

TEENS R TALKIN’: A COMMUNITY COLLABORATION TO SUPPORT HEALTHY TEEN DEVELOPMENT [646]

Caroline M. Shelton ^a
Val A. Thomas-Matson ^b

^a Harborview Children’s Response Center, Bellevue, WA
^b King County Community Organizing Program, Seattle, WA

Session Plan

Workshop Summary

The Washington State Healthy Youth Survey (HYS), administered bi-annually by the State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction (OSPI), measures youth health-risk attitudes and behaviors. The State OSPI chooses select districts to be a random sample for aggregate statewide data. Districts not chosen as the random sample may voluntarily opt to administer the survey for their own purposes. The 102 question survey measures behaviors including violence, drug and alcohol abuse, depression and suicidal ideation, and other risk factors affecting teen health and safety. Results are made available to school districts, who may in turn share them with individual schools and the community.

The HYS provides useful data for school districts and community service organizations to: 1) assess the health & safety of teens; 2) develop appropriate violence prevention and intervention programming; and 3) quantify the need for services when applying for funding.

Two school districts, Northshore and Shoreline, chose to have students participate in the survey in 2002 and 2004. However when it came to utilizing the data in ways outlined above, both districts struggled with how to share the results with their communities. After hearing about this struggle over the course of the 2 survey cycles, in 2005 a local coalition of human service providers, public servants and parents took the lead in forming a task force to create a forum for the community to learn about teen responses to the HYS. An underlying goal of the coalition was to build a bridge between schools, community resources and families, increasing collaboration to support healthy teen development. The Teens R Talkin’ task force served as a starting point for this collaboration-building work.

This workshop will outline the case study of Teens R Talkin’ as a context to discuss effective approaches to increasing community involvement. Presenters will also incorporate principles of community mobilization and prevention education, our specific areas of professional expertise, into the workshop dialog. Finally, we will offer an assessment tool for use in evaluating progress of community collaboration efforts.

Workshop Goals

- To highlight an example of a community collaboration effort whose goal was to increase health, safety and support of teens
- To discuss community mobilization and prevention strategies. Audience will learn principles of community mobilization/community collaborations
- To apply audience members’ current practices to Teens R Talkin’ case study
- To present strategies to assess community collaborations

Workshop Objectives

1. To introduce audience to Teens R Talkin’ case study as a context to explore community mobilization principles
2. Presenters will describe roles in prevention and community mobilization
3. To introduce the Healthy Youth Survey
4. To describe the emergence of the Teens R Talkin’ coalition goal and activities
5. To provide participants with a fundamental understanding of theoretical principles that enhance community collaboration
6. To provide participants with an assessment tool to evaluate community collaboration efforts

Workshop Activities

- (20 min) Presenters will begin discussion with a presentation of the Teens R Talkin’ Case Study.
- (20 min) Presenters will co-lead a discussion of community mobilization and prevention principles.
- (10 min) Presenters will provide and discuss the assessment tool to evaluation community collaboration efforts.
- (10 min) Presenters will answer questions from audience about the tool.
- (10 min) Presenters will ask participants to share examples of current community collaboration efforts, providing for a chance to problem solve any challenge areas.
- (10 min) Final question and answer session

Assessment

Presenters will evaluate the degree to which objectives were met through a post-presentation questionnaire. (see attached)

Resources

- ***The Healthy Youth Survey (HYS)*** is a collaborative effort of the Washington State Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, the Department of Health, the Department of Social and Health Service's Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, and Community Trade and Economic Development. The Healthy Youth Survey provides important information about adolescents in Washington. County prevention coordinators, community mobilization coalitions, community public health and safety networks, and others use this information to guide policy and programs that serve youth.
- The information from the Healthy Youth Survey can be used to identify trends in the patterns of behavior over time. The state-level data can be used to compare Washington to other states that do similar surveys and to the nation. Every two years students in grades 6, 8, 10 and 12 answered questions about safety and violence, physical activity and diet, alcohol, tobacco and other drug use, and related risk and protective factors. See <http://www.rmccorp.com>.
- ***The Social Development Research Group (SDRG)*** is a nationally recognized interdisciplinary team of researchers united in a common mission: To understand and promote healthy behaviors and positive social development among children, adolescents, and young adults by:
 - Conducting research on factors that influence development;
 - Testing the effectiveness of interventions;
 - Studying service systems and working to improve them;
 - Presenting science-based solutions to health and behavior problems; and

- Disseminating knowledge produced by this research. See <http://www.depts.washington.edu/sdrg>.
- **The Institute of Cultural Affairs (ICA)** is a private, not-for-profit social change organization. Its objective is to promote positive change in communities, organizations and individual lives in the US and around the world by helping people find their own solutions to problems and the means to implement those solutions. ICA uses highly participatory techniques to foster creative thinking, consensus-based decision-making and team building. Its methods generate ownership, create clear goals, open lines of communication, broaden perspectives and motivate people to adapt to their changing environment while honoring the cultural traditions and diversity of all involved. See <http://www.ica-usa.org>.
- **The Centers for the Application of Prevention Technologies (CAPTs)** assist States/Jurisdictions and community-based organizations in the application of evidence-based substance abuse prevention programs, practices, and policies. The CAPT system is a practical tool to increase the impact of the knowledge and experience that defines what works best in prevention programming. See <http://www.captus.samhsa.gov>.
- **Youth Suicide Prevention Program** seeks to reduce teen suicide attempts and deaths in Washington State. We build public awareness offer training, and support communities taking action. To increase public awareness, we distribute educational materials, offer presentations and promote Suicide Prevention Week. In schools, we help students develop prevention campaigns, and assist educators with training and crisis response plans. Parent Information focuses on depression and community resources, and Media Guidelines encourage responsible reporting on suicide. See <http://www.yspp.org>.

References

- Jackson, T. (2001). *Activities that teach*. Cedar City: Red Rock Publishing.
- Lofquist, W. (1996) *The technology of development*. Tucson: Development Publications.
- Stanfield, R. B. (Ed.). (2000). *The art of focused conversation*. Gabriola Island, BC: New Society Publishers.
- Wong, S. C., Burgoyne, K., and Catalano, R. F. (1994). *Communities That Care planning kit*. Seattle: Developmental Research and Programs.

Appendix

Table 1. Healthy Youth Survey Data and Teen Focus Group Responses

Depression & Suicide			
10 th	During the past 12 months, did you ever seriously consider attempting suicide?	Yes	16.8%
10 th	How likely would you be to seek help if you were feeling depressed or suicidal?	Somewhat or very unlikely	22.7%
<p align="center">What do you think are the biggest problems teens face when it comes to your mental health?</p> <p>TRIGGERS (13)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Stress (5) • Mental Fatigue (1) • Abuse/Harassment (2) • Self-Image (4) • Drug Use (1) <p align="center"><i>“Stress! There are little or no help on how to cope with and re-direct stress”</i></p> <p align="center"><i>“I had a friend that would cut herself because she would get in fights with her boyfriend and then she would call me and tell me that she was cutting herself and that she wanted to jump into the road and kill herself. She called me multiple times in the middle of the night and I would tell her “no, no just calm down.” She used suicide things and cutting herself to take her mind off of her boyfriend.”</i></p> <p align="center"><i>“Three homies of mine took themselves out. It was just like she said. It was out of no where. Not one of them ever talked about. It came out and everyone was like are you kidding me? There are people that talk about how they are going to kill themselves and they never do it. But my homies who did take themselves out never said a word about it. It just happened out of no where.”</i></p>			
Safety			
6 th	I feel safe at my school	Definitely not true or mostly not true	8.0%
10 th	I feel safe at my school	Definitely not true or mostly not true	21.8%
6 th	In the last 30 days, how often have you been bullied?	At least once	29.9%
10 th	In the last 30 days, how often have you been bullied?	At least once	19.8%
<p align="center">What do you think are the biggest problems teens face when it comes to violence and other general concerns about your safety at school, home or in your community?</p> <p>ABUSE/HARRASSMENT (20)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Abuse at home, from parents, family violence (4) 			

- Sexual abuse, sexual harassment (4)
- Verbal, other harassment and abuse (5)
- Abuse from boy/girl friends—dating violence (3)
- Physical assault, fights (4)

“I have friends who are constantly harassed; good when school gets involved even when it occurs off-campus”

“Female teens get a lot of sexual abuse because they don’t realize that women don’t have to deal with men making rude sexual remarks to them; they think it means the males like them”

“Some kids may deal with [abuse-related] problems at home or at school by cutting themselves”

COMMUNITY VIOLENCE (9)

- Violence occurring off-school grounds (4)
- Drugs/alcohol triggers violence (3)
- Worry about safety in community (2)

“Not around violence very much but when I am it usually happens because people are drunk and acting stupid”

“Afraid to go outside by myself at night because of the horrible things I hear about on the news”

Alcohol & Substance Abuse

10 th	During the past 30 days, on how many days did you drink alcohol?	At least 1 day	30.0%
10 th	How easy would it be for you to get some beer, wine or hard liquor?	Very easy	29.6%

What do you think are the biggest problems teens face when it comes to drug and alcohol use?

RISK FACTORS (13)

- Peer Pressure (10)
- Stress (2)
- Lack of social outlet (1)

“Too much [perception] that alcohol is cool and anyone who doesn’t drink is not”

“The fact that everyone else is doing it makes you want to fit in”

“Students being force-fed so much in our lives, alcohol and drugs present a fantastic escape/opportunity to rebel”

“Those not involved with activities or sports are more susceptible to looking at drugs for common ground to socialize”

MINIMIZING EFFECTS OF USE (9)

“Not enough teens realize that drugs- no matter what type- ruin your health, and once used have the chance to become addictive”

“A lot of teens just need to worry about drinking and driving; teens using drugs and alcohol can’t really be stopped, so we should just pay closer attention when it’s happening”

“Kids think they can try it once and it won’t affect them- they are too sheltered [from reality]”

PREVALENCE OF DRUGS/ALCOHOL (8)

“Many athletes in high schools are drinkers, partiers”

“The fact is that drugs and alcohol are easy to get a hold of, it’s hard to avoid”

“Parents don’t worry about what you [are doing]; most chances are kids will drink, smoke, do other things”

NEGATIVE CONSEQUENCES (8)

“Over-dosing and alcohol poisoning are too common”

“Using drugs early on, and then starting to use worse drugs”

“Loss of motivation, problems with parents”

Figure 1. King County Community Organizing Program Coalition Assessment Survey

KING COUNTY COMMUNITY ORGANIZING PROGRAM COALITION ASSESSMENT SURVEY

This survey asks 35 questions about your feelings or impressions regarding the coalition with which you are involved. Each question asks about how well the coalition, as an organization, is working in several areas.

For each question respond using the 1 to 5 scale described below. Circle the number that best matches your impressions. For each question, if you think the question does not apply to your coalition, circle NA (not applicable) instead of circling a number.

- 1 Coalition rarely or never meets this standard
- 2 Coalition mostly does not meet this standard
- 3 Coalition sometimes meets this standard
- 4 Coalition usually meets this standard
- 5 Coalition always or almost always meets this standard
- NA The question doesn't apply to my coalition.



Inclusive membership	1. The coalition identifies potential new coalition members.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	2. The coalition has (or is developing) clear membership criteria.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	3. The coalition has regularly invited (or has plans to invite) member involvement from outside its initial core.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	4. The coalition effectively orients and integrates new members.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	5. The coalition creates opportunities for every member to be involved in some way.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	6. The coalition provides its members with leadership development opportunities.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
Internal Communication	7. The style of communication in the coalition reflects the diverse styles and needs of members.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	8. Regular meetings of both the entire coalition and its subcommittees take place.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	9. The coalition helps members to dialogue and seek solutions to conflicts within the coalition (e.g., turf issues, competition).	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	10. The coalition provides opportunities for members to build knowledge about each other.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	11. The coalition provides opportunities for members to build respect for each other.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	12. The coalition regularly discusses <i>new</i> ideas.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
Clear Mission	13. The coalition involves as many members as possible in the discussion of new ideas.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	14. Coalition members share (or are beginning to share) a common view of the common mission of the organization.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	15. The coalition gathers (or is beginning to collect) input from both formal and informal leaders to define its issues and strategies.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	16. To help plan, the coalition gathers information about future trends in its areas of concern. (Polls, reports, journals, statistics, etc.)	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	17. The coalition uses the mission statement as a guide to develop clear, attainable, short-term and long-term goals.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	18. The coalition, on a regular basis, reviews its mission statement and plans to determine:	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	18a: if they are relevant;	1—2—3—4—5 NA
18b: if they could be revised to better address community needs;	1—2—3—4—5 NA	
18c: if the coalition has fulfilled its mission.	1—2—3—4—5 NA	

Figure 1 (continued)

- 1 Coalition rarely or never meets this standard
- 2 Coalition mostly does not meet the standard
- 3 Coalition sometimes meets the standard
- 4 Coalition usually meets the standard
- 5 Coalition always or almost always meets the standard
- NA The question doesn't apply to my coalition.

Effective Group Process	19. The coalition works (or will work) to build a broad and diverse base of financial support.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	20. The coalition develops its organizational structure and revises it to gain increased flexibility if appropriate.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	21. The coalition reduces hierarchical structures where possible, simplifying policies and procedures.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	22. The coalition reviews and revises its decision making process to increase shared leadership and responsibility.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	23. The coalition develops and uses an effective recruitment and orientation process for new leaders.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	24. The coalition effectively implements its plan(s).	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	25. The coalition has developed (or is developing) an effective process to use for running coalition meetings.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
Evaluates Success	26. The coalition has put into place (or is developing) ground rules/agreements concerning how members will work together.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	27. The coalition discusses how the group will remain accountable to the community without duplicating efforts.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	28. The coalition regularly reviews progress made on its plans.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	29. The coalition discusses difficult events or “failures” and applies learning to future projects.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
External Communication	30. The coalition shares its mission and goals with the community.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	31. The coalition develops (or is developing) stronger relationships with key individuals and groups in the community.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	32. The coalition continues to “sell” the coalition to key leaders and the community.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
Achieving Goals	33. The coalition regularly achieves goals.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	34. The coalition celebrates its “victories” and achievements.	1—2—3—4—5 NA
	35. The coalition widely publicizes accomplishments of its goals.	1—2—3—4—5 NA

Figure 2. Community Mobilization – Advocacy – Service

The King County Community Organizing Program
 Creating safe & healthy communities through prevention

3 WAYS TO GET THINGS DONE IN THE COMMUNITY

COMMUNITY MOBILIZATION

<u>Advantages</u>	<u>Limitations</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Help people do things themselves ● Unites parts into cohesive whole ● Forms a group to solve problem ● Accomplishes the group’s goal 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Takes more time to change system ● May not meet immediate needs ● Heightens and creates tension ● Can lead to friction

ADVOCACY

<u>Advantages</u>	<u>Limitations</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Pleads a course for others ● Protects interests of the individual/group ● Represents others ● Offers legal assistance 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Does not empower other people ● Builds dependency ● Does not tap energy of diverse group ● Can be slow ● Deals with symptoms, not problems

DIRECT SERVICES

<u>Advantages</u>	<u>Limitations</u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Done for people ● Serve people ● Help with immediate problem ● Solve problems ● Educate & counsel ● Require accreditation/licensing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Are not change agents ● Do not build power ● Do not tap energy/emotion of people ● Have effects limited by people served ● Maintain status quo ● Build dependency ● Are not generally affected by problem

Teens R Talkin’: A Community Collaboration to Support Healthy Teen Development

Evaluation Form

Presenters: Caroline Shelton and Val Thomas-Matson

Please take a moment to let us know how this workshop met the following objectives. Your feedback is appreciated!

Please circle one:

1. I increased my knowledge about community mobilization principles.

1	2	3	4	5
Very little		Somewhat		A great deal

2. Because of the Teens R Talkin’ case study, I understand approaches to applying community mobilization principles.

1	2	3	4	5
Very little		Somewhat		A great deal

3. Because of attending this workshop, I have increased skills (knowledge) in working with community mobilization – community collaboration efforts.

1	2	3	4	5
Very little		Somewhat		A great deal

Please check one:

4. What components of the workshop were most useful?

- Assessment tool
- Levels of community readiness
- Help with current collaborations
- Other _____

5. What components were least useful?

- Assessment tool
- Levels of community readiness
- Help with current collaborations
- Other _____

6. How will you apply the information to community mobilization efforts?

7. What is your overall evaluation of this workshop?

1	2	3	4	5
Useful		Somewhat useful		Very useful