



Region One SPF SIG Wrap-up

Each county prepared answers to the following questions:

1. Give one example of a positive outcome achieved by your county.
2. In your overall effort, what has worked?
3. In your overall effort, what has not worked?
4. What lessons have you and your county partnership learned from this experience?

Calhoun County (submitted by Shari Johnson):

- 1./2. The Communities Mobilizing for a Change on Alcohol (CMCA) approach was possibly the best approach to encouraging a community to become involved, or more importantly finding out what a community cares (or doesn't care) about.

It seems the only time people are asked what they're concerned about is in the midst of a crisis, a political election or people are seeking funding for something. Because of that, I think people have a suspicious nature about why they're being questioned and to what degree of concern the interviewer has.

When the CMCA questions continued for a few years, then I think they built a connection to the cause. Consistency in the effort was key to the success that was achieved.

3. I'm going to try really hard not to let the bitter taste that was left in my mouth from county politics jade my answer. But I make no promises. What has not worked is people. With youth as the primary focus, the school system was and should be the primary (not sole) approach to reaching youth on underage drinking. In Calhoun County it was the only place that you could have access to the target population, and should have been an easy access to those who are often providing the alcohol. But it was a constant battle with the

system. And often times, it was not their fault. The “system” has placed so many requirements on Administration and Faculty to get their elements of education in, they leave no room to teach children to live, and parents are just trying to survive.

As an outspoken Christian, my constant view of the lack of morals within and without the school kept my prayer life active, but did little to encourage me that we would see progress in the future regarding the reduction of underage drinking.

Parent involvement is a must if our children are going to get through their school years as productive adults. Our schools should be where the community comes together. But it's not. Few parents attend student activities or events, and the school is seen as a drop off point and retrieval. While teachers are spending their day trying to teach around behavior problems, there is no time to teach substance abuse prevention or moral expectations. And although I know this is not going to solve substance abuse issues in Calhoun County, I still believe it's where you have to start, and it's where we'll have the most impact.

Our community has the worst opinion of the education and political realm of any county that I have visited. Of those in the community that I spoke to, there is no trust found. They send their children to school and turn a blind eye to what's happening there, because they believe, they cannot make a difference, nor do they have a voice.

The school staff earnestly tries to make a difference. But they are so overwhelmed with the responsibility cast upon their shoulders to get their required tasks done, there is no time put prevention into the picture. And the denial by Administration that we even had issues was ludicrous! And never ended. They would refute any statistic given.

Calhoun's problems are far deeper than I had ever imagined 5 years ago.

4. The relationship of myself with the county partnership completely fell apart. And I learned what I've hated being told for the 20 years I've worked in the political realm was true.

Certain people in the community will either have control. Or they will destroy every opportunity they can't control.

*** An unasked question: Would you do it again?

Yes. But when building the coalition, I would seek those in my community who had never been heard from and give them a voice.

Doddridge County (submitted by Terry Hutson):

1. Approximately 30 county agencies have partnered with us throughout the years. The Doddridge County Board of Education has committed to provide \$6,000. (of the \$15,000 we asked for) in funding to help continue our work within the county. Our County Commission is still on the fence about providing \$35,000 in funding that we asked them for. Out of all the stuff I have learned the last three years, I can't come up with the right words or data to prove we are doing a great job.
2. The empowering and mobilizing of agencies to work together as a team to reach community members in a wide variety of ways. Our coalition is one of the biggest groups of people that meet together in Doddridge County. The partnerships that have come out of this endeavor like West Virginia Magazine, Our Senior Volunteer to Work Program and our AmeriCorp*VISTA to serve substance abuse prevention in our county.
3. We have not been able to get law enforcement 100% with us. Even after I wrote a grant for the county to get EUDL grant funds and our PRO Officer grant funds I can't get Sheriff to help us out. Our Sheriff will not work with us on EUDL grant. He will not let officers work with us on compliance checks. He does not prosecute underage drinkers and/or adults for contributing to minors. I know this for a fact because my husband and I brought him to a home at 2:00 in the morning and he did not do one thing about it. Parents have said to us why you are wasting tax payer's money on prevention when there is no enforcement. We always thought that was a great question....but we continued to move forward with groups that would work with us. I have always stood up to him, I even did not prosecute him when I found out their office did not send in IRB reports to the State for almost 6 years. It is our impression that some people in Doddridge County just do not care.
4. Education and partnerships truly the way to get anything done. Engaging community leaders, parents, and youth is the key element in achieving the goals and objectives of any program. I heard someone say once "You have to own the problem, to solve the problem" I truly believe this to be true now.

Marshall County (submitted by Latrisha Whitelatch):

1. Through its involvement in the WV SPF SIG Project, the Marshall County Anti-Drug Coalition (MCADC) had the opportunity to work with community partners and local legislators to change state law regarding the consequences of underage drinking. In July 2009, Gov. Manchin signed the law that made

underage drinking a delinquency offense. In addition, since being awarded the SPF SIG planning grant in 2006, the MCADC and its fiscal agent, the Marshall County Family Resource Network, have been awarded a federal Drug Free Communities Support Program Grant, an American Lung Association Tobacco Mini-grant, a Drug Free West Virginia Grant, and, most recently, a Substance Abuse Prevention Services Grant.

2. Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol, TIPS merchant education combined with compliance checks, and coalition capacity development efforts have been very successful in Marshall County.
3. TIPS did not work in our community as a stand-alone project. The MCADC also continues to struggle with maintaining meaningful youth involvement. Finally, the MCADC would have benefited from coordinated data-collection efforts at the state-level, such as mandated PRIDE surveys. We have found ways to get PRIDE conducted in Marshall County, but a lack of coordinated data-collection efforts has made regional prevention work somewhat challenging.
4. The most important thing that the MCADC learned during the WV SPF SIG Project is the SPF process. We have used this process again and again with different subjects/issues. I personally cannot say enough about what I have learned while working on this project and the assistance and support that I have received from the WV Partnership and from the WV PRC. My community and our community coalition are better for having been involved in SPF SIG – we would not have been in a position to apply for and be awarded the grants that we have received to provide substance abuse prevention services/programs if it were not for having taken part in SPF SIG.

Ohio County (submitted by Julia Charvat):

1.
 - Quantitative Outcome: Off-premise retail compliance in the City of Wheeling has risen from 84.7% in 2008 to 97.6% as of August 2010.
 - Qualitative Outcome: We have developed a strong collaborative relationship with local law enforcement through underage drinking enforcement and related prevention activities. This has been tremendously helpful in our efforts to prevent not only underage drinking but also prescription drug abuse.
2.
 - We have been able to build capacity so that Ohio County Schools implements evidence-based prevention education programs without needing coalition staff to implement.
 - Project Sticker Shock
 - Working with Recovery community
 - First Rx Take-Back day was a success- collected 164 bottles of controlled substances
 - Capacity: dividing coalition work into taskforces has helped focus

our efforts & match coalition members skills & interests more effectively

- 3./4. - Needed more professional development and criteria for coalition staff to be prepared or learn the necessary skills and information to assess/plan/implement/evaluate evidence-based prevention strategies.
- Coalition had little knowledge of tobacco prevention efforts and how that could or should have been connected to our coalition's work, clarification about Synar compliance, etc.
- Increased state-level coordination to collect, publish & disseminate local data on a consistent & ongoing basis (for trend data) would have been beneficial for our coalition (i.e. Florida's prevention data system publishing its results online).
- Parent involvement remains a challenge
- Prioritizing & focusing on cultural competence remains a challenge
- Balancing evidence-based & environmental strategies with coalition member interests in tangible or "feel-good" events, activities, etc. (information dissemination, alternative activities, etc.).

Wood County (submitted by Kelly Shook):

1. We have a well developed coalition and we are on track to make real progress in our county.
2. Coalition building, compliance checks, TIPS trainings, media campaigns, constant networking.
3. We have not been able to get the general population involved in helping with underage drinking prevention.
4. Involvement of all 12 sectors, especially local government is crucial to success. Community readiness assessment is also crucial as is strategic planning.