Marijuana: Prevention First!

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My Perspective
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Objectives

- Assess marijuana outlet density and high concentration areas through environmental scanning and asset mapping.
- Use relevant, creative, and fun ways to engage youth in your prevention programs.
- Shift social norms in your communities through advocacy and policy change.
Behavioral Health Services is a not-for-profit community-based healthcare organization providing medical services, substance abuse, mental health, drug-free transitional living, housing for women with HIV, and prevention services for the local community. BHS – Family Health Center our first community health clinic opened in April 2016.

BHS began providing outpatient substance abuse treatment services to adolescents and young adults in the Centinela Valley in 1973. Realizing the enormity of need throughout Los Angeles County, we expanded reach and now operate from 13 locations covering the South Bay, East Los Angeles, the San Gabriel Valley, and the metropolitan areas of Los Angeles County. We operate two Chemical Dependency Recovery Centers, four residential sites eight outpatient clinics, two of which provide mental health services in addition to substance use services. BHS also provides outreach to individuals living on Skid Row and participates in several homeless projects.

We strongly believe in partnering not only with our clients and their families, but also with other service organizations throughout the community in order to ensure that clients and their families have the greatest opportunity for long-term recovery from substance use.
South Bay Prevention

Our focus is to educate youth and community members about drugs, reduce youth access to drugs, pass policies related to youth drug consumption, and protect our youth and community.

We are currently advocating for a Social Host Ordinance in the city of Torrance that holds adults who provide alcohol to minors (anyone under the age of 21) legally responsible and will incur a fine if cited.

Our Drugs Kill Dreams Program is a voluntary afterschool program, which targets Alcohol and Other Drugs (AOD) use among middle school students in Torrance teaching them how to plan and prepare for high-risk situations where AOD may be present and how to make healthy choices in those situations.

South Bay Outpatient (SBOP)

We are a community based program committed to the recovery of alcoholism, addiction and related problems. SBOP is certified by the State of California. We provide a comprehensive program of education, counseling and support services directed to promote lifestyle change. We provide services for Proposition 36 and CARE participants. Services in the Spanish language.

Based on the 12-step philosophy, individuals are presented the knowledge and skills necessary for their recovery, while their family and significant others are given information and guidance to understand and support their continued recovery.
Local Marijuana Prevention Efforts

- 1x1 Meetings
- Anti- 4/20 Day
- City Council Meetings
- Health & Resource Fairs
- Marijuana Town Halls
- Marijuana Youth Presentations
- South Bay Communities Creating Change (SBC3) Coalition
County Marijuana Prevention Efforts

- RAM (Rethinking Access to Marijuana)
  - Coalition of community-based organizations working together to educate people about the harms of youth marijuana use.
  - Our mission is to prevent the access and availability that leads to youth marijuana use in the communities of Los Angeles County.
    - Key informant interviews
    - Dispensary mapping project
    - Environmental scans
Asset Mapping
Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF)

- Developed by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Service’s Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

- The five steps and two guiding principles of the SPF offer prevention professionals a comprehensive process for addressing the substance misuse and related behavioral health problems facing their communities. The effectiveness of the SPF begins with a clear understanding of community needs and involves community members in all stages of the planning process.
Sustainability and Cultural Competence

- Assessment
- Evaluation
- Implementation
- Planning
- Capacity
Asset Mapping

- What is an asset?
  - Assets are positive and effective resources including people, programs, and places in a community that make it safe, healthy, and a great place to live.

- What is asset mapping?
  - In short, identifying assets in a community.

- Why is it important?
  - Asset mapping helps identify resources in the community, needs in the community, and is a way to engage community members in the process.
  - Coalitions can use asset mapping to inform policies, develop and support campaigns, build and strengthen existing relationships, etc.
  - This is a great way to involve different sectors in the community in the work you are doing.
Engagement

- Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) Identified 12 Sectors:
  - Businesses
  - Civic/Volunteer Groups
  - Elementary & Secondary Education
  - Government
  - Healthcare Professionals
  - Law Enforcement
  - Media
  - Parents
  - Religious & Fraternal Organizations
  - Youth
  - Youth Serving Organizations
  - Others involved in ATOD

- Ask yourself…
  - Who do you want to engage?
  - Why do you want to engage them?
  - What role will they play once engaged?
Youth Engagement

DRUGS ARE BAD

MMKAY?
Youth Engagement

- Ways to engage youth:
  - Active and specific roles where they are involved in planning and decision making
  - Food
  - Activities
  - Celebrate and show appreciation
  - Opportunities for development
  - Opportunities to develop others
  - Meaningful relationships and partnerships
  - Meet them where they are
  - Scholarships
What is an environmental scan?

- An assessment used to gather information on local conditions or physical elements contributing to alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use.
Environmental Scan

- **Why** –
  - Why are we conducting the scan? Why is this important?
    - Many youth in our community report accessing marijuana through dispensaries.

- **How** –
  - How are we going to use the data?
    - To reduce youth access by limiting the number of outlets in our community.
    - To advocate for the strict enforcement of ______ policy.

- **Who** –
  - Who should have a seat at the table? Who is missing that I need invite to participate?
    - Youth, parents, hospitals, local service organizations, businesses, etc.
Environmental Scan

**What** –
- What questions need to be asked? What data do we need to inform policy and create change?
  - How many dispensaries do we have in our community?
  - Are there people hanging outside or loitering?
  - Are the windows obstructed from clearly seeing inside/outside the store?

**Where** –
- Where will the scan occur? Where will planning meetings take place?
  - Scan – Identify focal points (schools, community centers, etc.). Identify dispensaries (yelp, weed maps, leafly, etc.).
  - Meetings/Trainings – Park, local organization, community center, etc.

**When** –
- When will the scan occur? When will planning meetings take place?
  - Create a timeline to include meetings with coalition/community members, training on how to conduct scan, conduct the scan, post data collection activities (analyze data, present data to inform policy).
What –
  – What next? What are you going to do with the information you gathered?
    • Prepare a report, include the data in presentations, include it in testimonials at City Council or when meeting with decision makers.
    • Make sure this is included in your timeline.
Environmental Scan Activity
Let’s Get to Work!!!!
Report Back
Next Steps & Resources
Next Steps

- Get the training, tools, and resources that you need to develop your own capacity and lead the process.

- Take the plan back to your community and get input, make revisions, and start making change.

- Prioritize engaging different sectors (i.e. youth, parents, law enforcement, business, etc.) of your community.

- Research best practices and talk to other organizations about what they are doing. REMEMBER: There is no point in reinventing the wheel.
Next Steps

- CADCA Online Training - http://learning.cadca.org/
Resources

- **Behavioral Health Services, Inc. (BHS)**

- **Rethinking Access to Marijuana**

- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)**
  - www.samhsa.gov

- **Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA)**
  - www.cadca.org

#WeMakePreventionWork
“Change will not come if we wait for some other person or some other time. We are the ones we’ve been waiting for. We are the change that we seek.”

- President Barack Obama
Thank you!

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