews[iv] and face-to-face interviews typically have higher responses than mail-in surveys. • Consider how choices about administration impact who is (and is not) included in your survey. For example, in-person administration in schools means high-risk students might be missing—like those with histories of truancy or those who have dropped out. Similarly, online surveys can impact who is (and is not) included, omitting those who lack access to technology.

Key Questions	Follow-up Questions	Considerations
Is the survey written so that participants will understand the questions' content?	• What is the reading level or literacy skill of your target population? • Are the survey questions worded in a way that is easy for participants to understand? • Can accomodations be made to support members of the target population who may need extra assistance in completing the survey?	• Reading level can be assessed using computer programs. Microsoft Word can generate a readability statistic that will report the Flesch-Kincaid Grade Level, which corresponds to U.S. school grade level. • For the general population, it is recommended that surveys not include items that require more than 8 years of formal schooling and, for vulnerable populations, no more than 5 years of formal schooling.[v] For example, the Massachusetts Youth Risk Behavior Survey, designed for high school students, was written at the 7th grade reading level.[vi]
Is the survey culturally competent for the intended participants?	• Are you targeting immigrant population(s) or non-English speaking populations? • Will you need to administer the survey in languages other than English? • What translation services are available?	• Translation of surveys requires multiple steps. A simple model includes 3 steps: (1) write survey in English; (2) translate survey into second language (translation); (3) translate survey from the second language back into English (back-translation). Once back translation is finished, the text is compared to the original survey. The translators meet to negotiate changes to ensure that the final translation matches the original English translation as closely as possible.[vii] • It may be helpful to consult a linguist. • Consider seeking input on questionnaire wording from a community advisory board or representatives of the target population to get feedback regarding cultural appropriateness.
How much will it cost to collect data on outcomes of interest in your target population?	• How much money and resources do you have available for data collection purposes?	• The cost of data collection varies according to collection method. For example, face-to-face survey interviews are usually the most costly because they require training survey

Key Questions	Follow-up Questions	Considerations
How much will it cost to collect data on outcomes of interest in your target population? **(cont.)**	• How many participants do you need to survey and what response rate is expected? • What quality of data is sufficient?	administrators and perhaps paying them for their time. Web-based survey methods may cost less (due to free to low-cost online programs) but the quality of the data and response rates may be lower. For more on the pros and cons of different data collection methods, visit: https://preventionsolutions.edc.org/services/resources/data-collection-methods-pros-and-cons
Who will conduct data collection activities?	• Has this individual (or individuals) been trained in data collection? • Is additional training needed?	• Interviewers need to be trained on data collection processes, as well as on the human protection protocol. They may also need refresher trainings throughout the data collection process if there are changes to the survey or procedures.
Who will take primary responsibility for developing and ensuring that the data collection protocols are followed?	• Are the data collection protocols documented and standardized? • Are the protocols clear, understandable, and easy to follow? • Have data collectors been adequately trained in data collection protocols? • Have the instruments and protocols been approved by an Institutional Review Board (IRB), if necessary?	• If possible, hire a data collection coordinator to make sure that data collection procedures are followed and standardized. • Periodically during data collection, review randomly selected surveys to determine completeness. Conduct routine check-in meetings with interviewers or data collectors to ensure they are following protocol, and brainstorm solutions to potential barriers to following protocol.
What measures will you take to assure respondents that their responses will be kept private?	• Are you asking questions about illegal behaviors? • Are you asking other sensitive questions, such as about suicidal thoughts and behaviors, or experiences of abuse (emotional, physical, and/or sexual)? • What protocols do you have in place to protect the confidentiality of participants and their responses?	• Consider connecting with an appropriate IRB (may be required) to review the methods and measures in order to ensure the protection of the participants. • Instead of names, pair each participant with a unique identifier (code) marked on their survey form. • Keep the list of paired names and identifiers stored in a locked cabinet or password-protected file and

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Key Questions	Follow-up Questions	Considerations
What measures will you take to assure respondents that their responses will be kept private? **(cont.)**		separate from the surveys—and limit who has access to this list. • Train interviewers on research ethics and human protection protocols and ensure they are followed. • Require password protection and security software for the computers used for tracking participation and data input. Only allow password access to necessary people who are trained in confidentiality and ethics. If possible, store data only on external hardware and lock up the hardware in a secured cabinet and room when not in use.

FOLLOWING UP AND SHARING RESULTS

In order to make evaluation respectful, useful, and purposeful, decisions need to be made regarding the dissemination of evaluation results.

Key Questions	Follow-up Questions	Considerations
Will results be shared with key stakeholders?	• In what format will key stakeholders be most receptive to reading and understanding evaluation results? • How can you best convey program/strategy successes as well as barriers/challenges? • When would it be best to share results?	• Evaluation results can be used to improve and strengthen programs or strategies. Consider discussing a process with key stakeholders for realigning resources or strategies to put the evaluation results to beneficial use. • Sharing evaluation results with stakeholders helps to build relationships and trust. This is particularly important when working with minority populations, such as Native American/Alaska Native populations or lesbian, gay, bisexual, or transgender populations.

Key Questions	Follow-up Questions	Considerations
What type of follow-up are you prepared to implement with participants?	• Will you provide survey results to participants? • How will you thank participants?	• Consider sending a thank you via letter or email or postcard. • Consider sharing some of the key results from the study so that participants feel that there will be positive outcomes as a result of their involvement.
How will evaluation results be used?	• What process will you follow to realign resources to improve, replace, or augment strategies or programs based on the evaluation results?	• Reflect on process evaluation measures that document implementation and see if adaptations were associated with more or less positive outcomes.

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Reporting Your Evaluation Results

Evaluation results are used to improve programs, sustain positive outcomes, and improve the community's overall plan for addressing substance misuse and promoting wellness. But they can be used for other reasons as well, such as to help obtain funding and to build community awareness and support for prevention.

So evaluation results need to get into the hands of the people who can use them. Keep in mind that organizations don't use evaluation results; people do. The Department of Health, for example, isn't going to use the results of an evaluation, but "Cathy Smith" in the Department of Health may. So, unless you get the results of the program evaluation into her hands and explain how she can use the results, they will sit on a shelf somewhere in the Department of Health.

Follow these general guidelines for reporting your results:

- Brief stakeholders throughout the process. Try to avoid surprising your stakeholders with the results of your evaluation. Brief them along the way, rather than waiting until the end of the project. Present a draft form of your report before it goes public.
- Create a dissemination plan. Identify the various audiences that need to see the results (including the population the intervention focuses on), what information would be most useful to them, and how to get it into their hands.
- Select formats for reporting results. Be sure to use the most appropriate format for each audience (for example: public presentation, social media, flyers, reports).
- Help stakeholders understand the data. Take time to review the findings with your stakeholders, discussing the ramifications of what you found. Don't shy away from negative or unexpected results. Instead, use these as an opportunity to inform future efforts.

Remember that each stakeholder has his or her own interests and may need different kinds of information about the results of an evaluation. So, one size will not fit all when sharing evaluation results with stakeholders.

The following set of questions can guide how evaluation results are presented, in order to ensure that results are relevant to various stakeholders and community members:

1. WHAT data have you collected?
2. WHY do you want to share the data?
3. WITH WHOM will you share the data?
4. WHAT data would be most useful?
5. HOW are you going to present the data?
6. WHO will present the data?
7. WHERE will the data be presented?
8. WHEN will the data be presented?

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Answering these questions will help you determine the presentation of your evaluation results to various stakeholders.

Some factors may influence whether and how your evaluation results get used. So keep these in mind:

- The way in which findings are reported, including layout, readability, and user-friendliness, all make a difference. The timing is also critical. If a report is needed for a legislative session, but isn't ready in time, then the chances of the data being used drop dramatically.
- The quality of the evaluation and relevance of the findings matters. If the evaluation design is logically linked to the purpose and outcomes of the project, the findings are far more likely to be put to use.
- The availability of support and technical assistance, after findings are reported, can sustain use. Questions of interpretation will arise over time, and people will be more likely to use the results if those kinds of questions can get answered.
- The political context or climate can have an impact. Some evaluation results will get used because of political support, and others will get squashed because of political pressure.
- Other factors, like the size of your organization or program, may matter as well. Sometimes larger programs get more press. Sometimes targeted programs do.
- Consider competing information. For example, are there results from similar programs that confirm or deny your results? Are there other topics competing for attention?

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Selecting an Appropriate Evaluation Design

The first step in any project is to develop a plan for getting the work done. The plan for an evaluation project is called the "design."

All too often, prevention practitioners launch into their evaluation without coming up with a plan. They start thinking about how to collect data before determining what to collect. This is usually accompanied by the phrase, "Let's do a survey!" But before choosing methods, practitioners need to back up.

Designing an evaluation is a process that starts out general, but which ultimately becomes very specific. The first step is to clarify the purpose of the evaluation. That leads to developing questions that then require information and data obtained from methods. But the methods come last, not first.

One of the primary purposes of the evaluation is to determine if the program or intervention had the desired effect. A classic research study found that individual behaviors and workers' performance can improve simply because they know they are part of the study. The "Hawthorne Effect," as this phenomenon is known, is a thorn in the side of evaluators.

To correct for the Hawthorne Effect, some type of comparison generally needs to be made to make sure the change was the result of the intervention, and not due to the attention received. There is a continuum of evaluation rigor among these different methods of comparison.

Experimental Design

Typically, the most rigorous evaluation approach is an experimental design where participants are randomly assigned to a program or a control group. Those participants in the program group receive an intervention, while those in the control get either the existing program or in some cases, no program. Some type of pre/post assessment is provided to both groups and the results are then compared to determine if there were differences between groups. This method provides the greatest support for ruling out plausible explanations.

Quasi-experimental Design

Similar in structure to the experimental design, the quasi-experimental design does not rely on random assignment in making assignments to a program or comparison group. A quasi-experimental design is frequently used when there is not a sufficient number of participants available to randomly assign to a program and control group. As a result, in a quasi-experimental design, a significant challenge is identifying comparison groups and then collecting data from them. To score well on most federal lists of evidence-based programs, it is important, at a minimum, to use a quasi-experimental design.

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The Purpose of the Evaluation

The purpose of the evaluation varies greatly from program to program. As discussed previously, evaluation can be defined as the systematic collection of information about program activities, characteristics, and outcomes to reduce uncertainty, improve effectiveness, and make decisions. Most frequently, the emphasis is on whether or not the program had the intended effect. But, information could be collected that focuses only on the number of individuals served. Or evaluation data may be collected to use for marketing purposes. Each of these different strategies would require differing evaluation designs and differing evaluation skills.

What Will Be Evaluated

Is it the entire project or only certain components? For example, if you are part of a coalition, you may think about evaluating individual coalition initiatives like the provision of after-school activities. But don't forget that you may also want to evaluate changes in the coalition over time—things like growth of coalition membership, formal agreements with key community organizations—and the impact of the coalition on the overall community.

Who Wants to Know What

Keep all of your stakeholders in mind. Program providers may want to know what's working and what isn't. Funders may want to know if the program is cost-effective and supported in the community. They may also have specific measures that are required. Communication between funders, project staff, and evaluators is essential to ensure the necessary data are identified, collected, analyzed, and reported in a manner that is understood from the beginning.

When Results Are Needed

An evaluation is often bound by schedules and deadlines that are beyond your control. Think about school calendars and funding cycles as examples. If your reporting needs are short-term, don't ask questions that require long-term follow-up. Process information is generally needed quickly. Short-term outcome results often need to be reported back in a timely manner (usually within 6 to 12 months of program implementation), while more long-term results are typically not available until sometime after program completion (often 3 to 5 years).

What Will Be Done with the Evaluation Results

Think broadly about the utility of your results. You can use your data not only to meet funding requirements, but also to garner community and school support, inform future planning or programming, support community stakeholders, etc. But, the degree of influence a program has on the evaluation findings is largely dependent on the research design used.

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Strategies for Conducting Effective Focus Groups

The following guidelines related choosing participants for focus groups can help to generate information that is more reliable.

Include People Who Can Provide the Information You Need

Data collection involves asking the appropriate people for the appropriate information. Suppose you want to learn about parents' attitudes and practices concerning teen alcohol use, and drinking and driving? You obviously want to ask parents. But you also might want to consider the following:

- Should parents have children of a certain age in order to participate? (for example, no younger than 15?)
- Do you want to include both mothers and fathers?
- Does the ethnicity of the parents make a difference?
- Should you include parents who drink and nondrinking parents?

Try to define your participants as precisely as possible. It usually makes sense to consider gender, age, occupation, geographic location, ethnicity, and language.

Include Participants Who Are Similar to One Another

The less diverse your focus group, the better. If you want to gather information on Hispanic teenagers, teens who have recently emigrated from Somalia, and teens in the "heavy metal" subculture, organize individual focus groups for each category.

There are two reasons for this:

- An individual cannot represent a population. A focus group of 10 teenagers might not be able to provide a representative sample of all teens in your community. But it will probably generate more representative information than will one teenager included in a group spanning several generations.
- Research shows that people are more likely to reveal their opinions and beliefs and to talk about sensitive issues when they are with people who they perceive to be like themselves.

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Include Participants Who Do Not Know One Another

Participants are more likely to be honest and forthcoming when they do not know the other people in the group. The following may occur when participants know one another:

- They are less likely to reveal personal or sensitive information.
- They are more likely to express views that conform to those of others in the group (especially others whom they perceive as having some power or influence outside the group).
- They may respond to questions based on their past experiences with one another (which effectively reduces your sample size).

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Tips for Conducting Key Informant Interviews

Although key informant interviews are more informal than other forms of data collection, they still require a structure to be effective. Your respondent is more likely to take you seriously (and provide better information) if you are prepared and the conversation has direction.

Tips for conducting key informant interviews include the following:

- **Begin by introducing your project and purpose**. Remind the respondent about your purpose and the ultimate use of the information. Also, explain who will have access to your interview notes and whether the respondents will be identified in any reports or public discussions of your investigation.
- **Start with an easy question**. For example, ask how long your respondents have been in their jobs. This will set them at ease and provide a context for analysis (as someone who has been on the job for six months will not have the same perspective as someone who has been on the job for 10 years).
- **Ask your most important questions first**. You might run out of time. This is especially important when interviewing people whose job might require them to end the interview early (such as emergency medical service or law enforcement personnel).
- **Ask the same (or parallel) questions of several respondents**. For example, you might want to ask all respondents connected with a particular prevention program (or system) to list the three things they would like to see improved. Answers from a number of different people in a system can reveal programming obstacles or places in which the system needs to be improved.
- **Don't move to a new topic prematurely**. Don't leave important issues hanging—you might run out of time before you can return to them. Also, you will get more useful information by discussing one subject at a time.
- **Be prepared to ask the same question in another way**. Prepare several questions that try to elicit the same information. Turn to the alternate questions when your first question just doesn't do the job.
- **Don't get stuck on a question**. Sometimes you just won't get the information you want from a particular respondent. Know when to move on so you don't frustrate yourself or antagonize your respondent by trying to elicit information that he or she does not have, cannot articulate, or isn't willing to share.
- **Don't let the interview go much over an hour**. The people you chose as key informants are likely to be busy. The quality of the conversation can deteriorate if they feel rushed. Many of your respondents may be people with whom you might want to collaborate with in the future, so don't antagonize them by letting an interview go on too long.
- **Record the interview if possible**. And take notes. As with focus groups, transcribe the recording and type up your notes as soon as possible after the interview is completed. Don't forget to get the respondent's permission to make an audio recording.

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Using Process Evaluation to Monitor Program Implementation

Process evaluation involves analyzing how program activities are delivered. Prevention practitioners seek to find the answers to these central questions:

- Who delivers the program and how often?
- To what extent was the program implemented as planned?
- How is the program received by the target group and program staff?
- What are barriers to program delivery?
- Was the data used to make program improvements/refinements? If so, what changes were made?

These questions enable practitioners to also assess the quality of implementation, which is critical to maximizing the program's intended benefits and demonstrating strategy effectiveness. Process evaluation also provides the information needed to make adjustments to strategy implementation to strengthen effectiveness.
Specifically, process evaluation can be used to:

- Paint a clear and compelling picture of the population targeted with each strategy
- Reach important target audiences of stakeholders
- Provide data for program improvement efforts
- Distribute the information through as many channels as possible to reach target audience

Why Not Just Look at Results?

Outcome evaluation looks at results. It measures the direct effects of program activities on targeted recipients, such as the degree to which a program increased knowledge about the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. But results don't tell the whole story. Evaluation that only focuses on outcomes is sometimes called a "black box" evaluation because it does not take process evaluation into consideration.

Disappointing outcome evaluation results can frequently be illuminated by examining how the program was implemented, the number of clients served, dropout rates, and how clients experienced the program. Those same kinds of questions can also explain positive evaluation results. (You can't take credit for positive results if you can't show what caused them.) Outcome evaluation alone, without a process evaluation component, won't provide information about why a program did or didn't work.

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Defining Quality

Quality implementation means that the implementers of each strategy have:

- Assured the strategy matches the cultural, developmental, and gender characteristics of the population
- Received training or technical assistance to support appropriate implementation of the intervention
- Worked with the program developer, policy expert, or the evaluator to understand core components—the elements most responsible for demonstrated outcomes
- Assessed the need for any adaptations to the strategy, especially core components, in order to meet the particular needs of the target population
- Sought input from the program developer about planned adaptations to assure they are consistent with the core components
- Planned necessary adaptations to target population, program content or materials, delivery setting or timeframe to assure integrity of implementation
- Sought to deliver program's core components with fidelity when possible
- Tracked implementation through process evaluation as well as all planned and unanticipated adaptations to inform outcome evaluation findings
- Used process evaluation data to inform and strengthen implementation when outcome evaluation did not reveal desired program results

Process evaluation measures should be designed to assess how well the implementers adhered to those items.

What to Do with Disappointing Process Data

If process data suggest the program was not effective, practitioners should work with project stakeholders to:

- Determine if the program was implemented with quality
- Determine if strategy was appropriate for the population's needs (review needs assessment data and program theory)
- Review evaluation strategies and measures to ensure they are appropriate and valid

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PREVENTION SOLUTIONS@EDC

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What Are Core Components...and Why Do They Matter?

Core components are the most essential and indispensable components of an intervention practice or program (“core intervention components”) or the most essential and indispensable components of an implementation practice or program (“core implementation components”).

Core Components for Interventions

Part of an implementer’s goal is to implement only those attributes of a program or practice that are replicable and add value. Core intervention components are, by definition, essential to achieving good outcomes for consumers. However, understanding and adhering to the principles of intervention underlying each core component may allow for flexibility in form (the intervention’s processes and strategies) without sacrificing the function associated with the component.

Knowing the core intervention components may allow for more efficient and cost-effective implementation and lead to decisions about what can be adapted to suit local conditions. Core intervention components may best be defined after a number of attempted applications of a program or practice, not just the original one.

Core Components for Implementation

The goal of implementation is to have practitioners base their interactions with clients and stakeholders on research findings (evidence-based practices and programs). Core implementation components help accomplish this task. The core implementation components consist of the following:

- **Staff selection**: Beyond academic qualifications or experience factors, certain practitioner characteristics are difficult to teach in training sessions so must be a part of the selection criteria. Staff selection also represents the intersection with a variety of larger system variables. General workforce development issues, the overall economy, organizational financing, the demands of the evidence-based programs in terms of time and skill, and so on impacts the availability of staff for human service programs.
- **Pre-service and in-service training**: Trainings are efficient ways to provide knowledge of background information, theory, philosophy, and values. They also help to introduce the components and rationales of key practices and provide opportunities to practice new skills and receive feedback in a safe training environment.
- **Ongoing consultation and coaching**: Most of the skills people need can be introduced in training but really are learned on the job with the help of a consultant or coach. Implementation of evidence-based practices and programs requires behavior change at the practitioner, supervisory, and administrative support levels. Training and coaching are the principle ways in which behavior change is brought about for selected staff in the beginning stages of implementation and throughout the process of evidence-based practices and programs.

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- **Staff and program evaluation**: Staff evaluation is designed to assess the use and outcomes of the skills that are reflected in the selection criteria, are taught in training, and reinforced and expanded in consultation and coaching processes. Assessments of practitioner performance and measures of fidelity also provide useful feedback to managers and implementers regarding the progress of implementation efforts and the usefulness of training and coaching. Program evaluation assesses key aspects of the overall performance of the organization to help assure continuing implementation of the core intervention components over time.

- **Facilitative administrative support**: This provides leadership and makes use of a range of data inputs to inform decision-making, support the overall processes, and keep staff organized and focused on the desired outcomes.

- **Systems interventions**: These are strategies that work with external systems to ensure the availability of the financial, organizational, and human resources required to support the work of the practitioners.

These are interactive components that can compensate for one another so that a weakness in one component can be overcome by strengths in other components. Organizations are dynamic and there is an ebb and flow to the relative contribution of each component to the overall outcomes. The feedback loops are important in keeping the evidence-based program "on-track." If the feedback loops (staff or process evaluations) indicate needed changes, then the system needs to be adjusted to improve effectiveness or efficiency.

Critical functions of implementation consist of practitioner training, coaching the practitioner on the job, regularly assessing fidelity, and using that information to improve the performance of practitioners who are selected for the position.

Multilevel Influences on Successful Implementation

The core implementation components are important in changing the behavior of practitioners and other personnel who are key providers of evidence-based practices within an organization. The core components are contained within and supported by an organization that establishes facilitative administrative structures and processes to select, train, coach, and evaluate the performance of practitioners and other key staff members; carries out program evaluation functions to provide guidance for decision-making; and intervenes in external systems to assure ongoing resources and support for the evidence-based practices within the organization.

The core components must be present for the implementation to occur with fidelity and good outcomes. The organizational components must be present to enable and support those core components over the long term. And, all of this must be accomplished over the years in the context of variable but influential changes in governments, leadership, funding priorities, economic boom-bust cycles, shifting social priorities, and so on.

Organizational Change and Development

Implementation of evidence-based practices and programs almost always requires organizational change. The elements often described as important to organizational change are:

- Commitment of leadership to the implementation process
- Involvement of stakeholders in planning and selection of programs to implement, to encourage buy-in and ownership during implementation and continuing operations and to keep negative forces at bay
- Creation of an implementation task force made up of consumers, stakeholders, including unions and community leaders to oversee the implementation process
- Suggestions for “unfreezing” current organization practices (including the use of external consultants or purveyors), changing those practices and integrating them to be functional, and then reinforcing the new levels of management and functioning within the organization
- Resources for extra costs, effort, equipment, manuals, materials, recruiting, access to expertise, re-training for new organizational roles associated with implementation of an innovation
- Alignment of organizational structures to integrate staff selection, training, performance evaluation, and on-going training
- Alignment of organizational structures to achieve horizontal and vertical integration
- Commitment of ongoing resources and support for providing time and scheduling for coaching, participatory planning, exercise of leadership, evolution of teamwork

Reference

Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature – 2005 (PDF | 2 MB) at the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) Clinical Trials Network Dissemination Library

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A POLICEMAN'S PRAYER

Saint Michael, heaven's glorious commissioner of police, who once so neatly and successfully cleared God's premises of all its undesirables, look with kindly and professional eyes on your earthly force.

Give us cool heads, stout hearts, and uncanny flair for investigation and wise judgment.

Make us the terror of burglars, the friend of children and law-abiding citizens, kind to strangers, polite to bores, strict with law-breakers and impervious to temptations.

You know, Saint Michael, from your own experiences with the devil, that the police officer's lot on earth is not always a happy one; but your sense of duty that so pleased God, your hard knocks that so surprised the devil, and your angelic self-control give us inspiration.

And when we lay down our night sticks, enroll us in your heavenly force, where we will be as proud to guard the throne of God as we have been to guard the city of all the people.

Amen.

HONORING THE ULTIMATE SACRIFICE: PAYING TRIBUTE TO OFFICERS KILLED IN THE LINE OF DUTY

Law enforcement officers dedicate their lives to serving and protecting their communities, often risking their own safety in the process. Unfortunately, some officers make the ultimate sacrifice and lose their lives in the line of duty. These brave men and women deserve our utmost respect and gratitude for their selflessness and unwavering commitment to keeping our communities safe. In this article, we will explore the importance of paying tribute to officers who have been killed in the line of duty and the various ways in which we can honor their memory.

Recognizing Their Sacrifice:

The first step in paying tribute to fallen officers is acknowledging the profound sacrifice they have made. These officers put themselves on the frontlines, facing dangerous situations and confronting criminals to ensure our safety. By recognizing their bravery, we can show our gratitude and demonstrate that their sacrifices will never be forgotten.

Attending Memorial Services:

Memorial services play a crucial role in honoring fallen officers. These services bring together family, friends, colleagues, and community members to commemorate their lives and express condolences. Attending these services not only provides comfort to the grieving families but also shows solidarity and support for the law enforcement community.

Creating Memorials:

Memorials serve as a lasting tribute to fallen officers and provide a place for remembrance. Communities can come together to create memorials, such as plaques, statues, or dedicated spaces in public areas, to honor the officers who have given their lives. These memorials serve as a reminder of their sacrifice and provide a place for reflection and gratitude.

Supporting Surviving Families:

When an officer is killed in the line of duty, their family is left behind, grieving the loss of their loved one. Supporting the surviving families is an essential part of paying tribute. This can be done through financial assistance, emotional support, and ensuring that they are not forgotten in their time of need. Community organizations, police departments, and individuals can provide various forms of support to help ease the burden on these families.

Commemorative Events:

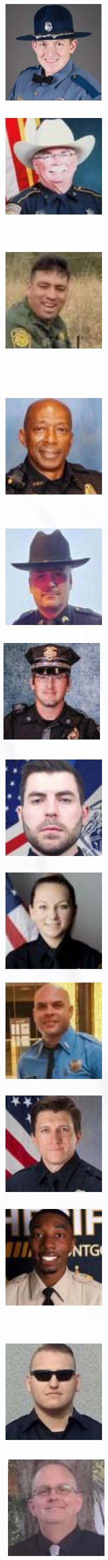
Organizing commemorative events is another way to pay tribute to fallen officers. These events can include memorial marches, candlelight vigils, or charity fundraisers. By participating in or organizing such events, we can raise awareness about the sacrifices made by law enforcement officers and bring the community together in solidarity.

Remembering Their Stories:

Each fallen officer has a unique story, filled with bravery, dedication, and sacrifice. By sharing and remembering their stories, we can ensure that their memories live on. This can be done through articles, social media posts, or by featuring their stories in local newspapers or community newsletters. Remembering their stories allows us to honor their legacy and inspire future generations to serve their communities.

Paying tribute to officers who have been killed in the line of duty is a vital way to honor their ultimate sacrifice. By recognizing their bravery, attending memorial services, creating memorials, supporting surviving families, organizing commemorative events, and remembering their stories, we can ensure that their memories are never forgotten. It is our collective responsibility to show gratitude and respect for these brave men and women who put their lives on the line to protect and serve. Let us stand together and pay tribute to these fallen heroes.Cersperum quiatemque dolorepuda quo quas endi volor aspedis atet od unt volut quam repudi consedit la iligentium intem inctam cum accatur susapisquis sed et, odisciistia voluptatias is endi architi de prerum rem aceaquiae pla volupta tatectaquam

MEMORIAL SECTION



Trooper Christopher M. Gadd
Washington State Patrol, WA
EOW: Saturday, March 2, 2024
Cause: Automobile crash

Deputy Sheriff Bryan “Brad” Sweetman
Harris County Sheriff’s Office, TX
EOW: Monday, March 4, 2024
Cause: Duty related illness

Border Patrol Agent Christopher Luna
United States Department of Homeland Security - Customs and Border Protection - United States Border Patrol, US
EOW: Friday, March 8, 2024
Cause: Aircraft accident

Chief of Police William Anthony Anderson, Sr.
Northeast Mississippi Community College Police Department, MS
EOW: Saturday, March 9, 2024
Cause: Heart attack

Sergeant Thomas A. Sanfratello
Genesee County Sheriff’s Office, NY
EOW: Sunday, March 10, 2024
Cause: Assault

Patrolman Justin Hare
New Mexico State Police, NM
EOW: Friday, March 15, 2024
Cause: Gunfire

Detective Jonathan Diller
New York City Police Department, NY
EOW: Monday, March 25, 2024
Cause: Gunfire

Deputy Sheriff Christina Musil
DeKalb County Sheriff’s Office, IL
EOW: Friday, March 29, 2024
Cause: Vehicular assault

Agent Eliezer Ramos-Velez
Puerto Rico Police Department, PR
EOW: Friday, March 29, 2024
Cause: Gunfire

Lead Police Officer Adam Buckner
Tucson Police Department, AZ
EOW: Sunday, March 31, 2024
Cause: Automobile crash

Deputy Sheriff Jermyius O’Marian-D’Nazhray Young
Montgomery County Sheriff’s Office, AL
EOW: Friday, April 5, 2024
Cause: Automobile crash

Correctional Sergeant Andrew John Faught
Illinois Department of Corrections, IL
EOW: Monday, April 8, 2024
Cause: Automobile crash

Chief of Police Steven Allen Singer
Lake Lafayette Police Department, MO
EOW: Monday, April 8, 2024
Cause: Heart attack

Lieutenant Rodney Osborne
Ohio Department of Rehabilitation and Correction, OH
EOW: Tuesday, April 9, 2024
Cause: Gunfire (Inadvertent)

Special Agent Derek Sean Baer
United States Postal Service - Office of Inspector General, US
EOW: Tuesday, April 9, 2024
Cause: Automobile crash

Police Officer Ross Bartlett
Ceresco Police Department, NE
EOW: Friday, April 12, 2024
Cause: Automobile crash

Police Officer Joseph Russell McKinney
Memphis Police Department, TN
EOW: Friday, April 12, 2024
Cause: Gunfire

Sergeant William Marty Jackson, II
Winchester Police Department, KY
EOW: Sunday, April 14, 2024
Cause: Heart attack

Police Officer Michael E. Jensen
Syracuse Police Department, NY
EOW: Sunday, April 14, 2024
Cause: Gunfire

Lieutenant Michael Hoosock
Onondaga County Sheriff’s Office, NY
EOW: Sunday, April 14, 2024
Cause: Gunfire

Investigator Brian Herbert
Osage Nation Police Department, TR
EOW: Wednesday, April 17, 2024
Cause: Heart attack

Deputy Sheriff Alfredo “Freddy” Flores
Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department, CA
EOW: Saturday, April 20, 2024
Cause: Fire

Police Officer Jordan Wingate
Oakland Police Department, CA
EOW: Saturday, April 20, 2024
Cause: Automobile crash

Deputy Sheriff Tobin Bolter
Ada County Sheriff’s Office, ID
EOW: Sunday, April 21, 2024
Cause: Gunfire

Police Officer Luis M. Huesca
Chicago Police Department, IL
EOW: Sunday, April 21, 2024
Cause: Gunfire

Investigator John Hampton Coddou, III
Harris County Sheriff’s Office, TX
EOW: Tuesday, April 23, 2024
Cause: Struck by vehicle

Police Officer Kyle Hicks
Corpus Christi Police Department, TX
EOW: Wednesday, April 24, 2024
Cause: Gunfire

Sergeant Ian Taylor
Billerica Police Department, MA
EOW: Friday, April 26, 2024
Cause: Struck by vehicle

Police Officer Russell Croxton
Dubach Police Department, LA
EOW: Saturday, April 27, 2024
Cause: Struck by vehicle

Master-at-Arms Lyndon Joel Cosgriff-Flax
United States Navy Security Forces, US
EOW: Sunday, April 28, 2024
Cause: Boating accident

Police Officer Joshua Eyer
Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Department, NC
EOW: Monday, April 29, 2024
Cause: Gunfire

Investigator Samuel Poloche
North Carolina Department of Adult Correction, NC
EOW: Monday, April 29, 2024
Cause: Gunfire

Investigator William “Alden” Elliott
North Carolina Department of Adult Correction, NC
EOW: Monday, April 29, 2024
Cause: Gunfire

Deputy U.S. Marshal Thomas M. Weeks
United States Department of Justice - United States Marshals Service, US
EOW: Monday, April 29, 2024
Cause: Gunfire

Assistant Chief Kevin Linn Palmer
North Richland Hills Police Department, TX
EOW: Wednesday, May 1, 2024
Cause: Heart attack

Trooper II Marcellus E. Bethea
New Jersey State Police, NJ
EOW: Sunday, May 5, 2024
Cause: Duty related illness

Sergeant Bill Hooser
Santaquin Police Department, UT
EOW: Sunday, May 5, 2024
Cause: Vehicular assault

Police Officer Jacob Derbin
Euclid Police Department, OH
EOW: Saturday, May 11, 2024
Cause: Gunfire

Corporal Pricilla Soell Pierson
Ponchatoula Police Department, LA
EOW: Tuesday, May 28, 2024
Cause: Heart attack

Trooper First Class Aaron Pelletier
Connecticut State Police, CT
EOW: Thursday, May 30, 2024
Cause: Vehicular assault

Police Officer Jamal Mitchell
Minneapolis Police Department, MN
EOW: Thursday, May 30, 2024
Cause: Gunfire

Agent Davis Geovanni Martinez
Maryland Department of Public Safety and Correctional Services - Division of Parole and Probation, MD
EOW: Friday, May 31, 2024
Cause: Stabbed

Police Officer Joshua Briese
Gila River Police Department, TR
EOW: Saturday, June 1, 2024
Cause: Gunfire

Senior Police Officer Vicente Ortiz, Jr.
Corpus Christi Police Department, TX
EOW: Saturday, June 1, 2024
Cause: Motorcycle crash

Constable Philip John Michael
Pennsylvania State Constable - Fayette County, PA
EOW: Thursday, June 6, 2024
Cause: Automobile crash

Sergeant Floyd H. Miles, Jr.
Charles City County Sheriff's Office, VA
EOW: Sunday, June 9, 2024
Cause: Heart attack

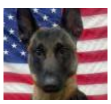
Detective Ryan So
Scottsdale Police Department, AZ
EOW: Thursday, June 13, 2024
Cause: Gunfire (Inadvertent)

Deputy Sheriff Bradley J. Reckling
Oakland County Sheriff's Office, MI
EOW: Saturday, June 22, 2024
Cause: Gunfire

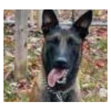
Agent Luis Algarin De Jesús
Puerto Rico Police Department, PR
EOW: Monday, June 24, 2024
Cause: Motorcycle crash

Youth Counselor Corey Proulx
Wisconsin Department of Corrections, WI
EOW: Tuesday, June 25, 2024
Cause: Assault

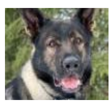
Deputy Sheriff William Butler, Jr.
Hillsdale County Sheriff's Office, MI
EOW: Thursday, June 27, 2024
Cause: Gunfire



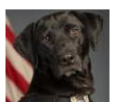
K9 Raiden
Tomah Police Department, WI
EOW: Monday, March 4, 2024
Cause: Struck by vehicle



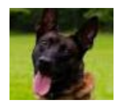
K9 Rivan
Virginia Department of Corrections, VA
EOW: Tuesday, April 2, 2024
Cause: Stabbed



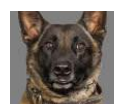
K9 Dax
Lake County Sheriff's Office, IL
EOW: Friday, April 12, 2024
Cause: Duty related illness



K9 Max
Regional Transportation District Transit Police Department, CO
EOW: Wednesday, May 8, 2024
Cause: Exposure to toxins



K9 Coba
South Carolina Law Enforcement Division, SC
EOW: Tuesday, June 11, 2024
Cause: Gunfire



K9 Wick
Richland County Sheriff's Department, SC
EOW: Thursday, June 20, 2024
Cause: Struck by vehicle

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