

## **SELECTING EVIDENCE-INFORMED SUBSTANCE MISUSE PREVENTION STRATEGIES: RESOURCES FOR THE NEW HAMPSHIRE PREVENTION SYSTEM**

### **Introduction**

The New Hampshire Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Services is committed to using evidenced-informed approaches to substance misuse prevention to ensure the best outcomes for our communities. “Evidence-informed decision making” involves not only the use of research evidence but also considers community expertise, existing public health resources, knowledge about community health issues, the local context and community, and the political climate.<sup>1</sup>

There are many factors to consider in the development of evidence-informed strategy to address any public health issue. After prioritizing issues and related conditions, communities are challenged with the task of determining what solutions will be most feasible and at the same time most effective.

To do this, communities can start by researching best practices that have been found to impact the problem and local conditions they wish to change. The research can serve as a basis for strategy recommendations.

### **Researching and Developing Strategy Recommendations**

Strategy recommendations can be developed by reviewing the researched best practices relevant to the problem and local conditions that have been identified. Sources of information for evidence-informed substance misuse prevention strategies include but are not limited to:

SIX CORE COMMUNITY SECTORS RESOURCES

<http://nhcenterforexcellence.org/resources/>

NREPP

<http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/>

OJJDP MODEL PROGRAMS GUIDE

<https://www.ojjdp.gov/mpg>

EXEMPLARY AND PROMISING SAFE, DISCIPLINED AND DRUG-FREE SCHOOLS PROGRAMS

<https://www2.ed.gov/print/admins/lead/safety/exemplary01/report.html>

THE COMMUNITY GUIDE

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<sup>1</sup>Source: <http://www.biomedcentral.com/1471-2458/14/728>

<https://www.thecommunityguide.org/>

WHAT WORKS FOR HEALTH

<http://www.countyhealthrankings.org/roadmaps/what-works-for-health>

**Peer-reviewed literature can also be found using search engines and databases such as:**

- Google Scholar: <http://scholar.google.com/>
- PubMed: <http://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pubmed>

**Literature Reviews can be requested through the New Hampshire Center for Excellence Technical Assistance Request Form:** <http://nhcenterforexcellence.org/center-services/request-ta/>

## Selecting Strategies

The next step is to determine best practices for the community based on the research. Using the strategy recommendations as a foundation, here are some questions communities can consider to determine strategies that are the most realistic and feasible for their community:

1. What assets already exist that can be built upon to implement the recommended strategies?
2. What are the gaps and challenges to implementing the recommended strategies?
3. Based on exists assets and gaps, what strategies can be implemented with success?

Evidence-informed strategies are most effective when implemented with fidelity. Research shows that multi-sector, multi-strategy community-based approaches to substance abuse prevention that include strategies within the entire spectrum of Center for Substance Abuse Prevention Categories<sup>2</sup> across the categories of prevention defined by the Institute of Medicine (universal, selective, indicated)<sup>3</sup> reduce alcohol and other drug use significantly.

Based on the socio-ecological framework, environmental prevention strategies, such as public information and policy development and enforcement, are most effective for impacting population-level change.

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<sup>2</sup> (CSAP Prevention Categories: Information Dissemination, Education, Alternatives, Environmental, Community-based Process, Problem Identification and Referral)

<sup>3</sup> Source: <http://captus.samhsa.gov/prevention-practice/prevention-and-behavioral-health/levels-risk-levels-intervention/2>

## **New Hampshire Service-to-Science Program**

Given the reality of limited resources in many communities as well as diverse cultural needs and conditions, some communities may choose to blend or create an innovative approach to addressing their communities' substance misuse prevention needs. The NH Center for Excellence coordinates a NH Service-to-Science process that is available to any NH prevention professional or organization seeking technical assistance to review and improve program and evaluation design for innovative programs that have not been endorsed as evidence-based. New Hampshire Service-to-Science applicants receive technical assistance from the NH Center for Excellence and applications are reviewed by a panel of experts in the field.

For more information about the NH Service-to-Science program and for an application, please follow this link: <http://nhcenterforexcellence.org/resources/best-practices/>

***Additional resources for understanding and identifying evidence-based strategies are listed here:***

- **Identifying and Selecting Evidence-Based Interventions**  
<http://store.samhsa.gov/shin/content/SMA09-4205/SMA09-4205.pdf>
- **A Paradigm Shift in Selecting Evidence-Based Approaches for Substance Abuse Prevention:**  
<http://www.cars-rp.org/publications/Prevention%20Tactics/PT09.06.10.pdf>