



Transcript:

Successes and Challenges in School-based Prevention During COVID-19: A Panel Discussion

Presenter: Erin Ficker, Rebecca Anton, Kathryn Draper, Felicia Ibarra, Jenny O'Brien, & Kaitlin Panka
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ANN SCHENSKY: Good afternoon, everyone. Welcome. We're going to give people a minute or two to get logged on and get settled and we'll get started.

OK, we're going to get started. Again, welcome, everyone, to our webinar today, school-based prevention, successes and challenges. Our moderator today will be Erin Ficker. This webinar is brought to you by the Great Lakes PTTC. And SAMSHA, the Great Lakes ATTC, MHTTC, and PTTC are funded through cooperative agreements from SAMSHA.

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We have some housekeeping details for you today. If you are having technical issues, please individually message Kristina Spannbaauer or Stephanie Behlman in the chat section and they'll be happy to help you out. If you have questions for the speakers today, please put them in the Q&A section located at the bottom of your screen. They will respond to these questions as part of the presentation.

We will also be using automated transcription during the webinar today. You will be directed to a link at the end of the presentation for a very short survey. We would really appreciate it if you could take some time to fill it out. Takes about three minutes and it's about how we report back to SAMSHA. Certificates of attendance will be sent to all who attend the full session. They will be sent out via email, and they take about a week. We are recording this session, and it will be available on our website in about two weeks. If you would like to see what else we're up to, feel free to follow us on social media. And with this, I'm going to send it over to Erin.

ERIN FICKER: Thank you, Ann, so . Much and I am very excited to welcome you all to our school-based prevention, successes and challenges panel



discussion today, on April 1. And this is no joke. Successes and challenges in school-based prevention have been quite difficult to find in the past year. So I wonder, as our audience, if you have the ability to raise your hands and share with us how many of our attendees are currently school-based prevention providers? How many of you are currently school-based prevention providers and are joining us? Great. Great.

Looks like a lot of you are. And if you can put your hands down, those of you who are school-based prevention providers, how many of you can raise your hand again and say you've had some challenges in the past year? You have had some challenges. Yep. It's been a challenging year, there is no doubt. And if you'd like to, use the chat to share with us, those of you who can use the chat, share with us which of the curriculums you're using in your school-based prevention program. So just take a sec to do that, if you'd like to share which of the programs you're using.

And I see people are coming out. We're seeing people doing Too Good for Drugs, and the Botvin Program, Signs of Suicide, what else, sport. Feel free to go ahead and keep-- Strengthening Families, these are some classics, Too Good for Drugs. Wonderful. Positive Action and PPW.

Great. Yep. So lots of really great We Thinkers, lots of great programs that are often set in schools, some in after school time, some can do both. But great to see that you guys are out there doing this great work. So we know it's been a difficult year and we all know why that this year of challenge that COVID has brought us.

So see if I can use my own slides. There we go. COVID-19 crisis school-based prevention has got me thinking a lot in terms of QI language or quality improvement language. And I've really been thinking of it in these terms. And really, we had this wonderful, active, happy school, these active every day life and school that was vibrant.

And you can see in this picture. We have these children close together and doing activities. And then COVID really disrupted every aspect of every part of all of our lives. It's something we've all been talking about for the past year. I know we tire of talking about it.

It disrupted our work, our school, our lives, our travel, our socializing, everything. And our classrooms went from bustling activity, full of programming, full of life, to absolutely disruption. So I've been thinking of that in this way, this complete halt, this disruption. And in QI, in quality improvement, we talk about disruption. So we were completely disrupted. And so spring of 2020 the schools closed across the country. Classrooms went from that bustling environment to empty. And what happens was our school administrators and prevention providers at home became the ones who were bustling, but at home, by ourselves, on Zoom, trying to figure out



how we were going to continue to provide education. And just absolutely scrambling to figure out what to do.

And at first, there was nothing. We're going to close for two weeks. In my community, it was, we're going to close for a week, and then we'll have spring break, and then we'll probably come back. And then it was, we're going to close for probably another couple of weeks, then we'll come back. We're going to send you home with some work. It'll probably be another couple weeks.

And our lives started to come, and then another couple weeks, and we started to live in a series of chunked out couple weeks, couple months, until we started to realize after a while that this was the long haul. So it became clear that we were going to have to plan. We were going to have to plan for more than just worksheets and more than just, we'll get into the classroom soon enough.

It was obvious for a lot of us that administrators weren't thinking about how prevention was going to be a part of spring. We were just trying to make sure that we were connecting with children. We realized that for a lot of us, in a lot of places, school was a mess. Prevention programs weren't a priority. And while, for some schools they were thinking about social and emotional health of children, it was touching base with them and making sure they were safe. It was making sure they were getting something to do, it was making sure that they were getting food to families. But it wasn't making sure that prevention was necessarily reaching those families. And we really, really began to understand the scale of this destruction during that spring shut down.

After the disruption, came the summer. And whew, we made it through that crazy summer. We were still in a period of-- or that spring-- and we were still in a period of destruction, but we had a pause where we could take a period to adapt. And now, the schools were closed and there was a time to really focus on what we were going to do. But we, as prevention providers, had no idea what was going to happen.

And to be honest, I don't think schools knew what they were going to do, either. Were we going back to school? Were we going to continue with this, with remote learning, with staying home, and being remote via, whether it was worksheets sent home, whether it was via Zoom, or Microsoft Teams, or whatever technology we were using, via iPads, different technology. Schools were scrambling to figure out how they were going to train teachers and get schools up and running.

And in some cases, they were considering social and emotional learning, they were considering prevention. But in most cases, we found they were just trying to figure out how to deliver basic educational services and how they



were going to adapt. Prevention with figuring out, how could they get it? And prevention providers were figuring out the same things.

How can I get in a classroom that's socially distant? How can I get into a school that's being run entirely virtually? How can I adapt my programs? How can I adapt my curriculum? How can I work with developers?

So it was a period where we had an opportunity to take a deep breath and spend some time learning. But still, really unknown. Maybe we would open back up and things would be normal was the secret hope in the back of everyone's mind.

And then the school year came. And honestly, there was still a lot unknown. We were still in a state of substantial destruction, but we were better prepared. We spent the summer preparing.

We knew that there was a chance that we would be virtual. And we kind of knew what that might look like. Maybe it would be hybrid where we were part in school and part virtual. Or maybe we would get to be back in-person on some level, and we knew no matter what it wouldn't look like it used to. So we spent some time preparing. And worst of all, we knew that it could be, maybe, some days virtual, some days hybrid, and some weeks in-person, and back and forth as the virus continued to change our world. And so we continued to adapt.

And this was a time where we took everything we learned over the summer, everything we saw happen in the spring, and we tested it and we put it in place. We implemented it, we saw if it worked, we changed it, we tested it again, we implemented and tested those changes and those adaptations. And that's what these panelists I'm going to introduce to you today, that's what they did.

And that's what we all did. Whether we knew whether or not, we were implementing this quality improvement model of adapting, implementing, and testing new approaches to prevention education, to prevention curriculum, implementation, everything that we did. So today's panelists that I want to introduce you to today are from three different states here in the Midwest. Jenny O'Brien from the Boys Girls Club of Wayne County, Indiana. Kathryn Draper from the LEO Program in Marshfield, Wisconsin. And the team of Felicia Ibarra, Kaitie Panka-- I really hope I said your name right, I realized I just didn't ask until now-- and Beckie Anton from Youth Outreach Services in Illinois.

These three programs did everything they could during those three periods. And I'm going to have them present to you their goals, successes, and challenges during those three periods of disruption, adaptation, and implementation, and test during this COVID challenge, and where they are today. So I'm really proud to introduce them today.



We're going to start with Jenny O'Brien. And before I get started, if you have questions today, I think Ann had mentioned in her introduction that we are using the question and answer feature instead of in the chat. If you can write your question and answers in the question and answer chat at the top or the bottom of your screen, you can write the question and answers there. And if you have one that's specific to one of our panelists, if you could just write the agency for who you're asking. You can just write BGC, or Jenny, or whoever you're asking for, we'll make sure that we get that to them.

We will be taking all the questions at the end. Or if it's for everyone, you can also indicate that. That would be fantastic. So Jenny, welcome. Thank you for joining us.

JENNY O'BRIEN: Welcome. Thank you for letting me be here.

ERIN FICKER: I'm so excited. I did just want to ask you, how you're doing today?

JENNY O'BRIEN: Doing pretty good. We had snow on the ground. What a way to wake up.

ERIN FICKER: Oh, that is unfortunate. I saw flakes fall yesterday and it was a little heartening here in Chicago. So I'm sorry to hear that Indiana had some as well. Well, I just wanted to ask you if you could tell us a little bit about what programs you're operating, and how many schools you were in before the pandemic, and how many schools you're in today. And then we launch into your slides.

JENNY O'BRIEN: All righty. So I've been involved with the Boys Girls Club and in prevention for 13 years. We are currently facilitating three different programs. We are doing Too Good for Drugs, Project Alert, and Botvin Life Skills Training. We are in two intermediate schools. They serve fifth, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade.

We are facilitating with the fifth graders, the seventh graders, and the eighth graders at those two schools. All of the schools get Too Good for Drugs with fifth grade, one of the schools gets a seventh and eighth grade Botvin Life Skills, another school gets the Project Alert, the Too Good for Drugs, and the Botvin Life Skills Training. And then our junior high, we also work with a junior high that is just seventh and eighth grade. Or no, sorry, sixth, seventh, and eighth grade. And they serve all of their grades with the too good for drugs program.

ERIN FICKER: Great. Well, that's a lot going on, a lot of different programs, and a lot of moving parts.

So let's see. Tell us about the spring of 2020 and the goal and how you got there, your goals and successes.



JENNY O'BRIEN: Right. So when the pandemic shut down our schools, there was a lot of worry in the prevention world. We didn't know what was going to happen, how long it was going to happen. It was just crazy.

Luckily, before our program shut down, as I said, we were facilitating in three different curriculums in two different intermediate schools and that junior high. The junior high was actually sending us the data, which was great. Our direct reach goals, the number of people, the youth that we needed to serve had already been met. So we actually exceeded that number, doubled that number before the pandemic.

Therefore, we were not concerned with prevention at that time, which was great. We instead took our prevention programming and geared it towards our challenges and our concerns. Sorry.

Our challenges included, we had incomplete data because programs had just gotten started. We were focused more on our community needs because we saw a need in our community. We were seeing an uptake in suicides and different things like that.

So our challenges include keeping in touch with our youth in our community. And we completely, like I said, changed our goals. We realized that we needed to focus more on our community. We could not do that without going via social media because we were not able to do in person. So we posted mental health awareness information. We posted different things about social distancing. We did drug awareness facts during the National Drug Awareness Week.

And then because we are Boys and Girls Club, we also focused on outdoor things that they could do with their families like nature hikes or scavenger hunts, things they could do around the town. So completely changed our goals.

ERIN FICKER: That's great, though. Wonderful. So just to clarify, you had some sessions of your curriculum in process that had to stop?

JENNY O'BRIEN: Correct.

ERIN FICKER: But you had already met your contractual obligations?

JENNY O'BRIEN: We met our contractual obligations. I can't say that word. But we had met those. So we did not have to do-- we were actually at 200% of our goal last year. So we were not worried about losing 50 to 60 kids or 100 kids with their survey data, because we had already gotten above and beyond what we needed.



ERIN FICKER: That's great, that's great. Cool. Well, let's move on to how you handled the summer.

JENNY O'BRIEN: So this summer was a whole different story. We watched as the guidelines changed. And they changed and they changed again. We watched what our schools were thinking. And our program goals, we were worried about it. So we set our numbers a whole lot lower than we usually would because we wanted to make sure that we could still reach our goals for what we needed for requirements.

So this meant that half our youth, they decided they were going to go to hybrid schedule. And we realized in July that we were in trouble. So I immediately reached out and accessed the school. With our relationship that I have built over the last five years, we accessed what we could do, what we couldn't do. Northeastern, the junior high school was already on board. They were already trained. So they were able to say, hey, we can run the program. We don't need you to come in and do it. Great.

The schools here, the local school district that I work with, our intermediate schools, we're actually in both of the schools. And the principal said, we're not letting anybody in the building, or the superintendent.

So we went in and I immediately emailed the principals and said, "What does this mean? Where do we go? How do we continue what we're doing?" And the principal at one building said, "Can you model it, train our staff? We'll take over and still give you the data."

It was great. They were willing to work with us, do whatever was needed. And the other principal said, "We want you in our building. Your programs are beneficial to us. They meet our needs. We want you in the building." And so both principals were willing to pay to have the teachers trained with the life skills. Project Learn is a free training. And I am a train the trainer for the two different drugs programs. So I can train the teachers and they only had to pay the Botvin life skills.

But the schools both agreed these are important programs. They wanted to do that.

And so once the school district was trained, we were great to go, except that hybrid schedule was still a challenge. Because that meant that our fifth graders are on a six-week grading period, which caused a little bit of trouble there. Because with the kids being hybrid, they're in school 15 days out of 30 days in that grading period. So that would mean I was there with them at least 10, if not 12 times of the 15 times they were actually in the building.

But because it was hybrid, half the group came on Monday, half the group came on Tuesday, and then they alternated Fridays. So Monday, Wednesday



group or Tuesday, Thursday group, I had to look at the teachers and go, "OK, so I need to be in your building four out of five days a week? I can do this." And the teacher at the school that we were allowed to be in said, "I will help pick up. I will do the Tuesday, Thursday group if you do the Monday, Wednesday group."

That way, he could see me model it and then he could present it the next day. Even though he was trained, I kind of gave him that feedback because he was a new health teacher for this year. So training them, facilitating them. The school all the way up to the superintendents sign MOUs that, hey, we want to make this work. We're going to make it work.

And so yes, we had challenges. But we worked around them by the first day of school. That was a good year overall.

ERIN FICKER: Good. I mean, it sounds like you did a lot of capacity building that's going to carry forward into yet another year and another year and another year.

JENNY O'BRIEN: Correct.

ERIN FICKER: Let's talk about the school year, how it actually panned out. But that was a lot of the planning. And your goal for the actual year was to serve 545 youth. Tell me about that number a little bit.

JENNY O'BRIEN: So again, we set our numbers low because we were a little concerned with COVID, could we physically as one person be in three or four different places. We had actually opened up the position that I have available that someone could facilitate.

And as I said, during the summer, we were able to be in the two schools to at least get them started, but train them and then get new staff.

So we opened up the position for our prevention specialist. Nobody wanted to work because in August, they were still getting the benefits and they were still getting the unemployment benefits. And nobody wanted to take that position. That being said, we're still dealing with the hybrid schedule. That meeting requirement of having the kids there 80% of the time has been a challenge. However that being said, for each group that we work with, we are able to keep that between 70% and 75%, if not, 80% or higher. So again, we're meeting that.

Keeping the facilitators on track is difficult when, as Erin said at the beginning, you have the hybrid schedule, you have the in-person schedule, you have the snow days thrown into that and trying to get your curriculum into that time zone with all those things going on. It's been a little interesting with that.



But the biggest success is that we are only in one school with two programs half time, meaning the teachers, the school supports it. They're doing the other half of our program.

And then the Botvin life skills program, I am teaching both days of that week because I didn't want to throw a new teacher three new curriculum. So I took that one back from him.

And then our intermediate school, they are facilitating all of their programs. Capacity building, they have actually stepped in, jumped in with both feet. They are actually providing it now to their sixth, seventh, and eighth grades. Plus size are successes to this. Our class sizes are smaller and our capacity and our sustainability continues to increase.

And I didn't put this on my slide because I just found out the numbers. We are already at 900 youths served this year because of that capacity and sustainability facilitating with the other facilitators.

ERIN FICKER: That's fantastic, yeah.

Wonderful. Well, thank you. This is amazing. And if you have questions for Jenny about how she does this and how her programs worked and what were the tickets to her success, or if you want her to expand on some of the challenges that she faced, go ahead and enter those questions into the question and answer pod. And we will address those towards the end of our webinar.

I want to applaud you. We are learning from so many people in so many different areas of our work that the adaptations that we're making, some of them when this is over, we are going to throw out the window and walk away from. And some of them, we're going to keep and they are lessons well learned.

So looks like you have a little bit of both of that. So thank you so much, Jenny, for taking the time to share with the group and with us your lessons learned and your challenges over the year. Thank you.

We are going to move on to the LEO Program. And Kathryn Draper from Marshfield, Wisconsin.

KATHRYN DRAPER: Hello.

ERIN FICKER: Hello. Oh, my phone just made a weird noise. Did you guys hear it? Are we good? OK, that was just me. Wonderful.

Hello. Thank you so much for being here and for taking the time. I was hoping you could tell us a little bit about your program. I know it's a little unique. And it's helpful if you could just tell us a little bit about it.



KATHRYN DRAPER: Yeah, so we are a grant-funded program through the Department of Children and Family in Wisconsin.

And so our program is actually evidence-informed. So when we were writing our proposal for the grant, we looked at a bunch of different programs, picked out things that worked really well for them, trying to improve on things that we were seeing some gaps in.

And this is our third year in the program. And so we're collecting data and trying to see what worked well and what didn't.

So we are a little bit of a unique piece in that our funding is also located within just Wood County right now. So as we're kind of test running this program with our schools, kind of seeing how it's working.

ERIN FICKER: Great. And how many schools are you in?

KATHRYN DRAPER: Yeah, so we are currently in about eight schools in the county. We have about two left to kind of expand to within our high schools.

ERIN FICKER: And it's all high school?

KATHRYN DRAPER: Yes. So the ages for our program are 14 through 20, so high school is kind of the place we've been targeting for that.

ERIN FICKER: Wonderful, great. And you've been at it three years with this particular program?

KATHRYN DRAPER: Yep, yep. So this is our third year here.

ERIN FICKER: Great. So you're two years in and you got hit with this craziness.

KATHRYN DRAPER: Yes, yes. It was definitely something as we were just getting our feet on the ground feeling like we really have some solid foundation to move forward with our schools, we had a lot of changes all happening at once.

ERIN FICKER: Oh, so much fun. And then so then in spring, spring came and your goal was, you set a goal to continue school partnerships. Tell us a little bit about your successes and your challenges there?

KATHRYN DRAPER: Yeah, so I mean, as you mentioned, it was kind of a week-by-week. At first, we thought it was just going to be an extended spring break and that we would be kind of back in the classroom in a few weeks and being able to just kind of readjust the dates that we had chosen.



So really, it was just making sure that our schools knew that we were still here and that we were still wanting to do programming. Obviously, they had a lot on their plate. So we were not necessarily the first thing that they were thinking of. But we wanted them to know that we weren't just dropping off the face of the earth and this is something that we were working on creating alternative options for as we went.

And we kind of worked on sessions, planning for the summer. We had plans to be in different summer schools with our high schools. We had plans to be part of different community organizations, of the library, trying to figure out communication with them of, are you still doing this, is this happening, what is it looking like? And trying to stay as up to date on the ever-changing world that we were living in.

Luckily, we were able to stay in contact with our students. So after they finished the eight session classroom curriculum, they have an option to do one-on-one mentorship with us, which was so valuable for us to be able to continue to connect with those students one-on-one.

And also, trying to provide them support as they were also saying, "All of these opportunities are being lost for me. I'm really struggling with online school. I don't know what's happening," this uncertainty and really helping them kind of get that student perspective. As we were looking at schooling from more of an outsider point of view, they were looking at the school year as, this is my sophomore, junior, senior year of high school. And what is this going to look like?

ERIN FICKER: So what about the challenges?

KATHRYN DRAPER: Yes, the challenges. So we were-- in the middle of a few more sessions, we were trying to figure out like, OK, so these students have gone through half the program now. Is there a way for us to get them the other half of the program or trying to figure out communication wise. And our program, we were very proud that it was a very hands on, in person, interactive program. So we were not at a place to just flip a switch and go to virtual right away.

So unfortunately, we had to kind of cancel those as we realized towards the end of the school year that we were not going to be going back in person. And that options for us to finish that curriculum were not necessarily there. We were able to offer those students opportunities this fall if they went through the first half and wanted to continue, which was great. But it was definitely something, as we were looking at this, where we were not prepared for virtual at all. This is nothing that ever crossed our mind because we loved being in the classrooms and having that connection with students and providing them those hands-on opportunities.



So unfortunately, the spring came with a lot of kind of, OK, we're just going to have to stop planning for what we have and kind of take a couple steps back to figure out what we need to make this look like for the next school year.

ERIN FICKER: Great. Well, it sounds like you tried to make the most of it. But like all of us kept thinking, well, maybe in a few, maybe in a few, maybe in a few.

Well, let's look at what summer looked like in Marshfield. Oh, adapting.

KATHRYN DRAPER: Oh, yes.

ERIN FICKER: Sorry, I missed one. Not always so good at this. Summer, you were looking at-- your goal in the summer was to revamp the curriculum.

KATHRYN DRAPER: Yeah, so we kind of took this opportunity as, OK, so we're not going to be able to facilitate the program like we had planned this spring. So luckily, because we were able to keep connections with those students that were in mentorship, we really gave them the microphone and said, OK, what worked well? What did you love about this? What didn't work well?

It was really helpful as we were also trying to figure out, how can we work these activities that were normally hands on or group activities and make them individual or make them things that we can do virtually. So our students were so wonderful in that and so reflective and introspective, too, of, this is what really helped me implement or cement these ideas. And these are things I don't want to be taken away or the authenticity of our program be changed. So it was great as we were adapting to how we were going to make this virtual, to also have that student feedback, which was really wonderful.

ERIN FICKER: Great. I love the adaptation piece, is that period of adaptation you're talking about.

KATHRYN DRAPER: Yes, yes, definitely looking at-- at this point, I think we were still very hopeful that we would be back in the classroom in fall as normal, pre-COVID. So we were kind of looking at, OK, let's take this quieter period that we weren't expecting and really investing it back into our program. So we were able to do a lot of test runs, too, with our students, which was wonderful to get the feedback. We always joke as facilitators that as much as we try to put ourselves in the head of a high schooler, we really don't know sometimes. And things that we think are going to land great with them, they're like, "Um." And some things that they are really connecting with we're like, "Really?"

So it was great to have that student perspective, too.



ERIN FICKER: I know. We all think we're young and hip and in touch until we realize that we're not.

KATHRYN DRAPER: Yes.

ERIN FICKER: OK, challenges.

KATHRYN DRAPER: Yes, challenges were a big one. So all of our schools, of course, are on different online platforms. Some are using Google Classroom. Some are using Canvas. Some are using Schoology. So we were trying to navigate, how can we meet all of the schools where they're at? So we had this great idea that we would create our own LEO program Google Classroom and that we could just add the students to that classroom or add the teachers to that classroom.

So we spent a lot of the summer creating this fully revamped, online classroom with all of our materials, creating everything so that it would work for all of our schools.

Until we realized that apparently, Google does not speak to Google very well. So our Google Classroom, because we were not technically through a school, we could not collaborate or connect a classroom with the classes that were through an actual school.

So we had to, as we were like, "Oh, great," finally taking a deep breath, finally taking a moment to say, "Oh, great we found a solution. This is going to work."

And then kind of as August came around, it was like, "OK, never mind. Let's start back and figure out how else we can meet our schools where they're at."

ERIN FICKER: Frustrating.

KATHRYN DRAPER: Yes. And then also, yeah. We had to create a lot of plans kind of A to Z of, some of our schools were going back full time in person, five days a week. Some of our schools were doing a cohort style, 1/2 days. Some of our schools were doing all online. Some of our schools were doing hybrid, where half the students were in the classroom and half the students were joining from home.

So we really had to create a lot of different plans and like, this activity will work virtually but might not work as well in a hybrid. So let's find an alternative to that.

We really wanted to be able also knowing that in Wisconsin especially, our policy has changed very quickly within our governor and our state and what was required, what the schools were expected to do. So we also had to be able to-- when one of those decisions was made, to then be able to very



quickly pivot to, OK, now they're going back to full in person instead of hybrid. So let's adjust what we're looking at with this class.

ERIN FICKER: Yeah. There was a lot of quick changes.

KATHRYN DRAPER: Yeah. And the schools were also unsure of what their reopening plan was until like the last week of August, it felt like. So as we look at some of our schools, we're like, "Yes, we want you to be in our schools again. We loved our partnership. We're just not quite sure what that's going to look like yet."

So a lot of it was also kind of waiting for us, of, OK, we know that they're interested. We know that we're continuing the partnership that we have. But we're just not quite sure how it's going to fit together as we're looking at the differences of what school looks like this year.

ERIN FICKER: Great. Well, that was a lot to handle over the summer. So let's hear about how the school year actually played out thus far. Tell us about your goal and how your successes started.

KATHRYN DRAPER: Yeah, so really meeting the schools where they're at, right? All of our schools started in a very different way. Some of them were doing that hybrid cohort. Some of them were doing all in-person. And especially our smaller schools were doing very different things than our bigger schools.

And so we had to really figure out, OK, where can we meet their needs. And one of the ways that we kind of adjusted was, we saw a lot of our schools struggling with, what do we do with gym class? How do we do a virtual gym class?

So what we offer to them, why don't you use our program as your virtual gym class. It's a great opportunity for them to learn about mental health, physical health, and also hopefully taking some of that burden off of our schools. We know that they were not only trying to make a plan for how the school year was going to work, but also what the curriculum was going to look like and how they needed to adjust to meet their students.

We also, because we had planned A through Z, were able to quickly pivot and adjust when our schools pivoted and adjusted. So we were so lucky to work with great teachers that were very wonderful communicators with us to say, "Hey, just a heads up. I'm thinking this is going to be changing or I'm thinking that this might be happening. How can we adapt? How can we prepare?" Their flexibility along with ours worked well, where teachers were able to kind of say-- there was a lot of moments where technology didn't happen. We played a video and half the students at home could hear it, but the students in the classroom couldn't. And it was great to have teachers and students that I think at this point everyone is like, "Yep, that's just technology and we just



kind of need to go with the flow and figure out how we're going to make it work."

So we really lucked out with this teachers and partners that we were able to work with to make our program as successful as it could have been with all of the different students and platforms that they were using to connect.

ERIN FICKER: That makes sense. And that communication of them giving you the heads up, "This might change and here we go," and lots of changes this year. The challenges that came with all of that as well, tell us about that.

KATHRYN DRAPER: Yes, so when those changes happened, they happened very quickly. A lot of times it was a decision that came out on Friday and that Monday morning, it was already happening.

So we had schools that were doing pretty well for the first couple of weeks. And then all of a sudden in October, they had a bunch of cases break out. So they just decided to go all remote very quickly.

So as those changes were happening really quickly, it was not only a challenge for us to give the teachers all the materials they needed. But then, they needed to then turn around and get those materials to their students. And as I'm sure some of you know, sometimes students don't necessarily check their emails as often as we do as working adults. And so sometimes it was, OK, so the students haven't replied or hasn't come in. They haven't attended virtually in a while. How can we kind of meet them where they're at or try and figure out what's going on here.

I will say, I think attendance or not attendance but engagement too was much higher when they were in the classroom with the teacher than when they were all joining from home.

I think that's a similar pattern that we've seen across a lot of virtual remote individuals. I think students feel much more comfortable to engage and ask questions when they're in a classroom with their peers than when they're at home and they can turn the camera off or stay muted.

And it's kind of more intimidating to have to do that alone and do it kind of virtually. So trying to meet our students where they're at and also understanding. Zoom fatigue is a real thing and our students, when they were doing virtual school at home, the last thing they wanted to do was have to log into another meeting.

So we tried to be really honest and open with them and say, "Yeah, we're feeling that, too. We're really tired." And how can we make the most of the situation that we're in.



It was great to have a lot of student authenticity within that, of them saying, "You know, I'm here. I'm engaged. But I just can't have my camera on today, or I just need to be sitting in this space rather than this. But I'm here and I'm listening." And really, them giving us what they could and us meeting them where they were at.

ERIN FICKER: That's great, yeah. I saw a lot of Zoom fatigue in my own home with my own little students that are here. So yeah, we all have experienced that.

Well, thank you so much. That sounds like you guys had a lot going on, a lot of pivoting, a lot of changes in working with that older audience, probably talking to a lot of black squares with just no faces in them, which I know is very difficult. I'm sure you'll have a lot of questions from your peers about engaging with that high school level audience.

So if you have any questions-- thank you so much for sharing your story with us about your successes and challenges. If you have any questions for Kathryn, you can put those in the Q&A. Just let us know that they are for the LEO program or for Kathryn. And we will get to them at the end.

Because we want to go on and hear from Youth Outreach Services, which has a very different model for how they work with their schools and their set up. And they're from my state, the beautiful state of Illinois.

So I'd like to introduce the team from Youth Outreach Services. And we have with us Felicia, Katie, and Beckie. And if you guys can turn on your cameras so we can see you. They are in both Chicago, Illinois and Lyons Township, which is a suburb on the outskirts of the Chicagoland area.

And they're taking-- let's see if I can see you guys. There you are. I just couldn't see you because you were further down. There you go.

Their team is fantastic. I actually, because I worked in Illinois for so long, know a little bit about Youth Outreach Services that I can't wait to hear a little bit about. Can you tell us a little bit about what programs you provide, both in Chicago, I know you're going to tell us a little bit about your programs both in Chicago and in Lyons Township. So I think Felicia, you were going to tell us a little bit about what programs you provide.

FELICIA IBARRA: Yes, absolutely. So we provide Project Alert, which is for middle schoolers, seventh and eighth graders. So seventh graders receive the full core curriculum. And then the eighth graders receive some boosters to follow up.

We also offer TND, which is project Towards No Drug abuse, and that's for high school students. And we also offer Generation Arts, which is an opioid



short, two-day curriculum for middle schoolers and high schoolers. It says it's for teens, so we offer it to them as well.

ERIN FICKER: Great. And do you guys-- how long have you been working in the schools that you are in now?

FELICIA IBARRA: For quite a few years. I've been with prevention here at Youth Outreach Services for three years. And I know that we were in some of the schools before my time. So for many years, we'll say.

ERIN FICKER: That's great. Can you tell me a little bit-- so Youth Outreach Services does other services in the schools too, not just the prevention programming, is that correct?

FELICIA IBARRA: Yes, that's correct. So they offer counseling services. And so that is a huge way for us to network and meet the school staff because we offer so many different services. So yes, we also offer counseling.

ERIN FICKER: Great. So you have a really strong connection to those schools, which I think is one of your many strengths as a large organization. And you're a fairly large organization within the Chicagoland area.

FELICIA IBARRA: Yes, we have quite a few different locations.

ERIN FICKER: Yes, yes. You're a very well-known and well-respected organization here in Chicago and beyond. I can't say Chicagoland one more time. I just can't do it.

Great. Well, let's get started. And I know you guys have a plan for splitting up your slides between the three of you. So I am going to go ahead and let you guys take over and tell us-- have you guys start and tell us about the spring.

KAITIE PANKA: Yeah. So I got the spring slide. So our goal was to simply prepare materials for online facilitation. So during the spring 2020, everything seemed to be up in the air. Though our prevention team at Youth Outreach Services kept a level head and was determined to move forward despite the current uncertainty, which led to a few successes.

The first action we wanted to take was to create presentation slides that were more vibrant and engaging than the slides we already had from previous in-class facilitation.

So we researched different ways to update our slides. And we came across this graphic design platform called Canva, which is used to create presentations, posters, documents, along with other visual content. So our previous slides were in PowerPoint. So we went to work making new and improved slides in Canva which included bright colors, moving graphics,



photos, fun text. And all of those helped to keep our students engaged virtually.

Along with Canva, we incorporated Kahoot and Padlet into our lessons to provide different forms of participation in addition to using the chat in the meeting.

ERIN FICKER: For those of you who don't know, just so you do know, Kahoot is a quiz show, kind of a quiz, a question.

KAITIE PANKA: Yeah. So we use it for different review games. So it shows like an answer and then it's kind of, I guess, almost like Jeopardy.

ERIN FICKER: Yeah, yeah. There you go.

KAITIE PANKA: Yeah, there you go.

ERIN FICKER: And it has a way to communicate where people can post different things. It's almost like a Post-It note wall, right?

KAITIE PANKA: Exactly. Yeah, everyone can see it.

ERIN FICKER: Yeah.

KAITIE PANKA: And I would like to note for Padlet, we use that a lot for many different things. So we use to use a Padlet to post resources for students to look at outside of class.

And then we also use it as a portal for students to ask questions anonymously. Maybe they weren't so comfortable asking it in the chat or in class. They could just ask it on the Padlet and we could get back to them that way. And then also, we used it for kind of like a Q&A during class, as well.

ERIN FICKER: Cool.

KAITIE PANKA: Another success we had was creating facilitator's notes for every single lesson to encourage uniformity and consistency among our staff. So we have two substance use prevention teams, as Felicia noted, one in Chicago and one in the South suburbs or in Lyons Township.

We created these facilitation notes so that way, if one of us had to step in and cover a class or two on the other team, we would have everything laid out and ready to go.

And now for future, we have these in case there are any new staff or any other opportunities for virtual facilitation. It just helped us out a lot.

ERIN FICKER: That is a significantly impressive use of dead time.



KAITIE PANKA: Yes.

ERIN FICKER: That is smart. That's a really smart use of time.

KAITIE PANKA: Yes. And now for challenges, planning for the unknown. We didn't know what platforms we were going to use, kind of like what Kathryn was saying.

And we decided to meet schools where they were at. And we decided to use whichever platform they were using.

And along with this, we didn't know which curriculum we were going to facilitate. So we definitely needed to be prepared for everything, everything. Creating slides to accommodate different time frames, class times were different than they usually would be because all of our schools were virtual. They were going to be in the school year.

So we had to create slides that were going to allow us to be flexible while still following that fidelity. And it definitely helped that the state was being a bit more flexible as well, which helped with this particular challenge.

Anticipating curriculum changes was another challenge we encountered. We wanted to move forward and take action on developing the slides I talked about with our successes. But we were also waiting for the state and the curriculum developers for virtual changes. So we were playing the waiting game.

And then one more challenge, we were also awaiting communication from school partners. And at this point, the students weren't even getting their own curricula, let alone our prevention curricula.

And as a lot of us may know, the ability to communicate with schools, teachers, and/or admin was cut to just mainly email. And since everyone was home, dropping by the schools or even giving them a phone call was really non-existent. So once again, we were definitely playing that waiting game.

ERIN FICKER: Yeah. That was one of the hardest parts of all of this is just the unknown anxiety that we all felt.

Great. Oh, and I left that one off. Great, well, let's move on and hear about what summer was like for y'all. And we're going to hear from Felicia about how we all weathered the summer.

FELICIA IBARRA: Yes, absolutely. So during the summer, we were still doing a lot of planning. As someone else already mentioned, there was still a lot of the unknown, right?



So our goal was to communicate with existing partners. So our strongest partners stayed in touch with us. And we really pride ourselves on that because as you guys know, networking is very difficult, even if you already have a relationship.

And so our strongest partners stayed in touch. We stayed in touch with them. So that was a really huge success for us. It was almost like they were on standby, which we really, really appreciated. And they were advocating for us, too, which we obviously enjoyed.

So we planned for flexibility regarding this time. So for example, the bell schedule, we knew that was going to change. And especially because a lot of us had worked in schools for so many years, we knew that things were not going to stay the same. And so we planned for bell schedules.

And what ended up happening was, as schools hit us with maybe 45-minute time frames or one-hour time frames or an hour and 15-minute time frames, so we were prepared and editing our slides accordingly. So we had that. Technology issues, we were thinking about that. Excuse my background. I know there's an ambulance going by.

We were planning for that, right? So what my team did was, they created slides. They also were preparing videos for the slides. And they were making sure that they were creating backups so we had more than one facilitator in a room at a time. That was our plan.

We were going to make sure that we sent emails to teachers to make sure that there were multiple copies of things in case technology went down. Because we didn't know which platform we were using or going to use, as Katie said.

And one of the things we did well was just wait in regards to the platforms. So we didn't jump on anything. We told ourselves that we would use whatever the school used.

And we knew, because we've worked with Chicago Public Schools for many years and there's a lot of loopholes to jump through, that we would most likely have to be invited into the classroom virtually, as we were invited in person in the past. So we waited on that and we pride ourselves on that because we were simply invited in.

And then homework assignments, our curricula, they offer homework assignments. And so we knew that we would have to be flexible there, too. If there was limited time or youth did not have computers at home or they were struggling to get Wi-Fi in the city of Chicago, for example, we knew that we were not going to be able to enforce homework assignments to be completed at all or even in a timely manner.



So these are some things that we did successfully over the summer.

ERIN FICKER: That's great. That's wonderful. And I wanted to ask you a question. You said you had more than one facilitator. Was that for technological reasons in case someone dropped off that you planned to have for-- is that?

FELICIA IBARRA: Yes. We did that. We did a lot of planning over the summer. We did a lot of what-if scenarios. I'm big on that. I like to have a counter argument at all times. I like to have many what-ifs figured out. And so my team did a great job of that. So yes.

ERIN FICKER: Great. That's wonderful, yeah. OK, well, tell us about the challenges.

FELICIA IBARRA: Yes. To get straight to the point, the lack of communication. Again, we pride ourselves on networking. However, some of our partners did drop out or they didn't keep in touch with us.

We just couldn't find them, as Katie had mentioned. There's only one way to communicate now and that's via email.

Even with phone numbers during this time, people aren't at the office and they're not really providing maybe their personal phone number, especially teachers. You're not going to get their cell phone number. And reaching them at the school at their extension is just not going to happen.

So a lack of communication from some of our current partners or previous partners was a challenge. And then being informed that we were no longer needed for FY21, that was quite the challenge, right?

And so in Chicago, we lost a school or two but we did gain some schools in Lyons. So we listed it as a challenge. We wanted to be humble. I'm just kidding.

But we lost some, we won some. And so we are living and learning now. And that was true for the summer as well.

ERIN FICKER: A district like Chicago Public School with its size and the challenges that its faced, was that more challenging than a district like Lyons or in the districts in Lyons Township?

FELICIA IBARRA: Yes, so with our grants, we have assigned geographic areas. So even though the city of Chicago welcomes us, we get requests from all different types of schools. And we would love to service these schools. But our grant assigns us geographic areas. And so we have to service schools in these areas.



So it was quite the challenge because the schools in our areas were maybe not prepared for the pandemic, just like many, many schools were. So CPS, Chicago Public Schools is a different challenge, I would say, than the schools in Lyons Township.

ERIN FICKER: [INAUDIBLE]. Sorry. I live two blocks from the city.

FELICIA IBARRA: Yes.

ERIN FICKER: OK, so we'll move right along to, let's hear how the school year panned out. Lots of challenges, lots of what-if scenarios were run. You were already. You've got challenges. You were ready as you could be. So let's hear how the school year actually panned out. And we'll hear from Beckie, I think.

BECKIE ANTON: Yeah.

ERIN FICKER: OK, there you are. Tell us your goal of expanding and adapting virtual services to meet deliverables.

BECKIE ANTON: Yeah, so come August, we did get a couple schools interested. And so we started planning our virtual services. We found out what platforms we were going to be using. In Lyons Township, we mostly used Zoom. But in Chicago, they were using Google Classroom. And some of them use Microsoft Teams.

So then, we kind of just started adapting everything to make sure that we can adequately serve each school that we were in.

And one of our successes was consistently editing our slides after each cycle. So we started planning for this school year in March of last year. That's when we started. We started doing everything. We made the adaptations we thought were going to be good. We also changed them once we got guidance from the state and the curricula.

But once you go in and actually do it, you notice some things that need to be changed. And so after our first cycle, we changed a lot.

We went through our first cycle of the virtual facilitation. After each lesson, we kind of sat down and talked about what needed to be changed. And then we did it again once we finished the cycle.

And that didn't stop. We're on our third or fourth cycle with one of our schools. And we just really changed all the slides again.

We also became more inclusive. As you shared more privately, Padlet was amazing for that. The youth were very comfortable sharing their personal



stories because they know that we wouldn't know who said it and neither would their classmates.

So they were sharing all these personal stories, all these questions. And it was very beneficial for us because we got to answer their questions without them feeling embarrassed or getting bullied by any of the other kids. We also used Kahoot data to inform future facilitation and improve our delivery. So we used Kahoot for the Project Alert Information Review game, which is in lesson 11. And we used it for Champions of RX, which is the second day of Generation RX.

And after you finish a live Kahoot, Kahoot gives you a spreadsheet. It shows you everyone who played. It shows you how many questions each person got wrong, what questions were considered difficult, which is 75% of the youth got it wrong.

And so we use that data to really change the way we emphasize some of these points during our facilitation. Because if these questions were being missed, obviously we were not emphasizing it enough. So we really used that data to go ahead and emphasize different points in our next cycles. We also began using the school websites and social media for different deliverables. So for our communication campaigns for the upcoming National Prevention Week, they're going to promote some of our events. We did it for drug take back.

And so the schools were very willing to post their stuff on their website and their Instagram. And we were very grateful for that.

ERIN FICKER: That's great. That's great. These are all-- I just want to say, these are great examples of what we would consider testing or what we would consider quality improvement small test of change, right? So you change something, you do it, you test it. OK, it works this way. It didn't work this way. I'm going to change it a little bit. I'm going to run that test again. And then you run the test again and you change and you change.

That's just continuous quality improvement. And that's just great so in QI what you were doing was really implement, test, change, implement, test, change, implement, test, change. So that's really great, an example of really good quality improvement practices.

And when you encounter a disruption as big as COVID-19 disrupted schools and prevention, those are all great examples. We all have to do that so you guys did great. That sounds like exactly what you would want to be doing. So great job.

BECKIE ANTON: Yeah, Felicia very much advocates for our team that we are never going to be perfect and there's always something that can make it



better. So we do a lot of reflection and a lot of changes just to make sure we're doing the best that we can.

ERIN FICKER: Great, great. But there's always challenges. So let's talk a little bit about that.

BECKIE ANTON: There are always challenges. So participation from youth and teachers was rough, and it was rough for everyone.

But we did find that when the teachers had their cameras on and they butted in and put in some of their own personal stories, that the youth were more active. But that, again, falls back down to the teachers.

And we had some really, really great teachers who had their cameras on who interacted. We also had great teachers who had their cameras off. But it kind of just depended on the vibe of the class.

But we did find that after lesson like four of Project Alert, we started getting more participation. And I think that's just because we create such a welcome and friendly environment. And we always start class like, "Oh, how's everyone doing? How was your weekend? What are you doing? Did you do anything fun?"

So we still built that relationship without actually being physically in the classroom with them. But participation was rough.

ERIN FICKER: I hear you. So tell me more.

BECKIE ANTON: Yeah, so we also had limited methods of communication, as Felicia and Katie both mentioned. It was strictly email. And so we were emailing the teachers about the Illinois Youth Survey, because registration for that opens up this September.

For those who don't live in Illinois, Illinois Youth Survey gets implemented every two years. And it goes to all the schools. It's free. It's anonymous. So it just kind of asks you like, "Oh, have you ever done marijuana and drank alcohol at the same time? Have you ever driven under the influence?" And it's kind of just getting that data for us. So our job as one of our deliverables is to get more schools involved in that.

And so we're consistently just emailing these schools, emailing these teachers, trying to get them to be like, "Hey, yeah, we can totally do that." But they're uncomfortable because they don't know what life's going to be like next year either. And so that's kind of hard. We email them about curricula and just, that was more at the beginning.



We did email-- one of our failsafe options was we gave a copy of the presentations to each one of the teachers. And they also had copies of the Project Alert videos.

And so if, for some reason, me and whoever I'm facilitating with both went down, the teachers could just pull it up and keep kind of going, especially when it came to the videos. And that helped a lot because sharing your screen with videos, like what was mentioned earlier, does not always work. The audio doesn't always come across.

So our teachers were always more than willing to play those videos for us. With communication campaigns, we emailed the materials over to the schools, have them post them on their website, post them on their social media.

We had some issues with this. They forget. You send them the materials at the beginning of the month, but they're not going to post it for a couple of weeks later.

So we kind of had to change. We had to make sure we were following up and making sure everything was getting posted.

And then our youth advisory committee has not been very active in the Lyons Township area. Chicago does have one up and running. It's a lot of asynchronous. We were kind of just medium schools where they were at when it came to the youth advisory committees.

And then our final challenge was that schools were prioritizing other needs ahead of prevention, as mentioned earlier. The mental health and the social emotional learning standards were very emphasized this year.

And so we did kind of get dropped from a couple of schools. But we still have that relationship with them. And we're hoping that we can get back into the classrooms this coming school year.

ERIN FICKER: And quite often, I mean, even in normal times, we find that schools prioritize other needs above prevention, not necessarily a COVID-specific problem, although we all know to be true.

Well, thank you again for sharing. If you have questions for Youth Outreach Services or any other presenters, feel free to put in the Q&A. We're going to move right into Q&A right now.

So thank you so much, Beckie and Felicia and Katie for your wonderful presentation.

I want to move right into Q&A. And what we're going to do to do that, I'm actually going to stop sharing my screen so we can see everybody's face.



And I'm going to put us into gallery view so we can have a little Brady Bunch moment, which is my favorite kind of moment.

And I'm going to go through the questions that we have gotten. So like I said, if you have any questions or have-- sorry, I'm not as good as some other people at doing this. But I'm going to try.

So I'm going to ask these questions. And we'll see if we can get some answers.

So for Boys and Girls Clubs, one of the questions that someone asked was, are you losing funding by having the teachers teach your programs for you? You're muted.

JENNY O'BRIEN: I'm not good with these.

ERIN FICKER: It's OK.

JENNY O'BRIEN: We did not lose any funding. We were able to move things around, do what we needed to do, get more curriculum so that everything was being used.

We were also, because I was short staffed and I couldn't fill that position, we got the blessing from the state, which is a big deal, to give the teachers a little incentive. And so our teachers got a fairly decent stipend there right before Christmas time. So that incentivized them to continue to finish out the school year working with us and doing what it was.

But in regards to losing funding, no, we were able to budget amend and put it towards curriculum or incentives for our programs.

ERIN FICKER: OK. Hopefully that answered the question. If not, you can go ahead and put another question in and let us know that didn't answer your question. But I think I understand.

How were you able to convince-- and this might go to everybody. How were you able to convince school staff of the need to continue services versus maintaining their academic requirements? So I know I heard someone say, let me put it in your virtual PE class because virtual PE is the worst. I've seen it first hand. No offense if I have virtual PE teachers on the line.

But the question is a great one. How were you able to convince them, if they needed convincing? So I think that goes open to everyone.

FELICIA IBARRA: So for us, we've only ever worked with PIE classes or health classes. And so if you have a new partner or you're trying to connect with a new partner, we address the fact that our curriculum meets some of their state standards.



So we're helping them out, really. And so we frame it that way. I mean, I think that's important to point out.

And so you will have to look up your state's standards for physical education. And then you can just mark off what your curricula covers. And then you can present that to the teacher.

So for Illinois. It's a little bit more work because we don't get that listed for a lot of our curricula. We have to do it ourselves. But for other states, I know that information is readily available if you go on your curricula website. You can also contact the curricula creators and ask them if they have a comparison of curricula to state standards. So hopefully, that's helpful.

ERIN FICKER: That's great. Is there anyone else, especially in this year, was that harder?

JENNY O'BRIEN: I'm going to agree with Felicia. That's how we portrayed it originally. So coming in knowing that, hey, they're still teaching health classes, they still needed those curriculum met. So that's why it was so easy for us to step right back in.

KATHRYN DRAPER: Yeah, just echoing what's been said too, kind of reminding them that especially during these times, it's even more important to include that SEL and making sure that those prevention pieces are in there. Our program specifically looks more at the brain science side and teaching youth like dopamine and things like that. And substances are a very quick, easy way for youth to get that dopamine high. And so being able to educate them on other healthy ways for them to get that dopamine high when their dopamine was probably very low during this past year because there was a lot of things that were changing and they were missing out on.

And so being able to educate and empower youth was, I think, especially easy for our teachers to kind of say, "Wow, this is really important that we're including this, especially this year."

ERIN FICKER: Great, wonderful. OK, so it seems like there's kind of a universal way that people got through. That's fantastic, OK.

So this question is for Jenny. Jenny, were there any COVID-19 cases among students and staff during the time you were in any of the schools?

JENNY O'BRIEN: There was not. And our health department even clarified that, that said there was no contact tracing between students and teachers. Because of the hybrid schedule that we were in, our class sizes were half if not less.



When I would walk in a classroom and there's 12 kids, it's a whole lot different than when I would walk in a classroom before COVID and there's 30 kids. So we were able to spread out and keep that distance greatly.

We all wore masks the entire time, though, as well.

ERIN FICKER: Great, wonderful. Thank you for that question.

OK, this question is, I'm going to guess it's for everyone. This doesn't specifically ask anyone in particular.

So how are students with behavioral issues being addressed? Have they returned to school more or less focused? So has anyone run into that issue of students with behavioral issues in the classroom?

JENNY O'BRIEN: I'll go ahead and jump in. I have seen-- most of the kids that I work with, I also know because they started coming to the club when they were six years old. So I've gotten to know a lot of our youth.

Knowing that I know them and know their behavior issues from before, I think the smaller class size helps a lot. And I would advocate for that if we could figure out a way to have those smaller classes.

So that is how our-- I haven't really seen any differences in our discipline. The kids are doing better because they're getting more one-on-one.

ERIN FICKER: I would concur. I have heard from both principals and vice principals that the shorter day when they're in hybrid and they're only there half the day also helps quite a bit for kids who have behavioral problems that often show up.

JENNY O'BRIEN: And the other problem that I have seen is, those kids have trouble on the days they're not in school. They can't focus getting on the computer. So it does play both ways.

ERIN FICKER: Great, OK. So someone said, I was in classroom since last fall up here in the UP teaching Botvin. But teachers often reported eighth and ninth graders vaping was on the rise.

I've heard that, that vaping is on the rise with kids out of school. Interesting. OK, sorry. I was just reading one of the comments.

Great. Well, thank you for answering that. Yeah, I think the behavior question really varies based on how kids are in school, the kind of behavior issues kids have, and how schools are able to handle it and how they're staffed.

OK, well, thank you for that question. Advice on what to do during the waiting period. Try not to eat as much, stress eat as much as I did.



How can we advance our efforts during that time, currently in that stage? So advice on what you can do during the waiting stage to advance your efforts as much as possible. I think we've heard a lot of good things. Anyone want to jump on that question?

KATHRYN DRAPER: I would say when we were in the waiting period, that's when we did a lot of kind of revamping or improving what we had. Things that you don't normally have time to do I would say, like when we do normally just like a quick review of, OK, great. What's working well, what's not? And then kind of moving on.

But because we had more time to dedicate to it, I will say, I think our program materials were improved a lot, even just looking at our marketing and who we're in communication with at the schools, having time to really dedicate to that was really helpful for us.

And thinking a lot about the marketing, too. We were able to really improve our social media presence, getting schools to have our information up on the websites because that was becoming much more common for parents to go find information there, was on a school website or in a newsletter. So trying to find other ways to meet students and meet parents and guardians where they're at. It allowed us to have time to be creative as much as maybe it felt like too much time to sit and think about things. It also benefited us to have time where we had to really stop, slow down, and take a moment to really overlook what we've been doing.

ERIN FICKER: Great. Anyone else? I thought-- I heard from Youth Outreach Services that you unified all of your staff, your presenter notes on all of your-- Katie, who was-- Katie, were you talking about that?

KAITIE PANKA: I was. Yeah, I mentioned that a little bit. So one thing that you could do, I don't know if you use PowerPoint or Canva or any sort of slides for presenting wise. Though I highly recommend just going through the curriculum, seeing if there's any changes that you would like to make. For our facilitation notes, we added in all of the links that we needed to document, to Padlets, to videos. So that way, everything is right in that little document. So that way, we don't have to fish through YouTube and fish through our files to find all of the documents. It's just right there.

So that's something I highly encourage everyone to do. And then, Beckie can maybe talk a little bit about our Instagram page. But that's something during our waiting time, we got approved through our agency. So we were able to post more on there to reach youth maybe outside of our schools, which is great. So Beckie, if you want to talk about that a little bit.

BECKIE ANTON: Yeah, so we started our Instagram probably in June, I think? June feels right.



So every Friday, we post a fact. It's either something related to alcohol use, substance use. Recently, we just did one on stress and driving. It's the beginning of Distracted Driving Awareness Month. Distracted driving includes more than driving under the influence. But it's still a good topic to have, especially when you're reaching these high schoolers.

We post our communication campaign materials on our Instagram, as well as the school has posted on theirs. So we're really just saturating that out. We post local job postings for the youth, upcoming webinars, just other stuff within the community. And it's been really great. We have pretty good partnerships from that.

We started working with a different non-profit in the city of Chicago called Dion Dream Fridge. He provides food to the Inglewood area, fresh produce. And so we've been working with him a lot because those are also our youth. And so we're kind of just using it to really reach as many people as we can.

ERIN FICKER: That's great. Yeah, and I think anything you can do that you don't normally have-- those tasks that are like, "God, I wish all of our notes were uniform or I wish I had time to do that." Anything that's the disorganization or the lack of uniformity or anything that really helps, you could do that you never have time to do.

And I think Youth Outreach Services talked about doing a lot of those things in a way that was really thoughtful. As, I heard from all three of the presenters really talk about really thoughtful ways that you do that.

Thinking about, if you think about quality improvement, using that time to do adaptation and testing in any way that you can, to think about what has worked in the past, what hasn't worked, and really spent some time thinking about, how could I change it or how I adapt it is a really good way to use that waiting time.

The amount of anxiety that this society has collectively endured and continues to collectively endure is unbelievable. It is unbearable. It is unmanageable to even get your mind around.

So if you can keep yourself busy with tasks like that, that will eventually make your life less anxious or anxiety-ridden and easier. I think you will be happier down the line.

So I think these guys did a great job of using that waiting time really well. So hopefully, that answers your question. Hopefully useful. Again, I would not suggest the amount of stress eating that I engaged.

What was the app/website that was used for private youth sharing? This is for Youth Outreach Services. And I think it was Padlet.



KAITIE PANKA: Yeah, correct. It's Padlet. If you want, I can post it in the chat if you'd like.

ERIN FICKER: That would be great.

KAITIE PANKA: OK.

ERIN FICKER: Yeah, Padlet was used in my school. Our school district used it a lot for different ways, and they used it for kids to post responses to weekly questions, to themes in a book. Or you can use it anonymously as well. It's really kind of a cool thing.

I, of course, am too old to really understand it. But I think it's pretty cool from what I saw.

KAITIE PANKA: I will note that you can use it for free, though it limits you to only, I think it's five different Padlets. Though since we have three prevention teams in our large one, it was best that we just buy, I guess, the upgraded version so that way, we could use unlimited amount of Padlets and we didn't have to keep on deleting them and recreating ones.

ERIN FICKER: Oh, that's great. That's a great tip. Well, thank you for that. I see that it has shown up in the chat. So if you want to see it, Padlet, like a padlet of paper. No? I always thought it looked like Post It notes.

OK. So our next question is for anyone. Are you planning NPW events?

[INAUDIBLE]. Anyone?

KAITIE PANKA: I guess I will take this one. Yes, we are planning National Prevention Week ones. And we are doing that by including our youth advisory committee, which we have created with students through our middle school that we are working with, with our youth prevention education.

So that's been really nice. Our youth are really involved with just helping us out with, not only National Prevention Week stuff but a handful of our other deliverables as well.

ERIN FICKER: Great. Anybody else? Events?

JENNY O'BRIEN: We are partnered with our local LLC. And they have just recently got the Youth Coalition going. They are doing a dodgeball tournament that the youth all planned and set up all over the neighborhood. And they're going to pass out different bags and talk about it.

They've also just recently started an Instagram and Facebook for more the youth group. And so it's really neat to see that coming at this time and right before Prevention Week.



ERIN FICKER: Wonderful. Kathryn, anything with you guys for National Prevention Week?

KATHRYN DRAPER: We are kind of partnering or pairing with another one of the youth organizations that, they have a huge event they asked us to support. So that's kind of how we decided to get involved. It was better to kind of help them support one big event than try and do a couple of smaller events. So we're supporting some of our youth groups that way.

ERIN FICKER: Yeah. That makes sense. Rebecca, you look like you had something to say and then we missed it.

BECKIE ANTON: Yeah, we have different grant deliverables. So we're utilizing some of these online tools like Kahoot. So one of the Kahoot features is that you can do a Kahoot challenge. And so that's a self-paced one. Each different school will have their own link. And so we're working with them to do prizes.

But each school will have this challenge Kahoot. And then they'll reward with candy or school rewards just with that. So that's how we're getting in with one of our events. And I just think it's a very easy and simple way to get that event in and get it done. And it still hits everything that you need. So if you're stuck, Kahoot.

ERIN FICKER: Kahoot. Kahoot has been a hoot. I have enjoyed-- again, I get to be on the parent side of all of this. And I have watched my children do this from this side of the screen.

And the kids just, they love the Kahoot. I have watched it bring sleepy kids on the other side of the screen to life. They're like, "Oh, wait, we're doing a Kahoot," like under the table, I'm not interested, reading a book. And then she hears the word Kahoot and runs across the room.

So it is definitely a fun tool. So that's actually a great idea.

OK, I think we have time for one last question. And then we will have to wrap up. You guys have been so great and so generous with your time in sharing. And I do want to get to this one last question, which is for teaching on Google Classroom. Is your participation low? What's your advice for getting students to participate?

KATHRYN DRAPER: I will say, we have definitely taken advantage of the fact that students are very competitive sometimes. And so creating different opportunities for them to have competition.



So like coolest virtual background or we would put a background on ours and say, if you can guess where this background is from, then you can get a prize or get your name put in a drawing. Trying to incentivize that.

And also, just like with participation, sometimes it's like, the first person that can guess this or the first person that gives an example of this. I have found that is the most motivating thing for the students that I work with, at least. They are very motivated by competition, even if the prize is just that they won the competition. Sometimes that's all they need.

ERIN FICKER: That's smart. Anyone else used Google Classroom?

KAITIE PANKA: Yes. I will say, using Google Classroom is I guess, honestly similar to using Zoom and Microsoft Teams in my eyes.

With our experience, our teacher that we used Google Classroom with was our saving grace when it comes to participation. She offered one participation point every time a student would participate either in the chat or unmute. And she also offered a point if they had their cameras on.

In Chicago, you're unable to make the students have their cameras on. But it's definitely a little incentive that our teacher helped with participation. So that definitely helped.

ERIN FICKER: That's great. That's helpful. Did anyone-- someone else had un-muted to answer the question, I think?

FELICIA IBARRA: I did. I was going to say something similar to Katie. But I was just going to say that my staff works well with the teachers. And we have so many different experiences in different classrooms.

And so yes, we find that when you work with the teacher, even if they don't offer participation points, if you can ask them to offer participation points during your facilitation, it's very, very helpful. Because at the end of the day, we can't build the rapport that the teachers can. We cycle through students, right? As much as we love them, we only have them for a short period of time. And so if the teacher is there as a support, as they should be in person, and it should continue online, we find that those students participate the most.

So although all of the other examples are great, I think that the underlying issue or concern when it comes to participation is the school rules and the teachers' rules. So building those relationships with teachers are just so vital.

ERIN FICKER: OK, I'm going to try to get to one last question. And we have one minute left. And it's a super complicated question. So I'm sorry, Charlie. What ways did you take to maintain relationships with schools who said no for this year? And what are you doing to maintain positive relationships for those schools who said no to this year? What efforts are you taking? I'm kind of summarizing that question.



FELICIA IBARRA: One of the things that we are just starting to do and I really want to push, because this is a really good question, is that give and take, right? We don't want to just take and say, "Hey, we want to work with you guys. And what are you guys offering us?" We should also be offering the schools something, even if they're no longer able to work with us this year. So maybe sending them resources for their kids, LGBTQI resources, job resources, community resources, flyers that we get emailed all the time from our community alliances. Maybe we can send those over to teachers just to keep in touch and let them know that we're still here to support their kids. So that's on our agenda. And it's something that I've been thinking about greatly.

ERIN FICKER: That's good. That's great.

KATHRYN DRAPER: Yeah, definitely echoing continuing to send resources. There was a lot of obviously online virtual events. So trying to promote those. We also do a quarterly newsletter. So keeping them updated on what we have been able to do with other schools or opportunities that we have been able to promote with students so that they know that we are still active and we are still interested in working with them, even if right now isn't a great time.

ERIN FICKER: Great. OK, well we are just past 2:30.

You guys were amazing. I hope that we gave those of you who were able to stay still till 2:30, able to give you some tips, tricks, and something to take away.

This was really helpful for me. And I appreciate you all being here. And I appreciate all of those participants who were able to stay and listen. And is there anything we need to do for wrap up?

ANN SCHENSKY: No, we are good. Again, just a reminder that when you log off of the webinar, a link will pop up. And if you could just take a couple of minutes, literally two or three, to fill out the survey. And that would be really awesome. We would truly, truly appreciate it.

ERIN FICKER: Thank you. We're always trying to improve, as you are. Thank you so much. And we look forward to seeing you at our next PTTC event. Thanks so much, guys.