

**County of Sonoma Department of Health Services
Prevention and Planning Division**

**475 Aviation Blvd., Ste. 210
Santa Rosa, CA 95403
(707) 565-6680**

Mapping an Agenda for Prevention

January, 2000

Acknowledgements

The Prevention and Planning Division extends its appreciation to all of the service providers, community members, and other prevention stakeholders who provided the insights and recommendations that form the substance of this agenda.

Michael Sparks, of the Vallejo Community Fighting Back Coalition, volunteered his time to help design the prevention agenda building process and, later, to provide an overview of research to frame the discussion on environmental prevention. His ideas, experience, and humor contributed greatly to the process.

Prevention and Planning Division staff members, Maureen Donaghue and Rhonda Roman, ushered this endeavor from inception to completion with tireless energy, focus, and a demonstrated commitment to inclusion of different stakeholders.

A special thanks is extended to the Evaluation and Management and Training Group (EMT) for their support of the planning and implementation of the discussion groups and to Laurie Drabble, consultant, who enthusiastically worked with staff and community members to plan, facilitate and summarize the discussions.

Table of Contents

BACKGROUND	1
THE AGENDA-BUILDING PROCESS	1
DISCUSSION GROUP FINDINGS: STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS ACROSS DOMAINS	2
<i>FACILITATE COLLABORATION AMONG PREVENTION STAKEHOLDERS</i>	2
<i>SUPPORT SCIENCE-BASED PREVENTION</i>	3
<i>COMPILE AND DISSEMINATE DATA</i>	3
<i>ASSIST IN DEVELOPMENT OF A MULTI-CULTURAL WORKFORCE</i>	4
<i>ENSURE A FULL SPECTRUM OF PREVENTION APPROACHES</i>	4
STRATEGIC DIRECTIONS WITHIN KEY PREVENTION DOMAINS	5
<i>SCHOOL-BASED PREVENTION</i>	5
<i>ENVIRONMENTAL PREVENTION</i>	5
<i>FAMILY-BASED PREVENTION</i>	6
<i>YOUTH DEVELOPMENT</i>	7
<i>CRIMINAL JUSTICE: INTERSECTIONS WITH PREVENTION</i>	7
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE AND TRAINING	8

Background

Health and social problems associated with alcohol and other drug use affect Sonoma County youth, adults, families and communities in vast and complex ways. Alcohol and other drug (AOD) issues cross all service sectors, from health care, mental and social services, to schools and law enforcement. AOD problems result in reduced work productivity, academic failure, increased medical and psychiatric hospital admission, and problems of traffic safety, criminal activity, and violence. Because the root causes of alcohol and other drug problems are multiple and because their impact on the community is so widespread, prevention programming must accommodate a wide range of approaches.

Prevention of alcohol and drug related problems occur, not only on multiple levels, but also in a changing social context. Consequently, these efforts must be congruent with current research, growth and shifts in local demographics, emerging alcohol and drug problems, and changes in larger systems such as education, criminal justice and health systems. Because alcohol and drug-related problems impact all individuals, families, institutions, and communities in Sonoma County, prevention of these problems must include stakeholders from diverse sectors of the citizenry.

The Prevention and Planning Division of the County of Sonoma Department of Health Services provides leadership and funding for a wide array of prevention efforts in Sonoma County. The Prevention and Planning Division will be called upon to continue to advance prevention efforts in this changing environment. To prepare for the future, building on existing community and provider assets, the Prevention Division embarked on a process to develop a “prevention agenda.” The overall aims of this endeavor were to:

- Strengthen implementation of effective prevention strategies,
- Enhance opportunities for collaborative work that is inclusive of all major prevention organizations and stakeholders, and
- Build capacity in the community to support prevention efforts.

The information from the process will help guide the Division’s efforts to support and contribute to collaborative efforts between different prevention organizations, providers and community stakeholders. The agenda developed through this process will be used to guide Prevention Division efforts to seek additional funding for prevention activities in Sonoma County. It is anticipated that the strategies articulated by the agenda will also prove useful to the current work and future plans of groups engaged in prevention work in Sonoma County.

The Agenda-Building Process

Several small group discussions centered on key prevention domains were convened. These broad areas, defined as critical by prevention organizations and providers, include environmental prevention, youth development, school-based prevention, family-based prevention and prevention of alcohol and drug problems in conjunction with the criminal justice system (e.g. diversion programs). Five discussion groups, each focusing on one of these domains, were convened in November of 1999.

Discussions were guided by two overall considerations: what science-based strategies (approaches that are evidenced to “work” based on research) can be strengthened and how might capacity in this domain be enhanced. To this end, each discussion group began with a brief overview of prevention approaches that are evidenced to work in the particular domain under discussion. Participants were then invited to contribute to facilitated discussion of existing assets, gaps in the current prevention landscape, and potential directions for change.

Discussion group participants included prevention program providers, community members, and representatives from education, criminal justice, and health. The discussion groups also included representation from the Sonoma County Alcohol and Drug Advisory Board and the Sonoma County Community Health Partnership. Interested individuals not able to attend discussion groups were afforded an opportunity to submit comments and suggestions in writing or by phone.

A final gathering, composed of representatives from each of the discussion groups, was held in December of 1999. The group reviewed highlights of each of the domain discussions. Participants in the final discussion group then worked to identify what the Prevention Division could do to help advance prevention efforts, ascertain what training or technical assistance would be useful, and delineate what might be done in the short term with existing resources and stakeholders.

Discussion Group Findings: Strategic Directions Across Domains

Several themes that emerged across different discussion groups affirm the importance of the Prevention and Planning Division’s leadership in providing support, data, and a nexus for collaboration among prevention stakeholders. Discussion groups participants acknowledged the quality work of the Division to date and called for expansion of efforts in several key areas:

- ◆ Facilitation of greater collaboration between prevention providers and of new prevention partnerships in the community involving business, social service organizations, and faith communities.
- ◆ Support for science-based prevention.
- ◆ Identification, collection, analysis, and dissemination of data to inform prevention efforts.
- ◆ Assistance in developing a multi-cultural, culturally competent prevention workforce to address the needs of diverse and growing communities.
- ◆ Coordination to ensure a full spectrum of prevention efforts.

Facilitate Collaboration among Prevention Stakeholders

The Prevention and Planning Division should facilitate partnerships between prevention providers, community groups, government agencies, schools, law enforcement, businesses, and other local organizations to build collaborative relationships, enhance the effectiveness of prevention efforts, and promote a community environment that is conducive to and supportive of prevention.

This strategy is based on the Prevention and Planning Division's commitment to the development of strong collaborative relationships as a core approach to developing, implementing, and maximizing prevention efforts. The Division will strengthen and expand its role in facilitating collaborative relationships in several sectors.

Short term potential strategies:

- Convene gathering of stakeholders who share interest in different prevention domains to share information, problem-solve, obtain training, and discuss possible collaboration/systems improvement.
- Mobilize and facilitate coordination between County departments in support of existing and emerging prevention efforts.
- Assist prevention providers to develop communications that outline the benefits of supporting prevention efforts. Such communications may help other stakeholders such as businesses, social service organizations, and churches recognize the value of prevention.

Mid-range and long term potential strategies:

- Continue to facilitate and broaden dialogue with current partners and bring others to the table including law enforcement, probation, churches, businesses, and educational institutions.
- Develop new relationships with a wide variety of stakeholders to support peer-oriented prevention efforts targeting youth.
- Support outreach to colleges and universities to engage young adults in prevention efforts.
- Support community-based prevention efforts by sharing successful models with community group and organizations.

Support Science-Based Prevention

The Prevention Division should identify and promote the use of promising prevention and support the communication of practical findings from the research field to the front-line practitioners.

Short and long term potential strategies:

- Continue training on effective prevention approaches by accessing support, technical assistance and consultation from the California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs and other resources.
- Track emerging research, disseminate information and resources from state and regional gatherings, and provide support and leadership to the local prevention field through the work of Division staff.
- Promote the use of promising, evidence-based prevention strategies in existing prevention programs and in planning for new programs.

Compile and Disseminate Data

The Prevention Division should promote the development and dissemination of information and data to support and improve prevention services, program planning, and administrative decision-making.

Short and long term potential strategies:

- Provide leadership in mapping alcohol outlets, outlet density, and alcohol-related problems as documented by existing law enforcement or other data sources.
- Provide leadership in mapping alcohol and other drug-related problems (i.e., domestic violence, crime, and community health) for use in targeting prevention efforts and promoting dialog with community and government policy-makers.
- Facilitate a participatory process to find common objectives and community wide indicators to measure and evaluate changes resulting from prevention efforts.
- Facilitate dissemination of data on youth behavior gathered by schools to inform prevention work, work more effectively with schools, and leverage greater results through collaborative planning.

Assist in Development of a Multi-Cultural Workforce

The Prevention Division should support providers in their efforts to develop a workforce with the capacity to serve an increasingly diverse community with culturally competent prevention programs.

Short term potential strategies:

- Integrate a focus on strengthening cultural competence as a part of technical assistance and training plans.
- Support efforts of funded prevention organizations to enhance staffing with people who can bridge language and cultural barriers.

Mid-range and long term potential strategies:

- Participate in a system-wide effort to recruit and train bilingual/bicultural staff. In addition, explore opportunities for workforce development of bilingual/bicultural staff, possibly in collaboration with foundations and educational institutions.

Ensure a Full Spectrum of Prevention Approaches

The Prevention Division should support a continuum of effective prevention strategies involving both individual and environmental approaches through strategic program planning, funding of prevention programs/organizations, and building of community capacity to support prevention efforts.

Short and long term potential strategies:

- Work with existing providers, community members, and other stakeholders to continue to identify “gaps” in Sonoma County prevention efforts emphasizing under-reached populations, and differences in regional needs.
- Continue to fund, monitor and evaluate a continuum of alcohol and other drug prevention strategies.
- Support local providers in each community to undertake environmental prevention efforts and support community mobilization for environmental prevention.

Strategic Directions within Key Prevention Domains

The Prevention Division should provide leadership and support to advance prevention efforts in several domains.

School-Based Prevention

Short term potential strategies:

- Meet with representatives of school districts and the Sonoma County Office of Education to map current school-based prevention efforts, specifically the type and location of prevention efforts funded by the School Districts and the County.
- Convene school-based prevention providers to facilitate exchange of information, strategies, and ideas for improving services.
- Create a small group, including school representatives, to advise the Division on meeting prevention needs throughout the county.
- Keep providers and other stakeholders informed about the status and reauthorization of federal funding related to prevention (e.g. Safe and Drug Free Schools).
- Facilitate participation of prevention providers in the development of after-school programs to ensure integration of prevention strategies in program design.

Mid-range and long term potential strategies:

- Work with school districts to leverage additional funds and other resources for prevention.
- Support implementation of evidence based curricula at schools through training, research dissemination, and collaborative planning with schools. Require that evidence-based models be used in funded projects.
- Facilitate greater parent involvement in prevention through information and strategy exchange among programs as well as coordination between schools and community-based prevention providers.
- Work with schools and other policy makers to assess zero tolerance policies in relation to prevention goals and intervention opportunities for youth.
- Facilitate prevention efforts at colleges that include local high schools, businesses, school administrators, and other stakeholders.

Environmental Prevention

Short term potential strategies:

- Support local nonprofits to develop a core group of environmental prevention advocates in at least two cities.
- Help organize a prevention academy to provide intensive training on implementation of environmental prevention strategies for nonprofit leaders and then to other community leaders, parents, stakeholders.
- Promote data collection to inform environmental prevention efforts. This may include mapping of outlet concentration and problems, linkages between alcohol and drugs and crime and compiling data on the impact of problems on business and communities..

Mid-range and long term potential strategies:

- Facilitate active partnerships between community groups, prevention advocates, and law enforcement (police and Alcohol Beverage Control.) Specific areas might include: increased enforcement of laws related to signage and promotions, sales to minors, and adults purchasing alcohol for minors. In addition, development of a clear definition of “public convenience and necessity” to create standards for local decision making on outlet density in land use planning.
- Support community-based efforts to develop and promote policies to prevent alcohol-related problems at public events (e.g. requirement for responsible beverage service training for servers).
- Support community based efforts to encourage nonprofit organizations, youth organizations, and organizations raising funds for youth activities to adopt alcohol policies related to limiting promotions and protecting safety and health.
- Support community based efforts on the city level to adopt conditional use permit ordinance/s or portions of ordinances (e.g. implementing mandatory Responsible Beverage Service).

Family-Based Prevention

Short term potential strategies:

- Map existing family services county-wide and assess need for more accessible array of programs.
- Create opportunities for sharing strategies, such as exchange of approaches for teaching parenting skills, and communication between agencies involved with family-based prevention.
- Explore opportunities to coordinate prevention efforts with families identified through Social Services/Child Protective Services.
- Subsidize prevention organizations to have a table at the North Bay Family Expo (a fair with 14,000 people attending at the Fairgrounds with a focus on family resources for families.)

Mid-range and long term potential strategies:

- Help to develop culturally appropriate family services by supporting the development of bilingual and bicultural outreach workers or paraprofessionals that can serve as allies to support, help, and teach under-served families. Parent partners that “speak the language” of the client family or student partners that works with professionals may also be developed. Workshops for paraprofessionals could be provided across different regions.
- Support family service agencies to access bilingual and bicultural speakers/family educators from other regions to provide “circuit presentations” in different areas of the county.
- Facilitate development of interdisciplinary strategies, particularly case management models that are inclusive of other systems with which families are involved.
- Facilitate training on alcohol and drug problem assessment for other systems working with families including criminal justice, health, education, and social service systems.
- Facilitate sharing of technology and information between organizations providing family-based prevention and information services.

Youth Development

Short term potential strategies:

- Facilitate planning among stakeholders on strategies to advance youth development and encourage youth serving organizations to integrate youth development into their structures and programs.
- Support provision of stipends for youth peer-leaders involved in peer-oriented prevention activities and services.

Long term potential strategies:

- Seek funding and other resources to develop and expand activities that foster youth development (e.g. expansion of mentoring programs or involvement of youth in research and advocacy).
- Facilitate training of “adult allies” to increase the number of adults with the capacity to work effectively with youth development efforts and foster youth leadership.
- Work through prevention organizations and other systems to create additional youth centers; promote youth development activities that are youth driven at existing youth centers.

Criminal Justice: Intersections with Prevention

- Examine existing documents (e.g. Juvenile Justice needs assessment) and review recommendations for strategies that may be implemented through collaborative work among prevention providers, justice systems, and other stakeholders.
- Examine potential opportunity for the Prevention Division, Probation and schools to collaborate on a Juvenile Challenge Grant in California.
- Help substantiate and support the need for additional funding for early intervention and crisis services for youth.
- Organize a summit with different stakeholders to develop additional ideas and plans for prevention (and early intervention).

Mid-range and long term potential strategies:

- Enhance collaboration between systems including traffic court, probation, police and community-based organizations.
- Explore opportunities for prevention and intervention in collaboration with child welfare and juvenile justice systems (where there is currently a lack of resources to follow youth and intervene with parents of youth in delinquency and dependency court).
- Support additional prevention and intervention resources for youth including teen drug court, clean and sober schools, substance abuse intervention for adolescents, intervention for drug using parents of children with problems, and safe houses for youth.

Technical Assistance and Training

The Prevention Division should continue to provide and broker technical assistance and training resources to disseminate state-of-the-art science-based prevention practices, build the capacity of community partners to implement successful prevention approaches and continually improve the quality of funded prevention programs.

Specific areas for training and technical assistance in the short and long term include:

- Continued training on specific effective and emerging prevention strategies.
- Training on environmental prevention strategies to reduce alcohol and other drug problems.
- Technical assistance on public relations, marketing, outreach to translate the value of prevention to adults, parents, public administrators, businesses, and other potential stakeholders.
- Training and technical assistance on effective models for school-based prevention and after school programs.
- Training across fields in asset development.
- Other training and technical assistance as identified by funded prevention organizations, other allied agencies working with populations targeted for prevention efforts, and community groups interested in prevention.