

**2016 National Exemplary Awards for
Innovative Substance Abuse Prevention Programs, Practices and Policies
APPLICATION COVER SHEET**

1. Has this intervention been submitted for an Exemplary Award in previous years?

Yes No

2. What is the primary target for this program, practice or policy? [Circle one]

Individual School-Based Family/Parent Peer/Group
Workplace **Environmental/Community-Based** Other

If Other, explain: _____

PROGRAM INFORMATION

Program Name: One Voice Youth Empowerment Model

Agency: Dover Youth to Youth

Contact Person Email: Dana Mitchell, email = d.mitchell@dover.nh.gov

Address: 46 Chestnut St. Dover, NH 03820

Phone: 603-516-3274 Fax: 603-749-3956

I have reviewed the information contained in this application and certify that it is accurate, to the best of my knowledge.



Program Director Signature

5/3/2016

Date

NOMINATING AGENCY/ORGANIZATION INFORMATION

Agency/Organization: NH Governor's Commission Prevention Task Force

Contact Person Email: tfowlerconsulting@gmail.com

Address: 176 Tucker Mtn. Road, Andover NH 03216

Phone: 603-848-2521 Fax: N/A

I have reviewed the information contained in this application and certify that it is accurate, to the best of my knowledge.



Nominating Agency Signature

5/3/2016

Date

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ABSTRACT

Presented here for your consideration is the One Voice Youth Empowerment Model (One Voice) as developed and implemented by the Dover (NH) Youth to Youth program. One Voice is an innovative program designed to reduce substance use initiation rates among youth aged 11-17 and increase the perception of harm of AOD use by empowering participating youth with the knowledge and advanced skills needed to become active agents of change in their community.

The One Voice Model is based on the premise that youth are often an unutilized or an *under-utilized* prevention resource because there is no mechanism in place to provide them with the needed expertise and the “adult-level” advocacy skills needed to be truly effective. The One Voice theory of change is:

- **IF** One Voice is implemented with fidelity **THEN** youth advocates will increase their knowledge about targeted substances; increase presentation, media and other skills; increase knowledge of the legislative process; and develop a network of pro-social peers.
- **IF** the above happens **THEN** the youth advocates will increase their perception of harm of use; increase self-efficacy (perception that they can influence change, competency in skills); increase knowledge of the influence of media and the alcohol industry in the targeted areas.
- **IF** the above happens **THEN** youth advocates will be capable and motivated to take effective action to cause environmental change at the community level; delay their own initiation of AOD use; increase perception of harm of AOD use within the community; and ultimately, over time, decrease AOD use at the community level.

Students in grades 6-12 are allowed to join following preliminary training. They meet weekly to continue training and plan action in one of four broad categories: Media, Policy Change, Educational Activities, and Community Awareness efforts. Training is rigorous and focuses on background knowledge of selected target substances and skills such as public speaking, media development, and legislative procedures. Implementation of the program is facilitated by a comprehensive set of resources and instructions, including the *One Voice Youth Empowerment Toolkit*. These resources have been requested and provided to over 200 other communities and agencies interested in replication over the evaluation period.

At the Dover, NH implementation site, about 70 students participate each year. These students have proposed and passed 3 state laws and 7 city ordinances, conducted over 2 dozen presentations each year, created over 100 radio PSAs, created 4 broadcast quality video PSAs, and initiated dozens of awareness projects and campaigns in their community and regionally.

Evaluation of One Voice took place over the course of 2010 - 2015. Compared to the comparison group, participating youth advocates significantly increased their knowledge about the consequences of use and knowledge of industry practices; increased presentation skills; increased skills around media; increased knowledge of the legislative process; and developed a network of pro-social peers. The results also showed substance use among advocates was almost non-existent compared to school-wide YRBS data. At the community level, YRBS data indicate a steady and significant decline in underage drinking, Rx abuse, marijuana use and tobacco use over the evaluation period (YRBS in 2011, 13 and 15). One Voice was placed on the New Hampshire Registry of Evidence-Based Interventions in July 2013.

A. Philosophy

Program Mission & Rationale: Youth are often an underutilized and untapped key resource in community efforts to prevent the harm from risky behaviors such as underage drinking, nicotine use, or prescription drug abuse. It is well accepted that mobilizing all elements of the entire community (police, parents, media, schools, etc.) to take on targeted high risk behaviors is a sound and fundamental strategy for prevention. It is a core premise for the Drug Free Communities granting program and youth are a required sector that must be involved in every funded Coalition. Dover Youth to Youth's mission, as it implements the One Voice Model of Youth Empowerment, is to provide a framework where (1) Youth are not merely involved but are empowered to create change in the community's attitudes and environment; (2) Youth are valued as prevention partners; (3) Youth contribute substantively; (4) Youth grow and develop as a result of participation; (5) The community is impacted positively; (6) Lessons learned and actual implementation tools are shared with other jurisdictions/coalitions.

Over the last 8-10 years, Dover Youth to Youth has expanded its mission to include aiding other communities and prevention programs in implementing a true youth empowerment program where none exists or to help upgrade youth-based prevention programs from one where youth are involved – to one where youth are empowered to create change.

Philosophy & Framework: There is nothing new about the idea of youth participating in prevention activities in a community or, more commonly, in a school environment. However, this work often happens in loosely organized club settings and may result in only two or three activities being done during the year. Typically, the way youth are participating in prevention efforts lacks intensity and provides little in the way of skill development, training, and structure. When youth are participating in a low-intensity school club or are the token voice in an adult coalition, there is certainly "involvement". However, youth *involvement* is not the same thing as youth *empowerment*. It is from this perspective that the One Voice Youth Empowerment Model (One Voice) was developed by staff at Dover Youth to Youth, a community-based afterschool drug-prevention program coordinated by the Dover Police Department's Community Outreach Bureau for middle and high school students.

What distinguishes the One Voice Model of youth empowerment is the intense focus on knowledge and its capacity to develop core advocacy skills to a very high level of proficiency. The Model has three core elements: **Knowledge > Skills > Action**. All three elements are critical to achieve true youth empowerment.

Knowledge/Education: Students are provided with the extensive background information needed to develop an understanding of the problem. This knowledge suggests possible solutions to the problem and provides the inspiration to act. **Skills:** Before taking action, youth are provided with the skills needed to take action and cause change. These include such things as media or speaking skills. This provides the skills to act. Under-prepared youth who get in front of an audience and perform poorly are just as ineffective as adults who are unprepared. In either case a chance to have impact on the community was missed. **Action:** Youth are provided the opportunity to use the skills in the real world. They are given the chance to present

to a classroom, hold a press conference, conduct a demonstration, propose a new state law, or produce a video for cable access TV. This opportunity to take action to try to change their environment is where the empowerment process is completed.

A good analogy between this model and other less intensive programs where kids are involved in prevention would be: basketball. Typical youth involvement in drug prevention is a low intensity club activity similar to intra-mural basketball. Although there are many positive aspects to it, the One Voice Model program youth program is more akin to the “varsity” ball program. In a varsity mindset you would find high emphasis on skill development, high emphasis on coaching, sustained participant development over years, and sustained preparation and practice before (game) *action* takes place. To empower youth, the philosophical mindset of those running a youth program needs to be more on the order of the “varsity” level of expectations where youth advocates attain highly developed presentation, media or policy change skills before being put in a position to take action. The One Voice Model provides the structure, resources and foundation that can be used to organize youth assets and develop youth capacity to cause change.

The One Voice Model as evaluated in Dover is based on a three-tiered theory of change that follows and reflects this empowerment philosophy and is described in detail in *Section G. Evaluation*.

The Dover Youth to Youth program operates with a strong message to its student participants against the use of alcohol, nicotine and other drugs. In turn, the youth advocates send the same message to other students and the community generally, through their radio PSAs, theatrical skits, presentations, and various projects. The “no illegal or high-risk use” message permeates every aspect and level of the program. The no use message is combined with an effort to promote “non-use” as positive, socially accepted, socially approved of, and the norm.

B. Needs Assessment

The establishment of the Dover Youth to Youth empowerment program in the 1990s was a direct result of the community realizing through surveys in schools and arrest, hospital and other data that action needed to be taken, and needed to be taken in a more thoughtful way. Nearly half of high school students were drinking and using tobacco on a 30-day basis. Through a process of strategic planning and assessment, it was determined that although prevention activities were taking place in the community, the agencies involved were operating independently, without the benefit of a community wide plan, and often were unaware of what each other was doing. This led to the creation of the Dover Coalition for Youth, a recognition of the *need* to bring all prevention efforts together in a more mutually supportive, planned and systematic way. The establishment of the Coalition logically led to the idea that youth should “be involved” as part of the Coalition and part of the response and solution to these problems.

A youth empowerment group, by itself, would not normally be expected to assess community resources; identify gaps in capacity; assess readiness to act; and set priorities or outcomes. In our case, and virtually all others, the youth contribute to this as part of a larger community

coalition run effort. The Dover Coalition is a data driven coalition. All initiatives that are embarked upon rely on comprehensive needs assessments and rigorous data collection. The Coalition works with a variety of community partners to collect data. All of this information is compiled and carefully analyzed to determine trends and newly emerging problems. Through focus groups, the Coalition develops goals and creates strategies to address identified problems. Each time the community has conducted needs assessment or strategic planning the youth were involved as part of focus groups, completing surveys, or providing other input. This was the case again in 2009 when regional needs assessment activities were conducted as part of the SPF/SIG process in this region.

Over the last 10 years the Coalition has systematically tracked the substance abuse problem, particularly through regularly conducting the Youth Risk Behavioral Survey. Over the years, the Coalition and Dover Youth to Youth has tended to focus on tobacco, underage drinking, Rx abuse and marijuana – and data in surveys and other sources has consistently supported focusing efforts there.



Analysis by the Coalition has always helped guide the efforts of Dover Youth to Youth. For example, when data indicated a decrease in cigarette smoking but a sharp increase in e-cigarette use, Dover Youth to Youth began a process of educating themselves about those products and translating that info into action steps in the community, including a series of radio spots, an informational display, and a proposal by the students to restrict the use of e-cigarettes in playgrounds and in certain other youth oriented locations in

Dover (which was passed in early 2016).

Although the youth participants are generally the beneficiaries of the data collected by the Coalition, there are instances where they will demonstrate the nature of the problem by collecting their own data. In one instance the youth went to a local state owned beach and marked out 5 randomly assigned 10' x 10' squares with string and then sifted the sand to pull out all of the cigarette butts and counted them. They demonstrated that on average a family using 100 square feet of space was set up on 40 cigarette butts. Following a press conference and a front page story, the state agency in charge was motivated to put up signs and receptacles to address the problem.

In another example, Dover Youth to Youth students went to every store in the community that sells cigarette rolling papers to see if they could purchase them – since there was no law against the sale to minors. They found that 25% of 8th grade students (4 out of 16) were able to purchase rolling papers. The students found a state representative and convinced him to sponsor a state law making that illegal. Following testimony by these students before the House and the Senate committees, the law was passed. So in this example, Coalition data indicated that marijuana is an issue and the student's own research indicated that the particular legislative solution addressed a specific problem (kids were able to buy rolling papers).

The participants in the Dover Youth to Youth program operating under the One Voice Model work closely with the adult Coalition (Dover Coalition for Youth). The Coalition takes the lead in conducting research, needs assessment and facilitating surveys such as the YRBS. When survey data of 1,600 students indicated that the most common source of alcohol for a teen's first few drinking experiences was "taking it from their home or the home of a friend", Dover Youth to Youth took the lead in launching a "Fridge" campaign to target parents with that info. The students created radio PSAs that played hundreds of times, conducted a press conference, held a rally and press conference downtown to launch the campaign, created a video PSA that played on broadcast TV, and took other steps to support the Coalition.

Student Input: The target population for *participation* in Dover Youth to Youth, and similar groups implementing the One Voice Model is "teens". Throughout the process of building this program and developing the model, the youth participants have been instrumental in guiding and advising on the content, direction and tone of the program. This is particularly true of the early years where we were attempting to find a formula for meaningful youth participation with no real template to follow.

Listening to the feedback of the youth was one of the key things we did right at first. It was the youth that made it clear that being one of perhaps two teens at a Coalition meeting was **not** meaningful or engaging. They felt like window-dressing and felt that the adults did a lot of talk and not enough doing something. That led to the process of designing a system where youth could work with other youth to address substance abuse, in concert with the adult coalition. And again we listened to their reaction as we proposed how this could work. They had input on everything from length of meetings to what messages in PSAs resonated.

Over time, a culture was created within the program where the participants in Dover Youth to Youth just assumed that they were to have an opinion or input on virtually everything. The participants often came up with ideas for original media messages, theatrical skits, policy change proposals, and other project ideas. It was a Dover Youth to Youth participant that came to the group's meeting suggesting that they take action against a local amusement center that had a "kid's go-cart ride" with several Budweiser logos all over it (the business removed the logos within 48 hours of a visit by the students who spoke to the manager and delivered a letter stating their position).



As with any adult-guided program, youth input must be balanced out by perspective and feedback provided to them by adult staff. Input is a two-way-street, where staff might reply "but you can't spend tobacco-based grant money on an alcohol initiative" or might show them research that suggests that a certain style of message is not effective on a certain population.

C. Population Served

The One Voice Youth Empowerment Model could be looked at as having three population sets to consider: (1) The impact that the program was intended to have on the students participating as youth advocates; (2) the community-wide population that the advocates will hopefully impact with their efforts; and, (3) Youth programs nationwide that are eligible to receive training and resources in implementing the One Voice Model in their local jurisdictions. We will address all three populations in this section – but we tend to think of this program primarily in terms of its impact on the participating youth advocates because the One Voice Model is, first and foremost, a program designed to build the capacity of youth to impact their environment.

In Dover Youth to Youth, the youth advocates are teens in grades 6 – 12 that choose to volunteer. Any student is eligible to join after completing 5th grade and that is when 95% of members sign up. The City of Dover is located in the seacoast region of New Hampshire. Dover is comprised of a large central business district that services many surrounding communities - surrounded by successive rings of congested multi-family mixed residential, suburban residential and rural land use. Dover High School is a regional school servicing several smaller surrounding communities as well as the City of Dover.

At the 2010 census, the population of Dover was 30,000 and Dover has had the fastest growing population in the state of New Hampshire over the past decade. Dover borders Durham, NH which is home to the University of New Hampshire. UNH has 14,000 students, which adds an additional dimension in the fight against underage drinking and drug use since many students living off campus reside in Dover. Access to drinking parties and other events, as well as willing suppliers of alcohol to our youth, has been frequently mentioned as a concern in focus groups and interviews during our assessment of substance abuse problems. It is not uncommon for the Dover Police Department to respond to a drinking party where there is a mix of those above and below the age of 21 present – including high school students.

Culturally, Dover is 95% white Caucasian and the major racial ethnic groups each account for no more than 1 or 2% of the population. The community and its school age youth are almost universally English speaking. However, the community would not be called universally affluent and most cultural concerns relate to socioeconomic factors. The single biggest cultural concern relating to the management and implementation of Dover Youth to Youth and the One Voice Model is insuring that family income doesn't act as a barrier to program participation.

- There is a \$160 charge to attend the July week long Advocacy Training Camp – which each member attends once.
- There is also a \$120 annual fee to each member to sign up every September.
- Student participant training opportunities sometimes incur a cost (such as the annual 4-day summer training conference at Bryant University in Rhode Island; tuition = \$425).

Dover Youth to Youth application forms, Summer Training Camp forms and other conference registration forms explicitly advise parents and students that although a fee applies, “scholarships are available” and provides contact info for that purpose. In addition, during presentations to student or parent groups about the program, the audience is always reminded

that “not having the fee will not prevent students from joining the program.” Last year the fee to join Dover Youth to Youth was reduced or waived entirely for 7% of the participants. The fee to attend Dover’s Summer Advocacy Training Camp was reduced or waived for 18% of participants and 6 out of 13 students attending the 4-day conference at Bryant University received assistance with ½ the cost of the \$425 tuition needed.

Another significant cultural consideration that is important for a program that involves teens, and often targets teens with its messaging, is the *youth culture*. For example, this year a Dover Youth to Youth staff member attended a 6-hour training this year called “Teen Culture”. Staff regularly attends training on cultural competency, and the State of NH specifically requires 15 cultural competency hours to achieve prevention certification (the program coordinator is certified, and 2 staff are close).

As this model of youth empowerment is adopted in other parts of the country, there have been questions about the availability of the Toolkit and resources in Spanish. For example there are 9 locations in Arizona that have invested in the One Voice Toolkit and have been receiving web based training and other assistance. Spanish language materials were not a need locally in Dover where the materials were developed but could become a significant need going forward in order to allow the resources to be fully utilized in other jurisdictions. The process of translating hundreds of pages of scripts, lesson plans, exercises, and samples of press releases, flyers, videos and other documents is daunting. The flash drive containing supporting materials that comes with the Toolkit binder contains 14 gig of content. We have recently brought on a new staff member who is a native Spanish speaker and our plan is to identify key materials and start a process of converting one tool at a time into a Spanish version.

D. Building Capacity

Your question is: *How does your program relate to the community’s overall prevention strategy and/or systems?* And the answer is, the impetus to create the Dover Youth to Youth program, and ultimately develop a model of youth empowerment, was in response to the recognition that the community had no prevention strategy or system. The community had no cohesive prevention effort, prevention activities were scattered, and what existed was conducted independently of one another. There was no unity of message and no coordination or mutual support. Under the leadership of the Dover Police Department, an effort was initiated in 1992 to create the first community coalition, bring core sectors to the table, and coordinate the efforts of the schools, business, hospital, media, faith community, etc. This raised the question of: how could the youth participate?

The One Voice Model depends upon collaboration at multiple levels in order to bring youth to a position of being more than envelope stuffers or window-dressing. The One Voice Model provides a system for making that happen. From the beginning, the One Voice Model was developed to be mutually supportive of the Dover Coalition for Youth. At the local level that means the Coalition taking them on as partners and including them in the process of understanding drug use data, establishing community needs, setting goals for change, and

challenging the youth to take part in solutions. For example, the students' natural attraction to media messaging and technology allowed the Coalition to connect them with two local radio stations and begin a process of developing a series of radio spots targeting tobacco use and underage drinking. The students went on to create 5-10 spots each year, with those stations providing the technical production facilities.

Recent collaborations with the Coalition include: presenting at the Town Hall Meeting on Alcohol; assisting as actors at an interactive parent training; and promoting drug take back day by holding their Zombie Rally the week before the event. During this evaluation period, the students in this program collaborated with state and local entities. Some examples:

- ✓ Collaborating with the District Court, Police Department, and a radio station to assist two older teens arrested for providing alcohol to minors at a party (death resulting) in writing and producing 4 radio spots and two community presentations as part of their sentence.
- ✓ The local hospital to jointly conduct Kick Butts Day events;
- ✓ Assist the NH Liquor Commission on the design of their web site to make it more informative about treatment resources and warning signs of alcohol abuse;
- ✓ Collaborate variously with the NH Lung Assn., Breathe NH, New Futures and other NH non-profits on collective response strategies to proposed tobacco and alcohol legislative bills;

At the national level, collaborations include a long standing relationship with the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids and the TRUTH Initiative that includes participating in training and national campaigns coordinated by those organizations - and regularly assisting CADCA, the National Leadership Conference, Center for Alcohol Marketing and Youth, Y2Y International and other national programs with empowerment training at their conferences. Last month students conducted a workshop and participated in a plenary panel at the US Alcohol Policy Alliance conference.

Over a 10 year span, the Coaliton was a drug Free Communities and/or a STOP Act grantee. The One Voice Model guiding the youth program was perhaps the single biggest asset to the Coalition and those grant efforts. The impact of 4 teams of youth advocates conducting activities helped the Coalition meet its performance goals, made its grant reports to DFC more robust and the student volunteer time contributed significantly to the grant match requirement.

One of the most important aspects of collaboration involving One Voice is in its replication. Dover Youth to Youth actively collaborates with a network of local and county coalitions and prevention entities across the US that want to upgrade youth participation in their jurisdiction. As is explained in more detail in *Section F.* below, this support includes assistance provided at no cost through the phone, conference calls, email, webinars, YouTube site, and resources available on our extensive web site DoverY2Y.org. Last month we conducted a webinar for Arizona at the request of prevention entities from that state interested in youth empowerment. More extensive and sophisticated resources require a fee, such as the comprehensive One Voice Toolkit and training done where travel is required. Teams of Dover Youth to Youth students are traveling out of state on a monthly basis to conduct training for these programs.

In New Hampshire a wide variety of coalitions seek out One Voice resources and training. In Dover's immediate region, collaboration with local communities is well established. Since 2014, Dover Youth to Youth has been working with Lamprey Health Care, the regional public health network, and the Greater Seacoast United Way in an effort which has resulted in support for existing youth groups and establishing 4 new youth empowerment groups in Rockingham County. A similar program started in Strafford County in 2010.

E. Strategic Planning

The goals of the One Voice Model are to:

Establish and sustain a mechanism where youth can participate and be trained in prevention activities at an advanced and effective level as a component of a broad community response to substance abuse.

Objective 1: Employ 2 staff members to maintain the logistical, communications and physical resources needed to maintain a youth empowerment program consistent with One Voice Model.

Objective 2: Conduct recruitment of participants as needed to maintain 15-25 students per team.

Objective 3: Schedule and conduct a minimum of 3-4 meetings per month.

Objective 4: Plan and conduct, at a minimum, 6 – 10 prevention projects each year in direct support of the community Coalition's priorities and goals.

Advance the skill level of participants in core advocacy skill areas to an "adult" level over a period of 3-5 years so as to facilitate participation of youth advocates in policy change, educational, media-related, and other prevention activities commensurate with their skill development.

Objective 1: Provide all new participants with an intense advocacy training experience at the beginning of their participation.

Objective 2: Devote at least a 30-minute block of training at 50%, or more, of the regular team meetings of participants.

Objective 3: Provide advanced training opportunities for established participants so that at least half the participants on a team have attended training each year.

Reduce substance use among youth and, over time, reduce substance abuse community-wide by addressing the factors in a community that increase the risk of substance abuse and promoting the factors that minimize the risk of substance abuse.

Objective 1: Raise perception of risk of use (moderate or great) by 10% on the next student risk survey.

Objective 2: Decrease the ease of access ("easy or very easy") by 10% in the next student risk survey.

Objective 3: Decrease "past 30 day use" by 5% on the next student risk survey.

Objective 4: Raise student perception of parental disapproval of substance use as "wrong" or "very wrong" by 5% on the next survey.

Develop or strengthen collaborative relationships with other communities or organizations with youth empowerment groups interested in prevention.

Objective 1: Conduct at least one event each year in New Hampshire and one nationally that will expose other prevention entities to the One Voice Model and its resources.

Objective 2: Maintain an email list of prevention organizations that are interested in youth empowerment and communicate with them quarterly.

Objective 3: Plan, advertise and conduct at least 4 training opportunities each year that are open to participants and staff from other communities.

Objective 4: Maintain a comprehensive web site that includes downloadable prevention resources and information on advanced resources.

Objective 5: Maintain a network of youth empowerment programs that wish to sustain an ongoing connection and provide advanced assistance as requested.

Locally in Dover, these substance use goals and objectives are tied to the results of YRBS and other data compiled and evaluated by the Coalition and are the goals and objectives used in the community's STOP act and DFC grant. The goals and objectives related to programmatic structure and performance are responding to:

- (1) the established need for youth to be a part of full community collaboration; and,
- (2) the entire premise of our evaluation below, that – if youth are to be a part of community / coalition effort on substance abuse – youth must be empowered to be effective and not simply “involved”.

As was described in the implementation section, an extremely high percentage of the community – and the regional and state-wide population – are contacted by or exposed to their message. Within Dover, virtually all of the 4,000 school aged youth in Dover are exposed to 1- 3 live presentations in every 24 month cycle. Adults and or youth are regularly exposed to videos played on the local ABC affiliate and cable access, radio PSAs played thousands of time each year, stickers on beer products, palm cards, out-of-school presentations and a wide variety of community prevention projects. In addition, the policy changes initiated by participants have a lasting impact long after the change has been made.

Student advocates continually turn over through graduation and attrition, and sometimes staff turnover happens as well. To achieve sustainability, there must be consistent systems, ongoing training and well established references. A recruitment system is in place for recruitment of participants, where established members provide presentations to potential program participants each year through a school assembly and other info and presentations targeting parents. Mechanisms for training are firmly institutionalized, including the summer advocacy camp, ongoing training during the year and one-day conferences conducted every November. Consistency in training is further enhanced by the existence of an established set of training resources contained in the Toolkit. As a result, the process for training members in presentation skills employs the same lesson plan, PowerPoint and handouts, no matter who is teaching it.

Many former participants go on to social and public service jobs and many retain an interest in the prevention field. In fact, the current Dover Coalition director is a former 7-year participant in Dover Youth to Youth – as is the just recently hired director of a DFC coalition in a neighboring city and the director of the Partnership for a Drug Free NH. In the last two years we have started

a program where long-term graduating members can retain connections with the program as volunteer staff. Currently there are 6 such participants who, as college students, assist regular staff and in turn learn about the managerial side of running a prevention program. We feel that this training will further continue to encourage vocational interest in prevention and provide staff for the future.

The best ally of sustainability is to do a really good job and have the public value what is contributed and its impact. This insures continued support in the community, financially, programmatically and in other ways. However this is fleeting if the level of service is not maintained and sustained.

F. Implementation

As was stated in Section A, there is nothing new about the idea of youth participating in prevention activities in a community. However, too often this takes the form of one or two teens at a Coalition meeting “representing the youth voice”, who may or may not be bored and are probably not getting structured and consistent skills training in order to be meaningfully involved. In other cases, students may be part of a loosely organized club that may organize two or three activities during the year. Typically, the way youth are participating in prevention efforts lacks intensity and provides little in the way of skill development, training, and structure. What distinguishes the One Voice Model of Youth Empowerment is: (1) the intense focus on knowledge, (2) its capacity to develop advocacy skills to a very high level of proficiency, and (3) the highly developed resources and support that can be used to guide and speed implementation.

The Dover Youth to Youth program has developed an extensive series of training tools, techniques, and systems to facilitate **empowerment**. These tools are what allows Dover Youth to Youth to maintain its consistency - and these tools are what allows others looking to empower youth to replicate the program, as is described later in this section below.

The One Voice Youth Empowerment Model implemented by Dover Youth to Youth is composed of 70 youth in grades 6 – 12. They operate primarily after school hours on four age-based teams of 15 – 25 students per team. Each team has two adult advisers, its own projects and activities, and meets weekly for two hours to plan, train and rehearse for its various activities. Younger students meet for 7 months of the year and older students may be active for 10 or 11 months of the year. Most students join in 6th or 7th grade and immediately attend a 40-hour week-long summer camp where they receive training in core advocacy skills (public speaking, media literacy, prevention messaging) and get to experience a full range of actual action projects such as recording an actual radio Public Service Announcement and providing a medicine safety presentation to early elementary students. This basic training allows students to make a decision about joining Dover Youth to Youth in the fall, and over 90% do so.

The Dover Youth to Youth program is run by two adults who act as the primary advisers for the program. These staff members are part-time employees of the Dover Police Department’s Community Outreach Bureau. They work hand-in-hand with the Coalition Director who often

helps out with Youth to Youth activities, since they often coincide with Coalition goals. In addition, volunteers and college interns periodically supplement paid staff. The action teams start meeting by October 1st each year. At the meetings, background training on substance abuse continues, as does skills training, and planning and prep for various action steps and activities to be taken. The activities conducted by the student groups generally fall into one of 4 categories: Media, Policy Change, Educational, and Community or School Awareness Projects. In the course of a school year most participants will engage in a dozen or more activities – including one in each of the 4 categories.

For example, in this school year the 22 member Monday night team (high school age) team has created 3 radio PSAs, 1 video PSA, testified in the NH House against marijuana legalization, testified in the NH Senate in support of e-cigarette control legislation, proposed and passed a local e-cig ordinance, held a Gear Exchange, conducted a Logo Lampoon tobacco & alcohol spoof art contest, broadcast 7 webinars nationally from our facility, and prepared and conducted a regional training conference for youth advocates from throughout southern New Hampshire, and made dozens of presentations. The latter activities included everything from local presentations in schools, at Kiwanis or the Town Hall Meeting on alcohol to extensive out of town presentations in communities wanting to replicate their approach to youth empowerment. Last month 5 students presented at the national Alcohol Policy 17 Conference in Washington, DC. Other students have recently taught in Connecticut, New York, Vermont, and Massachusetts.

Younger middle school students start off with simpler activities but begin presenting in the elementary schools almost immediately. Even these youngest members are very involved in other action projects. For example, in the current school year they participated in a rally planned by the older students to raise awareness of e-cigarettes and how candy flavors can attract kids; dressed as zombies and conducted a campaign downtown to raise awareness about the Coalition's Drug Take Back Day (slogan: *if you think zombies are scary – check your medicine cabinet*); conducted sticker shock; and convinced a local gift shop in a seafood restaurant to stop selling magnets that displayed a lobster smoking a bong.

As the youth advocates age in middle school and demonstrate stronger skills, they start giving presentations with more sophisticated messages to older audiences in the Middle School and to adult audiences. For most participants, by 9th or 10th grade they have 4 or 5 years of training. They have become highly informed about the issues, have college level understanding of media development concepts, and advanced college or adult level presentation & public speaking skills.

Any active program such as this requires infrastructure and support. This includes a home or sponsoring organization that takes the program under its wing. This is most often a school, but could also be a hospital, Boys & Girls Club, or, as in Dover's case, a police department. Other infrastructure requirements include considerations for office space, telephone, email system, IT support, possible transportation needs, office supplies, fiscal management/payroll, grant writing & grant management, and space for the student members to meet and conduct business. In many cases these needs are met by the home or sponsoring organization; as is the case with Dover Youth to Youth.

The City of Dover has a population of 30,000. Virtually all of them have been affected in some way by the Dover Youth to Youth program over past years. Over the past 10 years, an average of 2,000 radio PSAs, created by the youth advocates have been played each year on 5 different commercial radio stations. These messages targeting parents, teens, or others are very well known. Educational presentations by Dover Youth to Youth members reach virtually all of the 4,000 school aged youth in Dover in a 24 month cycle. In school awareness initiatives and targeted media reinforce those messages repeatedly. Each year about 25% of 5th grade parents participate in a program where Youth to Youth students play the role of teenagers in an interactive theatrical setting called Freeze Action Theater.

In addition, policy change initiatives at the state and local level have had the effect of changing the environment for everyone in NH and beyond. Visitors and residents alike cannot smoke in Henry Law Park as a result of the ordinance that the students proposed and passed; and no one in the state can sell rolling papers to minors or host an underage drinking party – both as a direct result of proposals by empowered Dover Youth to Youth students.

Replication: The One Voice Model has been deliberately designed and constructed to make it readily replicable. The program can be replicated in its entirety with full fidelity or components of the program can be adopted by a youth program that has students involved in prevention but may not be prepared to take on the intensity needed to engage in policy change or more impactful activities. These are often newer groups looking to start off more slowly.

Implementation/replication of the One Voice Model is guided by the One Voice Youth Empowerment Toolkit (aka: the Toolkit), a comprehensive four part manual that follows the **Knowledge > Skills > Action** approach. The Toolkit contains a series of modules that either: 1) provide instruction for adults on best practices for organizing and administering a youth advocacy group; 2) describe how to help youth develop knowledge in specific areas such as industry practices or the consequences of alcohol use; 3) instruct how to build specific core skills such as public speaking or media development; or 4) provided step-by-step instructions on how to engage participating youth advocates in specific action projects.

Each component is designed to be practical and hands-on and provides everything a group advisor needs to conduct that particular activity or training. This includes step-by-step instructions, lesson plans, PowerPoint, exercises, handouts, sample templates, fidelity checklists and evaluation tools.

The Toolkit was prepared with the idea that the adult advisers may be inexperienced in coordinating a youth empowerment group. The Toolkit was also designed to be useful to more experienced advisers of established youth groups that want to expand the capacity, or increase the intensity, of their program. The Modules within the Toolkit help advisers to be effective regardless of his/her expertise in teaching such topics as media development, public speaking or working with the press.

However, there are other support structures that aid replication besides the Toolkit. Dover Youth to Youth provides a central point where questions or guidance is provided at no cost via email, phone, conference calls, on an expansive web site, or site visits in Dover. Dover Youth to Youth

also provides free webinars each year designed to help people get started in youth empowerment and a more advanced webinar series available for a nominal fee. Other training available on a fee basis includes an annual 4-day program for adult advisers, the week long summer training camp for youth advocates, and on-site training at hosting locations. All of this training is provided substantially, and often entirely, by experienced Dover Youth to Youth students.

For example, the Seabrook, NH Middle School, in collaboration with a regional coalition, wanted to start a youth advocacy program using the One Voice Youth Empowerment Model. They purchased the Toolkit, visited our site and observed Dover Youth to Youth meetings, scheduled staff training, and spoke to us at length about implementation. In October 2015 Seabrook scheduled a presentation on youth advocacy by 7 Dover students for their entire middle school student body, after which they distributed info on the first meeting and application forms based on our standard template. The school immediately had 25 students sign up. In the 6 months since their first meeting they used the Toolkit resources to find radio PSA ideas, conducted the medicine safety presentation, and have completed several in school projects. They are well on the way in developing background knowledge and key advocacy skills in only their first year of existence.

G. EVALUATION (40 points)

Evaluation Background & Overview: In 2008, following a county-wide needs assessment, Dover Youth to Youth was asked to provide technical assistance within its SPF/SIG region to help local communities implement youth empowerment as a strategy. In order to fulfill that role, Dover Youth to Youth began a process of formalizing and organizing its model, approaches, systems, and activities in a replicable user-friendly format – and institute a process of formal evaluation. The One Voice Model developed by Dover Youth to Youth was accepted in 2010 as a SAMSHA Service to Science site to receive technical assistance in evaluating its effectiveness. In 2011 staff applied for and received a \$30,000 SAMSHA capacity building grant which is awarded to select Service to Science sites. The evaluation of One Voice took place from 2010 to 2015. Customized quantitative tools were developed to collect program monitoring and evaluation data. Qualitative data were collected to confirm and contextualize the outcome results. The hypothesis that drove the evaluation design and analysis was as follows:

If you develop the knowledge base of youth to a level of expertise regarding risk behaviors, such as alcohol or other drug use; and develop their advocacy skills to a high level; and provide them with opportunities to take meaningful action, then they are put into a position of being positive agents of change among their peers and their community. They become empowered.

In short, participation in a youth advocacy program implementing the One Voice Model will result in participants that are knowledgeable, skilled, capable of collective action, and going to create change and positively impact the community. The One Voice Model theory of change is:

- **IF** One Voice is implemented with fidelity **THEN** youth advocates will increase their knowledge about targeted substances; increase presentation, media and other skills; increase knowledge of the legislative process; and develop a network of pro-social peers.
- **IF** the above happens **THEN** the youth advocates will increase their perception of harm of use; increase self-efficacy (perception that they can influence change, competency in skills); increase knowledge of the influence of media and the alcohol industry in the targeted areas.
- **IF** the above happens **THEN** youth advocates will be capable and motivated to take effective action to cause environmental change at the community level; delay their own initiation of AOD use; increase perception of harm of AOD use within the community; and ultimately, over time, decrease AOD use at the community level.

Evaluation Results (in the interests of space, only excerpts here are taken from our evaluation report): To test the above theory, a comparison group from within the primary intervention community of Dover was enlisted and comprised of the students from two 6th grade classrooms in the Dover Middle School who were not part of Dover Youth to Youth and the One Voice intervention. Youth in the comparison group completed baseline and follow-up surveys as well as a pre- and post-test presentation skills exercise.

The evaluation explored change over time in short-term, intermediate and long-term outcomes between the two groups: participants; and comparison group. All 6th grade One Voice Model participants who started the Youth to Youth program in the 2011 or 2012 school year completed a baseline survey (n=63). A follow-up survey was completed by most of the participants at the end of the school year (n=49). The comparison group completed the exact same baseline and follow-up surveys at the beginning and end of the school year. The results clearly showed that the intervention group of youth advocates showed significantly greater increases over time for measures demonstrating short-term outcomes, such as:

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|---|
| Knowledge of Industry Practices (informed about current practices and issues) |
| Perceived risk of harm (if a person drank alcoholic beverage each weekend) |
| Presentation Skills (observed score) |
| Media development Skills(knowledge about creating PSA for radio or TV) |
| Engaging with pro-social peers |

And intermediate outcomes, such as:

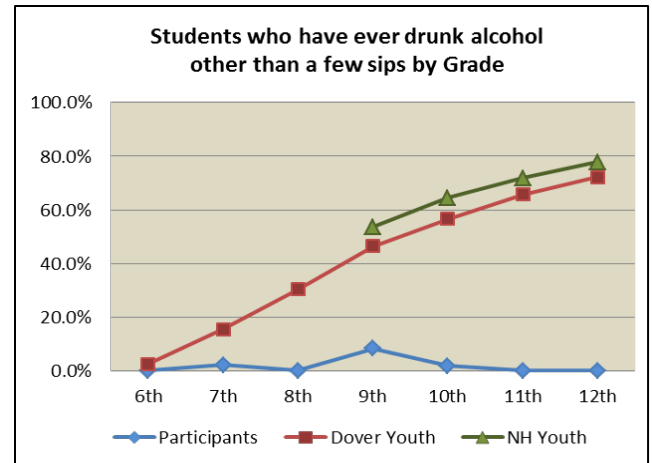
| |
|---|
| Self Efficacy Behaviors Scale (worked to make a difference); |
| Self Efficacy Beliefs Scale (believe they can make a difference) |
| Self-Efficacy Legislative Process (confident in ability to advocate for policies) |
| Presentation Skills Confidence (comfort level with speaking or presenting) |

Presentation skills are a central component to the One Voice model. Using direct observation and an independent scoring protocol, 6th grade participants and comparison group students were videotaped reading the same script and were scored in four key presentation skill areas. Participant presentations were videotaped at the beginning of their participation in One Voice, prior to receiving the presentation skills training module, and then again at the end of the school

year to evaluate change in presentation skill competency. There was a significant improvement in four key presentation skills that were measured for this study when compared to the comparison group.

Maintenance of Effect: Participants who started the One Voice program in 2011-2012 were asked to complete a follow-up survey in the fall of 2015. The participants who responded to the follow-up survey had been involved with the Dover Youth to Youth/One Voice program from between one to five years in total. The intervention group had sustained improvement over a period of 4 years. Although some of this improvement could be attributed to natural maturation, when compared to the comparison group, the intervention group still had a greater amount of change over time.

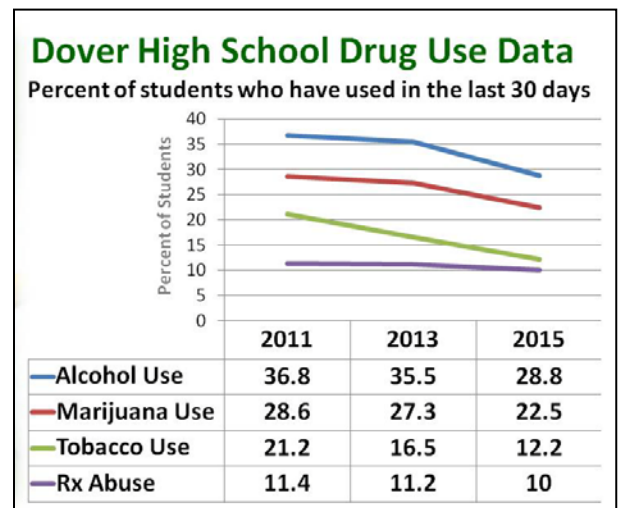
Long-Term Outcomes: It was hypothesized that: (1) One Voice participants would delay initiating their own AOD use; and, (2) these participants could in turn influence social norms & policies, and thus decrease AOD use at the community level. Initiation of substance use was analyzed by grade over multiple years of data collection at the Dover Middle and High School. Dover youth generally showed increased rates of use across all substances, while the participants, again starting in the same place as their 6th-grade peers, had extremely low to zero use rates. A possible indication of the environmental impact of One Voice in the Dover schools is that the Dover youth showed slightly lower rates of alcohol use than the statewide cohort (see chart).



Community wide change is harder to definitively demonstrate as being caused by the intervention since it is hard to control for other possible influences – but very positive changes in drug use rates were measured among the population of high school students during the evaluation period 2010-2015 (see chart).

The results of this evaluation study support the notion that, the One Voice Model implemented by Dover Youth to Youth produced the expected change in skills and knowledge of participants in the first year and the longer a youth is engaged, the greater their capacity to apply their knowledge and skills to create change. The results indicate that both the short- and intermediate outcome objectives were achieved.

In the long-term, participants indicated that they had either not engaged in use or substantially delayed their initiation with alcohol and other drugs when compared to their peers.



During the evaluation period the participants in Dover Youth to Youth continued to produce a wide variety and significant volume of activity – including examples that have been cited in prior

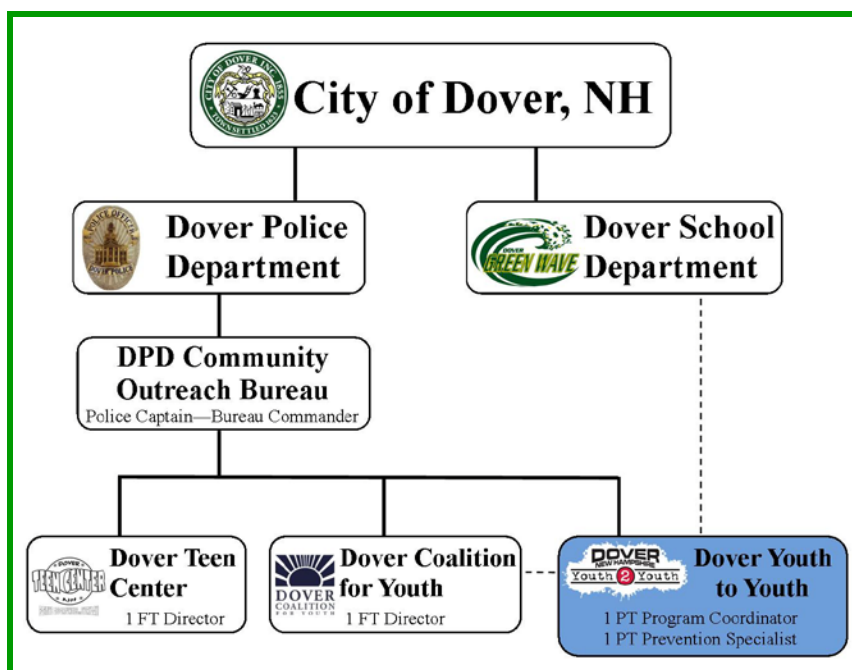
sections of this document. And the action taken clearly demonstrates that knowledge and skills were being acquired **and** put to use.

In 2013 Dover Youth to Youth’s “One Voice Youth Empowerment Model” was recognized by the State of New Hampshire as an Evidenced Based Initiative.

H. Program Management

The organization structure of a youth empowerment program is dictated by the host agency and where it is placed on the organizational chart. In Dover, the youth empowerment program was placed within city government under the police department’s Community Outreach Bureau. The staff running the youth teams report to a police captain who is responsible for overall managerial oversight and fiscal supervision.

Within the youth empowerment function, there is a program coordinator responsible for day-to-day programmatic implementation and supervision – and additional supporting staff. Staff, in turn, provides supervision of youth participants as they plan and execute activities. The program’s mission, goals, objectives, and implementation strategies are developed by staff and participants and approved by police department management, consistent with the goals, priorities or limitations set by applicable grants.



Budget Narrative: Expenses to run the Dover Youth to Youth program while it implements this model (and provides assistance to other communities implementing this model) include: two staff @ 34 and 32 hours, costing a total of \$120,000 including benefits. In addition a portion of the Coalition Director’s time is invested in supporting or directly working with the youth on mutual projects amounting to about \$20,000 of that salary. As usual, the personnel line item is the single largest expense. Other annual expenses include office supplies, printing, equipment repair or replacement, and similar expenses come to \$2,000 per year. Contracted services for speakers, trainers, media placement, or advanced video production services normally comes to \$4,000 per year. Food and supplies for meetings and training comes to \$2,000 per year.

The City of Dover and the Dover Police Department (as our hosting agency and fiscal agent) also provide in-kind support that includes: rent-free space in the community center for offices and meeting rooms; phone service, IT support, payroll & fiscal services; heat, electricity and

other utilities; and access to two 15-passenger vans for transport. Revenue for personnel and direct costs items comes from these sources: the Wentworth-Douglass Hospital (\$50,000 per year); City of Dover (\$70,000 / yr.); the Greater Seacoast United Way (\$30,000/yr).

But that is what **our** program costs to run. The better question is: *What would the budget be to implement the One Voice Model in another jurisdiction?* In general, an implementing organization would need two adult advisers for each team of 15-25 youth. These are often teachers on stipend, part time hourly staff or full time staff whose duties include a youth empowerment component. Two teachers might run the program on stipends for a total of \$4,000 for a year – or the youth program might be additional duties for previously existing staff. So staffing costs can vary widely, but can be kept under control.

Predictable one time initial start up costs include \$700 for a One Voice Youth Empowerment Toolkit. Attendance at the week-long youth empowerment training program for adult advisers conducted by Dover Youth to Youth each July is recommended. This training is \$300 for those who are in commuting range and up to \$1,000 or so for those that would have to fly in. Additional annual out-of-pocket expenses vary with the type of activities the group will try to complete, adult adviser & youth participant training needs, and the availability of in-kind services available from the sponsoring agency (utilities, space needs, etc.). However, each team of advocates would generally need about \$1 - 2,000 each year for supplies and miscellaneous expenses, and \$1 - 2,000 to access various training resources for adult staff or youth leaders.

Effective Communication: We have discovered that effective internal communication and coordination is fundamental to the success of a youth empowerment program and have built in some simple systems to accommodate that – and those systems are passed on to replicating locations. Examples include:

The first section of the Toolkit is devoted to organization issues. This includes a series of “Fidelity Checklists for each Module of the Toolkit. These are a series of one-page implementation *checklists* designed to be used for two purposes. First they can be used as a “to do” list for the advisers to remind them about next steps to take when implementing any of the Toolkit’s Modules. Second, they are used to monitor how closely the adviser is following the module design to implement the activities. The checklists include such things as: “Is a press release prepared? Has media been notified?” However, youth may not send out a press release without administrative adult review.

The Toolkit also details administrative functions such as meeting planning, building agendas, and communication with participants. Full contact info is collected on the application form of each youth participant each year – including full parent contact info. Each team of youth advocates has an email distribution list and advisers are required to send at least one email a week to parents and youth on program activities, assignments and expectations. For those wishing to replicate the program, these same resources are available, as well as the training, consult, web site, and electronic support described previously in this document.