The 7 P’s for Empowering Prevention in Schools

Mary Haag, RN, OCPC, ICPC
Policy, Planning, Practices, Programs, Peers, Parents, Partnerships, Progress

DESCRIPTION:

• Schools play an important role in substance abuse prevention. Research tells us that when teachers talk about the dangers of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use; when schools set clear rules about using alcohol and drugs during school/at school functions; and when schools enforce consequences when these rules are broken – kids are less likely to use substances. Learn how to be intentional about prevention in schools, a necessary component for a safe, healthy, school environment.
OBJECTIVES

Participants will be able to:

1. Describe the components of a comprehensive substance abuse prevention program
2. Demonstrate knowledge of evidence-based substance abuse prevention practices/programs and resources for selecting their strategies/activities
3. Understand the value of partnering with community coalitions/prevention providers to create a plan for developing their prevention program
Role of Schools in Prevention

• Schools are a part of the community and the center of a students’ life

• Schools and communities want to see students ready to learn and achieving academically

• Teachers, coaches, staff are key influencers in a child’s life

• School environment is an opportunity where clear boundaries and expectations are set

• Schools support the community norm that we all share responsibility for the well-being of our children
School Protective Factors

2018 PreventionFIRST! Student Drug Use Survey
• Teachers talk about dangers of drug use – **28.4%** a lot/often
• Schools set clear rules about drug use – **72.9%** a lot/often
• Schools punish when rules are broken – **75.7%** a lot/often
• Take part in school activities – **36.6%** a lot/often
• Play school sports – **46.6%** a lot/often
• Get in trouble at school – **3.3%** a lot/often
• Make good grades – **80.7%** a lot/often
Why is Prevention Important

• A Substance Use Disorder is a chronic, progressive, relapsing disease

• There are two main factors that lead to Substance Use Disorders
  • Biologic factors
  • Environmental – exposure to drugs
    • Early onset of use
    • Substance use/misuse/abuse in the home
    • Other risk factors, including trauma
What is Prevention

• Focused on reducing the likelihood of or delaying the onset of behavioral health problems (substance abuse, mental illness, etc.)
• Designed to reduce risk or promote health BEFORE the onset of disorder
• Promotion – strategies designed to create environments and conditions that support behavioral health and the ability of individual to withstand challenges
• Comprehensive, coordinated message, large scale
Evidence-based Prevention Strategies

CSAP – Center for Substance Abuse Prevention
- Information Dissemination
- Education
- Alternatives
- Problem Identification and Referral
- Community-based Process
- Environmental

CADCA – Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America
- Providing Information
- Enhancing Skills
- Providing Support
- Access/Barriers
- Incentives/Disincentives
- Physical Design
- Modify Policy
Comprehensive Substance Abuse Prevention Program

• School **Policy**
• Staff Development
• Student Education
• Youth-Led Prevention
• **Parent** Education
• Early Identification and Referral
• Community **Partnerships**
Policy

• Establish clear boundaries and expectations – review/update handbook
• Commit to assessment – surveys and screenings
• Develop prevention education across the curriculum
• Develop process when a student’s behavior causes concern
• Define how students in recovery will be supported
• Evaluate your progress and adapt as indicated
Staff Development

• Commit to professional development opportunities for faculty and staff
• Share your student survey results
• Identify staff person credentialed in prevention
• Identify staff to moderate youth-led prevention team
• Identify school nurses for implementation of screening
• Consider mental health therapist on staff
• Consider a trainer of trainers model for sustainability
• Convene & develop in-house coordinating body
Student Education

• Select evidence-based programs based on identified needs (see survey data)
• Implement comprehensively K-12
• Implement across the curriculum, not just in health education class
Youth Led Prevention

• Commit to youth leadership in prevention
• Participate in Youth Summit or host your own focused on prevention
• Seek Mini-Grants for youth-led prevention projects
• Convene and develop a youth-led prevention team to plan and implement peer-to-peer prevention
Prevention Planning for School

Programs:

• Designed to intervene as early as preschool to address risk factors for drug abuse such as aggressive behavior, poor social skills, and academic difficulties

• Designed for elementary school children to target academic and social-emotional learning

• Designed for middle or junior high and high school to increase academic and social competence (self-control; emotional awareness; communication; social problem-solving; and academic support, especially in reading)
Early Identification and Referral

• Screening
• Brief Intervention
• Referral to Treatment
• Recovery Support
Parent Education

- Parents are the #1 influence in their child's life
- Integrate where parents naturally come together in the school environment
  - School newsletter tips
  - Meet the coaches night
  - Parent-teacher conferences
  - Provide incentives
- Provide resources
  - Utilize your community partnerships
  - Think digital
Community Partnerships

Subject Matter Experts
• Community Coalitions
• Credentialed Preventionists

Planning Process
• Assessment
• Capacity
• Plan
• Implementation
• Evaluation

Resources
• Volunteers
• In-kind support
• Donations/Funds
Other things to think about

• Scare tactics are ineffective
• Learn person-first language to reduce stigma
• Do not focus on a single drug
• Utilize the expertise of credentialed preventionist and certified prevention agency
Other Resources

• [www.prevention-first.org](http://www.prevention-first.org) → Services → School resources → [COMPLETE LIST OF SCHOOL RESOURCES FOR YOUTH SUBSTANCE USE](http://www.prevention-first.org)


• [www.drugabuse.gov](http://www.drugabuse.gov) and [https://teens.drugabuse.gov/](https://teens.drugabuse.gov/)
Questions

• Mary Haag
  • mhaag@prevention-first.org
  • 513-751-8000
  • www.prevention-first.org

Thank You!