

Illinois Substance Abuse Prevention Programs Prevention Staff Qualifications By Sub-Grant Type

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Identifying Staff Qualifications and Building Staff Capacity

Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature by Dean Fixsen, et al. provides a much needed framework for considering the role of staff development in the successful implementation of evidence based programs and practices. Implementation of evidence-based practices and programs cannot occur unless providers are well-prepared to deliver the programs. Fixsen outlines the core components of implementation of evidence based programs and practices specific staff/provider selection, staff training, and ongoing consultation and coaching.

Staff Selection

Staff selection is an essential first step in ensuring high quality implementation of evidence based programs and practices. Considerations when selecting staff include:

- Look for “unteachable” characteristics, i.e. outgoing, comfortable using data, etc.
- Pre-requisites/minimum qualifications, i.e. education level, years of experience
- Present the position realistically, i.e. explain all components of the position including administrative responsibilities and hours, etc. This allows for mutual selection and improves the likelihood of retention.
- Look for “coachability” to improve likelihood that training, coaching, and supervision will result in successful implementation.

Staff Training

The goals of staff training are to increase knowledge of programs, practices, and policies; to practice and demonstrate key skills; and to orient new workers to the systems and organizations in which they are working. Training alone is often ineffective in reaching the desired goals of implementation, but is seen as a core component of increasing workers knowledge.

Ongoing Consultation and Coaching

Ongoing consultation and coaching provide an opportunity to reinforce knowledge imparted through training and fit the conditions in which the providers is working. The goal of ongoing consultation is to support the providers work within the context of their communities and assist in the practical application of skills. Ongoing consultation and coaching can include mentoring, technical assistance, and expert consultation services.

Source: *Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature*, Dean Fixsen, et al.
<http://ctndisseminationlibrary.org/PDF/nirnmonograph.pdf>

Qualifications by Sub-Grant Type

Local Capacity Building

This grant is designed for providers with little or no experience in delivering substance abuse services. Funds will support assessment and limited delivery of “universal” and “selected” services for youth ages 11-18 and their families, schools and/or communities. The goal of the grant is to build the capacity of organizations and communities to identify needs and provide prevention services. Activities under this grant include: assessment, planning, coalition development/enhancement, service delivery, and survey promotion and planning.

Considerations: Community mobilization and planning will be key components of the LCB grant. The provider staff will be required to work with the community to plan and implement prevention approaches. “Unteachable” characteristics essential to meeting the LBC grant requirements include: organized, outgoing, comfortable speaking publicly, good critical thinking skills, collaborative, , open to learning, creative.

Source: *Request for Proposals, Substance Abuse Prevention Program, October 11, 2011*

Minimum Qualifications

Associates degree and 3 years of experience working in human services or community organizing or bachelor’s degree in related field.

Experience or willingness to work with youth, families, and/or community coalitions. Experience with quantitative and qualitative data collection and analysis.

Able to:

1. Work evenings and weekends as needed to conduct/attend community meetings and events.
2. Communicate effectively with diverse populations with multi- or inter-disciplinary colleagues.
3. Conduct needs assessment for community substance abuse prevention including identifying and using existing epidemiological and other relevant data.
4. Gather and evaluate data and draw logical conclusions.
5. Establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with those contacted through the course of work.
6. Plan and facilitate community coalition meetings.
7. Synthesize community needs assessment findings to inform coalition decision making.
8. Collect and report on work as required by funder.
9. Write clearly and concisely.
10. Work independently under limited supervision and organize multiple work assignments

Direct Service

The direct service grant is designed to support evidence-based substance abuse prevention direct services that target individuals and families. Allowable direct service approaches include: youth prevention education, parent/family education, mentoring, and communication campaigns. Additionally, grantees are required to create or enhance a coalition to conduct the first three steps of the strategic prevention framework.

Considerations: *Working with youth, families and community members will be key components of the direct service grant, in addition to community mobilization and prevention planning. The provider staff will be work with schools, community organizations, and youth to administer their services. "Unteachable" characteristics essential to meet the direct grant requirements include: organized, outgoing, comfortable speaking publicly, desire to work with youth and families, open to learning, creative.*

Source: Request for Proposals, Substance Abuse Prevention Program, October 11, 2011

Minimum Qualifications

- *Associates degree and 3 years of experience working in human services or youth programming or bachelor's degree in related field.*
- *Experience or willingness to work with youth, families, and/or community coalitions.*

Skills and Abilities by Service Type

All services types and Coalition Building:

1. Communicate effectively with diverse populations with multi- or inter-disciplinary colleagues.
2. Implement effective prevention strategies with fidelity.
3. Establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with those contacted through the course of work.
4. Conduct needs assessment for community substance abuse prevention including identifying and using existing relevant data.
5. Gather and evaluate data and draw logical conclusions.
6. Plan and facilitate community coalition/project meetings.
7. Write clearly and concisely.
8. Work independently under limited supervision and organize multiple work assignments.
9. Collect and report on work as required by funder.

Youth Prevention Education:

10. Work evenings and weekends as needed to attend youth events.
11. Work with school personnel to develop mutually beneficial programs for youth.
12. Experience teaching/training in a classroom setting.

Parent/Family Education:

13. Work evenings and weekends as needed to conduct services for families.
14. Experience teaching/training in a classroom setting.
15. Facilitate discussions with youth and parents around sensitive topics.

Communication Campaigns:

16. Work evenings and weekends as needed to attend youth/community events.
17. Conduct needs assessment for community substance abuse prevention including identifying and using existing relevant data.
18. Gather and evaluate data and draw logical conclusions.
19. Experience with marketing or media campaigns.
20. Experience with graphic design.

Mentoring:

21. Work with schools and other community partners to identify mentors and mentees.
22. Provide support, training, and regular communication with volunteer staff (mentors).

Strategic Prevention Framework

This grant is designed to support the use of the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF). The SPF is a structured planning process that can be applied to prevention systems at both state and local level. [...] The guiding principle of this framework is that data on problems, resources, and readiness should guide the selection of evidence-based prevention strategies. Each community could potentially have a different set of target outcomes, but the goal is always community-level change in substance use consumption patterns and consequences.

The goal of the Strategic Prevention Framework grant is to reduce consumption of, consequences from, and contributing factors to alcohol, tobacco, marijuana and prescriptions drug misuse/abuse among 11-20 year olds in a targeted geographic community by following the Strategic Prevention Framework.

Considerations: *Working key community stakeholders to develop and sustain a coalition and using data to plan prevention strategies will be key components of the SPF grant. The provider staff will be work with schools, community organizations, and key community stakeholders to conduct the SPF process. "Unteachable" characteristics essential to meet the SPF grant requirements include: organized, outgoing, comfortable speaking publically, open to learning, creative.*

[Source: Request for Proposals, Substance Abuse Prevention Program, October 11, 2011](#)

Minimum Qualifications

- *Bachelor's Degree and 3+ years of experience working in substance abuse prevention, community mobilization or Master's degree in public health or other related field.*
- *Experience or willingness to work with community coalitions, community organizations, and data systems.*

Skills and Abilities

1. Communicate effectively with diverse populations with multi- or inter-disciplinary colleagues.
2. Knowledge of information gathering and data resources.
3. Gather and evaluate data and draw logical conclusions.
4. Conduct needs assessment for community substance abuse prevention including identifying and using existing relevant data.
5. Plan and facilitate community coalition/project meetings.
6. Ability to work successfully within existing organizational and community structures.
7. Establish and maintain cooperative working relationships with those contacted through the course of work.
8. Knowledge of substance abuse prevention strategies, including community level environmental strategies and policies.
9. Build community ownership of substance abuse prevention programs by collaborating with key community leaders.
10. Work collaboratively with evaluators to assess intervention efficacy and effectiveness.
11. Write clearly and concisely.

12. Work independently under limited supervision and organize multiple work assignments.
11. Collect and report on work as required by funder.
12. Work evenings and weekends as needed to conduct/attend community meetings and events.

References

California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs, California Prevention Field Core Competencies, 2009. <http://www.adp.ca.gov/prevention/pdf/CoreCompsfortheCAPrevField.pdf>

Council on Social Work Education. (2007). *Advanced Social Work Practice in the Prevention of Substance Use Disorders*. Alexandria, VA <http://www.cswe.org/File.aspx?id=22249>

Fixsen, D. L., Naoom, S. F., Blase, K. A., Friedman, R. M. & Wallace, F. (2005). *Implementation Research: A Synthesis of the Literature*. Tampa, FL: University of South Florida, Louis de la Parte Florida Mental Health Institute, The National Implementation Research Network (FMHI Publication #231).