

Ohio Strategic Prevention Framework – Partnerships for Success
Identifying, Presenting, and Reviewing Data to Choose a Problem of Practice

Introduction

Selecting a Problem of Practice (PoP) is comprised of two decisions:

- 1) **Choosing a Priority Substance:** Determining which priority your coalition will begin working on first: underage drinking (alcohol) or prescription drug misuse/abuse (prescription drugs) among 12-25 year olds.
- 2) **Identifying a Priority Population:** Specifying what age range and specific population will be the focus of your coalition’s first SPF-PFS project. For example, the type of evidence-based strategies used for 12 year olds will likely be different than those put in place for 25 year olds. Rather than trying to find a “one size fits all” strategy, your coalition will be determining which age range and specific population (e.g., 18-25 year olds attending Cardinal College; middle school students at Buckeye Middle School and Carnation Junior High; or high school-aged females in the Pawpaw Exempted School District) to focus on within the selected Priority Substance. The more specific you are in identifying and describing the priority population, the better!

Through the PoP process, your coalition will determine ONE Priority Substance and ONE Priority Population to focus on at this time using the data that are currently available. Depending on your coalition’s capacity and long-term goals, it may be possible for your coalition to complete the first project and address a second project during the SPF-PFS funding period. If your coalition wishes to focus on a substance or population for which there is no available data, it may also be possible for your coalition to gather additional data while undertaking the initial project; this would put your coalition in a position to focus on this other substance or population after completing the initial project.

It is necessary to have data to support your coalition’s decisions regarding Priority Substance and Priority Population. This PoP Workbook will assist you in compiling your available data and determining your coalition’s PoP. The information you compile, as well as your rationale and decision for your PoP, will be shared with the State Epidemiology Outcomes Workgroup (SEOW) for review and approval.

Suggested Citation:

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1. Identifying Available Data: Inventory Table

The Inventory Table, when completed, will show what data is available to your coalition.

The table is divided into the two substances: Alcohol and Prescription Drugs. Consumption indicators are listed for both substances.

Inventory Table: Available Consumption Data						
Consumption Indicators		Both Sexes	Males	Females	Grade	Age Group
Alcohol	30 Day Use					
	Binge Drinking					
	Other Use Measure					
Prescription Drugs	30 Day Use					
	12 Month Use					
	Other Use Measure					

To complete your Inventory Table, please place an **X** in the table for each piece of data. Each data piece will likely be represented by more than one **X**.

Example One: A school survey with 10th and 12th graders was conducted. The data include a 30 Day Use measure for alcohol, and the data are available by age and grade, but were not split out by sex. The completed Inventory Table would look like this:

Inventory Table: Available Consumption Data						
Consumption Indicators		Both Sexes	Males	Females	Grade	Age Group
Alcohol	30 Day Use	X			X	X
	Binge Drinking					
	Other Use Measure					
Prescription Drugs	30 Day Use					
	12 Month Use					
	Other Use Measure					

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Data from all surveys, as well as all relevant measures from each survey, should be described in the inventory table.

Example 2: A coalition has access to two surveys. **Survey One** was conducted in schools and data are available by sex, grade, and age. **Survey Two** was conducted at county health fairs for a specific age range and no other demographic information was gathered. The completed Inventory Table would look like this:

Inventory Table: Available Consumption Data						
Consumption Indicators		Both Sexes	Males	Females	Grade	Age Group
Alcohol	30 Day Use	XX	X	X	X	XX
	Binge Drinking					
	Other Use Measure					
Prescription Drugs	30 Day Use					
	12 Month Use					
	Other Use Measure					

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2. Presenting Your Data: Template Tables

After completing your Inventory Table, you will describe your data in greater detail. For each **X** in columns “Both Sexes,” “Males,” and “Females,” you will complete a separate template table.

To complete a template table:

- 1) Start by selecting the appropriate template (Both Sexes, Males, or Females).
- 2) Write in the Indicator using the label in the relevant row of the Inventory Table (30 Day Use, Binge Drinking, Other Use Measure, etc.).
- 3) Write the name of the survey.
- 4) If the data can be broken down by Grade, list the grades for which the measure is available. If the data cannot be broken down by Grade, please put an **X** after “NA,” or an **X** after “College/University” if that is where the survey was administered.
- 5) Please indicate which age range describes the data by putting an **X** after the appropriate range (12-17, 12-20, or 18-25 for alcohol, or 12-17 or 18-25 for prescription drugs) or writing in the age range in the cell after “Other.”
- 6) Indicate what form the data is in by writing in an **X** after “mean,” “percent,” or writing in the appropriate form (range, etc.) in the cell after “other.”
- 7) Write the exact wording of the measure in the cell under “measure.”
- 8) For each year data is available for this measure, from this survey, write in the year, and the data point for each level of geography data is available. Whenever possible, find the state and national comparison data to accompany your data.

Community indicates any geography that is smaller than the county level (e.g., city, township, etc.).

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Example 3: 30 Day Use data were collected in all school districts in the county in middle and high schools for all students under the age of 18 in the 2011/2012 and 2013/2014 school years. The data represent the percentage of students who have drunk alcohol in the past 30 days. The data can be broken down by grade, but not by sex. The completed template table would look like this:

Underage Drinking: Both Sexes					
Indicator:	30 Day Use				
Survey Name:	Atlantic School District Alcohol Survey				
Grades Represented:	6-12	NA__	College/University __		
Age Range:	12 - 17_x__	12 - 20__	18 - 25__	Other:	
Data are in the following form:	Mean__	Percent_x__	Other:		
Measure	Year of Collection	Community	County	Ohio	United States
During the past 30 days, on how many days did you drink one or more drinks of an alcoholic beverage?	2012		18.6	13.7	
	2014		19.2	10.6	

Noting Minor Misalignments in the Data:

Most state and national data will be for the age ranges provided in the template tables. IF YOUR DATA IS WITHIN ONE YEAR OF THESE AGE RANGES, either above (for example: 12-16 or 12-18 instead of 12-17) or below (11-17 or 13-17 instead of 12-17), place an asterisk next to the state and national data you fill into your template table. In the space below the table, indicate what level the state data represents.

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Example 4: In this example, you can see that the county's survey data contains 12-18 year olds. Because the data is not an exact match to the state data, the age range had to be written in the table, rather than a category selected. The difference is noted by an asterisk next to the state data, and the difference is described in the line after the table.

Underage Drinking: Both Sexes					
Indicator:		30 Day Use			
Survey Name:		Atlantic School District Alcohol Survey			
Grades Represented:		6-12	NA__	College/University __	
Age Range:		12 - 17 __	12 - 20 __	18 - 25 __	Other: 12-18
Data are in the following form:			Mean__	Percent_x_	Other:
Measure	Year of Collection	Community	County	Ohio	United States
During the past 30 days, on how many days did you drink one or more drinks of an alcoholic beverage?	2012		18.6	13.7*	
	2014		19.2	10.6*	
*State level data represents 12-17					

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3. Reviewing Underage Drinking Data

Reviewing Quantitative (numerical) Data:

Using the completed Inventory Table and the Template Table(s) necessary to identify and describe your community's data, please answer the following questions related to underage drinking in your community for the population(s) between 12-20 years of age:

1. Does my community have a higher 30 day use for underage drinking compared to the state of Ohio?
 Yes_____ No_____ Unknown_____

Explain:

2. Does my community have a higher 30 day use for underage drinking compared to the nation? Yes_____ No_____ Unknown_____

Explain:

3. Does my community have other use indicators that are higher than the state or nation for underage drinking? Yes_____ No_____ Unknown_____ NA_____

Explain:

4. Are there trends in my community data that indicate that underage drinking is a growing concern in my community? Yes_____ No_____ Unknown_____

Explain:

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Considering Qualitative Data:

In addition to quantitative data, community events can influence a community’s perception of how damaging or urgent a substance is to the community. It is important to take a read of your community to help understand how willing your community will be to focus on an issue.

This qualitative data can be found in a number of locations. Scan local newspapers for articles and editorials about underage drinking. Consider the number of times your community has focused on underage drinking as a problem (e.g., community forums, events, community engagement in substance abuse and prevention programming, etc.) in recent years.

1. If available, please write a brief summary of any recent events (e.g., car crashes, fatalities, etc.) that have influenced your community’s readiness to address underage drinking.

2. Use this space to summarize any other criteria your coalition is considering related to underage drinking:

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4. Reviewing Prescription Drug Misuse/Abuse Data

Reviewing Quantitative (numerical) Data:

Using the completed Inventory Table and the Template Table(s) necessary to identify and describe your community's data, please answer the following questions related to prescription drug misuse/abuse in your community for the population(s) between 12-25 years in age:

1. Does my county have a higher 30-day use for prescription drug misuse and abuse compared to the state of Ohio? Yes _____ No _____ Unknown _____

Explain:

2. Does my county have a higher 30-day use for prescription drug misuse and abuse compared to the nation? Yes _____ No _____ Unknown _____

Explain:

3. Does my community have other use indicators that are higher than the state or nation for prescription drug misuse/abuse? Yes _____ No _____ Unknown _____ NA _____

Explain:

4. Are there trends in my community data that indicate that prescription drug misuse/abuse is a growing concern in my community? Yes _____ No _____ Unknown _____

Explain:

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Considering Qualitative Data:

In addition to quantitative data, community events can influence a community’s perception of how damaging or urgent a substance is to the community. It is important to take a read of your community to help understand how willing your community will be to focus on an issue.

This qualitative data can be found in a number of locations. Scan local newspapers for articles and editorials about prescription drug misuse/abuse. Consider the number of times your community has focused on prescription drugs as a problem (e.g., community forums, events, formation of coalitions, community engagement in substance abuse and prevention programming, robberies, pain clinics, etc.) in recent years.

1. If available, please write a brief summary of any recent events (e.g., overdoses, drug related crimes, etc.) that have influenced your community’s readiness to address prescription drug misuse and abuse?

2. Use this space to summarize any other criteria your coalition is considering related to prescription drug misuse:

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5. Thinking About a Population of Focus

The initial Problem of Practice will focus on a population for which you have existing data. To help review what population data you have, look across all your template tables and please place an **X** in each cell of table below for each substance and age group that has consumption data available. If your coalition has data for an age range not captured in the available options, please write that range within the appropriate cell in the "Other" column.

Available Population Data				
Substance	Age Groups			
	12-17	12-20	18-25	Other
Alcohol				
Prescription Drugs				

It is important to specifically describe the population for which you have data. Where do these young people live, go to school, etc.? The more specific you are in identifying and describing the priority population, the better!

6. Assessing the Data

Based on the data and other criteria available to your coalition, please clearly articulate which substance is most in need of being addressed through the PFS and why. You will consider two types of data that you compiled above - quantitative data and qualitative data.

A helpful resource to consider when assessing the data is from the Community Toolbox. It can be found:

<http://ctb.ku.edu/en/table-of-contents/assessment/assessing-community-needs-and-resources/analyzing-community-problems/main>

Quantitative data are the data gathered from your surveys. Quantitative data yields two key pieces of information: *magnitude* and *trend*.

Magnitude refers to how big the problem is in your community relative to another unit (e.g., your community versus state, etc.). Examining magnitude can tell you if the problem in your locality is larger than it is in the surrounding areas (state, region, and/or country) and help you decide if the problem merits your coalition's attention and resources.

When possible, find and compare other geographies to your own to help determine the *magnitude* of the problem. For example, if your county has a higher 30-day alcohol use than either the state or the nation, that gives you a reference point and helps you determine that underage drinking is a serious issue in your county.

Trend is a review of multiple data points within your community only and is generally used to see if a problem is increasing, decreasing, or holding steady. This data is most easily obtained from the same survey.

For example, when you look at your county's data across the years, is use increasing, staying the same, or decreasing?

Consider the magnitude of the quantitative data for each substance and the trends over time for each substance. Does one substance stand out as a significant problem over the other?

Now, take into consideration the community context. Has one substance been linked to a series of deaths that has made the community ready to mobilize? Has there been community engagement around prevention of either underage drinking or prescription drug misuse/abuse?

Congratulations! You are ready to move forward to the handout titled: Choosing a Problem of Practice & Writing a "Statement of the Problem".

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