

# Sustainability Plan

Ohio's Strategic Prevention Framework – State Incentive Grant (SPF SIG)

**HAMILTON COUNTY**

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## Strategic Prevention Framework – State Incentive Grant (SPF SIG): Sustainability Module

### Introduction

“The key element of sustainability is providing continued benefits, regardless of particular activities delivered or the format in which they are delivered.” –Mancini & Marek (2002)

There are four clarifying questions that need to be answered in order for sustainability planning to move forward:

1. *What* are you trying to sustain? (or, *What* needs to be sustained?)
2. **Public Value:** What *evidence* do you have that what you are doing is *worth sustaining*? (or, *Why* does this initiative *deserve* to be sustained?)
3. **Authorizing Environment:** What *institutional supports, structures, and/or policies* need to be in place to achieve sustainability?
4. **Operational Capacity:** What *capacity* is necessary to sustain this effort and *where* will that capacity come from?

### A. Building the Sustainability Team

Before these questions can be answered, it is essential that you *identify the key players*. It is very important to consider your authorizing environment (Moore, 1995).

Who are the individuals in your coalition or community that need to be involved in conversations about sustainability? Please do not list your entire coalition roster. Be purposeful and intentional about the individuals who need to be at the table to discuss sustainability. This group must be big enough to be inclusive but small enough to move forward quickly. Please also consider individuals from outside your coalition that could play a role in sustaining the work of the SPF in your community.

The individuals that need to be involved in conversations about sustainability include the Hamilton County SPF SIG Advisory Council leadership team with support from the Hamilton County Advisory Council.

These individuals include:

- Debbie Zorn, OSET Evaluator
- Mary Haag, Executive Director/CEO/President, Coalition for a Drug Free Greater Cincinnati
- John Roberts, Hamilton County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board
- Linda Gallagher, Hamilton County Mental Health and Recovery Services Board
- Nicole Schiesler, SPF SIG Project Director, Coalition for a Drug Free Greater Cincinnati

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**B. Sustainability Question #1: What are you *trying* to sustain? (or, What *needs* to be sustained?)**

Weiss, Coffman, Bohan-Baker (2002) identified four categories related to “initiative sustainability.” These categories are very broad and are very applicable to SPF initiatives. These categories may be helpful for your team as you plan for sustainability. If your team has already clearly articulated what you are trying to sustain, you may want to categorize your objectives. Please feel free to create your own category if you need to.

*Please remember that you do NOT need a sustainability objective/goal for each category. We are providing these categories as conversation catalysts, not as requirements.*

1. *Organizations and/or Projects*: securing additional funding for projects begun or supported under the initiative
2. *Ideas*: maintaining the initiative’s core principals, values, beliefs, and commitment
3. *Relationships*: maintaining connections among people and institutions
4. *Outcomes*: maintaining initiative results

Please choose the question that most appropriately applies to your project: What are you *trying* to sustain? (or, What *needs* to be sustained?) Please state your sustainability objectives/goals as bullet-point statements. Each objective/goal must be specific, measurable, and observable.

The question that most appropriately applies to our project is “What are you trying to sustain?” Our sustainability goal and objectives are listed below as bullet-point statements.

Goal: Reduce high-risk drinking.

Objectives:

- Continue to collect, secure, and monitor data from 18-25 year olds.
- Build and strengthen college based coalitions on the campuses of the University of Cincinnati, the College of Mt. St. Joseph, Xavier University, and Cincinnati State.
- Grow evidence-based practices for high-risk drinking to a more comprehensive approach by encompassing the seven community change strategies of (a) providing information, (b) building skills, (c) providing support, (d) enhancing access/reducing barriers, (e) changing consequences (incentives/disincentives), (f) changing the physical design of an environment, and (g) modifying/changing policies.

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**C. Sustainability Question #2: Public Value - What *evidence* do you have that what you are doing is *worth sustaining*? (or, Why does this initiative *deserve* to be sustained?)**

We discussed the idea of *public value* (Moore, 1995). It may be helpful to frame this conversation among your planning team as such. For example, it may be useful to have your planning team respond to these questions (You do not need to write responses to these questions, these are just provided as conversation catalysts.):

- How is this SPF initiative positively impacting the community?
- What results from this SPF initiative are valued by the community?
- What results from this SPF initiative are valued by the leadership team?

Once you have answered these questions, please respond to the overarching question (whichever form is most applicable to your situation): What evidence do you have that what you are doing is worth sustaining? (or, Why does this initiative deserve to be sustained?)

The evidence that we have to show that what we are doing is worth sustaining is listed below:

- 3:4 college campuses have structured a team to address underage drinking
- The Less Than U Think campaign stimulated dialog on local media. (Radio = 700 WLW and social media)
- The collected NOM data was eye opening to college leaders influencing them to work with the Advisory Council on the SPF process and the issue of underage drinking.

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**D. Sustainability Question #3: Authorizing Environment - What *institutional supports, structures, and/or policies* need to be in place to achieve sustainability?**

We discussed the idea of *authorizing environment* (Moore, 1995). It is important to determine who holds the ability to make key decisions regarding the sustainability of the project.

What *institutional supports, structures, and/or policies* need to be in place to achieve sustainability of your SPF initiative? It may be helpful to frame your answer to this question using the following sub-questions:

- What current *institutional supports, structures, and/or policies* support your SPF initiative?
- Of these structures, which could be strengthened to ensure sustainability of your SPF initiative?
- What structures are blocking or obstructing your SPF initiative?
- Which structures are still needed to ensure sustaining your SPF initiative?

The SPF SIG Project has always been a “special project” of the Coalition for a Drug-Free Greater Cincinnati (CDFGC). It was the intent of the leadership team that when this grant was over, the work of the SPF SIG Project would integrate into the structure of CDFGC. The Coalition drugs of focus are alcohol, marijuana, and prescription drugs based on our data findings from the Student Drug Use Survey given every two years in the Coalition service region. The Coalition work has been based on the SPF process since 2004. This planning process strengthened what we already knew to work in prevention.

The Coalition has three strategic pathways. Below are those listed pathways and how each will meet the sustainability of this project.

- **Prevention Research:** The core indicators listed in SPF SIG logic model will continue to be collected on a yearly basis through the work of our Prevention Research Committee. This Committee will now serve as the “data committee” and will make sure the data is collected, secure, and monitored for 18-25 year olds. The instruments that will collect this data are the Student Drug Use Survey, the CORE survey and the ACHA surveys given on our partnering college campuses, and focus groups as needed.
- **Local Coalition Development:** The college-based coalitions will be built and strengthened through the work of our Local Coalition Development Committee. We will develop campus-based coalitions on the 4 campuses. [The work of these college-based coalitions will be included in the work plan for this committee.] We will document the number of new coalitions on the campuses and track their coalition development just as we do with the other 30 coalitions in our service region in the Greater Cincinnati Evaluation System.
- **Prevention Action:** The Prevention Action Committee will ensure that we grow evidence-based practices for high-risk drinking to a more comprehensive approach. Through our internal evaluation system we have the ability to track the seven community change strategies for each activity. We report quarterly on how we are showing that we are providing information, building skills, providing support, enhancing access/reducing barriers, changing consequences (incentives/disincentives), changing the physical design of an environment, and modifying/changing policies.

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**E. Sustainability Question #4: Operational Capacity - What *capacity* is necessary to sustain this effort and *where* will that capacity come from?**

We discussed the idea of *operational capacity*. In order for your sustainability goals/objectives to become reality, your SPF initiative must have the *capacity* necessary to achieve those outcomes. Capacity is defined in many ways, including (but not limited to): securing diverse resources and acquiring the appropriate expertise. Basically, the purpose of this question is to determine the resources (e.g., time, personnel, funding, etc.) needed to achieve each sustainability goal/objective.

What operational capacity is necessary to achieve sustainability and where will the capacity come from to sustain your SPF initiative? It may be helpful to frame your answer to this question using the following sub-questions:

- What *internal* operational capacity has your coalition built through the SPF SIG process? How will this increased internal capacity contribute to the sustainability of your coalition's SPF efforts?
- What operational capacity has your coalition built through *networks* (i.e., partnerships, collaborations, etc.) during the SPF SIG process? How will these networks contribute to the sustainability of your coalition's SPF efforts?
- What current resources are necessary to sustain your SPF initiative?
- Of these resources, which is insufficient or vulnerable?
- What current skills and expertise does your initiative rely on to sustain your initiative's positive outcomes?
- Of these skills and expertise, which could be strengthened to ensure sustained positive outcomes?
- Which skills and expertise are still needed to sustain positive outcomes?

The SPF SIG process, as mentioned under Section D, will integrate under the work and structure of the Coalition for a Drug-Free Greater Cincinnati. Internally, we will now include our Managers of Local Coalition Development and Prevention Action into accomplishing the goal and objectives listed under Section A. This increased internal capacity will bring additional experience to the table in regards to coalition development and growing evidence-based practices for the prevention of high risk drinking.

We will continue the strong partnerships that have been created through our college campus contacts and the individuals on our SPF SIG Advisory Council. We will invite these partners to serve on the committees of the Coalition and build their capacity to understand our work and their role.

The work of preventing high risk drinking falls under the work of the Coalition and what we are funded to do. We intend to apply for the Sober Truth On Preventing Underage Drinking (STOP) grant provided by SAMHSA to continue to secure funding for the Coalition.

Thinking creatively about who else should be at the table is the constant work of a coalition. Our efforts will continue to interweave individuals who care about the message of responsible drinking and have a passion for preventing the consequences of high risk drinking.

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**F. Strengths/Challenges**

In any projects, there are strengths and challenges. The purpose of the following questions is to help you identify ways you can capitalize on your strengths and prepare for probable or potential obstacles.

1. In what ways do you believe your SPF initiative is positioned to achieve sustainability?

2. What are the probable or potential obstacles to sustainability?

The following list provides ways that we believe the SPF initiative will achieve sustainability:

- The Coalition has the internal structure to continue the work of SPF under our three strategic pathways
- The Coalition has the ability to track progress through data collection with 18-25 year olds as well as the accomplishments in the community tracked through the seven community change strategies.
- The Coalition is well known in the community and is a partner that engages and collaborates on many different levels.

The challenge of the SPF SIG project to date has been staff and leadership changes internally at the Coalition as well as among our local college partners. Additionally, if it is not intentional to bring in the young adult population into the group, it does not happen.

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