Webinar
EBP
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Mary Thorngren: My name is Mary Thorngren and I'm the project manager for the National Resource Center and the National Resource Center is funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. We offer resources and expert support to help prevent youth violence and promote the overall well-being of children, youth, and their families and we believe that all children regardless of their ZIP codes or what community they live in can be healthy and thrive. The National Resource Center is coordinated by the American Institutes for Research and we are joined by more than 10 partner organizations. We have a website that has all of the resources from the National Resource Center and that's healthysafechildren.org and you'll be seeing more information about that later. We offer resources and expert support to states, tribes, territories, and local communities and we support two grant programs, Safe Schools/Healthy Students and Project LAUNCH.

Safe Schools/Healthy Students is an initiative that takes a comprehensive approach drawing on the best practices in education, justice, social services, and mental health, to help communities to take action to prevent youth violence in their communities. If you go to the website, healthysafechildren.org, you'll find a lot more information about Safe Schools/Healthy Students.

Project LAUNCH, which is Linking Actions Unmet in Children's Health, promotes the wellness of young children ages birth to eight by addressing the physical, social, and emotional cognitive and behavioral aspects of their development.

Again, healthysafechildren.org has information on both of the grant programs and a lot of resources that are relevant to the field at large. If you have questions during the webinar, please use the participant chat to type those questions in and the presenters will answer them.

Before we start, we have a poll. Before I introduce the presenters, I'd like to ask you to just take a moment to tell us what organization you work in and what your role is in the organization. So if we can pull the first poll in. Okay, so we'll give you just a couple of minutes for you to answer which organization and what your role is. It looks like we have a lot of folks from education who are playing different roles in that setting like colleges, counselors, administrators. We have some university folks on and some public health folks. Well, the good news is you're all in the right place because the information that we'll be providing during the webinar will definitely be relevant to all of you.

I'd like to start by introducing our presenters and they are distinguished in the field and in the work that they're doing and if we can pull the poll aside, we can pull up the – there we go. Dr. Allison Dymnicki is a senior researcher here at the American Institute for Research and she has really a lot of experience conducting prevention and intervention research and evaluation in both schools and community settings. She has expertise in evidence-based practices, qualitative and quantitative methods, school-based student support initiative, prevention and promotion in social-emotional learning and youth development.

Dr. Jeanne Poduska is a managing scientist at AIR and she has worked for over 25 years at the intersection of mental health and education. From 2005 to 2015, she led AIR's work moving the good behavior game into practice and working with districts and localities in the United States and internationally.

Our next presenter is Sandy Crawford and she is former Safe Schools/Healthy Students project director with the Alton School District in Alton, Illinois. The selection and implementation of several evidence-based programs throughout the school district was an integral part of the grant. Sandy brings 29 years of experience as a school social worker and she coordinated a staff of 24 social workers and interns and she's not going to talk about that work today. She's going to talk about the implementation of the evidence-based practices but maybe we'll bring her back some other time to talk about all of the work that the social workers and interns did in the district.

I'm going to turn it over to Dr. Allison Dymnicki who is going to walk us through the objectives for today.

Allison Dymnicki: Thank you so much, Mary. We always start these webinars by trying to be really articulate with the participants about what we are trying to achieve. We've got five objectives for today. We're going to describe what evidence-based programs are and their value. We hope to help you gain understanding of the considerations involved in selecting evidence-based strategies. We are going to describe steps to consider when you start planning or preparing to implement evidence-based strategies. Jeanne is going to describe some of the challenges that you should expect and anticipate when you start implementing programs. The last objective relates to accessing information from the National Resource Center and we are going to reference several resources that are available on that website and we also have several reference resources slides at the end of the presentation that include materials from the NRC and it has a wealth of information to support your knowledge and understanding of evidence-based programs.

The agenda for today's webinar is four-part. I'm going to start by describing an overview of evidence-based programs and the value of them. I'm also going to explain some of the things to consider when you select and plan to implement programs. Jeanne is going to describe implementing evidence-based programs and overcoming challenges and Sandy is going to chime in with a lot of evidence and experience as a school-based expert and what her district went through in selecting and implementing two evidence-based strategies. I also want to frame the webinar by telling people that this might be a bit different in terms of the format and the level of engagement from other webinars you've attended. We're very aware of how easy it is to multitask and to tune out when you have an hour and a half long presentation where people are speaking at you and so to address this concern, we've included a series of polling and reflection questions. You've already experienced the polling question to start, which asked you to describe what organization you're from and there is a number more coming. When the polling questions come up, we'd ask you to select the answer on the screen.

The reflection questions are a little bit different and the reflection questions are really for you to sit and think and we're going to pause for 30 seconds to give you time to think about the question. So if you are in a room next to a colleague, you can feel free to discuss your answer with them but just keep in mind you will only have 30 seconds. This is a pause and so 30 seconds to really sit and wrestle with the question and its application to the work that you do, to some people, this might be a real struggle and so we encourage you to notice what these pauses feel like and to get a sense if you can really be present during the webinar and if you can be thoughtful and reflective when considering some of these questions.

The next poll is going to come up now and this poll really helps us to understand where you are and what kinds of challenges or what place you and your organization is with regard to selecting, implementing, preparing for evidence-based strategies. We also want to acknowledge that you probably are doing several of these things and that we are just asking you to describe the one that you are primarily focusing on or the one that comes to mind first.

A lot of people are reviewing data and choosing your programs and are implementing programs as well as deciding what planning needs to be done. The planning one is great because it's often overlooked. That's really helpful. We'll take another 10 seconds or so for people to respond. [Pause] Okay, great. I think reviewing data is a real topic of interest right now as well deciding what planning needs to be done and implementing programs. We'll make sure we'll try to focus on those during the webinar. As Mary mentioned in the introduction, if we aren't hitting topics that you are interested in/have some questions on, you'll have opportunities at the end and we'll try to address those. If we can't address those within the scope of the webinar today, we will try to create a follow-up resource and answer questions in a document that's shared with people who were attending today afterwards.

All right. So I want to start the overview of evidence-based programs with defining what they are and you'll see a lot of different definitions of evidence-based programs and we chose one and we use one that really focuses on the aspect of rigorous evaluations. The definition here is prevention or intervention programs that had been found to be effective based on results of rigorous evaluations. We can go into a really long conversation about what rigorous evaluations are. In most cases, it means there is evidence from at least one rigorous study which usually uses a randomized control or a quasi-experimental design and has appropriate controls in place if it's quasi-experimental design. In terms of being effective, what that means is that the prevention or intervention programs were found to have positive impacts on targeted outcomes so outcomes the programs expected to influence. Randomized control trials where people are randomly assigned to one or two or more conditions are usually viewed as the highest standard for evaluating evidence-based practices and there are like a lot of different criteria based on the national registries and other organizations that we'll discuss later in terms of teaming in evidence-based program.

Why use an evidence-based program? What is the benefit of it? There are a number of them. We listed six or five here and we're just going to talk probably the most important consideration for implementing evidence-based programs relates to increasing the likelihood the program will result in positive outcomes in your setting. So if the program has a proven track record of success for the needs that you have identified and with a similar population, you're much more likely to observe positive outcomes in your setting.

Evidence-based programs often come with clearly defined implementation, training, evaluation, and technical assistance materials so that category implementation supports and this decreases the amount of times they have to spend developing materials and increases the likelihood of achieving desired outcomes and positive implementation or high quality implementation.

Another reason is that it can be more efficient to implement a program that has proven to work rather than developing a new program. It doesn't require you to develop new materials, to train people, develop training materials, et cetera.

The evidence of effectiveness that evidence-based programs bring can help in securing buy-in and support from stakeholders so a lot of times, policymakers or funders in particular, ask, "What's the evidence behind this program," and they're much more likely to be supportive when they see there has been a rigorous evaluation and there has been signs of positive outcomes on targeted outcomes.

The last thing is that selecting a program with a proven track record helps provide justification for funding or additional resources and it also raises the bar for the types of programs that are implemented. If you really start to emphasize the value of evidence-based programs, people start to understand the idea of developing theory-based models and the idea of collecting, monitoring, and implementation and outcome data and really having a better understanding of these kinds of considerations when implementing evidence-based programs.

We're going to bring up another poll now. [Pause] It will get a little bit bigger in one second. This poll relates to the challenges that you're facing when you're in the program selection process and it could be that you don't have data available to really understand what the needs and the strengths are of your community. It could be that you have so much data available or it's just not clear from the data you have available what it's saying and it's hard to interpret the results. It could be that people don't agree within your school or within your organization or community about what the needs and strengths are. It could be that people don't agree on what a new program should be addressing. Finally, it could be that people don't agree on which program to address to identify/specify the needs or strengths.

I'm happy to address Dr. [Barry Brady's] question about does there have to be a formal evaluation or can you use longitudinal data. Terminology is always important and formal evaluation, I'm not exactly sure what you mean by that but longitudinal data – so for example, if you are collecting data about the implementation of the program, which we'll talk about a little bit later, and you are collecting data about the targeted outcomes, for example: attendance, discipline, culture, graduation rates. If your program was designed to influence those things, that would be some evidence. Would that mean it's an evidence-based program and it would be put on a national registry of evidence-based programs, probably not. Usually, there has to be a fairly large-scale study done and usually, there is a number of other criteria that you need to meet but if you are trying to convince policymakers or other people in your community about a new program and you do have some kind of data on it, it really is theory-driven and it's longitudinal, then that could be convincing as is.

We're going to move on now to selecting evidence-based programs and the importance of using a careful approach. I list four steps here and we're going to talk through each of this. The first is to assess and analyze data. The second is to assess readiness. The third is to examine and assess existing programs. The fourth is to use resources and information to select evidence-based programs. I want to be clear about the time and resources it takes to identify needs and risk and protective factors and engage stakeholders and select evidence-based programs upfront and how that will actually save you time and resources in the long run. People said – several of them were saying there were in the selection process. That's really important to be thoughtful so that you're not selecting a program that isn't right for your needs or your community.

After reviewing your data, assessing readiness based on key stakeholder's motivation based on the general capacity of your organization and program-specific capacity needed to implement a program is really helpful and we'll talk a little bit more about that later. If your school already has evidence-based programs in place or even just has a wide number of programs in place, and we know that most schools and organizations do, then be aware that some of them might not be implemented as they were intended to be implemented or some of them may not be addressing the needs they were designed to address and really think thoughtfully about what programs are in place already and how this new program will add value or will replace an existing program. The last thing really has to do with providing strategies to determine how to select evidence-based programs and practices and we're going to talk about a few today and reference many more resources that are available.

The first step has to do with assessing and analyzing data. It's always important to start with the knowledge of risk and protective factors. I'll define both of those for you today. Risk factors are usually characteristics of individuals, families, schools, and communities that are associated with negative outcomes. It could include something like violence in the home or community, which place students at higher risk of poor mental health outcomes. These are the factors you want to prevent or reduce the risk of. You want to prevent or reduce the risk of negative outcomes. Conversely, protective factors are associated with the lower likelihood of negative outcomes or an increased likelihood of positive outcomes. Positive and a personal relationship, for example, supports mental health among youth so increasing protective factors can help to improve outcomes for youths. Identifying the protective and risk factors that are present in your school's community can help you to guide the EBP selection process, the evidence-based program selection process, as well as to understand what current programs are available and are meeting the needs you have. Evidence-based programs that focus on preventing risky behaviors and build upon our strength and protective factors amongst students can help to prevent negative outcomes that increase positive outcomes.

Once you have an understanding of what risk and protective factors are, it's important to access existing data sources for those risk and protective factors. Collecting compiled data to make sense of what the data is saying about those risk and protective factors and make sense of the data to identify needs.

The first step that we mentioned is assessing data. There are many different sources of data here that could be included. We mentioned a few here such as results from recent surveys, interviews, focus groups, events with youth staff or community members through different school, court, or police records and data from observations of classrooms, other school settings, and after school programs.

There are many more. This list is not exhaustive but we want to broaden your thinking about where local data could come from. Local data could also be strategic plans that are considered for your district or your school or your organization. That's really helpful. Sometimes those plans have data available in them.

So now we're going to stop and do another poll. [Pause] Okay, so this really asks people to describe what sources of data they currently use the most and several people mentioned school climate surveys. Other people are looking at school record data such as attendance rates or graduation rates or achievement data and lastly, other people are selecting other data sources. The other data sources, I'm curious what they are. If people could write those into the chat box, that would really be helpful. I'll give you a few more seconds here and I'll move on.

[Pause] Okay. Let's close that poll and move on to the next slide. Some of the other sources of data are the Public Health Department and National Ed data. That's great. The National Ed data actually comes up on this next slide where we describe different sources for data sources including government agencies, local sources, and national organizations, Public Health Departments also comes up here, too. Consider government agencies such as SAMHSA, the Center for Disease Control, the US Department of Justice, the US Department of Education, consider schools, mental health agencies, law enforcement agencies, Public Health Departments and several national organizations.

This table on the next slide really shows you a little bit more detail about some of those data sources. So for example, for Annie Casey Foundation's KIDS COUNT Data Book, they show state-by-state data tracking the status of children since 2000 and they include indicators such as teen pregnancies, school attendance, parent education, family poverty, infant, child, and teen mortality. That gives you a comprehensive picture about the youth and the health of youth in your community.

Most local data, you might need to access from your partners with data sharing agreements whereas government data, you can usually access it online or making a data request. Keep in mind that you might need to run some reports or do some cleaning of the data or do some additional formatting of those national reports but usually, they're publicly available.

When selecting evidence-based programs and you're in the stage of compiling or collecting data, I just have three considerations for everyone to keep in mind. One is just anticipate the time and effort, and I say this based on my experience. People could chime in with other timeframes but I would say expect to take six months to develop and adapt an existing climate survey and collect new data. Expect about a year for staff members to receive training and become comfortable with collecting and entering data, and ensuring that high quality data is being collected. Anticipate concerns people might have about sharing data. For example, particularly community-based organizations might be uncomfortable sharing data because if you analyze the data and determine their program is not effective, their agency might lose funding so describe how the data will be used. At this point, the data is being used to understand the current needs and strengths of your community and not to assess the effectiveness of existing programs but people might be really cautious about that. If possible, compile data for several years. This is important so you understand one single trend and you can tell if the same problem has been a problem for a number of years or a new problem is emerging.

Once you have the data, here's some guidance about making sense of that data. I suggest comparing data against benchmarks. Frequently, it's data from state or nationally representative samples that can provide a sense of how the data for your school organization compares to state or national rates. Large differences between your data and benchmark data can help you to understand critical risk and protective factors. As an example, to understand whether out-of-school suspension is a problem in a particular school in your district, you can compare suspension rates in that school with benchmark data on suspensions from all schools in the district or from all schools in the state. In addition to comparing your data with benchmarks, it's important to review data across subpopulations such as age, gender, ethnicity, disability, or poverty status, and this is called disaggregating data.

The third thing we discussed here is sharing results in multiple formats so thinking about PowerPoint slides, brief reports, executive summaries and then a range of venues such as staff meetings, meetings with community members, district-wide teams, policy groups in the community.

The last two points here relate to looking at the data and looking for trends or patterns of similarities and considering outliers. Think about on which points most people agree, then consider where there are points where perspectives diverge. For example, members of one focus group have a different perspective than members of other focus groups, then what does that mean? In these cases, think about whether there are things that explain the differences that should be taken into account.

The next step in this process has to do with assessing readiness. We define readiness as being the state of being prepared to do something and it's important to successfully implement evidence-based programs. Assessing readiness can help you determine whether the resources you are investing in implementation are likely to payoff and could help you to understand barriers. A school organization's readiness level can reveal whether it will be able to successfully implement evidence-based programs. In settings of high readiness, staff are motivated to work as a team to implement new initiatives and the organization support for effort to recognition and resources. In settings of low readiness, staff are not likely to rally around new evidence-based programs. In addition, the implementation might be mandated by leaders who do not seek input from staff or provide adequate support. Prior to introducing new evidence-based programs, it is important to assess readiness so that you can take steps to identify and reduce barriers that can hinder evidence-based program implementation.

There are many different conceptualizations and ways to think about readiness. Myself at AIR and colleagues such as Abe Wandersman have identified three domains of readiness. Motivational readiness in both the individual and organizational levels includes belief about and support for the evidence-based program such as collective expectations, pressures for change, and emotional responses. General organizational capacity, reverse of the functioning of a school organization and includes issues such as staffing and leadership, speaks the context, culture, current infrastructure and the organizational processes of the school organization where the evidence-based program will be implemented. Lastly, intervention-specific capacity relates to human and technical and fiscal capabilities that are needed to successfully implement a program. Think about skills and competencies related to specific programs that you're choosing. It's hard to measure these sometimes until you've actually chosen that program to implement.

So here's a tool and like I mentioned, we'll reference several tools and we have information at the end where to find these tools. This tool, it will help you to identify and assess the programs that are currently being implemented in your school. It asks you to think about if each program determines target students at the universal selective or indicated tier of services. Universal programs are usually meant to reach all students within a school or district or organization. Selective programs are provided for at-risk students, and indicated programs are provided for the students who have already demonstrated concerns or problems. These tools help you determine how the evidence-based programs you are selecting complement existing services and avoid duplicating. As you complete this tool, consider if there are more or one programs that could be removed to free up time and resources. This is something that a lot of organizations and communities feel uncomfortable doing but you need to consider how overwhelming it is to have many different initiatives being implemented at once and to try to think about which new programs can entirely replace or avoid duplication with existing programs.

We're going to move on to our first reflection question here and there are several questions included. I want everyone to take 30 seconds or so to think about the programs that are currently being offered in your school organization for all students, for at-risk students and for students demonstrating problems. Consider if there are any duplicative programs, consider if there are programs that you don't think are serving their intended purposes, and consider what needs you don't think are being met with the existing programs. Say for example you know there are a large number of students in your school that are having suicidal thoughts and you know there are programs that are being implemented in your school with that intention in mind and so maybe these programs are not effective at targeting suicidal ideations. [Pause]

Now you probably had the chance to think about that quickly. We're going to move on to resources and information that helps you gather information about evidence-based programs.

There are several different places to explore. We mentioned here evidence-based program registries, the research literature, evidence-based program developers and schools or other organizations that are implementing the evidence-based program. There are a lot of studies that have been written about in the literature about several of these programs. There are a lot of people that you can contact that you might know about or you can ask the program developer to be connected with to learn more. This is a good first step.

We're going to pull up one more poll here for my section and this is to ask you where you primarily get information on evidence-based programs, how many of you have used the registries that are available online, how many of you have used research literature, how many do you contact developers, how many have developers that contact you and how many contact other schools or organizations that are implementing.

Aligned with that, the next reflection question has to do with thinking about which sources have been the most useful so feel free to continue selecting and answering this poll and also to think about which of these sources have been the most useful. [Pause] Okay. Can we close that poll?

There are several registries to review that we mentioned. We list six here. SAMHSA has the NREP registry which includes mental health and substance abuse interventions. There is What Works Clearinghouse registry that focuses on academic and emotional behavioral intervention. There's a CrimeSolutions registry that looks at justice-related programs. Youth.gov has a lot of information about evidence-based programs including Risk and Protective Factors that they target. The Model Programs Guide from OJJDP includes a lot of information about juvenile justice and youth prevention, intervention, and reentry programs, and Blueprints include a lot of information about programs focused on reducing antisocial behavior. An important thing to consider is that these registries use different criteria to determine if a program is evidence-based. Just because a program is on a registry doesn't mean it's necessarily effective. A good example is Blueprints has reviewed over 1,400 programs and found about 5% that are effective but you'll see information about the other programs that were not deemed effective on there so you can also learn about programs that aren't considered evidence-based but have been evaluated.

This next slide has to do with tools that relate to making decisions. This tool that's shown here is exploring EBP's tool and it really has a lot of different questions to consider. It thinks about the evidence base for the program you're selecting if it's been tested multiple times in a similar community. It thinks about adaptations that need to be made to the program. It asks questions about the features and implementation support that are available. It asks if you align with your school's or organization's existing programs and organizational supports. It also asks about training consideration and additional cost to consider. Finally, it helps you to think about sustainability. Another tool that's helpful is the STRYVE Strategy Selector that CDC has developed and information available about that in the set of resource slides at the end.

One thing that's important to do once you're in the stage of selecting programs and determine fit. Think about fit as the match between the characteristics of the program you're selecting and the characteristics of the community or the school organization where the program is being implemented. There are many different types of fit characteristics that could be considered. We mentioned here the alignment with the organization's mission and vision or alignment with the values of an organization. We think it's helpful to have clarity of a program design to really understand what the components of a program are and how they will look in practice and to understand the feasibility of doing something in your organization. So do you have enough staff? Do you have the right type of schedule for this program to be implemented? Is the program too long? Does it have too many different sessions? Do you have the resource that is necessary to implement it as it's intended to be implemented?

A few reflection questions here. Does the program that you're selecting align with your school or organization's mission and vision? Do the features align with your preferred delivery characteristics? If not how will this impact implementation? These kinds of things are really important to think about as you consider adaptations. While we're not going to get into a discussion of adaptations today, there is going to be an upcoming webinar by NREP about the topic of adapting programs or implementing programs as they were designed to be implemented with Fidelity, and so there will be a lot more information about that.

This part of the presentation is a very brief covering of planning and we list six considerations. We first talk about considering the partner values, partner roles and the idea of creating shared decision-making structures and processes as you implement a program and plan for a program. You should really work with your partners to determine what roles they have and negotiate those roles before to understand the challenges and concerns. Make sure that there's a benefit of the partnership for each partner involved so that they remain engaged and committed.

An important discussion that Jeanne will cover is this idea of developing and revising logic models, the stated vision goals and plans. It's also, like I mentioned before, really valuable to consider how implementation outcomes will be assessed and if adaptations need to be made. Jeanne will also talk a little bit about monitoring implementation and some outcomes.

The last thee considerations relate to developing implementation teams and champions which has been identified in the literature as a really critical ingredient to successful implementation. Teams usually involved three to five staff members to support best practices and widespread implementations of the evidence-based programs. Each member should be interested in the work and receive training early on. It's important to have a member of administration as part of this team and it's important to have a champion. A champion is usually someone that will advocate for the implementation of the program, will drum up support, will help to identify and resolve problems, and will continue to get momentum and sustain momentum throughout implementation. A huge part of Jeanne's talk and a really aspect that is often underemphasized is how the system might need to be altered to be conducive to the evidence-based program being implemented. Consider existing programs and policies and procedures so think about hiring and staffing policies, financial policies related to maintaining equipment and supplies, administrative procedures such as providing time for staff training, facility considerations. Jeanne is going to really cover that system piece very well in her presentation.

The final consideration has to do with developing implementation, communication and tracking and monitoring plans. We're actually talking here about just describing who will implement which program activity, how the information will be shared, what data will be collected, how often it will be collected, and really writing down all of the details about the implementation of the evidence-based program and how it will be monitored.

So now I'm going to turn it over to Jeanne to really discuss the system's approach.

Jeanne Poduska: Thanks, Allison. I'm going to pause for 10 seconds so people can sort of – that was a lot of information. [Pause] As we move into discussing implementation, I'd like to ground our work in systems thinking.

We know that the introduction of any program or practice requires change and that's a lot of what Allison was just going through, staffing, training, materials. At the very basic we know we're introducing a new program. We're expecting people to change what they do when they show up Monday morning whether it's students or teachers or other personnel. All of these changes occur in the context in which we live and work. They occur in the complex system in which we live and work - the school system, the mental health system, the justice system. Actually, I'm probably going to use more school system examples today because the last I saw who was on most people are on the education system. I want to offer a definition of a system that I'm going to be using and it's fairly simple. It's system. It's an interconnected set of elements that is organized in a way to achieve something. There are main points in that, and that's elements interconnection and a function or purpose. Let's see if I can advance the slides. Yes, great.

Here's a simple graphic of a school system and we see some of the elements that interconnect to form the whole and there are all kinds of additional elements like curriculum instructions, student support services, IT services. What you notice is the complexity. A school system, most systems are comprised of a whole set of subsystems.

Here is a graphic from the work of David Chambers who is currently head of the National Cancer Institute and some of his colleagues. What the graphic shows is that what Allison was talking about to getting an intervention to work in the real world requires consideration of multiple context and systems and the fit between them. Allison introduced this importance of considering fit and alignment. On the left in the red, you see the intervention or program. It's got components. There are people who deliver it. There are outcomes that are expected. There's a way to deliver it. It could be an in-person training or an online delivery platform, and then that program is embedded in a specific practice system. That's the middle blue section, and I'm calling the practice setting a system for example a school system. Then moving to the right in the teal – what looks like teal to me – we see that any given system is embedded in this broader ecological context which has other systems operating in it including the other practice settings. It has a system of policy and government, and there's a whole host of other factors that might influence implementation such as population characteristics.

I want to note that this graphic introduces another critical element for implementation work and that's time. Time is noted by this TO, TI, T1, TN, and the N denotes something in the future. It could be T2, it could be T20. The point is that nothing is fixed so that the staff you have at T0 when you're first beginning to implement or even to prepare may not be the staff you have in the next year or two years out, or perhaps the staff are consistent but there are regulations and policies in your district or state that are changing and influencing funding or what programs you can use so considering this fit and alignment continue as you move in to implementation.

I have a question for all of you about alignment. If I were a student or a client receiving services in your specific system and to science fiction and I age incredibly quickly, so let's say I move through development such that within a space of this school year, I receive the evidence-based program you have in place for elementary school students, middle school students, or high school students, or just your program in general, what would be my experience? How aligned would you find these programs to be? We have a poll that's going to come up and that's the question - how aligned are your organization's program as students move from elementary school to middle school to high school. It's a pretty quick poll. Would you say highly aligned, sort of aligned or not well aligned? [Pause]

As we see these come up it's a great thing about anonymity because we see a lot of folks that are somewhat not well aligned. That's a fit issue.

Another follow-up question is, if I were receiving services in your school – the next poll – how aligned are your systems program with the programs in other sectors in your community? Would you say highly aligned, sort of aligned or not well aligned? [Pause] So somewhat aligned. Again there's some work. While Allison asked us to consider fit between a program and risk factors in our population and the fit between a program and the attributes of the system such as vision and mission and the technical, administration and financial feasibility in here we have considered the fit between programs that's best at student developments and the fit between programs across various service systems. I offer this because rather than being flummoxed at the complexity, I offer that systems thinking provide us a way to frame our question about fit and alignment to help us understand how things are going as we implement evidence-based practices.

So keeping this system's framing of mind, we'll discuss three considerations for implementing evidence-based programs, and we're going to spend most of our time on the first one, stakeholders and partners, because I personally think that's where the action is of really laying a foundation to be able to address challenges; logic models and measurement; and structures for implementation and sustainability. The second part of the systems definition was about interconnections between the elements, and most of the interconnections between elements within our practice settings and across settings are through information and people. I'm going to offer you quickly two activities you can use to begin thinking about stakeholders and partners that keep us thinking in this systems framework.

Here's the first activity. You could do this by yourself. I recommend doing it with three to eight people, and really all you need is a sheet of chart paper and some colored markers. What you do is you just ask yourself these following four questions, so start by thinking about who needs to be at the table, and as you do this, you consider who will be impacted by this program or initiative, right? It could be students, teachers, parents and family, other personnel if you're in a school. Who has the power and authority to implement success of this program? Consider formal authority, right? People appointed or elected, the superintendent, the mayor, the school board, the teachers' union.

Consider informal authority. I think about people saying, "Well, if Mr. DiCarlo is behind this effort, others are going to be listening." Well, Mr. DiCarlo might be the social studies teacher, the football coach, a parent who's involved with the school. Consider the detractors. You really want to know what they're thinking about. Think about the other subsystems in your own system that need to be involved. Lots of people forget IT lately, and often our data systems made the IT people involved, I find out. Think about that broader ecological community in which you're embedded, right? The teal part to the right, over there in David Chambers. Just write them all down, and you'll start noting that you're putting things down like "mayor's office." Sometimes, you're putting down the name of another system. Sometimes, you'll have a specific name attached, and sometimes you won't.

Then, you want to think about how do these people, how do these departments interact with each other? As you move on to question two, start with just indicating the strength of relationships, so you can use heavy lines, light lines, dash lines, different colors, whatever makes sense to your group. We're trying to capture how do these people interact with each other and how strong of an interaction do they have.

Then, you're going to move on to thinking about what are the leverage points to affect change. You're not going to be able to engage everyone at once, so you look and you say, "What is my picture telling me about where those relationships already exist, and who might introduce me or our team to someone else?"

Then, the final is to anticipate challenges, and again, this is what your picture can tell you. You might see that there is someone, a constituency, a whole system out there that you identify that is important that has no strong relationship with anyone else. If you identify them as important, they probably are, so you want to start thinking about like, "How do we get them here?" What's the old Clairol commercial? "Tell your two friends about it, and they'll too tell two friends." How do you get those people close to you? One of the things I think you'll notice in this activity is that you've identified stakeholders and partners in several levels which leads us to our next approach. I love the messiness of that approach. Some people like a little more structure which is to begin with a simple graphic such as this one that shows some potential stakeholders and partners across the various levels of context, and then just begin to populate and add to it.

I have to say I remember one of the first meetings I had with Zeph Capo. He's the president of the teachers' union in Houston. He's a co-author on this paper, and I showed him a version of this graphic. I was thinking about these things, and he just took it and began writing and talking. [Laughter] That's occurred time and time again when you use a graphic like this to engender people's thinking. I really also like this graphic because it reminds me that change is local. Whenever I have offered it to people or have used it as part of a presentation, people phone on what's not there, so they'll say, "Where are students in this? Where's the media? Where's whoever or whatever is relevant to that local community, that's exactly how a graphic like this can be used.

I have a reflection question, and I invite everyone on the webinar to reflect on this question, whether you are in a school implementing evidence-based programs. I think [everyone] on this call could probably reflect on this. As you consider your own work particularly with regard to creating change, what stakeholders or partners are missing for you, and why are they important?

Now, we're going to move and talk a little bit about discussing the how of developing partnerships, and we want to do this because many of us, perhaps most of us, here in this webinar today do this work, and yet it's something that we often do implicitly. We wanted to offer some steps that move us towards making that implicit explicit, so we just analyze the social and political constituencies, and then we want to engage and work through trust.

I want to say there are several kinds of trust. There's a whole literature on trust, but just to use some definitions that come into play in developing partnership, so there's contractual trust. Do I do what I say I will do? There's a competence trust. Do I have the skills and expertise to do what I say I will do? There's a central mode of trust that comes into play which is, do I have your best interest at heart? What does that look like to engage and work through that? I offer that it looks a lot like going out and talking with people, mostly listening ideally in their office or where they choose to meet. You might say, "Listening about what? Learning about what?" This is learning about their mission and vision, and if we want to learn about people's missions and visions to hear their challenges, we have to listen.

I'll just pose for all of us because, I know for me anyway, often in the moment of excitement about an initiative or an idea of how a person or an agency might be able to help or support an initiative, I forgot to listen. I just pose, "Have you ever had a conversation where you've been framing what you're going to say or you're already ready to say your next thing before the other person finished speaking?" I contend that's not listening, not deeply. One of the things to remember just to give some compassion to ourselves is listening deeply is a practice and a stance, but it's an intention we can have when we start having this conversation.

Listening usually turns into an exploration of mutual self-interest though that may take several conversations, and we begin to think through the roles of people or organizations, right? That's what we'll do together. How they might play into implementing the program or programs. It may take the shape or brokering introductions for us to others. It may be providing resources such as training or staffing. It may be deciding that the right time is not right now, and we'll leave the opportunity open for future collaboration and partnering.

The point is that through these conversations and explorations with stakeholders and potential partners, we begin to have a sense of who to ask to serve on an oversight committee, or we might find that there's a committee that will take on oversight of the program or initiative. A closing thought on this topic of establishing partnerships with stakeholders and partners is that establishing trust and maintaining these partnerships is a process. It's not an event. A bit ago, I invited you to consider stakeholders or partners that are missing in your work, and I invite you now to choose one person you identify and think about what action step will you commit towards meeting that person, and let's give it a timeframe of one month. What will you do over the next month to meet with that person? I'm actually going to stop here for a second and I'm going to – you think about that.

I just realized so I just put my email address in the chat box because I welcome hearing about who and what you commit to and how it goes, and you are welcome to email me and share that with me as the next month goes by. I'm going to ask a couple of questions about your oversight committees. If you have an oversight committee, I wonder how much of your time do you spend sharing updates, addressing immediate problems and concerns, reviewing data, discussing long-term strategies, say three years out? We ask this question because thinking about how we spend our time helps us think about the distinction between an interesting meeting and a purposeful meeting.

I'm going to go to another reflection question. If you have some oversight committee or the committees that you're on, do you have shared norms for how you show up and interact? How do you all make sure you show up and be your best self? Do you have processes in place to ensure equity of voice for all the members? Do you meet on a regular schedule?

Now, we're going to move a little bit to thinking about logic models and measurements, and I would say logic models remind us of the third part of our systems definition. They remind us of our purpose. Our purpose is not implementing an evidence-based program or programs. Our purpose is to support the growth and development of healthy successful children and youth, and so how does a logic model help us do that? It has several functions, and the one I want to highlight is that it's a tool that can guide our planning activities and progress towards achieving our short-term and long-term outcomes.

Allison had mentioned logic models in the earlier stage of planning. I bring it up here because – well, in the best worlds, teams would have time to develop all the partnerships and talk to all the stakeholders, and then they would take time to develop a logic model with partners well before implementing a program. In the real world, timelines, funding requirements, many things can press us towards implementation before we've had time to make ready. That's what grandmother used to say. If that occurs, it's worth pausing whenever we can to still stop and develop a logic model.

Here are steps to developing a logic model. We're not going to go through them now. I will say Allison mentioned at the end of the slides, there's a section on resources, and you'll find resources that will guide you through the development of a logic model. I just want to say, of note, there are three self-paced learning modules on selecting, preparing for implementation, and implementing evidence-based programs that are really going to have the tools and allow you to drill down into the nitty-gritty of all of this work.

Here's a sample logic model. I don't know if it's hard for you to see. It's a little hard for me. It's a really simple example. The focus here is on bullying, and there's one evidence-based program that's been selected. You see it there in box four, "Stop Bullying," and I just want to briefly show it to you. This is a tool that can guide us, so let's say you decide to implement the Stop Bullying program this school year. It's October, and the committee reviews how many teachers were trained, right? Box six. You see either it's the number that you set as a goal, fabulous, or you see that far fewer were trained. Then, you stop and you say, "Well, what happened? What midcourse correction is needed?"

Say it's January, and the committee reviews progress, and you see far fewer students with high levels of risk were referred to the mental health provider in box five, and then you have a conversation that turns out they've had real difficulty hiring staff. Basically, we at the school said, "Well, we're not going to refer kids there because they're not going to be able to do anything," but it allows us to pause together and say, "Well, what midcourse correction is needed?" and to think about what impact might this have on sustainability of the program over time. The point is let your logic model be dynamic. Let it be a tool. Change it as you learn. It's a tool that supports those elements of your system interconnecting efficiently and effectively.

Let's spend a few minutes on measurement, and again, I'm not going to spend a lot of time here about how to frame it or what to do. I recommend the resources at the end for the really more in-depth guidance. A couple of points to make, change takes time. We know that, and it's important to include measures for short-term outcomes as a way to determine if you're making progress and meeting long-term outcomes, right? We saw that in "Stop Bullying." Another example might be is collecting attendance records the way to seeing if your long-term outcome of graduation is going to happen because we know if kids don't attend school, it's not likely they're going to graduate.

Measure processes and monitor them. Some of them are listed here. Don't wait until the end to say, "Oh, my gosh. It didn't work. Why?" Measure these processes and think about, how is our partnership going? How is implementation going? Are people being trained? Are people getting the skills we thought they needed? Are we adapting it so broadly that we're not even doing the same program?

Share the findings from your analysis regularly. Both from the stakeholders like students, staff, families if you're inside the school, your other stakeholders, your partners and really importantly give people time to process and discuss the findings. Often, data is not the usual for people. There are things that will surprise everybody in the data, and often we experience data very differently. Use these findings again to reflect on the fit of the program in all the various ways that we thought that we discussed earlier and more just like, "What does fit mean?"

I will say this, my biggest fret about measurements, keep your measures consistent over time. It is far better to add additional measures as you move forward and learn than to change the measures you decide upon at the beginning of implementing a program. If you change your measures, it can be difficult. It can be sometimes impossible to know how things are going and to understand what's happening, so I'll say that again, keep your measures consistent over time.

We have a few polling questions, and I'm running out of time, so I think – let's see. How often do you review your data about your programing? Would you say never, once a year, twice a year, four times a year, once a month? [Pause]

It looks like four times a year, and the one behind it is once a year. Once year, that seems "Okay. Here we go." Four times a year is winning out. It's interesting to see this poll. For the next poll, who do you share that data with? Teams that are internal to your organization? Organization-wide? The broader community? All of the above? [Pause] It looks like a real balance between teams internal and all of the above, so there's a lot of data sharing. One question I'm not going to ask, something to think about is – and I think Sandy will address this too. It's have you ever stopped a program based on your community of data, and we're not going to take that as a poll, but it is something to think about.

Let's turn quickly to our third consideration and these structures. Allison mentioned all of these, and I just want to bring them up because the second part of the definition of systems, elements, interconnections, and purpose – again, much of the interconnections in our social systems operate through the flow of information. It's likely you'll have many of these kinds of implementation team set, and I just want to say linkages up here as really these linkages with external stakeholders, potential partners, things like communication. I just want to remind us we're in a constant state of change, so it's really critical to revisit the structure, the function, and the progress of these teams.

I'm just going to leave us with a last few takeaways. Implementation of evidence-based programs or programming occurs within a context and within systems, and we can't talk with the system, not the way I've been talking about. The trust that occurs from listening, engaging in dialogue, planning, developing solutions, and I would say celebrating success that occurs between people. It is never too early to begin planning for sustainability. As I was hearing Allison talk, if you hear some repetitiveness in what I'm saying from what Allison said it's because it's really the same thinking and processes all the way through, and implementing evidence-based programs or any programs is a process, not an event. I'm going to say thanks for hanging out with me, and I'll turn it over to Sandy who will share some experiences and learnings from the field. Thank you.

Sandy Crawford: Thanks, Jeanne. I'm going to share some of our story around how we selected and implemented evidence-based programs in our school district. I think in Alton we had some real successes with some programs and positive outcomes, and we also had some challenges with others that resulted in varying outcomes that some I would've liked to have been better. Like any other project that you undertake, when you're done and you look back, you have thoughts of, "Oh, if only I've done this instead." I've had some time now since I'm a former project director of being able to do that and some a-ha moments upon completion, and I'm going to share, "If I'd known then what I know now," and "What I might've done differently."

Alton School District is in Alton, Illinois. We're located across the Mississippi River from St. Louis. I'll give a little background on our community. We used to be a thriving industrial town with several factories, a steel mill, glass factory, and others that kept employment stable. Over the years, we've lost our major industries, and we've evolved to a bedroom community for commuters with mostly lower paying service sector jobs locally. Now, we have an unemployment rate that's higher than our state rate. In 2015, Alton's unemployment rate was 7.4% compared to the state rate of 6%, and our district poverty rate is now about 67%. That's increased gradually over the years, so we do have some economic challenges.

Did I mention Illinois is broke too? We have the distinction in Illinois of a historic year-long budget impasse, and a lot of nonprofit agencies in the state and locally as well have had to close or cut back due to underpayment or non-payment of state funds or late payments. Fortunately, our school district was awarded the district's Safe Schools/Healthy Students grant in 2009, and the Alton District draws from a community of around 50,000 people, and it's diverse both racially and economically. We've got some urban, small urban, some suburban, and even some rural features. We have around 6,500 students, and they're spread through seven elementary buildings. We have a large middle school with around 1,400 students and a large high school with around 2,000 students. We have a special day school for students with emotional behavior disorders, and we have early childhood programs as well.

At the beginning of our grant period, our Alton Area experienced a real increase in drug overdoses related to heroin, and we saw the emergence of a new drug called bath salts. A high school student in a neighboring county high school died of a heroin overdose. Coincidentally, our technical specialist with the national center had sent an inquiry and a news item about bath salts, and neither I nor our local police had even heard of it. Well, within a month, we had a death in our community from a bath salt overdose, and it was being sold in some of our convenience stores. The good news out of the bad news was that this really forged a commitment from our local law enforcement. They realized that this partnership and access to national trends could directly benefit law enforcement and our community. We had a rapid response of an ordinance that addressed the businesses that sold that product.

We also looked at our data, and our data did confirm that substance abuse was above the state rate. We do a biannual use survey in Alton with our middle and high school students, and it indicated that reported use of alcohol and marijuana had a significant spike during the middle school years, so we knew that's when things really changed. The reported 30-day use by teens of alcohol and marijuana in Alton was higher than the surrounding areas, so we looked at the county and the state rates as well. Additionally, our discipline data indicated a rise in aggression-related referrals, and we were seeing an increase in younger students during the elementary years, so we knew we had some real challenges facing us.

Although we have challenges in our population and community, we have a definite strength, and that's in our collaboration with community partners including law enforcement, juvenile justice, mental health, and a drug-free communities coalition. These partners had a long history of collaboration prior to our grant, and an ongoing community collaboration group had been meeting for several years to coordinate resources and share information. Our school district was part of this collaboration, so we had a strong existing relationship with these partners, and I think that was a really good foundation for our grant initiative. We saw those partnerships strengthen through the grant period, and I think that's a benefit that we continue to reap the rewards from today.

We looked at our data. We looked at our surveys. When our grant was being written, a focus group of school and community people met and discussed the needs and concerns around our drug use and social, emotional development and really the general well-being of our students and families. We had also done a Communities That Care survey that really gives us a good picture of the risk and protective factors in our community, and at the time when the grant was being written, a selection of evidence-based programs was made to address those concerns. It was a fit for our population, and those choices were written into the grant. The programs that were selected were chosen from the registry, and I think you heard about several of those today. They were a fit with our student population an addressed the risk factors that were identified through our data.

I'll describe the program choices, but I do want to say upfront that this isn't necessarily an endorsement for that particular program. They were chosen as they met the unique needs of our particular community, and the priority was that they were on the evidence-based list. As we began to discuss plans for implementation of the selected programs, we encountered a couple of factors that led us to make a change in our selection of the drug prevention curriculum.

Our police chief was very invested in community policing. He had a really good vision for what the school resource officer role was at our middle school, and that's where we were targeting our substance abuse curriculum. He wanted him to be involved in a prevention, education role, building relationships rather than being more of a guard role. He was considering revising the DARE program, and he had learned information about the outcomes of that program versus another program called Project ALERT that had better outcomes. The officer chosen for that role was also the right person for the job. He had volunteered time with the community juvenile diversion program, and he was really interested in taking on an active role in relationship building. He really liked kids, so he was just the right fit for that position.

We also had another community partner, a drug prevention agency, which was part of our drug-free coalition, and they had had experience with a program called Botvin LifeSkills, and they could offer technical assistance with implementation. That was a key factor in sustainability, having that support ongoing and at minimal or no cost to us. Although a different evidence-based program had been written into the grant, in our discussion with teachers, we came across some other issues around the number of lessons and how it fit into the curriculum. In our core management team, we arrived at the decision to consider changing the selection of our substance abuse prevention program based on feedback during our planning for implementation phase, so I think Jeanne's words and Allison's words that planning phase is so critical and so important. I'll say, as the new project director, I'll be honest. It raised my anxiety level a bit to change course that early, but I'm really glad we did, and I know, looking back now, that that was the right decision to do.

Our evidence-based program chosen for social, emotional learning skills was called the PATHS program, Promoting Alternative Thinking Strategies, and it offered a comprehensive pre-K through fifth grade curriculum with implementation by classroom teachers in the classroom so at a universal level. I'll mention our district uses the three-tiered Positive Behavior Interventions and Supports program district-wide, so these programs were designed for the universal level, and we were able to integrate them as well at other levels. With our PATHS program, we used the training through the manufacturer, and we were able to purchase curriculum kits for each classroom. They recruited master teachers, those who were really skilled and respected by their peers, and they were trained, and then they trained their colleagues. They were excited about the program and were able to generate a lot of interest in it. They then trained their colleagues through the in-service phase in the district, and they acted as coaches for the buildings. Additionally, we have paraprofessionals that we call social skill tutors and social workers, and they were also trained in the curriculum, so that they could reteach those lessons as a tier-two intervention for targeted students. I think a strength of this evidence-based program was the integration with the tiered behavior intervention system in every school.

I titled this next slide "The Good, the Bad, and the Ugly," and I think that's because you can encounter all three in doing this work. Hopefully, all of you who are participating today I'm sure will not encounter the ugly because you have engaged in planning. You've learned how to reflect on that, and so hopefully you'll avoid the ugly. As I mentioned earlier, I think we had success in several areas, and that was the good. We had challenges in others, and it was bad. It was uncomfortable, but I think we addressed many of those. We didn't really have the ugly, but I think it could happen very easily if careful attention isn't given to all of those steps that were mentioned earlier of analyzing your data, assessing your readiness, examining your existing programs, and using resources and information in selection, and understanding your system is very critical.

I'll start by talking about our challenges. We'll go with the difficult first as they tended to recur more with our PATHS or social, emotional skills curriculum. Our original selection process used the focused feedback from teachers and staff and they identified a lack of social skills and increased aggression among elementary students. This drove the choice of the PATHS evidence-based program which fit with our population, and we used that train-the-trainer models and used high-caliber teachers. They were trained through the trainer and trained their colleagues, and that was to be taught during the school day. We debated at the time of training whether we should train all elementary, pre-K through fifth grades, at once or whether to phase in the program, focusing on the primary grades the first year and adding the upper grades next year, I think, due to the high cost of the training. Many of these evidence-based programs are quite expensive, and many require their trainer so that needs to be a factor in your consideration, and as you look at sustainability, that needs to be a piece you look at. Due to that and the desire that we wanted to impact all students as soon as possible, we chose to train all grades during the first year. I'll also admit I felt some self-imposed pressure to roll out that implementation. It's kind of, "Well, we've got the grant now. Let's get rolling," but when I reflect back on our system readiness, there were some factors that presented a challenge for both readiness and motivation.

The same year that we rolled out the PATHS curriculum, we also had a new math curriculum that was also being introduced that was significantly different, particularly for the upper elementary grades. An additional stressor for the staff and administrator was the new teacher evaluation system that was being phased in. Teachers and administrators had dedicated in-service time for that process along with the other new initiatives, so those competing initiatives are a consideration particularly in a school district. I think the stress of incorporating the social, emotional curriculum along with implementing a new math curriculum presented challenges for some of the teachers particularly those in the upper grades. The building principals oversaw the fidelity of implementation, and it's important to have a plan for how you will monitor that. We had eight buildings, so we really need that monitoring to be done within the building, and the principals established a schedule with their teachers for the days and times that the PATHS would be taught. That actually worked well in most cases, and we were seeing fidelity with instruction. At least, it worked well for a while.

The next phase, I guess, I'll call the "Saga of Organizational Change." A couple of years after we implemented the social, emotional curriculum, we had a change in superintendents, and the new superintendent had a very strong focus on improving test scores. Actually, that was a legitimate concern. We needed to improve test scores, and much of his messaging around that was that that was priority that was to be given to academic instruction, and that was the first and most important priority. I think the unintended result of that was that the social, emotional learning was relegated to a lower priority, and in discussion with him later, it was not the message he intended to send, but I think sometimes that was heard by some people.

Over the next few years, we did see a reduction in fidelity of implementation particularly in one or two schools. Discussion with the principal who's building head did have lower test scores revealed she had told her staff that if they have to sacrifice time teaching social, emotional curriculum to increase instruction in academic areas that that would be acceptable. We had a situation of those competing initiatives complicated by messaging that wasn't real clear about fidelity. You can see where this was going. It resulted in inconsistent implementation. Most of the principals did maintain the expectations for the skills to be taught, and they regularly monitored that.

We also tracked the aggression-related discipline referral as an outcome measure, and it was interesting that the school that had the lower test scores and less fidelity also had higher discipline referrals. I think that this highlights the importance of monitoring both process and outcome measurements, so I used that information to talk with the principal, and we had a change in principals. They had to work hard to go back and renew the motivation with staff, and that effort continues, but there had been some improvement in discipline data and resulting change in academics. What I learned through that was that this work is complicated by many factors, and organizational change requires a great deal of reflection to read those changes accurately and then strategic planning to address the impact of those changes on your initiative.

Our substance abuse curriculum, we had better success with, and I think we were more comprehensive in our planning. The early involvement of our law enforcement partner, and we involved the health teachers, and the administrator at the middle school really ensured thorough planning and implementation. When we met with the health department head at the middle school to discuss the planning, it became apparent that our original curriculum contained a quantity of lessons that would've been difficult to include with other mandated lessons. Reducing the number of lessons would've prevented us from adhering to the fidelity of the program, so we really had a dilemma there.

When we explored those alternate programs, they felt Project ALERT and LifeSkills would fit with their constraints, and we had an added benefit that the LifeSkills curriculum included additional, optional violence prevention lessons. Those lessons could be used in selecting groups as part of the tiered intervention program, and they could also be used by the school resource officer in the community-based juvenile diversion program. He was also trained in this curriculum, so the integration and alignment of this program with the other initiatives in the school and the community was a real bonus and a real strength of this. Both of these programs offered online training, and the lower cost of training was a factor in sustainability. Our school resource officer was trained along with the health teachers. He participated in the classes in the large middle school, and he was able to meet every sixth grade student, and that helped his role as the resource officer.

Key to the success of these evidence-based programs was having input from those health teachers, the department head, and the administrator in planning for implementation. The middle school administrator who supervised the health teachers had been an assistant principal, and she previously had been a health teacher. She met with them regularly, and she was able to effectively monitor the fidelity of that implementation. I think our success with evidence-based substance abuse is due to three key factors, that partnership role with law enforcement and prevention agency was strong and our school resource officer role was clear. The involvement of the health department teacher in planning was critical and the system for monitoring fidelity of implementation through an administrator who was motivated and supportive of the program. We were able to measure our outcomes through the youth survey, and we did note a reduction in use. This resulted in a comprehensive approach that complemented the evidence-based program. We also had a parent component in this program, and our drug-free coalition promoted the social norms campaign at the school with the peer leadership group as well, so it was very comprehensive.

I've learned so much from our Safe Schools initiative and have had time to reflect on those lessons. I think we were trained to consider sustainability from the beginning. I think I would've devoted more time in discussion around this earlier and throughout the grant. I also learned that the organizational climate and vision really need to align with the program, and that needs to be communicated clearly from the top throughout the organization. This is really a prerequisite and key for sustainability. Where we were able to align our evidence-based programs with other initiatives, we had greater success and sustainability. They say hindsight is 20/20, and looking back I would've chosen to phase in the PATHS program focusing on primary grades first and then the upper elementary. I think we could've taken more time to let those upper teachers learn their new math curriculum and had more discussion.

Sometimes, the key message is slowing down, taking time to reflect and discuss. Are we ready, prepared? Are we committed to do this? Is the timing right? That may be exactly the right thing to do even if it produces anxiety. I think it's very hard to put on the brakes when you feel like you're responsible for getting the train to the station on time, but you have to agree hopefully with your team that if the key factors aren't in place or your data or your process measures or outcomes aren't good, it's worth slowing down and taking time to reflect and examine your data, systems and process, to see where the breakdown is or what modifications need to be made. It will be time well spent and pay off in the long term, so I wish you all well in your efforts. I think that we have a final poll, and I will turn that over to Allison for that and our closing.

Allison Dymnicki: Thanks so much, Sandy. That was really helpful and I always love hearing from the school side about your experiences. This is the last poll, I think, that's coming up right now. We're asking today is what remains your primary challenge. Is it selection of an evidence-based program or concerns about your selection? Does it relate to readiness either of your organization or staff? Does it have to do with monitoring the implementation of a program or measuring outcomes? Does it have to do with sustainability? If there are other concerns, can you also type those into the chat box? That would be really helpful for us. [Pause]

While we're waiting for people to type in their last full response, we're also going to put up a closing request, and our closing request is to share in the response pad a key takeaway, one way that you'll use this information going forward, or any lingering questions for the presenters. [Pause] Questions for us can include things that we might not have time to address today but would be happy to address in future webinars, so don't think that you have to only ask questions that can be addressed immediately. [Pause]

I love this takeaway, "The importance of having peer feedback on the implementation process, I think that's really important." We didn't mention this today, but in all of the work that we do, we really stress the importance of youth engagement, and so if you're working in schools engaging students, if you're working with community-based organizations engaging the youth that you survey.

Another takeaway is the timing related to planning strategies and planning differently. Someone mentioned, "Sustainability is always a challenge when the funding ends." These are fabulous. "Aligning with existing programs before implementing," you referred to this PowerPoint slide when implementing future grants.

You also see on the screen as you continue to think about takeaways and type in how you'll use this information going forward, a link to a survey that helps us to get better at doing this. We always are in a learning mode, and while we have a lot of information and expertise, we know we can always learn more from you and would love to hear your thoughts about today's webinar and what information was valuable and how this could be improved. I love the latest responses, "Stop, develop, and reflect in the process so challenging to do when there are so many competing demands on your time but so important." Someone typed in, "Continue to seek out lessons learned by others."

We're about time to close, and we are so appreciative of the time you spent with us today. We really value all your participation in these events and hope to continue to have you attend future webinars that the National Resource Center puts on. We also just want to end with the resources slide. As we said before, all these slides will be available online, so you'll be able to find this, but you can see the first link on this resources slide shows the website link to healthysafechildren.org where three modules are up. They're about selecting, preparing to implement, and implementing. There are also some resource mapping tools and steps building logic models. There are other online trainings as well that are all available at this link, so make sure to visit to see what information you can take away from this. I think with that, we're going to close. Thank you, again, for all of your thinking and your participation in the webinar and the poll questions and hopefully your reflections on the questions that we raised today. Mary, anything else to add?

Mary Thorngren: No. I think we're good. Thanks, everybody.

Allison Dymnicki: Thank you.

Mary Thorngren: Stay tuned, sign up for the newsletter, check the website out so you'll get information about when we do our next webinar for the field. Thank you.

- End of Recording -