

Prevention Research Unit

Prevention Research Unit Staff

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The Prevention Research Unit

The Prevention Research Unit (PRU) of the DPIC implements programs that promote healthy, drug free lifestyles. Staff of the PRU are specially trained to provide interventions that focus on increasing protective factors while reducing risk factors among select populations. The services provided are designed to impact various segments of the community at large, wherever populations in need are located. PRU staff work toward outcomes associated with strengthening bonds within the community; enhancing family bonding; promoting life management skills; increasing school bonding; and enhancing school performance. The PRU provides service to youth, parents, health care professionals, educators, and community residents. Over 3 million outreach services have been provided by the PRU to individuals in Hamilton County. In addition, 1,500 community residents regularly receive intense substance abuse prevention and education services, parent skills training, delinquency prevention programming, truancy services, and community empowerment training services. The following is a brief summary of the services provided by this community active division of the DPIC.

Responding to Every Adolescents Cry for Help (REACH)

This project, in its sixth year of operation, is funded by the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services. The REACH project provides substance abuse prevention, education and awareness services to high/at risk youth populations. Youth who participate in project activities are between 6 and 13 years of age and in need of special services due to one or more of the following: a). residence in shelters for the homeless/runaways; b). presence in a juvenile detention facility; and c) high rate of absenteeism/truancy from school. The project utilizes the NOMAD (NO More Alcohol and Drugs) mobile prevention unit to deliver alcohol, tobacco and other drug (ATOD) abuse prevention services. The use of the NOMAD enables easy access to housing projects, recreational facilities, street corners, and other areas where the targeted youth congregate. Program outcomes focus on increasing perception of harm associated with illicit drug use by addressing risk factors in the individual, school, and community domains. Substance abuse knowledge level and perception of harm pretests were administered to 200 youth participants and follow-up assessments were administered quarterly. The following tables detail assessment results.

Responding to Every Adolescents Cry for Help (REACH)

Assessment Results

Behavior	Baseline	Midyear	Final
Bother others in class	90%	67%	59%
Sleeping in Class	100%	70%	63%
Don't follow class rules	62%	51%	51%
Get in trouble in class	20%	10%	4%
Physical Fighting	90%	50%	5%

Attendance Pattern*	Percentage of Students (Baseline)	Percentage of Students Midyear	Percentage of Students Final
Present all the time	51	56	60
Present Most of the time	37	30	53

*Please note that the area of student attendance is influenced by many factors that school and project staff can not control. Project interventions have the least impact in the area of school attendance.

Knowledge Level/ Perception of Harm	Baseline	Midyear	Final
I admire people who use drugs	7%	5%	4%
I admire drug pushers	22%	10%	5%
Drug abuse harms the body	28%	89%	89%
Drugs are needed to feel good	29%	11%	9%
It's O.K. to try drugs once or twice	60%	37%	9%
Nothing is wrong with using most drugs	83%	20%	16%

Maintaining African American Traditions (MAAT)

The MAAT project is a specialized small group and individual mentoring program funded by the Ohio Department of Alcohol and Drug Addiction Services. The MAAT project centers on the principles of *Maat*, which include truth, justice, righteousness, propriety, harmony, balance, and order. Interventions involve African American males and females who are between 7 and 13 years of age. Youth participants are selected for involvement in the program based on high risk of involvement in the drug abuse culture due to the presence of one or more of the following risk factors: 1) high absenteeism and/or truancy from school; 2) school failure; 3) lack of sufficient cultural foundation; 4) lack of bonding with school and/or community; 5) low socio-economic status; 6) ethnic minority; 7) lack of positive parental role models and/or 8) African American males/females who lack ongoing contact with positive African American role models (elders). Project participants become reacquainted with the village (community) and are taught by elders to uphold village principles and to pass these teachings on to the next generation. This year a new component, self-discipline has been added. Relaxation, breathing, and self-control elements of the martial arts are taught by a fourth degree karate black belt.

Program outcomes for the Maat program involve behavioral assessments from the prospective of teachers and counselors as well as "self assessment" by the participants themselves. It is interesting to note the difference between the behaviors, as reported by the teachers and counselors, compared to self-reporting by program participants. The following tables detail assessment results.

Assessment Results

Student Behavior Assessment - Pre/Post project intervention assessment which provides information regarding project participants' assessment of their own behavior.

Behavior	Baseline	Midyear	Final
Don't behave in class	4%	10%	4%
Bother others in class	15%	8%	0%
Get in trouble in class	11%	11%	4%
Don't follow class rules	31%	11%	15%

Data was also gathered from teachers and counselors regarding student behavior. The following table displays that comparison:

Behavior	Baseline	Midyear	Final
Don't behave in class	95%	73%	57%
Bother others in class	75%	30%	22%
Get in trouble in class	98%	70%	55%
Don't follow class rules	64%	30%	27%
Total number of students with behavior problems	50	15	7

NOMAD (No More Alcohol and Drugs) Mobile Prevention Project

The NOMAD van remains the most community visible of all the DPIC prevention and outreach programs. The mobility of the NOMAD enables staff to provide substance abuse prevention and education services to hard to reach populations that may be missed by traditional access methods. The NOMAD project provides community specific substance abuse prevention/education services throughout Hamilton County. Major community events attract a multitude of community residents and, as a result, over 350,000 individuals participated in NOMAD specific activities. Services were provided at community fairs, rallies, promotional events, pool sites, recreation centers, health fairs, shopping centers, juvenile detention centers, and schools. The NOMAD unit is easily recognized and has become synonymous with substance abuse prevention in communities throughout Hamilton County. Many who participated in NOMAD programs would not have been exposed to targeted prevention services if the NOMAD van did not provide such programs to them in their communities. Over 350,000 pieces of substance abuse prevention and/or treatment literature were distributed and several hundred referrals to community based counseling, family support groups, or treatment services were made by NOMAD staff. The DPIC continues to seek support to enhance this vital community service program through the purchase of a new, technology updated van. The NOMAD van is crucial to the community outreach efforts provided by the PRU.

Prevention Alliance

The Prevention Alliance continues to focus on prevention education and outreach services to the western portion of Hamilton County. These activities are conducted under the direction of the PRU staff. The Prevention alliance is collaboration with The Alcoholism Council of the Cincinnati Area (ACCA), Crossroads Centers and The Urban Minority Alcohol and Drug Abuse Outreach Program (UMADAOP). This year's highlights include programming for the underserved including hearing impaired and older adult populations. In addition, special training was provided for law enforcement officers regarding current trends in street drug abuse. The Prevention Alliance conducted workshops and seminars to address the effects of marijuana use, pharmacology of cocaine, the toxicology of inhalant abuse and the health hazards of tobacco use. Special tobacco prevention and education sessions were also held. The following are ongoing programs offered by DPIC through the Prevention Alliance:

- 1.) Medication Education for the Older Adult
- 2.) NOMAD Mobile Prevention Services
- 3.) Adult Drug Abuse Education Program
- 4.) Drug Abuse Prevention Program for Youth
- 5.) Inhalant Abuse Prevention Program (Youth Component)
- 6.) Inhalant Abuse Prevention Program (Adult Education Component)
- 7.) Training of Trainers Programs

Tobacco Services

The Prevention Research Unit has provided a multifaceted program to address tobacco prevention from the grassroots community level. The Tobacco Intervention and Prevention Project (TIPP), funded by the Ohio Department of Health, provides tobacco prevention and education services to traditionally underserved (ethnic minority, economically deprived, socially challenged) populations in select communities of Hamilton County. The primary focus of the TIPP project is minimizing exposure to environmental tobacco (second hand) smoke. Program participants are assessed regarding their knowledge of the health effects associated with exposure to environmental tobacco smoke. Educational sessions are provided and personal incentives to either stop smoking or minimize exposure to environmental tobacco smoke are discussed. Follow up assessments are then conducted three and six months following participation in the project to determine program outcome(s). The NOMAD van has served as the base of operation for the community based tobacco outreach and education activities. In addition, the staff of the Prevention Research Unit and a medical team from Children's Hospital Medical Center educate parents of children who come to the CHMC Emergency Department with complaints of respiratory illness. The TIPP project also enables the PRU to promote smoking cessation for Hamilton County residents.

Shaping Healthy Attitudes, Knowledge And Success (SHAKAS) Program

Towards the end of the 2000 calendar year, the PRU began a partnership with the Cincinnati Metropolitan Housing authority. This partnership led to the implementation of intense drug abuse prevention programming in the EnglishWoods community. The Stimulating Healthy Attitudes Knowledge And Success (SHAKAS) project provides interventions that focus on increasing protective factors while reducing risk factors in the community domain among African American males and females who are between 9 and 18 years of age and reside in English Woods. PRU outreach and education staff provide interventions in the English Woods community to: increase academic performance; enhance job readiness skills; conduct anti-drug support groups; conduct weekly violence prevention and self-discipline sessions; conduct gender specific discussion groups addressing communication skills, self-image and positive socialization skills; offer parenting skills training to English Woods residents; facilitate community awareness fairs to address anti drug issues.

Proper Restraint Education Project (PREP)

In collaboration with the Ohio Department of Public Safety, the PRU has implemented the Proper Restraint Education Project (PREP). During routine community outreach activities, it was noted that a significant number of community residents do not use proper automobile safety restraints. When used, lap/shoulder safety belts reduce the risk of fatal injury and/or the risk of moderate to critical injury among vehicle occupants. Educational programs targeted at the general population have been effective in saving lives and preventing injuries. The PREP program applies such educational strategies to under-served populations in Hamilton County.