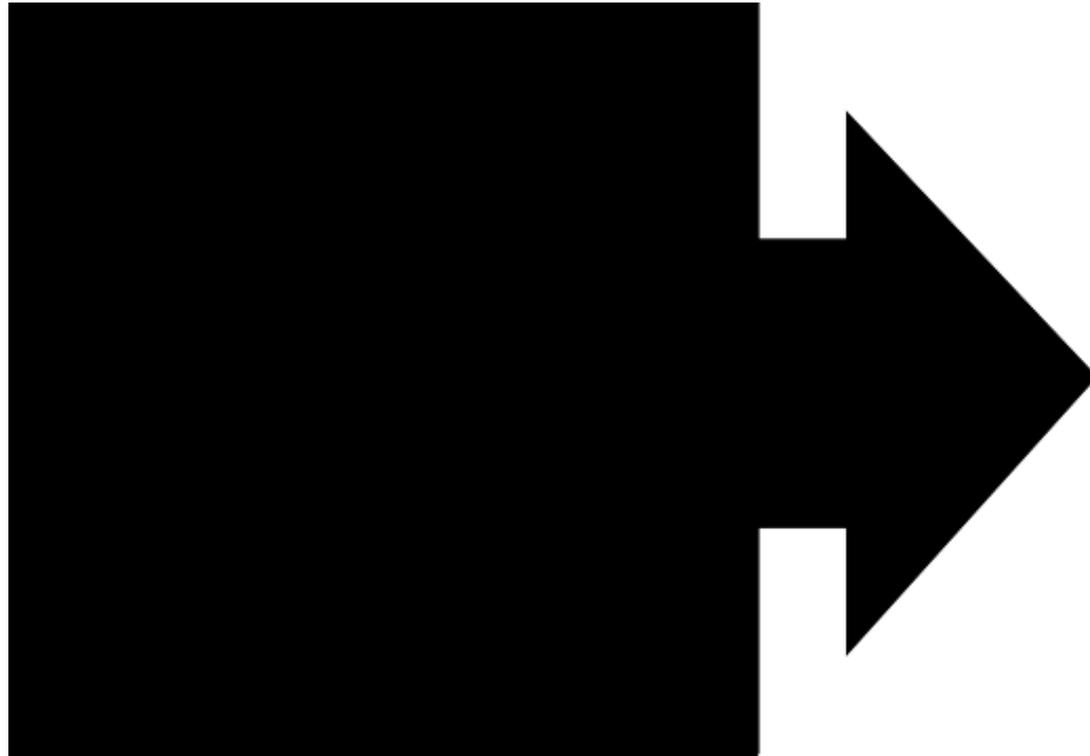


Chapter 2

Build Capacity



Introduction

Before you can effectively select substance abuse programs*, it is important to examine your organization's capacity to bring about the changes that you would like. *Capacity* refers to the various types and levels of resources that an organization has at its disposal to meet implementation demands.

There are three steps involved in evaluating your organization's capacity:

1. Determine your internal capacity (including cultural competency) and readiness—human, technical, and financial;
2. Determine the readiness of your community to support your efforts and collaborate with you as you implement the selected program (teambuilding); and
3. Assess your external capacity—human, technical, and financial.

It is especially important that you understand what the resources are that will help lead you to measurable success. Resources include more than just funding. You will need sufficient funds or in-kind contributions, of course, but other resources are just as important. You will need *human resources*—staff or volunteers—with specific skill sets, including leadership, program development, and networking abilities, to carry out the intended intervention. You will need facilities, transportation, office supplies, equipment, and other fixed capital to ensure sufficient capacity to implement sound programs. Central to your general capacity—and the area where programs often falter—you will need management and evaluation resources. You may need to seek outside resources to augment those you already have.

Specific programs will dictate the types of capacity you will need. An absence of these resources will almost certainly jeopardize your effort. You simply will not have the tools to implement the selected prevention pro-

**As used throughout this publication, the term "program" refers to the sum total of organized, structured interventions, including environmental initiatives, designed to change social, physical, fiscal, or policy conditions within a definable geographic area or for a defined population.*

gram(s) well. This may require you to select another program (or programs) that meets identified needs but requires fewer or different resources.

In this chapter, you will assess the overall capacity of your group or *coalition* to reach your goals and assess whether the community is ready to support the program. This part of the process ensures that the required resources will be in place when needed, whether the intervention is small and very specific, or large and comprehensive. Individual members of a coalition will also want to undertake this capacity assessment before making decisions about program selection.

Assessing your areas of capacity and readiness will

- Help you make a realistic match between the needs you have identified in your needs and resources assessment (see chapter 1) and the capacity of your coalition to address them;
- Provide the evidence you need to assure yourself and others that you have the ability to reach your desired outcomes;
- Reveal strengths and shortfalls in your capacity in key resource categories;
- Provide an opportunity to make up for anticipated shortfalls, find a way around them, or select another program that better matches your capacity.

Important Terms

Capacity: In this publication, the various types and levels of resources that an organization has at its disposal or can access to meet implementation demands.

Coalition: A partnership of social, political, health, faith, education, law enforcement, and other relevant organizations, as well as community stakeholders, working together to advance substance abuse prevention and reduction within a community or geographic area. In a more generic sense, coalitions can refer to groups of people working together to accomplish a mutually acceptable goal.

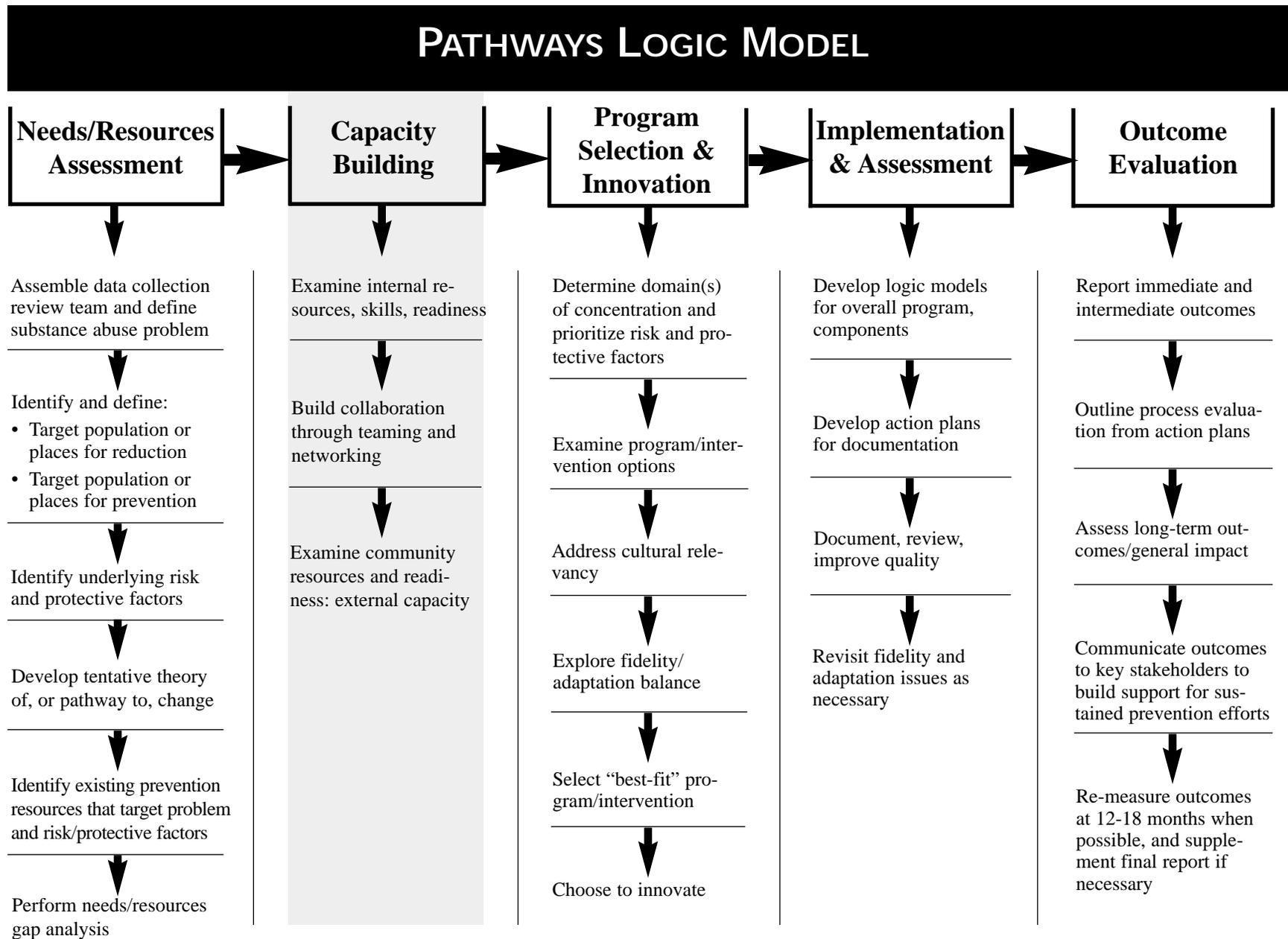
Collaboration: The process by which people/organizations work together to accomplish a common mission.

Community Readiness: In this publication, not only the community's awareness of, interest in, and ability and willingness to support substance abuse prevention programs, but also the availability of skills and resources within the community and the ability of the prevention agency and/or coalition to access these resources.

Cultural Competence: The capacity of individuals to be sensitive to and to incorporate ethnic/cultural considerations into all aspects of their work relative to substance abuse prevention and reduction.

Human Capacity/Resources: The collective knowledge, attitudes, motivation, and skills of the program implementers and other stakeholders.

Stakeholders: As used in this publication, all members of the community who have a vested interest (a stake) in the activities or outcomes of a substance abuse program.



Logic Model Discussion for Capacity Building

Here again is the logic model for PATHWAYS. This time, the shaded area shows how chapter 2 fits into the overall framework. The activities and tasks that make up the capacity-building component of the PATHWAYS process are described below. You will find more information about logic models and their role in PATHWAYS in chapter 4.

Capacity-Building Action Steps

- **Assess Organizational Resources (Internal Capacity)**
 - Examine breadth and depth of cultural competency, as well as skills for administrative tasks, long- and short-term planning, communication, decisionmaking, problem solving, conflict resolution, and creative thinking
 - Examine abilities for:
 - Networking within the field and among key people in the community
 - Reaching out to community “doers,” volunteers, and program participants
 - Mobilizing groups of people for action
 - Assess technological needs for client tracking and evaluation services
 - Determine financial resources for implementation and operational expenses

- **Build Collaboration**
 - If you are a single agency practitioner:
 - Identify potential partners for team building
 - Assess availability of other kinds of local support (e.g., from foundations, United Way, Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, etc.)
 - Achieve greater visibility in the community and with the media and key stakeholders
 - Mobilize these potential partners and stakeholders
 - If you are a coalition with partners in multiple locations, or you are a coalition within other coalitions:
 - Make sure each of your coalitions has sufficient capacity. If not, develop a plan to help them build the needed capacity.
 - Ensure that as a coalition you are making the most of collaboration to conserve resources and maximize results

- **Assess Community Readiness and Resources (External Capacity)**
 - Examine awareness of substance abuse problem(s) among populations and areas affected by the problem and among groups assuming leadership roles relevant to community health
 - Determine community norms relevant to substance abuse behavior
 - Identify key stakeholders and assess skills and commitment and access to resources that will support your effort
 - Develop approaches (e.g., media campaigns) that address gaps in community readiness and use stakeholders to identify and provide access to other stakeholders who do have these necessary skills and resources

Determine the Internal Capacity and Readiness of Your Organization

How ready and capable is your organization to carry out the proposed prevention program to meet your prevention goals and objectives? There are three broad categories of resources to consider as you assess your internal capacity: human, technical, and financial.

Resources in these vital areas are key to the effective functioning and survival of any group or organization. They are the organization's backbone, its infrastructure.

Human Capacity: The skill sets of the people involved in the program

As noted earlier, assessing your areas of capacity and readiness will

- Help you make a realistic match between the needs you have identified in your needs and resources assessment (see chapter 1) and the capacity of your coalition to address them;
- Provide the evidence you need to assure yourself and others that you have the ability to reach your desired outcomes;
- Reveal strengths and shortfalls in your capacity in key resource categories;
- Provide an opportunity to make up for anticipated shortfalls, find a way around them, or select another program that better matches your capacity.

Staff and skill sets are an important component of this internal or organizational capacity assessment. Skill sets refer to the ability to handle various functions. A leadership skill set, for instance, includes abilities in long- and short-term planning, communication, decisionmaking, and conflict resolution. Staffing should also include personnel with skill sets in the areas of communication/public relations, budgeting, fundraising, administrative support, evaluation, and project management. In a very large project, there may be a team of people carrying out these functions. In a very small project, one or two people may perform all of these tasks or work collaboratively with others who are skilled in these areas. As you decide who should do which task, examine abilities for

- Networking within the field and among key people in the community;

- Reaching out for additional community support and program participants; and
- Mobilizing groups of people for action

Carefully scrutinize the credentials and abilities of the individuals who will be handling the required implementation tasks and supervision. It is important that you know what you are looking for in a staff member. You may have a number of criteria, such as the applicants' skills, their personal qualities, their commitment to, or passion for, your issue, and/or their demographic characteristics. You may be trying to attain a certain level of staff diversity to be representative of the population you are serving. The following example shows what can happen when planning and assessing staff capacity are insufficient for the desired prevention initiative:

Example: “Insufficient Staff Capacity”

A well-established rural neighborhood youth club wanted to expand its service array and offer more specialized prevention programs directed at families. Having determined that many of the youth coming to the club were often engaged in conflict in their homes, the club's grant writer pursued funding for a model prevention program that encompassed family intervention strategies. The grant writer had determined that the model program met the needs of the defined population and that it had been proven successful in similar environments. However, she had not assessed the staff qualifications that were required for delivering therapeutic family programs.

When the club received the requested funding from its county government, the director became aware of the deficiency in staff capacity to implement the chosen program successfully. The club had only budgeted for existing staff, none of whom had the appropriate skill sets to implement the new program. The director was faced with an insufficient budget for hiring the staff needed for the new program and the challenge of attracting an appropriately qualified staff to a rural environment.

In this example, had the grant writer assessed the alignment between the existing staff capacity at the youth club and the staff credentials needed for the new program, she would have seen the obvious disparity between program needs and the club's capacity. In response, she could have planned a strategy to develop and budget for the appropriate staff to execute the desired program. Alternatively, she could have selected a program that was feasible within the parameters of the club's existing capacity.

Capacity Encompasses:

- An organization's staffing, technical, and financial skills
- An organization's networking and collaborative capacity
- Your community's resources for support
- Your community's norms and readiness for change

Assessing Cultural Competence

Use this checklist to measure how prepared your organization is for multicultural work and to identify areas for improvement. If you cannot check off an item, it may indicate the need for change in that area.

- The leadership of our organization comes from a diverse background.
- We make special efforts to cultivate new leaders, especially people who have not been previously empowered.
- Our mission, operations, and products reflect the contributions of diverse cultural and social groups.
- We are committed to equality within the organization and in our work in the community.
- Members of diverse cultural and social groups are full participants in all aspects of our organization's work.
- Speakers from any one group do not dominate meetings.
- All segments of our community are represented in decisionmaking.
- There is sensitivity and awareness regarding different religious and cultural holidays, customs, recreational preferences, and food preferences.
- We communicate clearly, and people from different cultures feel comfortable sharing opinions and participating in meetings.
- We prohibit the use of stereotypes and prejudicial comments.
- Ethnic, racial, and sexual slurs or jokes are not tolerated.

Adapted from *Community Toolbox*. Cultural competence in a multicultural world.

Capacity for Cultural Competence

Culturally sensitive and responsive prevention programs are important. The capacity of individuals to incorporate ethnic/cultural considerations into all aspects of their work relative to substance abuse prevention and reduction is called *cultural competence*.

Here are the kinds of questions to ask in assessing your organization's cultural competence: Does the organization continuously strive to build cultural competence within its staff? Do you encourage development of academic and interpersonal skills that allow personnel to increase their understanding and appreciation of cultural differences and similarities in others? Is the staff representative of the defined population? Is the staff willing and able to draw on community-based values, traditions, and customs? Is the staff willing and able to work with knowledgeable persons from the community in developing tailored programs and other supports?

A commitment to cultural competence encompasses the following:

- Acknowledging that cultural differences exist and have an impact on the delivery of substance abuse prevention programs.
- Respecting the culturally defined needs of the population, including the complexities of multiple cultures. People are rarely defined by one culture.
- Recognizing that the number of people who describe themselves as biracial or multiracial is increasing rapidly. This challenges many past assumptions about specific approaches tailored to race, ethnicity, or culture. While there is no easy answer, having the capacity as an organization or coalition to understand, be respectful of, and respond to evolving diversity is an important quality.

- Understanding that people from different racial and ethnic groups and cultural subgroups usually are best served by persons who understand and are sensitive to those cultures.
- Recognizing that embracing cultural diversity enhances the capacity of all.

Building cultural competency means changing how people think about other cultures and how they communicate. It also means that the structure, leadership, activities, and messages of an organization should reflect many perspectives, styles, and priorities.

Technical Capacity: Specialized support that sustains an organization

Depending on the size and scope of your organization and your planned program, you may need technical capacity not regularly available. This includes managerial, administrative, or specialized support, such as evaluation skills, to carry out your particular prevention efforts. You may need this specialized expertise intermittently and not on a full-time basis. Other community groups, agencies, and businesses may have resources to provide support for your prevention initiative(s).

- Managerial support maintains information on all activities and their outcomes, establishes protocols for allocating resources, and institutes strategies for working with program staff and volunteers, if they are used. Your group or coalition may not need a sophisticated management information system (MIS); a simple tracking system (even non-computerized) may be adequate for a small operation. Check with your region's Center for the Application of Prevention Technologies (CAPT) for guidance on tracking and management solutions that may suit your needs. (For more information about the CAPTs, go to www.captUS.org.)
- Administrative support represents facility management, communications, operations, and logistics (e.g., phones, faxes, databases, and the Internet; training and human development; and office tasks, such as keyboarding, filing, and preparing reports). Business activities, including book-keeping, payroll, purchasing, and accounting, also fall under administrative support. The New York Foundation for the Arts has created a handy technology assessment tool for the nonprofit sector to help assess needs in this area (see resources section for how to access this tool online).
- Specialized support refers to the kinds of infrastructure you may need for a particular program, such as desktop publishing or large event planning and production. Specialized support can also refer to your need for expert professional evaluation assistance, as will be described in chapter 5.

Financial Capacity: The ability to leverage funding to implement desired programs

Inadequate funding is often a reason why prevention efforts fail. Funding capacity relates to assessing the costs of implementing the proposed program(s) and determining how to make up deficits by securing donations or leveraging resources. Most important, it means developing a long-term funding strategy that ensures sustainability.

Here are some ways to improve your funding capacity:

- Use networking skills to keep informed and to develop connections with others.
- Appoint someone in your coalition to track funding opportunities that might be available.
- Seek out a local professional with grant writing and content area expertise to review your proposal, even if you cannot afford to hire a resource developer/grant writer. Guidance on grant writing and resource development is widely available. See this chapter's resources section for leads to helpful publications and Web sites.
- Find a like-minded tax-exempt organization to apply for a grant on your behalf. That same group, often called a "lead agency," might also manage the grant funds you receive.
- Stay connected with potential funding sources and have action plans already developed so you can move quickly when an opportunity comes your way. Funding success often means being in the right place at the right time.
- Get to know your local political leaders so that they return your calls; make sure that they and other key stakeholders understand the importance of your issues.
- Diversify your funding so you will not be dependent on a single source of support.
- Stick to opportunities that are consistent with your mission. This will prevent internal and external confusion about your program identity and help create a local base of support.
- Coordinate grant applications within a coalition to take advantage of several funding streams for the various components of your prevention efforts.

Few grant awards are large enough to fund development, implementation, and proper evaluation of a program. You should be prepared to leverage grant money and other resources so that the prevention effort does not falter in its implementation cycle, or when the initial grant is finished.

If you are part of a coalition, there should be a development unit or committee responsible for identifying and pursuing funding opportunities. This is often a role for a board and management team. Internally, the coalition also needs to have skilled staff to manage and report on financial matters.

Example: “Financial Capacity Considerations”

The Teen Development Program is an effective parent-training program developed for intervention with at-risk teens. However, it requires a highly qualified leader for every 15 families to conduct weekly group sessions, individual family meetings, and mid-week supportive phone calls. In addition, the program recommends a parent consultant to facilitate the group process and parent participation. Also, parent incentives (such as dinners, movies, bowling), child care, and meeting snacks add to the expense, although they also improve the level of participation. Training is required either onsite or at a nearby community center. Selecting the onsite training option adds \$500 per day to the training costs. There are also expenses involved in purchasing a leader’s guide and workbooks.

In short, there are financial considerations for nearly all programs. Some programs may simply be beyond your financial capacity to implement well, even if they are appropriate to the group’s objectives.

Figure 2.1 Guide for Internal Capacity Assessment

<p>Assess the strengths and weaknesses of strategic leadership within the coalition:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Leadership (managing organizational culture, setting direction, supporting resource development, ensuring tasks are completed) • Strategic planning (scanning environment; developing tactics to attain objectives, goals, mission) • Governance (legal framework, decisionmaking process, methods for setting direction, external links) • Structure (roles and responsibilities, coordinating systems, authority systems, accountability systems)
<p>Assess the strengths and weaknesses of the following systems, processes, or dimensions of human resources (managerial, direct service, technical/support staff):</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human resource planning (recruiting, selecting, orientation) • Training and professional development (performance management, monitoring, and evaluation) • Career management (record keeping, merit) • Compensation (wage rates, incentives) • Equity (gender, minority issues)
<p>Assess the strengths and weaknesses of other core resources:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Infrastructure (facilities, equipment, maintenance systems, utilities) • Technology (information, communication technologies, levels of technology needed/acquired to perform work) • Finance (planning, managing and monitoring cash flow and budget, ensuring an accountable and auditable financial system)
<p>Assess the strengths and weaknesses of program management within the funded agencies:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning (identifying needs, setting objectives, pricing alternatives, and developing evaluation systems) • Implementing (adherence to schedules, coordination of activities) • Monitoring (systems for evaluating progress, communicating feedback to stakeholders)
<p>Assess the strengths and weaknesses of process management within the funded agencies:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning (identifying needs, looking at alternatives, setting objectives and priorities, pricing activities, and developing evaluation systems) • Problem solving and decisionmaking (defining problems, gathering data, creating alternatives, deciding on solutions, monitoring decisions) • Communications (exchanging information, achieving shared understanding among organizational members) • Monitoring and evaluating (collecting, generating, and analyzing data, tracking progress, judging performance, utilizing information, changing and improving organization, program, etc.)

Adapted from Lusthaus, Anderson, and Murphy, 1995.

Teaming: Capacity Building Through Networking and Collaboration

Prevention practitioners increasingly realize they should adopt comprehensive, interrelated approaches to prevention to deal with the multiple and interrelated factors that contribute to substance use/abuse. *Collaboration* is the process by which several agencies or organizations make a commitment to work together to accomplish a common mission. It allows them to capitalize on each other's program and administrative strengths, by, for example, sharing technical assistance from specialized experts or working together to mobilize additional funding and community volunteers.

Through collaboration, organizations are able to

- Simplify or enhance the needs and resources assessment process;
- Identify gaps in current services and work together to fill those gaps;
- Expand available services through cooperative programming;
- Provide better services through interagency communication about participant needs;
- Share similar concerns while being enriched by the diverse perspectives that members from various backgrounds bring to the collaboration;
- Reduce competition for addressing issues;
- Improve communication with organizations in the community and through those organizations to larger segments of the community;
- Mobilize to effect needed changes through collective advocacy;
- Achieve greater visibility with decisionmakers, the media, and the community;
- Enhance individual skill levels by sharing information and organizing joint training programs;
- Conserve resources by eliminating duplication of efforts.

Team Building

Depending on the scope of your prevention effort and the size of your organization or coalition, you may now want to consider building a team for implementing prevention program(s). While this step could wait until program implementation actually begins, it is well to start thinking about it as part of the capacity-building process. This implementation team may be different from the one you assembled for needs and resources assessment.

Your implementation team will consist of individuals who have a vested interest in the specific problem or, more generally, in the prevention and treatment of substance abuse. Parents are an obvious choice. Others include the faith community, the media, school personnel, health professionals and public health organizations, social service agencies, law enforcement, and elected officials.

Obviously, the scope of the program you select determines how much of the greater community should be involved and to what degree. For a comprehensive program, and certainly for a coalition, representatives from the following groups are essential:

- youth
- parents
- business community
- media
- public and private schools
- youth-serving organizations
- institutions of higher learning
- law enforcement agencies
- religious or fraternal organizations
- civic and volunteer groups
- healthcare professionals
- state, local, or tribal governmental agencies

Example: “Capacity Building”

Ward 6 is a poor, inner-city neighborhood with extremely high rates of unemployment and crime, substandard housing, low educational achievement, drug-related arrests, and single-headed (mostly female) families. Community leaders Patricia Salazar and her husband were concerned about these problems and, in particular, concerned for the overburdened mothers. They determined that classes in parenting skills offered at night, after working hours, would be a good beginning to improve the environment for children.

The parenting classes were very well received and attended. However, through discussions with the mothers, the Salazars realized the community needed to address another significant need. Many of the elementary school age children and most of the middle school age youngsters in their neighborhood are latchkey children—usually on the streets without supervision after school hours. This places them at greater risk of negative influence from peers, older students, and others who might encourage them to use alcohol, tobacco, and illicit drugs.

The Salazars did not have the capacity to address this problem by themselves. Building upon established relationships with some community leaders and forging new partnerships with other community service providers, they were able to create a comprehensive afterschool program for these neighborhood youth. These efforts included the following: connecting with a local church that had a van that was not used on weekday afternoons; recruiting retired people in the community to drive the van to the middle school each day to pick up students and transport them to Casa Unido, the local community center; arranging for high school honor students to tutor and help with homework as part of their required community service hours; obtaining donations of a ping-pong table and basketball equipment; and arranging for sports enthusiasts to super-visit recreation. They were even able to acquire insurance coverage for the volunteer drivers and the van through a donation from a local insurance company.

This kind of collaboration is part of capacity building. It worked particularly well because each partner’s contribution suited its own individual purposes or interests.

The team brings various perspectives to determining your program. You may choose to address an easier problem in order to build community support around a successful undertaking. Or, you may want to tackle a more complex, multiple-problem intervention that will take full advantage of the resources and partners already in place. In all cases, the community should be ready to support the approach adopted.

If the team decides to tackle a problem that is less urgent, but potentially more reasonable under the circumstances, you should not forget the larger problem. It can be addressed by others who have the capacity to do so sooner, or it can be established as a long-term goal to be tackled by your team at a later date.

In *Stir It Up: Lessons in Community Organizing and Advocacy* (Jossey-Bass, 2003), authors Rinku Sen and Kim Klein differentiate between prevention/reduction for a specific group of individuals, or for a narrowly defined neighborhood or community.

At the base of . . . collective action lies a commitment to organizing the people most affected or most interested in problems created by substance abuse. The organizing process itself can transform people, presenting community members as agents of change rather than as victims of the status quo. Organizing, however, requires consistent, systematic work in the form of phone calls, reports, conversations, meetings, information, and the patience to deal constructively with the failed campaigns and incremental successes that are inevitable.

Organizing results in an organization with a wide range of activities focused on a clear mission and goals. It is distinguished from mobilization, which involves large numbers of people expressing their resistance or support, whether through a demonstration or petition, because organizing carries an expectation of sustained activity. Mobilization, on the other hand is episodic.

For groups that are new to organizing, it is important to define a clear constituency and a systematic plan for involving people who have knowledge of the problem, access to other people and resources to help identify the root causes of the problems, a commitment to resolving the problems, the potential for leadership, planning and related organizational skills, and community respect that can be tapped into to enhance group interests. Having a clear but flexible organizational structure, in which people

can become leaders but not get permanently attached to a position, will help make the effort inclusive.

For groups that have already been organizing, it is important to review the organization's constituency, structure and culture during all strategic planning processes, so the group can have the opportunity to deliberate about expanding or deepening its work. Experienced groups tend to become complacent about and limited in their outreach; they work mainly among already established leaders rather than continuing to expand their base.

Groups that combine organizing with direct services need to be completely clear about the differences between their various strategies, what they are trying to achieve with each, and how they will deal with potential conflicts.

All organizing efforts should be willing and able to integrate experience with credible information. Many organizations resist this need for substantial research and factual information, feeling that attention to evidence-based information or theory makes organizations elitist. Inasmuch as much of the analytical and theoretical writing practitioners need is in academic and inaccessible language, non-academics are often frustrated by what they perceive to be "roadblocks" to inclusion. However, these "are obstacles that need to be dealt with; they are not excuses for avoiding" the kind of analysis that enables practitioners to make the case to those who can assist with change.

No matter how great you are at organizing, there has to be broad-based public support for a sustainable, outcome-oriented effort.

Assess External Capacity: Community Resources & Readiness

The same three key capacity areas—human, technical, and financial—also need to be examined as they relate to resources outside your group or coalition. As noted previously, you need to consider diverse external funding streams. These include local funding initiatives, such as individual donations and direct local support from government entities or other organizations; regional and Federal initiatives, such as state block grants and state and Federal grant programs; and foundation support.

External support from can also add value to your prevention efforts. Most nonprofit organizations rely on community member participation to varying degrees. The jobs done by these individuals are as varied as the people who do them. For example, a high school student may provide tutoring assistance to younger children, an accountant may help the group or coalition apply for tax-exempt status, as may a retired city commissioner who has an interest in the community's anti-drug efforts. Regardless of the actual tasks they do, contributions from community members in terms of time, energy, skills, and other resources are critical for success. The involvement of community members in your group or coalition directly expands your program's constituency and network of support.

Physical resources also enhance your group's capacity. For example, schools or faith community buildings may provide space for afterschool programs, while the community library may donate meeting space for prevention-related classes or board meetings. Other agencies and businesses may offer the use of vehicles, computers, or other equipment. Creative use of your community's physical resources can reduce expenditures and increase access to prevention services.

Examining Overall Community Readiness

Assessing your organization's internal readiness and the external resources available for additional support are important steps. But you should also consider whether the community as a whole, or important segments of the community, are open to the kind of change you would like to bring about, and, if so, the nature of the human, technical, and financial resources that could be marshalled to supplement and support your organizational effort.

Research and experience over the past decade show that communities vary in their level of readiness to implement a prevention program. *Community readiness* refers to a community's awareness of, interest

in, and ability and willingness to initiate and support substance abuse prevention efforts as well as the availability of skills and resources within the community.

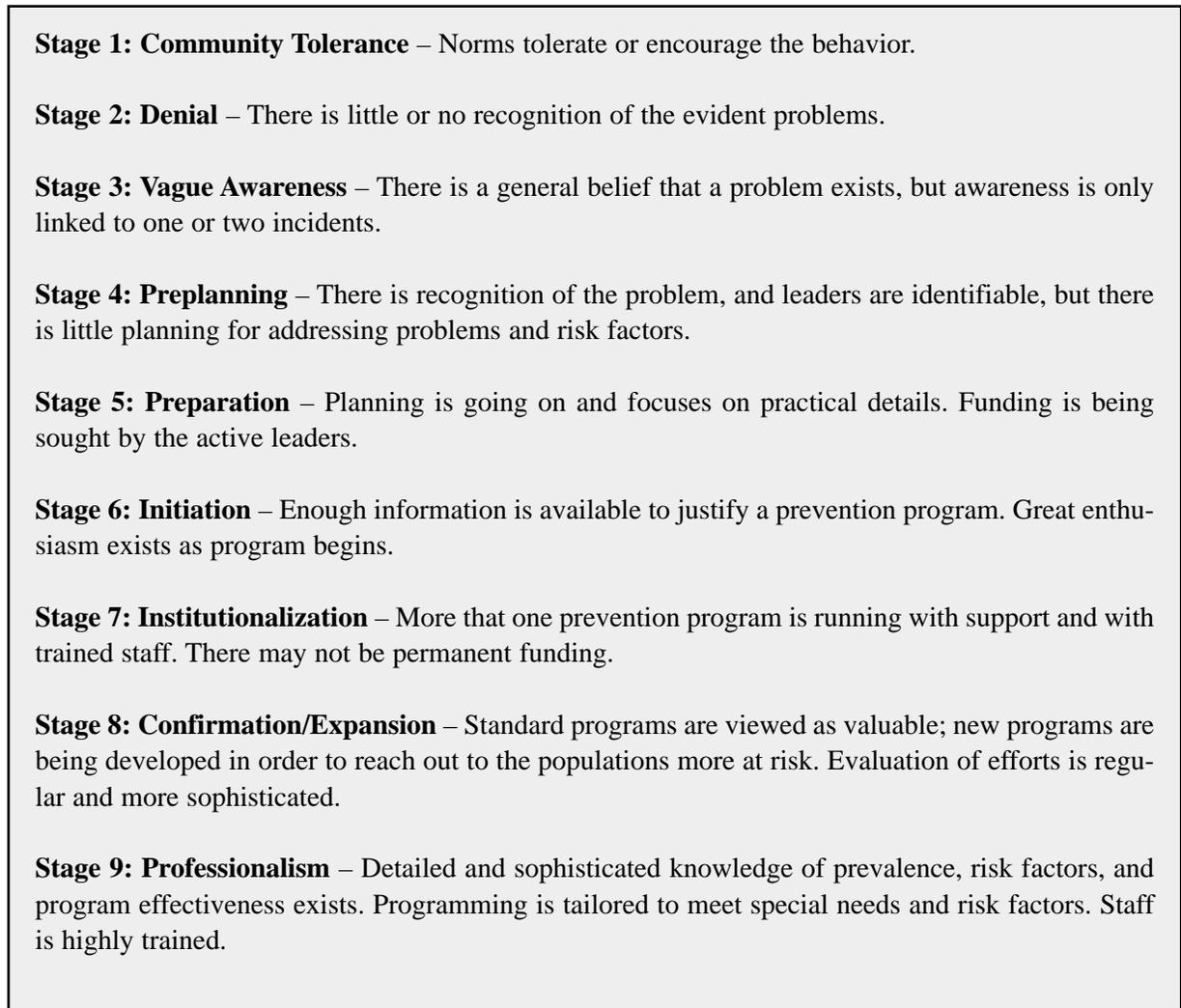
The degree of readiness within a community can be viewed as a stage in which prevention efforts can be either facilitated or thwarted. There are nine stages of readiness (see figure 2.2), according to Edwards et al. (2000). The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) found similar factors to be associated with a community's readiness for prevention programming.

Enduring, coordinated, and comprehensive prevention efforts are more likely to have the desired impact when there is community buy-in, and that occurs only when efforts are supported by community norms and values. For example, if community norms "support" serving alcoholic beverages at community events such as July 4 celebrations, festivals, etc., it is unlikely that the community is "ready" to embrace a zero tolerance policy for teen drinking. An informational, advertising campaign or several other environmental efforts, designed to educate the community on the dangers of alcohol use, might need to precede any sort of program for youth.

You need to ensure that *stakeholders*—individuals or groups in the community who have a vested interest in the success or failure of your efforts—are involved in your plan. They are vital to enhancing the credibility needed by your group or coalition to function successfully. And, as noted earlier, they bring essential external resources to the table. The higher the level of community buy-in, the more sustainable your effort will be over time.

The stakeholders you involve should be as diverse as the population you plan to serve. Include representatives of every sector of the community—government, law enforcement, and schools; people most affected by the program you are planning; diverse cultural, social, and faith community groups; business leaders and other people with influence in the community; and people in control of resources or who have access to resources needed by your effort. Key stakeholders might include the police chief, business leaders, a number of minority associations, the mayor, and many others. As a community coalition, all of these stakeholders should be represented in your membership. How you involve these stakeholders and how extensively you broaden community representation in your prevention efforts will vary with the scope of your work and the programs you select.

Figure 2.2 Stages of Community Readiness



From Edwards, Jumper-Thurman, Plesred, Oetting, and Swanson, 2000.

In Summary

Effective and sustainable prevention efforts should be based on adequate internal and external resources at the organization or coalition level. Moreover, your prevention programs can be successful only if developed within the context of community readiness for substance abuse prevention. Achieving community readiness often depends on involving key stakeholders in your efforts.

There are a variety of tools available to help prevention practitioners assess capacity and readiness (see resources section). Once you know your existing internal and external resources, you can then direct your efforts toward increasing readiness and building capacity as needed. The “Guide for Internal Capacity Assessment” in figure 2.1 provides additional considerations for assessing organizational capacity.

Reviewing the PATHWAYS logic model at the beginning of this chapter will remind you of the importance of developing capacity in the overall PATHWAYS process. This will help you determine if you have all of the resources you need to make an informed selection of a prevention program or practice—the next step in the PATHWAYS process, to be discussed in chapter 3.

Resources and References

Area Health Education Center (AHEC) Network offers community/coalition building resources at:
www.ahecpartners.org/community/resources/index.shtml

Arts Wire SpiderSchool at New York Foundation for the Arts (NYFA) provides information and training for nonprofits on how to integrate technology into their work. A technology assessment tool is available at: www.artswire.org/spiderschool/workshops/planning/inventory.html

Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America offers technical assistance, media strategies, and coalition development: www.cadca.org

Community Toolbox is a Web site (<http://ctb.lsi.ukans.edu/>) created and maintained by the University of Kansas Work Group on Health Promotion and Community Development in Lawrence, KS, and AHEC/Community Partners in Amherst, MA. The site provides “how-to tools” as well as links to hundreds of other Web pages and listservs in areas such as funding, health, education, and community issues. See especially Part H, chapter 27: Cultural competence in a multicultural world. Retrieved Nov. 28, 2001, at: http://ctb.lsi.ukans.edu/tools/EN/chapter_1027.htm

Edwards, R.W., Jumper-Thurman, P., Plesred, B.A., Oetting, E.R., & Swanson, L. (May 2000). Community readiness: Research to practice. *Journal of Community Psychology*, 3.

The Foundation Center provides education and training on the grant seeking process: www.fdncenter.org/

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