

Activity to Explore the 9 Principles of Effective Prevention Programs

Research has shown that there are nine overarching principles of effective prevention education programs. For more information please refer to: http://www.ncdsv.org/images/AmPsy_WhatWorksInPrevention_6-7-2003.pdf. This activity is designed to examine curriculum-based educational prevention programs for youth and to identify ways they could be strengthened to improve effectiveness.

Instructions

When you think about your current work with youth please consider and discuss the following with your colleagues regarding the curriculum you are using.

For each of the 9 main areas (comprehensive, varied teaching methods, etc...) discuss each of the following 3 questions.

If you are using this as a small group activity, please take notes in the area provided on the worksheet and share insights as a larger group after each of the groups has finished:

1. When you consider the sub-items under this area, where are you confident that your program sufficiently addresses this area?
2. Where might more work be needed to fully cover the items in this area?
3. What options for improvements, tweaks or complementary activities might be available for your organization? What new ideas are emerging in this area?

After you have completed the above questions for each of the 9 categories discuss:

On a scale of 1-10, with 1 being not at all addressing the 9 principles, and 10 being completely addressing the 9 principles, please rate your program on how well it addresses the 9 principles of effective prevention programs.

- a. How could you take the program to the next level? What would it take to more fully address the 9 principles?

COMPREHENSIVE: <i>Multiple-component strategies in multiple settings that address a wide range of risk & protective factors.</i>	
Does the strategy include multiple components?	
Does the strategy provide activities in more than one setting?	
Do the activities happen in settings related to the risk and protective factors?	
VARIED TEACHING METHODS: <i>Strategies should include multiple teaching methods, including some type of active, skill-based components.</i>	
Does the strategy include more than one teaching method?	
Does the strategy include interactive instruction for practicing new behaviors?	
Does the strategy provide hands on learning experiences, rather than passive?	

SUFFICIENT DOSAGE:

Participants need to be exposed to enough of the strategy for it to have an effect.

- Does the strategy provide more than one session?
- Does the strategy provide sessions long enough to present the content?
- Does the intensity of the strategy match the level of risk of the participants?
- Does the strategy include a schedule for follow-up or additional sessions?

THEORY DRIVEN:

Preventative strategies should have scientific justification or logical rationale.

- Does the strategy provide a theory of how the problem behaviors develop?
- Does the strategy articulate a theory of how and why the intervention is likely to produce change?
- Based on your model of the problem and your model of the solution, do you believe the strategy is likely to produce change?

POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS:

Strategies should foster strong, stable, positive relationships between children and adults.

- Does the strategy provide opportunities for parents and kids to strengthen relationships?
- In the absence or in addition to parents, does the strategy offer opportunities for participants to develop a strong connection with an adult mentor?

APPROPRIATELY TIMED:

Strategies should happen at a time that can have maximum impact in a participant's life.

- Does the strategy happen before participants develop the problem behavior?
- Is the strategy timed strategically to have an impact during important developmental milestones?
- Is the strategy content appropriate for the target population – developmentally, intellectually & cognitively?

SOCIO-CULTURALLY RELEVANT:

Program should be tailored to fit within cultural beliefs and practices of specified groups, as well as local community norms.

- Does the strategy appear to be sensitive to social & cultural realities?
- If not, are you capable of making the changes that are needed?
- Is the strategy flexible to deal with special circumstances or needs of participants?
- Is it possible to consult with potential participants to help you modify your strategy?

OUTCOME EVALUATION:

A systematic outcome evaluation is necessary to determine whether a strategy worked.

- Is there a plan for evaluating the strategy?
- Does the evaluation plan provide feedback prior to the end of the strategy?
- Is there a plan for receiving feedback throughout the strategy development & implementation?

WELL-TRAINED STAFF

Strategies need to be implemented by staff that are sensitive, competent and have received training, support & supervision.

Is there sufficient staff to implement the strategy?	
If so, has the staff received training to implement the strategy properly?	
Will efforts be made to encourage stability and high morale in staff members who will provide the strategy?	