

192852

Drug Abuse Prevention Among Youth:  
Hope, Promise, and Reality

**An Evaluation of the Federal *Ounce of Prevention*  
Youth-Led Substance Abuse Prevention Programs  
in the United States**

**Final Report**

Prepared for

Ounce of Prevention Program  
Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention  
The US Department of Justice  
Washington, D.C.

Prepared by

Michele Solloway, PhD, Jeffery Salloway, PhD and Tamara Martin  
Department of Health Management and Policy  
University of New Hampshire

May 2000

## Acknowledgments

*This evaluation was funded through grant from the US Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (Grant #97-JN-FX-0019). A report of this complexity and scope requires the work of many minds. The greatest contribution came from the youth and adults who were engaged in the various programs funded by the Ounce of Prevention Program. The authors of this report learned at their sides and benefitted from their insights. The Project Directors and their staffs shared generously of time and effort, filling out forms, granting interviews, and following paper trails at our request. The youth added immeasurably to our understanding of the effectiveness, benefits and importance of involving youth in addressing social problems for children, adolescents and young adults. Our own staff, especially Nancy Clark and Melissa Tappan, worked tirelessly on our central team to coordinate a major conference, distribute materials to projects, collect data reports and assemble meaning from complexity. Finally, we must thank Eric Peterson and Richard Freedman who managed the Ounce of Prevention project for OJJDP. These two shared generously of their wisdom with us and we learned together.*

## Preface

Over the past decade, drug use and abuse among the nation's youth has become an issue of national focus. Under the leadership of the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), U.S. Department of Justice, the *Ounce of Prevention* program provided funds for community-based organizations to develop innovative drug prevention strategies using peer interventions and a youth-leadership model. Of the one hundred proposals received in response to the *Request For Proposals*, ten sites across the country were selected. Each represented a different vision of what might be accomplished through the *Ounce of Prevention* program. They also represented a broad spectrum of organizational structures, target populations, geographic locations and prevention strategies. What they had in common was the hope of reducing drug use and abuse among youth and creating opportunities for at-risk youth to participate in these efforts.

A major innovation of the *Ounce of Prevention* program was the simultaneous funding of a prospective evaluation. This evaluation, conducted by faculty from the University of New Hampshire Department of Health Management and Policy, was intended to accomplish several goals. First and foremost was an assessment of whether and how the various programs were able to achieve their goals using the well established *Structure-Process-Outcomes* paradigm developed by Donabedian. In this way, the evaluation could identify what strategies were most effective in reducing youth drug use and what are the attributes or characteristics of successful programs. The determinants of "what works" in program implementation is often not the quality of the concepts or the nature of the dream as laid out in the proposals. More often, it is the ability of an agency to translate its vision into organizational structures, competent staffs, well-managed finances, and effective relationships. Without these, the dream remains unfulfilled.

The *Ounce of Prevention* program was intended to provide two years of seed money with the expectation that the community-based organizations could use these funds to develop self-sustaining enterprises. As such, a second goal of the evaluation was to assess the extent to which these programs increased the organization's or the community's capacity to reduce drug use among its youth and create sustainable programs. The University of New Hampshire developed and refined its capacity assessment tool for this purpose. Third, the evaluation team attempted to identify the true costs of operating these programs and where possible to analyze benefits and/or effectiveness. The cost assessment tool was linked to the capacity assessment with the hopes of obtaining a detailed and comprehensive picture of the scope and nature of the programs' efforts to create sustainable programs in their communities.

A fourth goal was to determine the relative effectiveness of the youth-leadership model in comparison to adult-led interventions. However, this comparison could only be made through a review of existing literature, as only peer-led interventions were funded through the *Ounce of Prevention* Program. Finally, the evaluation team was also to function as technical support for the programs to conduct their own internal evaluations. In doing so, the evaluation could be used to promote skills and tools for improved program evaluation in the future. It was believed that any

adverse or contaminating effects to the evaluation in training and providing technical assistance to the funded programs were outweighed by the immediate benefits of improved data collection and the long-term benefits of improving programs' knowledge of program evaluation.

This report details the evaluation of the federal *Ounce of Prevention* program. The evaluation was conducted over a two year period, from November 1997 to October 1999 and included an evaluation training conference for the program directors and youth leaders of the ten sites and cross-site comparisons among the ten funded sites (Chapter 2), site visits (Chapter 3) and in-depth assessments of programs' structures, processes, outcomes, capacity and costs (Chapter 4) for six of the ten sites; and technical assistance to all sites on an as-needed basis.

The findings of this evaluation suggest that these youth-led programs resulted in both immediate and long-term benefits to participating youth, youth in the community, the community-based organizations and the community at large. In particular, participating youth gained marketable skills, improved self-esteem, and directly reduced or prevented drug use among their peers through teaching, outreach and one-on-one interactions. Many of the participants interviewed indicated that the *Ounce of Prevention* Program "...turned their lives around." It was thus regrettable that nine months into the evaluation, the sites learned that *Ounce of Prevention* program was a victim of the federal budget process and would not be refunded for the second year. However, it is a testament to both the commitment of these programs and wise funding decisions of the OJJDP that for the most part, program sites have been able to continue their efforts. Moreover, as difficult as it is to conduct rigorous evaluations with statistically valid results, it is nonetheless clear that programs such as the *Ounce of Prevention* are beneficial to communities and the youth they serve.

# Drug Abuse Prevention Among Youth: Hope, Promise, and Reality

## Executive Summary

Over the past decade, drug use and abuse among the nation's youth has become an issue of national focus. Developed as part of the President's Crime Prevention Council and administered under the leadership of the U.S. Department of Justice Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP), the *Ounce of Prevention* program provided funds for community-based organizations to develop innovative drug prevention strategies through youth-led program. Specifically, the program required that youth be placed in leadership positions within the organization and have a substantial role in program design, policy formulation and implementation. The *Ounce of Prevention* program originally provided for two years of funding; however, due to Congressional budget cuts, sites received only one year of funding. Ten sites across the country were selected. Each represented a different vision of what might be accomplished through the *Ounce of Prevention* program. They also represented a broad spectrum of organizational structures, target populations, geographic locations and prevention strategies. What they had in common was the hope of reducing drug use and abuse among youth and creating opportunities for at-risk youth to participate in these efforts. This document reports findings from the evaluation of the *Ounce of Prevention* Programs.

### Evaluation Methodology

The *Ounce of Prevention* evaluation methodology was prospective rather than retrospective in nature; that is, the evaluation was conducted concurrently with program implementation and development between November 1997 and September 1999. The evaluation used a variety of data collection strategies including: convening an *Evaluation Training Conference* for program grantees and conducting a cross-site analysis of demographic and program characteristics common to the ten funded programs (Chapter II); in-depth case studies for six of the ten programs (Chapter III); performing three in-depth analytical assessments, including a *Structure-Process-Outcomes* assessment to measure to how well programs met their goals and what additional or unintended outcomes resulted from the grant programs, a *Capacity Assessment* to measure development and changes program infrastructure; and a *Cost Analysis* (Chapter IV); and providing technical assistance for all grantees for programs needing guidance on conducting program evaluation, data collection and analysis.

Selection of the six sites for the in-depth case studies was based on achieving a balance of structural and geographic representation, available comparisons with adult-led substance abuse prevention models in the literature, and the ability to collect data for the evaluation. The six sites selected include (1) a community-based youth program located in a low-income housing project; (2) an intervention program for homeless youth; (3) a comprehensive, school-based initiative that uses

political advocacy and community involvement as substance abuse diversion; (4) a program that uses a mentoring approach to provide strong role models to disadvantaged and at-risk minority youth; (5) a community and school-based program addressing the needs of Hispanic youth; and (6) a mandatory court-ordered diversion project for youth convicted of first time drug offenses.

### **Cross Site Comparisons**

The *Grantees' Conference* held in Washington, D.C. included a discussion of how substance abuse prevention outcomes could be measured across sites to develop a basis of comparison. A variety of outcome indicators were considered; subsequently, the grantees and evaluators agreed upon the following items as common data elements for program outcome measurement: the number of contacts with clients; the status of the client's participation (eg: new vs. continuing); client gender; client age; client race/ethnicity; year in school (if appropriate); program components or type of programming used; location of programming; family drug or alcohol use; and source(s) of client referrals (police, court, family, peer, other). Data were to be recorded on a weekly basis, then reported for a six month period, January 1 – June 30, 1998. Data were submitted to the Department of Justice in the grantees progress reports then forwarded to the evaluators.

Generally, the ten *Ounce of Prevention* programs studied vary greatly along all dimensions. The commonalities across sites include the peer-leadership, client age and participant race characteristics. Across sites, the majority of clients were of minority ethnicity, and either high school or middle school aged. Analyses conducted in this report were largely descriptive in nature. In addition, the cross-site comparisons were difficult to perform due to the poor quality of the data provided across all ten program outcome indicators. For future data collection activities, developing a standard methodology prior to the data collection period for clear reporting on outcome indicators is advised. Also, technical assistance provided to sites during the recording period to aid in data collection and data reporting is also advised.

### **Findings**

Site Visits: Site visits were conducted to six of the ten funded programs. In one instance, multiple site visits were conducted. In most cases, the *Ounce of Prevention* programs were much more robust than would be anticipated by the grant proposals. Of particular note, youth leaders and youth participants were able to demonstrate the profound impact that youth-led programs can have in a community. Many youth indicated that the Ounce of Prevention program had changed their lives by encouraging them to pursue their education, stay in school, resist alcohol and drugs, resist peer pressure, increase their self-esteem, and give them a base of support not otherwise available. Moreover, by affecting the participants, the program had also (1) reached youth and adults in the community; (2) created role models and productive diversion activities for at-risk youth; (3) improved awareness and understanding within the community, and (4) improved adult attitudes towards youth. The programs also provided employment, job training and skill development for a number of at-risk youth.

In addition, the *Ounce of Prevention* funds created opportunities for community-based organizations to develop and/or increase capacity within the community for drug use/abuse prevention. It tended to strengthen existing relationships, create new ones and build a political base for legal and advocacy actions to promote drug prevention strategies. However, continued funding for the *Ounce of Prevention* program was eliminated during federal budget negotiations. This had consequences for both the grantees as well as for this program evaluation. Nonetheless, despite having only one year of funding, the *Ounce of Prevention* program and the youth-led approach was somewhat successful in addressing drug use prevention among at-risk youth.

Structure-Process-Outcomes: The Structure-Process-Outcomes analysis revealed some central lessons for the delivery of youth-led drug abuse prevention services. One dimension of youth drug use is the alienation of these youth from adult authority and adult models of organization. This implies that delivering services to these youth via traditionally structured organizations may not be successful. Only youth who are already comfortable in formal organizations will participate easily in highly-structured organizations. In addition, the degree of fit between an organization's current operations and its plans for a drug-abuse prevention program are an important predictor of success. The analysis also suggests that a drug abuse prevention program in a cohesive minority community has to be part and parcel of the community's culture. It should reflect not only the culture of the community, but the structures that are common to the community as well. Moreover, change is best achieved when services are introduced by agents who do reflect the community itself. Drug abuse prevention in cohesive minority communities may be best effected by funding efforts which begin internally and which emphasize empowerment of the community.

Examining the structure and process, the outcomes become more nearly predictable and lessons can be derived for systematic drug abuse prevention and interventions. The first lesson is that coordination with outside agencies has to be iron-clad. One program targeting juvenile offenders, though an enthusiastic supporter of the *Ounce of Prevention* project, could not deliver the promised referrals for a variety of reasons. Probation officers have limited powers to coerce attendance at such a program. Ultimately their role is to make recommendations to a sitting judge. These are merely recommendations. The judges hear from defendants, attorneys, counselors and probation officers. Though the juvenile court fully expected that it could deliver referrals, it could not. This is a situation which can be reasonably expected to be repeated across the country.

The second lesson is that the notion that families of targeted adolescents will actively participate is probably naive. These are distressed families and often do not have the time to participate in such programs. The existence of such a program for youth may, in fact, reduce the stress on a family and assist them to marshal resources for other children in the home who are at risk. This lesson may require a difficult ideological shift as future programs are considered. Although the family is at the center of American values in assisting young people, many of these families may lack sufficient or appropriate resources to assist their children. It may be necessary to deal with young people in their emerging role as adults and to hope that the flow of intervention, rather than coming from committed adults and going toward their kids, has to go the other way, from committed youth back toward the family.

Capacity Assessment: Although the evaluation team was not able to conduct a capacity assessment on all six sites, the findings from three completed sites demonstrate that the *Ounce of Prevention* program resulted in increased community capacity to address substance abuse prevention and education among youth in a relatively short period of time. These findings are consistent with the site visits. However, the analyses contain some inherent limitations, including threats to internal validity, changes in on-site reporters over time which threaten both the reliability and validity of the self-reports, lack of participation by sites, and lack of comparability across sites. The assessment would be improved by objective or analytical tests administered to personnel by the evaluator rather than self-reports. Consistency of observation and assessment would also improve the validity of the findings.

Cost Assessment: As we contemplate the cost analysis for the six sites which were the focus for the evaluation, a number of conclusions are evident. Only two sites were able to generate cost data for the evaluation. Part of the reason for this may be that there were no grant funds to follow and the administrative staffs of the projects were simply not motivated to generate the reports. Additionally, it may be that administrative staff were simply unfamiliar with monthly cost reports. This left the evaluation team with little cost information and less quantified outcomes information. In part, this was due to the psychology of grant-funded agencies. The authors of grant applications take as their measure of success the procurement of grant funds. Project directors, who may or may not be grant authors take as their measure of success their ability to design programs, recruit staff, and put activities into the field in an organized fashion. Little attention is given to program evaluation, particularly when funds are limited and direct service is seen as the priority.

There are benefits to programs that understand how to complete a cost analysis. The individual sites can identify areas of support that qualify as in kind supports. There are many forms of funding sources that require in kind dollars. Also if a site understand what supports need to be in place for the successful completion of their program efforts and the costs associated with same, the program director is better able to budget the funding requests. The effort to produce a cost analysis for *Ounce of Prevention* is a major first step in altering this agenda among recipient agencies. The evaluation process was alien to the agencies funded. It would be helpful to both DOJ and community organizations to develop the expectation that they will report monthly on their costs and that they must be able to demonstrate quantifiable outcomes. Without these strictures, federal funding for intervention projects is based on hopes and promises which may never become realities.

### **What Works: Attributes of Successful Programs**

Although programs varied widely across the country, an examination of their challenges and successes found some common themes. Given the diversity of the experience, size and resources of the various community-based organizations, it is not surprising that some grantees were more successful in implementing and institutionalizing their drug prevention programs than others. By comparing programs along a variety of dimensions, we identified seven attributes or indicators of successful programs: (1) continuity of project staff, (2) strong leadership in project management, (3)

funding a designated coordinator to oversee program implementation and youth training and education; (4) development of coalitions to promote community drug prevention activities; (5) the ability of programs to leverage additional resources; (6) having project staff with strong advocacy orientation; and (7) having program staff with prior understanding or experience with drug abuse and prevention issues.

## **Recommendations**

The evaluation team concluded the following: (1) prospective evaluation is an excellent model and provides benefits that are not possible using retrospective evaluation; (2) the initial grantee training and assessment conference was extremely valuable and should be replicated in other federal evaluations; (3) community-based organizations have limited knowledge of program evaluation, how to identify their successes, and how or what type of data collection would best serve their program and funding needs; (4) the organizational context in which a program reside is a factor in its continued success and needs to be assessed during the funding process; (5) youth leadership is an efficient and effective model for substance abuse prevention. Based on the findings from this evaluation, the team makes the following recommendations for future program development:

- ▶ Use prospective evaluation methodology, taking care to preserve the integrity of the program implementation through the use of separate program officers.
- ▶ Include the pre-evaluation training and assessment conference as part of the evaluation methodology. Train grantees and youth leaders in conducting program evaluation, and in particular how to identify successful outcomes, improvements in program development and capacity and cost assessment.
- ▶ Develop uniform outcome measures and methodology for collecting and reporting data at the outset of the grant initiative. Use the pre-evaluation conference to develop common indicators and train grantees on data collection and reporting techniques.
- ▶ Train grantees to conduct cost assessments, including how to identify program costs, how to measure in-kind contributions, and how to establish data systems that produce accurate cost information.
- ▶ Funding for inadequate periods of time, or eliminated funding in the middle of an initiative may cause more harm than good. Continue funding for viable programs; and
- ▶ Conduct organizational assessment of grantees to better understand varying needs for technical assistance and funding.

## Table of Contents

<b>I</b>	<b>Drug Use Among American Youth: Prevalence and Models for Prevention . . . . .</b>	<b>1</b>
	Children At Risk: Prevalence of Drug Use and Abuse Among America's Youth . . . . .	1
	Models of Alcohol and Drug Prevention Programs . . . . .	3
	Comparing Peer- and Adult-Led Prevention Programs for Youth . . . . .	10
	Conclusions . . . . .	12
<b>II</b>	<b>The Hope: The <i>Ounce of Prevention</i> Federal Initiative . . . . .</b>	<b>15</b>
	Communities Respond to a Growing Problem . . . . .	15
	Evaluating the Ounce of Prevention Program . . . . .	16
	Cross-Site Comparisons . . . . .	20
<b>III</b>	<b>The Promise: Six Creative Solutions to Preventing Drug Abuse Among Youth and Findings from Site Visits . . . . .</b>	<b>22</b>
	Dorchester, Massachusetts: Involving Youth in the Community . . . . .	22
	Eureka, California: An Intervention for Homeless Youth . . . . .	34
	Los Angeles, California: A Comprehensive, School-Based Initiative . . . . .	41
	Kansas City, Missouri: Providing Strong Role Models . . . . .	47
	Portland, Oregon: Serving Hispanic Youth . . . . .	53
	Syracuse, New York: An Alternative Court-Ordered Program for Juvenile Offenders . . . . .	65
<b>IV</b>	<b>The Reality: Assessing Programs' Successes and Challenges . . . . .</b>	<b>76</b>
	Structure, Process and Outcome Measures . . . . .	76
	Capacity Assessment . . . . .	106
	Cost Assessment . . . . .	123
<b>V</b>	<b>Conclusions and Recommendations . . . . .</b>	<b>130</b>
	Summary of Evaluation Findings . . . . .	130
	What Works: Attributes of Successful Programs . . . . .	133
	Conclusions and Recommendations for Future Program Development . . . . .	135

## **List of Exhibits**

Exhibit I-1	Models of Alcohol and Drug Prevention Programs by Age Group .....	3
Exhibit II-1	Cross-Site Comparison Data .....	21
Exhibit III-1	Organization and Programs Operated by OCHA .....	55
Exhibit IV-1	Evaluation Indicators for the Structure-Process-Outcome Analysis .....	80
Exhibit IV-2	A Conceptual Framework for Capacity Assessment: Dimensions and Indicators .....	108
Exhibit IV-3	Capacity Assessment: Indicators, Type of Data and Level of Measurement ...	113
Exhibit IV-4	Personnel Capacity Assessment: Eureka .....	116
Exhibit IV-5	Organizational Capacity Assessment: Kansas City .....	119
Exhibit IV-6	Personnel Capacity Assessment: Los Angeles .....	121

Drug Abuse Prevention Among Youth:  
Hope, Promise, and Reality

**An Evaluation of the Federal *Ounce of Prevention*  
Youth-Led Substance Abuse Prevention Programs  
in the United States**

**Final Report**

## **Drug Use Among American Youth: Prevalence and Models for Prevention**

### **Children at Risk: Prevalence of Drug Use and Abuse Among America's Youth**

Alcohol and drug abuse are characterized by "...repetitive patterns of [use] in harmful situations with adverse consequences, including impaired ability to fulfill responsibilities or negative effects on social/interpersonal function and health."<sup>1</sup> Use and abuse of drugs are particularly harmful to youth because of the effects on physical, cognitive, emotional, and psycho-social development. By definition, youth are still actively engaged in the developmental process. In addition, drug use can be an outcome of, co-morbid with or result in other risky behaviors such as early sexual activity, drunk driving, violence and school delinquency or dropout. These activities have long-term implications for the health, safety and well-being of youth.

Data from a variety of sources indicates a growing trend in the use of illegal drugs, tobacco and alcohol among youth. The University of Michigan's 1996 *Monitoring the Future* study found that more than half of all high school students use illicit drugs by the time they graduate.<sup>2</sup> The U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Administration (SAMHSA) further reports that approximately 10% of youths age 12-17 reported using illicit drugs in 1998. Use of marijuana among youth was 8.3% and an estimated 1.8 million people over the age of 12 (0.8%) reported using cocaine.<sup>3</sup> Recent figures have also shown an increase in the use of illicit drugs including inhalants, marijuana, cocaine, lysergic acid diethylamide (LSD), and phencyclidine (PCP).<sup>4</sup>

While alcohol consumption for individuals under the age of 21 is illegal, SAMHSA reports that in 1998, approximately 10.5 million youth ages 12-20 were current drinkers. Of these, half (5.1 million) reported engaging in binge drinking, including 2.3 million who would also be classified as heavy drinkers. There have been no statistically significant changes in the rates of underage drinking since 1994.<sup>5</sup> Although alcohol consumption is generally decreasing, alcohol morbidity and mortality

are still causes of great concern for youth. In 1993, for example, youth ages 16-24 accounted for 28% of all motor-vehicle deaths related to alcohol in the US but only 15% of the country's licensed drivers.<sup>6</sup> Rice (1990) further reports that between one-eighth and one-sixth of all deaths in the U.S. can be tracked to alcohol or drug use.<sup>7</sup> The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation reported that abuse of alcohol alone costs society almost \$100 billion annually, and abuse of other drugs costs another \$67 billion annually.<sup>8</sup> Of particular interest to the juvenile justice system is that more than 75% of all foster children — children at higher risk of juvenile delinquency — are products of alcohol and/or drug-addicted parents.<sup>9</sup>

Homeless and runaway youth are also at very high risk for drug and alcohol abuse as well as a variety of related risky behaviors including multiple partners and unprotected sexual activity, HIV infection, unwanted pregnancy, violence and other problems. In a recent study of homeless youth in southern California, 30% of a sample of homeless youth (n=409) had injected drugs, 20% were involved in drug dealing and 43% had engaged in sex for trade.<sup>10</sup> Homeless youth are also at risk for mental health problems, which further increases the likelihood of engaging in substance use and abuse. Rohde et. al. (1996) showed that 80% of adolescents with alcohol abuse or dependence had some other mental health problem.<sup>11</sup>

Literature concerning drug-abuse prevention reflects the complexity of the factors that influence alcohol and other drug (AOD) use. Recent efforts have been made to rigorously quantify the claims of drug abuse prevention programs in order to measure their true effectiveness. In particular there has been much debate over the effectiveness of adult versus peer-led programming. This literature review is intended to look critically at past evaluations of prevention programs as well as to look for the factors that are common to successfully executed and evaluated programs. The different categories of prevention programs will be outlined with their target populations and effectiveness examined. Prevention programs initiated at school and in the community will be examined, as well as non-AOD programs whose efforts parallel AOD abuse prevention.

## Models of Alcohol and Drug Prevention Programs

### Conceptual Frameworks for Developing Prevention Programs

A comprehensive meta-analysis by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services on the effectiveness of initiatives to curtail AOD abuse defined seven approaches to drug abuse prevention: (1) positive decision-making; (2) development of safety and health skills; (3) development of psychosocial skills; (4) intensive counseling; (5) case management; (6) multidirectional or combination model; and (7) environmental change. The report also ranked programs according to the ability of these program types to reduce/delay AOD use, increase AOD knowledge, and change AOD risk factors.<sup>12</sup> Exhibit I-1 shows which models are related to youth in two age groups: ages 4-12 (preschool to 6<sup>th</sup> grade); and ages 13-18 (youth in secondary education).

**Exhibit I-1:  
Models of Alcohol and Drug Prevention Programs by Age Group**

Age Group	Outcome		
	Reduce AOD Problem Behavior	Change in AOD Related Knowledge and Attitudes	Effects on Long-term Risk and Protective Factors
<b>Ages 4- 12</b> (Preschool and primary education)	Psychosocial Skills	Positive Decision-making	Safety/Health Skills
<b>Ages 13-18</b> (Secondary education)	Psychosocial Skills Safety/Health Skills	Positive Decision-making Safety/Health Skills	Psychosocial Skills Intensive counseling Environmental Change

The **positive decision-making** approach consists of largely didactic lessons on the adverse effects of alcohol and drugs on social, decision-making and mental health skills. The assumption is that more information will lead to lower drug abuse rates. The vast majority of all programs (80%, n=119) were associated with schools either directly or indirectly by means of shared facilities. Of all models studied, this approach was the most likely to be led by peers or community activists, with 28

out of 149 programs (19%) being conducted this way. Although this approach generally targets youth, it only worked well with adults, whose cognitive skills were well developed. It was less effective with children and adolescents, who lacked strong cognitive skills and the ability to enact lifestyle changes based on this information.

The **safety and health skills** approach is similar to positive decision-making and includes drug awareness as part of an overall health and safety curriculum. The underlying premise is that educated people will make healthy decisions concerning AOD use. Although this type of program appears successful in addressing AOD abuse, it has been used almost exclusively on low-risk adolescents and its effectiveness on at-risk groups is unknown.

The **psychosocial skills** approach differs from the first two in that it does not include any didactic AOD education. Rather, it concentrates on developing academic, parenting, and employment preparation skills, thereby reducing AOD risk factors. A common component for such programs is cultural regrouping, a process where ties are strengthened to their traditional culture. This technique is based on the belief that AOD use is a response to a lack of skills to deal effectively with environment pressures, lack of social ties and community networks. This type of program has been almost exclusively targeted to adults and has been moderately successful. The few programs that were targeting adolescents were highly rated in producing positive outcomes when compared to other approaches.

The **intensive counseling** approach relies on one-on-one or small group interactions that are often accompanied by didactic AOD education. This method attempts to address the concept that every potential AOD user has his or her own set of unique circumstances to address. Though this approach appeared to be moderately effective with the at-risk youth and their families that it targeted, it was noted in the report that progress in this population is difficult to produce because of co-morbid social and economic factors that increase the risks of AOD abuse.

The **case management** approach combines individual counseling with training in a specific

skill, such as parenting, along with case management. Often this type of program targets those who are at very high risk of potential harm through AOD use, such as pregnant or at-risk mothers and adolescents who have shown early signs of AOD use. This approach to prevention is usually associated with treatment programs. This method showed positive long-term results with adults. Data regarding youth programs is scant and meta-analysis limited due to the small number of programs available for study and a lack of rigorous data collection for those that were examined.

The **multidirectional** approach is a combination of several other approaches and is characterized by an attempt to expose program participants to as many options as possible in a "scattershot" manner. For example, programs may include drug-free alternative activities, personal skill development, training in task-oriented skills, AOD education, and cultural regrouping. This approach showed some progress among young adults, with programs that offered less complex arrays of services faring better.

The **environmental change** approach is premised on a community-based public health model of prevention in that it attempts to create an environment that is not conducive to AOD abuse. This type of intervention was the most successful of the various models studied at reducing AOD abuse risk factors; however, the study noted that no one approach to AOD abuse was consistently superior when applied across all populations. In some cases, programs were not applied to their ideal constituency. For example, the Positive Decision Making approach was aimed largely at youths even though it is more suitable to adults. Similarly, the Psychosocial Skills approach was notably effective for children though it was predominately directed to adults.

A key factor cited in numerous studies is the need for truly interactive programs where the discussion is two way and the participants have a chance address their individual concerns. A didactic approach is often cited as being counter-productive. Tobler, whose meta-analysis of adolescent drug prevention programs is quoted and sometimes criticized by the meta-analyses papers above, found that there was a statistically significant difference between interactive and non-interactive programs.<sup>13</sup>

### School-Based Programs

The majority of drug prevention programs for children and adolescents occurs in a school setting. The reasons for this are obvious: (1) programs can target large numbers of students at a relatively low cost; (2) students are a “captive” audience; and (3) programs can draw on the teaching expertise and support of the school staff. An example of a prevention program widely implemented prior to evaluation is the *Drug Abuse Resistance Education Program (DARE)*. Created in 1983 and utilizing members of the local police force, about 50% of all schools in the United States participate in this *safety and health skills development* program. However, existing reports of the program's effectiveness rely heavily on anecdotal evidence.<sup>14</sup>

A recent meta-analysis of *DARE* revealed that while the program has had no significant result on illicit drug use, it did, however, increase students' knowledge of AOD.<sup>15</sup> This supports the findings of the US-DHHS study, which concluded that due to their developing cognitive skills, children are not the ideal targets of such a program.<sup>16</sup> Bruvold's meta-analysis of school based programs similarly confirmed that while awareness of drug effects was increased by school-based programs, patterns of drug use were not changed.<sup>17</sup> Bangert-Drowns' meta-analysis of school-based programs further suggests that education on drug effects alone may be counter-productive in that it arouses students' curiosities about the drugs in question.<sup>18</sup> Although these meta-analyses disagree on the exact magnitude of school-based programs' effects, they do concur on two points. First, school-based programs have some utility in improving AOD knowledge; and second, there is a general paucity of evidence on the positive effectiveness of these types of programs.

One key factor that inhibits school-based programs is that teacher-student interactions are not the primary influence on students entering adolescence.<sup>19</sup> An important determinant of AOD abuse is the family. One program that specifically tailors itself to family influence is *Family and Schools Together (FAST)*. This program was established in 1988 to address family issues and included workshops to (1) strengthen parent-child bonds; (2) increase parent roles in their children's lives; and (3) close the gap between school and home. A two year follow-up study found a number of positive outcomes, including that 35% of the families involved increased their community involvement. This

follow-up, which is lacking in many programs, was key in measuring success. The fact that the family unit is a fundamental part of a child's development means that improvements, if possible, can be lasting. The Ninth Special Report to Congress on Alcohol and Health echoes the influence of family on the establishment or prevention of substance abuse.<sup>20</sup>

### Community-Based Programs

A great deal of focus has been placed on addressing drug prevention where it happens: in the community. Community-based programs for youth drug prevention have thus flourished over the past several decades. One approach that has been used since the early 1970's has been the substitution of constructive alternatives as a replacement for drug use, such as the *Outward Bound* program. Diversion programs are also popular; however they do not address underlying factors that lead to AOD use in the first place. Swisher and Hu's evaluation of the *Channel One Program* clearly points out that this adult-supervised community service program suffers from the same shortcoming found in programs such as DARE.<sup>21,22</sup> It is a simple solution that does not solve a complex problem. Though the participants enjoy the project, the results show no measurable change in outcomes with respect to AOD use. One evaluation that highlights the problems inherent to AOD prevention programs is Fors' report on a peer-led drug education program for homeless youths in the Southeastern United States. Though the program seemed to have a short-term positive effect on the participants, follow-up assessment was nearly impossible due to the transient nature of the population.<sup>23</sup>

*Project SixTeen* used eight pairs of communities to test the added impact of a community-based anti-tobacco program as a supplement to a school-based program.<sup>24</sup> Their findings suggest that community interventions influencing the social context relevant to the use of tobacco by adolescents was efficacious. In another study to determine the differences and commonalities between ethnic groups, Dent et al demonstrate that each child also has a progression of drug awareness and use that evolves over time.<sup>25</sup> This research suggests that prevention programs should be specifically tailored based on a child or adolescent's cognitive, psychosocial and developmental stage.

One factor addressed by Unger et al's (1996) thorough study of drug use among homeless youth in Los Angeles is mental illness.<sup>26</sup> Her studies have established a strong-link between mental illness, homelessness, and AOD abuse. This finding is supported by a federal report that also find a high rate of psychiatric co-morbidity and alcohol abuse.<sup>27</sup> Once again, examining factors that go beyond drug education reveals the underlying complexity involved. In this case the correlation is strong enough for Unger et al. to speculate that much of the drug abuse witnessed may result from an attempt at self-medicating for their condition.

### Peer Interventions

The influence of peers as a causal factor in drug use have been hypothesized and demonstrated. Young people who associate with peers engage in problem behaviors — delinquency, substance abuse violent activity sexual activity or dropping out of school — are much more likely to engage in the same behaviors.<sup>28,29,30</sup> These findings are supported by more recent studies by Huizinga<sup>31</sup> and others who report on collaborative studies in Denver, Pittsburgh and Rochester (NY) that attempt to identify risk factors for delinquency and substance abuse. These studies conclude that associating with peers who are delinquent, who use drugs or both relates strongly with delinquency and drug use. They further conclude that the prevention of delinquent peer groups must be a program priority. Moreover, just as peer association is implicated in increased drug use and abuse, it may also provide a forum for intervention and prevention.

Peer interventions take a variety of forms including peer mediation, peer counseling and peer teaching. Implicit in using peers as a system for delivery of interventions is the idea the they will serve as role models for other youth. Although the effectiveness of peer interventions has been the subject of research, conclusions are subject to wide interpretation. Peer intervention — in particular mediation and counseling — have been widely used in violence prevention. Gottfredson reviewed evaluations of peer counseling approaches with regard to violence, most of which were typically implemented in treatment settings.<sup>32</sup> The evidence from quasi- and true experimental evaluations indicates that peer counseling in elementary and secondary schools has not been effective and may even have negative effects on delinquency and associated risk factors, including alcohol and drug use.

Lam also reviewed 14 evaluations of peer mediation programs in North America, assessing them for their ability to prevent or reduce violence.<sup>33</sup> Of these, only three used quasi-experimental designs. Qualitative and anecdotal reports suggested that the programs had positive effects on students' attitudes, knowledge and behavior. However, none of the controlled studies showed significant impacts on students' observable behavior with regard to violence.

The major psycho-social approaches to drug-use prevention are ones that focus on social influences and/or broader personal and social competence — for example, programs that focus primarily on the peer and other social influences to use drugs and on the development of skills to resist those pressures. A national study of one such program was conducted by fourteen Boys & Girls Clubs of America.<sup>34</sup> A pretest-posttest non-equivalent groups design with multiple posttests was employed as follows: five clubs offered the *Stay SMART* program only; five offering the *Stay SMART* plus the *SMART Leaders Booster* program; and four clubs served as controls. The booster program was presented to *Stay SMART* completers as a peer leader program that encourages participants to (1) be positive role models and exert positive influences on their peers to resist pressures to use alcohol and other drugs, and (2) resist engaging in early sexual activity. Despite an elegant community-based design and numerous sites, only 377 youths initially participated and 161 youths were included in the final sample for the two intervention strategies and control groups. The two intervention programs — *Stay SMART* alone and *Stay SMART* with the *Booster Program* — showed positive effects for marijuana-related behavior, cigarette-related behavior, alcohol-related behavior, overall drug-related behavior and knowledge concerning drug use.

This research represents significant effort at a quasi-experimental controlled study. We find, however, that site selection biases may have influenced outcomes. Issues of sample attrition likewise raise concerns about the validity of outcomes. Nevertheless, the consistency of the reported outcomes with other, similar studies, provide encouraging support for offering peer-focused prevention in community-based settings. The Boys & Girls Clubs of America have been active since *Stay SMART* in offering peer-group interventions, especially in public housing. Their Weed and Seed program sites, for example, are currently under evaluation. Preliminary findings suggest that the

programs have reduced juvenile crime in some areas.<sup>35</sup>

Other investigators have also assessed peer interventions. In particular, Prince (1995) contrasted the impact of peer-led, adult-led and control groups on smoking cessation among high school age youth (see also below).<sup>36</sup> Significant reductions were found for both peer-led and adult-led groups compared to the control groups. This is encouraging data to support the belief that peer-led groups can be a cost-effective alternative to adult-led groups. Another study of peer intervention focused on AIDS prevention efforts in Dade County Florida.<sup>37</sup> Although this study did not use a carefully controlled quasi-experimental design, it nonetheless reported improvements in knowledge and awareness and holds promise for using the peer intervention techniques. Similarly, Goldberg and others used a small scale (n=56) non-random controlled trial study and reported that the use of peer-led groups resulted in cognitive and attitudinal changes in athletes who are at risk for steroid use.<sup>38</sup>

An extensive review of literature on community-based approaches for AOD prevention revealed no specific discussions of peer-led interventions. This is at once surprising and understandable. While the epidemiologic research identifies peer influences as causal, the intervention literature is mixed in its assessment of the efficacy of peer interventions. In examining other peer-intervention studies and meta-analyses, it appears that there is no consensus in the literature that peer interventions are effective using statistically significant criteria, despite a large number of studies on such interventions. That does not mean, however, that such programs are not helpful for individuals who participate or have benefits for the communities in which they are located. It is important to recognize that designing evaluation strategies that can produce statistically significant results may not be compatible with designing programs that effectively address difficult and multiple social problems.

### **Comparing Peer- and Adult-Led Prevention Programs for Youth**

Although the literature comparing adult and peer-led prevention programs is limited, several studies have shown that peer-led prevention programs are at least as effective as those led by adults. For example, Prince's study of side-by-side programs to curb tobacco use showed that the peer-led

groups yielded results that were statistically equivalent to adult-led groups.<sup>39</sup> Similarly, the *FAST* program found that layperson graduates of the program who were well trained and supported performed as well as M.S.W.'s hired to do the task.<sup>40</sup> Other studies concur that the peer-leaders themselves benefit from the experience.<sup>41,42</sup> Fors put forth that peer-led programs for homeless youth also yielded significantly better results than adult-led programs. This was due to the fact that homeless youth were much more likely to have strong feelings of alienation towards adults in their lives than those in the general population were. Those living on the streets or in transient housing rely heavily on peers for their support network for survival.<sup>43</sup>

Adult and peer-led HIV prevention programs parallel drug-prevention programs and offer some viable comparisons. In Europe, for example, intravenous drug users have banded together to form peer-support groups in order to decrease behaviors such as needle-sharing that put them at risk for HIV. These "junkiebonden" self-help groups emphasize equality and mutual respect. Though this study is descriptive rather than analytical, the recipe for true "peer" interactions is compelling.<sup>44</sup>

For some school populations, positive results were seen using peer educators. For example, a preliminary finding reported by O'Hara and colleagues was that peer-educators for HIV prevention worked well in an alternative school. When properly trained and supervised, the peer-educators were able to get past the awkwardness of human sexuality in and more effectively discuss alcohol and drug use and related issues. Though the authors are awaiting long-term follow-up results, the project appears to have had a measurable impact on student behavior.<sup>45</sup> Podschun's article on a peer-led HIV outreach program, also a descriptive rather than analytical review, points to the need for "true" peers. For example, a college-bound volunteer may not be perceived as a peer to a homeless person of the same age. The Teen Peer Outreach-Street Work Project has youth volunteers who speak the same languages as the target population. In addition, some of the volunteers were formal clients who could better relate to the difficulties the homeless face.<sup>46</sup>

Simons, et al offers an example in a descriptive paper of a peer-led HIV prevention program in Denver that nearly failed due to cultural misperceptions. They set up an office to distribute needle-

cleaning kits to intravenous drug users. Because their second-story office overlooked an area of active drug trading and the workers were of a different ethnic background, people refused to come in due to perceptions that they were undercover policemen engaged in surveillance duty. A change in personnel helped alleviate this problem.<sup>47</sup>

## Conclusions

The literature review found a variety of models applicable for AOD abuse prevention. Some appear better suited to youth than others and should be chosen accordingly. Comparisons of adult versus peer-led approaches are scant in the literature. With the exception of a growing body of meta-analyses, evaluation of AOD prevention programs are generally short-term and more anecdotal and qualitative rather than statistical or analytical. Nonetheless, studies do show that peer-leaders benefit from the experiences gained. A key determining factor in all of the successful programs found in the literature was that these programs were capable of defining and measuring desirable outcomes. The programs that had positive results also sought to address the issues that cause drug use and addressed the complexity of the issue. Interactive programming played a key role in that it addresses the needs of the individual. Peer-led programs further individualize the process by allowing access to ideas presented by a familiar face that recognizes the conflicts young people face in dealing with drug abuse.

## References

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (1997) Ninth Special Report to the U.S. Congress on Alcohol and Health. Washington, D.C. (page 1).
2. The National Drug Control Strategy, 1997. Office of National Drug Control Policy, Executive Office of the President, Washington, D.C.
3. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, 1998. Summary of Findings from the 1998 National Household Survey on Drug Abuse, Office of Applied Studies, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, Washington, D.C.

4. Bukoski, W.J. Meta-Analysis of Drug Abuse Prevention Research. National Institute for Drug Abuse, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C.
5. U.S. DHHS, SAMHSA, 1998, op cite.
6. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (1997) Ninth Special Report to the U.S. Congress on Alcohol and Health. Washington, D.C.
7. Rice, DP. 1990. Estimates of the economic costs of alcohol, drug abuse and mental illness. In Substance Abuse: The Nation's Number One Health Problem, eds C. Horgan, ME Mardsen and MJ Larson. Princeton, NJ. Robert Wood Johnson Press.
8. Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, 1994. Costs of Addiction, Report #13. Princeton, NJ.
9. Children's Defense Fund, 1994, cited in McClellan, A.T., Woody, G.E., Metzger D. et al. 1996. Evaluating the effectiveness of addiction treatments: reasonable expectations. Appropriate comparisons. The Milbank Quarterly, 74(1):51-85.
10. Kipke, M.D., O'Connor, S., Palmer, R. and MacKenzie, R.G. (1995). Street youth in Los Angeles: Profile of a group at high risk for Human immunodeficiency Virus infections. Archives of Pediatric Adolescent Medicine 149:513-519.
11. Reported in Unger, J.B. Kipke MD, Simon, TR, Montgomery SB and Johnson, CJ. 1997. Homeless youths and young adults in Los Angeles: prevalence of mental health problems and the relationship between mental health and substance abuse disorders. American Journal of Community Psychology. 25(3):371-392.
12. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (1994). Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse Prevention: The National Structured Evaluation, Third Report to Congress. Washington, D.C. The remainder of this section is based on this document.
13. Tobler, N. S. Meta-Analysis of Adolescent Drug Abuse Prevention Programs: Results of the 1993 Meta-Analysis. In Bukoski, W.J. (Ed) Meta-Analysis of Drug Abuse Prevention Research. National Institute for Drug Abuse, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C.
14. Ennett, S. T., Tobler, N. S., Ringwalt, C. L., Fiewelling, R.L. (1994). How effective is drug abuse resistance education? A meta-analysis of project dare outcome evaluations. American Journal of Public Health. 84(9):1394-1401.
15. Ibid.
16. US DHHS, 1994, op. cite.

17. Bruvold, W. H. (1990). A meta-analysis of the california school-based risk education program. Journal of Drug Education 20(2):139-152.
18. Bangert-Drowns, R.L. (YEAR) The effects of school-based substance abuse education - a meta-analysis. Journal of Drug Education 18(3):311-339.
19. McDonald, L., and Sayger, T (1998). Impact of a family and school based prevention program on protective factors for high risk youth. Drugs and Society, 12(1):61-84.
20. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (1997) Ninth Special Report to the U.S. Congress on Alcohol and Health. Washington, D.C.
21. Hu, T., Swisher, J. D., McDonell N, and Stein J. 1982. Cost-Effectiveness Evaluation: A Drug Abuse Prevention Alternatives Programs. Prepared for the National Institute on Drug Abuse. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Washington, D.C.
22. Swisher J.D. and Hu, T.W. (1983). Alternatives to drug abuse: some are and some are not. Preventing Adolescent Drug Abuse: Intervention Strategies National Institute on Drug Abuse, Washington, D.C. Vol 47:141-153.
23. Fors, S.W. and Jarvis, S. (1995). Evaluation of a peer-led drug abuse risk education project for runaway/homeless youth. Journal of Drug Education, 25(4):321-333.
24. Biglan, A. Ary D. Yudeleson, H., Duncan, TE, Hood, D, James L., et al. 1996. Experimental evaluation of a modular approach to mobilizing anti-tobacco influences of peers and parents. American Journal of Community Psychology 24(3):311-339.
25. Dent, C. W., Sussman, S., Ellickson, P., Brown, P., Richardson, J. (1996). Is Current drug abuse prevention programming generalizable across ethnic groups? American Behavioral Scientist, 39(7):911-917.
26. Unger, J.B. Kipke MD, Simon, TR, Montgomery SB and Johnson, CJ. 1997. Homeless youths and young adults in Los Angeles: prevalence of mental health problems and the relationship between mental health and substance abuse disorders. American Journal of Community Psychology. 25(3):371-392.
27. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. 1994. Eighth Special Report to the U.S. Congress on Alcohol and Health. Washington, D.C.
28. Barnes, G.M. and Welte, J.M. 1986. Patterns and predictors of alcohol use among 7-12th grade students in New York state. Journal of Studies on Alcohol 47: 53-62.
29. Cairns R.B., Cairns, B.D., Neckman, H.J., Gest, D.S., and Gairepy, J. 1988. Social networks and aggressive behavior: peer support or peer rejection? Developmental Psychology 24: 815-823.

## II

### **The Hope: Evaluating The Federal *Ounce of Prevention* Initiative**

#### **Communities Respond to a Growing Problem**

The *Ounce of Prevention* program was a collaboration between the President's Crime Prevention Council (PCPC) and the Department of Justice, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) and represented a conceptual innovation. Agencies from around the country were invited to design and implement new strategies for drug abuse prevention which were to be based on a peer-led model. The overarching goal of the program is to reduce substance abuse for at-risk youth using a youth-led model and develop strong and sustaining programs. Over one hundred proposals were received. Each of these represented a vision, a set of hopes for what might be accomplished with federal money and an input of technical expertise.

The hopes that these applicant agencies expressed began with specific goals. The process of writing grant applications for federal review must incorporate as goals in the text of the application the vision present in the RFP. Not to do so is to invite a low priority score for not being attentive to the RFP. Beyond the re-stating of federal goals; however, each agency was then free to formulate its own dreams about how they might implement a particular vision for peer-led drug abuse prevention.

From the large number of applications submitted to the *Ounce of Prevention* program, ten were selected for funding. <sup>1</sup>Of these, six were selected by the Evaluation Team for in-depth study. In assessing the effectiveness of these six, the intent was to derive a number of conclusions. Pre-eminent among these conclusions was to be an answer to the question, What works? What peer based strategies are most effective in preventing drug use among adolescents?

---

<sup>1</sup>Federal appropriations for the *Ounce of Prevention* program was approximately \$100,000 per program for 18 months.

While the issue of what works is the most important question that needs to be answered from this research, the determinants of what works in the implementation of real programs is often not the quality of the concepts or the nature of the dream. More often, it is the ability of the agency to implement the goals of the project in real ways that translate dreams into organizational structures, competent staffs, well-managed finances, and effective relationships. Without these, the vision, the dream, remains unfulfilled.

## **Evaluating the Ounce of Prevention Program**

### Methodology

The evaluation methodology was prospective rather than retrospective in nature; that is, the evaluation was conducted concurrently with program implementation and development. On the one hand, this approach is highly beneficial because it reduces problems associated with retrospective evaluations such as staff turnover and not being able to interview program participants; participant recall, lack of appropriate data collection for the evaluation and the inability to observe the implementation and development of a program over time. However, prospective evaluations have their own challenges. For example, the presence and technical assistance of the evaluators contaminate the evaluation in that the evaluators themselves become participants in the program. In shaping the data collection, they may also inadvertently cause changes in the program that would not have otherwise occurred. While these issues are important, they are outweighed by the benefits of on-going assistance and assessment.

The evaluation strategy included a variety of components including:

- ▶ Convening an *Evaluation Training Conference* for program grantees (described in this Chapter);
- ▶ A *Cross-Site Analysis* of demographic and program characteristics common to the ten selected programs and in-depth case studies and site visits for 6 of the 10 programs (see Chapter III); and
- ▶ Three in-depth analytical assessments of the 6 case studies, including (1) a *Structure-Process-Outcomes* assessment to measure to how well programs met their goals and

what additional or unintended outcomes resulted from the grant programs; (2) a *Capacity Assessment* to measure development and changes program infrastructure; and (3) a *Cost Analysis* (see Chapter IV); and

- ▶ Providing technical assistance for all grantees for programs needing guidance on conducting program evaluation, data collection and analysis.

The evaluation was conducted in three phases. Phase I consisted of conducting initial program assessments, a literature review and convening the evaluation and training conference. Phase II focused on the implementation of the evaluation including selecting programs and conducting site visits, collecting data for the three analytical components and providing technical assistance to programs. Phase III involved follow-up data collection activities with programs, conducting data analysis, and preparing the final evaluation report.

#### Convening an *Evaluation Training Conference* for Grantees

As a starting point, the evaluation team believed it would be helpful to bring grantees and youth leaders together. The purpose of the conference was three fold: (1) conduct an initial assessment of the grantees' programs to assist the Evaluation Team in selecting sites and providing technical assistance; (2) develop a support network among the grantees and in particular among the youth; and most importantly, (3) educate and train grantees on the various components of the evaluation.

The conference was highly successful in achieving these goals and resulted in a number of additional benefits. Grantees were able to present and discuss their projects. This was useful for the evaluators because the grant descriptions did not generally capture the scope and range of project activities. It also was very helpful in targeting grantees' technical assistance needs and in the subsequent selection of case studies. It was also very beneficial for the grantees to meet each other. In particular, this conference was in most cases the highlight of many youths' experiences, as they would generally not have had the opportunity to travel to the nations' capital and meet federal officials. More importantly, it created a network among the youth, who expressed feelings of some isolation from their peers. These youth are courageous in saying no to peer pressure and fighting

substance abuse in communities and cultures that accept the presence and use of alcohol, tobacco and illicit drugs. The participation by these youth was inspirational for the adults and helped address some of the stereotypes about youth today.

### Selecting and Conducting Site Visits

An integral component of the evaluation strategy was to conduct in-depth case studies on six of the ten program. At the time the evaluation proposal was prepared, the grantees had not yet been selected. Consequently, the selection criteria outlined in the proposal were anticipatory. It was envisioned, for example, that we would select a six of the ten grantees for site visits to reflect the diversity of the Ounce of Prevention program, geographic distribution and variety in approaches used to address community substance abuse prevention. Th site selection was also intended to be based in part on the ability to conduct comparisons with existing or previous adult-led programs, as found in published literature. Potential criteria included the following:

- ▶ Area of substance abuse addressed by program (eg: targeted or specific areas of substance abuse prevention, such as tobacco, alcohol, illicit drugs versus a comprehensive approach);
- ▶ Characteristics of the target population with respect to age, gender, and ethnicity;
- ▶ Type of participation (voluntary vs mandatory);
- ▶ Program setting (for example, school-based, community center, housing project);
- ▶ Socio-geographic characteristic of the program (for example, urban versus rural, inner-city empowerment zone; and/or a specific target population focus such as homeless youth, minorities such as Hispanic or Native American youth, or juvenile offenders ); and
- ▶ Program replicability.

As the evaluation was implemented, several issues became clear. First, the grantees selected had few viable adult-led comparisons in the literature. Consequently, it was not possible to use this as a criterion for selection for the six site visits. Second, staff turnover and the ability of the

evaluators to communicate with project staff was a strong factor in the choice of sites for case study. For example, Miami's program experienced rapid turnover in the program coordinator. The program in New Mexico did not have a well developed telephone or electronic communication system in place, and reaching program staff was quite difficult. Third, it became apparent that while all programs had an identified youth participant, the actual role of the youth with respect to leadership in some of the programs was questionable. Finally, the programs were highly diverse; and although this reflects a positive and intentional dimension of grantee selection, it made site selection and cross-site comparisons difficult. Ultimately, the site selection was based on achieving a balance of structural and geographic representation, available comparisons with adult-led substance abuse prevention models in the literature, and the ability to collect data for the evaluation. The six sites selected were:

- ▶ *The Walter Demney Youth Center (WDYC)* in Dorchester, Massachusetts — a community-based youth program located in a low-income housing project;
- ▶ *The RAVEN Project: Youth to Youth Street Outreach Program* in Eureka, California — an intervention program for homeless youth;
- ▶ *South Central Youth Empowered Through Action (SC-YEA)* in Los Angeles, California — a comprehensive, school-based initiative that uses political advocacy and community involvement as substance abuse diversion;
- ▶ *The Block Brothers*, Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Kansas City in Kansas City, Missouri — a program that uses a mentoring approach to provide strong role models to disadvantaged and at-risk minority youth;
- ▶ *Entre Amigos ("Among Friends")* Substance Abuse Prevention Program in Portland, Oregon — a community and school-based program addressing the needs of Hispanic youth; and
- ▶ *The Salvation Army Diversion Project in Syracuse*, New York — a mandatory court-ordered diversion project for youth convicted of first time drug offenses.

Taken together, these sites represent urban, suburban, and rural areas throughout the nation; a diversity of youth populations (Blacks, Hispanics, homeless youth, first-time offenders); mandatory and voluntary programs; a variety of settings including schools, community centers, and housing projects; and an assortment of program approaches and components. Individual program descriptions

and findings from the site visits are found in Chapter 4.

### Technical Assistance

The Training Conference was used to conduct initial assessments of grantees and develop a workplan for providing technical assistance. On numerous occasions, grantees would call or email requests for support in a variety of areas. For the most part, technical assistance revolved around collecting data for the evaluation. The Evaluation Team responded to all requests for technical assistance. After a time, requests for technical assistance dropped off, and there was some indication that technical assistance requests declined after federal funding for the *Ounce of Prevention* program was not renewed.

### **Cross-Site Comparisons**

An important component of the *Grantees' Cluster Conference* was a discussion of how substance abuse prevention outcomes would be measured across all ten sites. Potential outcome indicators were considered; subsequently, the grantees and evaluators agreed upon the following items as common data elements for program measures: (1) number of contacts with clients; (2) status of client participation (eg: new vs. continuing); (3) client gender; (4) client age; (5) client race/ethnicity; (6) year in school (if appropriate); (7) program components used by clients or type of programming; (8) location of programming; (9) family drug or alcohol use; and (10) source(s) of client referrals (police, court, family, peer, other).

Data were to be recorded for the above ten outcome indicators on a weekly basis, then reported between January and June, 1998 in grantees' progress reports submitted by each site director. In November of 1998, these reports were forwarded to the UNH Evaluation Team for cross-site comparison. The data show marked contrasts in both reporting style and program characteristics across the ten sites. Due to the lack of uniform reporting across sites, however, the data submitted were not comparable. Data are shown in Exhibit II-1.

**Exhibit II-1  
Cross-Site Comparison**

Program Name City / State Setting	Client Data*						
	Number of Client Contacts	Gender	Age	Race	Program Component(s) Used	Family Situation/ Drug/Alc. Abuse	Referral Source(s)
<b>Block Brothers</b> Kansas City, MO Community Center	183 continuing youth avg. 96 youths/day	m=118 f = 65	7-17 yrs.	98% Afr. Am.	Recreation (games, activities) Prev. Programs (career dev., conflict resol., subst. abuse)	high rates unemploy. and alc/subs. abuse	NA**
<b>SCYEA</b> Los Angeles, CA School	378 youth members increased from 165; 29 new youth leaders	more males than females	high school	Afr. Amer., Latinos make up majority	"Rap Group" talk group= 32; Social activities (trips, parties, etc)	NA	Recruited from Crenshaw High + 2 other S. LA high schools
<b>RAVEN Project: Drop-In</b> Eureka, CA Community Center	163 new 174 continued 337 total	m = 170 f = 167	10-14= 7 15-17= 85 18-21= 180 21-24= 65	233 Caucas. 13 Latino 11 Alaskan 7 Afr. Amer. 73 Other	"Alternatives- To- Drug-Use" groups= 67, TV use= 40, showers= 70, laundry= 125 cooking= 53, arts/crafts=13 phone-use= 64, job related=15	127 homeless 7 unreported runaway 95 disenfranchised 65 'in transition' 35 traveling	NA
<b>RAVEN Project: Outreach</b>	588 new 886 continued 1474 total	m= 914 f= 560	10-14= 82 15-17= 83 18-24= 761	1118 Caucas. 77 Alaskan 58 Latino 25 Afr. Amer. 198 other		437 homeless 265 disenfr./impovert. 145 'in transition' 568 'hanging out'	NA
<b>OCHA</b> Portland, OR School & Community Center	4 paid youth staff 13 volunteer youths over 744 youths at assemblies and small group activities	Vol. Youths: m= 5 f= 8	middle and high school	all particip. & staff were Hispanic/ Latino	Youth Hotline Student Assemblies- 8 sch. total= 490 participants Small Groups= 13 groups, serving 254 students re: drug/ alcohol abuse Media Campaign Parent Groups	NA	NA
<b>Salvation Army</b> Syracuse, NY Community Center	16 youth members 4 completed 12 wks 11 referred to higher level of intervention	m= 20 f= 11	10 yrs= 2 13-15= 29	20 Afr. Amer. 8 Caucas. 2 Hispanic 1 Asian	Weekly activities organized into 12 week sessions= 20 Outward Bound= 6	NA	Dept. of Probation-24 Syr. City Schools- 5 Alcoh. & Drug Abuse Prevention Couns.- 2
<b>Walter Denney</b> Dorchester, MA Community Center	13 continuing youth members	m= 10 f= 3	14-16 yrs.	Afr. American	NA	families living in low income environ.	NA

### III

#### **The Promise: Six Creative Solutions to Preventing Drug Abuse Among Youth and Findings from Selected Site Visits<sup>1</sup>**

The purpose of the site visits was to collect in-depth information on the programs and observe how the programs functioned in practice. The site visits also provided a richer understanding of how the programs were implemented, what worked, how the program fit within the community, how the program changed over time, what challenges were faced by program leaders and participants, and how those challenges were met. The site visits consisted of a number of activities, including individual meetings with the program director, youth leader(s) and bookkeeper or accountant; group meetings with program participants; observation of program activities; and if possible, meeting with other community organizations. Site visits were conducted over seven months, from April - October 1998. This Chapter provides descriptions of each program and findings from the site visits.

#### **Dorchester, Massachusetts: Involving Youth in the Community The Walter Denney Youth Center (WDYC) at Harbor Point**

In the early 1970's, Walter Denney began a part-time child care service for the residents of Columbia Point Housing project. This service expanded, incorporating recreational programs for the youth of the community, and culminated in the development of a youth center geared towards meeting the needs of all youth residents. The center grew under the leadership of Mr. Denney until his retirement in 1991, from a part-time service with a non-supervised management team to an agency that is professionally staffed and supervised. In 1994, the Harbor Point housing project formed the Harbor Point Community Task Force, Inc. which now manages the center named after its founder Walter Denney, the Walter Denney Youth Center (WDYC). The community is located on fifty acres on Columbia Point peninsula in Boston and consists of over 600 youth among the over 2,800 residents. The majority of residents are low income minorities. This community, once a dilapidated

---

<sup>1</sup>Portions of this chapter information from the original grantees' proposals.

public housing project, is now a more mixed income development attempting to address the social issues surrounding urban life, particularly substance abuse among youth.

WDYC provides age appropriate programming for youth 6 to 19 years old. The purpose of the center's activities is to empower the positive development of the youth of Harbor Point through a peer-based skills and alternative programs. The four major program goals include:

- ▶ strengthening the existing youth council by increasing the number of youth involved in the center's policy and management;
- ▶ providing extensive peer leadership training and drug and alcohol prevention training for youth council members;
- ▶ offering activities and programming away from the community to widen youths' experiences; and
- ▶ collaborating with other Columbia Point youth service providers to leverage existing resources and avoid duplication of services.

WDYC's four major program components are: (1) an after-school program; (2) a teen enrichment program; (3) a community computer center; and (4) a summer camp. These components are available at certain hours for most of the week during the school year, and most of the day for a seven week period in the summer.

After School Program: This program provides tutoring and homework assistance for children ages 6-13 during the school year. Students complete a daily journal and participate in a variety of recreational and leisure activities. The focus is on bridging the gap between teachers and parents.

Teen Enrichment Program: The Teen Program operates year round and provides evening activities for youth ages 12-19. Twice per month activities and field trips are held on Saturdays. Teens also have access to a game room equipped with table soccer, table tennis, and a pool table. Peer leadership training is also offered in the evenings through a small group workshop forum.

Community Computer Center: The Computer Center is a room fully equipped with personal computers and printers with access to the Internet and certain software packages. Instructional classes for all ages are held year round. This center is an after school haven for teens, and a community resource where residents can develop marketable skills.

Summer Camp: During the summer months, a day camp is provided for Harbor Point youth. Activities include tennis, basketball, golf, swimming, arts & crafts, and weekly field trips.

At the time of the grant award, the Youth Council consisted of eight youth members, ages 12-16. The Council meets weekly to discuss planning and implementation of center activities, and new strategies for empowerment of Harbor Point youth. The center also employs a Coordinator and one Assistant Coordinator who work with the Youth Council members to initiate peer leadership training, outreach services, and recruitment of youth and parents. The Coordinators are also responsible for instituting structural changes to improve the Council's effectiveness, and for developing and implementing fund-raising efforts. WDYC also acquired a van used for field trips and special events. The van has been an important resource allowing the Center youth to access resources outside of the Harbor Point Community.

Setting: The Harbor Point housing complex has a remarkable geography and history. It is located on a picturesque peninsula that points seaward in Boston's harbor. It shares this peninsula with two institutions which characterize the hopes and aspirations of the new Boston, the JFK Memorial Library and the University of Massachusetts - Boston. The JFK Library harks back to the era of the Great Society with its promise of a new life for all Americans without regard to race or income. The campus of UMass-Boston symbolizes the commitment of the state of Massachusetts to provide an urban university which will address urban problems and provide an upward mobility route for low income students. The presence of these institutions in proximity to Harbor Point could not be more poetic.

The physical geography of the peninsula itself speaks in a different language. Its land border

is Morrissey Boulevard, a high speed thoroughfare difficult to cross on foot. Lining the boulevard is the fenced rail of the MBTA rapid transit system -- Boston's legendary T. These are serious psychological and physical barriers in accessing Boston. At its front door, the peninsula suffers the Bay State Expo Center, a large convention center which is ringed by square miles of parking lots and which hosts an endless flow of transient visitors. The physical barriers which separate Harbor Point from Boston are repeated in the high fences which surround the housing complex. Entry is strictly controlled at limited access points where security guards tend barriers around the clock. It is an enclosed and isolated community, made separate by its geography and its guarded physical structure.

On its land side, Harbor Point is prison and fortress. Its gates make it a fortress against those who would enter to make mischief -- thieves, gang members, drug dealers. At the same time, one does not simply walk out of the community and into the city. One exits though a gate, constantly reminded of the barriers between the community and the city. At the end of the street lies the boulevard, the MBTA, and beyond that, gentrifying Dorchester and South Boston. On the bay side, Harbor Point is picturesque and refreshing. Broad avenues lead to the water's edge and a spectacular view of the beaches of South Boston. The breeze is fresh on the warm days and bracing on the cold. It is a constant reminder of Boston's seafaring past.

Harbor Point began as a public housing project called Columbia Point. It was composed of high rise subsidized housing which by the late 1960s had become an impacted sore in the flesh of the city. It was an impenetrable morass of poverty, drugs, crime, and gangs, a dead end on the peninsula. Its immediate locale included South Boston, a hotbed of working class racism which threatened violence to African-Americans who got lost in its alphabetized streets.

As part of the Great Society, the U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare (now Health and Human Services) in Washington funded a neighborhood health center through Tufts University's School of Medicine. The organizing principles of the neighborhood health center were set by Count Gibson, H. Jack Geiger, and Peter Kong-Ming New, all of Tufts. Gibson was a leading voice for community health, Geiger was a health-care radical, and New was a social anthropologist

with a genuine commitment to delivering social action programs into the hands of program recipients. Together they helped to organize a neighborhood board which they empowered to make policy for Columbia Point's health center. This bold social program established in the culture of the community a sense of local initiative which persists to this day. The board of the neighborhood health center expanded and became a residents' governing board for the entire community -- The Community Task Force. Board members learned to set policy, recruit professionals, manage finances, write grant applications, identify problems and create programs to deal with these problems.

As time progressed, and the vertical slums which were Columbia Point became untenable, the city entered into a contract with Corcoran, Jennison, Co. to raze the outdated high-rises and to create in its place a mixed income community. The re-named community, now known as Harbor Point, includes bayside town houses which rent for market prices. These line the streets with water frontage. In the center of the complex are numbers of high rises called subsidized housing which shelter the community's low income population.

Across the street is the Gov. Paul Dever Middle School. Near the main entrance is the aptly-named Geiger-Gibson Neighborhood Health Center, and the Walter Denney Youth Center. Across the street, set alone in the midst of cleared parking lots stands a single church. It is in this setting that the Ounce of Prevention program has tested its abilities at peer-run drug abuse prevention.

**The Hope: *Ounce of Prevention* Goals and Program Leadership:** In response to the request for proposals by the Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, the Harbor Point Community Task Force submitted an application for support under the Ounce of Prevention Program. The application is pointed and direct in its statement of goals. The goals for the project at its inception were:

- ▶ Strengthening the Youth Council by doubling membership;
- ▶ Providing peer leadership;
- ▶ Providing peer-to-peer mentoring training;
- ▶ Increasing parental involvement in youth issues;
- ▶ Offering programming alternatives to youth outside of the Harbor Point site;

- ▶ Decreasing the high school drop out rate; and
- ▶ Decreasing the teen pregnancy rate.

These goals are interesting for their diversity of scope. They divide into broad, general intentions for a better community in the forms of increased parental involvement, lower high school drop-out rate, and decreased teen pregnancy. These goals directed at a better community can be subsumed under the rubric of environmental change. The goals of environmental change contrast with highly specific programmatic goals of enlarging the Youth Council, training peer leaders and peer mentors, and offering off-site programming. These specific goals can be characterized as a psycho-social skill approach designed to develop skills that reduce risk factors.

The broad, general, environmental goals are typical of *Ounce of Prevention* grants. As such, they are desirable while at the same time being very difficult to achieve. The reasons behind poor relationships between parents and their children, adolescent school drop-out, and early pregnancy are complex and woven deep into the fabric of the community. It is difficult to conceive of an eighteen-month program having an impact on problems of this complexity. On the other hand, the specific psycho-social skill goals are focused and achievable with the infusion of resources, the creation of organizational capacity, and the management of program.

Multiple site visits were carried out in an assessment of the *Ounce of Prevention* project at the Walter Denney Youth Center. Beginning in the spring of 1998, through the summer and on into the fall of 1998, members of the evaluation team conducted periodic visits to the site. The overall objective of the site visits was to determine the extent to which the global and specific goals of the project were being realized. Further, the evaluation team sought information which would illuminate those factors which contributed directly to successful achievement of goals or were barriers to achievement.

The site visit findings relative to structure and process issues and capacity building issues were rather straightforward and easy to summarize: The Harbor Point Task Force is a well-practiced social

action agency. They were able to put in place an appropriately sized, appropriately led and appropriately structured organization to implement the goals of the Ounce of Prevention program. The project director had a clear sense of his place in the organization and the processes which needed to be set in motion to accomplish the project's objectives. Moving from the grant application to the structure, process, outcome analysis, the Harbor Point project was well organized in all respects.

Program Administration:

The Ounce of Prevention project shares space in a primary school building next to the health center. Its location could not be more auspicious for coordinated action with the school and health center. While the offices of the project are outside the fenced boundaries of Harbor Point itself, it is easily accessible, parking is available, the offices are comfortable, and there is support staff available to the director. In addition to the administrative offices, the project runs a computer center on the ground floor of one of the subsidized housing units.

The Executive Director of the project, Eric Mitchell, is a well trained, well qualified man with a quiet confidence in his program. He reports to Ruby Jaundoo, the signatory to the grant and to the Board of the Harbor Point Community Task Force. In terms of the everyday operation of the project, he seems to have full autonomy. However, it was clear in repeated discussions that he does not have fiscal responsibility for the project as a whole. While he controls day-to-day disbursements, the overall financial control of the project rests with Ruby Jaundoo and the Board. Though this is a responsible management model, it isolates the Executive Director from the pressures of budgeting and procuring major continuation funding. These are carried out at the level of the Task Force. When the Executive Director required additional funding, he placed such requests with Ruby Jaundoo who worked with the Board to allocate new monies, raise new funds, or to deny the request. This limits the Executive Director's autonomy and his sense of responsibility for the fiscal well-being of the program. The youth-leader was 14 years old and considered by the Evaluation Team to be an inappropriate choice for the leadership position.

The matter of fiscal autonomy became apparent around the issue of stipends for members of

the Youth Council. The original grant requested budget for stipends to pay youth for participating in the Youth Council. A major impetus of the grant was to expand the membership on the Youth Council. However, the monies available from the Ounce of Prevention grant were limited. Once these were committed to current members of the Youth Council, there was no additional money to recruit new members. For this, the Executive Director had to go to the Board.

With regard to programming, the Executive Director has been creative and made use of diverse resources. He has used the close physical proximity to develop a working relationship with the University of Massachusetts -Boston. This has brought student involvement and faculty interest. Thus, the project has become a mini-laboratory for applied social science programs. He has recruited an adept staff and seems to have a collegial relationship with them.

#### Program Activities:

The *Ounce of Prevention* grant funds several signal programs at Harbor Point. The computer center is a well-lit, accessible complex on the first floor of one of Harbor Point's central high-rises. The director of the computer center is a warm, competent man who provides not only substantial computer expertise, but male role modeling as well. The walls of the center are lined with relatively modern computer hardware which the members of the Youth Council use frequently -- most often for playing computer games. They are very much like adolescents across the country. The Youth Center used a portion of the funds from the Ounce of Prevention grant to purchase a van for off-site activities. The large maroon Dodge van is parked across from the Walter Denney Youth Center and is often used to take Youth Council members on outings to the cultural sites of Boston and vicinity.

While the original objectives of the project called for leadership training, peer mentoring and parental involvement as important program objectives, these seem to be slow to develop or perhaps even lost issues. There has been some programming in the direction of leadership training, but a serious curriculum directed at drug abuse prevention was not in place at the time of the site visits. Parents have been unresponsive to efforts to organize them, even when staff went door to door to try to promote participation. Although the program activities are well conceived and the project is

well staffed, the community has not been overwhelmingly responsive. There is a sense that the program serves those male adolescents who will make it out of Harbor Point in any event.

**Coordinator of the Teen Center:** The *Ounce of Prevention* project employs a coordinator for the teen center. This position is funded 20 hours a week though it really needs a full-time person. The coordinator is an individual with very good instincts on youth development issues. She was hired on the grant to work with 13 to 16 yr. olds. She reports the following:

*“Older kids will no longer have anything too with me. The 16 year olds -- if they're involved in the program and the streets haven't picked them up by now -- they'll come back. They get stipends for certain programs. The program is something to do for now but if my friend has something to do over here -- I'm gone. It's almost all boys. I don't know what happens with the girls. Some girls may be in the house doing nothing, some are out working for the summer, some work during the school year, some are just out wandering. Some come by. They've been dating. I wouldn't necessarily call it gang activity. They are very territorial. The girls are into boys and they wander out of Harbor Point. They participate in group sessions over at Geiger-Gibson Neighborhood Health Center. The program has no effect on drop-out rates. All these kids have dreams. It's our job to remind them of their dreams. Teen pregnancy -- it's very high on the Point. I have no idea why. The girls need something.”*

*“This is a younger age group. Need to get them young. What are these kids looking for in the program? Fun and games mostly. They're not asking for information on drugs and alcohol, but we give it to them and they do respond. We had a group on HIV done by the Health Center. About ten kids are on the Youth Council now. It's very hard to get parents to come on field trips. The program aims at coping mechanisms, self-esteem. We had a couple of retreats -- one on Evacuation Day (March 17th) on how to become a positive adolescent in today's society. They also had an overnight retreat to Newport, RI. We get the good kids - -the kids who are going to make it anyway? Yes! How many kids do you have contact with? On average - about 6-8 come in the Teen Center. How many do you see in all? About 25. How many kids are core from that 25? About ten. We don't do any evaluation of our trainings.”*

**The Pilot School:** The school is an experimental effort by the Boston School Department to provide flexible learning and special enrichment to the Harbor Point community. It boasts an advanced computer lab, a theater facility, and a small library. More important, it has a dedicated staff

who are quite committed to developing the talents of the children in the neighborhood. The relationship between the project and the Pilot School is far more personal than organizational. The principal and the Executive Director have a cordial relationship. The programs share space and such programs as after-school care. However, there does not seem to be a concerted effort to merge aspects of the two programs so that both are more effective. This may result in part from the nature of the Harbor Point Community Task Force and the Boston School Department.

For decades the Boston School Department was run under the supervision of Judge Garrity, a federal judge, in response to minority complaints of racial segregation in Boston's schools. As a result, Boston minority school children were bussed from their neighborhoods, often to enroll in schools in previously all-white schools. The most infamous of these was South Boston High School which became the site of numerous racial incidents. Since that time, the relationship between minorities in Boston and the School Department has chafed.

The Pilot School is a daring initiative on the part of a besieged and conservative school department. It is a creative effort which was staffed with an eye toward talent rather than teacher seniority. Nevertheless, the Pilot School operates within a conservative bureaucratic environment and its ability to respond creatively to programming opportunities is limited. At the same time, the Harbor Point Community Task Force is known as an activist minority organization which is able to exert considerable political pressure. In short, there may be some wariness on the part of the School Department to permit the wholesale engagement of its school with the Ounce of Prevention project. A sad commentary on this is being played out now. The Pilot School has been successful and will be expanded. This will likely mean that it will move from its current location at Harbor Point to a location somewhere in South Boston where it will be less accessible to Harbor Point children. Thus, the Walter Denney Youth Center will lose its convenient access to this model school.

**The Geiger-Gibson Health Center:** Another neighborhood organization of some importance is the adjacent Geiger-Gibson Health Center. It is located right next door to the office of the Walter Denney Youth Center in a small, neat brick building. The health center conducts a series of programs

specifically for youth. Of particular interest to the Ounce of Prevention project is their discussion group for adolescent females. This is designed as a teen pregnancy prevention program, a drug abuse prevention program and a school drop-out prevention program. Sessions run an hour and half to two hours once a week, with an enrollment of 49 youth. The Youth Director reports that:

*"There has been an increase in our groups in expulsions and suspensions -- from South Boston High School. There's a high increase in marijuana use. It has to do with society today. Everyone and their mama out there smokes weed - -this is a gateway drug. They see everybody doing it, they say it's cool. A lot of these mothers will actually smoke a joint with their kids. Our kids don't have much experience with crack. They're doing some selling and they're doing some drug running for the older kids. We're trying to offer more substance abuse groups -- individual and group counseling.*

*There's lots of teen sexuality, lots of teen pregnancy. A very large increase over the years and lots of younger kids coming in. Why? It contributes to popularity. Within ages 12 - 18 peers have the most influence over them and it's not cool to be a virgin. Ounce of Prevention definitely has an impact on drug use. We're working good together -- focusing on drug prevention, making good decisions. We're educating the kids on hard core drugs. We're letting them know how serious and damaging they can be. But we're striking out on marijuana use. There's not a lot of alcohol use -- in some ways marijuana is more accessible to them than alcohol is -- you don't have to go to the store for it. Harbor Point has established its own culture out here -- it's different from Mattapan or West Roxbury."*

Thus, the Ounce of Prevention program has developed a cordial relationship with the health center and is doing some conjoint programming. However, pregnancy rates are up; school drop outs are up; marijuana use is up. These programs are working against what seems to be a rising tide.

There is an additional irony to be considered. As the Commonwealth of Massachusetts has moved toward enrolling its Medicaid population in managed care organizations, the Geiger-Gibson Health Center has found that it has to compete with other providers in negotiating contracts to serve its client populations. As managed care organizations download the risk of health care to providers, two outcomes are evident. First, the health center has less and less money available to offer services, especially counseling services. Second, because it is now a provider to enrollees in managed care and is in a cost squeeze, there is substantial pressure on the health center to move its physical location to another area where it can enroll a lower-risk population. This would help it to offset the operating

losses it experiences at Harbor Point. In short, Harbor Point is in immediate peril of losing two institutions which have provided vital services to it: the Pilot School and the Geiger-Gibson Health Center. This would leave the Walter Denney Youth Center without key organizational partners in offering social interventions.

#### Security Issues:

In the process of the site visit, a lengthy interview was conducted with the Captain and Sergeant of the security force which polices the Harbor Point community. The community contracts with a private security agency which, in turn, coordinates with the Boston Police Department, but which is a separate entity. The security forces were most responsive to questions but had little to offer. The contract for security services had changed from a previous security agency to the current provider and the officers reported that the philosophy of interdiction and prevention had changed markedly. For example, they reported that previously officers had routinely arrested youth who were seen smoking marijuana. Now, officers confiscate and destroy the marijuana in the view of the users and they admonish that use will not be tolerated at Harbor Point. This change in enforcement philosophy makes data non-comparable over time.

Security officers report that Harbor Point has become a target community for hard drug-dealers from outside. Security officers have come to recognize them and make serious efforts to keep them off-site. At the same time, they are seeing common urban patterns of drug distribution: young boys are recruited by dealers as runners; dealers are present in expensive cars offering a life-style choice that is difficult for Ounce of Prevention to compete with. There is coordination with Ounce of Prevention -- but not close coordination.

#### Conclusion and Program Success:

The operating philosophy of the Harbor Point project is that prevention has to begin young. It attempts to enrich life for an isolated community; to develop important life skills, job skills and self esteem skills for youth through off-site programming, a computer center, and local programming. Is this enough to effect change? Outcomes do not exist in a measurable form. Where they do, they

are negative. The security force does not have usable data on arrests or interdictions. Pregnancy rates and high school drop out rates have risen. This is probably because of outside forces which the project is powerless to affect.

There are palpable successes. Kids get summer jobs that lead to part-time jobs that lead to commitments to high school and career. Young people see a world outside of Harbor Point. They become familiar with computers and learn painlessly that they have real skills which are marketable. However, these are limited successes which can not be demonstrated to be vastly different from what might have happened without the project. This is a difficult conundrum. As costs are factored in, the conundrum becomes more difficult still. The teen coordinator reports that the project has a hard core of members of the Youth Council of six to eight. In total, it has touched only perhaps twenty five. The cost of the project is over \$100,000. If we assume that ten youth had their lives changed by the project, that is an average cost in excess of \$10,000 per case.

A program evaluator is forced to ask a difficult question: What would be the result if a program simply approached ten youths and offered each \$10,000 over a period from ages ten to eighteen for staying clean of drugs? Would the results be any different? Or perhaps would they be more certain? A difficult conundrum indeed!

### **Eureka, California: An Intervention for Homeless Youth The RAVEN Project: Youth to Youth Street Outreach Program**

The Redwood Area Venture Education Network (RAVEN) Project was established in 1994 through funding from the US Department of Health and Human Services' Drug Abuse Prevention Program for Runaway and Homeless Youth. This project was created as an outreach program for the prevention of substance abuse in the homeless and runaway youth population of Humboldt County, California. Humboldt county ranks 47<sup>th</sup> out of 58 counties in California for the percentage of children living in poverty. In addition to poverty, drug use and associated drug crimes, violence, school drop out rates, and homelessness are increasing problems in this area. As Humboldt is located on Highway 101, this county has become a stop on the "homeless youth circuit", a route highly

traveled by transient youth including Seattle, Portland, Humboldt, San Francisco, and Los Angeles. There are an estimated 200-800 homeless youth on the streets in Humboldt County on a daily basis. These youth are exposed to increasing levels of violence and drug abuse, which were previously associated with more urban areas.

Humboldt County, most well known within the drug culture for growing high quality marijuana, is a beautiful and forested county located along California's northern coast about half way between Seattle and San Francisco. The RAVEN Project is the street outreach component of the services offered by the Youth Service Bureau to Humboldt County's homeless, street, and runaway youth population. Youth educators and street outreach workers provide the at-risk population with services including health education, risk reduction materials, alternatives to substance use activities, resource referrals, and access to "survival" services (such as food, laundry, medical care.).

The RAVEN project is a youth-led outreach program utilizing ethnographic approaches to working with youth, in youth-frequented locations. The program covers a wide geographical area of approximately 45 square miles in Eureka and around Humboldt County and serves transient youth who migrate all up and down the western coast. Some program components are conducted within the community center itself, while other activities, such as outreach and community or parent substance abuse prevention education programs are conducted off-site.

#### Organization and Implementation of the RAVEN Project:

The RAVEN program is run as part of the Youth Service Board (YSB), headed by Peter LaVallee, which in turn is one of many programs operated by the Redwood Community Action Agency (RCAA). The RAVEN project, located in a stand-alone facility — a house located in a low-income residential area accessible from the freeway — is separate from other YSB programs and was designed to be a safe place for runaway and homeless youth and to provide outreach and other services as well as diversion experiences. While the YSB had initiated some youth development programs with a grant from the Blue Cross Foundation (now The California Endowment), the RAVEN project specifically targeting homeless and runaway youth, was really founded through

funding from the *Ounce of Prevention* program. Serving the homeless population initially created some havoc among staff because the clients were so different, and because counseling, case management and drop-in for both homeless and the general population were not compatible in a small space. In particular, differences in appearance, hygiene and behavior (mostly resulting from drug use) were difficult for existing YSB staff, who were not accustomed to dealing with this population. The *Ounce of Prevention* grant provided sufficient support for the RAVEN program to have its own space — a critical factor in its success.

While the RCAA and the YSB have other sources of funding, RAVEN is a typical “shoe-string” program, operating primarily from one grant to the next. At the time of this site visit, the RAVEN project was funded almost exclusively through the *Ounce of Prevention* grant funding. As the *Ounce of Prevention* grant program was due to expire, YSB was in the process of developing a large multi-year grant through a solicitation from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. The RAVEN project was subsequently successful in obtaining DHHS funding. It should be noted that although the program was existing from “hand to mouth” RAVEN was clearly a highly successful program, reaching and significantly impacting the lives of many at-risk youth, as discussed below.

**RAVEN Philosophy and Goals:** The underlying philosophy of the program is based on three premises: (1) to meet youth on their terms and address needs as identified by the youth — a central tenant of the youth-led model; (2) to use a “harm reduction” approach,<sup>2</sup> advocating education as well as abstinence as a means to address issues regarding health and lifestyle choices; and (3) to provide youth with all of the options available to them with the hope that they will choose healthy

---

<sup>2</sup>The “harm reduction” approach derives from community-based public health models of intervention, particularly those developed targeting HIV prevention for individuals who are substance abusers. This approach acknowledges that individuals engage in harmful activities but does not pass judgement on whether individuals are ready to abstain from risky behavior. Rather it supports program activities to provide information about how to minimize risk. provides individuals with tools, services, and other forms of support to protect themselves and their community from harm. Fundamental to the harm reduction model is respect for individuals, wherever they may be in the spectrum of risk, and a belief that fundamental change in community health can only occur with the active participation of the community.

lifestyles and make positive decisions for themselves. The project is committed to involving youth in leadership positions for the ongoing development and implementation of the project based on the belief that youth are best at reaching and thus helping other youth. This is particularly true for alienated and disenfranchised youth. It is even more applicable to homeless youth who through a variety of adverse circumstances have come to distrust adults. These three premises direct the seven goals of the RAVEN project, which are:

- ▶ Reaching youth in their environment;
- ▶ Providing basic survival supplies (eg: food, clothing, toiletries and resource referral);
- ▶ Increasing the health and well-being of youth living on the streets;
- ▶ Creating a network of resources and referrals for homeless youth;
- ▶ Providing positive adult and youth role models;
- ▶ Offering emotional support directly to youth;
- ▶ Advocating for youth in meeting their self-defined needs; and
- ▶ Employing youth to carry out the goals of the program, thereby providing funds, diversion activities and creating role models for youth.

#### Program Components:

The RAVEN program addresses the above goals through the implementation of three main types of activities: (1) drop-in services provided on-site; (2) street outreach activities, which occur throughout Humboldt County; and (3) "alternative-to-drug-use" groups, some of which are on-site, some are off site.

**Drop-In:** Two afternoons per week, the RAVEN Project facility provides homeless/street youth with services including: access to basic survival supplies, free laundry facilities, health education, employment information, medical care, transportation, how to obtain identification, social services assistance, and other referrals as necessary. Youth entering the facility are assisted by one or more peer educators who work with each youth according to their individual needs.

**Street Outreach:** The outreach component is designed to provide services to runaway and homeless youth ages 10-21 who may not be connected to other resources or services. Youth educators (leaders) are recruited from the streets to provide the homeless/street youth with contacts and access to services via their peers. The project has developed procedures and policies for outreach

workers including pre- and post outreach procedures; an inventory list for the outreach bag; and a *street outreach tracking log* for evaluation purposes (Appendix IV-1a) Youth outreach is conducted in locations throughout the county, including Eureka, Arcata, Garberville, McKinley, Blue Lake, and other surrounding rural communities as needed. Youth educators provide basic survival and personal hygiene supplies, health and substance abuse information, education and referrals; information about the RAVEN Project, services and activities available on site; and pocket-sized listings of local resources for youth, including teen clinics, medical services, free meals, food lines, anonymous and confidential HIV/AIDS testing, available housing and other community-based services. Project leaders estimate that youth leaders reach approximately 200 youth per month.

**"Alternative-to-Drug-Use" groups:** The RAVEN Project offers five ongoing activity groups for youth. They include: *Girl's Space*, the Garberville Rap Group, *Queer Coffee House*, organic gardening (on-going — and the RAVEN project grows vegetables for youth consumption), the Medicinal Herbs Workshop, the Puppet Playhouse, and anger management groups for both girls and boys (operated separately). The goal of these various activities is to provide a safe place for youth to talk about sensitive issues, learn communication skills, receive health and substance abuse education, do arts and crafts, and be involved in a productive use of their time. Other activities have included organizing a concert and organizing and going on camping trips. These activities are meant to be fun as well as provide diversions to assist youth in resisting substance abuse activities. These groups also follow a policy of confidentiality, allowing youth to discuss sensitive issues more openly.

In addition, the RAVEN program provides transportation to community services and refers youth to transitional living programs in the communities. It also promotes youth leadership by recruiting and training youth to act as outreach coordinators and youth leaders in the RAVEN program itself; and providing youth speakers to community service agencies, parent groups, youth groups, the university and public and private primary and secondary schools in Humboldt County to increase awareness of what works for street youth and youth in general. These activities also serve to develop networks with other community organizations and increase collaboration to serve youth in the county. Material depicting various program activities are found in Appendix IV-1b.

### Hiring and Training Youth Leaders:

During the grant period, the RAVEN Project employed 16 youth. Three were over age twenty-one, with the remaining youth educator positions were held by youth ages 16-21. These youth leaders were recruited from the streets of Humboldt County or by virtue of their participation in RAVEN activities. Responsibilities, activities, and expectations are clearly laid out and youth positions are compensated monetarily (Appendix IV-1c). The program emphasizes trust, responsibility for one's self and actions, and consequences of engaging in substance use/abuse. Specifically, there is a zero tolerance for drug use while on the job and non-compliance with this rule results in being fired. As part of their activities, youth leaders are also expected to set goals for themselves and engage in planning and monitoring to assess their progress. They are further encouraged to write about and discuss their experiences with their peers.

Youth leaders receive a number of different trainings and skill development opportunities, and they are guided in all aspects of the RAVEN project. The series of orientation trainings include information on the following topics:

- ▶ Philosophy of RAVEN and discussion of the harm reduction model;
- ▶ Achieving program goals;
- ▶ Empowerment and the concepts of "rescuing" or "enabling" youth drug use;
- ▶ Boundary issues with drugs;
- ▶ Relationships with staff and clients;
- ▶ Consequences of not complying with program rules;
- ▶ Services provided by RAVEN;
- ▶ The street culture (which most youth are familiar with by experience); and
- ▶ How to conduct outreach.

In addition, youth receive on-going training on specific topics including crisis intervention, suicide intervention, HIV/AIDS prevention and information on other sexually transmitted diseases, domestic violence, date rape and sexual assault, cultural and sexual diversity, conflict resolution and anger management. Additional information is also provided on adolescent development, a check list for key counseling techniques, definitions of child abuse and neglect, a list of service questions and response tips, models of behavioral change, effective listening techniques, youth empowerment, how

to develop a healthy relationship, and 10 key de-escalation techniques.

Brief descriptions of the youth leaders are found in Appendix IV-1d. However, these descriptions belie the profound impact that the RAVEN program has had on their lives. Individual interviews indicate that the RAVEN project turned participants' lives around in fundamental and substantial ways. For example:

- ▶ *Tiffany* was depressed and suicidal when she came to RAVEN. After working with RAVEN for two years, she now conducts mentor training in other services organizations and acts as a role model for other youth. Tiffany is a talented and burgeoning artist and is also developing an art show as part of the Humbolt Arts Council. Tiffany plans to study counseling and pursue her art.
- ▶ *Crystal* was 16, homeless, a high-school drop out with 5<sup>th</sup> grade literacy skills, and using speed when she became involved with RAVEN. She used RAVEN to become emancipated and with the support and encouragement of the program, she returned to school. She is now receiving straight A's and has reduced her use of illicit substances. She has also become involved with Ameri-Corps and the JOBS corps and is turning her training into a paid internship.
- ▶ *Tony*, 18, was homeless and living in a bus when he started hanging out at RAVEN. After several months, he was hired as a youth leader and started a garden. His love of nature and gardening quickly expanded into the organic gardening project. As a result of this effort, Tony not only provided opportunities for other youth and contributed to the RAVEN project, he also received an internship at a local community college and is now considering a career in agriculture.

#### Program Successes:

The RAVEN program has been a small but highly effective program to reach homeless, transient and other at-risk youth in northern California. In particular, it is the strength, understanding and guidance of the program manager, Ms. Suzette Dunning, who is primarily responsible for overseeing all the youth-leaders' activities and the overall success of the program. Through her enthusiasm, creativity, and "tough love" approach, she has developed a strong and viable means of reaching youth, engendering their trust, and disseminating the messages of substance abuse prevention and the importance of making healthy decisions. She has also created a number of

programs for parents and other community organizations, to promote networking and strengthen the community's resources for at-risk youth. Most importantly, as the testimony above suggests, the RAVEN program has had a significant impact on the lives of the youth leaders and its participants. All this has been accomplished on very limited funding and the fervent dedication of the program staff.

This program would in theory be easily replicated across the country. However, the strength of the program is also one of its weaknesses. As with most community-based programs, the RAVEN project is dependent upon the skills, motivation, and dedication of a few people. That is, personality plays a strong role in the success of the program. Should those individuals leave, as surely they will at some point, it is unclear that their particular attributes could be easily replaced. Experience suggests that through careful recruitment focused on qualities such as strong leadership and strong internal understanding of problems facing youth, programs such as the RAVEN project can be sustained. Having invested in developing the infrastructure, and given its low operational cost and strong positive outcomes, the Department of Justice would be well served to continue funding for the RAVEN project.

### **Los Angeles, California: A Comprehensive, School-Based Initiative South Central Youth Empowered Thru Action (SC-YEA)**

#### Program Overview:

South Central Youth Empowered Thru Action (SC-YEA) is an organized group of African American and Latino youth, formed in 1991. SC-YEA is the youth led component of the Community Coalition for Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment project. This program operates from a community center located in South Central LA. SC-YEA organizes high school students with the goal of addressing problems that contribute to teenage substance use and abuse. The project provides training for youth in problem solving and critical social thinking through its strong emphasis on community organizing activities. The mission of SC-YEA is to become an influential youth leadership club with a presence on all eight South LA high school and ten middle school campuses. Youth members and leaders participate in local, regional and statewide initiatives and campaigns to bring

about social change related to substance abuse prevention issues. Initiatives include press conferences, rallies, marches, and on-campus educational activities led and conducted by SC-YEA youth members. Some specific policy changes brought about by SC-YEA youth include, a ban on tobacco and alcohol ads on all public transportation in LA county; a reduction of tobacco and alcohol billboard ads in South LA; a school board resolution to establish tobacco and alcohol free zones near school buildings.

The program is managed by a team of five staff persons, two adults over age twenty-one, one adolescent, and two young adults age twenty. The second level of management are high school Student Organizers paid a stipend for leadership in coordinating SC-YEA chapters on their school campuses. Student leaders are responsible for planning and implementing community organizing activities. Students who regularly attend the lunch time and after school meetings, and who join the SC-YEA chapter, are considered a part of the general SC-YEA membership.

In addition to community organizing activities, SC-YEA provides youth members opportunities for participation in substance free recreational and cultural activities. Youth leaders organize weekly recreational activities such as sporting events, dances, and movies, bimonthly cultural and/or educational activities, and monthly field trips. SC-YEA aims to offer community organizing and recreational opportunities to over 250 youth members.

#### Program Leadership and Development:

During the site visit three members of the Los Angeles Community Coalition program management team were interviewed. These members — Marqueece Dawson, Program Director, Cameron Levin, Program Administrator and Karen Bass, Executive Director — represent the three tiers of administration directly above the youth leaders in the Community Coalition program. Karen Bass, Executive Director of the Community Coalition, is the vision behind the development of this program. She has been involved with evaluating grant funded programs and has designed internal evaluation procedures for the Coalition. Ms. Bass reviewed the current assets of the Community Coalition program. The building space itself is impressive. This program is located in the middle of

the area of the South Central Los Angeles riots. This building is new, in an excellent location, allows adequate space for administrative staff, youth leader activities and large group meetings. The building is leased annually from the City.

Marqueece Dawson, Program Director, is a well trained grants manager. The Community Coalition receives funds from a great number of sources with a total budget of \$1,359,496. Mr. Dawson is directly involved with procuring funds, directing funded activities and evaluating program outcomes. The Coalition also retains the services of Robyn Elliott as Fiscal Manager, who is a marvelous asset to the Community Coalition. She is a well trained accountant and oversees the diverse fiscal structure of the Coalition. Review of the diverse structure reveals the large interaction between the multiple funding sources and ongoing Coalition activities.

The Community Coalition program does not have a large overhead. The number of personnel required to run the number of grants and programs is low for the amount of funding the Coalition receives. Where many of their activities take place in community setting the cost is also minimal to the program. The Coalition is very successful at attracting additional funding sources. Their capitol resources are growing quickly due to this increased funding. With additional capitol resources the expansion of programs is facilitated. The SCYEA youth program is expanding at such a rate that additional facility space as well as additional computers and technological services are always in need. The Coalition has been very effective at staying ahead of the growth curve in this area.

The Community Coalition is a rapidly expanding program. The funds supplied by this grant were expected to: (1) expand the participant membership by fifty to seventy-five percent; (2) initiate new *SC-YEA* programs in four new high schools and two new middle schools; (3) develop a college student mentoring program; and (4) increase substance free recreational opportunities. At the time of the site visit these program expansions were well underway. By the end of the grant funded period the program exceeded the proposed expansion criteria.

In addition to the expansion programs funded by this grant the Community Coalition was also

receiving funds to continue activities previously created. These activities include a structured six week educational and training program in substance use and community organizing for the student organizers, biweekly small group discussion groups focusing on personal growth, substance use, and conflict resolution, monthly parent discussion groups focusing on parenting adolescents and how to identify substance use, two cultural or educational recreational activities per month, monthly field trips to Southern California neighborhoods, quarterly recreational activities for all the youth from the various student chapters, and trips to local college campuses.

All of these activities, ongoing and expanded are directed by the Program Director. There are program Administrators and Youth Leaders who are directly responsible for the individual activities. The Youth Leaders are given work space, computers, telephone access and supplies at the Community Coalition Building to support their activities. The Community Coalition has been very successful at attaining other financial supports to expand the support services available to these direct line workers. During this grant period the Coalition was able to procure eight additional phones, a large screen TV for their meeting room, a binder, a camera, a new seven passenger van, a laminator and a security system for the building.

In addition to program activities, the Community Coalition also has subcontracts with a consulting company IMOYEA to evaluate the Coalition's Programs. IMOYEA indicated that the indicators developed at the Grantees Conference in Washington, D.C. would be very hard to ascertain but that they would make every effort to submit the data requested. IMOYEA also provided information regarding past activities where they have been working with the Community Coalition. By all accounts the relationship between IMOYEA and the Community Coalition has been a very productive union. IMOYEA has conducted a variety of internal evaluation activities that have in turn served to provide the Coalition with the information needed to make the changes in the local neighborhoods that is the Coalition's charge.

#### Youth Leadership and Activities:

Elmer Roldan, the Youth Leader, provided a tour of the youth leaders working area, the

charting procedures used to track the expansion of the program to additional school sites, the methods used for tracking attendance at *SC-YEA* meetings, and an overview of current neighborhood activities. A rapid expansion rate is documented by these tracking systems. *SC-YEA*, the youth component of the Coalition, also has a corresponding program, the *Teen Tobacco Awareness Program (TTAP)*. Both of these programs have successfully led campaigns to address ATOD issues affecting youth.

The *TTAP* sought to establish city level policies to reduce tobacco sales to minors and targeted advertisement. The *TTAP* campaign, that is being replicated in three other cities, involved a comparison survey documenting the number of alcohol and tobacco billboards in two city council districts. The Coalition evaluators along with the teens conducted the survey. Senior citizens members of the Neighborhoods Fighting Back component of the coalition drove the teens around the city to assist them in documenting information regarding the billboards. The evaluator reviewed the statistical results with the youth leader and assisted them in the creation of graphics tables to be used for presenting the results. The survey demonstrated an over-representation in the target area, relative to the predominantly White middle class comparison community. *TTAP* presented their results to the City Counsel Representative and requested she convene a meeting with billboard company representatives. *TTAP* convinced the representatives to reduce the number of alcohol and tobacco billboards in the target area. In addition, the companies donated free space and the teens chose to create their own prevention message.

The evaluator also had the opportunity to attend a *SC-YEA* meeting convened at the Coalition building. The attendance was high. During the time of the site visit, two *SC-YEA* youth had been approached by the student population in their respective school to help organize a student walkout. The *SC-YEA* youth leaders had been approached because they were respected for their organizational abilities. Parents of *SC-YEA* members provide a meal for all of the attendees at all such meetings. While parental involvement is very supportive for the youth members of this program, *SC-YEA* is clearly a youth driven program.

Program Successes:

**RAP Groups Reduce Gang Fighting and Improve Life Circumstances for Participants:**

Cameron Levin, Program Administrator, had recently been hired by the Coalition to facilitate the RAP Groups, which is a group therapy activity that meets bi-weekly.<sup>3</sup> There are multiple groups and these therapy sessions have led to more cohesion and less fighting among their members. The future expansion possibilities for this program are good. In addition, Ms. Levin tracks the grades and school attendance of Coalition youth program participants. Among the Youth Leaders there has not been a high school drop out. The number of Youth Leaders going on to college had been at approximately fifty percent, a rate considered high in this area. However, with the increase in the college mentoring program and Ms. Levin's additional efforts, the number has been increasing. Currently, the number of participants pursuing college or obtaining a good paying job is 100%.

**Targeting Liquor Stores: A Successful Drug Abuse Prevention Strategy:** Decreasing the number of liquor stores was identified as a key program element for reducing the alcohol and drug abuse in these neighborhoods. The corner liquor stores support the illegal drug industry by carrying many of the products needed for the distribution and use of crack cocaine. In many South LA liquor stores drug paraphernalia such as glass pipes used to smoke cocaine are sold from under an enclosed shelf or from the back room. The crack addict purchases chunks of copper scouring pads used for heat conduction when smoking and the crack distributor purchases items to weigh and package small amounts of the drug. Telephone booths outside the liquor stores facilitate interaction between addicts and distributors, serving as an outdoor office for the distributor.

The Coalition was conducting a neighborhood survey regarding access to alcohol and other drugs and has been very active in trying to reduce the number of destroyed liquor stores being rebuilt in the neighborhoods served by the Coalition. Specifically, the organization has mobilized these efforts with petition drives, holding public hearings, organizing press conferences after these hearings and hosting community meetings. These efforts have mostly been successful.

---

<sup>3</sup>The RAP Groups are referred to as the *Self Efficacy Peer Counseling Groups* in the grant.

The Coalition also conducts an outcome study to determine the effect of the Community Partnership model on community members attitudes, perceptions and knowledge in the South Los Angeles target area. This study is designed to accomplish two primary goals. First, to determine whether South LA residents' perceptions have changed over the last four years regarding (1) overall ATOD use, abuse and availability in their neighborhoods; (2) community standards and levels of concern regarding ATOD use; (3) community problems and personal involvement in ATOD prevention activities; and (4) community resources knowledge of ATOD services in the community. The second goal is to determine whether changes occurred in mobilized neighborhoods in which liquor stores identified as problematic had witnessed either closure of the liquor store or restrictions placed on the liquor store. The survey results were not available for inclusion in this evaluation. However, a motor tour of the neighborhoods revealed a visible difference in the areas where the number of liquor stores has been reduced. For example, neighborhood residents walk on the streets in the areas where the stores have been removed, while the counterpart neighborhoods appear to be too dangerous to walk or even drive past commercial and residential properties that have been taken over by the drug traffickers.

In conclusion, the *Ounce of Prevention* Program has been successful in Los Angeles. It has contributed to the on-going efforts to reduce alcohol, tobacco and other drug use in at-risk and dangerous neighborhoods. It has promoted the development of youth in a variety of areas, including self-esteem, education, personal and career development. Of particular significance, it has contributed to bringing together disparate factions of youth into a cooperative and collaborative process to reduce the risks facing youth in South Central LA.

### **Kansas City, Missouri: Providing Strong Role Models Block Brothers, Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Kansas City**

The Boys & Girls Clubs of Greater Kansas City began the Block Brothers program in 1991 in response to a lack of positive youth-development activities and concern over youth substance abuse and crime in the southeastern part of Kansas City. The Block Brothers program is designed to provide youth in targeted areas with positive role models in their neighborhoods; offer young adult

males leadership development, employment, and professional training opportunities; develop organized neighborhood resources and activities for youth and their families; and provide youth with a sense of belonging through the creation of a small group club. In addition, the program provides opportunities for youth members to: enhance leadership skills; become positive African American role models; learn to communicate and interact with youth and community leaders; learn to locate and utilize community resources; and earn money while going to school.

The Block Brothers program offers outreach services to youth (ages 7-14) who previously did not have access to a Boys & Girls Club or other youth facility. Block Brothers (both leaders and participants) are African American males, ages 16-24.<sup>4</sup> Block Brothers must have a minimum GPA of 2.8 and plans to pursue college or other vocational opportunities. Each Block Brother receives a minimum of 16 hours of training, and becomes a key staff member in the provision of outreach services to children from their own neighborhood. They must recruit up to twenty youth living within a five block radius of their home, to be part of a small group that meets three to four times per week. During these small group sessions, the youth leaders conduct programs on substance abuse prevention, sexuality, conflict resolution, and healthy lifestyles. Block Brothers also schedule leisure and recreational activities for the group and help youth and their families access programs available through the Boys & Girls Club and other community organizations.

#### Program Leadership:

The site visit included key-informant interviews with all levels of program managers as well as with the Vice President for Administration/Finance and the Executive Director to review the evaluation tools. The program had also hired a program evaluator. Immediately prior to the site visit, the Project Director resigned; however, he was available to answer questions and participate in the site visit. The program was in the process of trying to recruit a former program participant to become the new Director. In addition, the Vice President for Administration/Finance had not attended the conference and was thus unfamiliar with the evaluation tools and cost data requested. Nonetheless,

---

<sup>4</sup>There were approximately 183 youth participants.

the program staff were committed to completing the tasks required for the evaluation and were a dedicated staff and sense of responsibility to the youth in their community. In addition, The Boys & Girls Club of Kansas City has a well established support base, despite the high turnover rate. This allows them to not suffer programmatically due to personnel changes. The addition of a trained evaluator also added to the site's ability to participate and complete the UNH evaluation activities as well as conduct on-going evaluation of the program.

The leadership discussions revealed that both the national parent organization and the Boys & Girls Club in Kansas City were being reorganized simultaneously. Core programs had been renamed and reorganized, and new age groups for programming were also being developed. In addition, the Block Brothers program is seen by the Boys and Girls Club and the community as effectively serving the youth and as a replicable initiative in other sites.

Development and Changes in The *Block Brother* Program:

Mr. Brooks, creator of the Block Brothers Program in 1991, envisioned and designed the program because of his belief that there are not effective role models in place for the youth in the areas the program serves. The predominance of minorities served by the Club and the fact that minorities have the least number of positive role models in place suggest this a very apt needs assessment. Mr. Brooks also serves as a local minister. In this role he is a very visible role model and has had additional opportunities to market the Block Brothers program. The Block Brother program is designed to create positive role models with the Block Brothers (youth leaders), then disseminate positive models to youth in the community. Upon acceptance into the program each Block Brother compiles a *Block Brother Packet* which includes the following assessments and planning tools (Appendix IV-2):

- ▶ Block Brother Youth Survey(s)
- ▶ Leadership Inventory
- ▶ Personal Development Plan
- ▶ Academic Attendance and Performance
- ▶ Career Goals and Progress

The packet is very complete and lengthy. The ultimate goal is to lead each of these youth leaders to Post-Secondary Education or Training Programs.

The Block Brothers program was also in the process of converting from the school year program to the summer program. Recreation activities, which are the backbone of the summer activities, serve to give the Block Brothers an opportunity to interact with the youth in a fun setting, and provide activities through which youth can build self esteem, learn teamwork, develop mutual caring — all factors which may reduce the risk of turning to substance abuse for psychological need. In addition, there are other programs addressing substance use prevention, conflict resolution, healthy lifestyles and education. These programs are generally offered in the mornings prior to the recreation programming. The *Ounce of Prevention* grant provided funds for Block Brothers to be trained in using program related curricula. Once trained these Block Brothers are able to provide the youth participating in the program with supervised activities and training in the following areas:

- ▶ *Life Works*: Career development program with age appropriate groups for youth from ages 7-17
- ▶ *Call Me M.R.*: A teen pregnancy prevention program targeting young men
- ▶ *Talking With T.J.*: A conflict resolution program for 2nd thru 5th graders
- ▶ *Priority Contact Plan*: Staff identify youth needing extra mental health support; three community partners provide on-site counseling to these youth at several club sites, as well as therapeutic group activities
- ▶ *Priority Star Baseline Training*: alcohol and substance abuse training;
- ▶ *Young Mens Work and HYPE (Helping Youth Prepare for Excellence)*: training and follow-up to prepare youth to serve their communities, building positive relationships and planning recreational and community service activities; and
- ▶ *BEST (Building Exemplary Systems for Training Youth Workers)*: this program provides an introduction to youth development training which after further course work a certificate as a Youth Development Worker can be obtained.

It should be noted that these types of trainings also serve to develop personal leadership for

the youth serving as the Block Brothers as well. In the months just prior to this site visit a *Youth Executive Program* was started by some of the local business leaders. *Multiple Block Brothers* had just been recruited away to become participants in this new concern. In fact the Youth Leader who had attended the Grantees Conference in Washington, D.C. was one of these recruits.

#### Youth Leaders:

The youth leader who attended the Grantees Conference had left the Block Brothers program prior to this site visit to join a new initiative for youth executives in Kansas City. However, three currently participating Block Brothers — Marques Taylor, Michael Freeman and Clifton Reagan — were available. Marques had been a Block Brother since October of 1997 and had started in the program as a participant when he was twelve or thirteen. Michael had an older brother who was a Block Brother before him and was a past participant as well. Clifton had also started as a member and had a brother who was also a Block Brother. This speaks to the pattern of familial involvement in the program. Each Brother was responsible for recruiting and organizing youth, and conducting recreational and other program activities. The three groups were almost at maximum capacity and included a total of 42 youth, with group participation numbering, respectively, fifteen youth, fourteen youth, and twelve youth. The summer season was just starting and because that is the busiest season, the projected involvement was well over the maximum level.

Each program completes a full weekday program Monday thru Friday. The bus that picks up for the recreation activities arrives around noon each day. However, most participants arrive at the Block Brothers' homes much earlier in the morning. This provides opportunities for other activities in the morning. The Block Brothers also hold weekly meetings. These meetings offer programs such as Smart Moves, a nationally recognized program that includes a drug prevention curriculum and addresses teen sexual involvement. The Block Brothers also deliver an alcohol and drug use prevention message as role models and mentors that the youth respect, by delivering a strong message that alcohol and drug use is not acceptable behavior and through the specific programs that they deliver with a prevention message. Each Block Brother tracks program attendance by participant and activity. Each of these Block Brothers spoke with great pride and

commitment to their program. They feel a real sense of responsibility to their communities. In the cases where an older brother had been a Block Brother they seemed to feel as if they were carrying on a tradition of caring and responsibility.

Several aspects of the program were observed during the site visits. First, there appears to be a strong familial tie in the program. A number of Block Brothers were younger brothers of former Block Brother youth leaders. In addition, the youth leaders Brothers were exuberant in their efforts to recruit new youth for their programs in their respective neighborhoods. The Program Director was continually asked for input regarding current recruiting methods. The Block Brothers were also very interactive with the youth from their own neighborhoods as well as the group as a whole. The pool personnel spoke highly of the program. They are impressed with the respectful manner the Block Brothers use in administering the program while at their site.

#### Program Successes:

In reviewing the area served and the status regarding current program numbers it was evident that the program was running well even given the large restructuring efforts underway. The grant being evaluated serves the area in Hickman Mills (Census Tract 96) in Kansas City. The program was to hire five new Block Brothers to service this area. All five of the new positions had been filled and recruitment of youth was progressing nicely. Each Block Brother in the original program works with approximately fifteen youth and this level of participation is the goal for this expansion activity.

The project leaders were eager to point out many successes of the program. The Youth Leaders that have been recruited are in most cases past program participants. Many of the Block Brothers are also brothers of past Block Brothers. Family involvement has stayed high since the inception of the program. The enrollment rates of youth have continued to climb and the diversity in the curricula has been enhanced.

## **Portland, Oregon: Serving Hispanic Youth Entre Amigos ("Among Friends") Substance Abuse Prevention Program**

*Entre Amigos* — Spanish for *Among Friends* — is a substance abuse prevention education program targeting low-income Latino youth and their parents in five area high schools throughout the city of Portland, Oregon. The purpose of the project is to decrease youth substance abuse and increase parents' understanding of how their attitudes and behaviors affect their children's choices. Specifically, project goals include (1) enhancing empowerment of low income, Latino students by teaching them how to organize and become effective agents of change; (2) encouraging peer based learning and support amongst Hispanic/Latino students and their families through public education campaigns; (3) creating awareness and sense of responsibility of current health and social issues that are critical to making long term, positive change in the Latino community; and (4) promoting long-term, institutional change by giving low-income Latino youth the skills, knowledge, and encouragement to be actively involved in community organizing and advocacy.

Designed and implemented by Latino youth, the project is comprised of the following paid positions: an adult Program Manager (\$14.50 per hour), a project advisor (\$10.25 per hour); a youth coordinator (\$8 per hour); two paid youth community liaisons (\$6 per hour), and a youth team/volunteer coordinator (\$6 per hour). As discussed below, teams comprised of a youth leader and 3-4 youth volunteers develop and conduct education presentations for youth, parents, schools and community groups, under the guidance of a nine member volunteer student management team. Youth leaders and volunteers also organize media campaigns, conduct parent workshops, conduct outreach to local businesses, and staff a crisis and referral hotline. With funding from the *Ounce of Prevention Initiative*, *Entre Amigos* expected to provide 1,250 Latino students and 100-150 parents with substance abuse prevention education.

*Entre Amigos* is situated within a larger community-based organization — the Oregon Council for Hispanic Advancement (*OCHA*) — under the direction of Maria Elena Hawkins. *OCHA* was started in 1995 primarily to address student retention and reverse growing school drop-out rates of Hispanic youth in Portland. In addition to student retention programs targeting schools with the

highest Latino populations and lowest income neighborhoods, OCHA also administers *LISTOS*, an alternative high school program (GED) for Latinos throughout the Portland public school system. *LISTOS* is based out of Madison High School and is in its third year of operation. OCHA also developed the Oregon Leadership Institute (OLI) — a year long course targeting high-school aged Latino youth. Initially, the OCHA programs were adult-led and focused on developing strong role models for at-risk Latino youth. As the program grew, and as more youth successfully completed the Leadership Institute, youth began to take a more substantial role in developing and implementing OCHA programs. OCHA has grown considerably since 1995 and had, at the time of this site visit, an annual operating budget of \$1.6 million. Exhibit III-1 shows the various programs operated by OCHA as of July 1998.

Substance Abuse in Oregon:<sup>5</sup>

The *Multnomah County*<sup>6</sup> *Benchmark Trends* report states that the abuse of alcohol and drugs among youth people in Oregon is increasing, following national trends.<sup>7</sup> The report places reduction of alcohol and drug use by youth as an “urgent benchmark” which should receive high priority for action. More than half of seventh graders in the Portland Public Schools reported having used alcohol, citing home as their source. Juvenile arrests for drug offenses in Multnomah County more than tripled between 1991 and 1995, and drug related deaths nearly doubled between 1993 and 1995. Heavy drinking among youth has been conclusively linked to fights, property destruction, academic and employment problems, and moving vehicle and criminal offenses in the area. In addition, 20% of HIV positive Hispanics in the county report intravenous drug use as their mode of transmission.<sup>8</sup>

The report also suggests that the root causes of adolescent substance abuse include nonfunctional family structure, negative peer associations and influences, lack of commitment to

---

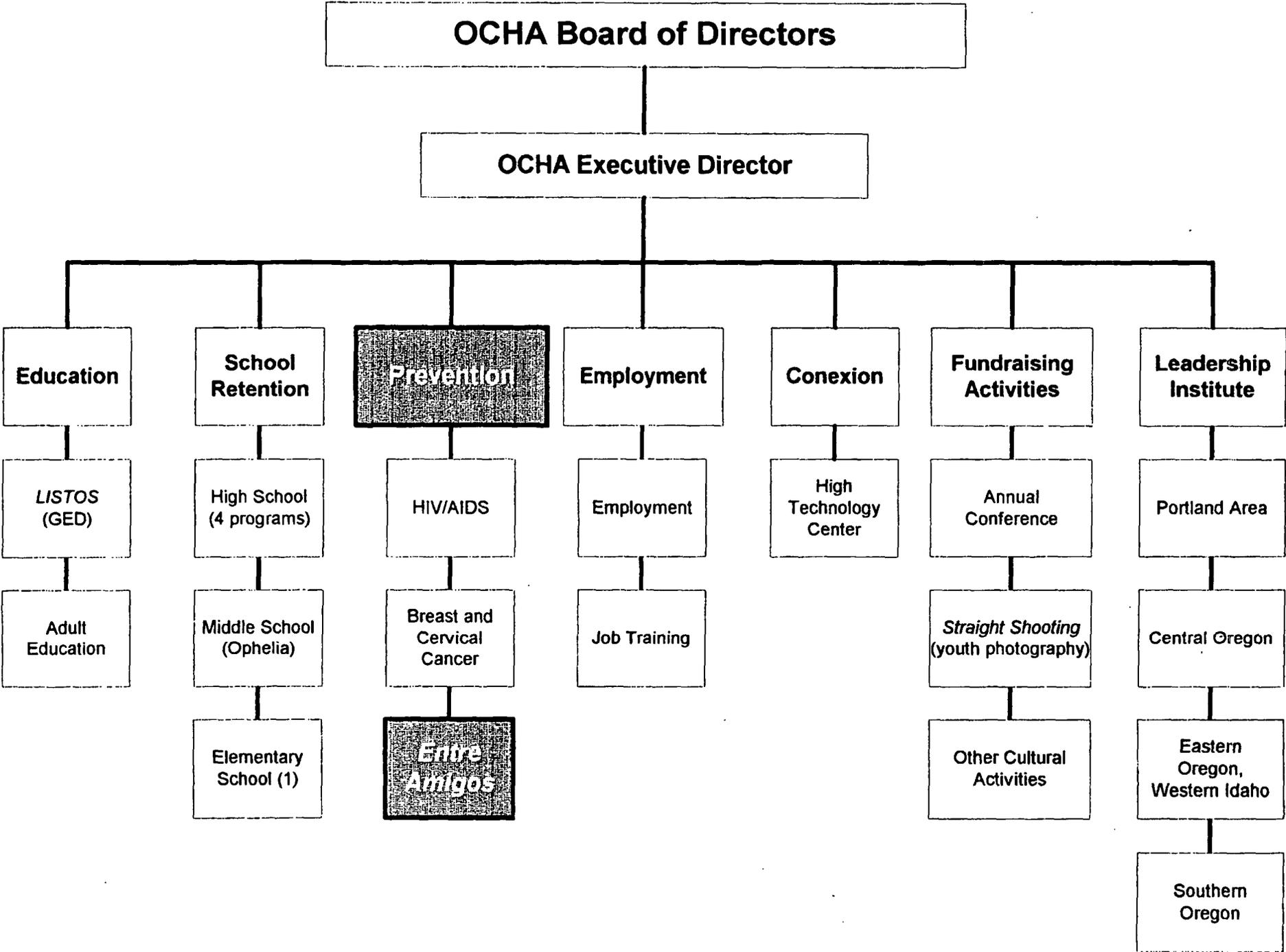
<sup>5</sup>This section was extracted and paraphrased from the original grant proposal.

<sup>6</sup>This is the county in which Portland is located.

<sup>7</sup>*Multnomah County Benchmark Trends*, September 1996.

<sup>8</sup>Percentage includes both adults and adolescents.

# Exhibit III-1: Organization and Programs Operated by OCHA



school, psychosocial attributes, social class and racism. *Entre Amigos* youth leaders suggest additional factors, such as peer pressure, the desire to be accepted by others, curiosity, attempts to mask personal problems or respond to pain caused by personal problems, and attempts to gain recognition or attention through negative behaviors. The youth leaders expressed special concern about middle school students, who often believe they will be perceived as more “grown up” and therefore more respected, if they smoke, use alcohol or drugs, engage in sexual activity or become involved in gangs.

Youth also discussed the impact of parental behavior and attitudes on the behavior of youth and expressed concern that the lack of parental involvement contributes to the growing substance abuse problems. They also cited numerous examples of substance abuse by parents directly contributing to similar activities by their children. Finally, *Entre Amigos* youth leaders indicated that substance use/abuse at a young age can lead to a wide range of other problems, including intravenous drug use, criminal activity, date rape, adolescent pregnancy, and violence against friends, family or society.

#### The Latino Community Responds:

*Entre Amigos* began in 1996 as a peer-to-peer bilingual HIV/AIDS prevention education program targeting low-income students from schools with the highest Latino student populations. The program included an extensive component on alcohol and drug abuse because of its direct relationship to sexual activity, thus its relationship to increasing the risk of HIV infection. Using the organization of a campaign on HIV/AIDS prevention as a focal point, students participated in a year-long leadership development program and were taught skills in:

- ▶ Public speaking;
- ▶ Leadership and personal development
- ▶ Negotiation;
- ▶ Fiscal accountability;
- ▶ Goal setting;
- ▶ Advertising;
- ▶ Community organizing;
- ▶ Program development, evaluation and survey techniques; and

- ▶ Team building.

Students then formed into teams of four to develop and implement school-based programs. Each team worked with an adult advisor and mentor. Teams also worked cooperatively with school personnel and school-based health clinics under the premise that prevention messages targeted to youth are more effective when presented by peers. This is found to be especially true in the Latino community where language and cultural differences create barriers to trust and communication. Each team also selected a campaign manager, a secretary, a community/school liaison and a treasurer to oversee the campaign budget of \$200 per school. Roles were rotated so that each student could gain experience with each position.

Using the HIV/AIDS work as a stepping stone, the *Entre Amigos* project began to focus more heavily on substance abuse prevention efforts. In an effort to better understand the needs of Latino youth, OCHA conducted 3 large focus groups (n=12-15 participants each) with high school youth to discuss how drug and alcohol affected their lives, existing programs have not worked, and what would work with Latino youth. The powerful stories that resulted from this activity led to the development of the hot line and the need to talk with parents. The initiation of the President's *Ounce of Prevention* program could not have been more fortuitous for *Entre Amigos*, as the program had evolved to become a youth-led, youth focused program in substance abuse prevention; thus, its mission was a perfect fit for the Department of Justice program. Funding for *Entre Amigos* was also critical in (1) institutionalizing youth leadership and participation; (2) promoting acceptance of youth leadership within OCHA as well as throughout the general community; and (3) increasing the growing capacity of OCHA to serve Latino youth in Portland.

#### Program Activities:

Entre Amigos consists of five program components: (1) a hot line; (2) student assemblies and presentations at schools; (3) small group sessions; (4) parent group presentations; and (5) a media campaign. Each is discussed briefly below (see also Chapter 5 for outcomes). The Program Manager was quick to point out that the activities described below were, with minimal oversight, the result of

the thoughtful, diligent and persistent efforts of the youth leaders and volunteers. Youth took responsibility for all aspects of program development, implementation and tracking. During the site visit, the evaluators had the opportunity to observe most of these activities and interview youth leaders and participants, and through which the Program Manager's perspective was validated.

**Hot Line Crisis Intervention and Referral:** The hot line was developed as a community resource to be available for both youth and adults, and to offer a service where individuals could call with questions, requests for referrals and assistance for themselves, friends, or family members. At the time the grant was written, no community agency provided this type of service specifically for Hispanics. Youth leaders created a logo and business cards for distribution in schools, community centers, shopping areas and businesses throughout the community. At the time of the site visit, the hot line was staffed with two telephones, a minimum of three youth and one adult supervisor. Youth were paid \$6 per hour for their efforts. The hot line operated two days per week, Tuesday and Friday from 4-8 pm. Discussions with program staff indicated that the primary limitation on staffing was funding, and that demand exceeded their capacity to provide service.

A tracking system was also developed to collect demographic and service data from each caller, including age, county from which they were calling, student/parent status, source of referral and whether they were a first time or repeat caller. Statistics were recorded and compiled by youth staffing the hot line. The tracking system not only verified the need for the hot line service within the OCHA program, it also provided community agencies and service providers with information specifically about the prevalence and substance abuse needs of Hispanics. Moreover, it created a mechanism for collaboration and to strengthen communication and linkages between OCHA and other community agencies with common goals.

**Student Assemblies:** Youth teams developed and presented drug and alcohol prevention education programs to be used at student assemblies targeting low income elementary and secondary schools with large Hispanic populations. Through the use of skits, role plays, poetry, audio and visual presentations and personal experience narratives, the presentations provided important

information to youth of all ages about the reasons for and consequences of drug and alcohol use, build trust with students, and offer assistance. Presentations were conducted in both English and Spanish. At the end of the program, the teams issued invitations to both students and teachers to schedule follow-up sessions, either individual or small group, for a more personal interactive sessions. As seen during the site visit, these sessions were conducted in classrooms rather than in large assemblies, but appeared to be effective ways to disseminate information about alcohol and drug use, promote healthy lifestyles, and generate discussion among youth about family activities around drug use.

**Small Group Sessions:** Small group sessions were intended to be used as follow up for the student assemblies to provide a more intimate and safe setting to discuss particular issues with alcohol and drug use. The sessions were developed to be highly interactive and used games because they are non-threatening and effective in promoting discussion of very sensitive issues as well as attitudes and behavior surrounding drug use. Youth leaders provided information and referrals for counseling services and treatment sites available in the community as well as diversion activities. A \$25 gift certificate (usually in the form of movie or concert tickets, sports equipment or restaurant gift certificates) was offered to encourage participation in the small groups.

**Outreach Program for Parents:** Recognizing the critical role of parents and parenting in substance abuse prevention, youth leaders also developed an outreach program for parents to discuss prevention and parenting issues. In particular, *Entre Amigos* was concerned about teen parents, their lack of parenting and life experience, and lack of knowledge about the impact of their behavior and attitudes on their children. Youth teams attempted to schedule monthly one parent groups at each school and conduct follow-up with personal phone calls to encourage participation at the meetings. However, attendance was low and meetings were held less frequently. Nonetheless, this activity successful in reaching some parents and suggests that additional outreach efforts to adults in the Hispanic community is needed.

**Media Campaign:** As an integral part of the program, *Entre Amigos* conducted broad-based

community outreach and substance abuse prevention education through the development of a media campaign. Designed and implemented by youth teams, the campaign consisted of regular public service announcements, radio shows, and appearances on a public access television show. Two radio shows in particular — *Cita con Nelly* and *Voz Juvenil* — are deeply committed to airing shows related to alcohol and drug prevention and have strong ties with OCHA. These shows are conducted in a “town meeting” format and permit call-ins from listeners. This format is believed to be particularly effective because of the anonymous attribute of radio shows. The youth teams were responsible for all aspects of the campaign. At the time this site visit was conducted, *Entre Amigos* youth had:

- ▶ Created a public service announcement
- ▶ Conducted 2 - 1 hour radio shows on *Entre Amigos*; these were live call-in shows Sponsored on KBOO and La Zeta;
- ▶ Conducted two public access television shows;
- ▶ Partnered with United Voices to develop and conduct a teen talk show in Spanish on *VOZ Juvenile*;
- ▶ Appears on *Buenos Dias Oregon*, a Spanish morning show offered in Oregon and Southwestern Washington; and
- ▶ Provided interviews with *El Hispanic*; a local community paper and the most widely read bilingual paper in Oregon.

In addition to these activities, funding for the program included two youth leader and participant retreats. These retreats were used to enhance leadership and presentation skills, discuss strategies for outreach and education, develop program components, and provide support for youth leaders and volunteers.

#### Successes and Challenges of *Entre Amigos*:

The site visit revealed a number of areas where *Entre Amigos* had been highly successful in meeting, and indeed surpassing, the project goals and expectations. These include: (1) developing substance abuse educational materials and community resource documents specifically geared to the needs of the Hispanic population; (2) increasing the capacity of OCHA to reach Latino youth; (3) creating an environment in which youth acquired direct, individual benefits; (4) promoting new alliances and partnerships in the community; (5) increasing the visibility of *Entre Amigos*, OCHA and

the voice of Hispanic youth at the local and state level of governments; and (6) building capital capacity within OCHA.

**Developing Educational Materials and Resource Directories:** First, and of critical importance, the program developed a number of substance abuse educational materials and community resource documents specifically geared to the needs of the Hispanic population. Examples include

- ▶ Educational materials disseminated at schools;
- ▶ Two *Information and Referral Resource Directories* for use at the hot line which covered a number of topics (health, education, social services, legal services, community activities, role models and mentoring);
- ▶ Public service announcements;
- ▶ Protocols for radio and television shows on substance abuse prevention;
- ▶ Information about youth needs for adults;
- ▶ Youth leader training materials; and
- ▶ Tracking and evaluation forms

The development and dissemination of these materials represents an important step in filling a gap in substance abuse prevention and education for Latino communities.

**Reaching Latino Youth:** Second, the program had substantially increased the capacity of OCHA to reach Latino youth.<sup>9</sup> This had been accomplished in several ways. Initially, the Ounce of prevention program permitted the development of substance abuse prevention specifically targeting Hispanics in Portland, a service which had been lacking and much needed in the community. Second, *Entre Amigos* established new and strengthened old ties with educational institutions through the student assemblies. Third, the media campaign created a vehicle to reach broader populations in need of substance abuse prevention and treatment services throughout the Portland and southwestern Washington area.

Perhaps the most impressive example of reaching Latino youth lies in the direct youth-to-

---

<sup>9</sup>See also Chapter V, Capacity Assessment.

youth contact. During a group interview with youth leaders, volunteers and participants (n=17), people were asked to indicate how many people they had succeeded in really reaching and stopping or influencing to stop them from using alcohol or drugs. All youth reported that they had succeeded in reaching at least one person and stopping substance use or abuse. Over half of the group (n=10) had succeeded in reaching an addition two people, and five members had succeeded in reaching an additional three or more individuals during the time *Entre Amigos* had been in operation (less than one year). To put this in perspective, seventeen youth had stopped at least 52 individuals from engaging in substance abuse. Given the low cost of the program and the high monetary and social costs of substance abuse, this appears to be on face value a very cost-beneficial program (see also Chapter 5).

**Youth Acquire Individual Benefits:** Related to these successes, the youth leaders and participants reported acquiring invaluable individual benefits, including enhanced self-esteem, direction with their lives, emotional support for avoiding substance abuse, dealing with underlying issues that lead to substance abuse, and support for adopting a healthy lifestyle; increased friendship with peers; a sense of belonging; staying in school; acquiring skills and training that would lead to jobs. These benefits were often referred to by youth as “life savers.” A number of participants indicated that without the *Entre Amigos* program, they would not have been able to deal with difficult family experiences, peer pressure and other aspects of their daily lives that they said would drive them to use and abuse drugs.

**New Alliances and Partnerships:** In addition to enhancing the capacity to reach Latino youth, *Entre Amigos* has promoted new alliances and partnerships in the community, in particular with other youth focused community-based organizations, such as with Boys and Girls Club, United Voices and Clara Vista “Back to School program. In addition, *Entre Amigos* also established new relationships with organizations that had not previously worked with OCHA, such as the state’s division of Adult and Family Services and two crisis counseling organizations that provided training and support for the *Entre Amigos* hot line — the *Oregon Partnership* and the *Women’s Health Crisis Line*. The program also attempted to create relationships with the *NW Gang Investigation*

*Association* — a group devoted to reducing gang activities, much of which revolve around acquisition, selling and use of illicit drugs — and *Los Hermanos*, a mentor program for Hispanic youth.

**Visibility in State and Local Government:** Another critical area of accomplishment is the increasing the visibility of *Entre Amigos*, OCHA and the voice of Hispanic youth at the local and state level of governments. For example, as a result of her participation in *Entre Amigos*, the youth coordinator now sits on *Oregon Drug and Alcohol Prevention Task Force*, a statewide task force operated by the Oregon Division of Health Services, on which few youth participate. At the local level, youth leaders attend hearings for drug and alcohol related incidences, work with youth juvenile counseling cases, and work with the juvenile justice court for Latina women. In this regard, the *Ounce of Prevention* grant not only increased visibility of the program, it also opened some doors. The program activities created opportunities to conduct public speaking and public affairs activities, to tell the Latino story to state legislators. As a result, people in positions of power became more familiar and comfortable with *Entre Amigos* and OCHA. Connecting with local juvenile justice officials, police, fire, and courts also led to increased access to funding as well as leveraging of funds through donations and collaborations.

**Building Capital Capacity:** Finally, the *Entre Amigos* program was successful in building capital capacity within OCHA. The program was able to obtain donated items and expertise — for example, training time from outside experts and consultants, building space, and computers which were donated by the county government. In addition, *Entre Amigos* was able to leverage funds to buy a computer for youth leaders to track and evaluate activities. Through administrative savings, *Entre Amigos* was able update its accounting system with new software. This increased organizational capacity to track use of funds and program costs.

Challenges:

The primary challenge facing *Entre Amigos* is the one facing most of the other Ounce of Prevention programs and indeed, most similar community-based programs of this nature — the

inconsistent and low level of financial support to ensure continuity of activities. During the site visit, *Entre Amigos* staff were informed that funding under the Ounce of Prevention program had been discontinued and further, that an additional grant submission anticipated to supplement the program had also been turned down. The Program Manager had been supported with funds from other prevention activities and her position was not threatened. However, the youth were facing a complete loss of funds for their work. To their great credit, they all agreed to stay on until the funding crisis could be worked out. This demonstrates not only the dedication these youth have for the program, the need this program fills for youth participants and the Latino community at large.

Conclusions:

*Entre Amigos* has had a significant impact not only on Latino youth but on the Latino and general community as well. In addition to the direct benefits of the substance abuse education and prevention program, *Entre Amigos* participants have become increasingly politically active. For example, youth leaders became involved in ridding a low-income Latino neighborhood of a nudist juice bar; youth testify at hearings and sit on task forces, and they have been active advocates for the civil rights of recent immigrants. As a result of *Entre Amigos* and the activities that result from it, Latino youth are becoming increasingly visible throughout the Portland area. They are also learning how to work within established systems of justice, education, health care and politics to effect change in their communities. Finally, they are giving Latino youth a voice in government.

The program has had spin-off effects as well. First, because it has been effective, *Entre Amigos* and the youth who participate are considered to be "cool" among their peers. This is extremely important for youth who need good role models among their peers, and in particular to assist at-risk youth in preventing substance use and abuse. In addition, the program provides alternative activities that are beneficial to the individuals as well as the community. The program fills a void where other resources do not permit after-school activities or simply do not reach youth who have dropped out.

Of particular relevance to this evaluation and the questions pertaining to the viability of youth-

led (versus adult led) programs, *Entre Amigos* participants cited that talking with other youth and having other youth as role models were the most important feature of the program. Clearly, the tangible benefits of stopping drug abuse, of "saving a life" make this youth-led model worth further investment and recognition.

## **Syracuse, New York: A Court-Ordered Diversion Project** **The Salvation Army, Diversion Project**

Syracuse is a city that is "on the way" between here and there. Its existence has been defined historically by the path that passes it. Once that path was the Erie Canal linking the Hudson River to the Great Lakes. Today it is the New York State Thruway, the major road link from New York City north and west to Buffalo. In turn, Syracuse is the gateway from the Thruway to the Finger Lakes region of the state and is the entry point from that region to the rest of the state.

In some ways, the road link defines some of the nature of life in Syracuse. The Onondaga County Department of Public Health in a seminar for Ounce of Prevention peer leaders reported that Syracuse has highest rates of sexually transmitted diseases in the state. Their explanation is that people leaving New York City for upstate New York get off the highway at Syracuse. There they encounter young people making their exit from rural New York state, seeking a more urban life in Syracuse. Agricultural workers who pick fruit in the orchards and vineyards of the region end up in the low-income districts of Syracuse. Syracuse is an end-point for migration. The migrants bring with them their cultural diversity, their energy, and their health problems. They bring also, their appetite for drugs and their sources of supply. These potent forces, sellers and buyers, vendors and markets, come together on the streets of Syracuse.

### Drug Use Among Youth in Syracuse:

The problem of drugs is especially acute for the youth of a city like Syracuse. It is at once a city of dreams and disappointments. The dream is of a better life away from the small towns of rural upstate New York. The dream is of a life off the migrant stream or away from the bigger -- and the biggest -- city. It is a place at which one arrives or in which one grows toward adulthood with

hope. It is a city of disappointments. The size of the city limits the opportunities for upward mobility. It is a city of three-quarters of a million. Blue collar job growth is at best modest . White collar job growth is quite poor. For a young person growing up in Syracuse, the options are to moderate dreams, to endure disappointments, or to move onto the highway. In this environment poverty is endemic. With poverty, the culture of the streets becomes central to the lives of adolescents. With life on the streets initiation into drug use in youth is a fact of existence. The typical array of agencies exists in Onondaga County to combat drug abuse, in particular, the Onondaga Commission on Drug Abuse. In addition, an atypical agency exists in Syracuse to assist youth who have already been intercepted in abusing drugs -- the Salvation Army.

The Ounce of Prevention Program:

The Salvation Army received a grant under Ounce of Prevention to conduct a peer-based program for youth who had already been adjudicated in the Youth Court for drug offenses. The concept was to recruit and train peer leaders in mentoring skills and to offer the services of these peer mentors to offenders. The project was named Get HYPED -- by the peer leaders. The intention of the program, agreed to by the Youth Court in the process of submitting the application, was to refer youth who had appeared before the court on drug offenses to this innovative, peer led program. The Ounce of Prevention Program was then designed to provide offenders with a group of trained peer mentors who would become role models for them through a twelve week program of rehabilitation.

One of the great strengths of the program was the fact that the Salvation Army would run it. The Salvation Army is a nationally recognized, not-for-profit, religiously based organization. Forbes magazine, the business magazine, in an article published on April 20, 1998, featured the Salvation Army as a model of not-for-profit efficiency and effectiveness. The Salvation Army brought to the effort in Syracuse its impressive strengths in recruiting very high quality staff, its administrative apparatus with tight supervision and well-developed financial controls, and a plethora of other programs which could be tied in to drug abuse prevention. In addition, the Salvation Army, brought to the project a rich network of organizational affiliations on which it could call for building comprehensive services.

The hope was that the Salvation Army would marshal its extensive expertise, its tight organizational systems, its community reputation, and its web of affiliations to construct an innovative and successful program. The concept, trained peers mentoring adjudicated offenders, was fresh and bold. The Salvation Army proposed to hand to the peer mentors which it recruited not only authority for mentoring, but authority for building program and even for key staff recruiting decisions. While there were risks in delegating this degree of authority to youth, it was a risk well founded in the faith that permeates the Salvation Army.

The Salvation Army's Ounce of Prevention program in Syracuse is housed in a site which conjures up images of Broadway's Guys and Dolls. It is a main thoroughfare store-front with the ambience of a mission. It is located on Syracuse's south side, a neighborhood of old single and multiple family dwellings which now house a primarily African-American and Puerto-Rican population. Though the traditional Salvation Army uniforms are absent and Guy Masterson is not present, the unpretentious warmth of the organization spills out onto the street. There young men lounge on the street corner, smiling and welcoming the passerby. Inside, staff, secretarial help and adolescents mix easily. The walls are whitewashed and plastered with upbeat posters. Staff offices are located in a back corner and lounge areas, pool tables, and study tables welcome the youth who enter. Upstairs, in a converted apartment, are several meeting lounges and offices.

The Salvation Army Diversion Project provides substance abuse prevention services to first time juvenile offenders. The project is designed to engage youth in positive peer-led activities as a means of diversion from further involvement in drug abuse and/or the juvenile justice system. Outcome goals include:

- ▶ Increasing at risk youth's knowledge about drugs and alcohol;
- ▶ Increasing youth's "protective factors" (participation in substance free, positive activities,
- ▶ Improvement in connection/communication with parents, improved self-esteem, etc.); and
- ▶ Prevention of further referrals to Probation or Juvenile Court.

All program components focus on helping at risk youth to develop positive feelings about participation in substance free activities. The program model consists of three major components: (1) Peer leadership training; (2) Diversion Programming (including prevention education, peer-led support groups, and social/recreational activities); and (3) Parent education groups.

**Peer Leadership Training:** Youth who successfully complete the 12-week diversion program are eligible to apply to become a peer leader for subsequent 12-week programs. Peer leaders must then complete a 24-hour peer leadership training program. Subsequently, trained youth leaders are responsible for facilitating peer support counseling groups, assisting with tutoring and mentoring, and conducting substance abuse education sessions. In addition, peer leaders generally act as role models and encouragers for the youth members.

**Diversion Programming:** This portion of the program occurs in twelve week cycles, consisting of three components: (1) substance abuse education classes; (2) peer support groups; and (3) weekend activities. During the first 8 weeks of programming, youth attend at least 3 program events per week, one substance abuse education class, one peer support group, and one weekend activity. Weeknight events include 2 optional nights of drop-in tutoring and mentoring and a recreational activity after every class, group or drop-in session. During the final 4 weeks of programming, the weekend activities focus on preparing youth for an Outward Bound experience. Drop-in tutoring/mentoring nights and special weekend activities also continue during this time.

Weekend activities occur on Friday nights and Saturdays at a social or recreational location/event within the community. Youth must attend the two required activities during the week (substance abuse class and peer support group) in order to participate in the weekend activity. Examples of usual weekend activities include, bowling, roller skating, movies, dances, sporting events, and community cultural events. The goal of engaging youth in these types of recreational activities is to offer them with enjoyable alternative activities to drug abuse and juvenile crime.

**Parent Education Groups:** Parents are encouraged to attend certain sessions of the

substance abuse education and peer support group meetings held weekly. These sessions are designed to educate parents along with their teens while opening lines of communication and offering opportunities for positive parent-teen interaction. In addition, the project offers a "monthly family activity night" where interactions between parents and teens are encouraged in a supported and fun environment.

The program has a Director in JoAnne Trinkle. While she works in the command structure of the Salvation Army, she was hired by the first cohort of peer mentors who were recruited by the program. These mentors were recruited by soliciting nominations from case workers in other Salvation Army programs. They then interviewed candidates for the position of Director and hired JoAnne. The program shows all the earmarks of a well-structured, well-directed effort. Bethany Joly, who works directly under JoAnne Trinkle reports that the number of peer mentors and referred youth varies a great deal:

Syracuse's program structures are in place -- referral forms, job descriptions, reporting relationships, finances etc. All the structures are in place. The internal processes are impressive. The external processes are in jeopardy -- the referral processes and the family processes. This may be the weak link in the whole Ounce of Prevention Process. Bethany Joly runs groups under the supervision of JoAnne Trinkle and reports on the nature of the youth who come into the program

The groups meet on Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays. Monday is a training session. Peer leaders are high school sophomores, typically aged 16. There are five peer leaders at a time with staff ratios 1:1 to sometimes 1:3. Friday is activity day. Appropriate administrative mechanisms are well in evidence. Attendance sheets are kept; minutes of meetings are recorded; time sheets are collected. The management expertise of the Salvation Army is clear in the program. The competence of the administrative staff is without question. The resources for success are present in the program. Staff are thoroughly professional. Physical resources are adequate. Of importance, additional resources, not in the budget, are available through other Salvation Army programs run out of the same site. A van is available; small pockets of money are accessed through small grants; linkages to organizations

such as the county department of public health are used to augment program. The resources to effect change appear to be present.

Creating measurable outcomes sometimes takes more than structure, process, and capacity. JoAnne Trinkle identifies two groups of kids as the focus of the program -- peer leaders and client kids. Ironically, she notes that the peer leaders are actually the highest functioning kids at risk -- they are being case managed by Salvation Army social workers. These are the best of the inner-city kids:

*Looking at client kids, there are three groups: (1) those who are going to make it anyway; (2) those who will not make it no matter how hard you try; and (3) a middle group that needs resources and programs to make it -- or to be lost to the streets. The majority of client kids are those who will make it and those who need the program to keep from being lost. There is an alarming proportion of kids who drop out. More than fifty percent of the kids who show up as clients drop out. You need two or three years to figure out how to reach those kids.*

*Of fifteen kids who show up, two will complete the program and thirteen will drop out. What we need is time to fine-tune our programming to reach these kids and a year and half is in no way enough time to do that. I spent the first few months just looking for a director for this program. It took us from July when the grant was approved until February 23rd just to put up our first group. This is a matter of time resources. Money has never been the issue. Time is the issue. We need to think of capacity building as putting time in place -- and not just resources. We've replaced our referral sources (the courts) with our case managers. We have to replace family functions in the lives of these kids.*

*To add to our budget we got a little grant. Peer educators are terribly responsible. Once you get the client kids in -- attendance is sporadic. We average pretty steadily at least five kids coming all the time -- when we have forty kids in the program. Outward Bound has been put in place. The program is no longer a twelve week program -- it has been reduced to a six week program. The effect on peer leaders is there: Improvement in school work. Public presentation skills are vastly improved. Leadership skills, confrontation skills. They're proud to be employed. Proud to get their paychecks.*

#### Problems and Prospects:

A major problem of the Get HYPED program in Syracuse has been the flow of referrals from the Youth Court. Though the Director of the Youth Court was a signatory to the grant application,

two events altered the anticipated flow of adolescents from the court to the program. The first was a change in personnel. A new Director who had not been a party to the grant application took over the Youth Court. With this, the administrative support for the flow of referrals diminished. Second, the length of the Get HYPED program -- twelve weeks, turned out to be far longer than the average probationer's sentence. This meant that probation officers would have to keep offenders on their case loads far longer than was typical if they were referred to Get HYPED. JoAnne Trinkle, the Director of the Get HYPED program reported:

*The referral system is not working the way that it should. We wanted the younger age kids -- first time offenders. What we wanted was a Youth Court connection -- a place to send referrals from the court which is run by kids in every role but judge. Primary referral source was to be Youth Court. The administrator didn't want to do that and there have been no referrals. So we went to the probation officers. But they more often refer to shorter programs. If they refer to OOPS they have to extend the case and hold onto the case. This then adds to their case load. Thus we changed to a six week program to accommodate their probation schedule. Three training sessions a year. Rates of finishing the program are very low. Right now I have ten to twelve kids who are active. Six or seven will complete the program. We have major problem - getting the referrals out of the referral sources. The Youth Corps at the schools pledged referrals but the number of referrals has declined. Personnel have changed and those present at the time of the grant writing are no longer in place. The commitment to the program is not there. There is a competing program in town that offers similar services that is run through an in-school counselor.*

*Probation officers have 60-70 kids on their case load and they want something that they know is going to work not something they are going to try out to see if it works. I had them to a luncheon and asked them what works and they gave me ideas. It's a twelve week program -- they realize that if they have a kid on probation for a short time they have to extend the case to keep the kid in the program. They originally bought in -- thought it was a great idea, then they realized they had all these cases they had to extend and they hadn't anticipated that.*

A second major problem has been engaging parents in the life of the program. JoAnne Trinkle observes:

*Trying to get parents here has been out of control. I have tried everything -- child care, bus tokens, reminders -- we had one parent complete a five week cycle for support groups. The probation mandate is on the child. We have no leverage on the*

*parent. These are families that have been through a ton. Parents are looking for someone to help them in supervising their kids. Where's the father? Mom has a new boyfriend. How long will he be around? Referral sources and interagency linkages and family linkages are highly problematic. The only way to make parent involvement work is home visits – a case management approach. Working with these families will always be an uphill battle. The street-wise kids get themselves here after school because they know they're safe here. They're the ones that need to get engaged, that need to get an outside role. In part the agency has replaced the dysfunctional family. You give them responsible adult role models, responsible peer groups, and a normative system.*

#### Program Successes:

The clearest success of the program is the impact which it has on peer leaders. It must be recalled that these were recruited by Salvation Army case managers. Thus, these are youth at risk. Their response to the experience of mentoring other youth is noteworthy. Of the kids who are referred, fifty percent would not have made it without the program. The question of who the program works for is critical to an analysis of its effectiveness. If only thirty percent of the kids who come into the program are marginals who really need the program to make a difference in their lives and if the program works for 50% of these, then the true success rate is  $30\% \times 50\% = 15\%$ . Bethany points out that even if that is true -- and she estimates a higher rate -- the 15% for whom the program is successful take the message out into the street and it becomes cumulative. She alleges that the success of the program is not in the success of individuals, but in the impact of those successful individuals out on the streets. Her theoretical model, then, is not focused on individual success rates, but on cultural change. If she is correct -- and she may be -- then it takes a longer program to accomplish that cultural change.

In addition, youth participants provide the following comments on the program and responses to the evaluators' questions:

- ▶ *The Program gives me a positive experience. Education wise it gives me a lot. It teaches me a lot more about things I thought I knew a lot about. I'm happy when I can see positive improvement. It gives me a lot of satisfaction. I can be the teacher. I can show others new ways to approach stuff – how to deal with bad situations. I've made new friends.*

- ▶ **Are you changing kid's lives?** *Some kids don't want to change and there's nothing to be said about it. We have to walk the walk. You can't be a hypocrite. You think about what you can do and what you can't do on the streets.*
- ▶ **Do people think you are super-cool or un-cool?** *We have negative feedback and we have positive feedback. Most people say negative things -- "You think you're a hot act. But I'm out there trying to help myself and trying to help other youth. But I do get asked what the program is about and can I be a part of it?" [What about the gangs?] We really don't work with them.*
- ▶ **What proportion of kids will complete the program?** *For now it's twelve weeks but we're gonna make it shorter -- six weeks. It's hard to say which kids will complete it. [What proportion of the kids can you relate to?] Each of us have certain kids who we can talk to -- who come to us. They talk to us outside the center. [Can you keep these kids from going back into trouble?] Some come because they're made to and some just love it here and don't want to go home.*
- ▶ **To what extent is it Joanne's program and Bethany's program and to what extent is it yours?** *It's our program. We set the hours, we set the program.*
- ▶ **What's the best part of the program?** *Activities really work. When we went to the Activity Zone they acted like brothers and sisters. When we show them things they can accomplish that's really positive. They see things they never see in their everyday life. They get to be kids -- relax, have fun, and work together. They don't want to be lectured. They want an interesting way of learning.*

#### Conclusions:

The management of Salvation Army has come to its own conclusions about the Ounce of Prevention Program. In an extended interview, Linda Wright, the manager for the program said:

*This was a new initiative for the Salvation Army. We partner with the youth that we provide services for. But in this project youth lead the program and this is a new type of decision making apparatus for us. I saw this as needing program staff that was open to a non-traditional way of doing things. It wasn't as much risky as it was exciting. We were doing something new and different. Now that they've wiped out the money and we've learned something, we don't have a way to sustain it. We can't find an extra \$50,000 to put on the table to continue this. We expected that if we put on a good demonstration, there would be other opportunities. We need time for our relationships with the community to mature -- courts and probation officers. The*

*federal calendar was really rapid. We needed to hire staff, hire kids -- they needed to hire the staff. They made a great choice. It helps if your staff is already in the agency. Our board has been extremely involved. They have been extremely supportive of Ounce of Prevention. Clearly our peer leaders are getting as much out of this as the kids in the groups. As for referrals, it's slower than what we anticipated. It's a time problem. It takes time to discover what kids the programs will work for. The Youth Court Director has changed. We worked with them around shortening the group work to better meet the needs of Youth Court. The Youth Court thought that the sentence was too harsh and the probation officers thought that the program was too long. We haven't had enough time in the developmental process for this project.*

An immediate conclusion to the observations in Syracuse is that for a program such as this to succeed there must be a source of rock-solid referrals in place. The program needs a conduit from schools, drug courts, youth courts, and probation officers. There has to be a way to guarantee this. One of the applicant organizations has to be a referral agency. In any of these programs, referral is the weak link. Without a secure mechanism for case finding, such a program is fatally flawed.

In such a program there are three groups that we're trying to intercept: Group one is those adolescents who will make it anyway -- who have cognitive skills, are school oriented, have a family base. There is clear evidence that such a program is useful for these youth. The program is good for them, provides them cognitive skills, leadership skills etc. But they will make it anyway. The youth that are getting referred into Ounce of Prevention programs, especially as peer mentors, are the kids who are going to make it anyway.

At the opposite end of the spectrum is Group three, a group of kids who won't make it no matter what. They come from dysfunctional families; they are already involved in drug oriented peer groups on the streets and if they are in intervention programs they will be disruptive. These kids are not accessible. They may get referred into a program, but they're not going to fit very well. There remains substantial doubt as to how to reach these youth.

The third group of kids is the group in the middle and this is the group that programs such

as Ounce of Prevention are best directed toward. A very small proportion of the kids who are referred into the program are those who are marginal - - who really need the program. But the numbers are so small that it's really going to be difficult to show the results of the program -- i.e. if you compare a population that has access to an intervention program but will make it anyway with a population that does not have access but will make it anyway -- there are no significant differences to demonstrate. If the population for whom the program makes a difference are genuinely small -- and they appear to be -- then you can't demonstrate effectiveness!

Thus far we have discussed two variables in assessing the Syracuse program: The structure of referrals and the nature of the kids who come in. We can now look at the variable of type of family background. Family involvement is very poor. The families of marginal kids are not easy to engage in the program -- they may be dysfunctional and at the very least limited in their resources. Thus, you have difficulty demonstrating that a family intervention will be successful. None of this augurs well for a community based intervention. One option is to organize the entire community -- block parent groups, neighborhood improvement groups, family groups at the schools; you then need kid programs that are put in place by these indigenous groups and which are run by the kids -- the cool kids. It would then be the kids who recruit other kids into the program.

There are a number of conclusions which are evident from this analysis. First, referral sources are critical to the success of any youth program. Second, working with families is an enviable goal, but probably unrealistic. Third, the number of youth for whom the program makes a dramatic difference in terms of individual cases is small. Fourth, the most dramatic impact of the program may come from the changes in community culture which it engenders over time. Finally, an eighteen month time frame to measure results is unrealistic.

## IV

### **The Reality: Assessing Programs' Successes and Challenges**

This chapter deals with the ability of each of the six agencies to move beyond the statement of global goals and specific strategies laid out in the grant applications. Specifically, we ask how well each agency has done at translating goals into organizational structures and processes. Once an organization has established a plan to accomplish this, it must also find the human resources to fill the positions in the structure. To carry out goals, an organization must have capacity to run the processes within the structure and to evaluate the outcomes. If it does not have the capacity, it must build it. A third task is then to manage the financial resources to make that capacity function. This chapter analyzes the six programs described in Chapter III along these three dimensions: (1) structure, process and outcomes; (2) capacity building; and (3) cost.

Each of these topics was presented and discussed at the initial evaluation meeting prior to the site visits. Forms were sent to project managers and returned to the UNH evaluation team. In some cases, the forms were not completed or not completed correctly. As such, we do not have all pertinent data on all sites.

#### **Structure-Process-Outcomes Analysis**

Goals: The purpose of the *Structure-Process-Outcome Analysis* was to document how agencies moved from the world of ideas to the world of action and change. This analysis asks three basic questions:

- ▶ Has the project created structures which were not in place previously and which would not have been put in place without the project?
- ▶ Has the project created or altered processes to deliver services? and
- ▶ Has the project created or altered outcomes from the services that were delivered?

The *Structure-Process-Outcome* paradigm developed by Donabedian<sup>1</sup> is useful for planning as well as evaluation. Implicit in the model is the notion that sometimes the structures or arrangements which are put in place to effect change, or the processes by which people move through those structures, have as much importance or even more importance than the outcomes that they are intended to produce. The *Structure-Process-Outcomes* evaluation tool was designed to identify project accomplishments under the *Ounce of Prevention* grant. It was also designed to help project directors plan concrete steps toward those accomplishments.

#### A Conceptual Framework for the *Structure-Process-Outcomes* Evaluation

**Structure Analysis:** A *Structure Analysis* identifies critical organizational elements that form the backbone of a program. This portion of the analysis asks: What are the organizational mechanisms currently in place in the program and how do those relate to the structures in the community? This question leads logically to an inventory of existing services and agencies that serve at-risk youth. Further it prompts an assessment of how these efforts are coordinated — Is there a system which coordinates services at the agency level? Is there a uniform referral system? Is there coordinated case management or care management system which advocates for clients?

Effective structures are critical to successful programs. One thing that shows the creation of a structure is an organizational chart. Each project was asked to construct an organizational chart that showed what structures (programs, projects, personnel) were in place prior to the *Ounce of Prevention* grant and those that were in place which are supported by the *Ounce of Prevention* grant but did not exist before. Other items can also be included in structure including: (1) material resources such as the purchase of equipment, computers, cars or vans for transportation; (2) organization structures such as the development of a youth council or (3) relationships with other organizations that did not exist prior to the grant, such as the a cooperative relationship with schools or a health center and a mechanism for communicating about issues and needs for at-risk youth.

---

<sup>1</sup>Donabedian, A. 1980. *Explorations in quality assessment and monitoring. Vol. I: the definition of quality and approaches to its assessment.* Health Administration Press, Ann Arbor, MI.

**Process Analysis:** While a *Structure Analysis* deals with organizational components, process is the dynamic dimension of how structures are related to each other and how communication is accomplished. A *Process Analysis* answers the question of *how* an organization functions and what kinds of relations does each identified structure in the project have with other organizations? For example, the analysis might have asked program directors to identify the following:

- ▶ How often does a youth council meet?
- ▶ How does the *Ounce of Prevention* program communicate with sister agencies in the community?
- ▶ What are the mechanisms by which program information is disseminated internally and externally?

**Outcomes Analysis:** An *Outcomes Analysis* is based on measurable results from the program and may be identified in terms of the goals and objectives. It asks the question: “How well or in what ways did the program succeed in achieving its mission?” For example, did the program see a change in youths’ knowledge about or attitudes toward drugs, about their intentions regarding drug use; changes in youth’s ability or intentions to stay in school or get a job, knowledge, attitudes and intentions regarding pregnancy. *Outcomes Analysis* may also reflect unanticipated or unintended outcomes — for example, creation of a relationship that led to leveraging additional resources for the program; formal incorporation of a substance abuse training curriculum in local schools; increased educational achievement of youth participants; or improved property values in neighborhoods where successful anti-drug campaigns have occurred.

Measuring change in outcomes over time is key to a successful outcomes analysis, and there are a variety of ways in which this may be accomplished, including through observation, pre and post surveys of participants, or examining existing data such as police records, crime statistics, juvenile drug offenders, teen pregnancy rates and drug-related youth mortality and morbidity rates. In addition, an *Outcomes Analysis* requires baseline measures, which provide information about the issue prior to inception of the project, and comparison measures, which re-evaluate the baseline measures

after the program has been fully implemented.

Baseline measures are often in place and collected routinely by public agencies at the municipal, county, and state levels. Directors were encouraged to establish base line measures wherever possible. In some cases, baseline measures were taken from the grant applications. In cases where no baseline measures are available, it is possible to find a similar (or control) community to use for comparison, called a contrast measure. Also, if a program is serving one part of a community but not another the two areas may be compared if they have similar characteristics. Finally, a time trend may also be used to measure changes over time in the community and the contribution of the program to those changes. As is clear from the cross site comparison (Chapter III), developing common outcome measures by which programs can be compared is problematic, even when participants agree on the measures. In this section, we assess each program with respect to its intended outcomes (goals and objectives) as well as any unintended outcomes. Exhibit III-1 shows potential indicators and measures for all three areas.

Methodology and Analysis: A detailed workbook was provided to each site along with technical support for completing the form. The goal of the exercise was to formalize and concretize the process of moving from dreams to actions. Directors were to use these to check progress as the project progressed so that they could tell if they were hitting the mark — making progress toward goals and objectives. If not, they needed shift strategy, change program, or perhaps even revise goals and objectives.

The analytical tool was filled out at two time points by the project directors -- at the January 1998 conference in Washington, DC and during the summer of 1998. In this way, the analysis was designed to served two functions: The initial document was to assist the director in identifying a hierarchy of goals, objectives, needed processes and desired outcomes as a planning tool for the project. The second iteration of the document was designed to provide the director of each project with a brief tool which would alert them to those tasks which were not yet accomplished and which needed attention in very short order to make progress toward outcomes. Thus, the initial document

**Exhibit IV-1**  
**Potential Evaluability Indicators**  
**for the *Structure-Process-Outcomes* Analysis**

<b>Domain</b>	<b>Indicator</b>
<b>Structure</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Organizational development to promote and sustain substance abuse prevention services</li> <li>▶ Number of personnel appropriate trained to provide substance abuse prevention services</li> <li>▶ Ongoing training and education requirements</li> <li>▶ Change in number of sites involved in program</li> <li>▶ Program eligibility requirements</li> <li>▶ Recruitment for participation</li> <li>▶ Development of case management or referral systems</li> <li>▶ Linkages with other community organizations</li> <li>▶ Development of dedicated funding sources</li> <li>▶ Change in size or structure of other community-based organizations to incorporate additional youth leaders</li> </ul>
<b>Process</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Type and nature of decision-making processes</li> <li>▶ Procedures and priorities for allocating resources</li> <li>▶ Development of communication networks</li> <li>▶ Number, frequency and content of staff meetings and meetings with key community leaders and others involved in substance abuse prevention</li> <li>▶ Outreach to schools, community centers, houses of worship and other locations where youth convene</li> <li>▶ Recruitment and training of youths to conduct or provide youth-led substance abuse prevention services</li> <li>▶ Use of media to promote substance abuse prevention and education</li> <li>▶ Development of peer-led advocacy activities</li> <li>▶ Presence of internal and external incentives to participate</li> <li>▶ Pressures regarding the program</li> </ul>
<b>Outcome</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Number of clients served</li> <li>▶ Change in number of new users</li> <li>▶ Rates of recidivism</li> <li>▶ Changes in attitudes or beliefs by program participants</li> <li>▶ Changes in behavior by program participants</li> <li>▶ Participants' satisfaction with prevention services</li> <li>▶ Decline in substance abuse juvenile delinquency and/or incarceration</li> <li>▶ Improved public education and awareness</li> <li>▶ Local mandates regarding sales of legal drugs to minors or use of advertising in high risk areas</li> </ul>

was a planning tool, the second document was an interim evaluation tool.

was a planning tool, the second document was an interim evaluation tool.

We reviewed each project's long-term and short-term goals and their links to measurable objectives and processes. Our intent in this section is not to assess the viability of the goals. Rather, the intent is to assess whether the original goals were linked logically to objectives and processes in such a way that the agency and the project director had a clear blueprint to follow in constructing an effective program. Further, these documents alert us to potential problems in the operation of each project.

**Dorchester, MA: *The Walter Denney Youth Center***

Goals and Objectives: The target population for the program was youth between the ages of six and nineteen living in the mixed-income development in Boston known as Harbor Point. The program is run by the Walter Denney Youth Center under the sponsorship of the Harbor Point Community Task Force, Inc. The overall goals of the project are aimed at youth development with special attention to an expanded role for a Youth Council. The development goals of the project are quite general and include disseminating knowledge of drug abuse, parental involvement, decreased school drop-outs, decreased teen pregnancies, reduced youth crime, and improved parental involvement. Long-term objectives were carefully specified and included:

- ▶ Development of off-site cultural programming;
- ▶ Development of a computer center;
- ▶ Creation of a job internship program;
- ▶ Development of a peer leadership training program;
- ▶ Development of peer-to-peer mentoring; and
- ▶ Increased parental involvement

To accomplish these long-term objectives, a number of short-term objectives were designated.

These included (1) doubling the number of members of the Youth Council; (2) developing curriculum materials for training peer leaders; (3) developing a set of off-site cultural activities; and (4) doubling the number of parents involved in Walter Denney Youth Center Activities

Structures: To accomplish these objectives a number of organizational structures and material resources needed to be put in place. These material resources included a van and a computer center, complete with computer hardware. Programmatic structures which were required were: personnel to run the computer center and a youth programmer to conduct leadership training, off-site cultural activities and parent activities.

Processes: To accomplish these objectives a number of structures had to be in place and a number of processes had to be operating. At the time of the Washington, DC Conference the van was in place and was being used for transportation to off-site activities. A site had been identified for a computer center, a person with computer expertise had been recruited, and the procurement of computer hardware had been begun. The Project Director had a clear sense of how to implement the specific objectives of the project. General long-term goals were more elusive.

As the project progressed, evaluation of the structure and process elements showed some real progress toward implementation of specific objectives with a simultaneous lack of progress toward long-term goals. The Youth Council met regularly. The computer center was used frequently by youth. A job internship program was in place which resulted in paid summer jobs. There were frequent off-site trips. However, programs to elicit parental involvement did not produce adult participants. Parents did not show up at meetings despite aggressive outreach to homes. Young women did not participate in the program. It was an all-male domain. Progress toward such global goals as reduction in teen pregnancy, reduction in school drop-outs, reduced crime and the like were not demonstrable.

Assessment of Structures and Processes: The proposal by the Harbor Point Community Task Force is a model for writers of grant applications. It is well-thought out and demonstrates real needs

by rational use of data and logical development of programming ideas. The Task Force used the Walter Denney Youth Center as its focus and hired very competent staff to implement the proposed program. The staff, led by a well trained Project Director put the specific structural elements of the program into place in as timely a fashion as possible given the constraints of the grant. The van was in place, the computer center was in place, coordination with outside agencies such as the neighborhood health center and the school were in place -- this was model of how a project should be implemented.

There are several problems, however, which characterize the project and from which we can gather important lessons. A general goal of involving parents is not enough. As in other projects parental involvement in drug abuse prevention is a logical and seductive goal, especially to middle-class evaluators who see the family as the touchstone for drug abuse prevention. To the parents of these youth, however, there does not appear to be a similarly seductive call. They do not come to participate. One area which merits serious consideration and possibly empirical investigation is whether parental involvement can really make a difference in drug abuse prevention and if so, how to engender it. These two questions remain unanswered.

A second lesson is that there is a genuine gender problem in the Harbor Point program. Young males were highly visible as participants in the program while females were non-existent. This may be because the activities of the program were more "male" than "female", i.e. Computer oriented, work place oriented, and off-site. Again, these are programs which speak logically to middle-class social service professionals but which may be far off the mark for young women living in low-income communities. These young women may be more oriented to issues of home, child rearing, or perhaps fashion, beauty, art, health care or the like. For whatever reason, the program did not succeed in captivating young women.

A third lesson is that specific objectives may not necessarily be linked to global goals. While the global goals in the Harbor Point project are highly desirable, the ability of a short-term (eighteen months) project to effect teen pregnancy, high school dropping out, crime, or even community

attitudes toward drugs is highly questionable.

### **Eureka, CA: *The Raven Project***

Goals and Objectives: The Raven Project was conducted by the Redwood Community Action Agency of Eureka, California. It is based on an educational model directed at personal and cultural change. The target population for the Raven Project was those youth of Humboldt County from ages 10 to 21 who are living on the streets. Long term goals for these youth had one general focus and one highly specific focus. The general focus was to subtly alter the culture of youth living on the streets. The specific focus was to provide some carefully specified products and services to these youth. The two levels of goals were integrated. Overall goals were directed at:

- ▶ Increase the physical health and well being of these youth;
- ▶ Increase leadership and employment opportunities for these youth; and
- ▶ Increase alcohol and drug education intervention and reduce risk for 200 of these youth.

Thus, the overall goals were to change cultural perceptions of drug and alcohol abuse through education among street and homeless youth and to provide “hard resources” which would be available to these youth to support the cultural changes. The measurable objectives for the program were carefully and thoughtfully linked to long-term and short-term goals. Long-term objectives included:

- ▶ Provide outreach services delivered by peer street workers to 300 homeless/street youth;
- ▶ Offer resource information and HIV and substance abuse risk reduction education through 1,000 contacts with street youth;
- ▶ Provide cost-free medical and dental screening to 100 street youth;
- ▶ Disseminate survival supplies (personal hygiene and first aid products, clothes, food, condoms, etc.) to 250 youth;

- ▶ Recruit 10 street youth to participate in policy and programming decision-making;
- ▶ Provide two part-time street outreach positions held by youth 16 to 25; and
- ▶ Provide training to ten youth educators and two street outreach workers in runaway and homeless youth issues and outreach strategies.

To accomplish these long-term objectives, a number of short-term objectives were designated and included the following: (1) provide rotating youth-led educator groups. These are to be “alternative to drug use” groups for youth age 10-21 that focus on youth developed topics such as anger management, self-esteem, self-empowerment, communication skills, health and substance abuse/use education; (2) collaborate with existing substance abuse prevention programs with department of alcohol, mental health, schools, public health department; and (3) provide consistent street outreach services to youth via youth, disseminating written and verbal education about drug education and information.

Processes: To accomplish these objectives a number of structures had to be in place and a number of processes had to be operating. By the time of the Washington Conference in January of 1998, the group had obtained a van for transporting youth to the center and to conduct outreach to youth in the target areas. The process of establishing a relationship with the community of homeless and street youth had begun and a facility for group meetings was in place. Fliers were being printed to hand out and relationships with local clinics were being built. Supplies were being procured. The process of street outreach had not yet begun. This meant that youth educators had not yet been recruited or trained and that discussion groups for street youth were not yet in place. Thus, outcome measures were not available.

Assessment of Structures and Processes: Where some projects rely heavily on the creation and maintenance of structures, the Raven Project is very process oriented. The street youth who are targeted by the project are alienated from formal structures in a very real sense. The outcomes of the project are dependent on the number of contacts with street youth, lines of communication to clinics,

and the project's ability to recruit and train youth who will become educators and outreach staff. If these processes worked, there would be several real outcomes: The distribution of supplies to street youth, their use of the physical facilities for group discussion, and a changed awareness of alcohol and substance abuse.

The structure and processes of the project were well-matched to the goals of the project. The target population is one that has, by definition, rejected a world of bureaucratic organization. Were the Raven Project to have tied itself to local bureaucratic organizations, it would have been less appealing to its target population. Instead, it is structured as a "loose" organization with weak ties to other organizations. Its model of delivery is conceived and delivered autonomously. The success of the organization depends not on its formal structure but on its ability to maintain a fluid organizational process which does not impose role obligations on its client population.

#### **Kansas City, KS: *The Block Brother Program***

Goals and Objectives: The Block Brothers Program was run by the Boys and Girls Clubs of Greater Kansas City. The Boys and Girls Clubs is a national organization with a cogent organizational philosophy aimed at disadvantaged youth. The national organization is highly structured and has earned a reputation as a responsible action agency directed at youth-in-need. One of the strengths of the organization is its ability to operate effectively as a corporate entity while at the same time offering each participating youth a sense of personal and caring commitment by specific workers. In Kansas City the target population for the program was youth from disadvantaged circumstances. The emphasis in this particular program was on personal development and the strategy was the development of a system of Block Brothers.

The overall goals of the program were divided into long-term and short-term goals. The long term goal was to improve the life outcomes of disadvantaged youth. The long-term objectives for the program were very specific. These included: (1) all Block Brothers will graduate from high school; and (2) Block Brothers attend some form of post-secondary or vocational education or military

service. Linked to the long-term goals and objectives were a set of short-term goals and objectives including promoting personal development and leadership skills by all Block Brothers and providing positive youth development programs in under-served areas of Kansas. To accomplish these short-term goals, a number of short-term objectives were designated:

- ▶ Block Brothers will set and achieve goals articulated in a Personal Development Plan;
- ▶ Each Block Brother will maintain a GPA of 2.8 or more;
- ▶ Each Block Brother will demonstrate positive leadership skills; and
- ▶ To conduct strong youth development programs for previously unserved youth age 7-17.

These objectives fit well with a Boys and Girls Club model of action which promotes individual growth among disadvantaged youth. The key mechanism for this development in the Block Brothers program, as elsewhere in the Boys and Girls Clubs, was the mentoring relationships built into well-organized programs.

Processes: By June of 1998 the Block Brothers program was in its second iteration of the Structure, Process, Outcome analysis. The structures and processes necessary to the implementation of the goals of the program had been clearly identified and most elements were in place. Block Brother role models has been recruited and were in the process of helping participating youth to develop their individual Personal Development Plans. Programming for participants was running. Participants were being counseled on application to post-secondary educational institutions. A system for monitoring grade point averages was under development. The keystone of the Block Brothers Program was the use of mentors' homes and Boys and Girls Club Hub sites for gathering places for participants. This mechanism was the lynch-pin for linking participants to the larger organization and programming of the Boys and Girls Clubs. This structure was in place and participants were using these sites for drop-in.

In this way a large number of structured activities were put in place. Youth participants were

counseled into jobs, offered adult mentoring and leadership training. They were tutored in developing a Personal Development Plan and guided into using Boys and Girls Club services to implement that plan. The mentors' homes became de facto neighborhood drop-in centers where youth came to do homework, get tutoring, or just hang out with an adult role model. In short, the processes which were implied in the initial long-term goals were being put in place as the project moved along.

Assessment of Structures and Processes: The Block Brothers Program of the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Kansas City takes a personal development approach to drug abuse prevention. The underlying assumption is that the best preventive program is one which assists a young person in developing self-esteem and acquiring the attitudes and skills necessary for success in a world of employment. It is preventive in that it empowers youth and provides them an alternative to street life with a promise of success.

Implicit in the Block Brothers Program is a two-part change in neighborhood cultures. The first change that is necessary for program success is the acceptance of the Block Brothers Program as a legitimate place for youth to hang out. The second part is a change that the program would hope would spread out from the Block Brothers Program: That concepts like leadership training, Personal Development Plans, work opportunities, post-secondary education and the like are legitimate and attainable values for a population of disadvantaged youth.

It can be argued that for severely disadvantaged youth, those whose academic skills are severely compromised, who come from dysfunctional families, or who are beset by intransigent poverty these values are rarely realistic. Further, it is exactly those youth who have adequate academic skills, supportive families, and who believe in the possibility of success in the American economy who are the best candidates for a program such as Block Brothers. However, many of these will make the transition to a world of work anyway.

What this implies is that the Block Brothers Program works best for those youth who need it least. Moreover, its message of hope and personal responsibility is one which would play especially

well in those geographical areas where hope already exists and where upward mobility for disadvantaged youth seems like a real possibility. The nagging question is whether a program which builds on abstract foundations rather than highly focused drug abuse prevention and which is less suited for the severely disadvantaged could be successful in places where economic hardship is the norm.

Block Brothers would seem to be ideally suited for those youth and those neighborhoods where life is marginal, where poverty is not so grinding as to destroy dreams, where street life is not so all-encompassing that an adult mentoring program would be derided, where the culture of drug use is not pervasive, but only a risk for those who are most marginal. A special strength of the program is that it is self-contained and well-managed, requiring only marginal coordination with other agencies to perform well.

**Los Angeles, CA: *South Central Youth Empowered Thru Action (SCYEA)***

Goals and Objectives: The *Ounce of Prevention* program in South Los Angeles was run by *South Central Youth Empowered Thru Action (SCYEA)*. It is based on a community development model. The target population for the Community Coalition for Substance Abuse and Treatment's program was middle and high school youth, especially those at risk of gang involvement. The vision was to build a youth organization which served a diverse set of needs for these at-risk youth, including (1) recruiting student organizers; (2) improving the self-efficacy of Student Organizers in management of academic, social, and personal problems; and (3) providing alcohol, tobacco and drug free educational and recreational activities. From these overall goals measurable objectives for the program were derived. These were aimed at the construction of a youth organization that would be a counterweight to gang organizations. Long-term objectives were carefully specified and included:

- ▶ Expand the general membership of SCYEA 50 to 75% by opening new chapters in four high schools and two middle schools;
- ▶ Expand the number of Student Organizers by recruiting two to four new African American and Latino students to lead each new chapter;
- ▶ Develop a six-week training program in substance abuse and community organizing

for new Student Organizers;

- ▶ Recruit and train ten to twelve college students to serve as peer mentors;
- ▶ Organize bi-weekly small group discussions on personal growth, values clarification, substance use and conflict resolution;
- ▶ Organize monthly parent discussion groups;
- ▶ Organize weekly substance free recreational activities;
- ▶ Organize two cultural and/or educational activities per month including field trips to different southern Los Angeles neighborhoods; and
- ▶ Coordinate quarterly recreational activities for youth from student organizing committees.

Processes: At the time of the Washington Conference a structured curriculum for Student Organizers was not yet in place. Nevertheless, the process of organizing had begun. New Student Organizers were being recruited and training was in process. Recruiting of student members at target schools had begun. The College Student mentor Program was not yet in place. An academic tracking system for youth was in process.

At the time the site visit was conducted, the monthly discussion meetings for parents had not yet begun. Planning for recreational activities was in process but no recreational activities had begun. However, bi-monthly rap sessions for SCYEA members were coming on-line. Major efforts were being expended to begin recruiting SCYEA members at target schools. But at the time of the Washington Conference, Student Organizers were not yet recruited and, of course, were not yet trained. Plans were being developed for recreational and cultural activities.

The Project Director had an acute sense of the structures and processes which had to be put into place. Further, he and his staff were easily able to specify measurable objectives. Developing a structured curriculum required recruiting an educator. Likewise, for each goal, a necessary structure, process and outcome were specified.

Assessment of Structures and Processes: *SC-YEA* was exceptionally responsible in repeating the Structure, Process, Outcome Analysis by September of 1998. By that date, the project had put the necessary structures into place to accomplish the goals of the project. A structured curriculum for Student Organizers was in place and youth were being trained in it. As a result, student membership in Chapter schools was increasing. The College Student Mentor Program was on line with its requisite academic tracking system. Monthly discussion sessions for parents and bimonthly rap sessions for youth were being held. A recreational and cultural program was planned and executed.

There are a number of features of *SCYEA* which contributed to the success of the *Ounce of Prevention* program in putting processes in place. The *Ounce of Prevention* program was built upon the already-existing program of a successful agency. The *Ounce of Prevention* program was a very nice fit for the values and operating strategies of *SCYEA*. Further, *SCYEA* is a "tight" organization with a clear sense of mission and a clear set of operating principles. It was these operating principles which were expanded for the *Ounce of Prevention* project.

**Portland, OR: *Entre Amigos***

Goals and Objectives: The *Ounce of Prevention* project in Portland, Oregon was known as *Entre Amigos* (Among Friends). The target population for the program was youth in the low-income Hispanic community. The approaches to these youth were through the schools, primarily the middle schools, families, and other agencies. This was based on a broad model of community development and programming targeted at drug abuse. A comprehensive goal was to empower low-income Hispanic students with the skills to do community organizing long-term.

The measurable objectives for the program were somewhat diffuse. Long-term objectives were as (1) scheduling one presentation at each high school and one third of the middle schools (15 of 45) on alcohol and drug abuse with invited follow-up presentations; and (2) increasing Hispanic

access to direct services and treatment through a 25% increase in referrals from a drug-abuse hot line. To accomplish these long-term objectives, a number of short-term objectives were designated, including:

- ▶ Aggressive leadership training for parents so that they acquire and increase understanding of their role in their children's decisions about use of alcohol and drugs;
- ▶ Targeting of schools which have a 55-65% participation in the free school lunch program;
- ▶ Intensive team building for a bi-lingual prevention campaign;
- ▶ Development of increased collaboration and trust between Latino students and service organizations

Processes: To accomplish these objectives a number of structures had to be in place and a number of processes had to be operating including the following: (1) putting the resources in place for the hot line; (2) preparing the materials for presentations; (3) recruiting parents to participate in presentations; and (4) beginning dialogue with social service organizations.

Assessment of Structures and Processes: *Entre Amigos* is a very process-oriented project. The structures of the organization were not carefully defined in the Structure, Process Outcome Analysis, but definition of processes was well developed. These processes included media: The use of flyers, Latino newspapers and cable TV. Further, the staff sought strategic alliances with other agencies such as the police and the Northwest Gang Investigation Association. Emphasis in *Entre Amigos* is on communication: Skit presentation, establishment of a hot line, and making youth available to other youth as sources of information and support on the streets. Other activities include dances and youth events.

The Structure, Process and Outcome plan for *Entre Amigos* is packaged in a terminology which fits well with the nature of the community it serves. It targets a linguistically distinct cultural group (Hispanics) in a defined geographical area (Portland). This is a community which has strong

internal cultural bonds and a social structure of its own. *Entre Amigos* does not impose an additional organizational system on the community in the form of a bureaucracy. Instead it aims its efforts at processes, in particular communications.

The question is whether an effort such as *Entre Amigos* can add its cultural message of drug use prevention to the existing Latino culture. If it can, then that Latino culture will be a substantial barrier against drug use. This implies the need for a process in which the local Latino population of Portland is empowered to take action within its own community. By emphasizing youth empowerment in the schools, *Entre Amigos* plans to take the message of Latino empowerment to young people and to enlist them in preventing drug use.

There are some worthwhile lessons to be derived from this view of *Entre Amigos*. In the normal process of evaluating programs such as this one, the first things that an evaluator looks for are the indicators of structure, the organizational chart, the leadership system, the sub-units which provide the foundation for action. In this cohesive ethnic community, structures such as these are probably not predictive of success. A vertically structured organization, may, in fact, be quite antithetical to success. A flat organization that is quite unstructured, but which relies on processes of communication throughout the community may work far more effectively than a hierarchical organization which has the appearances of being imposed from outside.

### **Syracuse, New York: *An Alternative Court-Ordered Program for Juvenile Offenders***

Goals and Objectives: The *Ounce of Prevention* program in Syracuse is run by the Salvation Army. This national organization has an outstanding reputation for social action programs. It has a modern, hierarchical organization with sophisticated mechanisms for program management and review. The target population for the program was juvenile offenders. The overall goal of the program was to divert juvenile offenders from further involvement with the juvenile justice system by offering a peer-led substance abuse prevention program. Short term goals were to offer the program as a peer led system of support and involvement. The approach was a blend of a focused

program for those most at risk (juvenile offenders) and a community development model using peer leaders.

The measurable objectives for the program were aimed at increases in knowledge about the risks of drug abuse, reduction in peer related risk factors (i.e. Moving youth out of a drug-oriented peer culture), involvement of parents in the lives of youth at risk and increase in parental knowledge of drugs. Long-term objectives were carefully specified. These included:

- ▶ 75% of participants will demonstrate an increase in knowledge about the effects of substance abuse;
- ▶ 75% of participants will demonstrate a reduction in individual and peer-related risk factors that lead to substance abuse;
- ▶ 65% of youth will successfully complete the 12 week discussion program and will have no further incidents of involvement with the juvenile justice system for six months after completion;
- ▶ The program will hire and train 15 youth as peer leaders;
- ▶ The program will increase parental involvement and knowledge of substance abuse.

To accomplish these long-term objectives, number of short-term objectives were designated including the following:

- ▶ Recruit peer leaders;
- ▶ Hire peer leaders at a ratio of five leaders for each referred juvenile offender;
- ▶ Train peer leaders to conduct educational and support group components;
- ▶ Develop a program of twenty-four hours of training including a ropes course;
- ▶ Establish referral sources for first-time offenders;
- ▶ Enroll up to twenty five youth for a twelve week cycle of peer led programming; and
- ▶ Conduct weekly support, education, and socialization components.

Processes: To accomplish these objectives a number of structures had to be in place and a number of processes had to be operating. Most of these structures were under the control of the Project Director. These were internal structures and processes such as recruitment and training of peer leaders, establishment of peer discussion groups and tutoring programs and the like. The Salvation Army as an organization is exceptional in its reputation of structuring programs and moving participants through the resulting processes.

However, the conduct of the project also required external structures and processes. In particular it relied on links to the juvenile justice system to produce referrals into the program. This process of referral was one over which the project had little control other than the good faith of the players in the juvenile justice system -- in particular the probation officers. Without that control, this critical input process was in jeopardy from the outset. The second external process which was vulnerable was the link to parents and families. This external link was based on the assumption that parents and families had the interest and the time resources to participate in the program. Without any means of control over that link, the goal of involving parents and families was also in jeopardy from the outset.

Those processes which were under the internal organizational control of the project were put in place early on. A recruiting program for peer leaders was established. A screening program was put in place. Peer leaders were hired and training began. Juvenile officers were contacted as a source of referrals and a system of referral was constructed. The first participants were recruited. At the same time efforts at parent outreach began. A parent group was planned. A family open house night was planned. Graduation ceremonies were planned.

Assessment of Structures and Processes: From the analysis of the Structure, Process and Outcome documentation, it is evident that the Salvation Army was adept at organizational development. Personnel were in place, goals and objectives were clearly outlined. Processes were designed which matched closely the goals specified in the original grant application. This was a

sophisticated and thoughtful program of intervention. In retrospect, the program worked especially well for the trained peer leaders. However, the two points of vulnerability in the project were the flow of referrals from the juvenile justice system and the involvement of parents and families.

The referrals did not come from the probation officers in the numbers anticipated. This lack of referrals meant that there would not be sufficient numbers of offenders to challenge the substantial skills that had been developed in the peer leaders. One predictable outcome was that the project would put onto the streets of Syracuse a talented, motivated group of peer counselors who had the potential to change the culture of youth in their neighborhood with regard to drugs. This was a valuable outcome. But the impact on juvenile offenders was less than was hoped.

Parents did not get involved. Their adolescent children were well cared for by the Salvation Army project. They were safe; they were being trained; they were responsible young people who were fulfilling the aspirations of parents who cared about them. But these parents had jobs and older kids who were not doing as well and younger kids who needed looking after. There was neither time nor energy to devote to a young person who did not need these resources to do well.

Summary of Structure-Process Outcomes Analysis and Conclusions: From this review of the Structure, Process, Outcome Analysis, we can derive several important conclusions which inform future efforts at drug abuse prevention efforts: First, drug abuse prevention efforts which target parents and which intend to involve them as actors will have a very difficult time doing so. Parents of those youth who are most at risk for drug abuse simple don't come out.

Second, the nature of the agency implementing the drug abuse prevention program is an important variable in predicting the success of the effort. In the case of programs aimed at ethnic communities, you have to have an agency that participates in the culture of the target community. In addition to staffing such an agency with ethnic natives, the structure of the agency has to reflect the values of the target community. In this case, the Raven House project in Eureka and the Entre Amigos project in Portland are exemplars of projects whose staff make-up, values, and organizational

structure are well-attuned to their target communities.

Third, an agency has to have a record of accomplishment to succeed. Those organizations sponsored by national agencies such as the Salvation Army and the Boys and Girls Clubs have an advantage in putting structure and process into place. They know how to recruit talent and how to monitor the operation of a project to be certain that goals are met in a timely fashion. This does not preclude the success of a new agency. It just means that practice helps.

A fourth and related finding is that coordination with cooperating (but unfunded) agencies has to be guaranteed. In the cases of Syracuse and Harbor Point, agencies which had pledged support in the forms of referrals and coordinated programming did not participate actively in the life of the project. It is not difficult to understand why. Though outside agencies had value commitments which made them moral partners in the effort to prevent drug abuse, there was no commitment of real resources which gave them material motivations to participate. In the case of Syracuse, this meant difficulty in getting referrals to the program from probation officers. In the case of Harbor Point, though the school, the health clinic, and the security force spoke of the need for cooperation, de facto, there was little actual coordination.

Fifth, there are subtle gender issues which are not yet documented in the literature. The program in Syracuse tended to be a young woman's program. The project at Harbor Point was clearly a male youth program. The content of a program needs to be carefully tailored to include elements attractive to the targeted population with special attention to gender issues.

Finally, culture change in an at-risk community is possible. Surprisingly, there is evidence from several of these projects that the culture surrounding drug use is subject to change, even in the short run. Analysis of Syracuse, Los Angeles, Eureka, Portland, and Kansas City is provocative. These show preliminary evidence that youth can be recruited, trained in the nature of drug abuse prevention, community organization, and personal development and sent back into their communities to deliver a new message on the streets. This is perhaps the most heartening finding of the evaluation.

One can identify three target groups in drug abuse prevention efforts among youth: Those who will make it anyway, those who will not make it, and the marginal group -- those who will make it only with the assistance of targeted programs. There is a substantial portion of youths in the test communities who would have escaped drug abuse were the projects in place or not. In fact, these programs are most attractive to those who will make it anyway. Moreover, there is a subculture of youth who come from families which are dysfunctional, who have personal pathologies, or who are just unlucky and who will be impossible for even the most clever project to reach. They are not attracted to participate in these projects.

There is also a marginal group which might go one way or the other and it is these that are the most important target population for these projects. For them, the success of the project is a key variable in their life course. These projects are vitally important for this group. The fact that the projects are most attractive to those youth who will make it anyway should not be seen as a weakness, but as a real strength. Their participation implies long term changes in youth culture. It is these long-term changes in youth culture which will materially affect the marginal group. However, we do not yet know how to reach those who will not make it. It may be that youth oriented programs will not reach this hard-core group and we must wait until later in their life courses to help them -- if we can.

### **Outcomes**

A close reading of this report reveals few quantifiable outcomes. Although the Request for Proposal (RFP) specified the need for demonstrated outcomes as well as a contracted evaluation process directed at outcome identification, the outcomes nonetheless remained elusive. They lurk within the text of this final evaluation report as qualitative data. They are present in site visit reports and in the analysis of outcomes -- but not as the quantified measures of the impact of the *Ounce of Prevention* program which were desired. This section responds to the absence of quantified outcome measures. As such it has a two-fold purpose: (1) to define why it was not possible to produce quantified outcomes data and (2) to discuss the specific outcomes of individual projects in the absence of quantified outcomes.

### Generating Outcomes Data:

The *Ounce of Prevention* program was designed to produce outcomes data. The initiation of this process begins with the RFP. An RFP has multiple purposes and is written to satisfy a number of audiences, including Congressional funders, Cabinet and sub-Cabinet members of the Administration, agency executives, and consultants in the applied areas, many of whom are academics. RFPs are written to precise standards. This implies that they include objectives which call for precise and measurable outcomes, as was the intent in the *Ounce of Prevention* program. As a result, RFPs are couched in terms which represent high, perhaps maximal, expectations.

The RFP thus represents a politically sensitive document. The funding agency must be sensitive to the Congress and to its constituency in the scholarly community. The Congress, especially a fiscally responsible Congress, will demand identifiable outcomes from social action programs to justify its expenditures. The scholarly community will demand identifiable outcomes as part of its search for scientific documentation of the efficacy of conceptual approaches to intervention. The RFP becomes a consensus document but one which sets a high standard of evidence that funded programs will work. The net result is that the RFP contains specific language which calls for efforts at documentation of outcomes.

If a federal agency such as OJJDP cannot demonstrate outcomes for a program, it becomes difficult to justify continuation funding in the administrative budgeting process. Further, a program which fails to generate demonstrable outcomes runs the risk of Congressional scrutiny, embarrassment for the agency, and cessation of funding. To some extent, grantees were selected based on their ability to produce outcomes data. However, when Congress decided to eliminate the program during the budget negotiations, grantees understood that regardless of their ability to demonstrate positive outcomes, no additional funds would be forthcoming from OJJDP. This immediately removed from consideration one of the potent motivators for social action agencies -- the promise of additional federal funds for project continuation. Certainly, there were internal incentives within each grantee organization to use federal funds to better their communities and document outcomes for future funding from other sources; however, the documentation process for

OJJDP became far less important.

It also affected the Evaluator's ability to collect such information. As part of the *Ounce of Prevention* evaluation, the Team was contracted to provide both training for evaluation research and continuing consultation for evaluation. Its tasks were to teach the importance of evaluation research, to be accessible to projects in the role of technical support as they gathered evaluation data, to analyze that data as it became available, and to derive usable conclusions. The role of the Evaluation Team depended entirely on the willingness and the ability of the grantees to develop sources of data, record and archive that data, and submit it for analysis. The Team, however, had no real power to demand that agencies alter the manner in which they were organizing their programs or that they gather data, and no power to coerce data from them. Each agency understood that at the end of the funding period, the project would simply end -- with no further opportunity for continuation funding from the federal government. The net result of the elimination of federal funding was that most of the six organizations targeted for in-depth assessment did not provide outcomes data. It would be unjust to suggest that they failed to provide outcomes data as a deliberate act. They did not provide outcomes data for a variety of reasons.

#### Agencies and the Failure to Provide Outcomes Data: What Went Wrong?

While qualitative data support positive outcomes in a number of the programs, quantitative outcomes data are not present for a number of reasons including: (1) unrealizable goals; (2) the failure of cooperating agencies; (3) lack of continuity in program leadership; (4) failure to put a program into place; (5) failure to collect outcomes data; and (6) a time frame that is too short.

**Unrealizable Goals:** Some project goals were unrealistic and unrealizable. An example which was present in several projects was the inability to motivate parents of youth to participate in programming. Both Harbor Point (Dorchester, MA) and the Salvation Army project (Syracuse, NY) claimed a central goal of motivating parents to participate in programs. Neither program was successful in meeting these goals. Families of youth at risk are themselves stressed. Many parents of at-risk youth are burdened by work, responsibilities for other children and their own psycho-social

problems. Expecting active participation from them was idealistic and perhaps naive. This component of the programs did not materialize and there was nothing to measure.

**Failure of Cooperating Agencies:** In some sites, programs did not materialize because promised cooperation in the community did not emerge as planned. When social action agencies are dependent on other community agencies for referrals into their *Ounce of Prevention* projects and those referrals do not occur, the grantees are left with no client population to serve. Such was the case in Syracuse, where the juvenile court had promised a stream of referrals into a youth-led assistance program for adjudicated drug offenders.<sup>2</sup> Further, probation officers realized that the Salvation Army's *Get HYPED* intervention program required a longer intervention than typical probation periods. Thus, probation officers would have seen their case loads swell. As a result, the flow of adjudicated offenders did not occur. Agencies are most often facile in adjusting to changes in their environments. However, when vital elements of the environment do not deliver key resources as promised, as in the case of the juvenile offenders in Syracuse, the program cannot go on as promised. The sanctions which the federal government can apply to grantees or the cooperating agencies are limited, if they exist at all.

**Lack of Leadership Continuity:** The impetus for a social action program relies on a shared vision. Programs create formal statements of vision, values, and processes to guarantee the continuity of the program even when key individuals transition out of leadership roles. However, discontinuities in leadership can be very damaging to the processes of a project -- especially as new leaders lack a vision of the proposed outcomes and the links between programs and outcomes. When this occurs intended outcomes may change -- or be lost. In addition, social action programs are often very dependent upon the vision, charisma and motivational qualities of a one dynamic individual. If or when that person leaves the organization, programs under that person's leadership may be at risk of falling apart.

---

<sup>2</sup>This system would have replaced the probation system. However, from the time of grant submission to the time of funding the Director of the Youth Court resigned and was replaced by someone who was not a signatory to the grant.

One project funded under *Ounce of Prevention* exemplifies this difficulty. The Miami project saw frequent turnover in the position of project director. There was not a consistent means of contacting the program. As personnel changed, understandings of the program's vision changed. Discussions of outcomes shifted visibly with these changes. As a result, it was determined by the Evaluation Team that Miami would not be included in an in-depth study. When key personnel change, visions change. In several cases the accumulated training and consultation between the Evaluation Team and the director were lost in the transition. Further, the commitments to the Evaluation Team which were made by an original director get diluted as new directors face the challenge of simply running the program. Outcomes data in such a circumstance is an early casualty.

**Failure to Put Program into Place:** Some elements of proposed programs were not put into place or were put into place far too late in the grant process to provide measurable outcomes. In addition to the examples of parent-oriented programming which failed when parents could not be recruited to participate, other elements of promised program simply never appeared. For example, training materials in Syracuse were late in being developed and the computer facility at Harbor Point was very slow to come on-line. In addition, although the Harbor Point program intended to develop a youth council among adolescents, it was never able to generate more than ten members. These were paid a stipend for their youth council activities, but even with that incentive, there was never a ground swell of membership. Late in the program there was concerted effort to develop the council, but by that time, there would be no measurable outcome available for this evaluation report.

**Agencies Did Not or Could Not Gather Data:** In several instances it was not possible to generate relevant outcomes data. At Harbor Point there was a change in the on-site security force at mid-point in the grant. Security arrangements were contractual with a private security force. The first vendor of security services had a hard-line position on drug infractions. All incidents were prosecuted fully. The second contracted security force had a totally different philosophy. Drug infractions were ignored initially and officer-adolescent counseling took place on the streets. This made comparisons of infraction rates before and after the project non-comparable.

While qualitative data was available in every instance and was gathered and included in this report, quantitative data was not producible for any single project. Project directors were generally not trained in generating data and were motivated to do so only in the abstract. To address this need the Evaluation Team ran a conference in Washington D.C. early program to alter grantees of the need for systematic evaluation, to orient them to data gathering methods and tools, and to create strong working relationships for technical assistance. While the grantees were receptive to the abstract notion of the value of measuring outcomes, there were never any sanctions or incentives to do so. In the pressure of running projects, grantees generally did not develop the data needed for outcomes assessment.

**A Time-Frame That is Too Short:** The final reason that outcomes data was not developed was that the time-frame for the projects was too short to see noticeable changes. The funding period for the projects was eighteen months. Much of that time was shortened because of a late start up, time required to put personnel in place, time to build processes and develop materials, and time to recruit youth into programs. As a result, the time frame was shortened from eighteen months to as little as fourteen months. It was not possible to show results in so short a time period.

### Project Outcomes

Though there are not quantifiable outcomes to present, there are qualitative outcomes which are worth noting. Some of the projects did not succeed and others seem to have done so. These are noted below:

**Dorchester, Massachusetts:** Harbor Point in Dorchester targeted the youngest group of all the Ounce of Prevention projects (youth between the ages of six and nineteen). The grant proposal by the Harbor Point Community Task Force was excellent and a professional staff was recruited. The goal of involving parents was not met. For these parents involvement did not occur. There was a genuine male bias in the Harbor Point program. Young males were participants while females were not. The project was off the mark for young women. For whatever reason, the program did not succeed in recruiting them. Data was not available from the security force or from the schools.

Interviews were held with key informants for qualitative research. However, the project director was never accountable for the production of systematic data.

**Eureka, California:** The Raven Project in Eureka was successful in putting process into place. The project created a large number of contacts with street youth and opened regular lines of communication to clinics. Supplies were distributed to youth in the streets. Youth came in to the facility from the streets and developed a changed awareness of alcohol and substance abuse. The project created a "loose" organization with weak ties to other organizations. It maintained a fluid organizational process which worked well for street kids. The very fluid nature of Project Raven, its lack of structure, was its great strength. It was successful in outreach and informal education.

**Kansas City, Kansas:** The Block Brothers Program of the Boys and Girls Club of Greater Kansas City works around a concept of personal development in its approach to drug abuse prevention. The assumption is that one can prevent drug abuse by assisting a young person in developing self-esteem and developing skills for employment. This implies a set of values on work and youth coming together with career aspirations in mind. While this is admirable, it was never demonstrated that the project served the needs of adolescents who did not begin with these values in the first place. It may be that for severely disadvantaged youth -- exactly those most at risk for drug abuse these values are not germane. The Block Brothers Program works for those youth who are already career oriented. Block Brothers would be better suited for those youth where poverty is not so severe and where the culture of drugs is not pervasive. While the program was implemented well, it did not address the needs of the youth who needed it most.

**Los Angeles, California:** SCYEA (South Central Youth Empowered Thru Action) worked hard to complete the Structure, Process, Outcome Analysis. The project had put the necessary organizational components in place including its structured curriculum for Student Organizers. It was effective in recruiting student membership in Chapter schools. The College Student Mentor Program was enacted as was an academic tracking system. Where other projects had failed to mobilize families, SCYEA was holding discussion sessions for parents and youth. SCYEA began this project

with a record of skills already in place. While they did not initiate a new organization, they were able to expand the existing organization in meaningful directions. They used a grass-roots community organization and focused it on drug abuse prevention.

**Portland, Oregon:** *Entre Amigos* of Portland was similar to Eureka in that it was process-oriented. There was an emphasis on information dissemination via flyers, Latino newspapers and cable TV. The staff created alliances with other agencies including the police and the Northwest Gang Investigation Association. The emphasis on communication was creative: Skits, a hot line, using youth as sources of information and support on the streets, dances and public events. *Entre Amigos* added to Latino culture a strong anti-drug message especially among young people. The drug abuse prevention program used the culture of the a cohesive Latino community to create cultural barriers to drug use.

**Syracuse, New York:** The Syracuse program worked for the trained peer leaders. However, the flow of referrals from the juvenile justice system never materialized. Thus, the key outcome intended in the grant application never occurred. The referrals did not come from the probation officers. This meant that there were not sufficient numbers of offenders for the peer leaders to work with. One outcome was that the project put a talented group of peer counselors into the neighborhood. This was a positive outcome. But the impact on juvenile offenders never materialized. The program to involve families failed. Parents had jobs and older kids who were not doing well and younger kids who needed supervision. They never came in numbers which permitted a program to exist.

### Conclusions

The evaluation of program outcomes generates several conclusions. First, it is very difficult to involve parents as key participants in drug abuse prevention. Second, agencies such as Raven House in Eureka and the *Entre Amigos* in Portland are good examples of projects whose values, and organizational structure are well-attuned to their target communities. This is an important element

in success. Third, coordination with cooperating agencies has to be contractually guaranteed. In the cases of Syracuse and Harbor Point, agencies which had pledged support failed to deliver. Fourth, there are gender problems. The program in Syracuse was a young woman's program. The project at Harbor Point was a male program. Gender issues are not yet adequately addressed in the literature. Fifth, cultural change in communities is possible. Analysis of Syracuse, Los Angeles, Eureka, Portland, and Kansas City show evidence that youth can be recruited, trained in the nature of drug abuse prevention, community organization, and personal development and sent back into their communities to alter street culture. Finally, social action agencies are not well equipped to generate data to evaluate their own outcomes. Evaluation teams are requisite to provide training and technical support but this is not enough. There have to be sanctions and incentives to agencies to prod them into doing serious outcomes analysis.

## Capacity Assessment

Goals: A critical step in moving from *structure* to *process* to *outcomes* is determining how, with what resources and to what extent an organization implement the strategic plan. A capacity assessment is a *resource-based analysis* designed to answer these questions. That is, capacity assessment asks (1) what resources are employed in a program's *structure*; (2) what resources developed and used by an organization to undertake the activities presented in the *process*; and (3) what new capacity was created as part of a program's *outcomes*? Capacity assessment also provides a natural link to the cost assessment, as described in more detail below.

A Conceptual Framework for Capacity Assessment: Capacity may be defined in several ways: (1) the ability to hold, receive or accommodate; (2) the ability carry out goals; (3) the ability to respond to external needs, pressures; and/or (4) the ability to change. It can also be a measure of production or output — generally referred to “capacity building.” There are five dimensions of capacity:

- ▶ organizational structure;
- ▶ personnel;
- ▶ capital resources (durables such as building space)

- ▶ financial resources; and
- ▶ non-financial resources.

Each dimension is described briefly below. The components of each dimension outlined in this section are the building block of the analysis. That is, they provide indicators or measurable attributes of an organization that contribute to the overall capacity of the program. Exhibit IV-2 shows the specific indicators for each dimension.

*Organizational Structure:* There are three aspects of organizational capacity: (1) governance and accountability; (2) internal integrity; and (3) external integrity. “Governance and Accountability” includes many of the topics covered under the *Structure-Process-Outcomes* analysis, including program or organization goals and priorities; how priorities are translated into budget commitments; scope of membership; internal and external review process (accountability); and involvement of outside entities and individuals (for example, the presence of a Board of Directors). “Internal Integrity” refers to the degree to which (a) the structure of an organization matches its functions or activities or production needs and (b) staffing matches organizational output needs. Specifically, are the organizational structures in place staffing patterns — who does what — adequate and appropriate to support the intended activities and articulated goals? “External Integrity” refers to (a) the degree to which production matches society needs — that is, is the organization filling an identified need in the community and (b) how responsive to external events is the organization.

*Personnel:* Components of personnel capacity include (1) workforce characteristics and demographics; (2) workers’ skills, expertise, and knowledge and change in these attributes over time; (3) training and education needs; (3) the ability of an organization to recruit, train or retain workers; and (4) employee commitment and satisfaction, which also include the commitment of the organization to the worker, for example, in the provision of benefits, job security or stability in the workplace.

**Exhibit IV-2**  
**A Conceptual Framework for Capacity Assessment: Dimensions and Indicators**

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Indicators</b>
<b>Organizational Capacity</b>	<p><b>Governance and Accountability</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Goals</li> <li>▶ Established priorities</li> <li>▶ Review processes (external, internal)</li> <li>▶ Translation of priorities into budget commitments</li> <li>▶ Scope of organizational membership</li> <li>▶ Involvement of outside entities, individuals</li> </ul> <p><b>Internal Integrity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Structure matches function, production needs</li> <li>▶ Staffing matches organization output needs</li> </ul> <p><b>External Integrity</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Production matches society needs</li> <li>▶ Responsiveness to external events</li> </ul>
<b>Personnel</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Workforce characteristics, demographics</li> <li>▶ Skills, expertise, knowledge and change over time</li> <li>▶ Training and education needs</li> <li>▶ Ability to recruit, train, retain</li> <li>▶ Employee satisfaction</li> <li>▶ Employee commitment</li> <li>▶ Commitment of organization to workers</li> </ul>
<b>Capital Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Type (buildings, land, equipment)</li> <li>▶ Age</li> <li>▶ Present value</li> <li>▶ Discounted value</li> <li>▶ Durability</li> <li>▶ Appropriate to production process, "flexibility"</li> </ul>
<b>Financial Resources</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Budgets</li> <li>▶ Revenues</li> <li>▶ Costs</li> <li>▶ Financial Assets <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inventory and tracking of funding sources</li> <li>Ability to project future costs</li> <li>Knowledge of local markets</li> <li>Financial Buffer</li> <li>Set-asides for new staffing, training</li> <li>Financial resources linked to priorities</li> <li>Identification of external funding opportunities</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

Dimension	Indicators
Non-Financial Resources	<p><b>Internal</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Leadership within organization</li> <li>▶ Inventory of personal, organizational, community assets</li> <li>▶ Plan for identifying and mobilizing non-financial resources</li> </ul> <p><b>External</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▶ Political influence</li> <li>▶ Role in community</li> <li>▶ Outside perception of organization</li> <li>▶ Linkages with other organizations, communities</li> <li>▶ Ability to leverage additional resources</li> </ul> <p><b>Ability to change</b></p>

*Capital Resources:* Capital resources refer to durable goods including buildings, land, and equipment. Financial capital is described as part of “Financial Resources.” The capital capacity of an organization can be assessed in terms of the types of capital (eg: is it a building, land or durable equipment?) and for each item, its age; its present and discounted value; its durability (expected lifetime); and its appropriateness to the production process, or its flexibility in. As one example, many non-profit organizations have difficulty obtaining computers, considered by most to be essential in tracking expenditures and program activities. Alternatively, they may have old computers that do not have the ability to support more advanced software (eg: lack of memory, disk space) that would be helpful in achieving their program goals.

*Financial Resources:* Financial resources can be measured in a variety of ways including (1) the budget or anticipated expenses; (2) actual dollars put into program activities (Cost Assessment, see below); and organizational financial assets. Assets can include organizational revenues, the ability to track different funding sources and the ability to project future costs. Assets, then, are not simply about the availability of money to support activities, it is also about the organization’s ability to raise, track and evaluate the use of funds. For most non-profit services organizations, program funding presents a constant pressure. Thus, financial capacity is among the most critical aspects of capacity. Additional indicators of financial capacity are addressed by asking the following questions:

- ▶ What is the organization’s knowledge of the market for its services or activities? Is

there a demand for the services and can the market support the activities in generating revenues?

- ▶ What type of financial buffer or margin does an organization have? What kind of financial losses can an organization sustain and still achieve its primary objectives?
- ▶ Has the organization planned financially for expansion by setting aside funds for additional staffing, training, or capital improvements? For example, does the budget include line items for these expenditures, even if the amount at any particular time is \$0? Is there a long-term plan for funding stability and capital improvements?
- ▶ Are financial resources linked to program priorities? and
- ▶ What opportunities for external funding are identified by the organization? What is the ability of the organization to engage in grant writing or other fund-raising activities?

*Non-Financial Resources:* There are three types of non-financial resources that are critical to an organization's capacity: (1) internal; (2) external; and (3) the ability to change. Internal resources include leadership within organization, an inventory of personal, organizational, community assets (eg: whether an organization has identified its own capacity), and plans for identifying and mobilizing non-financial resources. External resources are primarily concerned with identifying the scope, nature and benefits of the organization's relationship to its community. Measures are mostly qualitative and include an organization's level of political influence; its role in community and the perception of the organization by the community; its linkages with other organizations in the communities; and its ability to leverage additional resources.

The ability of an organization to change, to respond to changes in its internal and external environment — such as loss of staff, or changes in community needs, funding sources, political or economic environment — while maintaining its overall mission is critical to the survival of most non-profit organizations. It is also the most difficult aspect of capacity to measure. First, one must observe an organization for a long period of time and have extensive knowledge of the organization, its history and development, and its staff. One must also have in-depth knowledge of the community and social, political and economic environment — both local and general — in which the organization operates. An assessment of organizational capacity in this sense requires extensive documentation. Generally, this type of assessment is conducted in in-depth case studies of programs over a long period of time.

*Levels of Analysis:* In addition to these five dimensions — organizational, personnel, capital, financial and non-financial — there are different levels of analysis. Each of these dimensions can be measured at the individual, organization, community or system level: what are the skills and abilities of specific individuals participating in the program, what are the organizational resources available to a program, what resources can an organization draw upon to promote program development, and

what resources are available outside the organization's community (this could include, for example, federal and state programs, regulatory mechanisms, political or economic resources).

Methodology and Analysis: The conceptual framework was presented to the *Ounce of Prevention* program directors and their youth leaders as part of the evaluation conference held in Washington, D.C. in January 1998. Participants were also led through an exercise that would later mirror their efforts to provide UNH with capacity assessment data when they returned home. The six sites targeted for in-depth assessment were asked to complete capacity assessment forms at two points in time: March 1998 (six months into the *Ounce of Prevention* Program) and September 1998 (one year later) The second form is designed to measure increases in capacity over time.

The conceptual framework outlines an ambitious set of indicators and measures for inclusion into the assessment. It became clear at the Grantees conference that a modified version would be more appropriate for the *Ounce of Prevention* programs. In addition, the second form was further modified to incorporate data on costs associated with program capacity, as described in the next sections. Specifically, grantees were asked to evaluate themselves, in both a qualitative and quantitative manner in the following areas:

- ▶ **Personnel resources**, including the demographic (age, education) and employment characteristics, level of effort (hours per week, wages) and assess each person's management, communication and analytical or technical skills using a scale of 1-5, with 5 being the highest level of expertise, in the following areas:
  - Management Skills, including program development, program management, team management and supervising. Clearly, not all indicators would be appropriate for all staff.
  - Communication Skills, including interviewing, writing, media work, briefings, and meetings;
  - Analytical or Technical Skills, including needs assessment, capacity assessment, survey research, program evaluation, data analysis, policy analysis, and legal analysis.
- ▶ **Financial resources**, including the grant, revenues from project activities, other sources of funds and gifts;
- ▶ **Capital resources**, including a description and assessment of the building space where activities occur (age, location, condition, ownership) as well as all office equipment, furniture, computers and other durable goods; and
- ▶ **Organizational resources**, including indicators in three areas:

- Mission: Did the staff, youth and volunteers understand the organization's mission and goals, and did they perceive the priorities supported the mission?
- Planning: To what extent did the organization have the ability to (1) learn new ideas from the community, (2) incorporate new ideas, and (3) anticipate changes in the environment? How aware was the organization of the community's needs, and did it engage in a collaborative planning process that included staff and youth? and
- Leadership: To what extent did the organization (1) articulate a vision for the program; (2) promote partnerships in the community; and (3) encourage staff and youth to develop leadership within the organization?

Exhibit IV-3 illustrates the type and level of measurement for each of the indicators used in this capacity assessment. Individual and composite measures were used to assess both starting capacity and changes or capacity development over time. Scores were unweighted — that is, each was assumed to be equally important. Because the data are self-reported the validity of the responses may be questionable. For example, project coordinators may have either over-rated or under-rated the abilities and perceptions of themselves or their youth leaders, or the capacity of their organizations. In addition, the scores may not be comparable across sites because participants may have a different understanding of skills and what constitutes a high or low score for any of the specific indicators. It is important, then, to remember that the data are self-reported and taken at face value. Data from the site visits provided in Chapter III may provide some insights into the numbers and scores presented here. Three of the six sites — Eureka, Kansas City, Los Angeles — completed both sets of capacity assessment forms. Data for these sites are reported here.

### ***The Raven Project Eureka, California***

Personnel Resources: Six months into the grant (March 1998), the program consisted of a director, coordinator, two youth leaders, 8 youth educators, and three volunteers. Six months later, the program had added one youth leader, doubled the number of youth educators, and added 2 volunteers. The level of effort (number of hours worked per week) was not recorded for the first capacity assessment; however, it is clear that the level of effort on the project increased substantially

given staffing increases. The second assessment indicates that as of September 1998, the project consisted of: 2 full-time adult project staff with college and post-graduate education; 3 youth leaders working 20-40 hours per week, two of which had college degrees; 17 youth educators working 10 hours per week (most had a GED/high school diploma or some college experience); and 5 volunteers working 2-5 hours per week.

**Exhibit V-3  
Capacity Assessment: Indicators, Type of Data and Level of Measurement**

<b>Indicator</b>	<b>Type of Data</b>	<b>Level of Measurement</b>
<b>PERSONNEL</b>		
<b>Employment Characteristics</b> Duration of employment (months) Level of effort (hours per week) Educational attainment Responsibilities	Numeric Numeric Qualitative Qualitative	Ordinal Ordinal Nominal NA
<b>Management Skills</b> Program development Program management Team Management Supervising	Numeric Numeric Numeric Numeric	Rank Scale (1-5, 5= highest score) Interval Interval Interval Interval
<b>Communication Skills</b> Interview Writing Media Work Briefings Meetings	Numeric Numeric Numeric Numeric Numeric	Rank Scale (1-5, 5= highest score) Interval Interval Interval Interval Interval
<b>Analytical Skills</b> Needs Assessment Capacity Assessment Survey Research Program Evaluation Data Analysis Policy Analysis Legal Analysis	Numeric Numeric Numeric Numeric Numeric Numeric Numeric	Rank Scale (1-5, 5= highest score) Interval Interval Interval Interval Interval Interval Interval

Indicator	Type of Data	Level of Measurement
<b>FINANCIAL RESOURCES</b>		
Budget	Dollar amounts	Interval
Other Funds	Dollar amounts	Interval
Revenue	Dollar amounts	Interval
Gifts	Qualitative	NA
<b>CAPITAL</b>		
Building, space	Qualitative	NA
Equipment	Qualitative	NA
Furniture	Qualitative	NA
Other durables	Qualitative	NA
Supplies	Qualitative	NA
Facilities match needs	Qualitative	NA
Unmet needs	Qualitative	NA
<b>ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT</b>		
<b>Mission</b>		Rank Scale (1-5, 1= highest score)
Staff understand mission	Numeric	Interval
Volunteers understand mission	Numeric	Interval
Staff perceive priorities support mission	Numeric	Interval
Volunteers perceive priorities support mission	Numeric	Interval
<b>Planning</b>		Rank Scale (1-5, 1= highest score)
Learns new ideas from outside	Numeric	Interval
Incorporates ideas into program	Numeric	Interval
Awareness of community needs	Numeric	Interval
Collaborative planning process	Numeric	Interval
Anticipate changes in environment	Numeric	Interval
<b>Leadership</b>		Rank Scale (1-5, 1= highest score)
Articulates vision for program	Numeric	Interval
Agency promotes partnerships	Numeric	Interval
Encourages staff to develop leadership	Numeric	Interval

The number and diversity of activities also increased commensurately. Of particular interest, the level of education among youth participants also showed gains. Discussions with program personnel suggested that the program was instrumental in encouraging youth participants to finish high school and/or attend college. Composite scores in the three areas — management skills,

communication skills and analytical or technical skills are shown in Exhibit IV-4. Scores show overall level of capacity including the average score for the two time periods as well as change in the score.

Overall, staff increased capacity scores in the three areas. The coordinator showed the highest level of capacity initially and thus gained the least, but nonetheless showed improvement over time. It also appears that the most unskilled participants — the youth educators and volunteers — showed the most gain, increasing their overall score almost a whole point (0.8), or an increase of 16% for this group of participants. Specific gains were shown in the following areas:

- ▶ the coordinator improved in conducting briefings meetings, program analysis and legal analysis;
- ▶ youth leaders gained in program and team management, conducting briefings and meetings, and conducting needs assessments, data analysis and legal analysis; and
- ▶ youth educators and volunteers increased their abilities to conduct interviews, they improved their writing and work with the media, and they showed gains in all components of analytical and technical skills.

It is particularly striking that the youth educators and volunteers group showed significant gains in analytical skills, with a 2.11 point increase, which represents an increase of 42% in six months! It should be noted that high gains in analytical and technical areas are particularly beneficial in that they represent skills that can translate to and be of value in the workplace. Thus, improving analytical capacity may improve one's employability or position in the job market. As such, it might also be argued that increasing a youth's analytical skills is helpful in reducing his or her risk factors.

The data also showed a slight decrease in capacity among youth educators and volunteers regarding management skills. This may have been the result of overestimation initially or changes in staff with lower capacity in this area — for example, recruiting more but younger or less skilled individuals. Without additional in-depth interviewing, it is not possible with this data to interpret what the decreased capacity resulted from. In any event, the capacity of this group increased substantially in the other two areas.

**Exhibit IV-4  
Personnel Capacity Assessment: Eurkea<sup>1</sup>**

Skill Area	Coordinator			Youth Leaders			Youth Educators and Volunteers		
	Avg	Change	% inc	Avg	Change	% inc	Avg	Change	% inc
Management Skills	5.00	0.0	0.0%	4.63	.25	5.0%	4.00	-.33	-6.7%
Communication Skills	3.85	.10	2.0%	3.25	.07	14%	2.31	.63	12.5%
Analytical and Technical Skills	4.36	.14	2.9%	3.85	.27	5.4%	1.91	2.11	42.3%
Total Composite Score	4.40	.08	1.6%	3.91	.41	8.1%	2.74	.80	16%

<sup>1</sup> Scores are based on 1-5, with 5 being highest level of expertise. Negative scores represent a decrease in capacity.

**Financial Resources:** Financial resources increased from \$105,182 in March 1998 to \$135,275 in September, representing an increase of 18.5%. The Raven Project depended almost exclusively on the *Ounce of Prevention* funds. Financial resources for the project totaled \$135,457, which included the \$100,000 grant, \$30,000 from a collaborative effort with *Tapestry*, a teen pregnancy prevention and education program, \$5,000 in other funds<sup>3</sup> and \$457 in revenues from concerts and other fund-raising activities. In addition, the project received donations, such as money, clothes, food, and books, from members of the community and other organizations. Gifts increased significantly during the six month period between the two capacity assessments. Items donated to the Raven Project included computers, bicycles, a stand-up freezer, a refrigerators, dishes, a couch, 15 sleeping bags, tents, a sewing machine, shoes, bedding and a television. While perhaps of limited monetary value, these items were essential and the project could not have obtained them with the limited funding available.

**Capital Resources:** Initially, the *Raven Project* rented space in the Youth Services Bureau, a 1950s building in a relatively nice part of town. Later, the project was able to purchase an old house near the highway. This was not only an improvement in capital resources, moving from a rental to

---

<sup>3</sup>The source of these funds was not provided.

ownership, but the building itself was much more suited to the needs of the project. For example, many homeless and runaway youth are afraid of adults and will not come to a facility that is predominantly inhabited by adults. Similarly, some people in the building were afraid of the homeless and runaway youth and many did not want them coming around. Homeless and runaway youth were also reluctant to come to a nice facility, or perhaps felt out of place because of limited opportunities to attend to their hygiene. The project's target population needed a place that was both "safe" and accessible, and the house was a more suitable site and environment for the youth it served.

In addition to a change in location and ownership, the project also acquired a substantial number of durable and non-durable goods, mostly in the form of gifts, as described above. Items in addition to those mentioned as gifts include a stove, microwave, various pieces of cooking and kitchen equipment, gardening furniture and tools, park benches, and a car for outreach. The project indicated a need for a larger facility to operate the drop-in services and for project staff, a printer for the project, more sewing machines, and larger and more durable outreach bags to accommodate growth in the program.

Organizational Resources: Capacity gains were not immediately apparent in this area. For example, the only area that did not remain the same or decline was among volunteers' perception that the organization's priorities supported the mission, and that was because there was missing data for the first assessment. Minor capacity loss was indicated in (1) the collaborative planning process; (2) the ability of the organization to anticipate changes in the environment; and (3) encouraging staff to develop leadership. These findings are in stark contradiction to the site visit findings (Chapter IV) and other assessments discussed in this chapter.

### ***The Block Brother Program, Kansas City, KS***

Personnel: The Block Brother program consisted of two full-time adult staff — a director, and administrator (both with some college education) — and 6 Block Brothers who were responsible for recruiting, organizing and interacting with youth aged 7-13 in specified neighborhoods. The

project also included a volunteer for 10 hours per week who assisted with food preparation. The project experienced some turnover during the summer of 1998 but by September, the project had 2 adult program staff, 2 youth leaders and 5 Block Brothers. Four of the five of the Block Brothers were the same from the first assessment.

The personnel scores were predominantly uniform between the two assessment periods. The director gained some knowledge of program evaluation. However, the composite score among Block Brothers show a substantial loss of capacity scores in data analysis, and the volunteers' scores for needs and capacity assessment also declined. These findings could be due to the changes in personnel or in the fact that the second assessment may not have been completed by the same person who filled out the first one. Leadership changes, the uniformity of the data, and findings from the site visits make the validity of the scores questionable. Moreover, while the site visit data support the findings of some lost project capacity, it was not among volunteers as suggested by these data.

Financial Resources: No changes in financial resources were indicated. The project indicated that total financial resources were based on the grant award of \$71,250. The cost assessment described below suggests that in filling out the form, the staff may not have considered all the funds that were really available to the program.

Capital Resources: There is nothing in the data to suggest changes in capital resources. Indeed, the assessment data are identical, save for the building description, which is not included in the first assessment, but only in the second. The project lists several computers, minimal office furniture (1 desk, 1 chair and 1 4-drawer file cabinet), an office phone, a cellular phone, a pager, and a variety of games and outdoor equipment. While the assessment indicated that these resources are "well matched" to the program's needs, additional resources include more and more reliable transportation, which would be used to reduce dependency on the one existing van.

Organizational Assessment: While the data generally appear to be similar between the two assessments in the above areas, the organizational assessment show significant increases in capacity

in two of the three areas: Planning and Leadership (Exhibit IV-5).

**Exhibit IV-5  
Organizational Capacity Assessment: Kansas City<sup>1</sup>**

Indicator	Assessment		Score Change
	#1	#2	
<b>Planning</b>			
Learns new ideas from outside	3	3	0
Incorporates ideas into program	4	3	1
Awareness of community needs	2	1	1
Collaborative planning process	4	1	3
Anticipate changes in environment	3	1	2
<b>Composite Scores</b>			
Average score	3.2	1.8	1.4
Percent increase in composite capacity score <sup>2</sup>	---	---	28%
<b>Leadership</b>			
Articulates vision for program	3	2	1
Agency promotes partnerships	3	2	1
Encourages staff to develop leadership	3	1	2
<b>Composite Scores</b>			
Average score	3.0	1.5	1.3
Percent increase in capacity <sup>2</sup>	---	---	26.7%

<sup>1</sup>Scores are based on a five-point scale with 1= highest score.

<sup>2</sup>Score change divided by number of elements in score (eg: 1.4/5=.28)

No change was indicated in the program mission. In particular, the collaborative planning process and the ability to anticipate changes in the environment appeared to improve significantly over time, increasing overall composite score by 28%. Similarly, leadership increased in all categories, increasing the composite score by 26.7%. It should be noted that in between the two assessments, the project experienced a change in the director's position, and it is not clear that the two people who filled out the form would have had the same perceptions or assessment criteria. This suggests that the data be viewed cautiously. It also points to a need to validate the reports with site visit data.

***South Central Youth Empowered Thru Action (SC-YEA) Program, Los Angeles, CA***

Personnel: The *South Central Youth Empowered Thru Action (SC-YEA)* Program was extensive by any measure. Program staff listed in the first assessment included:

- ▶ a full time program director;
- ▶ a full time program administrator;
- ▶ a youth leader (30 hours per week);
- ▶ 4 full time project staff whose roles were to conduct outreach to youth and parents, coordinate tobacco education and training, recruit and train youth organizers, and facilitate youth groups;
- ▶ five full-time support staff who provided management of the programs, policy analysis, strategic planning, other research for the project, and administrative support; and
- ▶ 9 volunteers working 10 hours per week; five volunteers had completed a high school diploma, 4 of those appeared to work only during the summer.

In all, personnel for this project consisted of 14.0 full-time equivalents (FTEs). The second assessment showed an increase in 2 full time project staff with some college education for recruiting and training youth, and 2 volunteers with some high school working 10 hours per week. This represents a gain of 2.5 FTEs or an increased capacity of 18%. Based on the *SC-YEAs* listed financial resources (see below), it is clear that personnel for the *Ounce of Prevention* program was not separated from other programs operated by *SC-YEA*.

Scores for personnel skills were listed for the director, the administrator, the youth leaders and four volunteers (Exhibit IV-6). On the second assessment scores for 2 additional volunteers were noted. Scores were high for the director, thus small changes were indicated in the areas of survey research and capacity assessment. The administrator showed a one point improvement in 7 of the 16 specific areas, including team management, writing, media work, capacity assessment, survey research, data analysis and legal analysis. This resulted in a 8.1% increase in the composite score.

Of all personnel assessed, the administrator showed the greatest increase.

**Exhibit IV-6: Personnel Capacity Assessment: Los Angeles<sup>1</sup>**

Skill Area	Director			Administrator		
	Avg	Change	% inc	Avg	Change	% inc
Management Skills	5.0	0.0	0.0%	4.0	0.25	5.0%
Communication Skills	4.8	0.0	0.0%	4.4	0.4	8.0%
Analytical and Technical Skills	4.43	0.29	5.7%	3.43	0.57	11.4%
<b>Composite Score</b>	<b>4.79</b>	<b>0.10</b>	<b>1.9%</b>	<b>4.15</b>	<b>0.41</b>	<b>8.1%</b>

Skill Area	Youth Leader			Other Project Staff <sup>2</sup>		
	Avg	Change	% inc	Avg	Change	% inc
Management Skills	3.33	0.33	6.7%	3.63	0.08	1.7%
Communication Skills	4.0	0.25	5.0%	3.78	0.56	11.3%
Analytical and Technical Skills	3.0	0.43	8.6%	3.55	0.21	4.3%
<b>Composite Score</b>	<b>3.61</b>	<b>0.34</b>	<b>6.7%</b>	<b>3.65</b>	<b>0.32</b>	<b>6.4%</b>

<sup>1</sup>Scores are based on 1-5, with 5 being highest level of expertise.

<sup>2</sup>Includes four individually evaluated project staff for Assessment #1, and two additional staff for Assessment #2 for Analytical and Technical Skills only.

The youth leader also showed a one point increase in the following areas: program management, media work, capacity assessment, survey research and policy analysis, resulting in a 6.7% increase in the composite score. The four project staff, taken as a group showed a similar increase in composite scores, with combined increases in all areas except program management, team management, media work, conducting meetings, policy analysis and legal analysis. However, some staff improved more than others. Contrary to expectations and results from other sites, the project staff with the highest average score (Staff person #2, average score of 4.04 out of 5.0) showed the highest level of improvement of an 8.8% increase in composite scores. The person with the second to lowest composite score (Staff person #3, average score of 3.44) showed the least change of a 2.9%

increase between the two assessments.

Financial Resources: Unlike most of the other programs investigated, Los Angeles has a well-developed, well-funded set of programs revolving around various aspects of substance abuse prevention and education and youth development. For example, of the \$1.34 million in external funding listed, the *Ounce of Prevention* grant constitutes only about 7% of the total funds available. Most of the additional funds are from federal, state and local government. This is in stark contrast to Eureka (78%) and Kansas City (100%). To some degree, this may reflect variation in the definition of resources. Clearly, Los Angeles included all organizational resources, while Kansas City included only grant funds. Nonetheless, Los Angeles has substantially greater resources as an organization than the other *Ounce of Prevention* sites. No revenue was listed and only \$5,000 in gifts were identified.

Capital Resources: Leased from the city of Los Angeles and used by a variety of groups under the umbrella of the "Community Coalition," the building space was reported as new and in excellent condition. It also contained a security system. The capital resources for *SC-YEA* also included three IBM compatible computers, two laptop computers, furniture for ten staff, two couches, fifteen tables, an assortment of equipment and supplies for training and education. During the assessment period, the project acquired a new 7 passenger van, five IBM compatible computers, a television, camera, and binder and laminator equipment.

The Director indicated that the facilities and equipment at the Community Coalition adequately serve *SC-YEA*'s needs and commented that the various groups that comprise the Community Coalition are collaborating to ensure that each has access to the facilities in the building for their events. However, because *SC-YEA* has exceeded its objective of increasing the number of youth organizers by 50-75%, they further indicated that additional space is need to accommodate the rapid growth in student organizers. In addition, the assessment also reports that additional computers and technological services are needed for the student organizers. In short, the project is big and growing, owing in some measure to the *Ounce of Prevention* program.

Organizational Resources: Scores were identical for all but two indicators. These pertain to the staff's and volunteers' perception that priorities of the organization support its mission. In both areas, the scores increased by one point, from a score of 2 to the highest score of 1.

### **Summary of Capacity Assessment**

In general, all three programs increased capacity in personnel and organizational resources. It also appears that participants with the least skills initially show the greatest increases, which would be expected. It is particularly noteworthy that youth tended to show increases in analytical and technical skills. As mentioned above, this is a highly favorable outcome as such skills would improve their ability to find good jobs. In addition, all sites seemed to have increased their financial, capital and organizational resources. Overall, the findings indicate that the *Ounce of Prevention* program resulted in increased community capacity to address substance abuse prevention and education among youth in a relatively short period of time. These findings are generally supported by the site visits.

Despite these strong findings, the data have a number of limitations. First, data are based on self-reports. In two of the three cases, the "reporter" changed. It is not known if the reporters shared the same perceptions or used the criteria for arriving at the score. Similarly, and for much the same reason, data do not appear to be comparable between sites. The findings also suggest that this instrument should be used in conjunction with, and indeed prior to any site visits. In this case, the second assessment took place after the site visits. Thus, only the first assessment could be validated by observation. Additional validation of the instrument would be helpful.

### **Cost Assessment**

Goals: Peer influences have been shown to be associated with use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs, as well as with interpersonal violence. The studies which have demonstrated these associations have been retrospective. As a logical next step, a number of prospective studies have been done of interventions designed to use peer influences to prevent use of tobacco, drugs, and alcohol. This is

most appropriate inasmuch as trend data shows increasing use of substances by adolescents. However, published reports of evaluations of peer-based preventive interventions have not uniformly supported peer-based programs as either cost-effective or effective in outcomes. The issue of costs associated with efforts at prevention was a focus of the *Ounce of Prevention* Evaluation. Assessing costs relative to interventions for drug abuse is a two-fold problem. It has been problematic to document outcomes and no published studies of cost exist.

On the one hand, research studies have been mixed in their outcomes. This may be a problem of inadequate methodology. Few studies use carefully constructed controls. Generally speaking, qualitative or anecdotal studies report positive effects while more carefully controlled studies report no effect or even negative effect. One of the more carefully designed studies by the Boys and Girls Clubs was a multi-site investigation with control sites. However, it has a disappointing sample size and critics have suggested that there was a selection bias built into the project. Further, none of the published studies address the significant issue of cost-effectiveness of peer-based interventions contrasted with adult-led interventions. In short, there are at least two issues that remain unresolved in the literature: Are peer-based preventive interventions effective in reducing use of tobacco, alcohol and drugs? And are peer-based programs more or less cost-effective than adult-led interventions?

The evaluation project initially proposed to do a carefully controlled evaluation of peer-based intervention programs, contrasting them for effectiveness with matched adult-led programs. A unique feature of the proposed research was the inclusion of cost data to permit the assessment of a cost-effectiveness ratio.

Methodology: The initial Department of Justice Request for Proposals did not identify the *Ounce of Prevention* grantees. Thus it was necessary to design a wide reaching cost analysis to be refined at the time of evaluation. Once the grant recipients were identified, this general methodology was refined for application to specific projects.

A simple financial monitoring system was designed. The purpose was to track actual program

costs. Data was to be collected at two time points -- just post the Washington, DC Conference and in the late spring and summer of 1998. The intent was to track monthly program costs and then to use these in conjunction with program outcome measures to construct a cost-effectiveness assessment. If program outcomes included a derived benefit, a comparison for cost benefits analysis might be completed. A cross-site analysis was planned to compare youth led programs to adult led programs (when applicable and published data is available) and to provide a comparison of the programs selected for special attention in this evaluation process.

The grantees were trained in cost analysis at the Grantees Conference in January of 1998. Each returned to their sites with forms to fill out to document costs of the project on a monthly basis. The cost analysis methodology was designed to provide both cross site and individual cost analysis and build on the previous evaluation components. As an extension of the *Structure, Process, Outcome* analysis and the *Capacity Assessment*, each of the sites should have been able to identify all of the resources necessary for the successful completion of their grant activities by following the progression from the structure, process, outcome report to the capacity assessment report. Then they only needed to add a dollar amount (cost) to each item listed. A cost would be associated with each item whether a gift or grant funded. This would have provided an complete program cost.

To facilitate the analysis, the capacity assessment and cost analysis tools were merged: two columns describing costs associated with development of capacity were added. In this way a project director or financial officer could take the capacity assessment tool and simply fill in the associated costs. Program costs could then be divided by the indicators that each site had agreed to collect at the January conference. For example, if each site had tracked the number of participants served, each site would then have a cost per participant served. A cross site evaluation could then be conducted regarding these costs per participant. Each of the indicators provided could be analyzed with the same methods. If any of the sites could then prove an effect created by their programming additional cost-effectiveness figures could be developed. These types of figures would aid their attempts to attract additional funding for their activities.

Findings: The results of this simplification were elegant methodologically. However, the performance sites were not totally responsive. Of the six sites selected for special investigation, only two, Kansas City and Los Angeles provided cost data for a full twelve month period. Dorchester reported for two months. The failure of the majority of the projects to provide cost data is clearly problematic to performing the analysis. In response to the question of why the data were not forthcoming, two possibilities that come to mind. First, the cost analysis was the third reporting component which was presented at the Washington Conference. By the time it was presented, the project directors and their youth directors were fatigued. Many did not attend the session. Those that did may not have absorbed the presentation.

A second reason is that each project director understood at the outset of the evaluation process that the *Ounce of Prevention* program had not been re-funded by Congress and that there would be no further funding available. In other words, this was the last federal funding which the project directors anticipated having. Further, it was made evident that this was an eighteen-month program with no prospect of renewal even if exceptional success could be demonstrated. Thus, there were neither incentives to cooperate closely nor penalties for non-cooperation. Given these operating parameters, it is no surprise that segments of the evaluation which took time and care to complete were low on the priority list of the project directors.

The net result of this reporting problem is that a full cost analysis is not possible. With limited outcome measure and limited cost data, a cost-effectiveness study cannot be done. It is not even possible to conduct a straightforward cost analysis of the two projects (Los Angeles and Kansas City) which reported cost data. While Los Angeles did the best job in submitting data it is quite evident that the data as reported is not adequate to complete a cost analysis. When the cost report is compared to the capacity assessment report, there are many names on the capacity assessment report that are not costed out in the cost report. This clearly indicates incomplete cost reporting. Kansas City's cost report is not itemized into the detail necessary to complete a cost analysis. The Program Director who attended the training conference and received instruction on completing the evaluation forms resigned from the program prior to the cost analysis reports being submitted. The correlation

between the capacity assessment and the cost analysis was not understood by the evaluation sites.

Lessons: There are several valuable lessons which we can take from our efforts to complete the cost analysis. First, grants which are to be evaluated by an outside evaluation team need to be subject to a requirement which stipulates that the contract will be terminated if the grantee fails to cooperate with the evaluation agent. The evaluation team was able to exercise only moral authority in generating data and this was simply not sufficient to motivate project directors to do the extra work that the evaluation process required.

Second, project directors, all of whom were quite skilled at conducting social action programs, were not well trained in managing organizations. Matters of cost analysis were a mystery to them at the inception of the Washington Conference. Efforts to train them to think critically about cost-effectiveness analysis in a short-term meeting with no outside incentives to perform the analysis nor penalties for not performing it were unlikely to succeed. Thus, one factor in determining the success of the evaluation is the managerial skills that are present among project staff. Options for maximizing success in these projects would include showing preference for projects which can demonstrate management expertise in their applications or providing substantial training for project directors as these grants begin.

Third, agencies which receive grants need to understand that the cessation of a single funding program such as Ounce of Prevention does not mean that they will not be funded under other programs. More important, compliance and performance on the present grant will be included in an assessment of future applications by the funding agency.

### **Conclusions**

As we contemplate the cost analysis for the six sites, a number of conclusions are evident. Only two sites were able to generate cost data for the evaluation. One possible explanation is the elimination of program funding and its subsequent effect: the administrative staffs of the projects simply may not have been motivated to generate the reports. Additionally, it may be that

administrative staff were simply unfamiliar with monthly cost reports. This latter hypothesis is difficult to sustain inasmuch as each project employed sophisticated business managers for whom monthly cost reports should have been simple to generate.

This leaves the evaluation team with little cost information and less quantified outcomes information. Why? In part, the answer may lie in the psychology of grant-funded agencies. The authors of grant applications take as their measure of success the procurement of grant funds. Project directors, who are occasionally the grant authors as well, take as their measure of success their ability to design programs, recruit staff, and put activities into the field in an organized fashion. While all of these, grant writers, administrators, and project directors, pay lip service to the ideals of evaluation, they are not held accountable for evaluating program outcomes. Further, unlike the scientific research enterprise, there is not a systematic ethic among social action agencies which says we must find out what works and how well it works and replicate those successful approaches. As long as we assess grant-writers on the basis of dollars produced and project directors on the basis of programs and personnel in place, this will not change.

There are two main advantages to programs that understand how to complete a cost analysis. The individual sites can identify all the direct and indirect supports that need to be in place for the successful completion of their project and to identify areas of support that qualify as in-kind supports. There are many forms of funding sources that require in-kind dollars in order to apply for program support so this can be a critical factor.

As a program analyzes all the direct and indirect supports that need to be in place for the successful completion of their project, they learn to be better budgeters to assure that the supports will remain in place and they identify unfunded supports that qualify as in-kind dollars. Each of the six sites received technical support and demonstrated the ability with this support to better identify the supports needed and how to utilize the in-kind supports identified for funding requests in the future. Many of the sites rebudgeted for contract extensions during the evaluation period and used the skills learned as part of the process.

The effort to produce a cost analysis for Ounce of Prevention is a major first step in altering the financial management among recipient agencies. The evaluation process was alien to the agencies funded. It must become routine. Agencies must come to expect that they will report monthly on their costs and that they must be able to demonstrate quantifiable outcomes. Without these strictures, federal funding for intervention projects is based on hopes and promises which may never become realities.

## Chapter V

### Conclusions and Recommendations

The findings from this evaluation highlights specific issues not only for future evaluation methodology for federal programs but in developing community-based programs. In this concluding chapter we summarize the lessons learned from the various analyses. Next, we delineate attributes of successful programs. Finally, we draw conclusions from the evaluation and make recommendations for future program development and evaluation.

#### Summary of Evaluation Findings

Structure-Process-Outcomes: The Structure-Process-Outcomes analysis revealed some central lessons for the delivery of peer-oriented drug abuse prevention. One dimension of youth drug use is the alienation of these youth from adult authority and adult models of organization. This implies that delivering services to these youth via traditionally structured organizations may not be successful. Only youth who are already comfortable in formal organizations will participate easily in highly-structured organizations. For example, the very fluid nature of Raven Project in Eureka is one of its great strengths. Despite its lack of structure, there are very well identified processes of outreach and informal education, much of which takes place on the streets, which characterizes the program. There is also a nice match here between target population and organizational structure. A highly formalized organization led by visible adults would probably not work as well.

In addition, the degree of fit between an organization's current operations and its plans for a drug-abuse prevention program are an important predictor of success. SCYEA for example, began this project with a track record of accomplishment at grass-roots organizing. It took the skills of grass-roots community organizing and applied them to the issue of drug abuse prevention. Though the verbiage of the project is aimed at peer-leadership, it is clear that a process of adult leadership lies behind the activities of SCYEA.

*Entres Amigos* shows us that a drug abuse prevention program in a cohesive minority community has to be part and parcel of the community's culture. It has to reflect not only the culture of the community, it has to reflect the forms -- the structures -- that are common to the community as well. Moreover, it cannot be introduced by change agents who do not reflect the community itself. Drug abuse prevention in cohesive minority communities may be best effected by funding efforts which begin internally and which emphasize empowerment of the community.

Examining the structure and process, the outcomes become more nearly predictable and lessons can be derived for systematic drug abuse prevention and interventions. The first lesson is that coordination with outside agencies has to be iron-clad. The juvenile justice system in Syracuse, though an enthusiastic supporter of the Ounce of Prevention project could not deliver the promised referrals. There are numerous reasons for this. Probation officers have limited powers to coerce attendance at such a program. Ultimately their role is to make recommendations to a sitting judge. These are merely recommendations. The judges hear from defendants, attorneys, counselors and probation officers. Though the juvenile court fully expected that it could deliver referrals, it could not. This is a situation which can be reasonably expected to be repeated across the country. One resulting recommendation which emanates from this experience is that a project such as this would be better lodged in the context of the courts with a contractual arrangement to deliver services by an outside agency. By lodging control in the courts, it might be possible to maximize the flow of referrals. This would not, however, mitigate the role of judges and attorneys.

The second lesson is that the notion that families of adolescents will come out and participate as active participants in such programs is probably naive. These are distressed families. The existence of such a program for youth may, in fact, reduce the stress on a family and assist them to marshal resources for other children in the home who are at risk. But these families cannot devote additional time resources to participate in programs. This lesson may require a difficult ideological shift as future programs are considered. Though the family is seen as the touchstone for community based drug abuse prevention efforts, though the family is at the center of American values in assisting young people, these families may have little to offer. It may be necessary to deal with young people

in their emerging role as adults and to hope that the flow of intervention, rather than coming from committed adults and going toward their kids, has to go the other way, from committed kids back toward the family.

Capacity Assessment: Although the evaluation team was not able to conduct a capacity assessment on all six sites, the findings from three completed sites demonstrate that the *Ounce of Prevention* program resulted in increased community capacity to address substance abuse prevention and education among youth in a relatively short period of time. These findings are consistent with the site visits. However, the analyses contain some inherent limitations, including whether the changes are real, changes in on-site reporters over time which may cause differences in how skills are perceived, lack of participation by sites, and lack of comparability across sites. The assessment would be improved by objective or analytical tests administered to personnel by the evaluator rather than self-reports. Consistency of observation and assessment would also improve the validity of the findings.

Cost Assessment: As we contemplate the cost analysis for the six sites which were the focus for the evaluation, a number of conclusions are evident. Only two sites were able to generate cost data for the evaluation and those data were insufficient for analysis. Part of the reason for this may be that there were no DOJ funds to follow and the administrative staffs of the projects were simply not motivated to generate the reports. Additionally, it may be that administrative staff were simply unfamiliar with monthly cost reports. This latter hypothesis is difficult to sustain inasmuch as each project employed sophisticated business managers for whom monthly cost reports should have been simple to generate.

This leaves the evaluation team with little cost information and less quantified outcomes information. Why? Part of the answer has to do with the psychology of grant-funded agencies. The authors of grant applications take as their measure of success the procurement of grant funds. Project directors, who are occasionally the grant authors as well, take as their measure of success their ability to design programs, recruit staff, and put activities into the field in an organized fashion. While all

of these, grant writers, administrators, and project directors, pay lip service to the ideals of evaluation, they are not held accountable for evaluating program outcomes. Further, unlike the scientific research enterprise, there is not a systematic ethic among social action agencies which says we must find out what works and how well it works and replicate those successful approaches. As long as we assess grant-writers on the basis of dollars produced and project directors on the basis of programs and personnel in place, this will not change.

There are advantages to programs that understand how to complete a cost analysis. The individual sites can identify areas of support that qualify as in kind supports. There are many forms of funding sources that require in kind dollars. Also if a site understands what supports need to be in place for the successful completion of their program efforts and the costs associated with same, they are better able to budget their funding requests. Perhaps of more importance to DOJ's long-term agenda of creating sustainable programs, understanding program costs, being able to identify in-kind contributions, and being able to demonstrate savings, cost-benefits or cost-effectiveness to community leaders are strong steps for these agencies to take.

The effort to produce a cost analysis for *Once of Prevention* is a major first step in altering this agenda among recipient agencies. The evaluation process was alien to the agencies funded. It must become routine. Agencies must come to expect that they will report monthly on their costs and that they must be able to demonstrate quantifiable outcomes. Without these strictures, federal funding for intervention projects is based on hopes and promises which may never become realities.

### **What Works: Attributes of Successful Programs**

Although programs varied widely across the country, an examination of their challenges and successes found some common themes. As was anticipated based on the selection of study states, some grantees were more successful in implementing and institutionalizing their drug prevention programs than others. By comparing programs along a variety of dimensions, we identified seven attributes or indicators of successful programs: (1) continuity of project staff; (2) strong leadership

in project management; (3) funding a designated coordinator to oversee program implementation and youth training and education; (4) development of coalitions to promote community drug prevention activities; (5) the ability of programs to leverage additional resources; (6) having project staff with strong advocacy orientation; and (7) having program staff with prior understanding or experience with drug abuse and prevention issues.

Continuity of project staff. Communities with more successful programs experienced continuity of grant project staff and had fewer staff changes. Continuity of the training among youth was a particular area where staff turnover, or lack thereof, made a considerable difference in the successful development and implementation of grant objectives.

Strong leadership in project management. In conjunction with continuity of project staff, the more successful programs tended to have highly motivated project directors who demonstrated strong leadership in project management. In some cases, project directors may have had the motivation but lacked sufficient experience in managing projects. Conversely, states that experienced staff turnover tended to have more difficulties implementing and completing project activities.

Designated coordinator to oversee training and education. Training was more successfully implemented and institutionalized in states or regions within states in which a designated staff person was responsible for developing curricula and coordinating training sessions. Once funding for this position was terminated or the staff person left the project, the training activities tended to drop off.

Development of coalitions to promote community drug prevention activities. Programs that were successful in institutionalizing drug prevention programs tended to have developed through project activities strong networks and coalitions. These groups were instrumental in lobbying for changes through the state political process as well as in their own communities.

Ability to leverage additional resources. A further benefit of coalition development was its effectiveness in establishing partnerships with other community organizations, schools, parent groups,

the business community, and local and state government agencies. By doing so, grantees obtained resources, sometimes financial other times in the form of free labor, goods and services (e.g., equipment and printing). Grantees were thus able to use drug prevention activities to leverage additional resources and subsequently expand their programs.

Project staff with strong advocacy orientation: By far the most clear indicator of program success is the presence of staff who are personally and professionally dedicated to being advocates for the special needs of at-risk youth. Even with continuity of funding, good project leadership, outside resources, and other structural elements, what clearly differentiated highly successful states from those who encountered more problems was the motivation factor of project staff. In most sites, staff, and in particular the youth, were extremely motivated and conveyed a strong advocacy orientation.

Prior understanding or experience with drug abuse and prevention issues: Communities that had already started to tackle issues concerning pediatric emergency care prior to the federal program had a jump start on grant activities. This allowed them to effectively target grant funds than states that were addressing the issue for the first time. It should be noted, however, that communities without a prior history and limited capacity should not be penalized for their lack of experience or resources. Rather, it points to the need for the Department of Justice to be flexible in targeting the use of funds, project scope, and expectations placed on states in the early stages of program development.

### **Conclusions and Recommendations for Future Program Development and Evaluation**

In summary, the evaluation team concluded the following: (1) concurrent evaluation is an excellent model and provides benefits that are not possible using retrospective evaluation; (2) the initial grantee training and assessment conference was extremely valuable and should be replicated in other federal evaluations; (3) community-based organizations have limited knowledge of program evaluation, how to identify their successes, and how or what type of data collection would best serve

program and funding needs; (4) the organizational context in which a program resides is a factor in their continued success and needs to be assessed during the funding process; (5) involving youth leaders shows promise as an effective model for substance abuse prevention.

Concurrent evaluation offers a viable model for program evaluation. Only recently has the world of evaluation research turned to conducting evaluations simultaneously with program implementation. Some evaluators have suggested that concurrent evaluation might contaminate the evaluation, as having the contact between program staff and evaluators would influence the direction of the program. However, this evaluation identified a number of positive outcomes without the participatory methods. It did not appear that the concurrent methodology contaminated program implementation or outcomes.

The initial grantee conference and training was critical to the success of the evaluation for a number of reasons. First, it brought people together and created a network, particularly among the youth, for support and exchange. Second, it allowed the evaluation team to learn about of the programs and get to know face to face the individuals responsible for implementation prior to the site visits. This facilitated communication between the evaluators and grantees and improved the team's ability to gather data. Third, the team was able to communicate the needs of the evaluation directly to the grantees and obtain feedback on which aspects of the proposed data collection methodology were feasible and which were not. Fourth, the team was able to conduct an assessment of technical assistance needs. Finally, the team and the grantees were able to identify a number of data elements common to all sites that could be collected for the evaluation.

What the team also learned from the training conference was that the old adage, "*You can't judge a book by its cover*" was fully operationalized in this initiative. Most of the grant applications were inconsistent with the reality of the programs. For example, the Dorchester grant received the highest score during the funding assessment process. However, the grant was prepared by someone who had left by the time the program and evaluation were implemented. In addition, the program itself was suffering from a myriad of problems. Conversely, the New Mexico application simply

requested funds for a van and did not appear, at face value, to be a substantial program. At the conference where the programs were presented, it was quite clear that the Pueblo not only had a comprehensive program but that numerous activities were developing and expanding as the program was implemented. Similarly, Miami appeared to be primarily a school-based initiative but was highly active in the local community, while Los Angeles appeared to be community-focused but the program targeted and recruited youth in schools for diversion activities. The experience with the initial grantee conference and training underscores the value of prospective or concurrent evaluation and program implementation.

Community-based programs have only a limited understanding of how to evaluate and assess their efforts. It became through the site visits and in discussing the program with staff that programs were more successful than not. While the challenges were clearly known, successes were so easily identified. Staff were not always able to identify outcomes, particularly as they related to improving or building program capacity. In addition, few if any grantees really understood how to assess their programs costs. Most were at least somewhat if not fully familiar with budgeting. However, determining actual costs proved difficult for most grantees. This finding highlights the importance of working with grantees prospectively to develop good program and evaluation data.

Organizational context matters: The organizational context made a substantial difference in the continuity and resources available to grantees. The *Ounce of Prevention* program in Los Angeles, for example, was part of a larger organization that obtained grant funds from a variety of federal, state and non-profit sources. Syracuse and Kansas programs were part of a national parent organizations, The Raven Project in Eureka, on the other hand, relied solely on the *Ounce of Prevention* funding for its activities. As a result of the organizational context, many programs were dependent upon a single source of funding or a single individual to develop and maintain the initiative. The Dorchester, Eureka and Portland programs are typical of many community-based organizations that live “hand to mouth” and from grant to grant. The latter two programs were also able to be highly efficient and effective with the resources they had.

The youth-leader model shows promise for drug abuse prevention. This evaluation found that the involvement of youth was beneficial in a number of ways. First, youth leaders acted as strong role models for their peers simply by engaging in the programs. In addition, the involvement of youth in drug abuse prevention programs also gives them opportunities to perform public service, become more connected to their communities, work with adults, build their self-esteem and develop good job skills. They offer diversion activities and a mechanism for peer acceptance that does not involve risky behaviors. Involving youth also facilitates communication between adults and youth and helps adults understand what youth need and respond to. Finally, qualitative data indicated that using youth to promote drug-abuse prevention was effective in reducing drug abuse among the close friends and family members of program youth leaders and participants. The *Ounce of Prevention* provided interesting and paid employment for at-risk youth, and as such, offered an alternative to drug use and training for future employment. In this way, youth leaders become role models for other at-risk youth; they contribute to community well-being and the program begins to address the larger cultural and societal problems of youth drug abuse in a positive way.

The *Ounce of Prevention* initiative began to put in place at the community level a number of programs that were clearly needed to address the needs of at-risk youth. Community needs assessments identified critical gaps and assessment protocols, intervention guidelines, and monitoring tools were developed. Communities made substantial and enduring inroads into the training and education of youth leaders. The grant provided a forum for bringing together groups that otherwise have little interaction. And overall, the program was highly successful in raising public awareness concerning the drug abuse prevention needs of at-risk youth.

Nonetheless, there remain gaps in communities' abilities to meet the drug prevention needs of youth and families. Funds for the youth-leaders were limited. It may be that additional funds to hire more youth would be effective and allow youth who may have limited employment opportunities to acquire viable job skills while simultaneously contributing to public service in the community — a win-win situation for the youth, the community and the government. Finally, most of the grantees effectively demonstrated leadership in developing and institutionalizing drug prevention programs.

It was particularly unfortunate that programs were defunded in the middle of this evaluation. Without continued funding, maintaining leadership in community youth drug prevention will be problematic, especially under increasingly stringent fiscal conditions. Even in the presence of a strong economy, many program staff are currently overworked and will be expected to do more with less in the future. Federal leadership is particularly critical in establishing and sustaining relationships that have been developed through the *Ounce of Prevention* program and other programs that provide services to at-risk youth.

Based on the findings from this evaluation, the team makes the following recommendations for future program development:

- ▶ Use concurrent evaluation methodology, taking care to preserve the integrity of the program implementation through the use of separate program officers for development and evaluation;
- ▶ Incorporate the pre-evaluation training and assessment conference into the evaluation methodology;
- ▶ Develop uniform outcome measures and methodology for collecting and reporting data at the outset of the grant initiative. Use the pre-evaluation conference to develop common indicators and train grantees on data collection and reporting techniques;
- ▶ Based on outcome measures, continue funding for viable programs;
- ▶ Train grantees in conducting program evaluation, and in particular how to identify successful outcomes, improvements in program development and capacity and cost assessment; and
- ▶ Conduct organizational assessment of grantees to better understand varying needs for technical assistance and funding.

