

# Step 5 Capacity

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**Focus question**

What capacities does our organization need so that we can implement the program?

**Step 5 Capacity** helps you assess your organization’s pertinent resources. Assessing suitability in Step 4 Fit has helped you better understand if the programs you’re considering are compatible with your community. Now, you assess whether your leadership, staff, facilities, finances, and other resources are adequate to carry out those programs with fidelity. The degree to which your organization’s resources are up to the task is your organizational capacity. Developing capacity, therefore, involves building and maintaining key

stakeholder support for the program by ensuring, from the outset, that it will be properly planned, implemented, and evaluated.



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### Collaboration

When planning a program in collaboration with other agencies, developing capacity involves clarifying roles and responsibilities with all partners.

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Possessing the full range of capacities that a program requires indicates that your organization can deliver it well enough to produce the changes and measurable outcomes you desire. A capacity assessment will show you what you currently have to work with and what you might need to improve before you make a final selection and launch a program.



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### Key point

This step is about making sure your organization and your key partners have the capacities necessary to carry out and evaluate the impact of your selected program.

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Developer materials associated with the candidate programs should clearly identify the specific capacity requirements and, in some cases, explain ways you can build them. If they don't, you may need to investigate further, perhaps by performing Internet searches, contacting program designers, or talking to groups already using the program. Throughout this step, we point out additional online resources from which you can learn more about the different capacities we list, including ways to develop them.

## Materials

- Completed Step 1 **Resources Assessment**
- Copies of curricula under consideration
- Copies of the Step 5 **Capacity Assessment** tool located on the CDC Teen Pregnancy website



## Step 5 Checklist

In this step, you will complete the following to find out if your organization has sufficient capacity to successfully deliver a particular program:

- Understand key capacities you need to support your work
- Determine whether you have the right levels of capacity for the potential programs
- Identify capacities that must be further developed so that you can proceed
- Use this information to narrow your choice of programs to implement



### Fayetteville Youth Network (FYN) Starts Step 5

A basic question for the work group researching evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention programs (EBPs) was whether the FYN had the organizational capacity to implement the two candidate programs that fit, *Making Proud Choices* (MPC) and *Becoming a Responsible Teen* (BART). They examined both programs, but here, we present FYN's assessment of MPC. A number of circumstances combined to increase FYN's overall capacity to deliver MPC:

- Not long ago, the state Department of Public Health granted FYN a two-year, \$100,000 grant to carry out teen pregnancy prevention programs. Even so, they would need to maximize their financial and human resources by finding other organizations willing to collaborate. Fortunately, because MPC also influences determinants related to teen violence, violence prevention funding also could be applied to the program. This was good news for members, who were inspired by the prospect of leveraging their teen pregnancy prevention funding. They could possibly bridge a variety of prevention efforts, which until now had been disconnected and funded separately.
- Several teachers from the middle school stepped forward to express their interest in becoming MPC facilitators in FYN's afterschool program.
- As a last bit of good news, the group learned that three other communities in the state were using MPC and would be glad to provide advice, support, cross training, and implementation tips.

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## Reasons for evaluating capacities

This step confirms well in advance of starting a program that you have the organizational and financial ability to carry it out effectively. If, for example, your staff members were not fully trained in methods of delivering the selected program, or if there were not enough staff members to deliver its components, the quality of the program and its outcomes would suffer. With concerns like these, an organization needs to examine itself thoroughly to determine if its capacity meets the capacity requirements of any program, EBP or otherwise.

*Is our staff qualified?*

*Do we have sufficient support within the organization?*

*Do we have appropriate supervision available for the staff?*

*Can we afford the curriculum, other materials, and training?*

*Can the organization meet evaluation needs for the program?*

Using the information and assessment tool provided, you can address any areas of inadequacy before they undermine program outcomes or render the program unsustainable. This step provides a process for discovering and fixing problems or for changing course.



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### Take note

If you find you don't have adequate capacity for your top-choice program and can't build it soon, you may want to revisit Step 3 Best Practices and select another candidate program.

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Even if you are already implementing a program, EBP or otherwise, this step will help you examine key capacities you're using and anticipate future needs.

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## Information to get you started

Some capacities can be easily assessed, while others just as crucial to success may seem vague or hard to measure. You'll probably find that ascertaining your technical and financial capacity to deliver the program is fairly straightforward. You either have enough money to purchase the program or you don't; either you have a computer in the office on which to track your work or you don't. Human resources, on the other hand, may be tricky to assess and quantify, but good staff, volunteers, leaders, partners, and community members are absolutely essential.

### Staff & volunteer capacities

You are going to need different people filling different roles to effectively deliver a program. Staff and volunteer capacities will be important. Essential staff and volunteers could include healthcare professionals, peer educators, and skilled facilitators delivering the content; evaluators monitoring progress and outcomes, as well as supplemental support such as drivers, cooks, childcare workers.



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#### Online

**Programs for Replication**, *Teen Pregnancy Prevention Research Evidence Review* by the HHS Office of Adolescent Health includes key staffing and capacity needs for programs on the list:

<http://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/oah-initiatives/tpp/programs.html>

**Conflict Resolution Network** provides materials for training staff in conflict resolution, such as the CR Trainers Manual: 12 Skills:

[www.crnhq.org/](http://www.crnhq.org/)

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**Skilled facilitators are essential to success** because they implement the actual program with the youth. Successful facilitators possess a number of skills:

- Ability to engage, inform, and involve individuals in groups
- Knowledge of adolescent development
- Effective classroom management
- Expertise in the program content
- Cultural competence



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### Key point

For a program to have the desired impact, your organization must have the capacity to implement all program components the way its developers intended. We recommend that your organization adhere to all program requirements. EBPs often require high levels of skills to deliver well.

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**An EBP may call for facilitators possessing specific experience or education.** They may need to have in-depth knowledge of the curriculum, content, adolescent sexual and reproductive health, or instructional methods. The person running the group also needs to be comfortable discussing with youth such topics as personal values, contraception, and sexual attitudes. Under-qualified staff, even if trained in program specifics, could make the program less effective.

**Staff and volunteers must always work in culturally sensitive ways.** Many teen pregnancy programs are aimed at young people with specific cultural and ethnic backgrounds, and the program should be delivered with an awareness and understanding of these young people's experiences. The program you're considering may or may not contain specific materials addressing relevant cultural issues. Thus, you may need additional knowledge and training to clearly understand how best to deliver the program in a culturally competent manner. You also want to make certain that all staff members and volunteers are well trained in cultural competence and systematically apply these skills in their work with youth.



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### Online

**Cultural Competence**, National Prevention Information Network:  
<https://npin.cdc.gov/pages/cultural-competence>

**Cultural Competency Resources for Professionals**, Advocates for Youth:  
[www.advocatesforyouth.org/index.php?option=com\\_content&task=view&id=33&Itemid=62](http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=33&Itemid=62)

**The Community Toolbox**, Work Group for Community Health and Development at the University of Kansas, Chap. 27:  
[http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/chapter\\_1027.aspx](http://ctb.ku.edu/en/tablecontents/chapter_1027.aspx)

**Ensuring Cultural Competence** from Provisional Procedural Guidance for Community Based Organizations, CDC:  
[http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/pro\\_guidance\\_contents.pdf](http://www.cdc.gov/hiv/pdf/pro_guidance_contents.pdf)

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### Memory flash

You used the **Culturally Appropriate Programs Checklist** in Step 4 Fit to assess programs under consideration. Make notes and fine-tune your assessment as you think about needed staff capacities.

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**Some programs are based on young people teaching, leading, and participating.** Success for some programs for young teens may depend on recruiting and training students as peer educators. In that case, assessing your organization's capacity to do so will be an essential aspect of program selection.



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### Key point

If implementing a program with fidelity requires you to recruit and train peer educators, you need to consider your organization's capacity for that effort.

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## Leadership capacity

Strong leadership capacity is always important to the success of programs and organizations, but there are many other kinds of leadership that might not be so easy to see. For example, traditional community leaders can provide access to more resources or help promote your program across the larger community. To successfully achieve your program goals, you need diverse set of leaders who stay involved over the long term. Leadership is necessary at the program, organization, and community levels so consider all angles when assessing leadership capacity to deliver and maintain your program(s).



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### Key point

Developing relationships with diverse types of leaders deepens your understanding of different cultures and communities, opens the organization to ideas, and fosters effective approaches.

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**Cultivating diverse leadership strengthens programs and organizations.** You can find many types of leaders among your staff, volunteers, and board or other advisory group members. However, you should also go outside your organization, actively recruiting people with a variety of perspectives and skills:

- Different kinds of thinkers
- People of different cultures, professions, and ages
- Community elders and other natural leaders
- Youth themselves
- Parent leaders



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### Online

**The Advocates for Youth** has information about youth activism.  
<http://www.advocatesforyouth.org/youthactivism>

**Develop Community Leaders** by the United Way of Rochester, NY, provides training

<https://www.uwrochester.org/develop-community-leaders.aspx>

**Applying Evidence Based Practice Approaches to Leadership Development** by the Leadership Learning Community

<http://leadershiplearning.org/system/files/Evidence%20Based%20Practice%20Final%20Report.pdf>

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## Partnership and collaboration capacities

Partnership and collaboration capacities are important to the implementation, growth, and improvement of your work. Partners and collaborators provide access to new skill sets, assets, and opportunities for leveraging limited community resources in support of youth. That makes them indispensable. Partners can bring needed skills that might be missing from your organization, share their assets, provide other voices to communicate your messages, and much more.

Collaboration also fosters the wide use of available resources. By increasing the number of people involved, collaboration can enhance effectiveness and build support for the organization's work. When more organizations collaborate, a greater number of sources are spreading consistent messages about positive choices.

Collaboration can have a powerful effect, because research has shown that when similar messages are delivered by multiple sources, people pay closer attention and message effectiveness increases. Of course, cultivating partners and developing collaborations takes time. The effort often involves significant changes in everyone's thinking about how the work gets done.





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## Collaboration

### Principles into Practice: Strengthening Leadership for a Diverse Society

by the National Coalition Building Institute:

[ncbi.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/principlesintopractice.pdf](http://ncbi.org/wp-content/uploads/2009/05/principlesintopractice.pdf)

**Healthy People in Healthy Communities** by HHS is a guide for building partnerships and measuring results:

<http://healthypeople.gov/2020/implementing/default.aspx>

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Generally, there are four levels of collaboration, each with requirements and benefits<sup>1</sup>.

**Networking involves the exchange of information** for mutual benefit. The most informal type requires little trust or time, although these factors may create barriers to expanded collaboration.

Example: two teen pregnancy prevention program coordinators share information about their programs.

**Coordinating combines networking and a change in activities** for mutual benefit and common purpose. The result might be a reduction in turf issues and increase of trust and time.

Example: two programs providing similar services change their operating hours, reducing duplication and providing more complete coverage in their area.

**Cooperating combines networking, coordinating, and sharing resources** for mutual benefit and a common purpose. Shared resources can include any combination of *human, technical, and financial capacities*. It requires high amounts of trust, time, and access to each other's sphere of influence. Thus, effective cooperation requires a greater organizational commitment than networking or coordinating does.

Example: the two programs share space and funding for their services and better meet the needs of the populations they serve.

**Collaborating constitutes a formal, sustained commitment by several organizations** to enhance each other's capacity for a common mission by sharing risks, responsibilities, and rewards.

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<sup>1</sup> Chinman, Imm & Wandersman, 2004; Himmelman, 1996

Example: the two programs provide professional development to each other's staff and improve service delivery to the populations they serve.

To establish a viable collaboration, organizations must acknowledge potential barriers, like resource limits. You may have to be deliberate and take time to build relationships. You will need to be specific about what you want and what you expect from participating organizations, which can be easier to negotiate than casual or general agreements.



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### Collaboration

Contact your state teen pregnancy coalition to help you identify potential partners.

**Advocates for Youth** has resources for building local coalitions, developing media campaigns, overcoming barriers, and advocating for teen pregnancy prevention. They also provide links to other organizations experienced in coalition building:

<http://www.advocatesforyouth.org>

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## Fiscal, resource, and technical capacities

No matter what program you select, you'll need a number of basic tools – what we call fiscal, resource, and technical capacities -- to do the work, such as computers, Internet access, spreadsheet programs, and, of course, original copies of the program materials. Depending on the activities built into the program, you might also need a number of specific, practical items, such as meeting space, transportation, condoms, notebooks, food, or DVDs and the audio-visual equipment to show them.



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### Collaboration

Resource capacities can sometimes be improved through collaboration. For instance, you may decide to share expensive program materials with other partners using the same program, however it is important to ensure the complete package is utilized by both partners.

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When considering the total cost to run your program, think ahead over the life of the project. For example, you may need to consider hiring an evaluator with technical expertise your organization lacks. Furthermore, a program that involves recruiting and training local teachers to present the curriculum may

have other built-in resource requirements that aren't readily apparent. For example, if you need to recruit five teachers for a three-day training, you'll need to build in the cost of paying those teachers *and* the cost for substitutes to cover their classrooms during that time. You may not be able to get the same five teachers again the next year, either, which means recruiting and training new teachers at additional cost.



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### Online

**W.K. Kellogg Foundation Evaluation Handbook** by the W.K. Kellogg Foundation program for Helping Communities Stand Up for Children offers a one-page checklist for selecting an evaluator:  
<http://www.wkkf.org/>

**Find an Evaluator** by the American Evaluation Association:  
[www.eval.org](http://www.eval.org)

**Evaluation for Improvement: A Seven-Step Empowerment Evaluation Approach** was created by CDC to help violence prevention programs hire evaluators:  
[www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pub/evaluation\\_improvement.html](http://www.cdc.gov/violenceprevention/pub/evaluation_improvement.html)

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## How to assess capacity

The **Capacity Assessment** tool will help you capture information about essential capacities needed to implement your program with fidelity and evaluate it. Using the materials that describe the program you're considering, you will determine the requirements for each type of capacity. From that information you will assess your organization's ability to meet those requirements, including possible solutions for areas of insufficient capacity.



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### Tool

The **Capacity Assessment** tool is located on the CDC Teen Pregnancy website. We use the fictional FYN to illustrate its use.

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The **Capacity Assessment** tool measures the capacities of six resource areas and prompts you to identify potential solutions to areas where capacity is inadequate. Use this tool to measure capacity in these areas for each of the candidate programs you are considering.

- **Program facilitator** capacity refers to the number, qualifications, and expertise of those who manage participant activities.
- **Other program staff** capacity describes employees with the knowledge and skill to plan, implement, evaluate, and promote a program.
- **Board and leadership** capacity looks at the quality of interaction between those who head the organization and the staff.
- **Technical** capacity assesses your access to specialized materials.
- **Fiscal and other resource** capacity breaks down potential costs and prompts you to consider funding and technical resource needs. You may need a range of grants, gifts, sponsorships, and fundraising to operate the program.
- **Collaboration and partnership** capacity explores contacts for building community collaboration in support of the program.



### Collaboration

From the very outset, try to involve organizations that can provide ongoing leadership and financial support that extends beyond the pilot phase.

## Set yourself up to succeed—assess your capacity!

Even if you encounter areas of insufficient capacity, your work group may be able to brainstorm creative and useful ways to get what you need. On the other hand, your assessment may force you to conclude that the program you're considering is not the right one for you. This is the reality for many organizations. Don't be discouraged. If you can't achieve capacities sufficient to carry out your current EBP choices with fidelity, you can return to your Step 3 short list of evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention programs and select another one that might fit and work better with your capacities.

The **Capacity Assessment** tool could also serve as a helpful planning **instrument**. Filling it out may inform regular staffing processes by indicating areas of expertise to seek in the future.



### Save it

Keep all assessment and support materials in a place where you can get to them when you need them.



### FYN completes the Capacity Assessment Tool

FYN filled out the **Capacity Assessment** tool for both MPC and BART. On the whole, FYN was most satisfied with their capacities (we show just one section of the tool in our example to implement MPC). Assessing other program staff, leadership, technical, and **fiscal and resource capacities** in light of MPC requirements, they concluded that their capacities were adequate for all four areas. They answered **Yes** to all questions.

With respect to facilitator capacity, MPC stipulates that educators who lack knowledge about HIV and other STIs and adolescent sexuality, or lack experience implementing such a curriculum with youth may need about 24

hours of curriculum-specific training. FYN is committed to providing the training.

They concluded at the end of the assessment that they were ready to proceed on to Step 6 Plan.

*e.g.* Capacity Assessment

Facilitator capacities	Requirements	OK?	Plan to increase capacity
Do you have the number of adult and youth facilitators recommended for the program?	<i>One adult facilitator or two peer facilitators. If peer facilitators, two peers should co-facilitate rather than a single peer leader, and they should be one age group older than the participants.</i>	<i>Yes</i>	<i>We plan to use 1 adult facilitator and 2 peer facilitators in each session.</i>
Do your facilitators meet program qualifications, including level of education, years of experience and necessary communications skills?	<i>Facilitators need a minimum level of comfort with adolescent sexuality and the language used to talk about it. If not knowledgeable and experienced, facilitators need 24 hours of training</i>	<i>No</i>	<i>Our facilitators work with youth on sensitive issues and communicate effectively with them. Facilitators are more familiar with substance abuse and will require the 24 hours of training in adolescent sexuality curriculum.</i>
Are your facilitators comfortable enough with sexuality topics to effectively deliver the program with fidelity?		<i>No</i>	<i>Facilitators will require training.</i>
Have your facilitators received all training necessary for working with youth (e.g., group facilitation, abuse and neglect reporting, CPR)?		<i>Yes</i>	
Have your facilitators received sufficient training specific to the program?		<i>Not yet</i>	<i>We've scheduled training prior to the beginning of the program.</i>

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## Applying Step 5 when you already have a program

We keep reminding you about the importance of periodically reassessing what you're doing. In this step, you need to stay on top of your organization's ongoing capacities so that you can maintain high-quality work delivering your chosen program with fidelity. Consider these questions:

*Since the program began, have we hired new staff members who need to be trained?*

*In recent years, have our facilitators attended refresher courses or updated their skills?*

*Are additional training resources that we need currently available?*

We suggest you use the **Capacity Assessment** tool to revisit the capacities you need.

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## CQI and sustainability at this stage

One of the challenges organizations face is staff turnover. You may do everything right when it comes to selecting and implementing an EBP, but if you lose staff trained in delivering the program, you lose important knowledge and skills—capacities—you’ll need to continue delivering a high quality program. There are ways you can retain both staff and important knowledge about your program within your organization. Staff training and continuing education have been found to cut turnover and when staff remain on the job, they help embed successful programs more deeply into an organization. If key activities associated with the program are integrated into your organization, especially implementation, monitoring, and evaluation, you can support the program even if you lose staff.

### Lessons learned

Later on, when you get to Step 9 CQI, we’ll help you determine whether your capacities continue to support high quality program implementation. In Step 10 Sustainability, you’ll consider how to maintain and even expand the various capacities needed to sustain your work.

Right now, here are some questions to help you think through any lessons learned during capacity assessment that will benefit you later on.

#### *How well do we understand our organization’s overall capacity?*

You’ve just completed an assessment that helps you understand capacity with regard to supporting a specific program. Understanding the bigger picture of capacity could help strengthen your organization as a whole.

In the Facilitator Resources section of the CDC Teen Pregnancy website we’ve included a special tool that might be useful to you. Called *Measuring Organizational Capacity*, it walks you through rating your organization in a variety of capacity elements. The tool was adapted by Advocates for Youth from an Annie E. Casey Foundation document and is specifically geared toward organizations engaged in the PSBA-GTO-TPP process.

#### *Do we need to go outside the organization to build our capacities?*

Some of what you need may be found by expanding or deepening relationships you have outside of your organization. These relationships can help maintain your existing capacities or find new resources. You may need



to learn some new skills and then share them with your stakeholders, including how to collaborate better, increase trust, and maintain continued successful communications.

*Are we comfortable engaging youth?*

In this guide we've been trying to shift the tone used to describe youth. Typically, participants have been referred to over the years as "target populations," leading to a perception that programs are being done "to" them. More programs, organizations, and community initiatives are instead learning to work *with* youth, rather than doing programs "to" them. Some proven programs have important peer facilitator components that enhance the impact of the program. Learning to authentically engage youth sometimes requires adults to learn new skills. Is this an area where you need to learn more?



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**Save it**

Keep taking notes about your findings in the Lessons Learned tool.

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## Getting ready for Step 6



You've now completed an assessment cycle for selecting some evidence-based teen pregnancy prevention programs that fit your youth, organization, and community, and that you have the capacity to deliver with quality. You've examined its potential to meet your goals and desired outcomes, the programs' fit with your community, and your capacity for implementing the programs with fidelity. You may have repeated this cycle to examine several potential programs.

In Step 6 Plan, you will select the program that best fits your youth and that you believe you can effectively deliver. Step 6 also outlines the process of developing a plan for delivering the program. Finally, you will complete the BDI logic model you started in Step 2 Goals & Outcomes.