



Empowering Community Coalitions to Prevent Substance Abuse: *Measuring the Effectiveness of Participatory Methods of Improving Health Outcomes*

Issue

Substance abuse exacts a high toll in local communities. Use of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs is frequently linked to injuries, crime and violence, as well as to a variety of chronic diseases. Although substance abuse prevention programs have the ability to improve community health, there are numerous challenges to implementing such programs. These include the knowledge and skills required, the large number of steps that need to be addressed, and the wide variety of contexts in which substance abuse prevention programs need to be implemented.

“The most important work to reduce drug use is done in America’s living rooms and classrooms, churches and synagogues, in the workplace and in our neighborhoods.”

Tommy G. Thompson
Former Secretary, Health and Human Services

Response

Researchers from the RAND Corporation in California and the University of South Carolina are engaged in a project to assess the effectiveness of participatory methods designed to assist community coalitions to prevent substance abuse and improve health.

The project will partner researchers with local substance abuse prevention coalitions to test the effectiveness of a participatory method entitled, *Getting to Outcomes: Methods and Tools for Planning, Evaluation and Accountability*. The participatory method is designed to enhance the prevention competencies of health care providers and empower them to adequately develop and assess community-based substance abuse prevention programs.

The specific aims of the project are to:

- Empower community-based coalitions to plan, implement and evaluate their own health promotion and disease prevention programs;
- Improve the effectiveness of substance abuse prevention programs through the use of the Getting To Outcomes model; and
- Identify factors associated with adoption of the Getting To Outcomes model.

This project will increase understanding of how to improve the ability of community coalitions to plan, implement and evaluate substance abuse prevention programs.

January 2005

More Information

For more information about this research project, contact Matthew J. Chinman, Ph.D., RAND Corporation, Drug Policy Research Center, P.O. Box 2138, Santa Monica, CA 90407-2138
Tel: (310) 393-0411 (ext. 6783)
Fax: (310) 260-8060
chinman@rand.org

This research grant is funded by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s (CDC) Community-based Participatory Prevention Research Grant Program. This Grant Program is committed to funding public health research that has direct relevance for policy and practice by having researchers invite health professionals and communities to participate in the research process - including identifying research questions of importance to their community and interpreting and applying the study findings in their community. A number of other community-based research grants are supported throughout the United States.

For more information about CDC’s Community-based Participatory Prevention Research, please contact the Office of Public Health Research, CDC, 1600 Clifton Rd., MS D-72
Atlanta, GA 30333
Tel.: (404) 639-4621
Fax: (404) 639-4903
<http://www.cdc.gov>

