

**Alcohol Policy 15 Conference**  
**Washington, DC**

**The Role of Evaluation in**  
**Translating Science-based Prevention Strategies**

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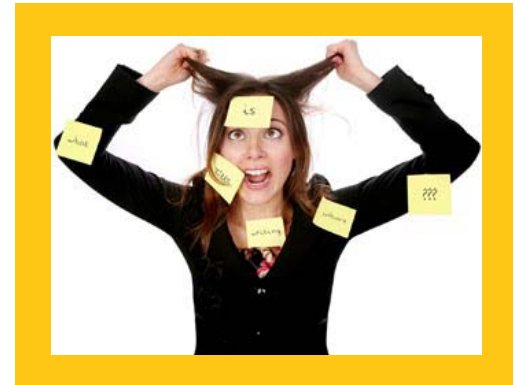
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# Overview

- Using Evaluation to Overcome Implementation Challenges
- Starting from Scratch When Promising Policies Lack Evidence
- Show Me the Evidence: An Ongoing Trend

# Using Evaluation to Overcome Implementation Challenges



# Implementation Challenges

What issues come up when clients implement evidence-based programs?

Fidelity of Implementation

- Whether the program is being delivered as it was designed or written

Factors Influencing Fidelity	Key Considerations
Pre-planning	What is the motivation for adopting the program? Has a needs assessment been conducted?
Program Characteristics	How clear are the program goals and procedures to put the program in place?
Training and Technical Support	Do staff have the appropriate knowledge and skills to implement the program?
Integration of the Program	To what extent are program goals linked to the goals/mission of the organization?
Organizational Characteristics	Is there a positive organizational climate, shared decision-making, community support and interagency linkages?
Implementer Characteristics	Does the organization have buy-in from the individuals carrying out the program?

# How Can Evaluation Help?

- Process Evaluation
  - Helps identify gaps in fidelity of implementation
  - Provides feedback to inform and improve the implementation process
  - Allows for corrections/adaptations early on
- Outcome Evaluation
  - Determines if expected short, medium and long-term outcomes are being reached
  - Can compare outcomes with findings from past studies (benchmarks)
  - May be difficult to do a control group study given time, money, context, etc.



## Example 1

# MVUSD Breakthrough Student Assistance Program

- The Riverside County Department of Mental Health Substance Abuse Program, Prevention Services partnered with the Murrieta Valley Unified School District (MVUSD)
- Received 5-year Safe & Drug-Free Schools and Communities (SDFSC) grant in the 2007-2008 fiscal year to fund Breakthrough, an alcohol and other drug (AOD) reduction focused Student Assistance Program (SAP)
- Adapted Project SUCCESS to fit the needs and context of MVUSD
  - Family Conferences
  - Individual counseling
  - Educational intervention and support groups
  - Prevention Education Series
  - Parent workshops
  - Promotional prevention materials
- Created additional infrastructure by implementing a district-wide policy



# MVUSD Breakthrough Student Assistance Program (cont)

## Data Collection Strategies and Tools

- MVUSD data indicators
  - At individual and district levels
  - Attendance, GPA, discipline incidents, suspensions/expulsions
  
- Survey research
  - Pilot CHKS Modules B and C
  - Student Survey (with CHKS items)
  - Student Evaluation Survey
  - 40 Developmental Assets Checklist
  - Family Conference Exit Survey
  
- Document reviews
  
- Key informant interviews



# MVUSD Breakthrough Student Assistance Program (cont)

## Key Evaluation Findings

Indicator	Selected Findings
School Support	More students knew where to go for help with a problem after participating in Breakthrough services (85% vs. 78%)
Alcohol Use – Past 30 Days	Binge drinking decreased from 20% before participating in Breakthrough to only 4% after receiving Breakthrough services
Drug Use – Past 30 Days	Findings indicated a downward trend for tobacco, prescription drug, meth and cocaine use after participating in Breakthrough services
School Attendance Rates	Participants' attendance rates increased from 82% 30 days before attending the Breakthrough Family Conference to 91% 30 days following the Family Conference
Discipline Incidents	Average number of disciplines for those with 1+ incidents decreased from 3.2 incidents 30 days prior to the Family Conference to 1.3 30 days after the conference
Academic Performance	Half of the participants' GPAs improved after participating in the Family Conference - of those who improved, average GPA at the time of referral increased from 1.44 to 1.69 at the end of the academic year
Suspensions	MVUSD suspensions have decreased almost 40% since the program was implemented in 2007



# Starting from Scratch When Promising Policies Lack Evidence



## Where To Start When Existing Evidence is Limited

- Identify research methods and findings from studies on related practices
- Look for existing trend data and make data requests
- Determine if existing data is accurate – is it measuring what you are trying to measure?
- Develop tools to collect data from those who may be experiencing the greatest impacts

## Example 2

# Social Host Ordinance Impact Evaluation

### How did the SHOs come about in Ventura County?

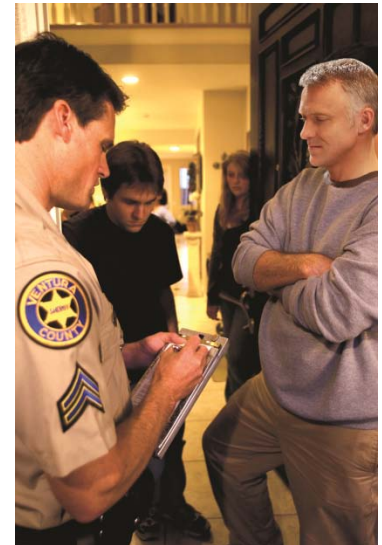
- VCBH was awarded SIG funds to support policy development related to underage and binge drinking in 2004
- Within 3 years VCBH and their partners had passed and implemented:
  - SHOs in all 10 municipalities
  - Countywide SHO that covers all unincorporated areas
  - Formal resolution to the countywide SHO to include federal land
- Ventura County was one of the first counties in the nation to have seamless coverage



## Social Host Ordinance Impact Evaluation (cont)

### Why conduct an impact evaluation in Ventura County?

- Two previous SHO evaluations were conducted on:
  - Policy advancement and implementation
  - Enforcement and initial outcomes
- By 2009 there was a growing interest in the longer term impacts
- Impact evaluation was designed to look at outcomes related to decreases in the incidence of disturbances and other problems resulting from underage drinking parties at private residences



## Social Host Ordinance Impact Evaluation (cont.)

### Three Target Jurisdictions

- Rationale
  - Cities were chosen based on these criteria so that findings may be generalized to other municipalities

Criteria	Camarillo	Thousand Oaks	Ventura
Level of initial fine	\$500	\$2,500	\$1,000
Geographic location	Central	East	West
History of enforcement	✓	✓	✓

# Social Host Ordinance Impact Evaluation (cont.)

## Data Collection Strategies and Tools

- Logic Model
  - Graphic representation of relationships between SHO goals and expected outcomes
- Document Reviews
  - Comparison of ordinances
- Impact Data Indicators
  - Law enforcement party disturbance calls
  - CHKS data on alcohol use, drinking and driving and perceived difficulty obtaining alcohol
  - VCMC alcohol-related ER visits
  - CHP-SWITRS data on collisions, injuries and deaths involving underage persons driving under the influence
- Enforcement Data
  - Number of SHO violations
  - Age and gender of hosts
  - Size of parties
- Patrol Survey
  - Administered to 91 law enforcement officers with authority to issue SHO citations in the three target cities
- Key Informant Interviews
  - Conducted with city officials regarding the SHO fine and appeal process in each jurisdiction

# Social Host Ordinance Impact Evaluation (cont.)

## Key Evaluation Findings

Indicator	Selected Findings
Passage & Implementation	SHOs in all 10 municipalities, a countywide SHO covering unincorporated areas, and a formal resolution to include federal land
SHO Violation Citations	Over 350 SHO citations issued to date in Ventura County
Characteristics of Violators	At least half of the hosts were under 21 and the percent of male hosts has decreased over time
Size of Party	Percent of hosts receiving citations for large parties with over 50 attendees has decreased since 2007
Repeat Offenders	Only 5-6% of violators were repeat offenders
Effectiveness	3 out of 4 officers agreed the SHO is an effective tool for reducing underage drinking parties
Negative Impacts	Over 90% of officers reported there have been no negative impacts resulting from the SHOs
Collection of Fines	30-69% of SHO fines have been collected

# Show Me the Evidence: An Ongoing Trend





# Sample of Evidence-based Program Registries

- **California Child Welfare Clearinghouse**  
<http://www.cachildwelfareclearinghouse.org/>
- **Exemplary and Promising Safe, Disciplined and Drug-Free Schools Programs**  
<http://www.ed.gov/admins/lead/safety/exemplary01/index.html>
- **Helping America's Youth**  
<http://www.findyouthinfo.gov/>
- **Northeast Center for the Application of Prevention Technology (CAPT) Database of Prevention Programs**  
<http://www.hhd.org/search/node/>
- **Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) Model Programs Guide**  
<http://ojjdp.ncjrs.org/programs/mpg.html>
- **Promising Practices Network on Children, Families and Communities**  
<http://www.promisingpractices.net/programs.asp>
- **Social Programs that Work, Coalition for Evidenced-Based Policy**  
<http://www.evidencebasedprograms.org/>
- **Strengthening America's Families: Effective Family Programs for Prevention of Delinquency**  
<http://www.strengtheningfamilies.org/>
- **Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA's) National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices**  
<http://nrepp.samhsa.gov/>

## Example 3

# BRRiIM Indicated Prevention Evaluation

- BRRiIM is an innovative prevention process designed to screen and educate individuals at high risk for AOD problems
- Core Activities
  - Referral, BRRiIM Interview, BRRiIM Prevention Services Agreement, Education/Brief Intervention, Family Involvement and Referral to Diagnostic Assessment
- Expected Outcomes (examples)
  - Increase participants' protective factors
  - Increase participants' readiness to change harmful behaviors
  - Decrease participants' risk factors for developing more serious AOD problems
  - Increase family involvement in participants' lives
  - Increase participant's use of community resources

## BRRIM Indicated Prevention Evaluation (cont.)

- Current Evaluation Strategies & Tools
  - Pre-Post BRRIM Participant Survey
  - Readiness to Change Interview
  - Key Informant Interviews
  - Tracking Logs
  - Evaluative Observations
  
- Recently submitted proposal to enhance BRRIM evaluation



# For Additional Information



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