

ACTION PLAN

June 2016

Sacramento County Coalition for Youth *Creating Community Action to Prevent Youth Alcohol Use*

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Sacramento County Coalition for Youth (SCCY or Coalition) is mobilizing to address underage drinking in Sacramento County, where alcohol is the most frequent substance of abuse by youth.

The Coalition addresses the concern that Sacramento County youth ages 12 to 20 are drinking too early, too much, and too often, according to Sacramento County data from the California Healthy Kids Survey (2009-11). *The Sacramento County Alcohol and Drug Prevention Services Strategic Plan (July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2021)* describes the SCCY as a key strategy for preventing underage drinking. The Coalition is led by the Sacramento County Office of Education, supported by the Sacramento County Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Behavioral Health Services, Alcohol and Drug Services, and will engage youth, families, schools, neighborhoods, and communities reflective of the cultural, racial, ethnic, linguistic, and LGBTQ diversity in Sacramento County.

The SCCY developed this Action Plan from October 2015 to May 2016. It provides a broad framework and a responsive menu of environmental prevention strategies and activities as a guide, ensuring strategies implemented by the Coalition will be outcome-based and lead to multi-level community change. The SCCY will use this Action Plan to begin project implementation in July, 2016.

Action Plan Strategies

The SCCY selected four Environmental Prevention strategies to include in the Action Plan: 1) developing targeted media messaging, 2) limiting youth access to alcohol, 3) addressing current laws, policies and practices, and 4) understanding and redirecting social norms. Each strategy is described in the Action Plan and a menu of possible activities is provided for each strategy. Environmental prevention approaches have the highest potential to produce population-level change.

The Action Plan is designed to be flexible, allowing the Coalition to be responsive to new priorities and opportunities within the County as they arise. The Coalition can leverage a wide variety of existing and potential resources, individuals, entities, organizations and successful national and local campaign models to implement its Action Plan. The SCCY will measure progress, collect data and set benchmarks to reduce underage drinking in Sacramento County.

The Sacramento County Coalition for Youth

The Coalition will meet monthly beginning in July 2016. Meetings will be held at the Sacramento County Office of Education on the first Wednesday of each month from 4:30pm to 6pm. Any person interested in community prevention is invited to participate as a SCCY member. The Coalition will recruit members from different segments of the community and continually build the capacity of its members. The SCCY seeks to approach all cultures in a competent manner and include input from all sectors, including youth, at every opportunity. Visit our website: SacramentoCCY.org.

For information about joining the Sacramento County Coalition for Youth or participating in its efforts, contact:

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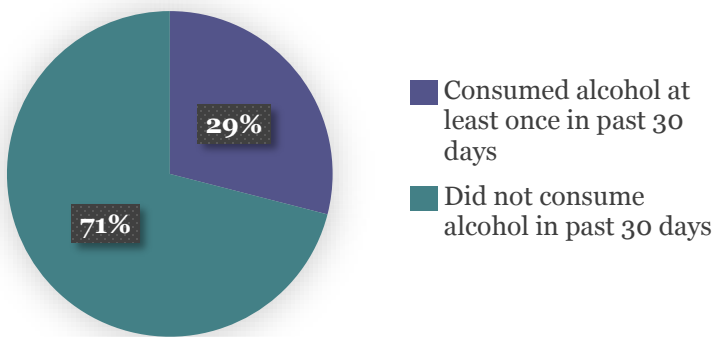
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INTRODUCTION

Background

Alcohol is the #1 substance of abuse by youth in the County of Sacramento. It is the most prominent and frequent “drug of choice” for surveyed youth in schools across the region (CHKS, 2013). Alcohol use has been identified as the most common substance abuse problem across California counties; as a result, preventing underage drinking is a major priority statewide. The early onset of alcohol use, the frequency of drinking behavior, and the intensity of drinking (i.e., binge drinking), establish patterns early in life that may lead to significant physical health and behavioral health concerns, societal problems, and other harmful consequences.

Sacramento County 11th graders

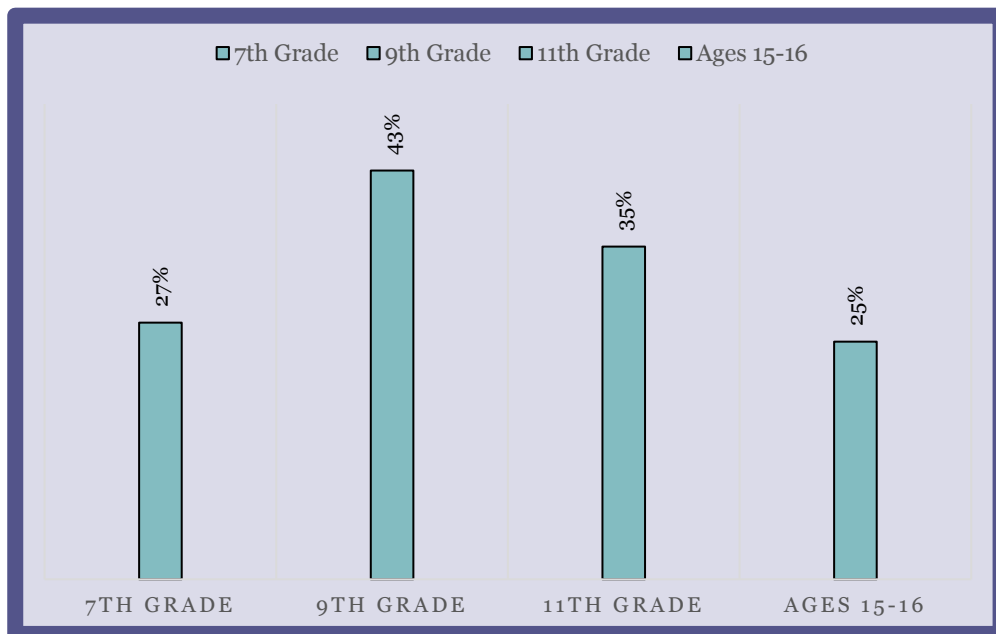


Alcohol is Sacramento County’s primary substance use problem among youth.

More than one-fourth (29%) of the County’s 11th graders reported they consumed alcohol at least once in the past 30 days. This measure is generally recognized as being indicative of current, active substance use, rather than one-time or sporadic experimentation.

Sacramento County Youth are Drinking Too Early:

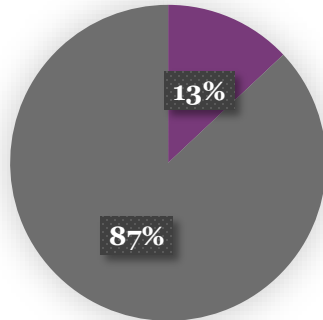
27% of 7th graders, 43% of 9th graders, and 35% of 11th graders tried alcohol before the age of 15, and another 25% tried alcohol between ages 15 and 16.



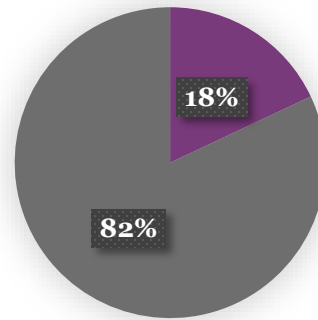
Sacramento County Youth are Drinking Too Much:

13% of 9th graders and 18% of 11th graders reported binge drinking (5 or more drinks in a row) in the past 30 days.

Sacramento County 9th Graders



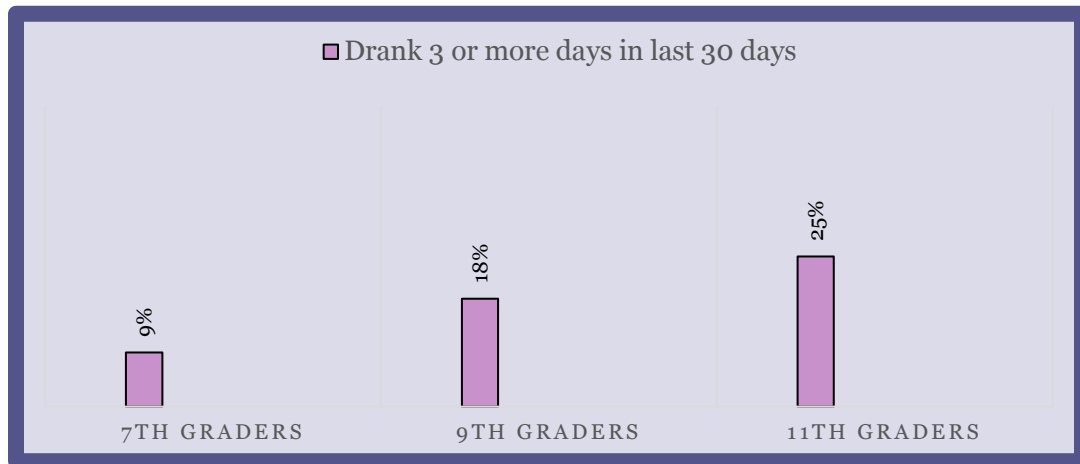
Sacramento County 11th Graders



Report Binge Drinking
Do not report binge drinking

Sacramento County Youth are Drinking Too Often:

9% of 7th graders, 18% of 9th graders and 25% of 11th graders reported they drank on 3 or more days in the last 30 days.



Source: 2009-2011 CA Healthy Kids Survey

The Sacramento County Coalition for Youth (SCCY) will address underage drinking. Funding for the Coalition comes from the Sacramento County Department of Health and Human Services, Division of Behavioral Health Services, Alcohol and Drug Services (ADS). ADS receives Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) federal block grant funding, which is overseen by the State Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) Substance Use Disorders (SUD) division. The state requires each county to develop a strategic plan that delineates the methods and strategies to be implemented to address the County's identified substance abuse issue.

As a result of the most recent strategic planning process for Sacramento County ADS Prevention Services, the data findings revealed that students across multiple grade levels throughout Sacramento County report using alcohol most often and at the highest level of all substances reported. Also of great concern is that young people indicate they are starting to consume alcohol at very young ages, and many are binge drinking with routine frequency at alarming rates. Based on these findings, ADS Prevention Services recognizes youth alcohol use as a major priority.

ADS identified a significant goal in the Sacramento County Alcohol & Drug Prevention Services Strategic Plan to increase the capacity of the community to participate in prevention measures, as well as to increase the sustainability of ongoing efforts by building a coalition of interested parties to focus on the prevention and reduction of underage drinking.



“When individuals, agencies, organizations and other resources are *mobilized* with a combined **FOCUS**, the *impact* is substantially more likely to increase incrementally.”

-Sac Co AOD Prevention Services Strategic Plan

ADS contracted with the Sacramento County Office of Education (SCOE) to direct the formation, organization, and facilitation of a coalition that will engage youth, families, schools, neighborhoods, and communities reflective of the cultural, racial, ethnic, linguistic, and LGBTQ diversity in Sacramento County, to work collaboratively to prevent and reduce underage alcohol use utilizing evidenced-based environmental prevention strategies and including additional approaches supported by prevention science and community-defined evidence.

The environmental prevention strategies to be implemented by the Coalition are expected to produce population-level change over time by increasing known protective factors on a much broader scale than other types of prevention strategies, while simultaneously reducing risk factors contributing to underage use of alcohol and other drugs.

The prevention and reduction in underage substance use improves the quality of life, academic performance, workplace productivity and military preparedness. Additionally preventing and reducing substance use/abuse significantly contributes to reduced crime, lower juvenile justice expenses, and fewer motor vehicle crashes and fatalities. Effective, consistent environmental prevention activities can lower health care costs for both acute and chronic conditions.

Protecting the developing brains of young people by reducing their use of alcohol is a major contributing factor to the short- and long-term health of the individual youth as well as the overall health and well-being of the community at large. Medical research shows that the developing adolescent brain may be particularly susceptible to long-term negative consequences of alcohol use. (*The Teen Brain, Ruder, Harvard Magazine*)

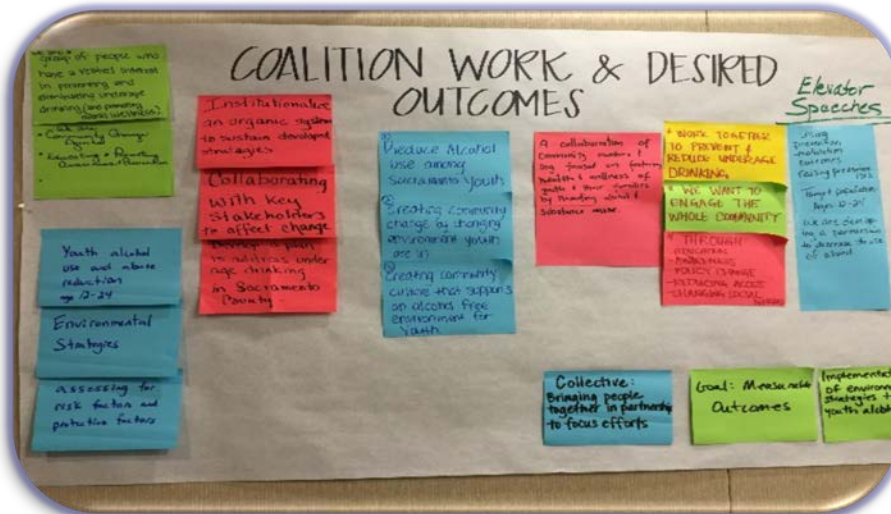
SCOPE OF THE ACTION PLAN

The Sacramento County Coalition for Youth (SCCY or Coalition) has been initially funded for a total of three years beginning July 2015. The first year included a planning process led by the Sacramento County Office of Education and supported by Sacramento County Department of Behavioral Health Services, Alcohol and Drug Services. Coalition members worked collaboratively from October 2015 through May 2016 to create the vision, mission and scope of the SCCY and identify and recruit interested stakeholders and sector representatives, bringing them together to formulate this Action Plan. The process has included training and education of the Coalition members related to prevention science, environmental strategies, and collective impact.

In building the knowledge, skills and abilities of citizens, including youth, parents, school personnel, neighborhoods, community leaders and other interested parties, the design is to engage all participants to create stronger communities that prevent youth alcohol access and underage drinking.

VISION

The Sacramento County Coalition for Youth *envisions* healthy and productive lives and futures without alcohol's harmful effects for youth ages 12-20.



The Coalition's *mission* is to take action to implement culturally competent environmental strategies that prevent and reduce underage drinking, and to promote healthy development of young people throughout Sacramento County.

MISSION

WHY ENVIRONMENTAL PREVENTION?

Youth are influenced by a complex set of factors and social determinants of health in their environments, including social norms, media messages, laws, policies and easy access to alcohol. Environmental prevention considers that individuals do not become involved with substances solely as a matter of personal choice (Fisher 1998). Research and evaluation of prevention strategies have demonstrated that environmental prevention approaches are recognized as having the highest potential to produce population-level change.

The creation of the SCCY is a means to systematically mobilize our culturally, racially, ethnically, linguistically and LGBTQ diverse communities to develop and support these environmental prevention efforts. By developing new partnerships and strengthening existing partnerships, the Coalition will be able to expand the prevention resources available in our county and ultimately make real, measurable change toward reducing and preventing alcohol use by Sacramento County youth.

The Coalition's conceptual framework and initial organization are informed by concepts related to the theory and practice of Collective Impact and collaboration. Collective Impact is a framework for collaborative groups to tackle deeply entrenched and complex social problems. It is an innovative and structured approach to making collaboration work across all sectors, including government, business, philanthropy, non-profit organizations and citizens. Common goals are achieved through the commitment of community sectors to work together to address complex problems and create large-scale, lasting results that change lives. Through collaboration and coordination of effort, as well as shared measurement systems to track progress against common, community-wide goals, the Coalition will be able to assess the effectiveness of their efforts in collectively "moving the needle" toward reduction and prevention of underage drinking.



ACTION PLAN STRATEGIES

The SCCY identified the following environmental prevention strategies to accomplish the goals and objectives presented in the Sacramento County Alcohol & Drug Prevention Services Strategic Plan (July 1, 2014 – June 30, 2021). This Action Plan offers a menu of possible strategies and activities that can be further prioritized and selected for implementation and is designed as a framework for implementation of activities to reduce/prevent underage alcohol use at the community level, providing enough flexibility to be responsive as new information becomes available or significant related issues arise within Sacramento County. As the Coalition implements activities over the coming months and years, it is expected that some priorities identified during the planning phase may shift with new information. The Coalition also recognizes that over time, new opportunities could change implementation activities and strategies. Accordingly, the implementation phase will involve choosing the most appropriate activities to meet the most up-to-date priority strategies.

Strategy 1. Develop Targeted Media Messaging

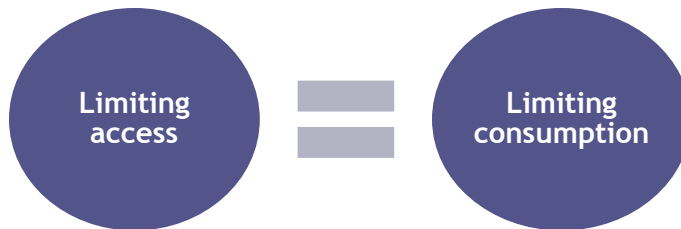
The SCCY will use the power of media to reach out, publicize activities and engage youth. The Coalition recognizes that youth are inundated with media messages indicating that drinking is an acceptable, fun, and safe way to socialize. It will be important for the Coalition to respond to these messages with positive messages of its own, emphasizing the truth about alcohol use and its effects in a way that appeals to youth.

The Coalition will seek to address misleading messaging directed to youth; identify and limit the media messages specifically aimed at youth; create new messaging with appropriate information about underage drinking; promote messaging that encourages young people to make positive life choices; and create and promote messages that remind young people (and parents/families) of the dire consequences of underage drinking.

Selected activities may include:

- Assess current media messages targeted at young people that showcase alcohol products, promotion, and placement in a way that entice youth towards alcohol use.
- Create specific media campaigns that are effective with youth from culturally, racially, ethnically, linguistically and LGBTQ diverse communities. Review successful examples used in other states and communities including health- and peer-related campaigns and/or access-related campaigns for parents and teens.
- Assess, in partnership with diverse communities, which traditional media and social media targeted audiences are using and determine which will be most appropriate for outreach to youth, parents/adults, or both.
- Identify media training and consultation to guide coalition efforts to understand available media choices and leverage free media.
- Connect underage drinking messaging with other culturally congruent prevention/health messaging where possible.
- Consider cultural competency issues, including targeting and tailoring messaging according to cultural norms, using the preferred language of participants and disseminating communications in threshold languages as indicated.
- Explore and utilize available media technology (for example, blogs and apps).
- Seek potential sponsors to underwrite the cost of paid media campaigns.

Strategy 2. Limit Youth Access to Alcohol



The SCCY will focus on access points – the most common places youth get alcohol and the people and institutions involved in encouraging and enabling their access – and work to limit and reduce alcohol availability to minors.

Activities may include:

- Determine access points by asking youth where they are getting alcohol.
- Collect existing data and/or create, distribute and analyze a confidential survey of youth to determine access points and alcohol use patterns.
- Inform parents/guardians about underage drinking laws, including adults' legal responsibility related to underage drinking in their home (Social Host Ordinances).
- Include alcohol access issues in media messaging campaigns (see Strategy 1).
- Assist parents/guardians in creating change in social norms that promote youth alcohol use and in creating safe communities, connecting them with others who also are making a commitment to change.
- Enlist the help of parents/guardians by asking them to sign a Parent Pledge to ensure youth do not have access to alcohol in their home. Create a voluntary directory of parents/guardians who have signed the Parent Pledge, so adults whose children are going to a party can discuss how the hosts ensure youth do not access alcohol and the party is safe and alcohol-free.
- Work with retailers to appropriately address the products, placement, price, and promotion of alcohol to reduce access to minors.
- Incorporate Reward and Recognition strategies for retailers, using signage, media, and social media to acknowledge retail outlets that do not sell alcohol to minors and to discourage minors from stealing alcohol placed near the door.
- Develop partnerships with other groups who currently work with retailers, including tobacco prevention, nutrition services and public health agencies, to work in partnership to implement strategies designed to reduce and eliminate youth access to alcohol through retail outlets.

Strategy 3. Address Current Laws, Policies and Practices

The SCCY will identify the laws and policies in Sacramento County communities that mediate youth alcohol access and use, assess the need for additional laws and policies to further limit youth alcohol access/use, and work with law enforcement agencies to enforce current laws designed to limit youth alcohol access/use.

Activities may include:

- Assess compliance with enforcement of existing youth/alcohol laws and policies (e.g., social host ordinances, minors in possession, open container laws).
- Investigate school, district and college campus policies and their consequences as related to underage drinking.
- Work with media outlets to change policies related to advertising alcohol to young people through social media.
- Work in partnership with law enforcement agencies to implement rigorous enforcement for businesses or individuals who don't comply with the laws.
- Build parent/guardian and youth awareness of Social Host Ordinances (SHOs) and laws related to retail sales to minors and their own roles in adhering to them.
- Build a broad base of support among parents/guardians, merchants, law enforcement agencies, the judicial system and community members to increase compliance with current laws regulating underage drinking.
- Assess existing density regulations related to the number of alcohol outlets to determine areas in need of more stringent policies and take action to reduce alcohol availability through retail/commercial outlets.

Strategy 4. Understand and Redirect Social Norms

The SCCY will identify and address the recognized and accepted social norms in Sacramento County and individual communities and subcultures and work to redirect the messages, thinking, attitudes and behaviors that encourage or accept underage drinking.

Social norms are complex and often deeply engrained. The Coalition will start with assessing existing norms related to youth and alcohol and identify which stakeholders hold and support them, then determine the most effective ways to approach and change them.

Activities may include:

- Research existing community social norms to gain a clear understanding of young people in our communities and their beliefs and values related to alcohol.
- Find successful examples of social norm campaigns related to underage substance use and target and tailor messaging according to cultural norms of the diverse communities in Sacramento County.
- Create countywide messaging reinforcing the development of skills, attitudes and behaviors that will assist youth in maintaining an alcohol-free lifestyle.
- Work with the community to develop and conduct parent/guardian campaigns, workshops and other activities to reinforce strong, positive, no-use messages regarding underage alcohol use.
- Engage in parent/guardian meetings, including booster clubs, community, faith-based and school sports meetings to deliver evidence-based education and encourage them to initiate conversations with their teens about ways to resist peer pressure.
- Ask families to make a Family Pledge that creates expectations, lays out consequences and sets in place consistent agreements on how each can provide support to another.
- Leverage the success of national, statewide and local campaigns to change social norms in Sacramento County. Examples include initiatives related to: tobacco use prevention, obesity prevention, mental health support, healthy childhood nutrition promotion, and underage drinking prevention coalitions in Elk Grove, Arden-Arcade, Placer County, and other local neighborhoods.

PROGRESS INDICATORS

For an environmental prevention strategy to be deemed successful, it must achieve measurable change. Activities listed in this Action Plan are designed to be data driven and to utilize culturally competent strategies. For each selected strategy, the Coalition will identify associated progress measures, including denoting existing benchmarks and setting improvement milestones to demonstrate progress toward the strategy’s goals. To monitor and assess progress, the Coalition will collect specific, measurable data through a variety of methods.

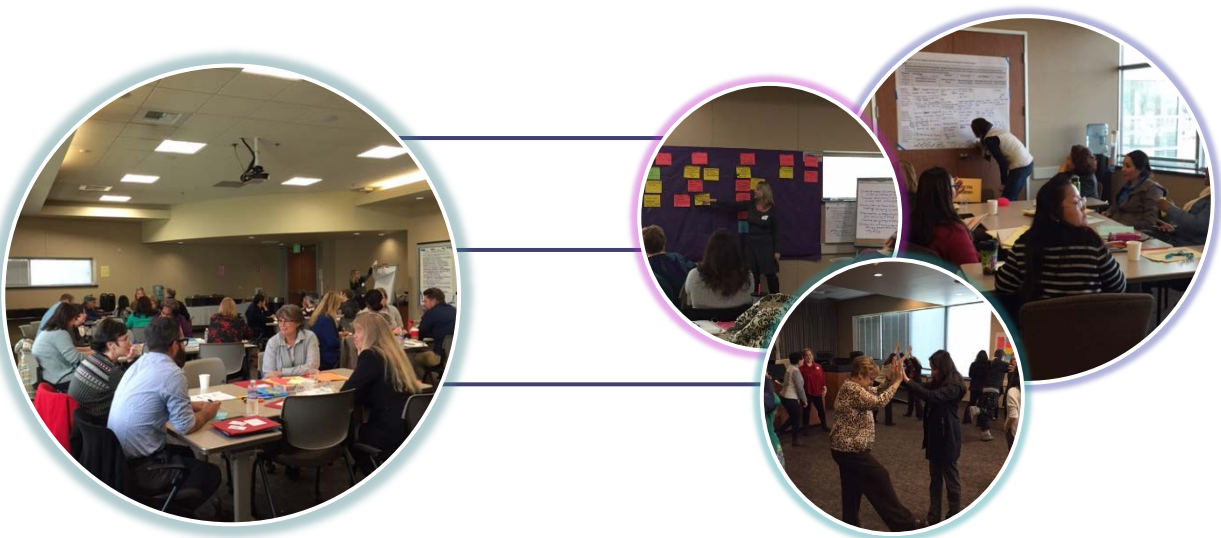
In the language of Collective Impact, to gauge how well a tactic “moves the needle” toward reducing/preventing underage drinking, the Coalition, in partnership with evaluators, will continually collect data, review progress of actions and adjust activities as needed to improve effectiveness in reaching the stated goals.

To gain a clearer picture of the effectiveness of the strategies within the diverse target audiences, data collected will be disaggregated by age, race, ethnicity, culture, gender identity, sexual orientation, and zip code, to the extent possible. Reviewing and analyzing disaggregated data will enable the Coalition to identify whether disparities exist. The analysis will inform strategy development aimed at achieving equitable results for the diverse targeted audiences.

COMMUNITY STRENGTHS & ALLIES

The SCCY already has strong support from a variety of sources including government and public service agencies, education agencies, community-based and faith-based organizations, families and individuals. Going forward, these relationships will be foundational. Priority areas will require allies from law enforcement, merchants and business owners, community-based organizations, parents, youth, faith-based organizations, and many others. Leaders and community advocates for prevention efforts will evolve within the Coalition and be supported, developed, and recognized.

Success will build upon existing and new resources, individuals, entities, organizations and models/best practices and community-defined evidence. The Coalition will also utilize content from experts such as SAMSHA, MADD, coalitions working on underage substance use prevention, local prevention providers, culturally diverse key community leaders who have strong community ties with the targeted audiences, and many others.



ABOUT THE SACRAMENTO COUNTY COALITION FOR YOUTH

The SCCY will kick off its implementation phase in July 2016. Recruitment efforts will be ongoing to continually reach new members who are reflective of culturally, racially, ethnically, linguistically and LGBTQ diverse communities, represent all sectors of the community and are willing and able to provide input, resources and make a strong commitment to implement the activities related to the four strategies outlined in this Action Plan. Community input and participation are both welcome and needed. The Coalition invites anyone with interest or experience in youth-related issues, and underage drinking prevention in Sacramento County to get involved.

A key initial implementation step of the Sacramento County Coalition for Youth will be to determine the types of support is needed to move the Action Plan forward. The Coalition will continue to identify and recruit the appropriate stakeholders needed to implement and participate in the various strategies. Initial training needs were identified during the planning process – members of the coalition recognize that to achieve our goals, we will need to build our capacity in terms of effectively coordinating with people, organizations, tools and support, including the areas of ongoing assessment, increasing access to research data/statistics, and gathering information from teens, parents and the community.

A value of the SCCY is youth voice – nothing about us without us. Ongoing efforts will be made to ensure youth participation and input. The Coalition will also consider cultural competency needs in every aspect of programming, including inclusion, outreach and appropriate resources and materials.

Laying the foundation for sustainability of our efforts is a core value of the SCCY - ongoing efforts from the community are needed to make significant positive change. We realize additional funding and resources will be needed to ensure the long-term, ongoing success of this essential work in decreasing incidences of underage drinking in Sacramento County. It is also true that our initial efforts to implement effective strategies, evaluate activities, increase community awareness and publicize project successes can have significant influence in ensuring the work of the Coalition continues beyond the current phase and becomes part of the fabric of our county's alcohol-use prevention work.

HOW TO GET INVOLVED

Beginning in July 2016, SCCY meetings will be held on the first Wednesday of each month from 4:30 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. at the Sacramento County Office of Education. Smaller working groups will meet at times and in locations that encourage widespread community participation. Please join us!

Community input and participation as the Coalition moves forward to implement the Action Plan are both welcome and needed. The Coalition invites anyone with interest or experience in issues surrounding youth, and especially in the area of underage drinking in Sacramento County, to get involved.

Please visit our website for more information: SacramentoCCY.org.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Action Plan reflects the year-long participation and active contribution from the following individuals and organizations, and we gratefully acknowledge their commitment:

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