



South Southwest (HHS Region 6)

PTTC

Prevention Technology Transfer Center Network

Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

Interim Report: Changes in Prevention Practice During the COVID-19 Pandemic

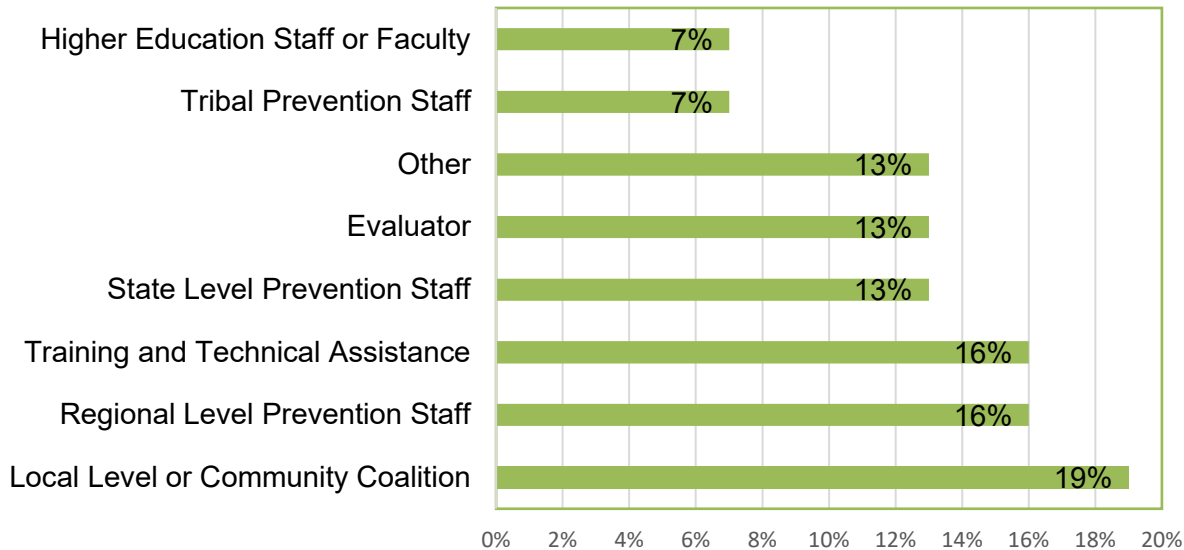
May 13, 2020

On May 4th, the South Southwest PTTC disseminated a survey to assess training and technical assistance (T/TA) needs of the region's prevention professionals during the COVID-19 pandemic. The report that follows includes responses submitted between May 4th and May 12th. The region will continue to analyze the responses as more data is gathered. As of May 12th, 32 participants working in the South Southwest PTTC Region (Arkansas, Louisiana, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas) completed the survey. The survey asks questions related to how prevention professionals and organizations are adapting strategies, engaging partners, and reaching marginalized populations during the pandemic. The final report will also assess further training, technical assistance, or other support needed to continue prevention work during COVID-19.



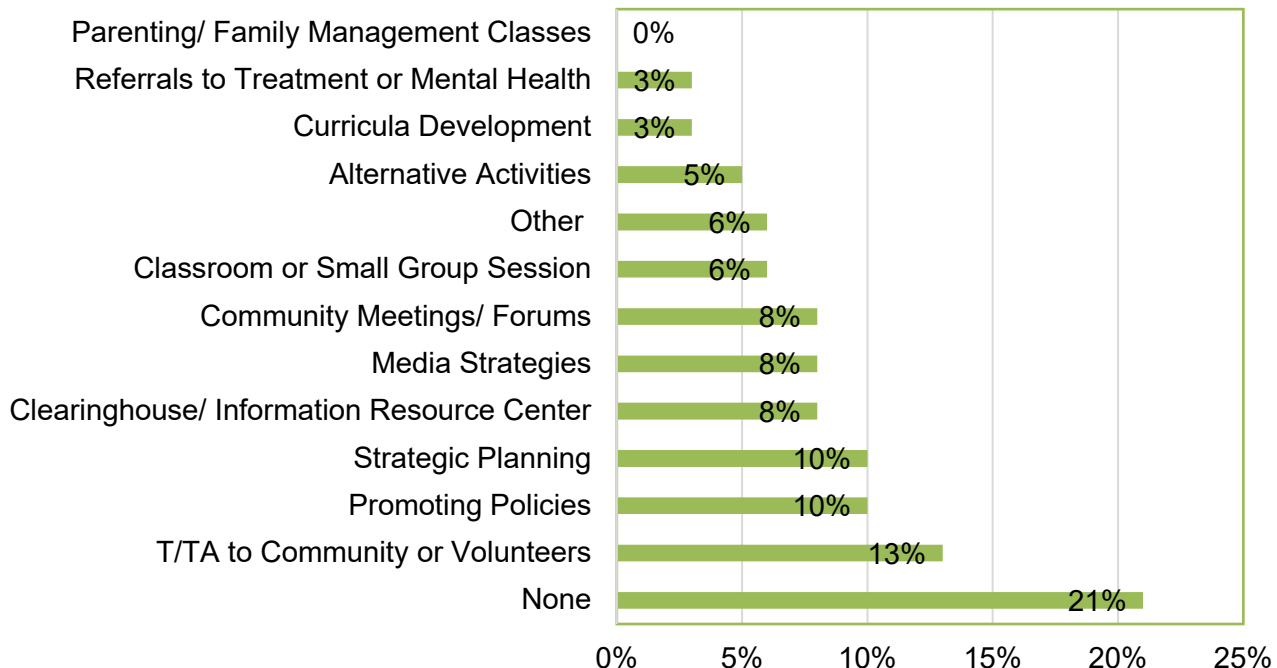
Primary Prevention Role of Participants

The majority of participants selected their prevention role as local level or community coalition, regional level prevention staff, training and technical assistance contractor, state-level prevention staff, or evaluator. Participants who selected “Other” identified as a prevention project officer, prevention specialist at a non-profit, and health educator. No respondents selected epidemiologist or K-12 school staff or faculty.



Activities Conducted Virtually Prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic

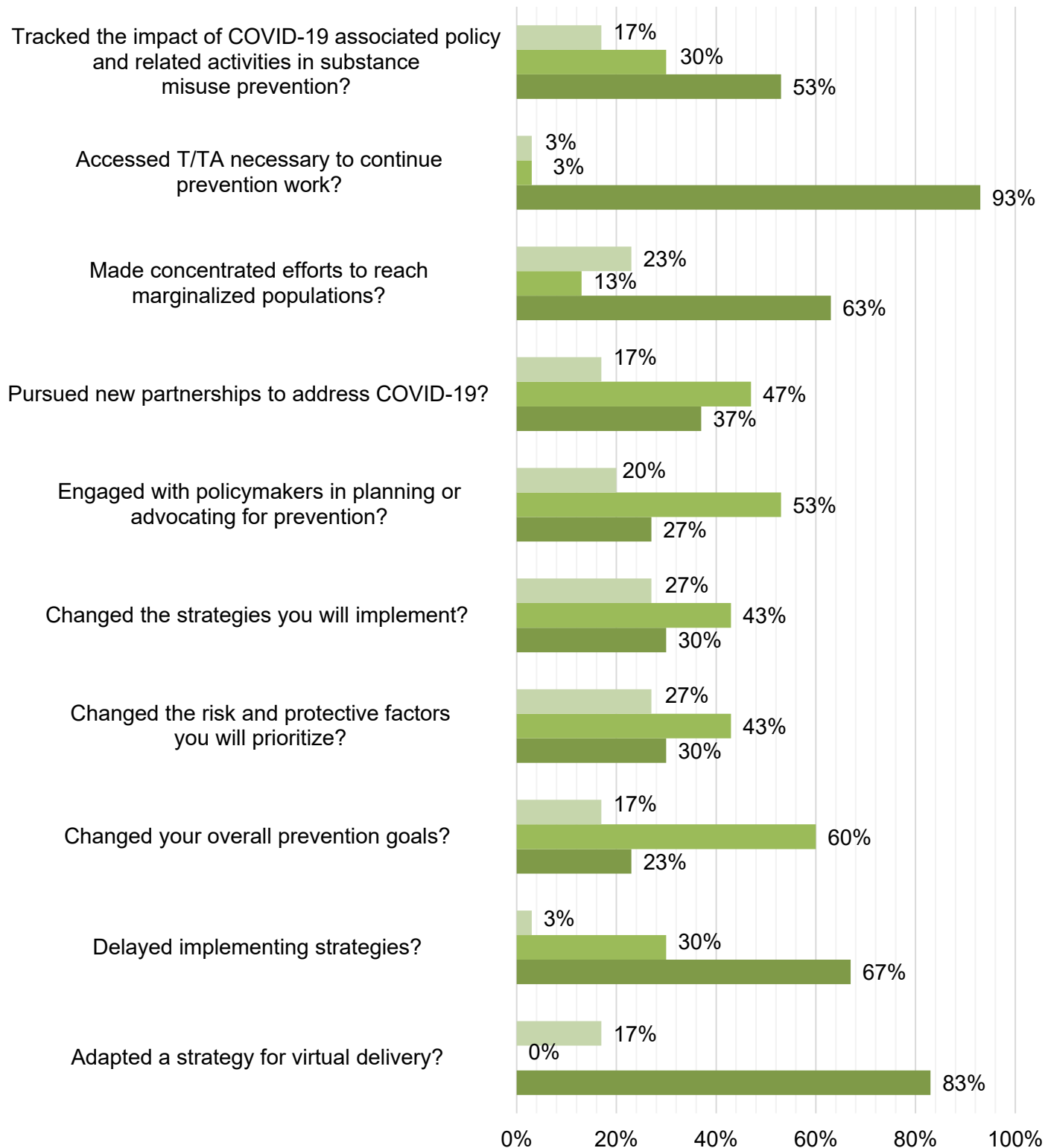
The majority of participants (21%) indicated they had not conducted services virtually prior to COVID-19. Training and technical assistance to communities or volunteers was the most frequent activity conducted virtually prior to COVID-19; not one participant indicated they had conducted parenting or family management classes virtually prior to the pandemic.



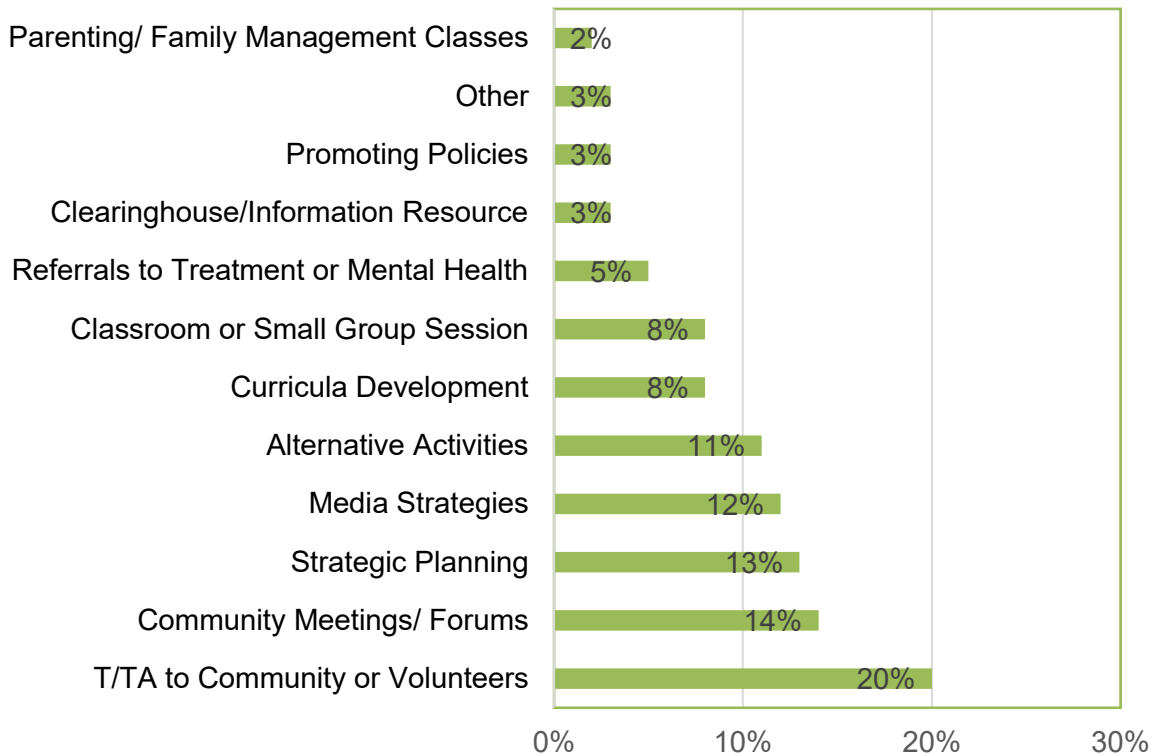
Changes in Prevention Work Since COVID-19

Since the inception of COVID-19, have you or your organization . . .

Plan to No Yes



What strategies have you adapted since COVID-19?



What strategies have you delayed since COVID-19?



Successes or Lessons Learned During COVID-19

Several themes emerged on successes and lessons learned from participants during reflection on COVID-19.

- *Plan for situations like COVID-19 in advance so prevention work can be continued and be as productive as possible.*
- *Use blended learning techniques in curricula, so the field is not as dependent on face-to-face delivery.*
- *Cross-train staff in different types of technology, so you have expertise in various online delivery methods.*
- *Utilize skills for engaging new partners during the pandemic (e.g., media).*
- *Be creative and proactive in delivering prevention messages.*
- *Address prevention staff personal stressors and concerns during a pandemic and encourage self-care.*
- *Recognize that some services are difficult during these events (school-related activities), but work to adapt in new ways.*
- *Use social media to stay connected during stay-at-home orders and provide information via Facebook, Instagram, etc.*
- *Use Zoom or another platform to hold virtual coalition meetings.*
- *Learn new ways to handle emergencies and reach out to partners.*

One participant stated, “We can do more than we thought virtually. I think a lot of agencies are learning this, but at the same time there is a lot that has to be put on hold because of this as well.”