



Ohio Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services

PREVENTION EFFORTS

through support of the 21st Century Cures Act

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Enhancing Prevention Efforts to Combat the Opioid Epidemic

[The 21st Century CURES Act](#) enacted by Congress in December 2016 recognized that states need significant help to combat the opioid epidemic across the nation. It is designed to modernize health care through enhanced innovation, research and communication, leading to better patient outcomes. The Act also makes new funding available to states to combat the prescription opioid and heroin crisis through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). SAMHSA's State Targeted Response (STR) to the Opioid Epidemic grant provides up to \$970 million to states and territories over a two year period.

As one of the states hit hardest by the opioid epidemic, Ohio is among the largest recipients of grant funding. Beginning May 1, 2017 through April 30, 2019, Ohio has received \$26 million per year that focuses on several core principles, one of which is the enhancement of prevention efforts targeted at preventing opioid abuse and misuse as well as stigma and trauma related to the opioid crisis. Efforts are focused on the utilization of evidence-based practices, which have demonstrated significant outcomes and often have been chosen as a result of the [Strategic Prevention Framework](#) (Figure 1). Ohio has instituted the Strategic Prevention Framework, built on a community-based risk and protective factors approach and a series of guiding principles, to ensure that communities are making data informed decisions regarding prevention programming.



Figure 1

Evidence Based Practices

In Ohio, communities and practitioners often do not have adequate resources to implement and sustain theory-driven, scientific-based interventions. However, with the continued advancement of prevention science the field has seen increased implementation to fidelity, enhanced cost efficiencies and returns on investment, and increased sustainability. Evidence-based practices are designed to elicit behavior and attitude change of participants, whether this is focused on individuals or populations. It is important that prevention providers go through the Strategic Prevention Framework process to identify what the problem is, who their participants will be, and what program they will implement to acquire the desired outcomes. Continued support for prevention evidence-based practices enables Ohio to focus on interventions that create both individual and environmental change that influence conditions that may lead to engagement in risky behaviors that are known antecedents to substance use, abuse, and misuse.

PAX Good Behavior Game

Training and technical assistance opportunities are available

statewide in order to promote the [PAX Good Behavior Game](#) in Ohio schools. The PAX Good Behavior Game is a universal preventive intervention used by teachers and schools to teach self-regulation, self-management, and self-control in young people. The intervention is designed to create an environment that is conducive to learning, improve academic success, and improve mental health and substance use outcomes later in life.

In collaboration with the Ohio Department of Education and their State Support Teams (SSTs), approximately 48 regional trainings for 1000 new teachers are being offered each year of the year grant. Additionally, training for up to 225 new PAX Partners that are working with these teachers and/or existing PAX schools is being provided throughout each grant year. There are also professional development/booster trainings being offered for 2000 existing PAX teachers which will bring them up to speed on the 4th edition update. All teachers and PAX Partners that are trained also gain access to a new web-based application for PAX, with instruction on utilization.



Botvin LifeSkills Training

[Botvin LifeSkills](#) training and technical assistance was provided statewide throughout SFY 2018. There were 10 regional trainings offered across the state, which included both the middle school and high school modules of the curriculum. Botvin LifeSkills is an evidence-based program for middle schools and high schools proven to reduce the risks of alcohol, tobacco, drug abuse, and violence by targeting the major social and psychological factors that promote the initiation of substance use and other risky behaviors. The program teaches students the skills to resist peer pressure, develop self-esteem and self-confidence, effectively cope with anxiety, increase knowledge of the immediate consequences of substance abuse, and enhance cognitive and behavioral competency to reduce and prevent a variety of high risk behaviors.

Expansion of Existing Evidence-Based Practices

In addition to the statewide expansion of Botvin LifeSkills and the PAX Good Behavior Game, 28 community organizations have also had the opportunity to expand their existing prevention evidence-based practices that have demonstrated a high return on investment and have shown significant outcomes through national or local evaluation. Projects have focused upon areas including various school based prevention programs, the Detera Project, children mentorship efforts, as well as other strategies that have demonstrated effectiveness. All 28 participating organizations have been able to expand their evidence-based practices throughout both SFY 2018 and SFY 2019. Agencies have developed and submitted sustainability plans that demonstrate how they will be able to continue the evidence-based interventions after the funding period.

Utilizing a Collective Impact Approach

[Collective Impact](#) is a proven method to impact complex social issues including substance abuse, by bringing together leaders from private, public, and non-profit sectors to focus on a common agenda that will impact multiple shared indicators around opioid use, misuse, and overdose death that are critical to Ohio's success. The collective impact framework calls for communities to come together to develop a shared vision for impact; establish shared measures to track progress; coordinate mutually reinforcing activities across prevention, treatment, and recovery supports; maintain open and continuous communication amongst all partners; and use a backbone organization dedicated to guide the work for the group.

Beginning in SFY 2018 and continuing onto SFY 2019, twelve Ohio organizations were selected chosen to serve as backbone organizations within their communities and have been participating in the Community Collective Impact process. Each backbone entity guides the process of a long-term community level effort to improve population level

outcomes related to opioid abuse and misuse. Backbone organizations serve as agents of change while also providing supporting infrastructure to coordinate work among partners. Each backbone organization and their community team is receiving training, technical assistance, support, and coaching from the Ohio University. Ohio University has been tasked with serving as the Collective Impact State Leadership team and provides expertise on the collective impact approach and SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework. Participating backbone organizations received \$20,000 each grant year to develop plans and implement their efforts. Both implementation and sustainability plans have been created by participating community organizations in order to develop and continue their efforts to guide long-term change.

Preventing Trauma at the Community Level

Education and support related to community trauma is being provided to communities participating in the collective impact approach. The program aims to encourage community-wide healing and resilience building to prevent future community trauma. The Prevention Institute is providing training and technical assistance to collective impact backbone organizations and community teams, which focuses on how to mobilize around opioid overdoses and related deaths without creating more trauma. This program has run in conjunction with collective impact throughout SFY 2018 and 2019.

Medication Assisted Treatment (MAT) Stigma Reduction

The Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) developed a MAT Stigma reduction program and the Prevention Action Alliance offered information sessions and opportunities for community coalitions engaged in the Statewide Prevention Coalition Association (SPCA) to participate in additional individualized training and technical assistance around this issue. It is imperative that our communities understand, support and help to decrease the stigma around medication assisted treatment.