

## SAC QUICKtips: SAP TEAM MAINTENANCE AND PROGRAM IMPROVEMENT

Most Student Assistance teams develop an operating rhythm thinking that rhythm will carry them through year after year without checkups or reflection. Evidence-based practice for Student Assistance Programs has identified SAP team maintenance and program improvement processes as a best practice.

People, systems, and trends change; most aspects of education have changed repeatedly through the years. The SAP must also remain current by assessing practices as part of its operations to stay current and effective.

- Set aside dedicated time to devote to team maintenance and improvement.
- Create a plan at the beginning of the school year that identifies what areas will be assessed, and when program assessment and maintenance will take place.
- Identify what data the team will need to collect to inform the program assessment process.
- Use existing tools to assist in collecting data to inform the assessment process.
- Lead with the questions, “What do we need to be doing more of, differently and stop doing to close the gap from where we are to where we want to be?”
- Quickly have each team member state their personal incentive for being part of the SAP.
- Establish facilitation agreements when starting the assessment process to create an atmosphere of trust, engagement, commitment and openness in dialogue.
- Set goals for the maintenance meeting.
- Create an atmosphere of challenge and striving for maintenance meetings.
- Create a plan for improvement, and follow the plan.
- Create action items designating the action, the person responsible, and timelines.
- Celebrate successes including individual student successes, team successes, and system successes related to SAP.

Resources on prevention.org – Professional Resources – Student Assistance Center:

- Student Assistance Program Best Practices Formative Assessment – focuses on examining indicators related to the SAP 23 best practice standards.
- SAP Levels of Development Workbook – examines standards of practice for SAPs in early to more experienced development.

Student Assistance Team Roles and Responsibilities Guide to be used with the Student Assistance Core Team Assessment Tool.