

Addressing Substance Use in Rural Areas

A Joint Training for Regional Prevention Partnerships
and Tobacco Control Program Community Grantees

July 8, 2019



TABLE TOPIC STRUCTURED NETWORKING AND SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION

Table Topic Summaries

TABLE 3

Topic: *Addressing Substance Use in Rural Communities*

Challenges

- Differences across school districts in approaches
- Access to transportation
- Isolation, social – dealing with family addiction and other issues
- Poverty
- Stigma (issues with Narcan and needle exchange)
- Legacy
- Cultural Acceptance
- Norms within families that bind
- Lack of coverage of law enforcement
- Boredom
- Drinking or other substance use with physical activity events e.g. baseball, kayaking, etc.
- Professional isolation
- Extended Families in cycle of poverty, schools/teachers overloaded
- Finding passionate motivated community leaders
- How do we get to our neighbors? It's easy to look past the invisible kids and never help
- Cultural navigation of rules/constructs of how to interact with neighbors

Opportunities

- Some pockets of volunteer transportation services
- Community centers, local libraries, offering programming after school
- For kids and adults
- Churches, lunch and other community programs and free breakfast programs
- Schools as community centers and resources
- Policies for events
- Youth soccer league adapting drug-free policies
- Substance free zones
- Relationships and access to legislature

Table 3 Opportunities *(continued)*

- Relationships with other parents
- Opportunities to build upon success in other areas
- In some communities strong popular leaders amongst students are positive influences – not using
- Involving kids, keeping them busy, involved in community initiatives, give them meaning and purpose
- Local libraries are really helpful at connecting services together, becoming a community hub.
- Large extended families – how do we infiltrate these families to break the cycle
- Connecting dots within communities
- Schools – natural opportunities; school nurses, PE teachers, school administrative assistants
- Ice fishing – outdoor activities that aren't getting passed down – create alcohol free day with teaching

Solutions

- Pledges not to use – using incentives (e.g. ski lift tickets)
- Working with private business to fund/build programs
- Educating landlord groups – supporting them with policies
- Mobile van for services – SBIRT and primary care (Addison)
- Build upon success e.g. substance-free policies for youth soccer/other leagues
- Identify sure “low hanging fruit” in communities that can be changed
- Take the readiness to talk about opioids and take it to talking about alcohol, tobacco, marijuana etc.
- Community trainings – opportunities to network and exchange ideas
- Statewide training and networking opportunities
- What aspects of rurality can be helpful and assist with the work? How can rural culture be an asset?
- What are the Assets? Libraries, clan (family) mentality, natural spaces, schools
- How do you start an alcohol free event like a fishing derby? Key leaders in the community spearhead it.
- Resiliency training/curriculum from CA to help kids with coping skills