



# New England Prevention Technology Transfer Center Tip Sheet

## Topic: **Creating a Prevention Strategy for Monitoring and Responding to Emerging Drug Trends in Your Community**

Researched and prepared by the New England Prevention Technology Transfer Center

In every New England community, drug trends will come and go, but a comprehensive, data-informed prevention plan can be effective no matter the drug use issue you are addressing. Just as important, are the partnerships needed to help monitor what's going on in the community, and for mobilizing a prevention response to those emerging trends. This tip sheet brings together key components communities and prevention organizations need to have in place to effectively monitor, and respond to, these emerging drug trends. The document also includes links to resources and tools you can use in the planning, development, implementation and evaluation of your prevention response. If you need further training and technical assistance responding to the emerging drug trends in your community, reach out to the New England Prevention Technology Transfer Center: [newengland@pttcnetwork.org](mailto:newengland@pttcnetwork.org)

### **Collaboration and Communication**

- Multi-sector collaboration at the local level is key. Key partnerships should include, but not limited to:
  - Law enforcement
  - First responders
  - Medical providers and health systems
  - Epidemiologists
  - Education
  - Behavioral health professionals
  - Faith-based organizations and partners
  - State, county, city, or town officials
- Each sector will have different vantage points on emerging drug trends. Regular communication amongst sectors will facilitate the whole picture of what is happening in the community, and provide data necessary to formulate your prevention strategies. Each sector brings different resources and expertise to contribute to the prevention response.

### **Training & Technical Assistance**

- Coordinate learning opportunities for prevention staff, coalition members, and other prevention stakeholders and community sector partners.
- Cross-sector learning opportunities strengthen prevention approaches to emerging drug trends by ensuring partners are working from common understandings and knowledge.
- Partner with training and technical assistance entities such as your states' prevention training provider and the New England Prevention Technology Transfer Center to organize and develop trainings for prevention professionals, partners, and prevention stakeholders.

### **Monitoring Resources** - National data & trends

- National Drug Early Warning System (NDEWS) <https://ndews.umd.edu/>
- Monitoring the Future: <http://www.monitoringthefuture.org/>
- SAMHSA National Survey on Drug Use & Health: <https://nsduhweb.rti.org/respweb/homepage.cfm>
- Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/index.htm>
- Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System (BRFSS) <https://www.cdc.gov/brfss/index.html>



## Applying the Strategic Prevention Framework to Responding to Emerging Drug Trends<sup>1</sup>



The Strategic Prevention Framework is the planning model, recommended by SAMHSA, for the prevention of substance use and misuse. The SPF isn't a prevention program itself, rather, is a deliberate, evidence-based process to put into motion prevention initiatives that are data-driven, grounded in evidence, implemented by multiple stakeholders, and measured and monitored for effectiveness. This section provides a brief, walk-through of the SPF and includes links to pages at SAMHSA's website with further guidance and tools related to each step of the SPF.

**Assessment:** <https://www.samhsa.gov/capt/applying-strategic-prevention-framework/step1-assess-needs>

- **What** are the substance use problems that are occurring in the community?
- **How** frequent are these problems occurring?
- **Where** are the problems occurring?
- **Who** is experiencing the problems?

**Build Capacity:** <https://www.samhsa.gov/capt/applying-strategic-prevention-framework/step2-build-capacity>

- What resources and strategic partnerships are available, or can be built, to address the substance issues in the community?
- Raise awareness of the issues amongst key stakeholders
- Build a diverse coalition of stakeholders to help with raising awareness in the community and to implement prevention strategies
- Train the prevention workforce and stakeholders on the substance issues. A prepared workforce is crucial to address the issues.

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<sup>1</sup> Source: Applying the Strategic Prevention Framework: <https://www.samhsa.gov/capt/applying-strategic-prevention-framework>



**Plan:** <https://www.samhsa.gov/capt/applying-strategic-prevention-framework/step3-plan>

- Prioritize which protective and risk factors related to the identified substance issues you will address. Evaluate the importance and changeability:
  - How much are these risk and protective factors contributing to your identified substance use issues?
  - Which ones can you actually address given your capacity and resources?
- Select evidence-based interventions to address the prioritized substance use problems and their associated risk and protective factors.
  - Ensure the outcomes stated in the evidence for a program are aligned with the outcomes you are looking to achieve.
  - Ensure the program is a fit with your community and the populations you are serving.
  - SAMHSA Resources to help with the selection of evidence-based prevention programs and strategies:
    - Finding Evidence-Based Programs and Practices:  
<https://www.samhsa.gov/capt/tools-learning-resources/finding-evidence-based-programs>
    - SAMHSA Evidence-Based Practices Resource Center:  
<https://www.samhsa.gov/ebp-resource-center>
- Build a logic model. You need to make sure there is line logic between the problem you are trying to address, the protective and risk factors influencing the problem, and the interventions you are choosing to implement. Identify metrics to measure and evaluate the impact of selected prevention interventions.

**Implement:** <https://www.samhsa.gov/capt/applying-strategic-prevention-framework/step4-implement>

- Develop a clear action plan. Lay out the steps you will take to implement your prevention intervention(s) and who will be responsible for each element of the implementation.
- Work with your implementation partners and ensure you develop clear communication protocols to ensure everyone is implementing according to the plan. If any change in course is needed, ensure all implementation partners are part of the conversation.
- Ensure you are implementing the evidence-based intervention or program with fidelity. Create a fidelity checklist to assist with this. If adaptation is needed, do as much as you can to retain the core elements of the program or intervention. Look to add, rather than subtract, or look for resources that may help with implementing the program as it was designed.
- Identify technical assistance resources to support implementation. For example, does a prevention program have a dedicated technical assistance contact or are their local experts who can advise you on implementing the program?



**Evaluate:** <https://www.samhsa.gov/capt/applying-strategic-prevention-framework/step5-evaluate>

- Evaluation is the important step of gathering information and data related to the development and implementation of your prevention intervention. This includes information related to the process of implementing your program, as well as information related to the outcomes of your program.
- Evaluation is not the last step of the Strategic Prevention Framework. In fact evaluation ideally is woven into every step of the SPF. Data and information from the evaluation process can help inform any needed adjustments in implementation along the way, as well as adjustments for the next implementation of the program.
- A key step in evaluation is communicating the results. This includes your implementation and community partners, but also the broader community itself, including those who are part of your target population. As you develop your evaluation, ensure you develop a communication plan for your evaluation report.
- SAMHSA has many publications and resources related to evaluation available at the following link: <https://www.samhsa.gov/capt/applying-strategic-prevention-framework/step5-evaluate>

**SAMHSA Tools You Can Use to Plan Your Prevention Approach to the Emerging Drug Trends in Your Community:**

There are many prevention tools, implementation guides, and training and technical assistance guides that have been created by SAMHSA and the Center for Applied Prevention Technologies. These resources cover many topic areas including different substances, prevention strategies, and SPF steps. These resources can be found at the SAMHSA pages linked below.

**Prevention Collaboration in Action Toolkit:** <https://www.samhsa.gov/capt/tools-learning-resources/prevention-collaboration-action-toolkit>

**Training & Technical Assistance Tools (searchable by prevention topic and SPF Step):** <https://www.samhsa.gov/capt/tools-learning-resources/training-technical-assistance>

**Archived Webinars (searchable by prevention topic and SPF Step):** <https://www.samhsa.gov/capt/tools-learning-resources/webinars>

**Let us help you!**

If you need further assistance finding or utilizing these resources, or don't see a resource for the strategy or issue you are trying to address, contact the New England Prevention Technology Transfer Center for further assistance. We can provide additional technical assistance and training you might need in addressing the emerging drug trends in your community.

Contact us @ [newengland@pttcnetwork.org](mailto:newengland@pttcnetwork.org) or (207) 626-3615