

Sustainability Plan

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

PORTAGE COUNTY

Ohio's Strategic Prevention Framework – State Incentive Grant is funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) and administered by the Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (OhioMHAS).

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.

Important individuals that need to be involved in sustainability conversations would be:

- The Executive Director, Prevention Coordinator and Portage Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition (PSAP) Coordinator, from Townhall II
- The Executive Director from the Mental Health and recovery Board (MHRB)
- Representatives of Kent State University
- One of our partnering organizations are also important individuals to the conversation
- Other core members of the PSAP Coalition or Kent State University (KSU) students could be helpful individuals, as well, when discussing sustainability.

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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 PSAP Coalition will post at least 10 healthy lifestyle blogs on www.18to25.org over the next year to provide KSU 18 to 25 year olds healthy lifestyle choices/alternatives to binge drinking.
- Members of the PSAP Coalition will maintain the relationships built with representatives at KSU by participating in at least 4 scheduled Healthy Kent meetings during the 2014-2015 academic school year to address alcohol and other drug (AoD) related issues for KSU students.

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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 PSAP Coalition SPF initiatives deserve to be sustained as they have aided in building partnerships between the community and Kent State University. The SPF initiative has provided an opportunity for multiple organizations (KSU, Healthy Kent, PSAP, and the City of Kent Police) to join together to address alcohol related issues among 18 to 25 year olds at KSU. This collaboration has worked to bring greater safety to the city by reviewing the KSU alcohol related policies and by spreading the word to students about KSU and city policies related to alcohol, so that they may make more informed and safer choices relating to alcohol.

We have seen an observable, positive impact on the community related to SPF initiatives during well-known spring party dates. There has been a decrease in arrests and KSU alcohol policy violations during spring party times which has contributed to a more peaceful and respectful community environment. This benefits the greater Kent community in being a safer place with less property damage, assaults, noise violations, and drunk and disorderly complaints. The Dean of Students at KSU attributes this decrease much to the efforts of Healthy Kent, as members spoke to Kent Inter-hall Council, Greek organizations and went canvassing door to door to off campus student housing on well-known party streets. This helped create a buzz among students regarding the University and city's tolerance of alcohol related violations.

Sustaining SPF initiatives is important to continue the Community and KSU partnerships to address alcohol related issues for 18 to 25 year olds. Offering information and alternatives that address alcohol related issues among KSU, 18 to 25 years olds may result in healthier, safer students and assists in creating a safer, peaceful and more respectful community.

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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?

One of the current institutional supports for our SPF initiative are the attitudes from leaders at the MHRB, Townhall II and KSU. They recognize that there are alcohol related issues among 18 to 25 year olds at KSU. Those leaders also recognize the need to address those alcohol related issues and are willing to make efforts in addressing them. Our leaders recognize the need for alcohol related policies, the need to have periodic reviews of those policies, the possible need to revise policies and the need to get policy information out to students. One aspect that could be strengthened is having uniform policies that are reader friendly and understandable to 18 to 25 year olds which is one of the SPF initiatives we are still working on. Additional coalition members are needed, especially from the community or students from KSU which would aid in sustaining the SPF initiative.

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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?

During this SPF SIG process we have improved our awareness of current alcohol related issues that need to be addressed in our community especially among 18 to 25 year olds. We also have become aware of our communities state of readiness and identified partners that were willing to work with us and assist in addressing the alcohol related issues among 18 to 25 year olds. Through the SPF process the Portage Substance Abuse Prevention (PSAP) Coalition has developed partnerships with members of KSU, Healthy Kent and City of Kent Police. The collaboration among these groups is necessary to sustain the coalition's efforts as each group is a necessary piece of the puzzle in addressing alcohol related issues among 18 to 25 year olds. Having collaborations between university and community groups strengthens the sustainability of the SPF efforts as there are multiple groups invested in addressing alcohol related issues among 18 to 25 year olds.

We need to maintain our partnerships and collaborative efforts to sustain our SPF initiative. We also need to maintain personnel to oversee the SPF initiative, bloggers to continue writing for the 18to25.org site, as well as funding to continue the SPF efforts. The most vulnerable resource is funding as it seems there are always shifts in budgets or funding cuts. Currently, our partnerships provide expertise in collaboration, prevention, and treatment of mental health issues as well as alcohol related issues among KSU students. The ability to preserve the initiative yet be open to change are important skills for sustaining positive outcomes. To sustain positive outcomes we need to continue or efforts and continue implementation of our initiative over more time. Developing expertise in how to change the norm and the college culture would be beneficial in sustaining positive outcomes.

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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?

Our partnerships and collaborations with multiple groups are one piece that positions us to achieve sustainability. Another important piece is the commitment of all the partners in addressing alcohol related issues among KSU students.

Potential obstacles to sustaining our current SPF initiative would be other AoD issues arising (i.e. prescription drugs, heroin) and needing to focus resources and efforts to addressing those issues instead of alcohol related issues.

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