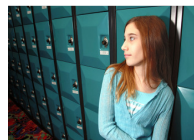


Student Alcohol and Drug Use Interventions

Winter 2010

For School Site Personnel

Meth Strike Force



Student success & AOD use don't fit together

Partners in the Strike Force Education Committee:

Grossmont Union High School District

Institute for Public Strategies

Life Skills Training

San Diego County Office of Education

San Diego County Alcohol and Drug Advisory Board

San Diego County Health & Human Services Agency, Alcohol & Drug Services

San Diego Unified School District

Many Possible Routes

A Shared Problem

As you may have read in Part 1, schools have opportunities to intervene in ways that enhance education, social and health outcomes. Part II describes this approach, along with related resources in more detail for those who may be implementing programs.

GOALS Program: An Example of Multi-System Coordination

Grossmont Union joined other partners to increase coordination and effective linkages for students and their families in trouble. The resulting process is called **Global Oversight Analysis Linking Systems (G.O.A.L.S.)** After a year in planning, the project now offers a model for a strategic information sharing system that ultimately reduces barriers when it comes to serving the needs of families in East County.

As Early As Possible

Intervening at the earliest point possible is critical.

Especially now, with many budget cuts, resources are tight. Recognizing signs and getting help sooner than later will be most effective.

All relevant agencies essentially share data and work the case together from their various perspectives. This prevents any student and their family from slipping between the cracks.

The **G.O.A.L.S Profile** provides kids and families a safety net of support --all the while strengthening the net. For more info, contact Jenee Littrell @ jlittrell@guhsd.org.

Parents Matter

All parents/families want success in school, and in life, for their children. Families do the best they can with the skills, challenges and risk factors they are working with. Drug use is "an equal opportunity" disease which can ravage any family and its members.

Parents are the most critical part of the solution team. Can they acknowledge their child has a drug problem or may need treatment? Can we identify other family members who can enter into this process if needed?

Parents are a critical member of this team. Blaming anyone – the child, the parent or the teacher for example – does not move us toward solutions. Coming from common ground and goals for the student/child's health and achievement will help bring about change.

Risk & Protective Factors

Risk and protective factors can be predictors of alcohol and drug problems – especially when multiple factors are involved. Common factors include:

- Easy access to substances
- Home supervision & high expectations
- AOD use by parents
- Stable living situation

“Teens and their families who get help early can overcome problems related to alcohol and drug use.”

Why Are We Interested?

Gratefully most students don't use meth, but we know that preventing all substance use is a priority. We've seen the data. Treatment success rates are more than doubled when a youth starts treatment early.

This committee surveyed SARB and treatment providers last year, and discovered that both agree stronger connections are needed.

Routes

Each “system” has unique pathways around identifying presenting problems and organizing help for families. Here are a few:

Education & Attendance

Student attendance is tracked – with ultimate accountability to the Student Attendance Review Board (SARB). After three letters and attempts to work with the parents, a student is scheduled for a SARB hearing, with a petition filed by the District Attorney. This hearing, with the district's SARB panel, district attorney and other partners, can lead to a variety of interventions, referrals or referrals to other schools.

Clearly SARB is one opportunity to get the attention, and make the case for follow-up and tracking. In SARB cases, alcohol and drug use may be identified on the part of the parent, or the student. It is essential that these issues be dealt with in order for regular attendance, and related classroom success, can be achieved.

Probation & Delinquency

Student behavior trouble may lead to misdemeanor or more serious crimes that come to the attention of Probation. A juvenile can be arrested for “Status Offenses” such as truancy or run-aways; but juveniles can be arrested for felony and misdemeanor crimes. In these cases, the Probation department has jurisdiction and the charge to help the young person and their family move forward through referrals to community programs, probation supervisor and other options.

Health Services & Alcohol /Drug Use

Recognizing the need for intervention with substance use can be tricky, but get help if you suspect a student needs more formal services in this area. Private programs are available to those with insurance coverage. For families with limited or no coverage, and limited ability to pay, the County of San Diego offers a range of services that are regionally based throughout San Diego County.

Teens can access either non-residential service where they can receive drug treatment after school in regional programs that charge on an ability to pay. Residential services are very limited, but with patience, teens can also receive treatment at Phoenix House in East County. Call the Access Number (1-800-479-3339) for referrals close to where students live. A web-based link to the directory is available at www.no2meth.org.

Support is Available

You can also seek consultation in knitting together the kinds of services you need from the San Diego County Office of Education. Visit www.sdcoe.org for information on Student Support Services, SARB and other resources.

See a detailed list of web-based resources about model programs and funding opportunities at www.no2meth.org. Look under the Community Resources tab, then go to Education.