The Importance of a Strong Needs Assessment

Michelle Salvador
Matt Whalen
Prevention Consultants VDH-ADAP
Today’s Goals:

• Review parts of the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF)
• Discuss assessment’s relationship with capacity building
• Discuss how a thorough needs assessment impacts human and fiscal resources
• Explore tools for conducting a needs assessment
Sustainability and Cultural Competence

- Assessment
- Evaluation
- Implementation
- Planning
- Capacity
Fiscal Resources and Human Resources

Readiness
What to Assess

- The nature and extent of substance use problems and related behaviors
- The risk and protective factors that influence these problems and behaviors
- The existing resources and readiness of the community to address its problems
Assessment Questions:

- What are the problems and related behaviors?
- Which populations experience them most?
- How often are they occurring?
- Where are they occurring?
Types of Data

Quantitative

Shows how often an event/behavior occurs or to what degree it exists

Qualitative

Explains why people behave or feel the way they do
Examples of Data Sources

National/State
- Government websites
- Survey-specific websites
- State depts./data warehouse
- State Epidemiological Workgroup

Local
- Health Dept.
- Hospitals/Clinics
- Police Dept.
- Schools/Colleges