

# **PROVIDERS' YEAR-END Progress Report**

Fiscal Year 2019-2020

Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Services (AODPS)

September 2021

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## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

### BACKGROUND

Within the Los Angeles County Department of Public Health (DPH), Substance Abuse Prevention & Control (DPH-SAPC) funds and provides administrative and programmatic oversight to community-based organizations and special prevention initiatives focused on implementing comprehensive prevention efforts that are equitably distributed, culturally and developmentally competent, and evidence-based. DPH-SAPC Prevention programs and services focus on individual- and community-level efforts to reduce the availability and accessibility of alcohol and other drugs.

This year-end progress report documents key prevention frameworks from which prevention programs derive strategies and services to comprehensively address the needs of their target communities and populations and define community impact through evaluation efforts across Los Angeles County. These frameworks are utilized, as required by the federal funding requirement, to standardize program delivery and evaluation throughout the County.

In addition to presenting on prevention program highlights for each priority substance area, the report also presents the barriers and challenges experienced by providers and recommendations for next-steps, in accordance with federal and state guidelines and the Los Angeles County's Strategic Prevention Plan: *1) Reduce prescription drugs and over-the-counter medication misuse and abuse, 2) reduce marijuana use by youth, 3) decrease underage drinking and binge drinking among youth and young adults, and 4) reduce availability of and access to methamphetamine and other illicit drugs by youth and young adults.*

Data were compiled based on self-reports from the SAPC-contracted prevention providers. Findings were summarized from agency reports to the state data reporting system and other qualitative measurements, as defined with their outcome reporting plan. Substance use prevention services continue to address individual- and community-level public health issues of drug access and availability, initiation of use, self-reported use, and positive developmental activities that serve as alternatives to drug misuse and abuse among youth and young adults.

### RESULTS

Throughout the fiscal year, SAPC-contracted prevention providers worked diligently to cultivate relationships with stakeholders, such as local pharmacies, health clinics, and law enforcement, to reduce the availability of and increase awareness of prescription (Rx) and over-the-counter (OTC) drug misuse and abuse. Community members were educated on the risks of Rx drug misuse and abuse, with the goal of increasing public awareness and knowledge of safe storage, safe disposal, and available drop-off sites. Efforts by Safe Med LA (the County's prescription drug abuse coalition), Service Planning Area (SPA) coalitions, and individual providers focused on educating the community on the importance of safe disposal methods for Rx/OTC drugs, and raising awareness of

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and increasing participation in the bi-annual Drug Enforcement Administration's (DEA's) National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day.

Marijuana (cannabis) remains a prominent topic within communities particularly because of the 2016 passage of Proposition 64, the Adult Use of Marijuana Act. Community outreach included various engagements with youth, key elected officials, school administration, law enforcement, and community leaders to increase community awareness of knowledge of marijuana policy and public health issues. SAPC prevention providers continue to offer meaningful engagement with the community to promote awareness and safety through education, especially as communities request additional education and outreach for marijuana as it relates to edibles and vaping. Additionally, public marijuana smoking has become a growing issue among communities and providers, increasing opportunities for providers to mobilize community members to document and address marijuana smoking in shared spaces. As a result, providers have increasingly focused their intervention efforts to encourage limits on marijuana smoking in public places, promoting clean indoor air laws, and targeting public places where youth tend to congregate.

Providers utilized environmental prevention approaches to reduce retail access and availability of alcohol to underage youth and vulnerable community members. Alcohol prevention activities targeted off-sale alcohol retailers, such as liquor stores and convenience stores. Providers have engaged in multifaceted ways to support monitoring and compliance with Lee Law regulations, supporting mandatory signage, and offering the Responsible Alcohol Beverage Service (RBS) trainings. Other agencies have focused on addressing local, city, county, state-wide policy initiatives and community education and outreach campaigns impacting alcohol prevention strategies from a public health and safety perspective. Several coalitions, workgroups, meetings, and alliances have been created and maintained to collaborate with community partners for advancing alcohol prevention strategies. Providers continue to educate and raise community awareness of alcohol-related harms, the social and economic conditions that contribute to addiction, and civic participation in advocacy efforts related to alcohol prevention.

Methamphetamine (meth) is once again emerging as a primary public health concern for Los Angeles County. Agencies have worked to reduce methamphetamine-related harms in their community through community education and awareness-building strategies involving youth and adults. Due to lack of reliable local data sources on methamphetamine and other illicit drug use, some agencies have created needs assessments and community surveys to better understand the needs of their community to inform environmental prevention strategies in their SPAs. For some communities, agencies have helped lead efforts to increase readiness for community-level interventions and environmental prevention strategies to reduce access and use of methamphetamine and other illicit drug by youth and young adults.

In summary, SAPC-contracted prevention staff reported programmatic challenges and barriers which will be utilized to improve service provision for the following fiscal year and encourage collaboration among the prevention provider network and respective community stakeholders. Among these reported challenges and barriers, providers and community members remain concerned about the increasing trends and normalization of cannabis and vaping use among youth because of recent cannabis legalization measures. Policy advocacy and cultural limitations to community engagement by parents, local government decision-makers, law enforcement personnel, and school administration remain a challenge for community providers and coalitions, whereby

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limited community participation can be attributed to staff turnover, language barriers, and a lack of political involvement by administrators and retailers. Despite these challenges, providers remain committed to utilizing innovative and evidence-based community-based participatory and engagement strategies to positively influence communities to advocate for reduction in availability and access of drugs and in community social norms that promote drug misuse and abuse among minors.

### RECOMMENDATIONS

In summary, contracted prevention providers remain dedicated to building on existing partnerships with community stakeholders, school administrators, law enforcement, and city decision-makers to implement and reinforce regulations that prevent and reduce alcohol and other drug (AOD) use among youth and young adults in Los Angeles County communities. Among these recommendations, providers are committed to increasing coalition capacity efforts to change social norms, with a dedicated focus on enhancing existing laws and ordinances to reduce alcohol, marijuana smoking, and Rx/OTC abuse and misuse in communities. Providers are also recommended to focus on educational efforts to increase knowledge, awareness, and perception of harm of methamphetamine use. In general, providers remain focused on implementing data-driven, innovative, and evidence-based prevention services that reduce AOD abuse among youth in Los Angeles County.

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### INTRODUCTION

DPH is committed to promoting health equity and ensuring optimal health and well-being for all 10 million residents of Los Angeles County. Through a variety of programs, community partnerships and services, DPH oversees environmental health, disease control, and community and family health programs. DPH-SAPC funds over 150 prevention and treatment community-based organizations aimed at addressing alcohol and other drug-related problems in the County of Los Angeles.

DPH-SAPC aspires to advance inclusive, just, and equitable access to resources and best practices that prevent and address substance use in Los Angeles County. Collaboration with public and private entities improve substance use prevention in communities by influencing the social norms and community conditions that promote substance use in target populations and communities. These prevention initiatives are designed to specifically address high-priority substance use areas in Los Angeles County.

Within the DPH-SAPC program, the Community and Youth Engagement Unit administers the operations for a network of Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Services (AODPS)-contracted community-based agencies. This unit oversees the implementation of prevention services via its Strategic Prevention Plan and the federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF). Central to each prevention framework is ensuring efforts are culturally competent and the results are sustained.

DPH-SAPC works collaboratively with the contracted prevention providers on an on-going basis to assess community needs and resources to develop effective, culturally-responsive prevention strategies. Emphasis on promoting the engagement of community members and their diverse perspectives, ideas, and strategies will build rapport and credibility at the local level that improves providers' delivery of prevention services.

Below are a list of highlights, accomplishments, challenges, barriers, and lessons learned from this fiscal year. Providers' prevention service data were summarized based on SAPC-contracted agencies' self-reports for the fiscal year. Findings have been consolidated to share best practices and community-based interventions that focus on substance use prevention and the health and well-being of Los Angeles County residents.



Photo courtesy of Day One, Inc.



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### PREVENTION FRAMEWORK

To achieve comprehensive, effective, and culturally competent AOD prevention services, DPH-SAPC combines the following three frameworks:

1. Federal Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) planning process.
2. SAMHSA's Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) prevention strategies.
3. Institute of Medicine (IOM) classification.

The use of these frameworks is required by the California Department of Health Care Services (DHCS) and is part of the mandatory reporting requirements for the web-based Primary Prevention Substance Use Disorder Data Service (PPSDS) System.

#### SAMHSA'S Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF)<sup>1</sup>

The SPF is a five-step planning process that systematically guides the development of prevention services. Central to all steps is ensuring cultural competency and sustainability. By addressing each of these steps, prevention services should address the needs of the target communities and populations, enhance protective factors and reduce risk factors in communities, build community capacity and collaboration, develop goals and measurable objectives, and emphasize evaluation to ensure the prevention program achieves the intended outcomes. The following is a brief description of each SPF step:



- Step 1: Assess Needs: What is the problem, and how can I learn more?
- Step 2: Build Capacity: What do I have to work with?
- Step 3: Plan: What should I do and how should I do it?
- Step 4: Implement: How can I put my plan into action?
- Step 5: Evaluate: Is my plan succeeding?

#### Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) Strategies and Activities<sup>2</sup>

The SAMHSA CSAP has classified common prevention activities into six major categories, termed *strategies*. An effective prevention program utilizes these strategies and activities to comprehensively address the needs of the target communities through evidence-based interventions and services.

1. **Environmental Strategy** – establishes and/or changes community standards, codes, and attitudes, thereby influencing incidence and prevalence of alcohol and other drug use within the community. The strategy emphasizes engagement with a broad base of community partners, place-based interventions, and public policy.
2. **Community-Based Process Strategy** – enhances the community's capacity to address AOD issues through organizing, planning, collaboration, coalition-building, and networking.

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3. **Information Dissemination Strategy** – improves awareness and knowledge of the effects of AOD issues on communities and families through “one-way” communication with the audience, such as speaking engagements, health fairs, and distribution of print materials.
4. **Problem Identification and Referral Strategy** – identifies individuals who have infrequently used or experimented with AOD who could change their behavior through education. The intention of the screening is to determine the need for indicated prevention services, not treatment services.
5. **Education Strategy** – encourages “two-way” communication between the facilitator and participants. This strategy aims to improve life- and social skills, such as decision-making, refusal skills, and critical analysis.
6. **Alternative Strategy** – redirects individuals from potentially problematic situations and AOD use by providing constructive and healthy events/activities.

### Institute of Medicine (IOM) Classification System<sup>3</sup>

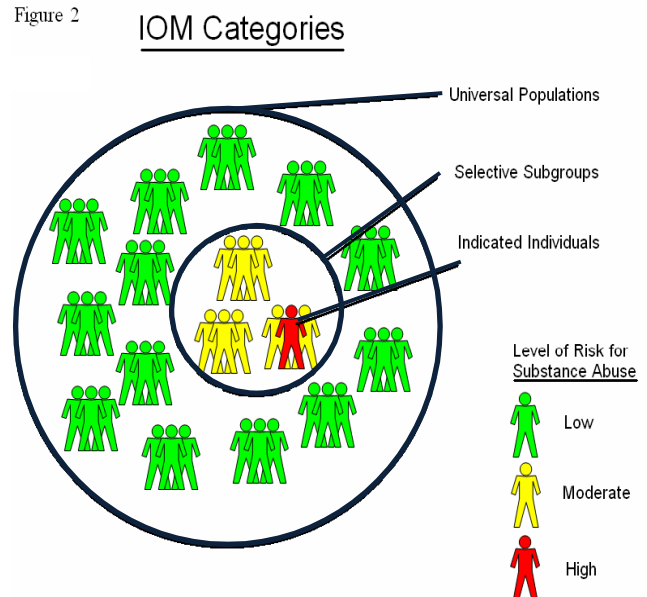
The prevention classifications are subdivided into universal, selective, and indicated. The IOM category is assigned by looking at the risk-level of the individual, or group, receiving the service. Federal prevention funding allows for the delivery of services for universal, selective, and indicated populations. The funding is not intended for those who need or receive AOD (ab)use treatment or recovery services.

**Universal** - Universal prevention targets the entire population (national, local community, school, and/or neighborhood) with messages and programs aimed at preventing or delaying the (ab)use of AOD. All members of the population share the same general risk for substance (ab)use, although the risk may vary among individuals. Universal prevention programs are delivered to large groups without any prior screening for substance abuse risk.

**Selective** - Selective prevention targets subsets of the total population at risk for substance abuse by virtue of their membership in a particular population segment. Selective prevention targets the entire subgroup, regardless of the degree of risk of any individual within the group.

**Indicated** - Indicated prevention is designed to prevent the onset of substance abuse in individuals who do not meet Diagnostic and Statistical Manual of Mental Disorders Fifth Edition (DSM-V) criteria for abuse or dependence, but who are showing early danger signs, such as failing grades and consumption of alcohol and other gateway drugs. The mission of indicated prevention is to identify individuals who are exhibiting potential early signs of substance abuse and other problem behaviors associated with substance abuse, and to target them with special programs.

Figure 2





**Alcohol and Other Drug  
Prevention Services  
(AODPS)**

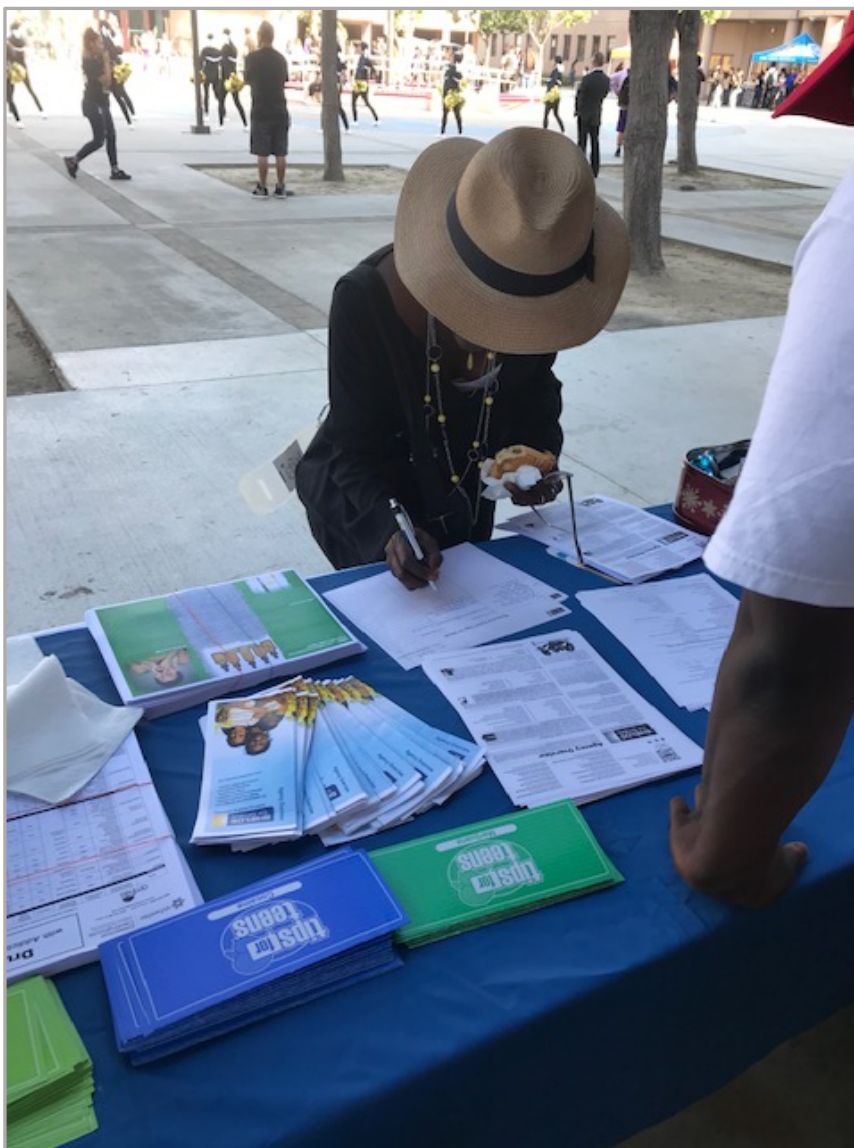


Photo courtesy of Shields, Inc.

## PREVENTION PROVIDER NETWORK

- 1. Adolescent Prevention Services (APS):** APS services are directed at reducing risk factors and increasing protective factors for youth who are at high risk for substance abuse. APS providers ensure that primary prevention programs and activities are aimed at informing and educating individuals on the risk associated with substance use and providing programs and activities to reduce the risk of such use.
- 2. Environmental Prevention Services (EPS):** EPS coalitions aim to change the policies, ordinances, and practices that facilitate substance use, and develop methods to ensure that efforts are enforced and sustained once implemented. The selection of environmental efforts/services is data-driven and designed to specifically address the highest priority alcohol-related problems and contributing factors of the target communities. This includes addressing where and how substances are sold and marketed, sales to minors, passage of substance-related ordinances/policies, and compliance with local regulations. Integral to the success of these environmental efforts is active and sustained involvement of local community residents (youth and adults), leaders, non-AOD focused businesses, AOD service providers, and others who are knowledgeable of the local issues and who are committed to engaging in data-driven solutions. A list of SPA Coalitions are presented in Appendix B.
- 3. Comprehensive Prevention Services (CPS):** CPS provides culturally competent and evidence-based prevention programs and activities that focus on both community and individual level efforts to decrease the social norms and community conditions that contribute to AOD use within the target population(s) and/or communities. The selection of services is data-driven and designed to specifically address the highest priority AOD related problems and contributing factors of target communities. This includes changing the local environment and conditions that facilitate AOD use, including the knowledge and behaviors of youth and adults that contribute to community norms about AOD use. CPS contractors appropriately engage community members and leaders throughout the process to best identify, implement, and sustain efforts.
- 4. Friday Night Live (FNL)/Club Live (CL), & FNL Kids:** FNL builds partnerships for positive, healthy youth development, and engages youth as active leaders, mentors, and advocates to reduce access to and availability of alcohol and other drugs. Services are provided in selected middle and high schools. Youth-adult partnership activities include educating policy-making officials, providing safe social outlets for youth, and hosting trainings and conferences on issues from leadership to social factors that contribute to substance abuse.
- 5. LA County Prevention Programs:** LA County directly provides prevention programs and activities at public parks and eligible educational settings utilizing these Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) strategies including information dissemination, education, alternatives, problem ID and referral, and community-based process. These directly-operated County programs offer coordinated, County-wide prevention programs that are dedicated to serving youth, young adults, and the community at-large. These County-led programs implement evidence-based community and individual-level services offering a range of substance use prevention education and positive youth development programming, aimed to empower individuals to resist becoming involved in or divert from risky behaviors such as substance use, misuse, and abuse.

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6. **Prevention Media Campaigns (PMC):** SAPC Prevention media campaigns provide countywide awareness and education regarding priority substances that most affect Los Angeles County communities. These data driven media campaigns utilize a multipronged approach to provide messaging that involve the most relevant forms of media, include both general and targeted messaging, and include a significant call to action. Culturally competent campaigns focus on highlighting emerging public health concerns including increased availability within communities and the potential health impacts such as risk of overdose or negatively altering adolescent and young adult brain development. These efforts align with the County goals and objectives, and significantly increases capacity of existing prevention media efforts from individual County providers and community coalitions.

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### PREVENTION GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

During FY2019-2020, the AODPS-contracted prevention providers addressed the following four priority area goals and objectives. SAPC's Community and Youth Engagement Unit collaborated with contractors to design and implement data-driven and community-based strategies, addressing priority AOD-use issues and other contributing risk factors in their communities.

Examples of implemented environmental prevention programs are presented in Appendix C.

Goal	Objective
1. Reduce prescription drugs and over-the-counter medication misuse and abuse.	Reduce availability of and access to prescription drugs and legal products that can be misused.
2. Reduce marijuana use by youth.	Reduce availability of and access to marijuana by youth.
3. Decrease underage drinking and binge drinking among youth and young adults.	Reduce availability of and access to alcohol by underage youth.
4. Reduce availability of and access to methamphetamine and other illicit drugs by youth and young adults.	Change social norms that contribute to substance use by decreasing favorable attitudes toward methamphetamine and other illicit drug use.



Photo courtesy of the Tarzana Treatment Centers, Inc.

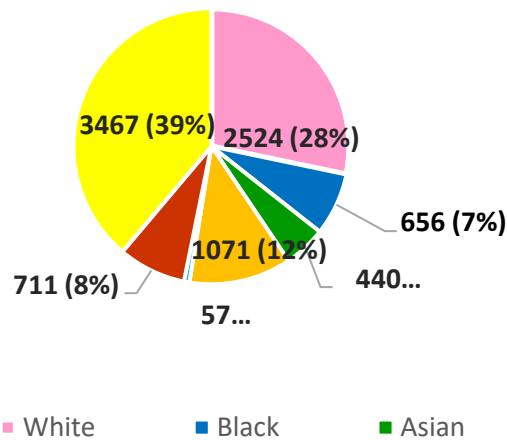
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### DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

During FY2019-20, SAPC-contracted AODPS providers served 8,926 Los Angeles County residents. Service recipients included youth, young adults, parents, families, and community partners. Below is a breakdown of service recipients, by various demographic characteristics.

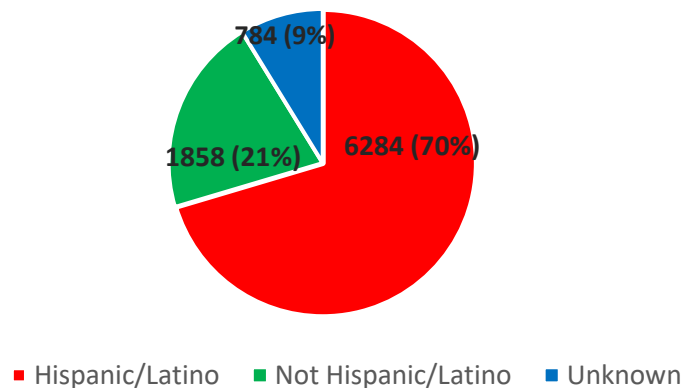
The pie graph below presents the total number (and percentage) of county residents served, by race:

**Number (and Percentage) of Residents Served, by Race**



The pie graph below presents the total number (and percentage) of county residents served, by ethnicity:

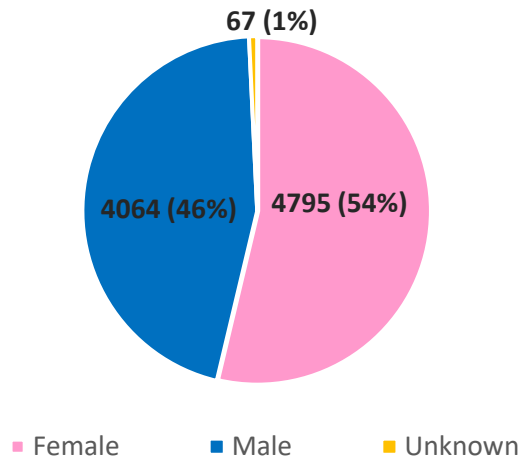
**Number (and Percentage) of Residents Served, by Ethnicity**



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The pie graph below presents the total number (and percentage) of county residents served, by gender:

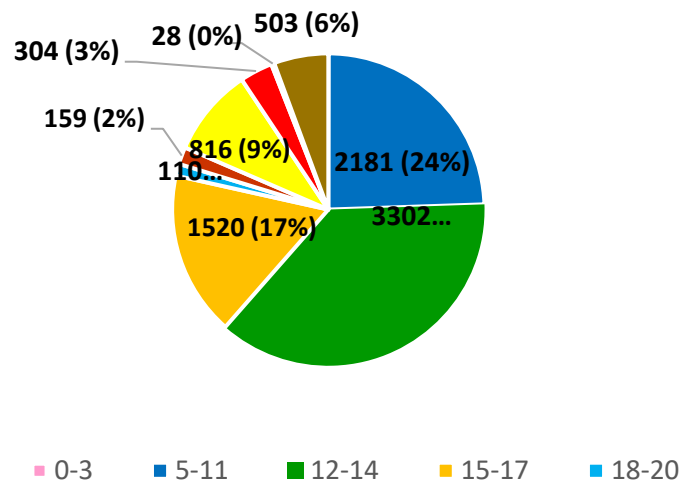
**Number (and Percentage) of Residents Served, by  
Gender**



*Note:* Deviation from a percentage total of 100 is due to rounding error.

The pie graph below presents the total number (and percentage) of county residents served, by age group:

**Number (and Percentage) of Residents Served, by Age  
Group**



*Note:* Deviation from a percentage total of 100 is due to rounding error.



## PREVENTION PROGRAM HIGHLIGHTS

### Goal 1: Reduce prescription drugs and over-the-counter medication misuse and abuse.

- 1. Safe Med LA Community Education and Action Team (CEAT) prevention providers developed age- and culturally-appropriate printed materials (e.g., flyers, brochures, pamphlets) and presentations for community youth, adults, and stakeholders regarding the risks and harms associated with prescription drug (Rx) and over-the-counter (OTC) medication misuse and abuse, and to promote safe usage, storage, and disposal practices.**  
The CEAT professional development efforts increased program staff knowledge and skills, which further enhanced outreach efforts aimed at reducing community Rx and OTC drug use. Additionally, the CEAT engaged stakeholders to discuss community support for prevention efforts. These efforts supported the DEA's National Rx Drug Take-Back event, which took place on October 26, 2019.



Photo courtesy of Phoenix House, Inc.

Providers developed and disseminated Rx/OTC educational materials to over 6,000 people to expand knowledge of safe usage, storage, and disposal of prescription drugs. Methods of community outreach included informational tables at pharmacies and other community settings, and educational presentations focused on risks of Rx drug misuse and need for safe disposal. Over 850 EmpowerRx Toolkits were disseminated, along with 56 safe-storage pouches equipped with child-proof or combination locks, and approximately 5,000 Safe Home Checklist Handouts and Safe Drop-Off Disposal Location maps were distributed SPA-wide. Successful social media campaigns were also implemented focusing on Rx and substance use prevention strategies. More than 4,000 people were reached through social media outreach and approximately 1,000 individuals were reached through community events, presentations, and focus groups.

In addition to parent centers, community events, schools, and conferences, many efforts targeted seniors and caretakers, and Adult Day Care Centers, by distributing information about the risks of overlapping use of opioids and benzodiazepines. Agencies collaborated with the City of Los Angeles Department of Aging to help inform Senior Center staff about convenient and environmentally responsible prescription

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drug disposal programs in Los Angeles County. Focus groups with parents and older adults helped gauge the perceptions of Rx drug abuse, access to Rx drugs, and likelihood of knowing how and where to safely dispose of Rx drugs among older adults and community residents.

- 2. Providers from all SPAs partnered with Kaiser Permanente and other health plans, community pharmacies, public health clinics, and local law enforcement to promote the biannual DEA National Prescription Drug Take Back Day in October 2019 and April 2020.** Take-back days are among the most significant events in which the community participates for safe disposal of Rx waste. During this fiscal year, prevention providers successfully promoted and hosted drop-off and collection sites throughout Los Angeles County. The collaborative, community-based efforts, including resource fairs, educated and increased awareness of the risks and harms of Rx misuse and abuse and generated 10,686 pounds of prescription drug waste. The biannual DEA National Prescription Drug Take Back Day was originally scheduled for October 26, 2019 and April 27, 2020. Although the October 2019 event went on as planned, the Great Cabinet Clean Out, a county-wide campaign in which providers collectively encouraged people, via social media, to properly store prescription medication while under mandatory stay at home orders, replaced the April 2020 DEA's National Rx Drug Take-Back event that was canceled due to the COVID-19 pandemic. The cancellation prompted providers to develop different strategies and materials to educate community members about local year-round safe disposal sites, including referring individuals to the DEA drop-off locator website. Providers utilized social media posts, video public service announcements (PSAs), and infographics to disseminate this information.

Due to past successful collaborations, coalitions were able to continue to work closely with the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) to coordinate take-back events at CVS, Walgreens, local pharmacies, churches, local clinics, and police stations, thereby expanding capacity for collection sites. Some agencies developed press conferences, videos, PSAs, and media campaigns which showcased take-back day efforts and highlighted the importance of safely using prescription medications. On the day of the event, some agencies utilized social media to provide live messaging about where residents could go to safely dispose unused, unwanted, or expired medications.



Photo courtesy of Phoenix House, Inc.

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**HIGHLIGHT:** SPA 3 staff worked collectively to create innovative strategies to enhance community partnerships. The Pomona Youth Prevention Council in partnership with Prototypes-Healthright 360, Day One, and NCADD-ESGPV achieved successful leadership and workgroup meetings with four local high schools, which included modifying the Life Skills Training data collection to reflect a more appropriate focus on perception of opioid harm in the communities they serve. Due to the cancelation of the April 27, 2020 DEA's National Rx Drug Take-Back event, Day One initiated an alternative campaign called The Great Cabinet Cleanout, which encouraged community members to properly store their unused or unwanted medication until the next prescription take-back event. This initiative was supported county-wide, with many other providers from different SPAs adopting the campaign. With successful established relationships with local pharmacies, NCADD-ESGPV developed a safe disposal poster with maps of local year-round drop off sites, which included a code that community members were able to scan with their phones to locate local Rx disposal sites.

- 3. Prevention contractors participated in numerous community meetings and public hearings to provide community residents and city officials information on safe storage and disposal of Rx and OTC medications, the potential harms of opioid and benzodiazepine use, and the adoption of new regulations, ordinances, and legislation.** Providers regularly attended city council meetings to provide public comment and presentations. For example, as a result of the successful passage of Senate Bill 212 in 2018 (which resulted in a significantly expanded network of Rx/OTC industry-funded take-back sites, bins, and sharps return centers throughout California), providers continued promoting its messaging by facilitating presentations and creating brochures and social media content about its impact on communities.

**HIGHLIGHT:** As part of the efforts to increase public awareness about the dangers of prescription medication misuse, providers in SPA 6, including Adolescent Prevention Services (APS) providers, **collected 613 pounds of unwanted, unused, and expired prescription medication, setting a new record for SPA 6.** The successful National Rx Drug Take-Back event on October 26, 2019 was hosted in collaboration with the South Los Angeles Movement (SLAM). Not only were community members able to drop off unused or expired prescription medications safely and anonymously, but the event also included a resource fair where residents were able to connect to local service providers and resources. The event encouraged community learning and education through games and activities about prescription drugs. The event also featured representatives from LA County Department of Mental Health, LA County Public Health Nurses, Watts Health Care AIDS/HIV Prevention, and Watts Health Care Tobacco Prevention. To enhance community awareness and inclusion, a local radio station provided DJ services, a local barber provided free haircuts, and boxed lunches were distributed.

- 4. To promote protective factors and reduce alcohol and other drug use risk factors among students, providers from various SPAs implemented evidence-based education prevention curricula for students.** These evidence-based prevention curricula support communities by changing knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and social norms around the harms associated with Rx/OTC misuse and illicit drug use. Evidence-based programs included: Drugs True Stories, Life Skills Training, Project Towards No Drug Abuse, and Too Good for Drugs. These programs and events challenged students to think about the



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harms and effects of Rx/OTC drugs abuse or misuse. With Stay-Home Orders beginning in March, providers transitioned to implementing presentations and intervention curricula virtually, via online platforms.

- 5. Parents, caregivers, school administration and staff, and concerned adults from several SPAs also received education curricula to promote greater prevention communication between parents and children to prevent alcohol and other drug use.** Parents were educated on identifying the risks as well as the short-term and long-term consequences of Rx/OTC drug use. In turn, parents were also encouraged to schedule family meetings and other communication strategies that proactively discuss the harms of Rx/OTC drug use with their children. Programs included: Guiding Good Choices and Parent Committed. Some providers utilized social media platforms to share educational prevention materials that reduce prescription drug and OTC use among community youth and adults. Each event provided opportunities to discuss Rx/OTC drug misuse and risk factors. Rx/OTC trainings targeted local mental health providers, school administrators and nurses, and youth agencies to provide information on safe use, safe disposal, and safe storage of prescription drug medications.



Photo courtesy of the Tarzana Treatment Centers, Inc.

- 6. Contracted agencies provided healthy alternative prevention services, such as youth leadership groups and large-scale alcohol-free events, to help reduce and prevent alcohol and other drug use in schools and communities.** Services included youth networking meetings and forums, annual youth summits, after-school youth mentorship programs, and youth leadership conferences designed to help youth learn, grow, and develop leadership skills to become agents of change in their communities. Students also learned about the various leadership, community service, and networking opportunities available in the community as healthy alternatives to Rx/OTC drug misuse/abuse. Many of these programs reached

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students in non-traditional school settings, including continuation schools, group homes, and existing youth development programs.

7. **SAPC mandated that each prevention agency maintain naloxone onsite and have trained staff to administer the medication in the event of an opioid overdose.** Prevention staff were also expected to train community members on naloxone administration. Providers have participated in naloxone training programs, such as the Naloxone Distribution Project where staff are able to provide overdose prevention training and distribute naloxone rescue inhalers to community members. Additionally, providers conducted naloxone trainings for community members and hosted naloxone trainings for other providers.

### Goal 2: Reduce marijuana use by youth.

1. **Providers from all eight SPAs participated in Rethinking Access to Marijuana (RAM) Workgroup meetings to reduce marijuana access and abuse by LA County minors.** RAM is a collaboration of public health professionals seeking to prevent marijuana-related harms by limiting youth's access to marijuana. This group was established with the purpose of educating communities about the potential harms of youth marijuana use, implementing and evaluating environmental strategies formulated to limit the availability of and youth's access to marijuana, while also influencing policy actions that support youth and communities free from marijuana-related harms. RAM utilizes a prevention-oriented public health approach to educate policymakers and communities about ways to protect youth from potential harms of marijuana misuse and abuse. The workgroup's four committees were chaired by staff from various contracted agencies.

The RAM Research Committee implemented **Photovoice**, a community-based research project that allowed youth participants to survey their neighborhood to capture photographs that demonstrate how the legalization of adult recreational marijuana use has impacted their communities and lives. Since the passage of Proposition 64, prevention providers conducted the RAM **Community Health Environmental Survey Scan (CHESS)** to examine the marijuana dispensary landscape (i.e., changes in location, number of marijuana dispensaries, and placement of marijuana advertisements) to inform future efforts with city officials on how to reduce the accessibility and availability of marijuana to youth. Committee members advocated marijuana prevention policy by attending City Council and Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors meetings to provide testimony on marijuana's risks to youth and to recommend policy options that protect underage youth from marijuana exposure and abuse. Pre- and post-Proposition 64 CHESS scans of dispensaries indicated storefront advertising and observable patron activity had increased, especially at dispensaries located in



Photo courtesy of CHCADA, Inc.

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close proximity to youth-sensitive areas (i.e., schools, parks, recreation centers). Despite full marijuana bans in some cities and the closing of storefronts after strong local objections, providers noted that closed dispensaries were quickly replaced by new, unlicensed, and illegal marijuana businesses disguised as ordinary retail stores (e.g., clothing and tire stores), shops with no obvious signage, and churches. Storefronts were found to be clustered on main streets, in primarily low-income areas, near freeways, and bordering unincorporated neighborhoods.

RAM continues to track and update community conditions and locations of unlicensed and unregulated cannabis dispensaries in target areas to document and inform County administrators, including the Office of Cannabis Management, about illegal, unlicensed cannabis dispensaries and to work with the Los Angeles County Board of Supervisors (LAC BOS) to close unlicensed cannabis businesses in unincorporated areas. RAM members implemented programs to assist community members to recognize and research licensed and unlicensed dispensaries to then partner with community administrators to reduce the number of unlicensed dispensaries. Community participants who identified unusual activity at unlicensed dispensaries worked with provider staff, City Council, and the Los Angeles Police Department (LAPD) to ultimately close these sites.

The RAM Policy Committee also developed reference materials and a mandatory training curriculum (i.e., Responsible Cannabis Training) to implement in partnership with the LA City Department of Cannabis Regulation and the City of L.A. as a condition for dispensary licensure and to hold licensed retailers accountable to reduce marijuana sales to minors. Next, the RAM Education Committee created **CannaBASICS 101** educational fact cards, in English and Spanish, on various topics, to distribute throughout County communities. Fact-card topics included, but were not limited to: ‘Marijuana and the Workforce’, ‘Marijuana and Pregnancy’, ‘Driving High and the Consequences’, ‘Public Spaces and Second-hand Smoke’.

RAM has hosted more than six workgroup meetings and the RAM committees have hosted more than 40 committee meetings this fiscal year. RAM members continued to work hard to ban the cultivation, distribution, testing laboratories, and retail dispensaries in unincorporated areas and other cities to reduce availability to youth and youth access and to promote public health safety. Additionally, RAM finally launched its website and held an event attended by community members throughout Los Angeles.

- 2. Contractors launch the Marijuana Public Smoking Initiative (MPSI).** The MPSI aimed to document the prevalence and issues of marijuana smoking in shared spaces (i.e., multi-unit dwellings, parks, businesses, and schools, colleges, or universities) by engaging community stakeholders across all SPAs. The goal was to implement data-driven community prevention initiatives and strategies to prevent, reduce, or identify alternatives to marijuana smoking in public.

Thousands of MPSI surveys were collected at community apartments, parks, local businesses, and other areas. For many communities, apartments reported having an increase in marijuana smoking. At parks, many surveyed were unaware of “No Smoking” signs in the vicinity and requested additional “No Smoking/Vaping” signage and additional enforcement of the no-smoking ordinance. An Adult Use of



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Marijuana (AUMA) professional development presentation was developed where the MPSI findings were discussed for Montebello and East Los Angeles. Prevention staff contacted Northeast LA parks that participated in MPSI to discuss the need for visible no-smoking signs and ways to collaborate. The MPSI will utilize the data to develop policies and toolkits to reduce the negative public health impacts of public marijuana smoking in Los Angeles County.

- 3. Providers engaged community members to develop partnerships with elected city officials, advocating for policies to reduce harms associated with all forms of smoking in outdoor places, including marijuana smoking, and to reduce marijuana use among youth.** Participating agencies provided education and testimony to the importance of addressing public cannabis smoking in Los Angeles County, supporting the Board of Supervisor's amendments to strengthen the County's policies on smoke-free environments.

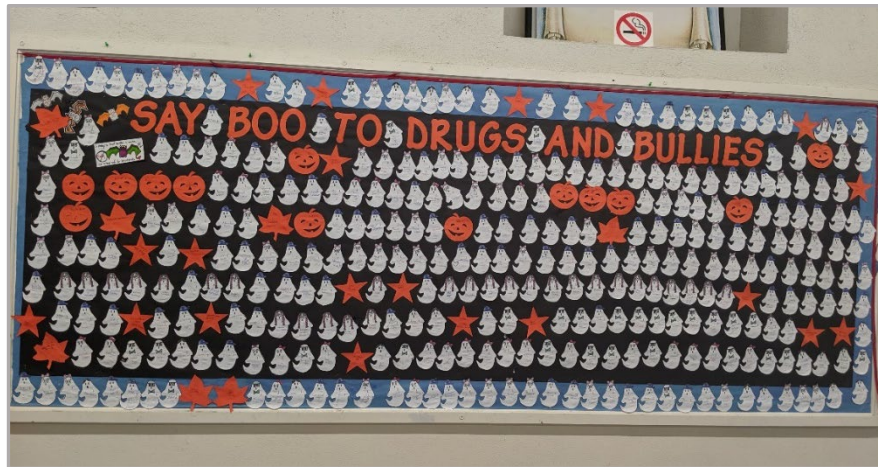


Photo courtesy of CHCADA, Inc.

### HIGHLIGHT:

SPA 1 providers provided outreach and educational materials to over 500 community members through tabling events on the topic of marijuana.

SPA 2 providers conducted outreach activities that reached over 3000 individuals and distributed over 500 brochures during the community events.

SPA 3 providers held outreach events at Eaton Blanche Park, Pasadena City College, Pasadena High School, and community presentations were disseminated to youth and adults at Alcott, Park West, Garey, and Pomona High Schools to discuss marijuana misuse and the risk factors of its use among developing youth.

SPA 4 providers found that making a presence and participating in the LA Unified School District's (LAUSD) Student Advisory Review Board (SARB) was beneficial in advocating for the youth. This setting

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was inspiring for students and their parents. Staff came out of the meetings with clear needs for youth and with resources to benefit families and youth attending LAUSD.

SPA 5 providers successfully partnered with Santa Monica High School (Samohi) to create an online marijuana usage survey to be disseminated to sophomores during the 20/21 school year. The survey will assess usage rates, perceptions, access points, associated harms, and support for interventions. The IPS/Samohi work is also laying the foundations for student-led peer campaigns to be initiated in the 20/21 school year intended to reduce social pressures to smoke marijuana. Results from the survey will inform the initiative and begin a comprehensive effort to develop student-led campaigns intended to reduce youth vaping rates at the school, which is the largest in the Santa Monica-Malibu Unified School District (SMMUSD).

SPA 6 Providers collaborated with the SPA 6 coalition, where several of youth participated in SAPC press conference during national prevention week and members were presenters at the 2019 Statewide Substance Use Disorder Conference around the environmental effects of marijuana in the South LA community. A great accomplishment of Community Coalition's Nuisance Abatement Campaign was developing the Trifecta Environmental Scan. The Trifecta Environmental Scan was designed to conduct direct observations of tobacco “smoke” shops, unlicensed marijuana dispensaries, and liquor stores in close geographic proximity to each other—otherwise known as a “trifecta of nuisance businesses.” This effort established environmental scanning tools that focused on observing and documenting issues or problems connected to alcohol, tobacco, or food outlets separately (e.g., food quality, tobacco marketing practices, alcohol purchasing by minors, etc.) for use in communities similar to South LA.

SPA 7 prevention staff developed online, social-media programing to connect with, educate, and mobilize the community to prevent marijuana and other drug use. During the Safer-At-Home pandemic orders, the SPA 7 Youth Coalition also continued their prevention efforts by adapting to an online meeting platform to present on marijuana’s abuses and risks.

SPA 8 Providers worked with coalition partners to urge the City of Carson to amend the original Alcohol Social Host Ordinance 19-936 in September 2019. The Municipal Code 4211 includes the hosting of any social gatherings or parties, and is responsible for control and distribution of cannabis, controlled substances (prescribed & illicit drugs), electronic cigarettes, and tobacco products.

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4. **Prevention providers from all SPAs participated in press events, resource fairs, community and recreational events, and shelters to disseminate marijuana prevention presentations and printed material.** They informed communities about the harms associated with underage marijuana use. Providers from all SPAs also utilized social media platforms to educate the community on marijuana prevention. Examples of community events included back-to-school nights, college campus events, health fairs, and family resource center presentations. Providers also collaborated with the local police departments to host special events that informed youth about the dangers of cannabis edibles and safety precautions to consider during the holidays. Other providers collaborated with Parks and Recreation to provide educational materials on marijuana prevention in park settings and promote healthy safe spaces. E-Books, flyers, PowerPoint presentations, and other materials were created and disseminated to the public. Many of the resources were translated into other languages to meet the diverse needs of local communities.



Photo courtesy of AADAP, Inc.

5. **To promote protective factors and reduce marijuana and other drug use risk factors among students, providers from various SPAs implemented evidence-based education prevention curricula for students.** The evidence-based prevention curricula support communities by changing knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and social norms around the harms associated with underage marijuana use. Evidence-based programs included Botvin LifeSkills Training, Creating Lasting Family Connections, Drugs True Stories, Guiding Good Choices, Project ALERT, Project SUCCESS, Project Towards No Drug Abuse, Positive Action, and Too Good for Drugs. With Stay-Home Orders beginning in March, providers transitioned to implementing presentations and intervention curricula virtually, via online platforms.

**HIGHLIGHT:** Life SKILLZ is an intensive summer program for at-risk middle school students designed to prevent substance abuse and empower youth to make healthy, positive decisions. SPA 3 implemented the Life SKILLZ Summer 2019 program where students reported gaining increased knowledge on alcohol, marijuana, and other drugs, as well as personal and social skills. Overall, 90% of SKILLZ participants agreed that they learned more about how alcohol and drug use can harm their health. Over 90% reported agreeing that they learned ways to refuse alcohol and drugs if someone offered it to them, and over 90% reported learning where they could go to receive help or community resources, when needed.

6. **Parents, caregivers, school administration and staff, and concerned adults from several SPAs also received education curricula to promote greater prevention communication between parents and children to prevent marijuana and other drug use.** To combat the increasingly favorable cultural attitudes towards marijuana, parents were educated to be able to identify their child's risks and the short- and long-term negative effects of

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marijuana use. Parents were also encouraged to schedule family meetings and other communication strategies to proactively discuss the harms of marijuana and other drug use with their children. Programs included Guiding Good Choices and Strengthening Families. Additionally, 500 intervention e-books were disseminated to parents and community organizations during outreach events and community meetings to support youth who have engaged in underage marijuana use, including ingestion of cannabis edibles.

- 7. Contracted agencies provided healthy alternative prevention services, such as youth leadership groups, to help reduce and prevent marijuana and other drug use in schools and communities.** Agencies expanded services to various school and group-home settings, including continuation schools and youth-development programs, resulting in an improvement in students' attitudinal changes toward marijuana use. Services included youth networking meetings and forums, annual youth summits, after school youth mentorship programs, and youth leadership conferences designed to help youth learn, grow, and develop leadership skills to become agents of change in their communities. Students also learned about the variety of leadership, community service, and networking opportunities available in the community as healthy alternatives to underage marijuana use. Other programs utilized youth prevention councils to participate in environmental scans to identify nuisance areas in their neighborhoods and to increase AOD protective factors among youth.

### Goal 3: Decrease underage drinking and binge drinking among youth and young adults.

- 1. Prevention contractors from all SPAs implemented environmental Retail Framework services, including Responsible Beverage Service (RBS) trainings, Pseudo-Decoy Buys, Merchant Committed, Knock and Talks, Merchant Assessment, and Project Sticker Shock to reduce alcohol accessibility and availability to minors.** The goal of the Retail Framework is to recognize and acknowledge alcohol retailers who are compliant with Alcohol Beverage and Control (ABC), including respective city rules and regulations, and to reduce underage drinking and minors' access to alcohol. Community providers reached out to more than 300 retailers throughout multiple SPAs. Approximately 7,000 'Sticker Shock' stickers were placed on alcoholic beverage containers at neighborhood liquor stores. Community youth and adults were trained to support these efforts, including providing merchant compliance checks. In some SPAs, various community sectors (e.g., law enforcement, community leaders, civic leaders, faith-based organizations, and school officials) participated through announcements and flyers, letters of support, and recruitment of retailers and volunteers. RBS trainings, while declining with AB 1221 and changing ABC requirements, have continued to be co-hosted by community partners. These initiatives established relationships between the community agency and the merchant, identifying alcohol-related issues in the community and working collaboratively with alcohol retailers to support reduction of underage drinking in Los Angeles County. Other programs allow teams to provide pledge cards, warning stickers, ID signs, notices, and training certificates to these retailers. Due to COVID-19, some providers increased use of social media platforms to increase awareness of alcohol misuse and abuse and to decrease underage drinking and binge drinking by posting informative videos and educational facts, while hosting community presentations via Zoom.



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Photo courtesy of Phoenix House, Inc.

**HIGHLIGHT:** SPA 3 staff utilized Project Sticker Shock to educate community members about the serious consequences of purchasing alcohol for a minor's consumption and to recruit retailers' support in continued environmental prevention efforts that reduce the prevalence of youth alcohol use. Staff facilitated a Sticker Shock training for all adult and student volunteers during coalition meetings. At the completion of Project Sticker Shock, staff created and posted a video on social media highlighting outcomes and images taken during the project. Volunteers were featured in the February edition of Pomona's local newspaper *La Nueva Vos*, highlighting the project. Staff also updated their strategy for identifying alcohol retailers in the community, updating a matrix of potential merchants to approach for implementing Project Sticker Shock during common 'drinking holidays'.

Although COVID-19 Stay-Home Orders and some owners' hesitance to have youth in their stores resulted in retailers unwilling to participate in Project Sticker Shock, providers also shared success stories from Pasadena retailers who chose to participate in this preventive effort. As a result, four new liquor stores participated in Sticker Shock. Thanks to the success of Project Sticker Shock, local community members invited SPA 3 agencies to host Sticker Shock operations in other cities.

2. **SPA 2 and SPA 7 providers engaged in the Beer Run Prevention Project to deter alcohol theft, thereby reducing alcohol accessibility and availability to youth.** The prevention effort was facilitated by installing police

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officer cut-outs in local alcohol retailers. Through engagement of more than 50 retailers, a majority of them continued to display their Beer Run Campaign certificates and stickers throughout the store from the previous year. The Beer Run signs and officer cut-outs were replaced with new ones this project year with support from LAPD partners. LAPD officers continue to work closely with retailers to reduce this trend and have reported an improvement in interactions.

3. **Staff from SPA 7 conducted Lee Law compliance checks, surveying alcohol outlets for excessive alcohol advertisements on store windows and doors as well as any missing, required signs (e.g., no loitering, no open containers).** One round of Lee Law compliance checks was conducted, instead of two, for 20 retailers, with 15 (75%) retailers in compliance with the Lee Law and five reflecting excessive signage and/or missing, mandatory signs. All retailers visited received information about Lee Law and Local Signage regulations.
4. **As members of the L.A. Drug and Alcohol Policy Alliance (LA DAPA), prevention staff from all SPAs engaged with community stakeholders and elected officials to address alcohol prevention bills, motions, and ordinances in Los Angeles County.** Agencies from all SPAs maintained their community advocacy groups, coordinated Town Halls and Summits to mobilize the community and bring their concerns to elected officials, and emphasized the importance of engaging young people in alcohol prevention issues. These advocacy groups have been actively involved with policy advocacy this fiscal year, specifically with the Alcohol-Restricted Use Subdistrict (ARUS), Restaurant Beverage Program Ordinance (RBPO), Conditional Use Beverage Permits (CUBP), and Senate Bill 58 or the 4 a.m. Bar Bill. Parents and community members attended rallies, provided public comment, and represented the community during media press events, media campaigns, op-ed articles, and press conferences. Other agencies formed separate workgroups to collaborate with other County service providers in county-wide projects or events that attempt to decrease access and availability of alcohol.

An increase in civic engagement among community stakeholders and service providers has resulted in increased efforts to promote public health policies that protect the health and safety of the public, and to reduce alcohol-related harms associated with the overconcentration of alcohol outlets: extend the ARUS (legislation that would reduce alcohol outlet overconcentration in the City of Los Angeles), table the RBPO (legislation that would have expedited and simplified the alcohol permit process in Los Angeles), advocate for the CUBP motion (legislation that reinstates admissible conditions on approvals specific to the sale and service of alcohol), and defeat the 4 a.m. Bar Bill (legislation that extends bar hours from 2 a.m. to 4 a.m. in California). SPA Coalitions advocated for Alcohol Liaison Officer positions to various departments such as City and Sheriff's Departments, building support for policy interventions that would reduce binge drinking and curbing the over-service of alcohol in their local communities.

As an example, Prevention Community Council (PCC) meetings within various SPAs support mobilization and network capacity building. PCC meetings have convened community personnel, such as law enforcement and civic leaders, to bring environmental change and reduce alcohol availability and accessibility among underage youth. These meetings encouraged community members to participate in public hearings/meetings pertaining to new or existing alcohol establishments and/or alcohol-related issues related to public health policy, such as proposed developments that include alcohol, billboards, marketing, public drinking citations, and drinking venues.



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In March 2020, these alcohol ad-hoc committees were placed on hold so that city officials could concentrate on the fiscal impact caused by COVID-19. As a result, SPAs pivoted to other mobilization strategies such as letter writing and social media postings to continue efforts in anti-substance abuse policy advocacy and education. As a result of the COVID-19 pandemic, legislation that was not directly related to pandemic relief was delayed.

**HIGHLIGHT:** To draw attention to the importance of local regulation and merchant compliance in reducing retail access to alcohol by youth, the Antelope Valley Marijuana, Alcohol and Pharmaceutical Prevention Coalition (SPA 1) **presented at Lancaster City meetings**, including the Planning Commission, Criminal Justice Council, and the City Council. Some of these presentations have informed community leaders and various councils and commissions about the public health safety harms associated with prevention-based support, or opposition to various ordinances, laws, and alcohol conditional use permits. The Coalition has built a strong rapport in the community through education and providing resources to community members on alcohol environmental issues. Members have been working closely with each other to bring awareness to youth and community members of factors contributing to alcohol consumption, harms, access and availability, with a wide network that consists of law enforcement, community partners, and other stakeholders. This fiscal year, SPA 1 Coalition's advocacy efforts succeeded as Palmdale city staff, while conducting administrative oversight visits to tobacco retailers, agreed to conduct similar oversight of alcohol compliance at locations that also sell alcohol.

5. **Prevention providers collaborated with community members and local agencies (e.g., law enforcement, local businesses) to promote messages about Social Host Ordinance (SHO).** To better frame our discussions of existing regulations such as the Social Host Ordinance (SHO), providers gathered surveys at various community events. The purpose of SHO is to penalize adults who knowingly host, provide alcohol to or permit alcohol consumption by youth under age 21 in a social setting. Agencies have continued to provide trainings and workshops to the community, many operating in collaboration with their local city councils and Criminal Justice Councils. Providers supplemented their SHO work with the 'Parents Who Host Lose the Most' and the 'Measure, Store, and Lock' campaigns to reduce alcohol accessibility to minors by adults in home settings.



Photo courtesy of Phoenix House, Inc.

6. **Providers provided focus groups, environmental scans, community surveys, and data reports to assess local underage drinking trends and youth access to alcohol with their local communities.** These data collection methods have been utilized to inform their stakeholders to increase awareness of the factors contributing to alcohol overconcentration and overconsumption, and to advocate for policies and actions that reduce advertising and youth access to alcohol. Agency staff visited retail outlets, storefronts, and surrounding areas to document

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alcohol advertisements and store signage, where staff reported an overconcentration of advertisements in proximity to where youth and families congregate. Staff also worked with youth to assess local conditions which promote underage drinking via environmental scans of retailers and neighborhood walks, where students examined the overconcentration of retailers and captured images that showcased the impact of alcohol in their community. These efforts inspired youth to capture these conditions by creating videos highlighting their efforts to help reduce underage drinking and access to alcohol in their community.

**HIGHLIGHT:** SPA 4 collaborated with Alcohol Justice to develop and administer the Los Angeles County Alcohol Shelter-in-Place survey in June 2020, which assessed LA County residents' binge drinking rates and access to alcohol during the pandemic. The resulting 20-page report detailed findings on increased consumption of alcohol during COVID-19, particularly among vulnerable populations. These data are being utilized to provide public health education that challenge regulatory relief measures, as such measures around alcohol may be contributing to increased binge drinking rates in LA County.

7. **Providers established and maintained partnerships with local leaders and agencies and distributed prevention printed materials (e.g., flyers, fact sheets, brochures) to increase awareness and reduce alcohol and other drug-associated harms.** Efforts were aimed at educating and raising community awareness of alcohol-related harms and the social and economic conditions that contribute to addiction. Many events were instituted throughout the year including Alcohol Awareness Month to prevent and reduce substance use and abuse by youth and other vulnerable communities. Examples of community events included back-to-school nights, college campus events, health fairs, and family resource center presentations. E-Books, flyers, PowerPoint presentations, and other materials were created and disseminated to the public, many that were translated into other languages to effectively reach out to the diverse LA County community.
8. **To promote protective factors and reduce alcohol and other drug use risk factors among students, providers from various SPAs implemented evidence-based education prevention curricula for students.** These evidence-based prevention curricula support communities by changing knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and social norms around the harms associated with binge drinking and underage alcohol use. Evidence-based programs included: Botvin LifeSkills Training, Creating Lasting Family Connections, Drugs True Stories, Every 15 Minutes, Guiding Good Choices, Project Towards No Drug Abuse, Reality Parties, and Too Good For Drugs. These programs and events challenge students to think about drinking, driving, and personal safety to reduce alcohol-related accidents caused by underage drinking and driving.
9. **Parents, caregivers, school administration and staff, and concerned adults from several SPAs also received education curricula to promote greater prevention communication between parents and children to prevent alcohol and other drug use.** To combat the increasingly favorable cultural attitudes towards alcohol, parents were educated to identify risks as well as short- and long-term consequences of alcohol use. Parents were also encouraged to schedule family meetings and other communication strategies to proactively discuss the harms of marijuana and other drug use with their children to reduce alcohol and drug abuse by youth. Programs included: Guiding Good Choices, Parents Who Host Lose the Most, Strengthening Families, and Creating Lasting Family Connections.

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- 10. Contracted agencies provided healthy alternative prevention services, such as youth leadership groups and large-scale, alcohol-free events, to help reduce and prevent alcohol and other drug use in schools and communities.** Agencies expanded services to include various non-traditional settings (e.g., continuation schools, group homes, and existing youth development programs), resulting in increased number of students served and increase in students' negative attitudes toward alcohol and other drug use. Services included youth networking meetings and forums, annual youth summits, afterschool youth mentorship programs, and youth leadership conferences designed to help youth learn, grow, and develop leadership skills to become agents of change in their community and to participate in healthy alternatives to underage alcohol use. Youth prevention councils participated in environmental scans that identified nuisance areas in their cities and developing large-scale, alcohol-free events to promote a social-norm shift away from binge drinking by youth.



Photo courtesy of CHCADA, Inc.

### Goal 4: Reduce availability of and access to methamphetamine and other illicit drugs by youth and young adults.

- 1. To inform strategies that address the growing methamphetamine epidemic, providers engaged in research and dashboard projects to supplement the community needs assessment they conducted during the previous fiscal year.** SPA 2 and SPA 4 providers continued to conduct meth assessment with parent groups and discussed the outcomes and harm-reduction initiatives with legislators. SPA 2 providers conducted ongoing research on drug trends to stay informed to better serve communities. Their research findings helped improve strategies to prevent drug use and its negative consequences and identify its environmental, behavioral, and social causes.

Through SPA 4 provider's Safe West Hollywood Community Coalition (SWHCC), staff engaged with the L.A. County Board of Supervisors to create a Methamphetamine Dash Board by providing community members with meth data, including ER visits, treatment admissions, and death rates presented by

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gender, race, and other demographic variables. The dashboard is purposed to inform the development of intervention policy at the local and state legislative levels.



Photo courtesy of CHCADA, Inc.

**2. SPA 4 providers engaged community stakeholders through coalitions, town halls, community meetings, and advisory committees to organize safe community spaces and other policy changes to reduce harms caused by methamphetamine and other illicit drug use in communities.** Because West Hollywood experienced an increase in the number of opioid overdoses from fentanyl-laced meth use, SPA 4's Safe West Hollywood Community Coalition (SWHCC) distributed Naloxone to help prevent fatal overdoses and to build support for harm reduction at city, county, and state levels. At West Hollywood's Halloween Carnival, coalition members conducted Naloxone training and distributed harm-reduction tools, such as Naloxone and fentanyl test kits. The SWHCC also hosted a Community Naloxone Training that received significant media coverage. Additionally, SPA 4 provider staff attended various community events, including 'Coffee with the Cops' events and meetings with community leaders to obtain law enforcement support.

The Coalition also hosted two town hall events, a "Chem Sex Town Hall", that focused on people who use methamphetamine while engaging in sex, and a "Harm Reduction and SARS-Cov-2" town hall with key service providers, detailing how prevention service barriers during the pandemic exacerbated methamphetamine use and its negative consequences in communities. Both town halls were policy-focused and intended to build community support for harm-reduction strategies in West Hollywood, including the creation of a sobering center and increasing funding for needle-exchange programs.

**HIGHLIGHT:** SPA 4's Social Model Recovery Systems (SMRS) staff organized community residents to become active members of the Friends of Hollenbeck Park effort to help reclaim Hollenbeck Park from alcohol, marijuana, and illicit drug activity, including methamphetamine use. The group served as a healthy recreational resource to the community, meeting six times during the fiscal year to help community members: identify concerns affecting the park (e.g., visible substance use), develop community-defined solutions (e.g., park improvements, including increased safety and facility cleanliness), and improve communication strategies with park and L.A. City officials. The group also taught community residents how to document park safety issues, during monthly park visits, by using environmental scan forms to note illicit drug use, drug sales, and other nuisance and safety hazards (e.g., graffiti, debris floating in lake, damaged exercise equipment, exposed electrical wires near light post). SPA 4's Friends of Hollenbeck Park provided public testimony at L.A. City's Department of Recreation and Parks Board meetings, collaborating with park directors and other city officials to renovate the local park and improve the community's safety and well-being.



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3. **To promote protective factors and reduce alcohol and other drug use risk factors among students, providers from various SPAs implemented evidence-based education prevention curricula for students.** These evidence-based prevention curricula support communities by changing youth's knowledge, attitudes, behaviors, and the permissive community social norms related to illicit drug use. With Stay-Home Orders beginning in March, providers transitioned to implementing presentations and intervention curricula virtually, via online platforms. Evidence-based programs this fiscal year included: Botvin LifeSkills Training, Creating Lasting Family Connections, Drug-Free 24/7, Drugs True Stories, Every 15 Minutes, Guiding Good Choices, Project Towards No Drug Abuse, Reality Parties, and Too Good For Drugs. These curricula and events challenged students to think about the harms and effects of meth and other illicit drug use. Providers in SPAs 4, 5, and 8 also engaged in problem identification and referrals for at-risk students, including those caught using illicit drugs.
4. **Parents, caregivers, school administration and staff, and concerned adults from several SPAs also received education curricula to promote greater prevention communication between parents and children to reduce alcohol and other drug use.** Parents were educated in-person or via telehealth to identify drug abuse risks and the short- and long-term negative consequences of meth and other illicit drug use. Parents were also encouraged to schedule family meetings and other communication strategies that proactively discuss the harms of meth, marijuana, and other drug use with their children. Programs included Guiding Good Choices, Parents Who Host the Most Lose the Most, Strengthening Families, Creating Lasting Family Connections, and Drug Free 24/7. The Loving Solutions and Parent Project Senior curriculums were also implemented among parents in SPA 7. Curriculum sessions were presented in English and Spanish, with group discussions focusing on topics such as, self-esteem, developmental stages, stress management, parenting techniques, building values and morals, and substance abuse. SPA 5 agency staff also reached out to local colleges to present on the short- and long-term effects of methamphetamine use, encouraging staff to refer at-risk youth for treatment. Given the Stay-Home Orders beginning March, educational presentations for parents were delivered using online platforms.

**HIGHLIGHT:** In SPA 3, the Pomona Youth Prevention Council was implemented through leadership meetings and workgroups at four local high schools. Provider staff successfully collaborated with youth on the successful implementation of the Pomona Youth Prevention Council, allowing for increased engagement in SPA 3 communities including more direct involvement with parents and youth. Through this engagement, providers gained a greater understanding of the needs of youth and families in Pomona. A plan of action with community partners was created to bring the youth of Pomona together by participating in alternative activities, such as Underage Drinking townhall, Reality Party, advocacy training, Art Walk, and many more.

## CHALLENGES AND BARRIERS

The COVID-19 pandemic stay-home orders limited providers from offering in-person prevention services within LA County communities. These challenges and barriers included:

- Many large-scale events, such as community trainings, outreach events, resource fairs, youth coalition meetings, and community surveys were abruptly cancelled or postponed.
- Organizations that did not initially have immediate access to online platforms were delayed in hosting online meetings and workshops.
- Legislation advocacy efforts were disrupted, as legislation not directly related to pandemic relief was postponed.
- Contracts with schools, libraries, and retailers, were either terminated or placed on hold, limiting the access of prevention programming in these settings. Also, as schools switched to distance learning, drug-prevention sessions were deprioritized.
- Many vulnerable community residents continued to lack reliable access to a computer, internet, or reliable phone service, resulting in lower participation in community meetings or workshops on virtual platforms.
- Agencies continued to express concerns that alcohol and marijuana outlets remained easily accessible during the pandemic, increasing public health concerns about the long-term consequences of AOD abuse among Los Angeles County youth.

Additional challenges and barriers experienced by contracted AODPS providers included:

- High turnover in prevention staff, which required spending substantial time to train new staff, thereby interfering with the complete implementation of their prevention work plan.
- Lack of bilingual staff that contributes to a language and cultural barrier among AODPS providers and community minority members, making recruiting difficult for some prevention services (e.g., retail framework and prescription drug take-back events; parent workshops).
- Engaging student and parent interest during implementation of educational prevention curricula and parent workshops, respectively, and managing time efficiently during the delivery of these programs.
- Not having a consistent, appropriate, meeting space with students at schools.



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- Low interest among off-sale retailers/merchants to participate in Responsible Alcoholic Beverage Service trainings.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

SAPC recommendations include, but are not limited to:

- Continue utilizing innovative community-engagement solutions to mitigate the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on in-person implementation of prevention programming.
- Letter-writing campaigns and increased use of social media as engagement tools.
- Development and distribution of posters with combined COVID-19 and substance use health guidelines and best-practices.
- Provide community and staff virtual platform trainings and technical assistance.
- Host virtual meetings, environmental scans, community surveys, and coalition meetings and forums with a vested interest to continue to increase their visibility on virtual platforms.
- Implement grab-and-go bags to enhance social connection, mutual aid, and health-promotional resources that offer drug-free and healthy alternatives to substance use.
- Implement prevention curricula to students and parents to increase knowledge of AODs' harmful effects on developing youth and to promote protective factors (e.g., effective communication between parents and children) that reduce AOD-use and its related problems in communities.
- Increase youth's community involvement and provide them with strategies and techniques to advocate for substance use prevention and health policies to help reduce access and availability of AODs in their community.

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## APPENDICES

### Appendix A

**FY2019-2020 PREVENTION PROVIDER NETWORK  
ALCOHOL AND OTHER DRUG PREVENTION SERVICES (AODPS) CONTRACTED PROVIDERS**

No.	Contracted Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Services Providers	CPS	EPS	APS	Special Project
1	Asian American Drug Abuse Program	X	SPA 8	X	
2	Avalon Carver Community Center	X			
3	Behavioral Health Services, Inc.				
	• Beach Cities	X		X	
	• Torrance	X			
	• Hollywood	X			
4	California Hispanic Commission on Alcohol & Drug Abuse	X	SPA 7	X	
5	Cambodian Association of America	X			
6	Child and Family Center – Santa Clarita			X	
7	Children's Hospital of Los Angeles	X		X	
8	City of Pasadena Recovery Center	X			
9	Clare Foundation Inc.	X			
10	Community Coalition for Substance Abuse Prevention & Treatment	X	SPA 6		
11	Day One, Inc.	X	SPA 3		
12	Didi Hirsch Psychiatric Services			X	
13	Fraser Communications				PMC
14	Helpline Youth Counseling, Inc.	X		X	
15	Institute for Public Strategies	X	SPA 5		
16	Jewish Family Services of Los Angeles	X			
17	Koreatown Youth & Community Center	X	SPA 4		
18	Los Angeles County Office of Education	X			FNL

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19	Los Angeles County Our SPOT Program				MOU
21	NCADD of East San Gabriel and Pomona Valley, Inc.	X			
22	NCADD of San Fernando, Inc.	X			
23	Pacific Clinics	X			
24	People Coordinated Services of Southern California	X		X	
25	Phoenix House of Los Angeles	X			
26	Prototypes a Center for Innovation	X			
27	Pueblo Y Salud, Inc.				
	• San Fernando	X			
	• Palmdale	X			
28	San Fernando Valley Partnership, Inc.	X	SPA 2		
29	Shields for Families, Inc.	X			
30	Social Model Recovery Systems, Inc.			X	
31	South Central Prevention Coalition	X			
32	Special Services for Groups	X			
33	SPIRITT Family Services, Inc.			X	
34	Student Wellbeing Centers				X
35	Tarzana Treatment Center	X	SPA 1	X	
36	The Wall Memorias Project	X			
37	Volunteers of America	X			
38	Watts Health Foundation, Inc.	X			

# Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Services (AODPS)

## Appendix B

### FY2019-2020 LIST OF AODPS Service Planning Area (SPA) COALITIONS

SPA 1: Antelope Valley Marijuana, Alcohol, and Pharmaceutical Prevention Coalition (AVMAPP)
SPA 2: Communities in Action
SPA 3: Rethinking Alcohol and Other Drugs (RAD)
SPA 4: Coalition to Prevent Alcohol-Related Harms in LA Metro (COPALM)
SPA 5: Westside Impact Project
SPA 6: SPA 6 Prevention Coalition (SLAM)
SPA 7: South East Community Alliance (SECA)
SPA 8: South Bay Communities Creating Change (SBC 3)



## Appendix C

### ENVIRONMENTAL PREVENTION PROGRAMS

#### **Beer Run Prevention Project**

Beer Run is a slang term used when some individual walks into a store, takes alcohol and walks casually to the counter as if to pay. The individual will then quickly run out of the store, stealing the alcohol. While this may appear to be harmless fun and a simple crime, the suspect who commits this crime could face jail time, injury or death. Many of these thefts can quickly turn into felony crimes of robbery when force or fear is used during the commission of the crime.

#### **Retail Framework**

The Retail Framework provides a gradual, eight step-wise approach that methodically documents problems at the outlets, recruits' retailers to participate directly in prevention actions, mobilizes concerned community groups to act, and approaches city agencies to carry out their oversight responsibilities for off-sale alcohol outlets.

#### **Merchant Committed**

Merchant Committed campaign encourages retailers to fully adopt preventive practices as part of their business operations, and Policy Development campaigns encourage the city to improve its oversight of off-sale outlets through community policing and CUP administration.

#### **Social Host Ordinance (SHO)**

Preventing Underage Drinking Parties Social host ordinances prevent underage drinking parties by holding the host (e.g., parents or other adults) accountable for these parties. A social host ordinance sends the clear message to parents and other adults that it is not acceptable to give alcohol to teens.

#### **Sticker Shock Project**

Capitalizes on community activism, cooperative efforts and collective responsibilities to combat underage drinking and its related problems. This includes adults providing alcohol to minors. The project not only educates citizens, businesses, educational institutions, health organizations, law enforcement and governmental authorities on the problems of underage drinking, but also ensures a consistent message about the existing laws, increasing efforts to bring about change.

#### **Responsible Beverage Server (RBS)**

RBS training is a community-based approach to promote public safety and to reduce risks associated with the retail alcohol environment. RBS has three essential elements: the adoption of alcohol-service policy for ABC-licensed establishments; the providing of server education and guidance; and the development of partnerships between law enforcement, local government and community groups.



## Alcohol and Other Drug Prevention Services (AODPS)

### **Warning Sign Campaign**

Licensees who fail to post required signs may receive a fine, suspension, or in repeated cases, revocation of their alcoholic beverage license. The ABC does not furnish or sell signs to licensees.

### **Parents Who Host, Lose the Most – Don't be a party to teenage drinking Campaign**

Strives to create consistent parental/community norms that underage drinking is not only illegal, but is unsafe, unhealthy and unacceptable. By increasing parental awareness and understanding of the health, safety and legal consequences of allowing underage drinking, this campaign reduces the number of parents who allow underage drinking on their property, which decreases underage access to alcohol.

### **Reality Parties**

Many adults feel drinking and drug use is a rite of passage. They assume teen parties are the same as when they were young. At Reality Parties, parents tour a home set up as a teen drinking party, with youth actors portraying common

party activities and voicing concerns expressed by local teens and young adults. After each performance or tour, Straight-Up facilitates community dialogue, with a panel to answer questions and discuss ideas for change.

### **Lee Law**

Refers to California Business and Professions Code § 25612.5, enacted in 1994. It requires off-sale alcohol retailers (e.g. liquor stores, grocery stores, but not bars or restaurants) to abide by a set of public health and safety standards to protect surrounding neighborhoods and communities from problems associated with alcohol sales.

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