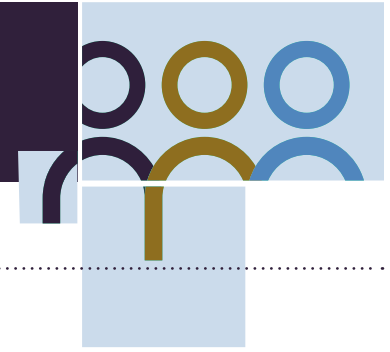


IMPLEMENTATION

STEP 4 of the Strategic Prevention Framework SPF*



The Role of Implementation

The work of Step 4 is built on the earlier decisions and findings from Step 1, the Needs Assessment; Step 2, the Capacity Building process; and Step 3, Planning and Strategy Selection.

Step 4 involves:

- Developing an Action Plan
- Obtaining Resources
- Implementing Action Plans
- Ensuring Implementation Fidelity

After selecting prevention strategies, the coalition must plan for implementation. Implementation requires an Action Plan that details goals, tasks or action steps, and responsible parties.

In implementation, the role of the coalition “shifts from planning to executing, overseeing the carrying out, holding each other accountable, and monitoring the action”.¹

A sample format for an action plan is provided below. It identifies specific action steps, who is responsible, when it should be done, and the resources needed.

Action Plan for [Community or Initiative Name]

Community Focus Area (town, counties, region, etc.) _____

Community Change to be Sought [Goal(s)] _____

Coalition Name or List of Collaborating Organization(s)/Group(s) _____

ACTION STEPS	By Whom	By When	Resources and Support Available/Needed		Potential Barriers or Resistance	Communication Plan for Implementation
What needs to be done?	Who will take actions?	By what date will the action be done?	Resources Available	Resources Needed*	What individuals and organizations might resist? How?	What individuals/ organizations should be informed about/involved?
STEP 1:						
STEP 2:						
STEP 3:						
STEP 4:						

(Community Tool Box/Ku.Edu)²

¹ Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) National Coalition Institute. *Community Coalitions Handbook Primer Handbook*, pp. 28-29. https://www.cadca.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/community_coalitions.pdf

² University of Kansas, Center for Community Health and Development, *Community Tool Box*, 2018. Ku.Edu. <https://ctb.ku.edu/en>

*The Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) is a community-based approach to prevention. (www.samhsa.gov) The SPF consists of 5 steps: 1) Needs Assessment, 2) Capacity Building, 3) Planning, 4) Implementation, and 5) Evaluation. Through all the steps, there is an expectation of Cultural Competence and Sustainability.

Identify and Obtain Resources

While an action plan is critical, successful implementation of the plan requires the mobilization of resources to get the job done.

RESOURCES WITHIN THE COALITION

Before beginning the implementation phase, leadership and coalition members should ask themselves:

- Who within the coalition and/or partners has taken a leadership role in implementing the strategy?
- Has appropriate training needed to implement the specific tasks been identified and delivered?
- Are the strategies comprehensive enough to bring about the

desired, anticipated change? This typically involves the combination of both individual and environmental strategies.

- Have key relationships and partnerships the coalition needs to implement the strategy been identified and addressed?
- Have enough resources been secured to implement the strategy?



- Have appropriate action teams been identified and created to implement the strategy?
- How will the coalition spend time at monthly meetings to ensure it stays focused on implementation?³

RESOURCES EXTERNAL TO THE COALITION

If the resources within the coalition are not sufficient, then the task becomes the recruitment of allies. This involves identifying others within the community who have a vested interest in seeing the intended change the coalition is seeking to bring about.

To identify these individuals or groups, the coalitions might ask themselves:

- Whose problem is it?
- Who is directly affected and who is indirectly affected?
- What are the benefits for their participation?
- What do they gain if the initiative is successful?
- What risks are they taking? What might they lose?

- What groups are they a part of?
- What individuals or organizations are already working on the issue?

The Action Plan should be amended to incorporate strategies for engaging the potential resources identified through this process.³

³ Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America (CADCA) National Coalition Institute. *Community Coalitions Handbook Primer Handbook*. https://www.cadca.org/sites/default/files/resource/files/community_coalitions.pdf

Successful Implementation

There are a number of factors that contribute to successful implementation. Those that can be anticipated and mitigated through thoughtful action on the part of the coalition include:

Favorable prevention history

It is important that the lead individual or lead organization be a willing partner who can see the benefit of the initiative. Acceptance of the role without a willingness to prioritize time or other resources can lead to weak or failed results.

Leadership and administrative support

Wherever the prevention program is initiated—the community, a school, the judicial system, a church, or all-of-the-above—leadership and administrative support must be present.

Provider selection

When selecting the best candidate to deliver a prevention program, consider professional qualifications and experiences, practical skills, as well as fit with the focus population.

Provider training and support

Pre-service and in-service trainings can help those responsible for program implementation understand the evidence behind how and why the program works. Training and ongoing coaching can be key to implementation fidelity and appropriate adaptation.

Ongoing connection to the coalition

While implementation may occur within many different settings (e.g. a school or within a particular population of focus within a neighborhood) a strategy is needed to retain the connection between the prevention provider and the coalition. This is typically done through regular presentations at coalition meetings. It also occurs in Step 5, with an intentional evaluation of the process and impact of the initiative.⁴



⁴ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. *A Guide to SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework*. (2019), pp. 21-22. <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/20190620-samhsa-strategic-prevention-framework-guide.pdf>

Balancing Fidelity and Adaptation

In Step 3, during the planning phase, coalitions selected prevention strategies based on:

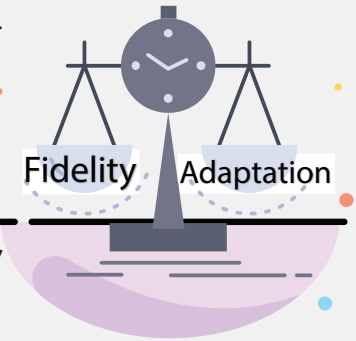
- the evidence of their effectiveness,
- an assessment of their appropriateness for the context/culture of the community, and
- the resources of the coalition.

The task in Step 4 is the implementation of those strategies. To achieve the anticipated outcomes that have been documented by research and enabled a program to be defined as “evidence-based,” it is important to replicate faithfully the strategy that had proven success.

The greater the fidelity to the original design, the more likely you are to reproduce the positive results described in the literature.

However, it can be appropriate to customize the program to better reflect the customs, attitudes, experiences and values of the local community.

When balancing the key concerns of implementation fidelity and community context and culture, there are several guidelines to consider, as listed below.



1. Retain core components.

Core component are those parts of a program or practice that are responsible for producing positive results. For example, if research that has determined a program successful was based on a two pronged approach: one to youth and one to parents, then an adaptation should not include the elimination of one of the two prongs.

2. Build capacity before changing the program.

Rather than change a program to fit local conditions, consider ways to develop resources or to build local readiness so that it can be delivered as it was originally designed.

3. Adapt with care.

Even when programs and practices are selected with great care, there may be ways to improve their appropriateness for a particular population of focus. To make a program or practice more culturally appropriate, consider the language, values, attitudes, beliefs and experiences of the focus population members.

4. If adapting, get help.

Knowledge experts, such as program developers, can provide information on how a program has been adapted in the past, how well these adaptations have worked, and what core components should be retained to maintain effectiveness.⁵

⁵ Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. *A Guide to SAMHSA's Strategic Prevention Framework*. (2019), pp. 20-21. <https://www.samhsa.gov/sites/default/files/20190620-samhsa-strategic-prevention-framework-guide.pdf>

SAMHSA Definition of Fidelity

“The degree to which a program or practice is implemented as intended.”