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Community-Level Prevention
How can my program impact the community?

The goal of **community-level prevention** (CLP) programs is to influence factors at the community level in a way that generates positive change in individuals. CLP programs target factors that increase or decrease risk for violence, such as social, economic, and environmental characteristics of neighborhoods, schools, and workplaces.

Regardless of your program's goals, both community-level and individual-level approaches can improve outcomes when implemented together.

Progress in sexual violence prevention is difficult to sustain when community attitudes and norms do not support prevention goals for safety, equity, non-violence, and respect. For this reason, CLP has become increasingly important in Rape Prevention Education (RPE) programming. CLP can work with communities to transform rape-supportive attitudes and behaviors among individuals.

What is community-level prevention?

The Centers for Disease Control (CDC) defines a community as a population with shared characteristics and environments, such as schools, neighborhoods, cities, organizations, workplaces, or institutions.

Societal
Change social norms to support gender equity and non-acceptance of violence

Community
Partner with groups across sectors to advance prevention efforts

Improve and sustain safe environments and create spaces that strengthen social connections

Influence institutional policies that support strong sanctions against sexual violence perpetration

Relationship
Support parents in developing skills to talk to youth and solve problems

Opportunities to build and maintain positive relationships between young people and with caring adults

Foster safe spaces for peer-to-peer education and mentoring

Individual
Build skills with school and community-based youth to develop leadership skills, identify boundaries, and understand interpersonal consent

For more information on community-level strategies, check out the CDC publication, "Continuing the Dialogue." Additional resources include "STOP SV: A Technical Package to Stop Sexual Violence" (see the "Creating Protective Environments" section) and the white paper, "Community-level Sexual Violence Prevention: Review of Prevention Efforts and Program Evaluation Approaches." To access the latter, please contact DOH at www.doh.wa.gov/YouandYourFamily/InjuryandViolencePrevention/SexualandDomesticViolence.

How is evaluating community-level programming different from evaluating individual-level programming?

For the most part, the evaluation steps that are covered in this toolkit — such as creating a Theory of Change or creating a plan to collect and analyze data — are the same evaluation steps that you will use to evaluate the CLP components of your program.

In some cases, your CLP program may require evaluation data that is different from the types of data required for individual-level programming. Following are three examples.

1) If you are evaluating a CLP program's effect on policy

When measuring a program's effect on policy, you will need to collect data about the policy. Examples include:

a) Reviewing a policy before and after CLP programming.

b) Interviewing or conducting surveys with individuals making or implementing the policy. Depending on your evaluation questions, the focus can be on the program's success (or lack thereof) in influencing the policy, obstacles that hindered success, and recommendations for next steps.

2) If you are evaluating a CLP program's effect on a specific setting

If you want to measure how your program affected a specific setting, you may need to use different data collection tools from those you would use to collect data from individuals. Examples include:

a) Observation of the setting(s) targeted by your programming.

b) Interviews with or surveys of community members who are part of the setting. An example would be asking women who attend fraternity parties about the strictness of the alcohol enforcement or their experiences with sexual aggression in those settings.

c) Data collected by the people in charge of the community where the setting exists. This is sometimes called "administrative data," such as a campus climate survey.

Keep in mind that changes at the community level may happen slowly. Think carefully when assessing short-term versus longer-term successes. It is important to be realistic about the timeline for long-term goals.

3) If you are evaluating the effect of a mass media campaign to influence social norms

An example of a mass media campaign is a social norms campaign — prevention messages meant to reach everyone in a community. This could include advertisements, billboards, posters, radio spots, or messages disseminated via social media. Common evaluation methods include:

a) Surveying all members of a community, or of a randomly selected sample that represents the whole community. Surveys can assess whether people have been exposed to or influenced by the messaging. Surveys could also be conducted before and after the social norms campaign to assess whether the targeted attitudes or behaviors changed.

b) Finding available data on rates of the events you are ultimately trying to reduce, such as sexual assaults. Looking at data before and after your social norms campaign can show whether rates changed. If you choose this approach, remember that it may take some time to see changes and that you may initially see higher rates of incidents as awareness rises and reporting increases.

c) Using an evaluation design in which one community (e.g. a school) is targeted by the campaign and another (called the "control") is not, then comparing outcome data between the two. In this design, you would use survey data or available data as described in (a) and (b) and then compare outcomes between the targeted community and the control community.

Publicly available datasets may offer helpful information for your CLP evaluation. The data can serve as measures of your outcomes, particularly if the community in question is geographic in nature (e.g. a county or state). See Module 10 for a list of CDC and WA DOH databases.

Evaluation of a new CLP activity should be incorporated into each section of the overall program evaluation. Most of the evaluation tasks in this toolkit include their own worksheets. Since CLP is integrated into each step of your overall program evaluation, it must also be integrated into each worksheet.

Instructions for integrating CLP into toolkit worksheets

Module Number	Module Name	Integration Instructions
2	Theory of Change	List your CLP programming as one of your "Activities" in the "Outputs" column. Include the inputs/resources you will need to implement the CLP programming, the participants, and the outcomes/results you hope to see at the community level.
3	Evaluation Planning	Write up the objectives of your CLP. Describe: • What you hope to learn from evaluation ("CLP Evaluation Questions"). • How you plan to collect evaluation data ("CLP Methods" or data collection plan). • What tools you will use to do so ("CLP Measures"). • How you will analyze the data ("CLP Data Analysis Plan"). Then briefly describe your plan for reporting your CLP evaluation results.
5	Implementation Reporting	Describe how you implemented your CLP activities as well as any progress in accomplishing the CLP implementation objectives outlined in your Evaluation Plan.

Module Number	Module Name	Integration Instructions
6	Outcome Reporting	Describe the results (or outcomes) of your CLP program activities, including whether you met the outcome objectives in your Evaluation Plan.
7	Challenges, Lessons Learned, and Implications for Program Improvement	Incorporate CLP evaluation when writing up Challenges, Lessons Learned, and Implications for Program Improvement. Consider whether you encountered any special challenges while carrying out your CLP. Be sure to describe challenges in this part of your report, along with what you learned and what you hope to improve in your program. If you did not encounter any challenges, you do not need to include CLP in this section.
8	Success Stories	Incorporate CLP evaluation when writing your Success Stories. If your success stories do not include any aspects of CLP programming, you do not need to include CLP in this section.
9	Annual Evaluation Report *and Summary of Highlights*	Describe what you have learned about your CLP activities during the evaluation process.