

SIERRA COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES  
DIVISION OF ALCOHOL AND DRUG PROGRAMS

**STRATEGIC PLAN FOR ALCOHOL AND  
OTHER DRUG PREVENTION**

2007-2012



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Photographs are supplied by Kevin Gong, <http://kevingong.com/Hiking/index.html>, Don Yegge, and Janice Stafford.

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## **VISION**

Healthy communities, families and individuals

## **MISSION**

The mission of Sierra County Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention is to increase protective factors and decrease risk factors for substance abuse in Sierra County, through community initiative and collaboration



Sierra Buttes

Photograph courtesy of Don Yegge

## INTRODUCTION

Sierra County is the second-smallest county in the State of California, with an estimated population of 3,455, according to the 2006 Census. There is a high level of community



cohesiveness among residents, combined with a spirit of independence and self reliance.

In developing the Strategic Prevention Plan, the Local Lead Council was reorganized and renamed The Sierra County Prevention Council. The Prevention Council played an active role in development of the Strategic Prevention Plan, as did the Sierra County Youth Council.

A Community Key Leader Survey was conducted,

community meetings were held, and the Youth Leadership Institute conducted surveys which involved over 200 local youth. Data was compiled and reviewed from multiple sources, including State of California Department of Criminal Justice data, California Department of Education, California Healthy Kids Surveys, Sierra County Human Services, and *Community Risk Factors* (CARS, 2004).

Prevention by Design assisted Sierra County with planning and design of the Community Assessment component of the strategic planning process. Annette Padilla, a consultant with the Center for Applied Research Solutions, Community Prevention Initiative provided technical assistance and plan review.

In Sierra County, there is the exciting opportunity to impact every youth and family. At the community level, Sierra County will continue to participate in outreach and education, while implementing evidence-based strategies. Outcomes of prevention efforts will be assessed on an ongoing basis. Efforts that are not effective over time will be re-evaluated and revised as necessary, or will be discarded for more promising practices.

## DEMOGRAPHICS



Sierra County covers approximately 1000 miles of heavily forested land and portions of the Sierra Valley. Sierra County is bordered by Plumas and Lassen counties to the north, Nevada County to the south, Yuba County to the west and the State of Nevada to the east. Elevations range from 1,800 to 8,589 feet. Large portions of the county are included in the Tahoe National Forest and a part of the Toiyabe National Forest.

The eastern and western regions of the county are divided by the 6,700' high Yuba Pass. The county seat of Downieville is in the western region of the county and boasts a population of approximately 325. Situated on the confluence of the Yuba River and Downie River, Downieville was established in the 1800s as a gold mining town. Many buildings in Downieville are remnants of the Gold Rush days. The town has plank sidewalks, and historic brick and stone buildings. Other communities in the western portion of the county are Sierra City, Forest City, Alleghany, Pike and Goodyears Bar.

The only incorporated city in Sierra County is the city of Loyalton, located in the eastern portion of the county, with an estimated population of approximately 815 (Census, 2006). Loyalton is located in Sierra Valley, the largest alpine valley in North America. This 5000-foot elevation mountain valley consists primarily of ranches established in the 1800s. Herds of cattle graze amid century-old barns in pastoral settings in the eastern side of the county. Many descendants of the original settlers remain in the region and local ties go back for many generations. Other communities in the eastern portion of the county are the small towns of Sierraville, Calpine, and Sattley.

Local media consists of two newspapers. *The Mountain Messenger*, the oldest weekly newspaper in California, founded in the 1800s, and *The Sierra Booster*, founded in 1949.

The closure of the timber mill in Loyalton in 2000 forced many residents to seek work elsewhere. Nearly 40 percent of residents now work outside the county. The western portion of the county is a popular mountain biking and hiking destination, and tourism has become a main industry for western Sierra County. A majority of county residents are now employed by city, county or federal government.

Approximately 20% of the population is below the age of 18. The school district consists of The Plumas-Sierra Unified School District, and the Sierra County Office of Education. The school population includes some students who reside in eastern Plumas County.

A majority of the population (90.2%) identifies as Caucasian. The second largest ethnic population identifies as Latino, with a 2006 population estimate of 8.4%. The Native population is estimated to be 1.4% of the population. According to 2004 data, 9.1% of the population lives below poverty.

## GUIDING PRINCIPLES

The state of California has adopted the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) as the requisite process for Prevention strategic planning by counties. In developing this strategic plan, Sierra County adheres to the following components of the Strategic Prevention Framework (see the model on the right):

1. Assess prevention needs
2. Build prevention capacity
3. Develop a strategic plan
4. Implement effective prevention programs
5. Evaluate efforts for outcomes

Project sustainability and cultural relevancy are integrated into all prevention services.



Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration  
(SAMHSA) Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF)

<http://prevention.samhsa.gov/about/spf.aspx>

The current Negotiated Net Amount (NNA) County Contract Boilerplate with the State of California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs states “The contractor shall expend not less than its allocated amount of the Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Block Grant on “primary prevention” for individuals who do not require treatment for alcohol and other drug use as described in the SAPT Block requirements (45 CFR 96.125). Inappropriate use of these funds for non-primary prevention services will require repayment of SAPT Block Grant funds”.

### 45 CFR 96.125 Requirements

SAPT block grant prevention funding must go towards the following services which are considered *Primary Prevention* activities;

#### 1. Information Dissemination

Includes but is not limited to:

- a. Clearinghouse/information resource center(s);
- b. Media campaigns;
- c. Brochures;
- d. Radio/TV public service announcements;
- e. Speaking engagements;
- f. Health fairs/health promotion; and
- g. Information Lines.

## **2. Education**

Includes but is not limited to:

- a. Classroom and/or small group sessions (all ages);
- b. Parenting and family management classes;
- c. Peer leader/helper groups;
- d. Education programs for youth groups; and
- e. Children of substance abusers groups.

## **3. Alternatives**

Includes but is not limited to:

- a. Drug free dances and parties;
- b. Youth/adult leadership activities;
- c. Community drop-in centers; and
- d. Community services activities.

## **4. Problem Identification and Referral**

Includes but is not limited to:

- a. Employee Assistance Programs;
- b. Student Assistance Programs; and
- c. DUI education programs.

## **5. Community-Based Process**

Includes but is not limited to:

- a. Community and volunteer training;
- b. Systematic planning;
- c. Multi-agency coordination and collaboration;
- d. Accessing services and funding; and
- e. Community team building.

## **6. Environmental**

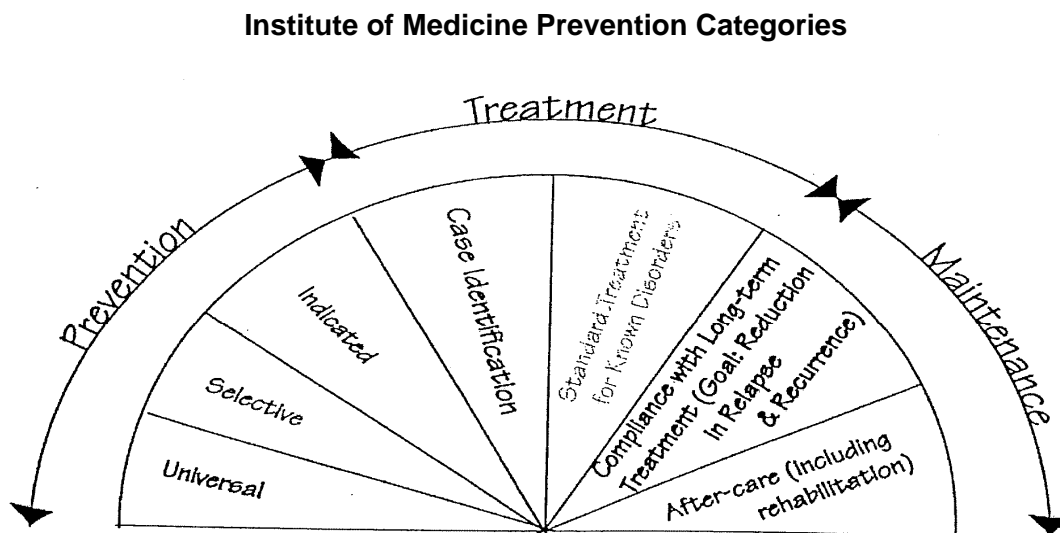
Includes but is not limited to:

- a. Promoting the establishment and review of alcohol, tobacco and drug use policies in schools;
- b. Technical assistance to communities to maximize local enforcement procedures governing availability and distribution of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use;
- c. Modifying alcohol and tobacco advertising practices; and
- d. Product pricing strategies.

Of the above, information dissemination activities, community-based process activities, and environmental activities have been found to be effective strategies to achieve outcomes for community change.

The State of California now supports the Institute of Medicine (IOM) prevention categories, described below:

1. **Universal Prevention Strategies** address an entire population (national, local, community, school, workplace, neighborhood), to prevent or delay AOD use and/or abuse.
2. **Selective Prevention Strategies** address an entire subset of the total population that is at higher risk for AOD use and/or abuse.
3. **Indicated Prevention Strategies** are designed to prevent/delay the onset of and/or reduce severity of alcohol and other drug use and/or abuse in individuals who are exhibiting early signs of sub-clinical alcohol and other drug use and/or abuse and other problem behaviors associated with alcohol and other drug use and/or abuse or who are exhibiting risk factors that increase their chances of developing an alcohol and/or other drug problem.



Center for Applied Solutions (CARS) 2006

Only the categories of **Universal** or **Selective** were considered for incorporation into Sierra County's Strategic Prevention Framework, in the interest of adhering to the 45 CFR 96.125 requirement that services provided by **Primary Prevention** services, as opposed to **Secondary Prevention**.

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In developing the Strategic Prevention Framework, the following information, disseminated by the United States Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) was incorporated into the planning process:

*Some highly publicized programs have been shown to be ineffective.*

*“One-shot deals,” such as hiring a motivational speaker or holding a drug-free dance, are ineffective as prevention strategies when used alone.*

**The following strategies are largely ineffective when used in isolation:**

**Information Dissemination** approaches that teach primarily about drugs and their effects;

**Fear Arousal** approaches that emphasize the risks associated with tobacco, alcohol, or other drug use;

**Moral Appeal** approaches that teach students about the evils of use;

**Affective Education**” programs that focus on building self-esteem, responsible decision making, and interpersonal growth.

*Recreational and cultural activities, known generically as “alternative activities,” often are regarded as attractive enhancements or the “hook” that attracts youth participants. Other activities, such as skills training, are more essential components of prevention programming.*

**Take action!** *Select programs and strategies that reach youth more than once. Ideally, youth should have exposure to prevention programs and strategies throughout their developmental years in a variety of settings*

<http://captus.samhsa.gov/Western/resources/prevmat/youth.pdf>

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It is the goal of Sierra County Prevention to **decrease risk factors** and **increase protective factors**, in accordance with recommended prevention practices. The Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) divides risk factors and protective factors into the following six domains:<sup>1</sup>

**1 INDIVIDUAL**

Risk factors include lack of knowledge regarding harmful effects of use, favorable attitudes toward use, early use, biological or psychological Dispositions, antisocial behavior, sensation seeking, and lack of supervision.

**2 FAMILY**

Risk factors include parental and sibling drug use or approval of use, poor family management, lack of parental involvement, family conflict, differential family acculturation, and low bonding.

**3 PEER**

Risk factors include norms favorable toward use and activities conducive to use.

**4 SCHOOL**

Risk factors include lack of educational commitment, poor grades or school failure, lack of attachment to school, school climate, and school policies lenient to substance use (e.g., tobacco)

**5 COMMUNITY**

Risk factors include norms favorable toward use or abuse, lack of social and community institutional bonding, lack of prevention effort resources, and lack of community awareness, as well as community denial and inability to address the problem of substance abuse.

**6 SOCIETY/ENVIRONMENTAL**

Risk factors include norms tolerant of abuse, policies enabling abuse, lack of enforcement of laws designed to *prevent use and abuse*, and inappropriate negative sanctions for abuse.

1 From *Substance Abuse Prevention Research Findings*, Western Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies, <http://captus.samhsa.gov/western/resources/prevmat/sub-res-findings.pdf>.

Sierra County prevention planning efforts have taken into special consideration the following assertions from each domain (excerpted and adapted from *Substance Abuse Prevention Findings*, Western Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies):

## 1 INDIVIDUAL

- **Normative education** (i.e., education which corrects both misperceptions about the prevalence of use, and attitudes favoring use) can be a positive influence; alone however, it is not sufficient.
- **Interactive approaches**, such as skills-building educational approaches and peer-led education, engage target audiences more effectively. These approaches include cooperative learning, role-plays, and group exercises. Didactic approaches are among the least effective educational strategies.
- **Peer-led**, youth educational interventions (or those which include peer-led components) are more effective than adult- or teacher-led approaches.
- **Interventions should appeal to the salient motives of youth.** For example, immediate smoking concerns (rather than lung cancer looming decades later) include foul residual odor or stained teeth.

## 2 FAMILY

- **School-based approaches involving parents**, and complementing student-focused curricula with parent-focused curricula can be effective in preventing adolescent substance use.
- **Interactive techniques** develop family interpersonal communication skills by modeling, coaching, rehearsing, and role-playing.
- **Sponsoring agencies** such as community and social institutions are of value. Churches and community recreation centers are promising alternatives when schools are not an option during nonschool hours.

## 3 PEER

- **Structured activities and supervised events** (e.g., sober prom and graduation parties) offer social interaction in settings intolerant of substance use.
- **Alternative activities** that incorporate social and personal skills-building activities are more likely to be effective with high-risk youth who may have had inadequate adult supervision, poor access to a variety of activities and/or insufficient opportunities to develop personal skills.
- **More intensive alternative programs that include a variety of approaches seem to be most effective.** Those programs that provide intensive interventions, including many hours of involvement with the program and related services, are most effective.
- Alternative events are peer and community statements celebrating and supporting a no-use norm.
- The effectiveness of approaches directed at youth in nonacademic social settings depends on the alternatives offered. **Alternatives must be attractive and appropriate to garner participation.**

#### 4 SCHOOL

- When addressing school domain risk factors related to lack of a satisfying academic experience, one approach is to include **academic skills-building** in prevention activities. This particular type of skills-building is a component of many after-school alternative activities.
- Lack of attachment to school may also result from **lack of future-oriented goals** dependent on the acquisition of education.
- **School policies that communicate a commitment to substance abuse prevention** include: formal no-use policies for students, teachers, administrators, and other staff; training for teachers and administrators; and a health education program that includes the most promising prevention curriculum.

#### 5 COMMUNITY

- **Alternative activities establish strong norms against substance abuse.** A single event can make a strong community statement, celebrate a no-use norm, draw media attention, and increase prevention support. For these alternative activities to be truly effective, however, they must be viewed not as ends in themselves, but rather as components of an integrated, comprehensive prevention strategy.
- **Controls on environments** around schools and other areas where youth congregate also convey strong community norms against substance abuse. These controls include restrictions on density of alcohol and tobacco outlets, setback distances of alcohol and tobacco outlets, restrictions on advertising near schools (e.g., placement of billboards), and establishment of drug-free zones that set standards for adult as well as youth behavior.
- **Media messages** should avoid demonstrating use, and should be of sufficient intensity and duration.
- **Community mobilization** raises awareness and involvement in coordinating prevention and treatment services
- **A coalition seeking active participants must meet members' needs.** Leaders and professionals are rewarded through accomplishments related to their organizational interests and through resource distribution. Citizens seek a useful application of their time.
- **Appropriate organization facilitates collective action.** Elaborate structures and procedures (committees, task forces, defined roles and responsibilities) are not productive.
- **A coalition must begin with a clear understanding of the substance-related problems it seeks to change.**

## 6 SOCIETY/ENVIRONMENTAL

- **Community awareness and media efforts** can effectively change perceptions regarding the likelihood of apprehension and punishment, reduce retailer noncompliance, change social norms regarding sales to and use by minors, and decrease costs of law enforcement operations.
- **Server training programs** only produce changes in selling/serving compliance when training is combined with law enforcement (against service to the intoxicated and sales to minors). Education and training programs teach alcohol servers about laws, violation penalties, the signs of intoxication and false identification, and how to refuse sales.
- **Alcohol and tobacco law enforcement by undercover buying operations** (decoy or sting operations) substantially increase the proportion of retailers complying with minimum purchase age.
- **Use and lose laws effectively increase youth compliance with minimum purchase age laws.** Use and lose laws allow driver's license suspension of a person under 21 years of age, following a conviction for any alcohol or drug violation (e.g., use, possession, or attempt to purchase without, or with false identification). While penalties should be swift, certain, and meaningful, penalties should not be too harsh. Severity is not related to effectiveness. If penalties are too severe, law enforcement and judicial officers may refuse to apply them.
- **Impaired driving law enforcement is an important deterrent.** It increases public perception of the risk of being caught and punished for driving under the influence of alcohol.
- **Impaired driving policies targeting underage drivers** have significantly reduced youth traffic deaths. Particularly effective are zero tolerance laws (setting BAC limits at .00 to .02 percent for youth) and graduated driving privileges (gradually lifting driving restrictions as driver experience and maturity increase).

After an exhaustive review of state and federal requirements, community data, prevention research, and after consultation with The Center for Applied Research Solutions, Community Prevention Initiative, Sierra County prevention strategies were narrowed down to the following two domains, as described above:

1. **Community** (listed as domain number five, above).
2. **Society/Environmental** (listed as domain number six, above).

# STEP 1

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## Strategic Prevention Framework NEEDS AND RESOURCE ASSESSMENT

In conducting the Needs and Resource Assessment component of the Strategic Prevention Framework, data was examined from many resources, including the following:

- **The California Department of Education;**
- ***Community Indicators of Alcohol & Drug Abuse Risk***, prepared by the Center for Applied Research Solutions (CARS), for the State of California Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs, in 2004;
- **Criminal Justice Statistics** Center data, from the State of California Department of Justice, Office of the Attorney General;
- **Youth Leadership Institute (YLI) Access Surveys;** and
- **California Healthy Kids Surveys.**

The input of key community leaders and local youth was crucial to the needs and resource assessment. As mentioned previously, the formerly named Local Lead Council was revitalized as the Sierra County Prevention Coalition and is now a driving force behind prevention efforts in Sierra County. Additionally, the Sierra County Youth Council, Friday Night Live, and other youth participated in the needs and resource assessment.

Resources utilized in developing the Strategic Prevention Plan include:

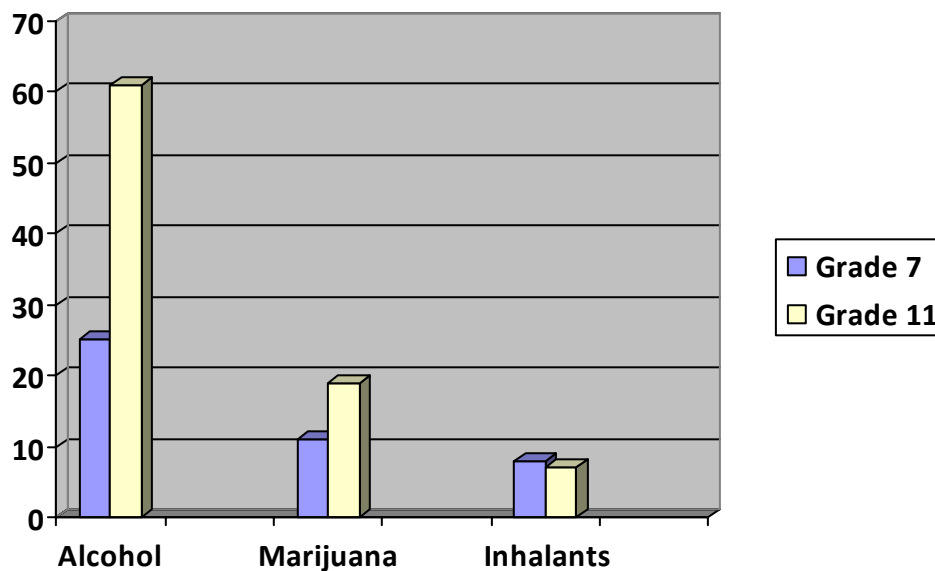
- ***Preventing Drug Use among Children and Adolescents***, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, National Institutes on Drug Abuse (NIDA), 2003;
- ***Risk and Protective Factors for Adolescent Drug Use***, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services, Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Office of Applied Studies, 1997,
- ***How to Make Prevention More Powerful***, Centers for the Application of Prevention Technologies (CAPT),
- ***Substance Abuse Prevention Research Findings***, Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies (CAPT),
- ***Substance Abuse in Rural and Small Town America***, Karen Van Gundy, University of New Hampshire, 2006.
- ***Drug and Alcohol Abuse in Rural America***, National Institute of Drug Abuse (NIDA).

In conducting a county-wide needs assessment to determine prevention priorities regarding alcohol and other drug use, the following core questions were addressed:

- What is the nature and extent of drug use in the county?
- What specific age groups and communities are impacted the most?
- What drugs are we seeing increased use rates for?
- What are the harmful consequences of alcohol and other drug use in our county?
- What specific age groups and communities are impacted the most?
- Which drugs are having the greatest impact?
- What are the community risk and protective factors associated with these issues?
- What are the existing prevention efforts?
- What are the most critical gaps in prevention services?
- What evidence-based prevention approaches are needed to address this gap?

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### ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG USE AMONG SIERRA COUNTY YOUTH PAST 30 DAYS



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**ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG INDICATORS AND TRENDS  
YOUTH LEADERSHIP ACCESS SURVEYS DATA  
2005-2006**

Youth Leadership Institute (YLI) data was utilized for this data, in lieu of CHKS data, due to the fact the Youth Leadership Institute data was more comprehensive and more statistically valid, due to a significantly greater number of participants in the surveys, which occurred in 2005 and 2006.

- In Sierra County, Forty four percent (44%) of students in grades 5<sup>th</sup> through 8<sup>th</sup> reported having tried alcohol
- Twenty five percent (25%) of Sierra County youth in Grade 7 reported having used alcohol within the past thirty days.
- Sixty-one percent (61%) of youth surveyed in Grade 11 claimed to have used alcohol in the past thirty days.
- Forty nine percent (49%) of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students stated they have driven after drinking. Sixty percent of 11<sup>th</sup> graders reported having been a passenger in a car driven by someone who had been drinking.
- Eighteen percent (18%) of 11<sup>th</sup> graders surveyed stated they “binged” on alcohol at least once in the prior thirty days (5+ drinks in one setting).
- Per student self-report, the majority of underage drinking and/or using occurs in local residences.
- The second highest locale is “Lakes/rivers/woods,” with 66% of youth stating drinking and/or using occurs in local residences, and 35.5% of youth stating use occurs in outdoor settings.
- Eighteen percent (18%) of youth surveyed reported that parents/guardians are usually at home when young people are drinking alcoholic beverages at their home or somebody else’s home (n=200).
- Local youth report that sixty seven percent of the time, alcohol is provided by friends who are over 21. Other sources include family. Reportedly parents/guardians provide the alcohol 7.6% of the time.

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## COMMUNITY INDICATORS DATA

CENTER FOR APPLIED SOLUTIONS, 2004

According to Community Indicators Data, compiled by the Center for Applied Solutions in collaboration with the State of California, Sierra County is on par with the rest of California, percentage wise for adult arrests for drug violations. Sierra County was the 4<sup>th</sup> highest in the state for adult arrests for DUI (ages 18-69), per 1000. Sierra County's average number of arrests was 20.5, and the average for the state of California was 8.4. Adult arrests for alcohol violations, (excluding DUI) placed Sierra County at 12<sup>th</sup> highest in the state. The average for California was 5.9, for Sierra County the count was 12.1.

The small population of Sierra County must be taken into consideration. Any arrest in a population this size will have a significant impact, statistically. Sierra County experiences an influx of tourism in the summer months, which could further skew the data. Some arrests likely represent visitors to the county.

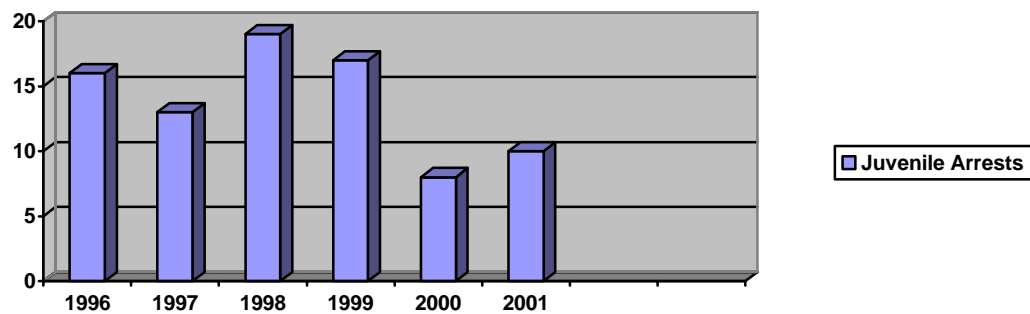
Data for adult arrests includes those 18 years old and over. Some adult arrests could reflect arrests of those still in high school, or peers of those in high school, but 18 years of age or older.

Sierra County was 4<sup>th</sup> highest in the state for alcohol-involved motor vehicle fatal and injury accidents per 100,000 licensed drivers. Sierra County's three year average rate was 219.5. California's three year average rate was 98.1.

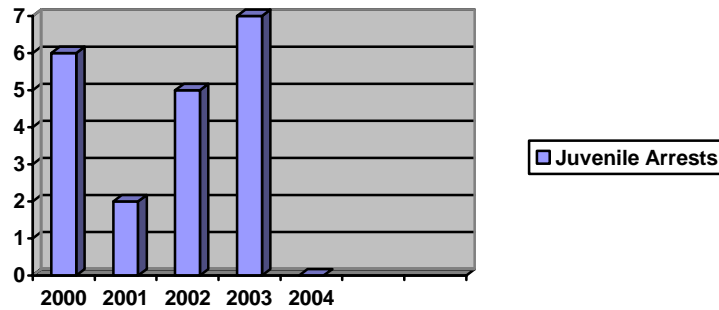
This increase in arrests within the county may reflect increased law enforcement activity, or increased tourism in the area.

According to Community Indicators (CARS, 2004), the three year average rate of Juvenile arrests for alcohol and drug offenses from 1999 – 2001 was 29.2 (see table below). The overall average for the State of California was 9.1.

**Juvenile AOD Arrests**



### Juvenile Arrests for Alcohol Related Offenses, Excluding DUI



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In 2006, 75% of Sierra County residents seeking AOD treatment, sought treatment for problems with alcohol.

Research conducted among rural populations has long shown that alcohol use among youth in rural areas tends to be higher than for their urban counterparts.

According to the 2004 Partnership Attitude Tracking Study (PATS) and the 2005 Monitoring the Future survey, the use of inhalants, as well as prescription and over-the-counter medications, is increasing among youth.

There is a small percentage of Sierra County youth reporting use of inhalants and/or prescription drugs. Additionally, three percent (3%) of Sierra County youth surveyed report use of methamphetamine, or another type of amphetamine (this survey combined methamphetamine under the general category of amphetamine). Marijuana is the second most abused substance in Sierra County. Data regarding prescription drug abuse in Sierra County is incomplete.

A strong sense of community cohesiveness is considered a protective factor that reduces risks for substance use problems. Rural youth and adults report feeling a stronger sense of community than urban counterparts.

As mentioned earlier, however, the rates of alcohol abuse in rural areas tend to be elevated. It has been posited that this might be because, in rural America, heavy drinking is more often tolerated or considered a “norm.” As Angeline Bushy, an expert in rural women’s health care, explains:

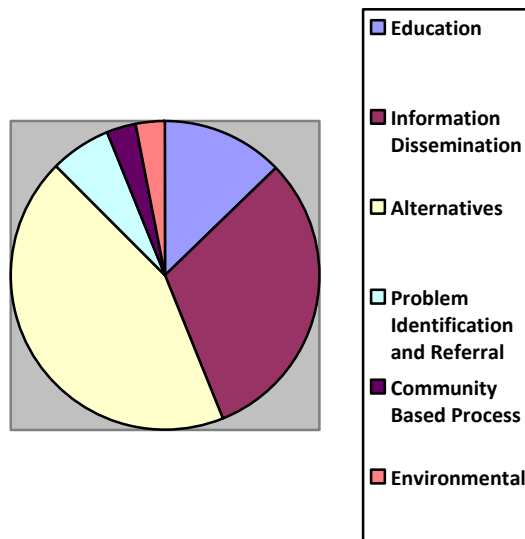
While a close-knit family can be highly supportive to someone with an emotional or substance abuse problem, in other cases, the family can hinder a sick person from seeking outside help. An overtly solicitous family also can develop a high tolerance or immunity to the dysfunctional behavior exhibited by a family member”.

The interpersonal dynamics that occur in families can also occur in close-knit rural communities, where everybody knows their neighbors.

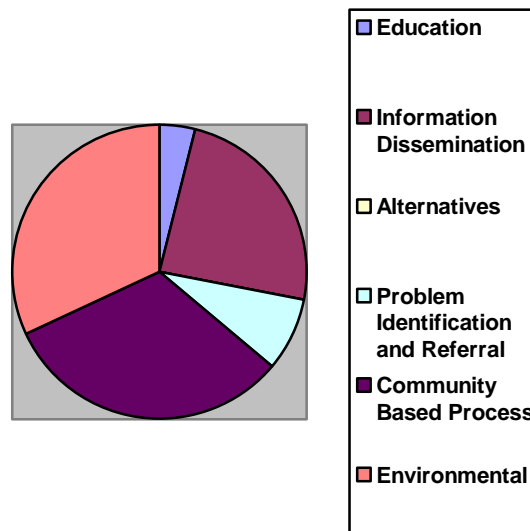
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As the charts below show, the services proposed in community-based process, information dissemination and environmental strategies will be a major shift in the way prevention will be provided. This will require support from our Board of Supervisors, county staff, and partners. Additionally, training and technical assistance will be needed from providers like CARS/CPI.

**PROGRAMS HISTORICALLY FUNDED BY SIERRA COUNTY  
BY PRIMARY PREVENTION CATEGORY**



**PROGRAMS FUNDED BY SIERRA COUNTY UNDER THE STRATEGIC PREVENTION PLAN  
BY PRIMARY PREVENTION CATEGORY**



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## **GAPS**

Aside from school-based education provided through Tobacco Use and Prevention Education (TUPE) funds, and a small Safe and Drug Free Schools and Communities (SDFSC) grant implemented by the Plumas-Sierra Unified School District, there are no formal alcohol and drug prevention programs in Sierra County, that are not mentioned here as being facilitated by the county. There are services that could be considered indirect alcohol and drug prevention, such as law enforcement and youth organizations.

Gaps include a lack of data on the rate of prescription drug abuse in Sierra County. Research regarding prescription drug abuse will be targeted as a part of ongoing data collection in the county.

While there has been education and information dissemination in the county, it has not specifically targeted binge drinking, or focused on underage drinking, aside from **Every 15 Minutes**, DUI Prevention Program, which has been adopted by the Sierra County Youth Council. According to CSAP, one-shot interventions and scare tactics will not have an impact if they are not tied in with an ongoing, community-wide effort that engages participants at multiple levels. Scare tactics in themselves are considered ineffective as prevention strategies.

While there is a strong cadre of parents involved in community prevention, prevention efforts regarding youth use has not been specifically targeted towards parents who are not already actively involved.

Environmental strategies in the county have mainly focused on tobacco prevention, which are not funded with Alcohol and other Drug funding. Sierra County prevention staff have some capacity to engage in environmental prevention strategies, due to experience in tobacco control.

There is a lack of indicated prevention services available for individuals identified as being at high risk, due to an absence of funding streams that specifically target high-risk youth who are not involved with existing entities such as social services, mental health, or the criminal justice system. A majority of youth who have circumstances that put them at risk for substance abuse do not meet criteria for involvement with an existing agency.

## STEP 2

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### Strategic Prevention Framework CAPACITY BUILDING

#### COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIPS

In the process of developing the Strategic Prevention Plan, the Sierra County Prevention Coalition, was developed and consists of a cadre of committed community leaders and partners.

Membership includes representation from the following entities:

- The Sierra County Sheriff's Department;
- The Sierra County Department of Probation;
- The Sierra County Department of Mental Health;
- The Sierra County Office of Education;
- Plumas-Sierra Joint Unified School District;
- The Sierra County Child Care Council;
- The Family Resource Center;
- Friday Night Live (FNL);
- The Sierra County Youth Council;
- The Assembly of God Church;
- Local parents; and
- Community volunteers.

Membership includes representation from Caucasian, Latino, and Native ethnic groups.

The Sierra County Prevention Coalition significantly expands the number of community partners involved in prevention efforts. Coalition members have expressed an interest in participating in receiving ongoing education regarding prevention, and participating in meetings and training opportunities at the state level.

Coalition members were provided education pertaining to risk factors, protective factors, and best practice for substance abuse prevention. Additionally, all data analyzed and compiled in researching community risk and protective factors was shared and discussed with coalition members.

## **Challenges**

Training and technical assistance will continue to be an issue. A move away from leadership training and education in the context of alternative activities has historically been a primary vehicle for prevention services in the past.

Drug-free dances, the Wilderness Challenge program, and similar activities assisted youth with goal-setting, leadership abilities and sending a strong community anti-drug message.

In the development of the Strategic Prevention Framework, Sierra County discontinued funding the Wilderness Challenge program. The Family Resource Center has found funding to continue the Wilderness Challenge program for one year.

Sierra County will continue to fund a Summer Recreational Program for youth, which incorporates alcohol and drug education and refusal skills, through this summer, and after that this program will be discontinued for more promising practices.

Moving away from what has been a community norm for prevention into a focus on community-based and environmental strategies represents a significant cultural shift for Sierra County. It will be important to continue to educate community leaders, residents, and service providers on effective prevention strategies and to provide technical assistance on effective data collection.

There is a significant gap in indicated secondary prevention services for “at risk” youth who are not eligible for existing services. Examples include youth experiencing significant family conflict or transition, who do not meet diagnostic criteria for mental health services. Youth who are performing poorly in school, and youth who are suspected of use of alcohol and/or other drugs, who are not involved with the criminal justice system.

Other gaps noted during the Strategic Planning process were a lack of vocational skills training programs in the community, and lack of school-based counseling services.

## **EXISTING RESOURCES**

Non-county funded existing resources in the community that could be considered prevention forums include the following youth-orientated groups and programs:

- The Sierra County Youth Council;
- The Booster Club;
- 4-H;
- Girl Scouts;
- Boy Scouts; and
- Wilderness Challenge.

Youth involvement has been instrumental in planning and implementing alternative and educational activities, conducting research, and providing input into prevention planning.

**Sierra County Office of Education** has collaborated in provision of an after-school program for youth, and provision of class-room based prevention education targeting tobacco, alcohol, and other drug use. School personnel have been key as FNL and Club Live Advisors, and facilitators for recreational activities.

**The Family Resource Center** now provides the Wilderness Challenge Program as mentioned previously. Wilderness Challenge is an outdoor-recreation based program that uses activities such as kayaking, hiking, and rock climbing to help youth ages 8 to 17 develop positive self esteem and leadership skills through goal accomplishment and team building experiences.

**The MEND program** is a wrap-around program targeting youth who are involved with Juvenile Probation who have been diagnosed as having a viable mental health diagnosis.

Sierra County is a highly cohesive community and the level of concern and involvement of local businesses, parents and community members in general is a valuable resource. Parents are active in volunteering for events such as **Sober Graduation night**.

Sierra County Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs funds a **Friday Night Live Mentoring Program** that facilitates the training and coordination of volunteers to provide mentoring to local youth.

Additionally, Sierra County Department of Alcohol and Drug Programs facilitates local traditional **Friday Night Live** and **Club Live** programs.

**Local churches** provide youth programs, counseling services, and alternative activities to youth who are connected to a faith-based community. Local church leaders have expressed an interest in increased involvement with general community prevention efforts.

Sierra County is a Local Lead Agency (LLA) for Proposition 99 **Tobacco Prevention**, and tobacco prevention efforts in the community are extensive.

Due to the rural, interrelated nature of Sierra County communities, **local law enforcement** personnel often are on a first-name basis with local youth. In developing the Strategic Prevention Framework, it became apparent that local law enforcement are often able to spot a struggling youth who is not yet involved in the criminal justice system, but who is heading in that direction unless intervention is provided. Law enforcement is a valuable resource for early identification of at-risk youth.

Other resources include the **natural resources** in the area, which provides ample opportunity for outdoor recreation. **Local ranches** provide opportunity for horseback riding and other avenues of connection to animals and nature.

As vocational training opportunities for youth were identified as a gap in community services, future efforts could be made to involve local business in apprenticeship opportunities. Such efforts could involve area groups such as the **Rotary Club** and the **Chamber of Commerce**.

**SIERRA COUNTY HUMAN SERVICES  
BUDGET FOR ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG PREVENTION**

**Substance Abuse Prevention and Treatment (SAPT) Prevention Set-Aside: \$83,144**

**Friday Night Live: \$3000**

**Club Live: \$3000**

**FNL Mentoring Grant: \$33,500**

Of these funds, only the SAPT Prevention Set-Aside applies to this Strategic Plan, as other funds are designated for specific pre-determined purposes (e.g., mentoring).

Sierra County intends to pursue alternative funding opportunities in the interest of enhancing capacity for prevention services.

One full time equivalent (FTE) is funded through SAPT Prevention Set-Aside, which has primary responsibility for prevention activities in Sierra County. Extra Help employees have been utilized to assist with prevention activities, as needed.

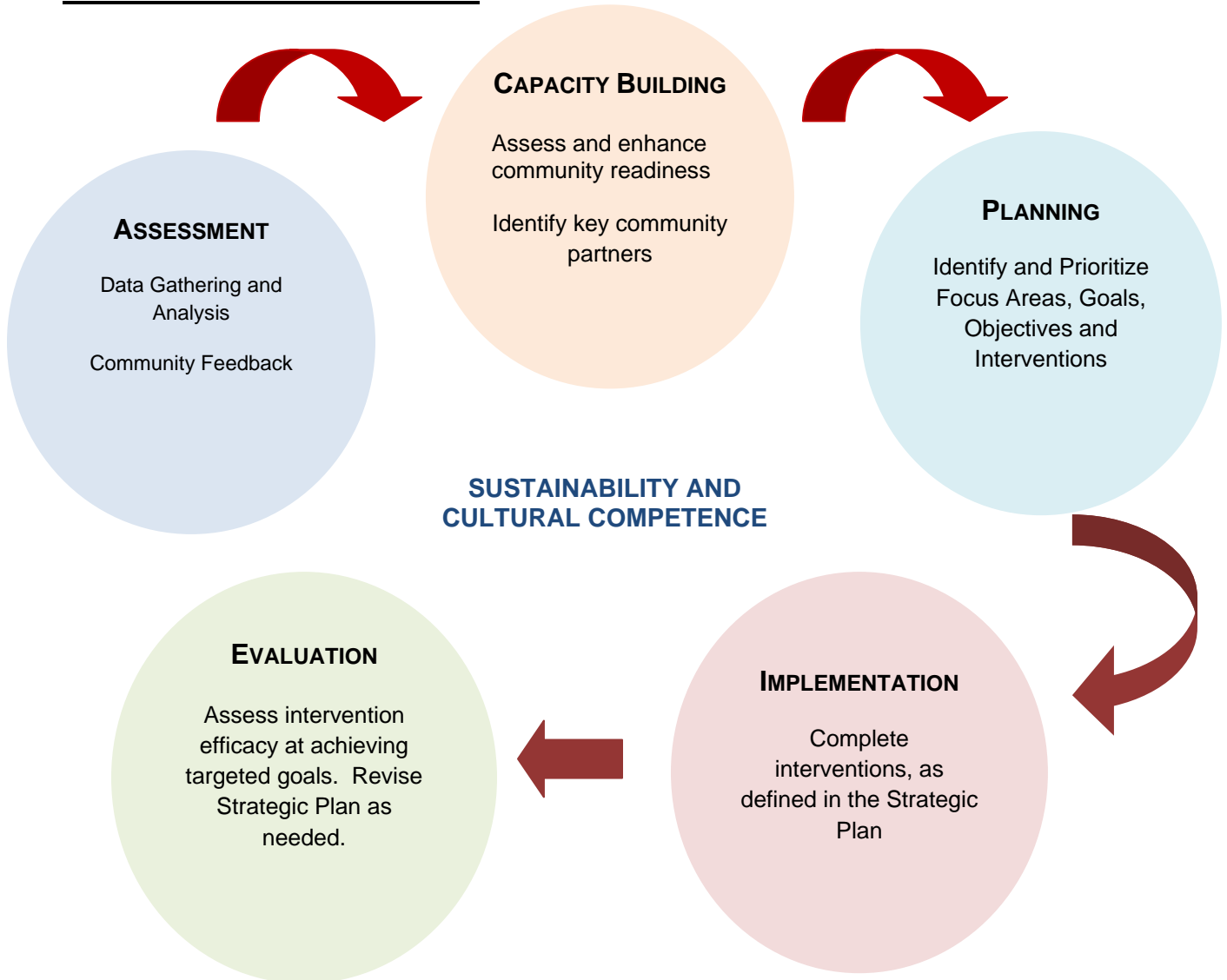
## **STEP 3**

# Strategic Prevention Framework

## PLANNING PROCESS

In identifying goals and objectives for the Strategic Plan for Prevention services, Sierra County utilized the Strategic Prevention Framework steps, as outlined by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.

### STRATEGIC PREVENTION FRAMEWORK



Community partners were engaged in the planning process throughout development of the Strategic Plan. The Strategic Plan was discussed at monthly Sierra County Prevention

Coalition meetings. In-between meetings, coalition members and other community members were kept apprised of the development of the strategic plan, and submitted feedback throughout the duration of the plan.

Community data was shared with coalition members and other community members. Coalition members and other community members were provided information in public forums and via e-mail of prevention principles and requirements, as outlined in this plan.

Criteria used to establish prevention priorities developed from an analysis of community feedback, quantitative data, current resources, prevention research, and technical assistance provided through the Center for Applied Solutions Community Prevention Initiative (CPI).

The Youth Leadership Institute did the most exhaustive survey of youth access to alcohol and other drugs and risk factors ever conducted in the county. An analysis of this data, other data sources, and community feedback indicated that youth access to alcohol was a most significant factor in Sierra County. There has been a lack of prevention services in Sierra County addressing the issue of youth access to alcohol.

## **PROBLEM STATEMENTS**

1. Youth are able to access alcohol through social and familial resources, which places them at risk for health and safety problems.
2. A large number of youth report binge drinking, which is dangerous to our community.
3. A significant number of youth report driving under the influence of alcohol, which makes our roads unsafe.
4. Sierra County, as a rural community, lacks adequate resources for prevention, resulting in inadequate infrastructure for the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) and environmental strategies.

## ACTION PLAN

Based on the findings of the needs assessment, as well as a review of the current prevention program inventory, the Sierra County Alcohol and Drug Prevention Collaborative identified and prioritized two areas of focus for primary prevention efforts for the next five years:

1. Systematic Capacity for Prevention;
2. Access to Alcohol and Other Drugs;

### GOAL 1: Increase Systemic Capacity for Prevention

#### CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

- ✘ Limited local data and/or tracking systems
- ✘ Limited capacity of individuals/agencies involved in prevention
- ✘ Limited funding for indicated populations, secondary and tertiary prevention

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES	LONG TERM OUTCOMES	MEASUREMENT INDICATORS
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<p>Establish ongoing quantitative and qualitative data collection procedures, which encourage timely and accurate reporting by October 30, 2007. Update system on-going until 6/30/12.</p> <p><b>Intervention:</b></p> <p><b>Community Based Process</b></p>	<p>Develop agreed upon written policies and procedures internally and with partners to continue collecting data on an ongoing basis.</p> <p>Use CARS Resource Guide for list of agencies and data sources to assist with “data mapping”</p>	<p>Established vehicles for community need, capacity and outcomes evaluation service and delivery decisions</p>	<p>Improve available data to better Inform prevention policy, service and delivery decisions</p>	<p>Increased evidence-based prevention services in the community</p> <p>Decreased problems in the community related to alcohol and/or other drugs.</p> <p>Community change using EP; staff/community capacity</p>	<p>Number of evidence-based prevention services in Sierra County.</p> <p>Refined alcohol and other drug problem statements</p> <p>Updated problem statements data system, to generate needed information (updates to strategic plan)</p>
	<p>By July 1, 2008, assess feasibility to contract with an evaluator; create a matrix of current data streams, and identified gaps in data (e.g., there is a lack of data pertaining to prescription drug abuse in the county).</p> <p>Meet with identified individuals and agencies responsible for data collection and develop a data collection plan.</p>	<p>Increased evaluation efforts</p> <p>List of partners to meet with; agenda minutes</p>	<p>Enhanced data systems</p> <p>Verbal agreement for data gathering; data review</p>	<p>Countywide data mapping</p> <p>Set protocol for future strategic plan</p> <p>Set protocol for future strategic plan</p>	<p>Revised data driven problem statements (plan updates)</p> <p>Checklist of procedures</p> <p>Checklist of procedures</p>

	Develop written policies and procedures for comprehensive data collection in Sierra County.	Data plan/evaluation plan	Good use of ADP funds		
<p><b>Ensure That All Prevention Programs in the County Use Evidence-Based Practices</b></p> <p><b>Community Based Process</b></p>	<p>Provide at least one (1) annual environmental and SPF prevention training to staff and all coalition/community members responsible for prevention planning and implementation by seeking resources from CARS.</p> <p>Provide at least 50 units of technical assistance (defined as 1 unit/hour) to partners to achieve EP goals.</p> <p>Create a Promising and Best Practices Data Base, which will be reviewed and updated annually.</p> <p>Staff and a minimum of three Sierra County Prevention</p>	<p>Increased skills in model program components such as applied data, community organizing, media, policy and enforcement</p> <p>TA services such as advise and guidance</p>	<p>Ability for staff and partners to engage in Environmental Prevention (EP) strategies</p> <p>Increase in strategic decisions regarding policy and media</p>	<p>Traits and characteristics to perform appropriate EP tasks</p> <p>Confidence of staff and partners who</p>	<p>Training evaluations</p> <p>Readiness for change increase in scale (community readiness instrument; advancement in skill via staff job descriptions)</p> <p>Partner satisfaction (coalition</p>

	<p>Coalition Members and/or parent partners will participate in statewide trainings such as California Prevention Collaborative, California Council on Alcohol Policy and/or at advocacy venues related to prevention.</p> <p>Activity 5: A minimum of three Sierra County Youth Council Members will participate in statewide trainings and/or advocacy venues related to prevention and report on their learning/experience to the Sierra County Prevention Coalition.</p> <p>In collaboration with the Sierra County Community Collaborative, a minimum of two evidence-based programs will be chosen for utilization in the county. Said programs will focus on identified needs pertaining to risk factors and/or protective factors.</p> <p>Implement a</p>			<p>are completing tasks with needed support</p>	<p>satisfaction survey)</p>
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	<p>minimum of two new evidence-based programs, either directly, or through contracting with one or more community-based organizations.</p> <p>Training will be provided to the Department of Social Services and the Department of Mental Health regarding integrating substance abuse prevention principles into their work with families where parental substance abuse has been an issue.</p>				
<p><b>Increase Community Capacity for Secondary and Tertiary Prevention, targeting Indicated Populations</b></p>	<p>Through other means other than SAPT funds, identify funding resources based on identified need of referral sources for populations</p> <p>identified as being at “High Risk”, who are not currently accessing services due to lack of resources.</p> <p>Apply for a</p>	List of funders and projects	Build sustainability	Sustainability in prevention system	Forthcoming sustainability plan

minimum of three prevention-related grants over the next three years. Explore and develop alternative resources for meeting community needs (e.g., faith-based community involvement, fund raising by youth programs).				
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## GOAL 2: REDUCE YOUTH ACCESS TO ALCOHOL

### CONTRIBUTING FACTORS

- ✘ Ease of youth access to alcohol from social and familial sources
- ✘ Lack of policies restricting alcohol availability and accessibility through social sources
- ✘ Limited education and training for alcohol retailers/servers, parents, law enforcement and the schools.
- ✘ High rates of binge drinking among youth

OBJECTIVES	STRATEGIES	SHORT-TERM OUTCOMES	INTERMEDIATE OUTCOMES	LONG TERM OUTCOMES	MEASUREMENT INDICATORS
Reduce adult provision of alcohol to youth in homes by 10% from baseline.	Define baseline of access to alcohol in homes. Research and establish social host liability ordinances in cities and county.	Increased community awareness about laws pertaining to adult provision of alcohol	Established protocols at the Sierra County Sheriff's Department for party dispersal	Decreased rates of underage alcohol use.  Lower youth alcohol-related problems.	Youth alcohol use in past 30 days (CHKS)  Youth binge drinking in past 30 days (CHKS)  Youth drinking and driving (CHKS)
Increase adult awareness of the nature and extent of youth alcohol use and associated risks.	Conduct one-on-one interviews with youth and law enforcement for calls for input on problem service data  Assist parents to development a monthly media campaign write an articles and Give interviews in local media to address laws regarding youth access until 6/30/12. Coordinate with local law enforcement	Increased community dialogue on the issue of teen drinking.  Media input  Meetings to discuss problems and data (calls for service); Meetings with treatment staff to adopt and integrate instrument	Decreased numbers of small teen parties where alcohol is served.  Increase understanding of laws by parents  Increased interest in environmental strategies such as data sharing and media advocacy; knowledge of policy solutions and data needs	Reduced numbers of "minors in possession" or minors in consumption" citations.  Knowledge of problem and solution by parents and community  More resources for data system and good relationships with law enforcement; support for policy change; treatment staff supportive of	Youth DUI arrests (CDOJ)  Liquor law violations Opinion poll evaluation of media output (knowledge of laws, providing access; measure the content of media)  Verbal cues and notes with law enforcement and treatment staff; actions by all.

	and the Drinking Driver  Program to implement the Place of Last Drink survey, to further define youth access.			Youth advocacy and media outputs	Decreased numbers of teens reporting alcohol consumption as a means of recreation.
Increase community cohesiveness and establish a strong community norm against underage drinking and/or other drug abuse.	Support a youth advocacy role including policy and media for teens involved in the coalition.	Youth generated media advocacy and policy recommendations to elected officials.	Increased discussion of issue among the public in terms of problem and solution.		
Reduce underage sales of alcohol to youth.	Develop a program for local youth groups and law enforcement to participate in compliance checks with alcohol laws (e.g., shoulder tap and decoy operations).	Outreach to proposed partners to Develop a comprehensive Youth Access Campaign, consisting of enforcement of existing laws, media, policy and education/training activities.	Design and implement media campaign component involving law enforcement	Periodic media input and output	Understanding of issues by media and the public (measure length and content of media stories)
Promote alcohol and drug free/alternative	Facilitate a community-wide Wilderness	With the participation of key stakeholders, develop a	All at risk youth meeting program criteria will experience goal	Local at risk youth will identify a minimum of	Decreased numbers of teens reporting alcohol

activities for youth.	Challenge Program.	wilderness challenge program designed to increase community connectedness and pro-social norms.	setting, leadership, and team building activities designed to increase community connectedness and pro-social norms.	three positive goals and demonstrate progress towards goal achievement.	consumption as a means of recreation
	Facilitate alcohol and drug free school-based alternative activities.	Provide a venue for school based after-hours recreational activities.	Availability of after-hours activities for local youth in the context of a rural environment/lack of resources.	A decreased number of youth reporting excessive amounts of time at home unsupervised.	Decreased number of latchkey children reporting alcohol consumption

## STEP 4

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### IMPLEMENTATION

Prevention services selected were chosen based on the evidenced-based practices in the Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol or CMCA project. The CMCA model has been used in other California counties recently as part of the State Incentive Grant (SIG) project. This SAMSHA model program will provide a template for staff and partners to adopt appropriate relevant components such as public policy, working with law enforcement, media advocacy and community organizing. Because our work will focus on youth access to alcohol, the CMCA project and its survey and evaluation tools are ideal for integration into Sierra County.

With an emphasis on community mobilization, our prevention strategies and campaigns will be provided to Universal populations or the entire community. This will enable our county to provide the best cost ratio of services per population. Knowing that public policy benefits all persons and is long lasting, this approach is the best use of public dollars.

The strategies and services chosen will respond to the needs of a rural community. Cultural competency of staff and partners will be addressed as services are delivered to our ethnic populations such as the Latino community, and with sensitivity to low-income residents.

Based on the success of the CMCA Model, the prevention strategies in environmental management that we have identified are expected to have a similar successful impact in our county. Given that we will use a combination of approaches ranging from media to policy, the net result of these will produce several outcomes that shall lead to long-term impact. Furthermore, policy measures have produced good outcomes in other counties, thus we expect similar results.

Given our current staff structure, the accomplishment of our goals and objectives is possible, given the support available from CARS/CPI. A sustainability plan will be developed in our second year by 6/30/09 and will address what projects need to be kept in addition to funding and resources.

Within our campaign timelines, tasks and activities as well as those responsible will be noted in order to achieve goals and objectives. This will give our participants and staff the opportunity to become invested in the scope of work. Timelines and activities will be added to this plan as additions to the Implementation section. We believe that the timeframe of five years is adequate to support environmental prevention.

According to our logic model, measures will be taken using the tools noted in parenthesis. Measures will be taken at several intervals by our evaluator including short-term (1 year), intermediate (2.5 years) and long-term (4.5 years).

## **STEP 5**

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### **Strategic Prevention Framework EVALUATION**

The evaluation design will be drafted by a contracted evaluator by 7/15/08. Our methods will also be included in our forthcoming Evaluation Plan which will support this Strategic Plan. Methods will include using the tools and measures noted in our logic model, in addition to other effective known techniques. Where appropriate, formal statistical analysis will be done to assess the impact of intervention (e.g., data may be subject to a multiple regression which accounts for identified variables). Survey data and target populations will consist of a large enough sample size to be statistically viable for scientific analysis, which may be a challenge for us since our population is approximately 3,455. All information compiled will safeguard the anonymity of participants.

Statistical data bases which will be included in evaluation of program efficacy include the following:

- ✚ California Healthy Kids Surveys (CHKS)
- ✚ Criminal Justice Statistics
- ✚ Treatment Data

By implementing this strategic plan, we expect to see a reduction in youth access to alcohol over time and an increase in our county capacity to address AOD issues using environmental management. Short-term, intermediate, and long-term outcomes as well as measures and tools are noted in our logic models contained in the Implementation Section of this plan.

Our objectives are measurable based on common prevention practices and realistic given our staff and partner resources. The proposed time frames give the staff and community an opportunity to learn and practice environmental prevention within an adequate amount of budgeted project resources.

As the Sierra AOD prevention staff contracts for evaluation services, further definition of data collection procedures will occur with professional expertise. The resources of CARS/CPI will be requested to support our process. Gathering qualitative and quantitative data that exists or is new will be a focus both on the local level and per agencies. This effort will lend sophistication to county internal operations in developing a “data warehouse” of available AOD data that is stored and available in one location. Having information from community members themselves via one-one-one conversations and other methods as well as interviewing key informants will be essential to our evaluation plan.

Our timeline will be designed by the evaluator and will consider our cycle for measurement and the scope of the five years of projected work. Forecasting for the next cycle of five years will also be accomplished. Outcomes for all interventions will be based on assessments for change in measurable objectives;

- A. Over time
- B. Before and after a designated activity or campaign

The evaluation data and findings will provide feedback into the planning phases to adjust what is not working in our logic models and adopt different tools and measures if needed. Such efforts will support appropriate resource application of staff time to accomplish our goals. Continuous improvement of our methods and scope of work will be implemented based on available research from the field and groups such as CARS. Our Implementation processes will be documented with our campaign plans and results shared with others at conferences and networking events as appropriate.

**SOURCES THAT WILL BE UTILIZED FOR EVALUATION PURPOSES INCLUDE:**

- ✚ Survey Data

- ✚ Focus Group Data
- ✚ Participant Observations
- ✚ Key Informant Interviews
- ✚ Statistical Data Bases
- ✚ Others per our evaluators' and/or CARS recommendation

## **PROGRAM MONITORING**

As a very small county with a limited budget, Sierra County prevention staff will be the direct service provider, in many cases. Prevention staff is required to submit monthly reports to administration, and to input activities into CalOMS, per state requirements.

## **PUBLICATION AND DISSEMINATION**

Evaluation information such as key findings and results will be disseminated to county staff and key partners in public forums, meetings, writing and by sending press releases to local media and drafting an Annual AOD Prevention Report to the Sierra Board of Supervisors, shared with the Sierra County Prevention Coalition, and other interested community members. The anonymity of participants will be a priority in our evaluation efforts.