

Student Assistance Programming: Creating Positive Conditions for Learning



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Preface:

A manual of guidelines, not dictates

For Student Assistance Programming, or SAP, to succeed in an individual school setting, it has to be adaptable in its scope and flexible in its implementation. Virginia school divisions and their elementary, middle and high schools vary widely in size, location, and student demographics. One school's workable approach may well be distinct from that of another school nearby.

This manual reflects that reality. It was developed by Virginia educators with practical administrative and classroom experience, including school-based coordinators running successful SAP processes, in collaboration with the Office of Student Services of the Virginia Department of Education. As a result, what divisions and their schools will find here is information and technical guidance they can use to craft and initiate SAP efforts they design and put to work in accordance with their needs.

Scientific research supports the practical steps in these pages. For example, studies conducted by Durlak, Weissberg, Taylor, and Dymnicki in 2008 and Osher and Kendziora in 2010, found that schools with integrated social and emotional learning programs and services had students with higher self-efficacy and achievement scores, and less behavioral problems than schools without social and emotional programs and services. The following outcomes were noted.

- Greater academic gains in math and reading, improvement in standardized testing, and pro-social school and classroom behavior, e.g., following classroom rules
- Improvement in attitudes about self, others, and school, including higher academic motivation, stronger bonding with schools and teachers
- Improvement in social and emotional skills, e.g., self-awareness and self-management
- Decrease in conduct problems, such as classroom misbehavior and aggression
- Decrease in emotional distress, such as anxiety and depression

The evidence also credits such programs and services for fostering stronger, more positive relationships among students, staff, and parents, and a more respectful and safe school climate. The collective term for all of these positive effects is "Creating positive conditions for learning." To help bring about these conditions, SAP provides division administrators and school principals with a proven process for dealing with youth problems. What's more, SAP adapts well to the needs of individual schools because "ideal" and "doable" are rarely one and the same given the totality of a school's mission. Deciding where SAP falls among a school's competing priorities should be decided on a school-by-school basis.

A subtle reflection of SAP flexibility is this manual's use of the noun "programming" over that of "program." The former better conveys the sense that a universe of prevention and intervention initiatives exists – and thus each school develops a SAP

process to suit its unique circumstances. “Program” is used when the context is an individual, evidence-based curriculum, practice or strategy that a SAP process uses or is considering.

The organization of the manual is straightforward. The text gives an overview of SAP (Section One) and explores SAP at the school level (Section Two) and at the division level (Section Three). The appendices (Section Four) provide supplemental information, examples, and sample forms for further illustration and reference. References (Section Five) and resource descriptions and Web sites (Section Six) provide additional information. Each chapter has been written so that it can be read easily and quickly. Each presents stand-alone information that represents a discrete element or part of the SAP process. And each chapter’s text subdivides into numbered sections that are easy to find and reference forward or backwards as the case may be.

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Student Assistance Programming

Creating Positive Conditions for Learning

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**SECTION 1 SAP Supports Academic Achievement, Social
and Emotional Developmental Needs of Youth**

**Chapter 1 An Overview of Student Assistance in
Virginia Public Schools**

Chapter 1 An Overview of Student Assistance in Virginia Public Schools

Chapter 1 Highlights

- Youth today can face complex problems.
- SAP is scientifically proven to promote academic success and positive development.
- SAP integrates well with other school programs.
- Multiple levels of student support work best.
- SAP can be tailored to all school divisions.
- Consider potential barriers to success.

1 – 1 School-based programming closes the gap

Greater awareness of personal and family problems affecting youth has led to a national consensus for schools to adopt additional educational approaches. Broadly stated, the goals are two: to help prevent problems through universal education and to address existing problems by directing individual students to school-based or community service providers as may be appropriate. The collective approach that achieves both ends — student-assistance programming (SAP) — is bringing about positive results wherever implemented.

Numerous research studies prove the efficacy of SAP (Carlson, 1996; Davis, Kempson, Nettles, Snobarger, 2008; Ferman, Tarasevich, Hepler, 2003; Fertman, Tarasevich, 2004; Kutash, Duchnowski, 2006; Scott, Surface, Friedli, Barlow, 1999; Willburn, Wilburn, Weaver, Bowles, 2007; Williams, 2008). Schools are the natural places for universal prevention education on a wide variety of personal and family problems that can affect students. When individual students experience problems, schools are ideally situated to help direct them to school-based or community-based services. Children spend sufficient time at school around adults and among their peers for problems to be noticed. For underserved populations of students, a school's student-assistance process can be the principal or only mechanism that connects them with helpful services.

As it exists today, student assistant programming is a multi-disciplinary, broad-based approach to preventing problems and addressing those that do occur. It's effective in terms of outcomes; it's effective in terms of cost. It's adaptable to all sizes of schools; it's adaptable to any student demographic. As a consequence, SAP has won wide acceptance among state and local education agencies.

SAP integrates well with most school's existing resources. Each school can design its own SAP model and implement it in a manner that accommodates its administration, faculty and staff. Such flexibility means SAP can help students deal with a wide variety of personal and family problems.

1 – 2 Stress can cause more than learning to suffer

Educators today are more cognizant than ever of how stress can affect the performance of students in the classroom (Adelman, Taylor, 2011; Adelman, Taylor, 2002; Anda, Felitt, 2011; Atkinson, 2005; Fleming, Haggerty, Brown, Catalano, Harachi, Mazza & Gruman, 2005; Kutash, Duchnowski, 2009; Mrazek, Haggerty, 1994; Robertson, David & Rao, 2003). Just as adults can feel stress from adverse personal or environmental circumstances in their lives, young people can as well. They, too, are vulnerable to stress resulting from a variety of problems they or others close to them may have.

- | | | |
|--------------------------------|-----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| • Alcoholism | • Family mobility | • Parental divorce |
| • Anxiety | • Homelessness | • Parent job loss |
| • Bullying | • Illegal drug use | • Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder |
| • Community violence | • Incarcerated parent | • Poverty |
| • Depression | • Mental illness | • Serious family illness |
| • Death of a parent or sibling | • Moving to a new school mid-year | • Sexual abuse |
| • Domestic violence | • Military deployment | • Tobacco use |
| • Eating disorders | • Parental discord | |

Poorer academic performance can be just one negative repercussion. Any of these problems — and the preceding list is partial — can lead to a ripple effect of poor choices, from absenteeism and disruptive or violent behavior to dropping out of school and even more dire consequences.

Other students in the same classroom, at the same lunch table, in the same extracurricular activity, or on the same bus, can also feel the ill effects of one student's problems. When several students have disparate problems left untreated, or a group has a problem in common that has not been dealt with, a school's entire learning climate can suffer.

The gap between young people with problems affecting them in school and the help they need, whether in the form of knowledge, programs or services, has been wider than it should be. According to a 2001 estimate, upwards of 80 percent of students with one or more social, emotional or behavioral problems were not receiving the help they needed. The 20 percent that did were students with severe problems (Foster, S., Rollefson, M., Doksum, T., Noonan, D., Robinson, G., & Teich, J. 2005).

Fulfilling student instructional and social developmental needs is a hallmark of the Commonwealth of Virginia's system of public education. This includes the development of new programming that improves key aspects of instruction by addressing youth needs in enhanced ways while at the same time integrating with and complementing existing programming. All of these principles underlay SAP. SAP combines common-sense logic with practical application. Helping students with problems receive the school-based or community support services they need correlates with helping their academic achievement.

The use of assistance services goes hand-in-hand with other positive indicators: stronger, more nurturing relationships among students, staff and parents, and a more respectful school climate that is safer in perception as well as reality. Creating these conditions for learning is what SAP helps division administrators, school principals and their faculties achieve on behalf of their students. The Virginia Standards of Quality (SOQ) and Standards of Accreditation (SOA) recognize the importance of a school environment that is conducive to learning.

1- 3 Standards of Quality

The Constitution of Virginia directs the Virginia Board of Education to prescribe Standards of Quality for Virginia's public schools. The Standards of Quality present expectations, and the Board issues directions designed to achieve excellence in education throughout the Commonwealth. Student Assistance Programming is a systems approach for assisting school divisions to attain certain sections of the Standards of Quality. The following excerpts from the *Code of Virginia* § 22.1-253.13:1, Sections A, C and D *Instructional programs supporting the Standards of Learning and other educational objectives*, exemplify areas Student Assistance Programming may be used in supporting these standards:

- A. The General Assembly and the Board of Education believe that the fundamental goal of the public schools of this Commonwealth must be to enable each student to develop the skills that are necessary for success in school, preparation for life, and reaching their full potential. The General Assembly and the Board of Education find that the quality of education is dependent upon the provision of (i) the appropriate working environment... (ii) the appropriate learning environment designed to promote student achievement
- C.Local school boards shall also develop and implement programs of prevention, intervention, or remediation for students who are educationally at risk including, but not limited to, those who fail to achieve a passing score on any Standards of Learning assessment in grades three through eight or who fail an end-of-course test required for the award of a verified unit of credit. Such programs shall include components that are research-based....
- D. Local School Boards shall also implement the following:....
 - 2. Programs based on prevention, intervention, or remediation designed to increase the number of students who earn a high school diploma and to prevent students from dropping out of school. Such programs shall include components that are research-based....
 - 7. Educational alternatives for students whose needs are not met in programs prescribed elsewhere in these standards. Such students shall

be counted in average daily membership (ADM) in accordance with the regulations of the Board of Education....

9. A plan to make achievements for students who are educationally at risk a divisionwide priority that shall include procedures for measuring the progress of such students....
16. A program of student services for grades kindergarten through 12 that shall be designed to aid students in their educational, social, and career development....

1 – 4 Standards of Accreditation

In the *Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia*, 8 VAC 20-131-10. Purpose.

The foremost purpose of public education in Virginia is to provide children with a quality education giving them opportunities to meet their fullest potential in life. The standards for accreditation of public schools in Virginia are designed to ensure that an effective educational program is established and maintained in Virginia's schools. The mission of the public education system is to educate students in the essential academic knowledge and skills in order that they may be equipped for citizenship, work, and a private life that is informed and free. The accreditation standards:

1. Provide an essential foundation of educational programs of high quality in all schools for all students.
2. Encourage continuous appraisal and improvement of the school program for raising student achievement.
3. Foster public confidence.
4. Assure recognition of Virginia's public schools by other institutions of learning.
5. Establish a means of determining the effectiveness of schools....

Through collaboration among school and community entities, a SAP helps by creating conditions for learning that improve schools and student achievement. Each school continuously evaluates its own learning climate using survey and incident-related data, regular review of individual student goals, and other information. By functioning as a management and monitoring system, the SAP infrastructure addresses several of the key responsibilities of principals detailed in Part V School and Instructional Leadership 8 VAC 20-131-210. Role of principal.

A. The principal is recognized as the instructional leader of the school and is responsible for effective school management that promotes positive student achievement, a safe and secure environment....

B. 2. Ensure that the school division's code of conduct is enforced and seek to maintain a safe and secure school environment....

- C. As the school manager, the principal shall:
 - 1. Work with staff to create an atmosphere of mutual respect and courtesy and to facilitate constructive communication....
 - 2. Work with the community to involve parents and citizens....

Part VII, School and Community Communications 8 VAC 20-131-270.
School and community communications.

- A. Each school shall promote communication and foster mutual understanding with parents and the community. Each school shall:
 - 1. Involve parents, citizens, community agencies....
 - 2. Provide annually to the parents and the community the School Performance Report Card....Such information shall include but not be limited to:..
 - c. Attendance rates for students.
 - d. Information related to school safety to include, but not limited to, incidents of crime and violence....

Regulations Establishing Standards for Accrediting Public Schools in Virginia can be viewed at <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/accreditation/soa.pdf>.

1 - 5 Virginia Board of Education Comprehensive Plan

The Virginia Board of Education has recognized the importance of creating positive conditions for learning. The Board of Education Comprehensive Plan: 2011-2016, includes the following objective:

The Board of Education will provide leadership to help schools and school divisions ensure a safe and secure environment conducive to facilitating the teaching and learning process.

Among the strategies supporting this objective is the following:

Promote the establishment of student assistance programs to provide comprehensive services to address the needs of students.

All conditions-for-learning strategies relate to one another and promote school and student success. Visit <http://www.doe.virginia.gov/boe/plan/comprehensiveplan.pdf> to read the full plan.

1 – 6 Virginia General Assembly Commission on Youth 2010 Legislative Study

In 2008, the Virginia General Assembly’s Commission on Youth (COY) directed its staff to study truancy and dropout prevention problems. This study provided further evidence that student support services are necessary for learning and specifically names Student Assistance Programming.

The final study published in 2010, *Study of Truancy and School Dropout Prevention* recommended:

Encourage school divisions to develop mechanisms, such as Student Assistance Programming, for identifying students who may need additional school or community supports and direct them and their families to the appropriate services.

The Virginia Commission on Youth, *Study of Truancy and School Dropout Prevention* can be found at <http://coy.state.va.us/reports.asp> .

1 – 7 The 12 SAP standards VDOE recommends schools follow

A given set of standards helps ensure student assistance effectiveness. The following are the Virginia Department of Education's (VDOE) 12 recommended standards for student assistance, nine of which come from the National Student Assistance Association's (NSAA), with three more – cultural responsiveness, conditions for learning and sustainability – added by VDOE. These standards codify what schools should aspire to in their SAP efforts and read as follows:

1. **School Board Policy** – Establishes the SAP as a comprehensive system of supports that recognizes the relationship between academics and problem behaviors and brings about a safe, disciplined and supportive learning community.
2. **Staff Development** – Inculcates the attitude and teaches the skills school employees need to provide effective assistance to students.
3. **Program Awareness** – Educates parents, students, agencies and communities about school policy on problem behaviors and provides information about assistance services.
4. **Internal Referral Process** – Provides a mechanism for identifying and referring a student with academic or social concerns to a case management team.
5. **Problem Solving Team and Case (Care) Management** – Evaluates how the school can best help the student in need of assistance.
6. **Evidence-Based Curricula, Practices and Strategies** – Provides information, support, and problem-solving skills to all students, and to those with academic or social problems, through instruction, group and individual counseling sessions provided by the school and community stakeholders.
7. **Cooperation and Collaboration with Community Agencies and Resources** – Builds bridges among schools, parents, and community stakeholders and resources through prevention initiatives and through referral and shared case (care) management.

8. **Integration with Other School-based Programs** – Joins student assistance services with other school programs designed to influence student behaviors and reduce their risks.
9. **Student Assistance Evaluation** – Ensures that a program remains data-driven on behalf of better outcomes for students.
10. **Cultural Responsiveness** – Fosters understanding and respect for diversity among all within the school community to help maintain a healthy school climate.
11. **Conditions for Learning** – Advocates school-based experiences that center on and connect with students on behalf of learning and related outcomes.
12. **Sustainability** – Promotes the development of long-term plans to continue programming operations.

There is no one way to achieve each of these standards. Schools are as different from one another as people are. So it's up to each school's administration, staff and faculty to choose a SAP model they can adapt to its needs and resources.

1 – 8 School-based SAP can take different forms

SAP comes in three typical service-delivery models. All three have been implemented in Virginia school divisions and often occur in some combination. School leaders should consider each before deciding what fits a given school's needs.

Core or Student Assistance Team – A cadre of school staff plans activities for all students, identifies students who need individual services, coordinates and recommends services as needed, and collaborates with other school and community resources. Administrators, counselors, social workers, teachers, special education coordinators, school psychologists, coaches, and other staff can be on the team. Members are chosen for their different perspectives, and all have key roles to play on behalf of the Core Team.

Internal Programs – The school division hires Student Assistance Specialists (SAS) as staff to coordinate and deliver SAP services. As a member of a school-based team, the SAS has more resources to draw upon. The SAS can leverage her or his knowledge and skills by collaborating with staff and faculty on student assistance programming and initiatives.

External Programs or Screening Agency Models – A staff of professionals contracted by community organizations spends time in schools delivering direct services and referring students to outside resources. This model can lessen the SAP administrative burden on a school's staff and faculty. A variation on this model is to have the contracted professional be a part of a school-based SAP Core Team.

Whatever SAP model a school adopts the goal is the same: student assistance programming that works for the school community at large as well as a given student in need of help.

1 – 9 From educating everyone to helping the individual

The SAP process allows for an awareness plan directed at students, parents, teachers and school staff, a group plan that serves a subset of students, and an action plan to assist an individual student. All plans emphasize strength-based approaches.

In individual plans, a function of SAP is to refer students and families to some form of assistance in the school or from an outside service. A SAP never provides direct treatment itself.

A SAP-referral can change a student's life. A 2003 National Student Assistance Association analysis of Pennsylvania schools found that SAP-referred students behaved better, performed better, went to the next grade with classmates, and graduated in greater number than those with problems but not referred. Nearly 80 percent of referred students and families connected with helpful services, a higher percentage than by any other means.

Beneficial outcomes, whether schoolwide or for one student, result from the SAP process. The structure of the process has much to do with that, for it involves multiple levels of support that work in concert with one another.

1 – 10 SAP process provides three interlocking levels of support

A tiered system of support provides progressive levels for working with students, parents and communities. The student assistance process employs definitions from the Institute of Medicine (IOM) to explain its three levels of support: universal, selected and indicated (Gordon, 1987; Mrazek, 1994). These three can be thought of as falling between two other levels of support: the more general for all populations of student being the health promotion level (i.e., health curricula and family life, guidance, character, and wellness programs that already exist in schools) and the more specific for certain students in the treatment level (i.e., where students with marked symptoms receive treatment services outside of school) (Kutash & Duchnowski, 2009). The SAP levels of support between those extremes are defined as follows:

Universal Level – These approaches address risk factors in populations of youth (i.e., in a classroom, school, or multiple schools) by providing all students with information and skills necessary to prevent problems. Examples of universal-level strategies might include an evidence-based, violence-prevention curriculum for fourth and fifth graders as well as schoolwide anti-bullying or underage drinking campaigns.

Selected Level – Selected-level strategies target subsets of student populations deemed at risk for problem behaviors. Among such subsets may be students from homeless families; children whose parents are alcoholics; students using

alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs; students with poor attendance or who drop out; and students with behavioral issues or academic struggles. Some 10 to 15 percent of students may need this level of various programs and services. Examples of selected-level strategies include conflict mediation training, educational support groups, student leadership training and mentoring programs.

Indicated Level – Strategies at this level address the needs of students who exhibit troubling symptoms — failing grades, disciplinary problems, abusing substances, or possible mental-health problems, and so forth — but who do not meet diagnostic criteria. Here assistance can lessen a problem’s severity, reduce its duration, and delay onset of other problems. About one to seven percent of students require these services. Examples of indicated-level strategies are students and their parents attending counseling together, anger management therapy, and referral to and ongoing consultation with a community provider of mental, substance abuse, or other forms of behavioral health services.

SAP’s three-pronged approach to student assistance affects attitudes, perceptions and knowledge from three focal points. The cumulative result is twofold: a better understanding of problems and their effects within the school community, and greater and more widespread tolerance for those in different or difficult situations. This more caring atmosphere goes hand-in-hand with a better learning atmosphere.

1 – 11 SAP process focuses on conditions for learning

The VDOE reviewed recommendations from the United States Department of Education’s (USED) Office of Safe and Healthy Students and combined them with guidelines from the National School Climate Center to create the following four Conditions for Learning, each with two or more desired practices or outcomes. In slightly abridged form, they read as follows:

1) Condition for Learning – Safety and Well-being

- a. **Rules and Expectations** on discipline and behavior are communicated clearly and enforced fairly.
- b. **Physical Security** is a feeling and a reality for students and adults at school and school events.
- c. **Social-Emotional Security** is evident in how students and staff feel safe from verbal abuse to exclusion – or any form of bullying or harassment.
- d. **Substance Use** does not occur on school grounds or among students.
- e. **Wellness** is promoted through the availability of healthy food choices and health supports.

2) Condition for Learning – Teaching and Learning/Academic Environment

Learning Support can be seen in teaching practices that provide opportunities to show knowledge, think independently, engage in dialogue, and ask questions – or well-managed classrooms where academic challenge and individual attention are the norm.

Social and Civic Learning are evident in effective listening, conflict resolution, contemplative and even emotional states, empathy, personal responsibility, and in ethics.

3) Condition for Learning – Interpersonal Relationships/Engagement

Respect for Diversity is widespread between students and adults, and across the school community.

Adult Social Support is everywhere in the forms of high expectations for students' success, willingness to listen, genuine concern for problems, and in welcoming parental involvement.

Student Social Support can be found in peer relationships in terms of socializing, problem solving, academic help and welcoming new students.

Professional Relationships are characterized by working well and learning together.

4) Condition for Learning – School Environment

Connectedness is demonstrated by regular attendance, participation in school activities, open communication, and school spirit.

Facilities are clean, orderly, and have adequate resources.

Leadership has a clear vision everyone understands, an open-door policy for all, and supports staff and their development.

SAP promotes these conditions for learning in several key ways:

- teaching the value of student, administrator, faculty and staff diversity;
- offering subgroups within a student population their own programming when they share a propensity for a given behavioral problem;
- weaving cultural knowledge into SAP initiatives; and
- treating all students with equal levels of respect and attention.

Implementers of a school's SAP process and its initiatives need to be sensitive to the traditions, language, values, customs, rituals, interactions, expectations for behaviors, and roles that members of a particular social or ethnic group share. Climate surveys completed by students, parents and faculty provide information for assessing and improving conditions for learning. Respect for all means a better school climate for all. And it begins at the elementary school level.

1 – 12 SAP in an elementary school

Elementary School Strategies – A 2003 U. S. Department of Justice Child Delinquency Bulletin Series report, "Treatment, Services, and Intervention Programs for Child Delinquents," stated on page six that, "School-based interventions that change the social context of schools and the school experiences of children can reduce and prevent the delinquent behavior in children younger than 13." Approaches that achieve such outcomes typically possess characteristics such as the following:

- They use classroom and school behavior-management policies and programs that reduce aggressive behaviors, such as bullying.
- They have social competency curriculums that teach social, interpersonal, and problem-solving skills.
- They make use of conflict-resolution and violence-prevention curriculums, including bullying prevention efforts that stress problem solving and social interaction.
- They refer parents to programs that teach how to monitor a child's problems, promote good behavior, and manage family practices.
- They offer teacher and parent programs and support groups on how to handle, socialize, and educate students to behave and do well.

Elementary School Rationale – Persistently disruptive children are two to three times more likely to carry poor behavior into later life. And students who do poorly in school are more likely to become antisocial by acting out or withdrawing (Burns, Howell, Wigg, Augimeri, Welsh, Loeber & Petechuck, 2003).

Thus, elementary school prevention and intervention focus on students with personal-conduct disorders or who exhibit symptoms such as aggression, disruptive behavior, acting out, destruction, dishonesty, theft, or rule violation.

The earlier the intervention, the more likely the chance that the student's performance will be put back on track and school attachment will grow, thus setting the stage for a productive, healthy lifestyle into adulthood.

Elementary School Service Providers – School counselors provide most prevention services in elementary school, while administrators, teachers and other staff support universal-level messaging and can help choose evidence-based curricula, programs and practices.

School staff receive professional development about the various symptoms of problem behaviors, referral sources, and classroom management skills that include how to best handle difficult students.

1 – 13 SAP in a middle school

Middle School Program Strategies – At a minimum, prevention and intervention strategies should focus on providing services during the critical middle school years (Burns, et al., 2003). Building upon norms and skills learned during elementary years, the middle school program and policies do the following:

- Clarify and communicate what constitutes good and poor behaviors to reinforce messages learned at the elementary level about acceptable norms.
- Use evidence-based curricula and other proven strategies in classroom programs that focus on social competency skills (e.g., developing self-control, stress-management, responsible decision making, social interaction and problem solving, bully prevention, communication and assertiveness skills) delivered over a period of 10–12 weeks, with booster sessions in each grade to reinforce what has been learned.
- Employ behavior modification programs that teach thinking skills to high-risk youth that emphasize changing behaviors and setting goals. Various efforts to teach thinking skills (i.e., cognitive-behavioral) that use interactive teaching, such as modeling or demonstrating behaviors, and rehearsal and coaching of new skills are used.

Middle School Rationale

On average, middle schools have the highest number of student problem behaviors, and thus exhibit the greatest need for student assistance. What is one key reason for this increase? Risk behaviors peak in mid- to late-adolescence, as do adolescent stressors (Burns, et al., 2003; Gottredson, 2001).

By engaging students at risk with support services, intervention programs are more likely to delay the onset of problem behaviors across the spectrum. Doing so significantly increases the likelihood of success in school and the potential for success throughout later life while simultaneously lessening the chance of dropping out and the downward spiral of consequences that can sometimes follow, including unlawful behavior (Dusenbury & Hansen, 2004).

Middle School Service Providers

At the middle school level, program services are more likely to be coordinated through a **multi-disciplinary or Student Assistance Team (Core Team)**, the traditional model for SAP. Under this approach, administrators enforce school and division policies for behavior and discipline for all levels of school as they typically do; and teachers use interactive and cooperative learning strategies to manage and engage students in classroom instruction as they routinely do. School counselors collaborate with teachers or Student Assistance Specialists (or both) on student-assistance, evidence-based curricula, at the Universal and Selected levels of programming, that promote social and emotional competencies and norms.

Student assistance in the middle school setting can also bring more intensive

services to bear for students at greater risk. Screening, referral, support groups, individual sessions, recovery support, and case (care) management are among these selected- and indicated-level services.

1 – 14 SAP in a high school

High School Program Strategies

SAP services can help students make the transition from middle to high school and from high school to work or college. At a minimum, high school strategies reinforce and sustain prevention and intervention lessons learned earlier and provide crisis-intervention to those at highest risk. Effective approaches include these aspects (Dusenbury & Hansen, 2004; Gottredson, 2001):

- Programs and policies reinforce behavior norms learned in middle and elementary schools (universal level.)
- One-on-one academic and vocational/career counseling as well as interventions (selected/indicated levels.)
- Programs and groups teach better thinking skills, which in turn help improve behaviors in high-risk youth (selected/indicated levels.)

High School Rationale

SAP experience shows that high school students often benefit most from programs connected to community service, substance abuse intervention, violence prevention, job training and employment.

Counseling that emphasizes adolescent and family issues can also be of great benefit to students and parents during the high school years.

For at-risk students, having normative behaviors reinforced, receiving academic support, and getting attention from a caring adult can influence them to stay in school and go on to lead a successful life.

High School Service Providers

Similar to middle school, **the best SAP-related services in high school come about from multi-disciplinary approaches.** Administrators enforce school and division policies on behavior and discipline. Teachers apply management and instruction strategies to reinforce prevention messages. School counselors help smooth the transition from middle school, give academic guidance, assist in referral to substance abuse and mental health programs, advise on transitions from high school, and create career plans.

Students with substance use, disciplinary, or other problems are referred to the SAP staff, who direct them to the services they need.

Typical Risk Indicators Found Among Students

- Aggression (physical or verbal)
- Alcohol, Tobacco or Other Drug (ATOD) experimentation, abuse, or dependence
- Association with peers or older kids with disruptive patterns of behavior
- Deceitfulness
- Depression
- Destruction of property
- Eating disorders
- Family problems
- Homelessness
- Limited personal skills (self-esteem and/or self-control problems)
- Low attachment to school
- Lying
- Parental illegal behavior and/or incarceration
- Parental or other significant adult substance abuse
- Persistent disruptive behavior in the classroom
- Poor academic performance (grades and homework)
- Poor attendance or truancy
- Poor social coping skills
- School sanctions (detention, suspension, expulsion)
- Social withdrawal
- Students in transition (new to school, divorce in family)
- Theft
- Victim of violence

1 – 15 Barriers to effective SAP

As cited by Gottfredson and Gottfredson in 2000 and again by the National Institute of Justice in 2004, ineffective, student-support programs have a number of shared shortcomings:

- lack of adequate training, staff development and technical assistance to apply programming and continue it
- poor staff resources, lack of continuity and length of programming

- weak school or SAP leadership
- overworked staff resistant to the idea of implementing new programming without additional support
- school/divisions that enable student problems by denying they exist
- an inability to sustain innovative strategies
- low teacher and staff morale
- lack of SAP buy-in among teachers and staff
- failure to apply any individual evidence-based curriculum with fidelity to its model
- poor monitoring and evaluation of programming

Other barriers can be disorganization, an unprofessional climate, poor communication, roles not being well defined, and failure to involve staff in SAP design. Schools having such problems are more likely to react with crisis-response tactics versus broad-based student assistance programming that addresses problems proactively and promptly.

1 – 16 Chapter 1 summary

Thanks to research and the experiences of teachers and staff, we know the components and practices that comprise the makeup of effective student assistance programming:

- help prevent problems from occurring and promote intervention for those problems that exist;
- lower barriers that hinder learning;
- promote a safe and supportive school learning environment; and
- help ensure a healthy school climate that benefits K-12 student populations.

Appendix A – Chapter 1

1 – 13 Surveys can address different audiences for different reasons

1 – 14 The conditions for learning seen in greater detail

SECTION 2 SAP at the School Level

Chapter 2 SAP Core Team Training

Chapter 3 The Early Identification Process

Chapter 4 Evidence-Based Programming

Chapter 5 Staff Development

Chapter 6 Building and Sustaining Awareness

Chapter 2 SAP Core Team Training

Chapter 2 Highlights

- Ideally, SAP Core Teams exist at division and school levels.
- Large and small school teams are both effective.
- The team has objectives at each level of support.
- Team members have different, yet complementary roles.
- School meetings are held regularly to review cases.
- Mutual support helps school team members handle the stress of referrals and case management.

2 – 1 The logic of a team approach to student assistance

A team can achieve more, faster, and with better results than one person. That's the basic idea behind the SAP Core Team, which oversees student assistance programming at the universal, selected and indicated levels.

SAP Core Teams exist at division and school levels. Their roles at each level are distinct and significant.

2 – 2 The SAP Core Team at the division level

The division-level team develops policies and procedures, oversees division needs, analyzes data, helps develop a broad-based prevention plan with available resources, reviews curricula and plans, and handles agreements (e.g., Memoranda of Understanding) with all community-based service providers with whom the SAP collaborates.

A division-level team, the community prevention council, or the school health advisory board may function as the division SAP Core Team, with state or federal guidelines determining its makeup. Otherwise, the division core team can include any combination of representatives from local entities such as area schools, youth-service organizations, the faith-based community, probation services, community welfare groups, the healthcare community, law enforcement, and business, government, prevention and treatment agencies.

2 – 3 The SAP Core Team at the school level

A variety of considerations can shape a school's core team structure. These can be the school's organization and its available staff. A SAP team may include representatives from other teams. Could a team with another prescribed function

such as truancy, student support, or other school-level teams would be examples — assume the additional role of student assistance programming? In some instances, the answer would be yes. A variety of factors – student population, training needs, having one or more team members from local agencies or service providers – can also influence the team’s makeup. In each instance, the individual school weighs its options and forms its SAP Core Team the best way it can.

2 – 4 Core teams can be large or small

The core team may be large (e.g. 18 to 25 members) and have sub-teams within it. Sub-teams can focus on problem solving at the grade level, handle case (care) management, assist in making referrals to community agencies, facilitate student counseling or group sessions, plan prevention activities, be evaluators, and coordinate staff development or awareness events.

Some schools have smaller core teams with a correspondingly smaller scope of service. In such instances, hiring a SAP Coordinator to augment the school’s staff or having SAP Core Team members from community agencies, or both, can help increase the team’s effectiveness.

2 – 5 What size should a school’s SAP Core Team be?

A simple, common sense formula for determining the right size team is this: *The extent of tasks to be accomplished equals the number of team members needed.* In some instances, a member can handle multiple tasks, in others, only one. Seeking advice from the division level and other schools can help a SAP Core Team determine the amount of work involved in a given activity. Add team members when the workload calls for it and the prospective members have skill-sets that add value. Each member should fulfill a need and contribute to the mix of skills.

2 – 6 The SAP Core Team at each level of support

Members of the SAP Core Team depend on one another to achieve team goals, which are established by way of an annual assessment of needs. This assessment sets priorities for each level of support for the year. For example, a level-by-level overview of core team functions might look as follows:

Universal Level – At this broadest level, the core team uses a needs assessment to determine the scope of prevention messaging to be communicated and prevention skills to be taught to the majority of students. The team puts the resulting programming into action and evaluates how well it works. At the Universal Level, team functions can be summarized in four sequential steps, which can overlap as they occur:

1. Examine data, review policies and procedures and prioritize prevention messaging.

2. Develop objectives, activities to achieve them, and methods for measuring results.
3. Choose evidence-based curricula, practices, strategies or programs.
4. Involve staff, students, parents and community stakeholders in prevention education and skills development.

Selected Level – At the Selected Level, the core team identifies groups of students early in the school year who exhibit elevated risk and monitors their progress using indicators. For example, the Virginia Early Warning Systems (VEWS) of the Virginia Department of Education relies on data from schools to predict which students are at risk for dropping out of school. VEWS identifies patterns and school climate problems that may contribute to dropout rates and helps target resources at division and school levels to support at-risk students. Risk indicators can be numerous unexcused absences, tardiness, failing a class, a 2.0 or lower grade point average, and several discipline violations. Students who are new to the school or known to have challenges at home may also qualify for inclusion in a selected-level grouping.

Indicated Level – At the Indicated Level, the core team receives referrals for individual students and then performs the following basic steps, more or less in the following sequence, to render assistance:

1. Gather additional information as may be required to make the most informed recommendation.
2. Develop a plan on how to handle the referral, and review and revise it as necessary.
3. Refer student to other school and/or community services as needed, especially if the student is not improving under current assistance.
4. Monitor and manage each student's case as necessary.
5. Maintain good working relationships with parents and services, both in and out of school.
6. Observe strict student, parent and staff confidentiality, only sharing information, as allowed, on a need-to-know basis.

The core team continuously evaluates its work with the goal of improving the student assistance process. Improvement involves training; few team members have all the knowledge and skills they need right from the start. School staff is not likely to make referrals or otherwise support SAP unless trained on SAP roles, anticipated outcomes, and overall benefits. Having team members with a variety of talents and perspectives helps the team connect with staff and faculty.

2 – 7 SAP Core Teams need multiple disciplines

A school's core team should represent a range of disciplines. Members typically include a building administrator, three to five teachers, and a school nurse, counselor, and special education instructor. A school psychologist, social worker, attendance officer, a court liaison and people from other local agencies may also be members. As one might suspect, the mix of disciplines often varies among elementary, middle and high school core teams. But whatever the team's makeup, its benchmark should be a range of disciplines. Experience shows that the most effective core teams are those where members have collegial personalities and share a passion for helping students (Davis, S., Kempson, D., Nettles, G., Snobarger, A. 2008).

Maintaining team performance is the responsibility of everyone on the team. Problems with members who are over-committed or have poor attitudes cannot be ignored without the team suffering. Dealing with such situations as a group is the most effective way to arrive at the best resolution.

2 – 8 The overall role of a SAP Core Team

Core team members mutually support one another as they strive to achieve objectives they establish together. Each member promotes the philosophy of student assistance at every opportunity. In practical terms, this means gaining knowledge, sharing it, and using it. They receive necessary prevention training; they plan such training and related activities for students, school staff, and community leaders; and, they coordinate or perform this training and lead these activities for as many people as possible.

In meetings, team members complete routine tasks and help the group solve problems. They manage the care of individual students—and in the process show the utmost respect for confidentiality of all parties involved in accordance with their training, ethical guidelines, and standards of practice.

Team focus is paramount. It is the responsibility of the team as a whole, and each member's individual responsibility whenever he or she feels the need to do so, to speak up on the team's behalf.

2 – 9 The role of a SAP Core Team Administrator

The team administrator organizes the team, manages SAP planning and activities, and assigns another team member to the role of core team manager to keep records of referrals and reports. Basic training in student assistance programming, on school climate and culture, and the many ways youth problems can manifest themselves, are a must for this person. The administrator provides this same information to team members and other school staff through in-service training or other educational opportunities.

In addition to referrals that come to the team, the administrator can also make referrals. In all cases, the administrator ensures that the team is following its procedures and the school's regulations. At no time is this more important than in student medical emergencies.

The administrator also serves another important function. He or she provides the most vocal support for student assistance programming.

2 – 10 The role of a SAP Core Team Manager

The core team manager oversees the recording of information regarding the student referral process and assists in preparing statistical reports. The manager checks for referrals, starts a log sheet for each referral, and obtains copies of the student's schedule, discipline, attendance and academic records — all to provide as complete a picture as possible of a student's pattern of behavior for the core team's review. A disposition form goes back to the referring teacher and a behavior observation checklist goes to the student's other teachers and any staff who have routine contact with the student. Upon the return of behavior checklists, the manager tabulates results for the team's review and assessment and stores all student information in a locked file cabinet or secure digital file.

2 – 11 The role of a SAP Coordinator

The SAP Coordinator (some schools use the title Student Assistance Specialist) handles a variety of education, prevention, counseling and coordinating functions. The SAP Coordinator is typically a full-time staff position whose functions may vary by hiring location.

Working with the division level, the school-level SAP Coordinator helps evaluate programming and suggests policy and procedural changes for the division to consider. The coordinator may also serve on the divisionwide team or the community-school prevention council, synchronize efforts with other community agencies and funding sources, and help craft Memoranda of Understanding (i.e., service agreements).

At the school level, the coordinator manages SAP and related services within the school. This may include helping form the core team and starting its work. Routine functions for most SAP Coordinators include teaching educational sessions, developing and giving in-service training, and consulting with faculty, staff and parents. He or she can be asked to consult with the disciplinary review committee at a student's expulsion hearing. The coordinator can be called upon to make presentations, determine SAP budgeting needs, and advocate on behalf of the school in a public relations role.

Functioning as a SAP counselor, the coordinator conducts pre-screening interviews, makes recommendations, refers to school and community agencies, develops service plans with other professionals and parents, puts these plans into

action, runs individual and group sessions, does case (care) management, serves on school crisis teams and handles crises, and does monthly reports and record keeping.

In the community, SAP Coordinators at division and school levels advocate for education, prevention and intervention programs, related services within the community, and follow-up support services. The coordinator also maintains relationships with courts of law, social services and counseling agencies, citizen groups, public and private associations, and businesses in the community on behalf of the student assistance effort.

2 – 12 Roles of other SAP Core Team members

School Counselor – Provides insight on academic, social and emotional needs of students and connections to resources in the school and community.

Regular Education Teacher – Provides insight on student academics and classroom behavior.

Special Education Representative – Functions as liaison between student assistance and special education.

Nurse – Provides knowledge on physical health and medications that can contribute to changes in behavior and may assist with physical health assessments when behavior and thinking change abruptly.

Athletic Director/Coaches who are faculty members – Gives perspective on youth who, though engaged in positive activities, have raised concerns with other adults with whom they have contact.

Court Liaison/Social Worker – Provides referrals on students sent for help by the courts, or students with truancy or other concerns, whose problems prevent them from reaching their potential.

Community Mental Health Liaison – Provides information on mental and behavioral health services, substance abuse, and social and developmental problems. Assesses students referred by the team.

Other Members – A school's administration may include other school faculty on the core team to help address known needs.

2 – 13 Who does what in a SAP Core Team meeting

When the following responsibilities are not assigned to individual team members, they may be shared among them:

Team Administrator – Keeps the meeting atmosphere open and balanced, focuses each discussion, keeps the meeting moving, summarizes meetings, and protects individual team members and students from inappropriate criticism. Monitors involvement of members in meeting.

Secretary – Maintains attendance records, minutes, and casework calendar.

Case/Care Managers – Distributes behavior information forms. Collaborates with the team to develop a case plan for referred students. Monitors progress of each case and reports it. Meets with individual students, parents, and faculty outside of core team meetings.

Core Team Manager – Collates and summarizes information. Presents materials that shed light on a student's behavior. Follows up on the team's action plans. May interact with parents or caregivers of students as the team's representative.

Faculty Reporter – Prepares faculty and staff updates for meetings or use in communications. Records meeting discussions and any decisions made. Within the bounds of confidentiality, reports what information may be conveyed to school staff with a need to know.

Team Maintenance – Schedules and moderates sessions where the team focuses on how well SAP procedures and practices are working.

Time Keeper – Monitors time and agenda items.

2 – 14 The School-based meeting

Pre-Meeting Tasks – A team member (i.e., coordinator or a case manager) prepares a preliminary file on each referred student based on the following information:

- cumulative student records
- attendance records
- early warning system indicator data
- any available legal records
- other information that has been requested by way of a behavioral checklist given to school staff and returned to the team

From these, the team should have sufficient information to decide on next steps, if any, in the student assistance process. This preliminary file is kept in a confidential file, hard copy or digital, separate and secure from other student records.

Team Meeting – Core team meetings occur on a regular schedule determined by the team. Members should arrive at meetings on time and be prepared to give the

meeting their undivided attention from start to finish. Either the SAP Team Administrator or SAP Coordinator runs the meeting, though other members may be designated to do so.

Guests may attend meetings. Any guest—whether a referring teacher, parents, school staff, or someone from the community, such as a probation officer—should have the meeting process explained to them, with special emphasis on the confidential nature of its proceedings. Guests should not be present during any part of the meeting that does not pertain to the referred student that warrants their visit.

Designated case (care) managers, who monitor individual student plans into action, report on the progress of each. For these ongoing plans, the team determines whether to continue them, revise them by way of additional assessments or intervention strategies, or close them as cases.

The team typically reviews student plans on a regular basis. The case (care) manager schedules periodic conversations with the student, his or her parents, and faculty to discuss and review the student's progress.

If, after a concerted effort at assistance, a student shows little to no improvement, and learning or emotional challenges beyond the team's scope are ruled out, a referral to other, perhaps more intensive services, whether within or outside the school, may be made.

Team Documentation – The team maintains records on attendance, confidentiality agreements, and student referrals. All team members sign confidentiality agreements and must adhere to confidentiality guidelines, including not sharing information on individual students with anyone outside of the team meeting without proper authority.

Schools should insist that referral forms contain only objective comments and observable behaviors. Comments made during the course of a meeting should not be documented, only a student's intervention or assessment plan.

2 – 15 Maintaining SAP Core Team performance

The health and productivity of the team directly relates to its ability to pursue its objectives. When team members talk before and after meetings, it fosters team health. Sharing time together on retreats and outings does as well. Even the simple act of celebrating success as a team strengthens team spirit. When a student overcomes adversity thanks to the team's work, it brings a deserved sense of accomplishment to a difficult job and should be acknowledged.

The responsibility of schools to students places an enormous pressure upon SAP Core Teams to be accountable to the school staff, students, and families. Teams address sensitive and serious issues in the lives of young people. Dealing with all of the aspects often causes stress.

Over-commitment to the SAP team and unrealistically high expectations can lead to burnout. Indicators of burnout include these:

- coming to meetings unprepared;
- arriving late, leaving early, or both;
- being preoccupied during meetings;
- acting or communicating defensively;
- offering little in the way of problem solving (feeling stuck;)
- expressing hopelessness; and
- blaming others.

A pattern of such behaviors in a member can interfere with the team's cohesion. Hence, good communication and mutual support among team members are essential traits a team should cultivate.

2 – 16 How a SAP Core Team compares to other teams

Schools can have a variety of teams to address different issues. Many school divisions have different teams that focus on academic, instructional and behavioral issues. Laws and regulations direct some teams. For example, a special education evaluation team (formerly known as a child study team) must follow very prescriptive regulatory guidance.

A team's purpose and the problems it addresses can vary across school divisions. Staff members may serve on more than one team and find that a given student can be the focus of multiple team efforts. Clarifying each team's boundaries in a spirit of collegial partnership helps prevent duplication and possible conflicts of effort.

Teams categorized under general education provide assistance to all students, families and staff. Truancy, instructional support, response to intervention, and student assistance teams are examples. These teams do not determine special education needs, though special education staff may serve on them. While the SAP Core Team does not screen for disabilities, it may refer a student to a special education administrator to determine if an evaluation is warranted.

Special education includes evaluation teams and individual education teams that determine disabilities and develop plans accordingly. The *Regulations Governing Special Education Programs for Children with Disabilities in Virginia, 2009* states that school divisions shall have a team in place to determine if a disability evaluation is warranted and then if a disability exists. If the student is found to have a disability, the Individual Education Planning Team develops an Individual Education Program (IEP). For information on special education team composition and roles and responsibilities, please review resources on the VDOE Web site at http://www.doe.virginia.gov/special_ed/index.shtml.

All staff members should be informed of the purpose and functions of all school and division teams. When overlapping influences surface, team members should be able to distinguish confidentiality, legal and ethical boundaries between their team and another.

2 – 17 Chapter 2 summary

Key points to remember about the SAP Core Team and its functions and members are these:

- The Core Team oversees student assistance programming at the school level, whereas division core teams have different responsibilities.
- The core team may be large or small, be staffed entirely by school personnel or have some members from outside agencies and service providers, but should always have members from multiple disciplines.
- Core team activities vary by the three levels of prevention and intervention—universal, selected, and indicated—in carrying out the mission of student assistance programming.
- Principal core team roles are administrator, manager and coordinator. The coordinator is a hired position with multiple responsibilities and does not exist in every school.
- Core team makeup often varies from elementary to middle to high school. Members may include teachers, counselors, nurses, athletic directors and coaches, court liaisons and social workers, and others.
- Core team members take on defined roles to facilitate their regular meetings.
- Due to the nature of student-assistance work, core team members need to collectively monitor the team’s performance in the interests of team effectiveness and individual team member health.

Appendix B – Chapter 2

2 – 18 Sample form: SAP Core Team Student Referral Notes/Student Support Plan

2 – 19 Making referrals to community-based resources

CHAPTER 3 The Early Identification Process

Chapter 3 Highlights

- Assistance starts with a referral within the school.
- Watching and listening for signs of problems leads to early identification.
- Preconceptions can keep students from receiving help.
- The SAP Core Team works with students and parents.
- A teacher may consult a team member about a student.
- The importance of confidentiality never changes.

3 – 1 Identification and referral — the keys to SAP success

Referring a student with a problem to the assistance he or she needs requires a specified process to set the right wheels in motion. Courts of law and community agencies have referral processes. In the school setting, student assistance programming provides the referral process. Universal-level activities and materials inform faculty, staff, students and families about how the SAP process works. A clear and straightforward process helps facilitate such universal awareness.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services weaves the idea of referral into its **six essentials common to a successful SAP infrastructure**:

1. Identify students with problems (see next section) before they can harm the students' potential for a successful school year.
2. Take initial action towards an effective, positive process of change.
3. Conduct a pre-assessment to determine how best to help students examine their lives and move in a positive direction.
4. Refer for help, within either the school and/or community, to provide students the assistance they need to overcome problems that interfere with their educational and overall development.
5. Support access to appropriate care, doing as much as possible to ensure that students take advantage of the opportunities given to them within the school and community.
6. Support student change through mentoring, individual school sessions, educational student support groups, and similar mechanisms where students learn to change behaviors, develop skills, and make the most of their innate abilities to learn.

In broad terms, this chapter deals with the first four of these essentials and then discusses the nature and importance of confidentiality.

3 – 2 Ways to identify students who need help

Students who need help for problems give signals both knowingly and unknowingly. Luckily, most of these indicators, whether academic, personal, or social, can be seen as red flags. Observation is the key. Any behavior pattern that signals something is not right in a student's life could be caused by an underlying problem.

To specify indicators of ninth-grade students likely to drop out of school, the Virginia Department of Education and the Appalachia Regional Comprehensive Center, as well as other states, divisions, and high schools, and the National High School Center developed the research-based Virginia Early Warning System (VEWS). The VEWS Tool uses a Microsoft Excel operating platform. The data is uploaded into the VEWS Tool, indicators and benchmarks are set, and students are flagged according to the thresholds set. The tool enables schools and divisions to identify students who may be at risk of dropping out of high school and to monitor these students' responses to interventions. The VEWS System Tool and Guide cite the following indicators, and time frame for reviewing benchmarks.

Indicator	Time Frame	Benchmark (red flag)
Attendance	First 20 or 30 days, each grading period, end of year annual	Missed 10% or more of instructional time
Course failures	Each grading period, end of year (annual)	Failed one or more semester courses (any subject)
Grade point average	Each grading period, end of year (annual)	Failed two or more semester core courses, or accumulated fewer credits than the number required for promotion to the next grade.
"On (off) Track" indicator(s)	End of year (annual)	Failed two or more semester core courses, or accumulated fewer credits than the number required for promotion to the next grade
Referrals and suspensions	Each grading period, end of year (annual)	Benchmarks need to be validated at the local level

The VEWS Tool and Implementation Guide may be found at http://www.doe.virginia.gov/support/school_improvement/early_warning_system/index.shtml

Other issues that impact high school engagement include a student changing schools during the school year and being two or more years over age for the current grade level. Any of the indicators could be a direct result or byproduct of

some problem of one kind or another and thus lead to a referral to the SAP Core team to provide a more complete picture of a student's life.

Adults who interact with students daily—teachers, principals, coaches, nurses, bus drivers, cafeteria workers, counselors, school staff, as well as those in community services, the courts and health care—can observe slight-to-moderate changes in a young person's behavior that can signal something is wrong.

In addition to a decline in academics and frequent tardiness or absence, common indicators include disruptive or aggressive behaviors, anger, depression, substance abuse, eating disorders and disrespect to faculty and staff. Even when none of these behaviors are present, an overheard comment can provide a hint of some problem. In other instances, a student may take a teacher, coach, or other adult into his or her confidence with expressions of concern about a fellow student.

Of course, any student can be moody or have a bad day, and not every problem in school is an indication of something more serious. But observing a pattern of undesirable behavior can be a tip-off that warrants a student's referral to the SAP Core Team.

3 – 3 Barriers to identifying students with problems

When a school's student-assistance policies are unclear, or clear but poorly enforced, students who need help may not receive it. This can cause a student to become stereotyped (e.g., as a loser or wild) without adequate thought having been given to the possibility of an underlying cause. While a disruptive student gets attention, a quiet student with good grades, but immense problems at home, can remain unnoticed.

Lack of universal education about problems students face can factor into this mix as well. When a committed SAP Core Team advocates on behalf of student assistance programming, this collective effort lowers the barriers that can prevent help from getting to students who need it.

3 – 4 An overview of the referral process

A student is most often referred to a school's SAP based on circumstances such as the following:

- Flagged as in need through an early warning system (VEWS.)
- An observed change in behavior raises concern.
- Disruptive behavior in the classroom does not change despite efforts of teachers to curb it.
- Parents or guardians request a referral.

- A discussion with parents or guardians indicates a need for student assistance.
- The student discusses problems with an adult, who in turn considers a referral to be in that student's best interest.
- A student expresses concerns about a peer to a teacher or an adult.
- A student refers himself or herself for assistance.

Whatever the circumstances, a referral occurs typically one of three ways: by someone having a private conversation with a SAP Core Team member, by identification through an early warning system or by the referring person's submission of a behavioral checklist to the team. In any instance, step one is maintaining a strict sense of confidentiality on the student's behalf.

Students who refer themselves for help, students referred by their parents, court-ordered referrals, or referrals from a community agency may not require a behavioral checklist form in order for the team to develop a plan for assistance.

When the team decides to gather more information, it most often includes present and past grades, attendance and disciplinary records, and any other information that may be available on the identified student. It may also request certain teachers and staff to complete behavioral checklist forms and submit them by a certain date. The form does not ask the respondent to determine the cause of behavior, just to note what is being observed.

Students may also be identified for referral by way of VEWS indicators—poor academics, absenteeism, discipline offenses, changing schools in mid-year, and so forth—and thus come to the attention of SAP Core Team for support.

Once all available information is in hand, team members tally submitted behavioral checklist forms on a summary sheet. At this point, the team has everything it needs in terms of records to discuss the student's case.

3 – 5 How the SAP Core Team handles referrals

SAP Core Team meetings typically occur every other week, depending on the team's caseload. During the meeting, members read each referred student's information, discuss the case, and determine a course of action. This occurs for new and ongoing cases.

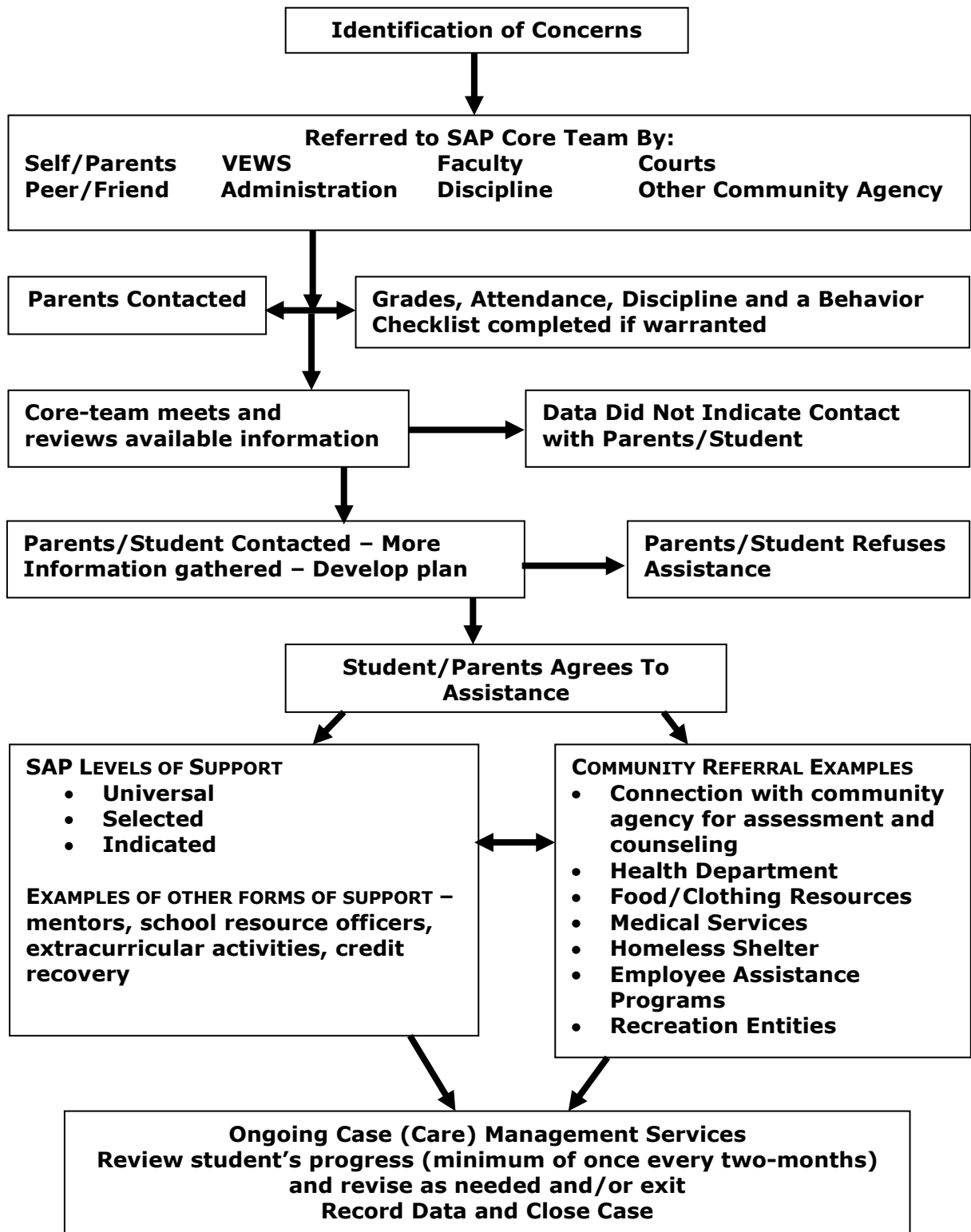
For new cases, the team chooses a member to be case (care) manager, which can be the SAP Coordinator (or specialist) if the team has one. The coordinator may also co-manage cases with team members.

In deciding how to proceed on a given case, any combination of these next steps may be appropriate:

- discussion with the teacher or staff person who made the referral;
- discussion with others who know the student well;
- meeting with the parents;
- meeting with the student;
- meeting with the student and parents together; and
- referral to in-school service or community service provider, or both.

Once a student action plan is agreed upon and assignments made, case monitoring begins. Each action plan is discussed and updated as needed at core team meetings.

3 – 6 Viewing the SAP referral process as a flow chart



3 – 7 Involving referred students and their parents

With a new referral, the team determines the most respectful way to approach the student and parents, gather information, discuss concerns and introduce the idea of getting assistance. If no one has a prior relationship with the student or parents, the team chooses a member to initiate contact. In some instances, another option may be appropriate, such as asking an adult outside of the team to make contact because he or she knows the student or family well.

Meeting with the student and parents begins a dialogue. A patient, calm and forthright approach has the best chance of success. In such an atmosphere, new details may be uncovered, the team's concerns can be discussed, and potential strategies for assistance can be introduced and explored.

An open discussion based on genuine goodwill can lead student and parents to participate in selected-level activities, early intervention educational support groups, mentoring programs, or other interventions available. Anything from academic assistance to referral to more intensive services (i.e., indicated level) within or outside of the school may be recommended.

Establishing a trusting, engaging dialogue with everyone involved fosters a collaborative spirit more likely to lead the student and parents to accept the team's recommendations. Much benefit can accrue to the student as a result.

3 - 8 Providing Case (Care) Management

One of the many benefits is ongoing communication among the student, parents and a member of the SAP Core Team as the assigned Case (Care) Manager. Maintaining a caring and supportive relationship with the student and parents is essential. Case (Care) Managers also join with other adults in supporting a students' commitment to school and learning.

The Case (Care) Manager monitors the student's progress and discusses with the student and parents achievements and concerns. Conversations with individuals from community entities may need to occur. In this case, the proper procedure for exchanging confidential information must be followed. Sections 3 – 9 and 3 – 10 below provide more information on confidentiality. The Case (Care) Manager reports the student's progress to the SAP Core Team. Student and parental successes are highlighted and changes or additional supports are put into place.

3 – 9 Updating the referring student or staff member

It's only natural that someone who refers a student for assistance would want to know the outcome. Confidentiality dictates what, if anything, may be divulged. The SAP Core Team may not share any information that compromises the student's confidentiality or privacy. If a member has doubts about what can be divulged, it should be discussed within the team. (See the next section for further guidelines.)

Teachers may also request consultation with a SAP Core Team member to discuss strategies they may use in their interactions with the student and family. Providing this help to the teacher is standard practice in student assistance. Alternatively, a SAP team member may refer a teacher to an instructional consultation team for this guidance.

3 – 10 Strict confidentiality is the default position

School policy on confidentiality has to be compatible with existing federal and state laws. Confidentiality is also an ethical and professional responsibility. According to *Help Is Down The Hall, A Handbook on Student Assistance*, published by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration of the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, these general guidelines apply:

- Staff members are not to talk publicly about or allude to a student's participation in SAP in any shape, way, or form.
- SAP records or written remarks about a student's behavior are never to be kept with or appear in that student's permanent record file.
- Special care should be taken to safeguard all confidential questionnaires and report forms.

Mutual trust between SAP Core Team members and students and their families has everything to do with the ability to connect students with the help they need. In doing so, the SAP Core Team may communicate with school-based and community service providers using appropriate protocol for sharing sensitive information on a need-to-know basis. The goal is to give the student the best chance for success.

In accordance with state and federal regulations and guidelines, school divisions should establish policy and procedures that cover the following:

- Disclosing and exchanging student information within the school as well as with outside agencies.
- Establishing service agreements with community agencies.
- Maintaining, accessing, storing and destroying SAP records.

In matters of student privacy, strict confidence is the team's default position – and it has to be, given federal law and guidelines.

3 – 11 Chapter 3 summary

In regard to identifying students who may need assistance on a problem, and referring them to the school's SAP Core Team, keep these points in mind:

- Early identification is key to dealing with problems that can blunt the benefits of a student's education if left unchecked.
- An early warning system gives many of the indicators teachers and staff should monitor.
- In most instances, a behavioral checklist given to the SAP Core Team starts the referral process, though other types of referrals can occur.
- The SAP Core Team evaluates all information it collects on a referred student and recommends a course of action to the student and parents.
- A core team member in doubt about sharing confidential information should consult the team.

Appendix C – Chapter 3

3 – 12 Sample form: Elementary School Behavior Checklist

3 – 13 Sample form: Middle and High School Behavior Checklist

3 – 14 Sample form: Behavior Checklist Summary

3 – 15 Balancing legal requirements for confidentiality

Chapter 4 Evidence-Based Programming

Chapter 4 Highlights

- Many educational programs claim evidence of support.
- Evidence-based means rigorous, scientific support.
- Evidence-based programs make fiscal sense, too.
- Evidence-based curricula and practices improve behavior and academics.
- Support groups complement and further SAP curricula.
- Reliable evidence-based programs adhere to certain principles.
- To be successful, maintain program fidelity.

4 – 1 Sorting through programs for student assistance

Professional educators nationwide appreciate that educational program developers offer the K-12 educational landscape a huge number and variety of intervention programs. Reading and math programs, after-school programs, and programs on the newest educational technologies are just some of the categories of curricula. Rare is the program offering that comes along without claims of improved outcomes and the evidence to back them up (Anderson, Crowley, Herzog, Wenger, 2007; “Annotated List of Empirically Supported/Evidence Based Interventions for School-Aged Children and Adolescents,” 1995-2004; *Identifying and Implementing Educational Practices Supported By Rigorous Evidence: A User Friendly Guide*, 2003; Hennessy, 2007; Nation, Crusto, Wandersman, Kumpfer, Seybolt, Morrissey-Kane, Davino, 2003; “SAMHSA Model Programs: Model Prevention Programs Supporting Academic Achievement,” 2002; “Technical Assistance Fact Sheets, Evidence-based Programs,” 2005).

Which ones are the best? It used to be that sifting through the many offerings was the only choice before school administrators. But this began to change when the federal “No Child Left Behind Act of 2001” called on educators to insist on rigorously documented, scientific research to be the basis for educational programs going forward. Today, federal K-12 grant programs as well as sources of private funding require this higher standard of programming.

4 – 2 What exactly are evidence-based programs?

In student assistance, an evidence-based program means a program of instruction, practices, or strategies that has been documented to work well. More precisely, it is a program that has been tested under rigorous scientific conditions and is proven to lower risk or improve outcomes. The evidence in each instance may vary, but for practical purposes the findings have been officially validated, as compared to programs that rely on some combination of tradition, anecdote, or popular

convention for their rationales. An evidence-based instruction implemented with fidelity to its design should produce outcomes similar to its documented ones.

In some instances, modification of some parts of an evidence-based approach becomes necessary due to practical realities of one kind or another. But first, contact the program developers for advice. Evidence-based programs that are not replicated faithfully, or those changed without the developer's involvement, are no longer considered evidence-based. To pursue student-assistance goals effectively, decisions on how to conduct prevention and intervention programs should be driven by reliable information and fidelity of implementation.

4 – 3 Accountability requires rigorous, scientific support

Federal and state agencies that sponsor and fund student assistance programming want to see what concrete results the programming has had on youth problems. Some recommend evidence-based programs as starting points for consideration. The Institute of Education Science's (IES) What Works Clearinghouse provides effectiveness ratings on reviewed programs and practices. So, too, does the National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP) of The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) of the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services.

In addition to IES and NREPP, the following scientifically evaluate student assistance programs, practices and strategies, and publish their reviews:

- Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice (CECP), part of the American Institutes for Research (AIR)
- Center for Study and Prevention of Violence, Blueprints for Violence Prevention, University of Colorado
- Collaboration for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL)
- National Dropout Prevention Center/Network, Clemson University
- Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Model Programs Guide, U. S. Department of Justice
- Promising Practices Network on children, families and communities, operated by the RAND Corporation

For the Web sites of all of the above, see Appendix D, sections 4 – 18.

Wide varieties of evidence-based programs help prevent or lessen substance abuse, violence, and other risky behaviors while improving behavior in general and social functioning in particular. These programs can also lower absenteeism, increase bonding with the school community, and improve reading, writing and math skills. Making use of evidence-based programs, practices and strategies in student assistance programming increases the probability of success. Typical evidence-based programs include one or more of the following academic outcome measures:

- Improved grades
- Higher rates of next-grade promotion
- Increased grade point average
- Improved graduation rates
- Improved reading, math, and writing skills
- Improved standardized test scores
- Increased credits earned
- Increased child developmental levels (for very young children)

Most evidence-based programs also have these complementary outcome measures:

- Decreased absenteeism/improved attendance
- Decreased high school drop out
- Increased parental involvement in child's school
- Fewer out-of-school suspensions
- Fewer in-grade retentions
- Fewer special education referrals
- Fewer school behavioral incidents
- Improved social competence and play skills in very young children
- Greater participation in after-school and learning activities

Of course no single evidence-based program can achieve all of these outcomes. That said, the practical reasons for choosing evidence-based programs – they produce measurable and positive outcomes – make them excellent choices for professional and fiscal reasons as well.

Based on evidence should not be the sole criterion a school uses in choosing its student assistance programming. Practicality, cost effectiveness, applicability to a target audience, and sustainable benefits can be qualities found in non-evidence-based programs as well.

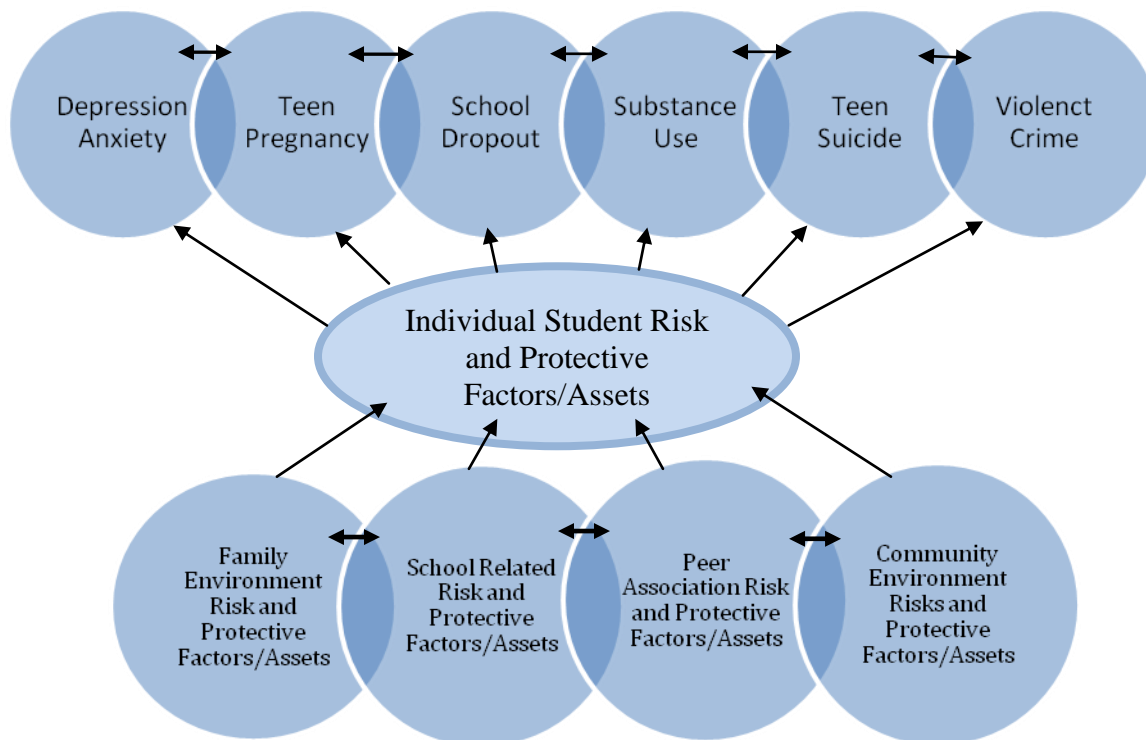
4 – 4 Evidence-based programs build assets and protection

Which evidence-based programs should be used? That depends on the causes and prevalent trends in youth behavior and what they suggest. The more obvious the high-risk behaviors, the more they would suggest a certain kind of corresponding, multi-component program. Understanding causes and reasons for the behavior is a prerequisite to choosing a program.

A basic understanding of how childhood influences affect behavior brings additional understanding to the programming-choice question. From a developmental standpoint, childhood influences break down two ways: those that foster risky

behaviors and those that promote healthy ones, otherwise known as risk and protective factors.

To assess risk and protective factors requires looking at five life domains. One is internal: the individual student. The others are external domains: the family environment, the school environment, peer group, and the community environment. The intricate mix of relationships among these domains can be seen in the following model:



Hawkins, J. D., Catalano, R. F., Miller, J. Y. (1992). Hawkins, D. J., Farrington, D. P., and Catalano, R. F. (1998)

Each student's internal and external assets, such as motivated to achieve and a caring school climate, aided by protective factors, such as opportunities to be involved and recognition for prosocial involvement, act as buffers against risky behaviors. For an even more detailed look at risk and protective factors by domain, see the chart in Appendix D, sections 4 – 14.

Stronger personal assets up the protective-factor quotient

If students are to be healthy, caring, principled, and productive, they have to have a reserve of personal assets to guide them. One authority on the subject is the independent, nonprofit Search Institute. Its Developmental Assets® framework for ages three through 18 consists of 40 common sense, positive experiences and qualities. These 40 developmental assets divide into external and internal. External

assets comprise the relationships and opportunities provided to young people, while internal assets are the personal values and skills they develop.

As a preventative approach, the Developmental Assets framework builds on inherent strengths in young people. The framework suggests a variety of strategies to increase assets associated with healthy, responsible behaviors. Some call for establishing caring relationships between adults and young people, some for asset-fostering environments in schools, homes, and communities, and some for formal structures in programs and practices that help build assets.

Schools and communities that have adopted the framework consider young people to be resources, not problems. To learn more about The Search Institute's Developmental Assets framework, see Appendix D, sections 4 – 15 for a list of the 40 assets and visit the Search Institute online at <http://www.search-institute.org/content/what-kids-need>.

4 – 5 Nine traits that effective programs share

If evidence-based programs work, how do schools determine what characteristics make for an above average student-assistance program for a given audience? The six co-authors of "What Works in Prevention, Principles of Effective Prevention Programs," a June/July 2003 article in *American Psychologist Journal* identified the characteristics of an effective SAP. Using a review-of-reviews approach to prevention programs, they identified nine principles in three broad areas that better evidence-based programs share.

In characteristics, effective student-assistance programs have these attributes:

- 1) **Comprehensiveness** – When family, peer and community environments enable or worsen behavioral problems, multiple interventions may be necessary.
- 2) **Varied teaching methods** – To emphasize both awareness and understanding of behavioral problems, instruction should include active, hands-on experiences to sharpen skills.
- 3) **Sufficient dosage** – Students, teachers and staff must be exposed to enough student assistance programming for it to be effective.
- 4) **Theory driven** – Programming should be supported by accurate information and empirical research.
- 5) **Positive relationships** – When students have solid relationships with adults and peers, positive outcomes are more likely to result.

For a particular audience, effective student-assistance programs also have these distinctions:

- 6) **Appropriately timed** – Programs must be developmentally appropriate and promote early intervention on youth problems.
- 7) **Socio-culturally relevant** – Programs should complement the culture of their target groups and foster participation in implementation.

For implementation and assessment, effective student-assistance programs should include:

- 8) **Outcome evaluation** – Meaningful evaluation results when clear objectives and goals have documented results that correspond to them.
- 9) **Well-trained staff** – Having staff trained in a program and supporting its implementation are keys to success.

4 – 6 Support groups are at the heart of SAP

School-based student support groups can provide the information and encouragement that sustain students during times of difficulty. The reasons they work so well are well established:

- Students learn that other students share the same or similar challenges they do.
- The sense of “We’re in this together” helps foster the trust among support group members that breaks down denial.
- Support groups provide emotionally safe venues where discussion focuses on information and solutions.
- Support group structure makes the most of meeting time and in turn eases the burden on staffs that perform individual counseling sessions.
- Groups facilitate healthy social interaction among participants and by extension with other students.
- Working together in a group setting builds bonds and further validates the group’s work among its members.

4 – 7 Educational groups are not therapy groups (and vice versa)

As is often the case, staffs of varying credentials administer school-based student support groups. To lessen the chances of misunderstandings and inconsistent practice, the following feature-by-feature comparison from *Help is Down the Hall, A Handbook of Student Assistance* (2007) clarifies the basic nature of support groups that provide education versus those that emphasize therapy.

Educational Groups	Therapy Groups
Focus on life skills/coping skills	Solve personal problems
Education	Resolution
Support/Safety Net	May be supportive but includes probing and confrontation

Educational goals and objectives achieved through curriculum-based content and activities	Individualized treatment plan; use of therapeutic activities; process is always more important than content
Building protective factors	Probing; addressing impact of risk factors; may focus on protective factors later
Conducted by trained facilitators knowledgeable about child development and specific problems	Conducted by trained therapists
LOVEE driven, meaning Listen, Observe, Validate, Educate, Empower	Psychological theory and diagnosis driven
Time limited, 6-12 weeks typically	Treatment defined by process and patient's progress

4 – 8 Successful support groups have effective facilitators

The successful school-based student support group, whatever its form, is led by a facilitator who fully engages the group's process – but who also stays within the group's operational guidelines to maintain boundaries between professional and personal involvement. The facilitator educates, listens, does not accept excuses or enable unacceptable behavior, and makes referrals to other support staff or community services when needed. On the other hand, the facilitator is not expected to cure problems, know every answer or win arguments with group members.

Facilitators need to know the characteristics of a healthy group, plus how to promote healthy interactions. Simple aids, such as a program-planning checklist, help. Typically, student-support staff (i.e., student assistance coordinators, school counselors and social workers, and psychologists) act as group facilitators. A qualified person from a community agency may also handle group sessions. For more information on developing working relations with community agencies, please see Chapter eight.

4 – 9 Setting up and running support groups

Starting school-based support groups involves decisions about the length of sessions, number and mix of participants, where to meet, the rules of group participation, curriculum structure, obtaining parental permission for students to take part and communication with parents.

The ongoing support group involves how to guide group discussion, ask questions, provide useful feedback, deal with group problems, and make referrals and more.

4 – 10 Evidence-based programs fit a tiered approach

The levels of care to which evidence-based programs correspond, whether used in a classroom or support-group setting, are categorized accordingly. Individual descriptions make programs easy to match with a school's need for one kind of student-assistance program or another.

- **Health Promotion Strategies** strengthen knowledge and attitudes across an entire population to reduce each student's risk of problems occurring later, thereby furthering prospects for positive development.
- **Universal Prevention Strategies** deal with risk factors in entire populations of youth—for example, all students in a classroom, or in a school, or in multiple schools—without trying to discover who is at higher risk for a particular problem. A school's prevention and intervention plan would likely show a number of evidence-based activities at the universal level, describing activities, details of implementation, and measures (i.e., indicators) of success.
- **Selected Prevention Strategies** consist of interventions to counter a known risk or risks associated with certain groups of youth. A school's prevention and intervention plan might show several evidence-based activities at the selected level, along with identifying the group of students being addressed along with the program's activities, details of implementation, and measures (i.e., indicators) of success.
- **Indicated Prevention Strategies** help students who show significant problems, but who do not currently meet a behavioral health or substance abuse diagnostic. A school's prevention and intervention plan might show one or more evidence-based activities, focusing on a small number of students at the indicated level, and describing activities, details of implementation, and measures (i.e., indicators) of success.
- **Treatment Interventions** generally target those who have high symptom levels or diagnosable disorders at the current time.
- **Recovery Interventions** generally target those who need maintenance support after treatment for behavioral health problems, substance abuse treatment or involvement in a credit recovery program. A school's plan to assist students with recovery might show one or more evidence-based activities, details of implementation, and measures (i.e., indicators) of success.

4 – 11 Success is in the details (i.e., a school collecting its own data)

The "Identifying and Implementing Educational Practices Supported by Rigorous Evidence: A User Friendly Guide" released by the USED in 2003 suggests that an under-appreciated aspect of how well an evidence-based program works in a school is how closely implementers adhere to the details of putting it into action. For example, when one state reduced its K-3 class sizes, some of the new teachers

hired were less qualified, negating the positive effects of more individual attention per student.

When putting an evidence-based intervention into operation, include mechanisms to capture outcome information in order to compare actual effects to predicted ones. Slight differences between a school's classrooms and those in an evidence-based study can result in much different outcomes. Considerations such as student demographics and reading levels should be roughly comparable between comparison groups. A school may wish to establish its own comparison group of schools or classrooms for the best indication of how well a given evidence-based program works.

4 – 12 Chapter 4 summary

Remember these key points about evidence-based, tiered programming:

- Evidence-based means a program has been scientifically tested under rigorous standards, had its results documented, and has thus been proven to produce positive outcomes.
- Evidence-based programs make sense for accountability, make sense professionally, and make sense financially.
- In student assistance, evidence-based programs improve academic performance across the board while lessening youth problems of one kind or another.
- Nine principles—comprehensiveness, varied teaching methods, sufficient dosage, theory driven, positive relationships, appropriateness, and well-trained staff—are associated with more effective, evidence-based programs for student assistance.
- Facilitator-run, school-based support groups contribute much to student success.
- Evidence-based programs fit a tiered approach with the various levels of care.
- Evidence-based programs still require attention to detail when implementing.
- When a school collects its own data and has its own comparison groups, it has the best information to use in assessing curriculum or initiative outcomes.

Appendix D – Chapter 4 – See the back of this manual

4 – 13 Educational institutions, organizations and government agencies that evaluate evidence-based programs

4 – 14 Risk and protective factor framework chart

- 4 – 15 The Search Institute’s 40 Developmental Assets**
- 4 – 16 Guidance for support-group facilitators**
- 4 – 17 Characteristics of healthy support groups for teens overcoming alcohol and other drug problems**
- 4 – 18 Facilitators program-planning checklist**
- 4 – 19 Mechanics of setting up school-based support groups**
- 4 – 20 What to keep in mind when running a support group**

Chapter 5 Staff Development

Chapter 5 Highlights

- Training all staff makes student assistance more effective.
- Ongoing training means more students get needed help.
- Core topics should be covered in every SAP curriculum.
- The SAP Core Team assesses training needs annually.
- Asking the right questions aids planning.

5 – 1 A trained school staff helps more students

For student assistance programming to succeed to any appreciable degree, professional development of school staff is a must. Ongoing training increases knowledge and awareness in staff. It shapes their attitudes and provides the skills necessary to reduce risk and increase protective factors. Most importantly, a well-trained staff means more referrals; and in turn, more students with problems receive assistance that leads to positive outcomes.

5 – 2 Who should be trained

The short answer is everyone. Training on prevention and awareness should target school staff from administrators and classroom teachers to custodial, student support, and playground personnel. Effectiveness depends on widespread knowledge, so the more eyes and ears involved, the better the student-assistance effort and individual student outcomes.

In-service training challenges participants to expand their base of knowledge about how different problems can affect students, and the corresponding school and community resources that provide the help students and families need. Balancing this is the practical knowledge about what staff can do – and making clear the steps for taking action.

Faculty wellness support is important for all faculty members, and it should be an integral part of staff development for SAP Core Team members. Any involvement in student assistance cases can take an emotional toll on a participant.

5 – 3 Five excellent reasons for training staff

Continuous, thorough staff training on student assistance should do the following:

1. Educate faculty about the identification of student groups, and individual students who may need assistance, and the internal referral process for the latter.
2. Educate staff about how behavioral, social, emotional, physical, and family health problems can influence a given student's academic achievement as well as the student's learning environment.
3. Build awareness about the SAP goal: to deal effectively with any barriers to learning facing individual students, or the student population as a whole.
4. Increase staff awareness and skills on behalf of protecting all students, including those referred for help.
5. Support staff wellness through education, and referral when necessary.

5 – 4 Three broad goals for staff development

Staff training for student assistance can vary from school to school, but should be designed to meet three common goals:

1. Increase the number of staff members who participate in identifying students, thereby helping more of those students who need it.
2. Connect identified students to support services, whether in school or within the community, as needed.
3. Provide school staff with language and terms that help them communicate clearly with each other, and persuasively with students who need help.

5 – 5 Staff training should cover these topics

A school's staff must know how to use SAP services from prevention through support. To achieve this, training should emphasize the following key areas:

1. A SAP overview that covers the 12 constructs of comprehensive programming, SAP Core Team roles and corresponding duties, and school policy.
2. The SAP continuum of prevention, the purpose of each level of prevention (i.e., health promotion, universal, selected, indicated and recovery) and its associated activities, and how this continuum looks in a SAP flowchart.
3. Relationship of SAP availability to academic achievement and the school's improvement process.

4. Recognizing the symptoms of high-risk behaviors – dependency on alcohol or other drugs, self-cutting, bullying, anxiety, depression, and so forth – to identify individual students who need assistance.
5. Summary of current and other drugs abused and their symptoms of usage.
6. Effects of substance abuse on families, including how denial and enabling behavior keep alcohol and other drug abusers from the help they need.
7. How a SAP Core Team approaches student assistance.
8. Strategies for selected- and indicated-level interventions and for reducing violence in general.
9. Understanding cultural difference among students and the community.
10. Procedures for referring a student, including how to complete basic SAP forms.
11. Understanding school policies and procedures on disciplinary referrals.
12. Confidentiality and how it protects students and their families.
13. Appreciation for risk and protective factors, resiliency, and internal and external assets development.

5 – 6 Assessing training needs and integrating plans

The school's SAP Core Team should conduct a training-needs assessment survey of staff and faculty each year, and use the results to develop a training plan in collaboration with the school's administration. Integrating this plan with the school's improvement plans affords more opportunities for staff development. Staff members who have training that complements student assistance work can save the school money by acting as training instructors. Another option might be local agency staff, if they provide free or low-cost training.

While school divisions offer universal-level trainings for staff, schools offer professional development to fit the specific needs of their faculties and staffs. In either instance, training should be based on training-need surveys, student, parent and faculty surveys, and academic, discipline, crime, and violence information. Positive conditions for learning depend on such thoroughness.

5 – 7 Key questions a training plan should address

1. How do we inform new staff about SAP processes and strategies?
2. What are the minimum and optimum topics, and the times for training, during the school year?
3. What training has occurred and how effective has it been?

4. What training remains to help staff understand student needs beyond the academic curriculum?
5. Are there other ways of training besides those that require in-service time?

5 – 8 NSAA training guidelines on staff development

The National Student Assistance Association (NSAA) says that staff development should have these attributes:

- Account for the culture of the local community, based on a thorough needs assessment.
- Focus on reducing barriers to learning that affect students' social and academic performance.
- Be practical and experiential so that staff will know how to provide educational support groups, agency referrals, mediation, mentoring, and evidence-based prevention curriculum.
- Cover faculty wellness support, including information on community resources for staff affected by personal problems.

5 – 9 Chapter 5 Summary

Remember these key points about staff development:

- SAP effectiveness depends on staff being trained to recognize signs of behavioral problems and knowing what to do.
- When virtually every staff member receives basic training, more individual students who need help can be identified and referred to school or community services.
- SAP can vary from school to school, but all of them have common goals and should cover a number of essential topics.
- The SAP Coordinator or Core Team or both should ask a few basic questions in assessing training needs each year.

Appendix E – Chapter 5

5 – 10 The National Student Assistance Association's suggested ethical guidelines and standards of practice

CHAPTER 6 Building and Sustaining Awareness

Chapter 6 Highlights

- Every SAP needs continuous awareness to sustain it.
- Awareness is part social marketing, part event staging.
- Social marketing focuses on a widespread problem.
- Awareness events cover the SAP process and how to make a referral.
- Student ideas can further awareness.
- Classroom presentations engage students and dispel myths.

6 – 1 SAP success depends on widespread awareness

The success of student assistance programming depends on awareness as much as anything. It is easy to understand why. Students, parents, teachers, and all school staff need to appreciate the many different forms youth problems can take and how student assistance programming can help. Community entities already well aware of these problems and their effects – the community health department, juvenile justice system, police department, social service agencies, and medical and mental health treatment agencies – also need to know about a school's student assistance effort. Business leaders should be made aware as well.

Early buy-in is key to programming effectiveness and sustainability. A group not sold on the idea of SAP may feel imposed upon and resentful. Awareness about prevention and intervention efforts should never stop. The help that some students need – the help that can change their lives for the better – depends on it.

Awareness of youth problems requires continuous educational programming to emphasize the assistance process of how referrals lead to services and positive outcomes. Many schools have an annual SAP reminder program early in the school year. While the prevention/intervention material remains basically the same, it does not have to be taught the same way. Varying the instruction from year to year helps keep the student-assistance concept fresh. Mistaken ideas about the nature and scope of SAP, especially among school staff, can blunt SAP effectiveness. A reminder of some nature addresses that proactively.

Promoting awareness means more students who need help receive it. The result is a better school climate, one where the focus is on what it should be: assisting every student in learning to his or her maximum capacity.

6 – 2 Think of awareness as marketing

The SAP Coordinator (if the school employs one) and SAP Core Team should think of themselves as the chief marketers of the school's SAP services. Marketing is about raising awareness. Apart from helping students receive the assistance they need, awareness of the SAP process is the SAP's chief responsibility. Each SAP audience is a stakeholder in its success, so each needs to know what SAP has to offer.

6 – 3 Establishing awareness is a two-part process

Promoting SAP awareness is a two-part process of social marketing and events held to raise awareness.

Broadly, social marketing involves a series of events – training, discussions, assemblies and the like – designed to change people's attitudes and behaviors about a specific concern or problem. Social marketing focuses on "the little picture" of a given problem and can be used to dispel popular myths, such as "all high school seniors use alcohol."

Awareness events are similar except that they constitute universal-level programming. Awareness events address the subject of youth problems in general and how SAP and referrals for help can lead to appropriate forms of assistance and desired outcomes. Awareness events get the word out about prevention and intervention at the universal level. As such, they focus on the big picture.

Used in combination, social marketing and awareness events heighten awareness to the maximum degree and thereby foster SAP sustainability. Let's consider each individually.

6 – 4 Social marketing raises awareness

Social marketing employs marketing tactics towards two goals. One is to communicate messages that motivate people to stop a given problematic behavior. The other is forming alliances with community stakeholders to better deal with it.

To encourage change, the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, part of the Substance Abuse & Mental Health Services Administration of the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, states that the social marketing messages should have three components:

1. Capture the attention of the audience.
2. Be meaningful.
3. Provide one small, practical step to begin the change process.

Within the school environment, social marketing lays the foundation for change by mobilizing students, faculty and staff on behalf of the SAP's goals for a specific problem among a school's student population, such as underage drinking or bullying. The idea is to help build enthusiasm for prevention initiatives related to the problem, which in turn bolster the work of the SAP Core Team in dealing with it.

6 – 5 Social marketing to school staff

Promoting the effort to solve a problem prevalent among youth to school staff is best done at the beginning of the school year when everyone has an orientation mindset. It is a perfect time to make clear the seriousness of any problematic trend noticed among the student population. The SAP Coordinator or Core Team members can hold an orientation session where staff can give feedback on aspects of a social marketing focus as well as SAP in general. Topics for this session could easily include all of the following:

- overview of programming structure and services
- fundamentals of prevention and intervention
- review of needs-assessment data (e.g., Teaching and Learning Surveys)
- guidelines and constraints of confidentiality laws
- roles of SAP Coordinator and Core Team members
- internal referral process
- feedback on what's working and what's not
- suggestions on improvements
- the SAP progress report
- setting the stage for updates at future staff meetings
- distribution of a SAP newsletter
- behavioral, social, and family problems, and how SAP addresses them

6 – 6 Ideas for schoolwide social marketing

In addition to focusing on a particular issue via staff in-services and distributing materials, the SAP Coordinator or Core Team members should do all they can in a broader sense to foster a school environment that encourages students to make good choices and put forth their best effort. SAP has used the following tips with success.

- Be a presence in school hallways. Students are naturally curious about school staff. A casual, relaxed teacher or staff member is approachable.

- Be available in the lunchroom, a less formal atmosphere that invites discussion with students.
- Appear in classrooms to present a five-minute “live commercial” on SAP topics.
- Know where students congregate and be a regular presence there.
- Attend and/or sponsor school prevention-club activities.
- Distribute a monthly SAP newsletter tailored to the school.
- Display messages that foster resiliency. Create and hang posters.
- Use student surveys and statistics to develop messaging that resonates with students.
- Participate in open houses and extracurricular or school-supported activities. Hand out SAP materials if it does not detract from an event.
- Have an open-door policy. It is inviting to students and staff alike.
- Be interviewed by a reporter on the school’s newspaper.

The point of these suggestions is this: think of social marketing as one continuous process that begins again early each school year.

6 – 7 Schoolwide promotional ideas

Only imagination limits the number of ways SAP might raise awareness of a given problem its school has to deal with. Here are a few more ideas that worked well in other schools:

- Write articles on the scope of SAP for any school newsletter that goes to parents and staff.
- Produce a brief SAP handbook written for students, another for parents, for faculty and staff and for the community in general.
- Create a SAP page on the school’s Web site. Update it regularly.
- Create a SAP pamphlet to use as a handout. Alternatively, add a SAP overview to an existing counseling center pamphlet.
- Attend community coalition and task force meetings.
- Make a brief SAP presentation at a community information night.
- Attend PTA or Booster Club meetings. Meet people. Offer to

give a brief talk on SAP efforts when an agenda permits.

- Interact with pediatricians, health and counseling professionals, treatment providers, and other agencies in the community that help families.
- Offer a parent-education series on SAP process and services.

6 – 8 Social marketing presentation in the classroom

Brief presentations in individual classrooms can be effective ways to address any specific youth problem that concerns a school's administration and community. A classroom's size often encourages students and faculty to ask questions that further clarify the scope of SAP services and the confidential nature of referrals and the assistance process. In this familiar setting, a presenter can make eye contact with each student to help ensure engagement.

Classroom presentations can be more of a challenge to pull off in larger schools. The SAP Core Team plans and makes, or oversees the making of, presentations, in either case avoiding conflicts with previously scheduled activities.

A brief outline of a classroom presentation might look like this:

1. Introduction and purpose of SAP process and services.
2. Description of youth problems causing concerns.
3. How students make SAP referrals, including referring themselves.
4. Description of how groups and individuals receive assistance, plus how prevention clubs and activities aid the SAP effort.
5. Support groups provided or available.
6. Review of group rules.
7. Expectations for student behavior.
8. Confidentiality, including exceptions to standing rules.
9. SAP office location and hours.

In middle and high schools, core or required classes, such as mathematics, English, or science, are good candidates for social marketing presentations. So, too, are PE and health classes and homerooms. In elementary schools, presentations are scheduled with individual grade-level teachers. Classroom presentations often result in referrals, including self-referrals.

6 – 9 Students can generate promo ideas, too

Students themselves can promote prevention and intervention, on a particular issue or in a broader sense, in a number of ways:

- Start a student prevention club with a mission to complement SAP.
- Have student leaders include specific youth problems in their announcements, and solutions or ways to build resiliency (i.e., develop positive character traits).
- Form a student-newcomers group that welcomes new students and includes a peer-to-peer overview of SAP.
- Have student-led classroom presentations to augment those given by the SAP Coordinator or Core Team.

6 – 10 Social marketing in the community

SAP benefits from having its coordinator and core team members get out into the community. When a specific youth problem is thought to be occurring more frequently, this becomes even more important. The following list shows a few ideas on how to go about it:

- Make informal visits to local agencies. These orient agency staff to the school's SAP and its core team members.
- Distribute programming information by way of community outlets. Anywhere general information is available to the public can also be a place for a pamphlet or flyer on the school's SAP.
- Network with service providers in the community. They want to meet SAP Core Team members.
- Attend community meetings and events. Coalition meetings, health fairs, and prevention activities sponsored by groups and service organizations all qualify.
- Collaborate on awareness events. Helping a community partner host an awareness event can build immediate rapport.

6 – 11 Use these five strategies for awareness events

Unlike the specific-issue focus of social marketing, awareness events take a more broad-based approach to foster safer school and community environments. Awareness events can be referred to as environmental strategies. These large-scale events should employ five broad strategies:

1. Dissemination strategies include everything from developing and distributing SAP materials to participating in health fairs and other outreach events, consulting on curriculum development, speaking to groups, and conducting public relations campaigns.

2. Educational strategies cover classroom-based and parent/family education, peer leader programs, and youth groups, and are typically in the form of a structured or semi-structured curriculum given over several sessions.
3. Alternative strategies incorporate activities that foster resiliency, drug-free social events, and youth leadership gatherings.
4. Environmental strategies include establishing policies, changing environment rules, and public policy efforts that focus on affecting youth problems.
5. Community strategies include assessing community needs, providing training and technical assistance, and coordinating with community/volunteer services.

Awareness events communicate concrete messages that change attitudes, increase notice of harmful behaviors, and help lower indulgence in habits considered risky.

6 – 12 Holding awareness events in the classroom

In addition to schoolwide awareness events, events with a similar broad approach can be held in individual classrooms to challenge any prevalent and incorrect attitudes concerning high-risk behaviors.

Classroom activities led by the SAP Coordinator, SAP Core Team member, or another staff member combine both didactic and experiential approaches, with several common goals in mind:

- Increase student awareness of the effects of high-risk behaviors.
- Persuade students that having any kind of permissive attitude about risky behavior is a mistake.
- Correct student misperceptions about risky behavior.
- Increase student knowledge and skills on resistance.
- Decrease unhealthy behavior related to high-risk actions.

It is important to note that classroom-based awareness activities are meant to supplement existing universal prevention programs. They are not a substitute for them. Even so, any well thought-out awareness activity in the classroom can increase peer support for making good choices.

6 – 13 The NSAA's three awareness guidelines

The National Student Assistance Association (NSAA) breaks out its three awareness guidelines as follows:

- **The goal of SAP awareness** is to involve parents, students, agency personnel and community members in developing safe and healthy school and community environments.
- **SAP awareness informs parents** that they will be notified of any concerns regarding their child's education, health or safety and that they will be involved in each step of the SAP solution-finding process.
- **Awareness of SAP services**, such as educational support groups, agency referrals, mediation, mentoring, character education, and the like can be delivered through homeroom presentations, SAP posters, newsletters, parent education, media coverage and inclusion in the parent/student/teacher handbooks.

6 – 14 Chapter 6 summary

Remember these key points about building and sustaining awareness on youth problems and the student assistance process:

- The goal of SAP is prevention for everyone and, when necessary, intervention for students who need assistance. Both depend on widespread awareness for success.
- Awareness is a two-part process: social marketing about individual problems and awareness events about youth problems in general. Both should be informative about the SAP process and how to make referrals.
- Awareness must begin with faculty and staff.
- In addition to schoolwide activities and events, classroom presentations can be effective with students and even result in referrals.
- Awareness must include parents as well as public and private groups and organizations that provide prevention and assistance services or link to services within the community.
- Augmenting continuous awareness efforts with a yearly reminder program helps reinforce the student assistance concept and process.

Section 3 SAP at the Division Level

Chapter 7 School Board Policy and Student Assistance

Chapter 8 Including Community Partners

Chapter 9 Assessing Needs and Evaluating Process

Chapter 7 School Board Policy and Student Assistance

Chapter 7 Highlights

- School board policy has a defined purpose and role.
- The clearer the policy, the more consistently it can be applied.
- The components of good policy have certain identifiable characteristics.
- For the sake of effective interventions, policy has to work with Virginia Board of Education guidelines for model student conduct.
- In designing school board policy, look at what other Virginia school boards have done.

7 – 1 Policy defines roles and spells out consequences

Policies related to student assistance have two broad purposes. First, on behalf of a positive learning climate, these policies define the school's role in ensuring safety, maintaining discipline, and handling student discipline offenses. Second, it makes the connection between academic performance and risky behavior of any nature abundantly clear.

Adopting such policy is a key initial step to student assistance programming that reduces barriers to learning that some students face. What's more, it sends an unmistakable message to students and their parents, as well as teachers and staff, about the school's expectations for behavior and its role in enforcing standards for the benefit of all. Well thought out and worded student assistance policy has these worthwhile effects:

- promotes a sense of connection with the school among students, parents, faculty, staff and the community
- inhibits violence and thus promotes school safety
- creates a disciplined environment for the sake of learning
- helps prevent and intervene on violations of the student code of conduct, including bullying and the use and distribution of alcohol, tobacco and illegal drugs

7 – 2 Useful policy is clear and specific

For student assistance policy, clear communication is not merely a goal. It is a must. To be followed, policy first must be understood by everyone for what it does and does not mean. Well-written policies do this. They promote understanding and thus avoid confusion.

Student-assistance policies must also be specific about the steps to be taken to intervene and help struggling students, whether their problems are personal, family related, involve substance misuse, or have to do with mental health. In short, anything that has the practical effect of hindering the student's natural ability to learn at an optimum level can be related to a youth problem of some kind.

7 – 3 Policy has to apply to everyone

The school must endeavor to be consistent and fair in enforcing student assistance policy. Encouraging a proactive mindset among teachers and staff helps ensure this consistency. The earlier assistance is given, the greater the chance that it will be effective on behalf of both the student in question and the school's climate.

The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services stresses consistency and a delineation that promotes it. On page 78 of its 2007 handbook, *Help is Down the Hall*, is the statement that, "... **successful student assistance programs share two essential traits. One, they ensure that all teachers and staff know how to apply policies and apply them consistently to all students. And two, they make sure that the student assistance and discipline processes are treated as separate and distinct, making early intervention an alternative to suspension whenever possible.**"

7 – 4 The components of student-assistance policy

In general terms, the National Student Assistance Association (NSAA) states that school policy should contain a statement of commitment to student assistance that defines its purpose and the responsibilities of those charged with providing it.

Administrative regulations should then establish the specifics of structure, procedures and responsibilities for all areas affected by policy, most notably in the following:

- universal-level programming for promoting prevention;
- internal referral process for referring individual students to services;
- confidentiality and its limits when dealing with minors;
- parents' right to know the steps being taken to help their children;
- reporting knowledge of a crime (e.g., possession of an illegal substance), including witness responsibility;
- relationship of student assistance to code-of-conduct violations involving illegal substances or violent or disruptive behavior;
- obtaining help through student assistance;
- relationship of student assistance to co-curricular activities, such as athletics; and

- collaboration with law enforcement, the juvenile justice system, substance abuse and behavioral health professionals.

7 – 5 Characteristics of effective policy and procedures

Well thought-out SAP policy and its corresponding procedures define the following areas with clarity:

- intervention procedures for student code of conduct violations;
- procedures for dealing with a student’s disclosure of substance use;
- crisis interventions and corresponding procedures;
- managing medical emergencies resulting from alcohol or other drugs;
- staff development for putting policy and procedures into practice;
- inclusion of parents in the SAP intervention process; and
- overall safety in the school environment.

7 – 6 Policy and the student code of conduct

The *Code of Virginia* in Section § 22.1-279.6.B requires schools to have codes of student conduct. The Virginia Board of Education’s (BOE) “Model Student Conduct Guidelines” state that school board policy should set forth the following:

- a) Statement of purpose and intent (or philosophy) of the policy.
- b) Roles and responsibilities for student conduct policy.
- c) Relationship to related policies and regulations.
- d) Disciplinary action criteria, procedures, and processes.
- e) Development, dissemination and periodic review of student conduct standards.
- f) Training of school personnel.
- g) Standards for student conduct.

Educational leaders must communicate to all constituents that the student code of conduct document is, first and foremost, a prevention tool. It sets clear behavioral expectations, explains consequences and intervention, and empowers adults to provide students with assistance or direct them to it.

The student code of conduct and student assistance policy should reinforce one another. When they do, the results are better than either could achieve alone. The school climate is safer. And there is a heightened sense of school connectedness, which everyone in the school community feels.

7 – 7 Chapter 7 summary

Student assistance policy defines the school's role in reducing barriers to learning, which in turn foster a more positive school climate. Policy should clearly define these aspects:

- School purpose and responsibility in providing student assistance
- Administrative regulations for the following:
 - universal prevention programming;
 - student referral process;
 - confidentiality and parental right-to-know limits;
 - crime reporting procedure;
 - the connection with student code-of-conduct violations;
 - how student assistance relates to co-curricular activities; and
 - involvement of outside agencies in student assistance.

Appendix F – Chapter 7

7 – 8 Sample school board SAP policy

Chapter 8 Including Community Partners

Chapter 8 Highlights

- School and community should cooperate to provide student assistance.
- Cooperation often means student assistance efforts get extra help.
- Coalitions with community entities aid universal prevention efforts.
- Coalitions with community agencies help individual students.
- A Memoranda of Understanding (MOU) defines working relationships.
- Effective student assistance includes parents and guardians.

8 – 1 A community has a stake in its schools and their missions

When students have problems outside of school, these problems can affect their academic success, their families, fellow classmates, teachers, and school staff with which they have contact. This overlap is why a SAP effort to help an individual student should not take place within the school walls alone – not if it is to be successful for everyone concerned.

In the large sense, collaboration between school and community is a well-known principal of modern-day education. A school needs the support of family members, neighborhood leaders, business groups, religious institutions, public and private agencies, community-based organizations, and local government if it is to achieve its educational mission. This still holds true when the focus becomes the problems of a single student. Serious problems often have ripple effects. When they do – and they most always do – community resources can play key roles in bringing about desired change in a student’s life. This, too, can result in ripple effects – ripple effects to the good.

8 – 2 Collaboration can provide help where most needed

Through collaboration, the school and community can do more with scarce resources. At the same time, they can reduce duplicating one another’s efforts. Collaboration can also mean securing the additional resources that both need. Improving ratios of support staff to students, another potential outcome, can help schools reach their goals for student achievement.

Collaboration can support school staff in other ways, such as providing consultation to teachers, working directly to engage parents, and improving school climate. Bringing additional resources and expertise thoughtfully to bear in the spirit of collaboration can leverage efforts and improve results.

8 – 3 Collaboration occurs in two principle ways

One – Schools work with community organizations and service providers on assessing needs and the corresponding universal and selected-levels prevention efforts that address them.

Two – Schools become partners with these same groups to ensure that identified students receive whatever assistance they need to overcome problems.

For all levels of SAP efforts to have positive outcomes, schools must collaborate with organizations and agencies in their communities, and with students' families. Engaging families, especially on behalf of indicated student groups and individual students, requires forethought and planning. Demonstrating a genuine spirit of cooperation is the most important factor in winning collaborative efforts.

8 – 4 Collaboration on universal prevention benefits everyone

Universal prevention – awareness programming directed at students and families – promotes healthy habits and wellness throughout a community. Thus, universal prevention helps keep risky behaviors at bay. When risky behaviors do occur, it can help keep them from becoming more severe. When a school's surrounding community is involved with the school's effort, universal prevention is more effective. After all, the problems students encounter naturally extend to their home; and just as naturally, to their community. So it not only makes perfect sense, it is desirable that school and community collaborate on promoting universal health for everyone's mutual benefit.

8 – 5 Six steps to universal-level programming success

Success of community-wide universal prevention depends on performing these steps well:

1. Form prevention council coalitions with groups likely to help schools.
2. Assess needs based on objective data.
3. Prioritize the use of funds where they are most needed.
4. Establish goals that can be measured.
5. Fill gaps in prevention services.
6. Evaluate efforts to adjust programming as needed.

In getting started, a school and its community do not have to look far to find groups to bring together in a prevention council.

8 – 6 Prevention council participants can be found everywhere

Community prevention councils are simply coalitions that form to promote universal-level prevention and positive youth development topics. Such councils typically include representatives from the following:

- area schools, public and private
- businesses and business groups
- churches, synagogues, mosques and other faith-based groups
- community service boards
- state and local government entities (e.g., DMV, et al.)
- law enforcement
- hospitals and public health agencies
- parents and youth
- prevention and treatment agencies
- probation services
- social service agencies
- youth service organizations

With a prevention council formed, the tasks become assessing needs and translating them into a plan of action where all parties know their roles in working towards goals.

8 – 7 From this focus to that initiative

The prevention council facilitates a back-and-forth exchange of information between school and community. Sharing information means a more coordinated effort at universal-level prevention. When enough evidence suggests a certain problem needs addressing, the prevention council may choose to focus on it. Examples of a focused effort might be decreasing alcohol, tobacco and other drug use, preventing bullying, teenage pregnancy, and violence. Truancy or vandalism might be other focuses.

Prevention councils may bring about a variety of initiatives, whether to respond to given individual needs, or to build strength and resiliency in youth and adults. Among such initiatives are reciprocal reporting agreements and social-norming campaigns. Bringing public attention to prevalent problems, such as under-aged drinking in a community, would constitute a specific initiative.

8 – 8 Collaborating to help individual students

When a SAP Core Team identifies a student with one or more specific needs, collaboration with community agencies may be appropriate. The SAP Core Team may refer students directly to resources outside the school by making suggestions to parents or guardians. The core team supports them as they seek and use behavioral health or other services in the community.

8 – 9 Know the people and groups to collaborate with

Whether school staff work directly in student assistance or make the occasional referral, they need to know what school and community resources can come to the aid of students and their families. Notable school resources should be obvious: educational student support groups, academic tutoring, mentoring, counseling, and special education. A list of community resources would most likely include the following disciplines, groups, and entities:

- academic tutors
- Al-Anon, Alateen and Alcoholics Anonymous
- Community Service Boards
- employee assistance programs (school or corporate)
- food banks
- health care providers and health departments
- mental health, family and substance abuse services
- religious groups, counselors and leaders
- school health advisory boards
- shelters for the homeless
- social services departments
- parks and recreation departments
- youth outreach and after-school programs (i.e., YMCA, Big Brothers/Big Sisters, Boy/Girl Scouts)
- youth sports organizations

When smaller communities lack the resources of more populous areas, SAP and school resources assume greater importance. In some instances, a social service agency may provide a service different from what it usually does in order to meet a given counseling or support need. But if certain services are not available, then documenting these unmet needs can enable a school-community prevention council to lobby successfully for new services.

8 – 10 Know how community agencies function

Networking with people who provide needed services, establishing rapport with new staff and brushing up on procedures can all pay dividends later when a student needs assistance. Good relationships are a must. The best approach is for the SAP Core Team to meet with any and every entity that plays a complementary role to theirs, to establish contact, build rapport and share information. The team should avoid giving the appearance of favoring one local agency or organization over others.

How often the SAP Core Team meets with a given agency or organization will of course vary, but regular contact is desirable. Contact depends on the reasons for it or the circumstances surrounding it or both – and the team should determine this frequency after initial contact with each individual agency or organization.

When meeting with community-based agencies, the SAP Core Team may ask questions on a number of subjects, including these:

- troublesome trends noted in youth behavior;
- services the organization offers to youth and families;
- needed but unavailable services and how the school and organization might work together to obtain them;
- how the school supports the organization's mission and delivery of services; and
- primary contacts at the organization when assistance is sought.

8 – 11 Understanding Memoranda of Understanding (MOU)

A Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) is a working agreement between a school division and another organization. The school and organization develop the MOU together. The agreement holds each party responsible to meet certain expectations. An attorney should review the MOU before its implementation. Subsequently, it should be reviewed on a periodic basis by the parties and revised as necessary to meet their changing needs. MOU formalize the school-organization partnership. Of particular importance are MOU between the school and service providers, such as an agency paid to perform student assessments. A MOU may also do nothing more than recommend that identified students seek services from a particular agency.

8 – 12 Key elements of MOU

All MOU cover the following elements in thorough fashion:

- statement of need or the purpose of agreement

- names, titles, and contact information for both organizations
- relationship between parties, which covers two principle areas:
 - school to organization
 - organization to another entity (e.g., not allowing a contracted organization to subcontract its work for the school to another organization of some kind)
- roles that both organizations agree to
- expectations of both parties, at a minimum including these points:
 - description of services
 - term of contract
 - timelines
 - use of relevant protocols (e.g., referral, crisis, treatment)
- communication and coordination, with particular attention paid to these vital areas:
 - participation in meetings
 - consultation
 - dispute resolution
 - communication pathways among everyone involved
- confidentiality, with adherence to the following legal mechanisms or areas of practice and their acknowledged standards:
 - Developmental Disabilities Confidentiality Act
 - Family Education Rights and Privacy Act
 - Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act
 - mental health
 - substance abuse
- parent or guardian and student consent, which must include the following consent and release:
 - written consent for services
 - written release of information and/or disclosure of records
- monitoring and evaluation, with emphasis on consumer satisfaction
- dated signatures of persons officially accepting for both organizations

8 – 13 Other elements a MOU may address

A MOU may contain a variety of other information, which the agreeing organizations consider necessary for one reason or another:

- target population, with regard to two considerations:
 - general population grade, classroom, high-risk students
 - geographic boundaries/jurisdiction
- environment, with mention of these aspects:
 - location of services
 - designated space and its maintenance
 - utilities
 - hours of access; arrangements for continuity of care over summer, school holidays, and so forth
- referral process, with particular attention paid to the following:
 - who can refer
 - to whom referral is made
 - how the referral is conveyed (i.e., telephone, in writing, et al.)
 - when to refer (i.e., for what reasons)
 - referral communications and feedback
- recordkeeping and documentation, with specific mention of these points:
 - where files are maintained
 - how files are accessed and shared for evaluations
 - data management
 - reporting
- qualifications of project staff and school personnel, with mention of this information:
 - professional licensure and certification
 - criminal background checks
 - Child Abuse and Neglect Tracking Systems (CANTS)
 - liability
 - professional, malpractice, worker's compensation and bonding
 - indemnification that holds parties harmless of liability, loss, damage, cost, or expenses
- nondiscrimination, stressing compliance with the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA)
- compliance with laws
- payment, costs and billing mechanisms that cover:
 - billing Medicaid and third-party payers
 - invoice submission

- responsibility for payment of taxes
- termination clause, waiver, or breach of contract
- maintaining a drug-free workplace

8 – 14 Collaborating with parents and guardians

Of course the SAP Core Team should collaborate with parents and guardians because barriers to learning that students face affect their families as well. While the team makes suggestions on obtaining support and services and encourages follow-through, it is the parents and guardians of students who obtain needed services.

The SAP team may ask parents to serve on advisory groups, such as school health advisory boards and safety planning and prevention teams, to provide parental representatives. Parents can also help with alcohol and drug-free after-prom and after-graduation high school celebrations, and awareness campaigns, and tobacco and violence prevention days.

See Chapter two for more detailed information on how the SAP Core Team functions, including how it collaborates with parents or guardians of individual students who need assistance. In addition, the Center for Innovation and Improvement (CII) publication *Handbook on Family and Community Engagement* is a valuable resource (Please see section six of the appendix for information on the CII).

8 – 15 Chapter 8 summary

Remember these key points about schools collaborating with their community on student assistance:

- A community is always a stakeholder in a school's mission.
- The two forms of collaboration between a school and community are implementing universal-level prevention and suggesting to parents or guardians that they contact an organization for the assistance needed.
- Schools collaborate by forming natural coalitions with community organizations, sharing information, and developing initiatives.
- A Memoranda of Understanding between a school and a community organization defines respective roles, as well as responsibilities for working together.
- Individual students receive assistance in a spirit of mutual collaboration with parents and guardians.

Chapter 9 Assessing Needs and Evaluating Process

Chapter 9 Highlights

- Assessing needs is a school's first step.
- A needs assessment gathers and examines information and sets goals.
- The SAP process has a clear flow.
- Reporting audiences have different informational needs.
- An evaluation is a four-step process.
- Interim objectives and long-term goals should be measurable.
- Capturing data for evaluation occurs at every opportunity.
- Reports have standard formats and have underlying assumptions.

9 – 1 Student assistance starts with assessing needs

A needs assessment is a process that collects information about a school community and analyzes it to reveal strengths and weaknesses and the gaps between them where needs lie. For student assistance programming, a needs assessment typically involves a number of activities:

- identifying perceptions, attitudes, beliefs and behaviors that support or hinder positive conditions for learning
- prioritizing needs in near-term and long-term importance
- examining how the school's current programs deal with these needs
- looking at community agencies, service providers and organizations as possible collaborators with schools
- understanding the nature of gaps between needs and resources

From identified needs come benchmarks, which can be prioritized by importance and urgency into goals for student assistance. When a school knows its needs, it can use its strengths to work on its weaknesses. Discovering what those needs are requires evaluation.

9 – 2 Evaluation involves five essential steps

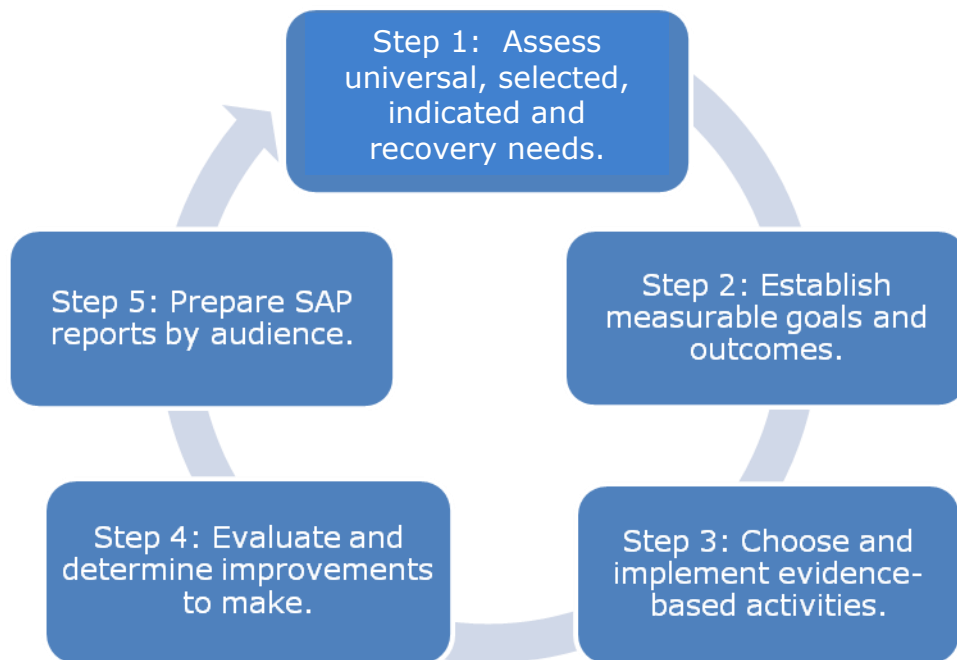
With a logic model for guidance, SAP evaluation breaks down into five steps:

- 1) Perform needs assessments to accomplish two goals:
 - a. Identify target population risks and the extent to which SAP curricula and process can deal with them effectively.
 - b. Prioritize universal-, selected- and indicated-level problems.
- 2) Set measurable goals for each problem to be addressed.

- 3) Choose prevention and intervention programs, practices and curricula that can be measured and thus evaluated.
- 4) Determine improvements to be made.
- 5) Analyze outcomes and prepare report versions for different audiences.

Seeing these five steps visually furthers an understanding of the evaluation process.

9 – 3 Picture the five evaluation steps as a cycle



9 – 4 Step 1: Assess universal, selected, indicated and recovery needs

The mission, objectives and goals of SAP form the basis for a needs assessment, whether it is for the programming overall or an initiative within it. In acquiring and examining data, an assessment seeks to determine prevention and intervention needs for target populations from at-risk groups to a school's entire student population to the community beyond. Students, parents, teachers, administrators, and community members should be included in this information gathering to better identify and prioritize needs.

The schoolwide needs assessment identifies universal-level prevention needs for a school's entire population. Student, parent, and faculty surveys and data on student discipline, crime and violence, student attendance, and demographics should be included.

Selected-level needs — those for sub-groups of students — may be derived from focus groups, universal-level assessments, attendance, behavior, course grades, self-referral, and information from people who know these students well.

Indicated-level needs—those for individual students—may be based on grades, discipline and attendance, self-disclosed information, and behavior observed with concern by faculty and parents, or referral from a court or community agency.

Recovery-level needs –may be based on the needs of individual students returning from hospitals, detention centers or long-term correctional facilities and identifying those in jeopardy of not graduating for credit recovery.

9 – 5 Step 2: Establish measurable goals and outcomes

Programming based on goals to accomplish is programming that has a direction. For each goal to be meaningful, it has to be more than a statement about a desired, long-term result. A SAP goal also has to be measurable in real terms. This may include outcomes along the way—milestones that mark progress towards achieving an ultimate intention.

In practical terms, SAP goals are about risks and protective factors and how their influence changes over time. Some goals related to bullying might be these examples with measurable outcomes:

- Reduce bullying behavior among eighth-grade students by 10 percent, as measured by incidents reported on the school's discipline, crime, and violence report from the previous school year.
- Twenty percent of students at Green School will report less tolerance for bullying behavior, as evidenced by school climate survey trends.
- An anti-bullying policy will be developed that all students will read and discuss in the classroom to foster widespread understanding. A post-instruction survey of all faculty and students will assess the school community's overall knowledge of the subject, and what steps to take when bullying is witnessed.

Outcomes occur in the present. When a prevention activity is held, pre-testing results compared to post-testing ones reveal an outcome. When an intervention is performed, an outcome results. Such outcomes can be measured at the point in time they occur. Did the desired movement happen? Was expected progress made? The outcome statement must provide an explicit answer to the question posed. Outcomes reveal the extent of progress towards goals and thus contribute to their achievement.

Examples of measurable outcomes include the following:

- Students who started out with poorer grades have improved academic performance by semester or year's end.

- More students stay in school (i.e., decreasing yearly dropout rate).
- Students who were absent more than school and division averages demonstrate higher, end-of-semester attendance rates.
- Comparison of baseline and follow-up information shows that referred students have become more involved in school activities.
- Fewer out-of-class behavioral referrals are made from one semester to the next.
- The annual student survey shows a drop in the use of alcohol or other drugs by students.
- Teachers observe and surveys can confirm evidence of improved coping as well as problem-solving and decision-making skills, both among students in general and referred students in particular.

9 – 6 Step 3: Choose and implement evidence-based activities

SAP coordinates activities that educate and raise awareness. Activities should be evidence-based curricula, practices, programming or strategies, and chosen on the basis that they complement a comprehensive, tiered approach. So long as such activities produce positive results and corresponding outcomes, they make sense to do.

Consider the following several examples of evidence-based activities for students and parents by SAP support level:

Level	Students	Parents
Universal	<p>"Caring School Community" is an elementary school (K-6) program that promotes positive youth development, and is characterized by kind, supportive relationships and collaboration among students, staff, and parents.</p> <p>A school-based program, "LifeSkills Training" helps prevent violence and the use of alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana use by targeting the social and psychological factors of youth development that can serve as catalysts for substance use and risky behaviors. http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov</p>	<p>"Guiding Good Choices" is a drug-prevention program for parents of children in grades 4 through 8, or ages 9 to 14, that teaches the knowledge and skills to guide children safely through early adolescence.</p> <p>For parents and youth 10 to 14, "The Strengthening Families Program" teaches skills that foster success in school and prevent substance use and aggression. http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov</p>

	<p>"The ATHENA (Athletes Targeting Healthy Exercise & Nutrition Alternatives)" program addresses disordered eating and body-shaping drug use among middle and high school female athletes. http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov</p>	<p>For children ages 2 to 5 and families, "DARE to be You" (DTBY) focuses on the child, family, school and community settings to improve children's self-esteem, communication, and problem solving, and the skills of parents, child-care personnel, and caregivers. DTBY also helps reduce drug and alcohol use. Available curricula include kindergarten to grade 2 and grades 3 to 5, 6 to 8, and high school. The latter encourages students to become teachers or leaders in their communities. http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov</p>
Selected	<p>"The Effective Learning Program" raises students' abilities to control their emotions and improves their relationship-building skills with peers and adults, which has shown to increase school attendance. http://www.promisingpractices.net/program</p>	
Indicated	<p>"Check & Connect is a dropout prevention strategy that relies on close monitoring of school performance, as well as mentoring, case management, and other supports. The program has two main components: "Check" and "Connect." http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/interventionreport.aspx?sid=78</p>	

For more selections like the above, refer to 4-3, "Accountability requires rigorous, scientific support," in section two, Chapter four.

9 – 7 Step 4: Evaluate and determine improvements to make

For the most meaningful evaluations of outcomes, activities should adhere to these principles:

- Sufficient detail about who did the data collecting, who the information was collected from, and when it was collected.
- Use of instruments that yield valid measures for results methodology.
- Definition of how indicators determine outcome criteria for success.

Evaluate the effectiveness of the programming at the universal, selective and indicated levels. Documentation of the number of participants in an activity or intervention, attendance and performance outcomes should be part of the

evaluation. Before and after testing that shows an increase in knowledge, skill level, or changes in attitude can be used to evaluate outcomes among students.

Two types of indicators are used in conducting evaluations. Outcome indicators reveal if a desired outcome has been achieved; activity and/or process indicators show what was done to achieve it. Both kinds of information are necessary to do a full evaluation of a program's outcomes for a given period of time.

Examples of outcome and process indicators

Outcome indicator	Process Indicator
Students who complete the anger management group will decrease discipline offenses by fifty percent as compared with their offenses from the prior year.	Ninety-five percent of the student participants will attend 10 of the 12 sessions.

(Evaluations that document activities or process but do not show how they contributed to reaching a short- or long-term goal, or evaluations that report outcomes but not the process of how they were achieved, are commonplace but do not reveal if a program has genuine worth and thus should be kept in place.)

Do not neglect collecting information on resources used, or the outcomes of activities, while focusing on process or outcome indicators. Outcome evaluations require resource-use and activity-outcome information, which are not the same thing. Analyze the collected information, compare the results with the desired outcomes, and determine areas of improvement accordingly.

Ongoing evaluation of a SAP shows what to improve

Once a school's SAP is up and running, ongoing evaluation reveals the effects of services and whether to alter or expand them. Using data collected as work is done — it should be an inherent part of any SAP process — makes evaluation possible. Without reliable data, no evaluation can be thorough, and the next steps in improvement, whatever they might be, cannot be known.

At a minimum, a school's SAP Coordinator and SAP Core Team should meet at least bi-annually for the express purpose of evaluating their work. Setting ground rules for the discussion and assigning team and meeting roles facilitates this different type of meeting. So, too, does an agenda apart from consideration of individual referrals and case management. The idea is to clear the slate and focus on the student assistance process and its procedures.

Data on the numbers of students referred, reasons for referrals, and types of interventions used—all of these collectively make a powerful body of research information. Referencing the program's logic model block by block brings up relevant questions. What changes, if any, are occurring in student behavior? What policies, procedures, or services should change, and if so how? What about staffing patterns? Other resources?

It takes time to reflect, discuss and evaluate well. On behalf of any SAP, this is time well spent.

Avoid these evaluation pitfalls

Even small pitfalls can weaken the value of a programming evaluation. Here are a few to safeguard against:

- Not conducting a pre-test or baseline measure ahead of evaluation.
- Giving inadequate detail on data collection for outcome assessments.
- Using instruments that do not measure characteristics associated with desired outcomes.
- Having pre-test questions different from post-test questions.
- Using unstructured feedback or anecdotal information as sole indicators.
- Reporting just numbers of sessions or people served instead of activity outcomes
- Using satisfaction surveys as measures of outcome.

9 – 8 Step 5: Prepare SAP reports by audience

When reviewing evaluation findings, the needs and preferences of given stakeholder audiences should guide the SAP Coordinator and Core Team in preparing versions of the report. Consider the following guidelines:

- Those who conduct SAP activities and those at the first level of supervision should review participant surveys as they are collected to improve them as needed.
- Those at the first level of administrative oversight need to review a summary of evaluation data at least monthly.
- The superintendent and local advisory council should receive a written summary report each semester or more frequently if requested.
- The school board needs a thorough report at least annually, but may request one more frequently.

Tailor each version of a report to its audience. Typical audiences are these:

- | | |
|--|---|
| • Collaborating agencies and organizations | • Parents of students |
| • Community at large | • Teachers |
| • Funding sources (current, potential) | • Superintendent and other school division administrators |
| • Local advisory council | • SAP staff/supervisory personnel |
| • Local school boards | • Virginia Department of Education |

No one format or outline is right for all evaluation reports. That said, the majority of reports have the following sections:

- I. Executive Summary
- II. Introduction of Report
 - a. Purpose of the evaluation
 - b. Overview of report contents
- III. Focus of the Evaluation
 - a. Description of program being evaluated
 - b. Evaluation questions
- IV. Evaluation Plan and Procedures
 - a. Design of the evaluation
 - b. Description of data collection strategies and instruments
 - c. Overview of data analysis
- V. Presentation of Evaluation Results
 - a. Summary of evaluation findings
 - b. Interpretation of evaluation findings
- VI. Conclusions and Recommendations
 - a. Implications of evaluation findings for program
 - b. Specific recommendations for program modifications/improvements

With the above organization and content, each part can be described as follows:

I. Executive Summary

The Executive Summary contains a brief description of the evaluation's purpose, questions, procedures, and its more noteworthy findings and corresponding recommendations. An executive summary may be as short as a single page but should not exceed three pages.

II. Introduction of Report

This opening section outlines the purposes of the evaluation and highlights the contents to follow. The introduction often states who the report's audience is. Any limitations on data collection, analysis or interpretation are brought to attention here.

III. Focus of the Evaluation

Here readers receive a description of the evaluated program that typically includes its rationale, beneficiaries, strategies and activities, and the setting(s) and the resources devoted to it. Specific questions to be answered give a context for the evaluation.

IV. Evaluation Plan and Procedures

In this section, methodological and technical information appear that establish an evaluation's adequacy and credibility. Clearly state the standard (or criteria) used to judge effectiveness to ensure readers view results with that in mind. This includes an outline of information collected to answer each evaluation question. It also describes methodology for collecting information and how analyses were made. Should sample data collection instruments be included, readers are referred to the report's appendix.

V. Presentation of Evaluation Results

Results appear in tables and other simple summary displays of data. (Summaries requiring greater detail appear in appendices.) Interpretation concentrates on whether interim objectives were made and any progress made towards long-term goals, including citing evidence of achievements in student-assisted programs if part of the evaluation. Findings should support the report's judgments and corresponding recommendations as well as clearly relate to the evaluation questions.

VI. Conclusions

Organize conclusions in terms of strengths and weaknesses. Describe each conclusion in detail.

VII. Recommendations

Use the report's conclusions to substantiate a list of recommendations and provide a supporting rationale for each.

9 – 9 A logic model makes a complex plan understandable

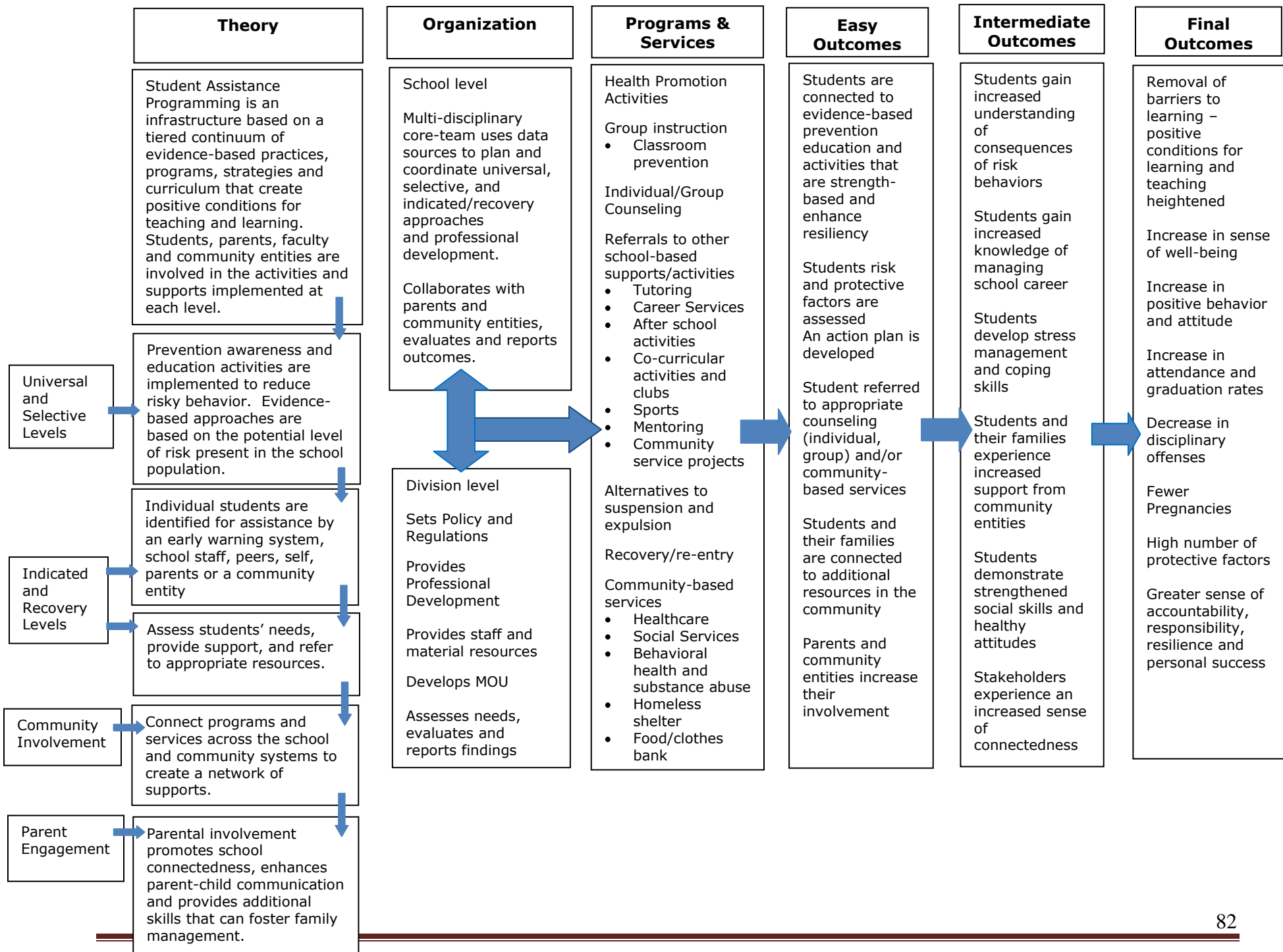
The document that sets down the needs and desired goals that a SAP report identifies and sets, and also depicts how the SAP process addresses them step by step, is called a logic model. A logic model is simply a type of flow chart. Developing a logic model is key in the early part of implementing student assistance programming. A SAP logic model may be included in each version of an evaluation report.

Graphically representing the student assistance process in the form of a logic model plan makes it easier to grasp. Displayed visually, SAP becomes more memorable, too: it can be seen in its entirety and each individual part can be appreciated individually. Plus, the model's graphic nature further ensures that every aspect of programming gets the notice it deserves. A logic model is a picture of a process in which each part of the process is shown in the sequence it occurs.

An evaluation logic model provides the added advantage of putting measurable data into meaningful contexts. The best evaluations are not just about getting a

take on how things have been going, but getting the right take – identifying components that work and those in need of improvement – so that good decisions on what to correct and how to correct can be made in the best interest of the programming. For more on logic model development, see Appendix G, sections 9 – 14 and 9 – 15.

9 – 10 Looking at a sample SAP logic model



9 – 11 Who creates a school's SAP logic model

Anyone with thorough SAP knowledge can fashion a programming model. However, the SAP Coordinator or SAP Core Team (or both if they exist in a given school) are the natural choices for current and in-depth information on programming and initiatives within it. As educators who carry out their school's student assistance effort, they can describe their programming and its aspirations better than anyone. In most instances, they develop the programming logic model – in effect, an action plan to follow – as a group effort. In turn, their knowledge enables evaluators to determine how to structure an evaluation.

9 – 12 A SAP logic model is the basis for evaluation model

In collaboration with SAP Core Team members, evaluators will use a school's SAP logic model to develop a complementary model for the purpose of evaluating the school's student assistance programming. Evaluation relies largely on a logic model's built-in indicators – measures used to determine if near-term, intermediate-term and long-term goals have been achieved in part or in whole. Simultaneous interpretation of indicators across a logic model can provide the strongest evidence of how well student assistance programming is working in comparison to the logic model.

9 – 13 Chapter 9 summary

Without evaluation findings, the way to improvement cannot be known with certainty. Ongoing information collection is the only route to thorough evaluations and the value they can provide in sustaining a SAP.

The evaluation findings go into different reports to suit the needs of different audiences. The five essential steps of evaluation – conducting needs assessments, having measurable goals and outcomes, choosing activities and putting them into practice, collecting data and preparing reports on findings, and making changes and improvements as needed – can be seen as a visual cycle.

The usefulness of collected information is as good as the instruments and methods used to collect it. Capturing information should be an inherent part of every SAP activity, at every prevention/intervention level.

Evaluation is qualitative, quantitative and impartial, and supports the recommendations made.

Appendix G – Chapter 9

- 9 – 14 The SAP process flows from left to right in the model**
- 9 – 15 A well-done logic model helps make evaluation effective**
- 9 – 16 What to scrutinize to evaluate outcomes**
- 9 – 17 What to examine to evaluate collaborations**
- 9 – 18 What to consider to evaluate SAP sustainability**
- 9 – 19 The right way to approach evaluation design**
- 9 – 20 Design in data-collection features to take advantage of**

Section 4: Appendices

Appendix A – Chapter 1 – An Overview of Student Assistance in Virginia Public Schools

1 – 13 Surveys can address different audiences for different reasons

Questionnaires on one topic or another enable schools to discover what types of barriers to learning are prevalent among students, faculty, parents, and within the surrounding community.

Student surveys – These surveys help measure students self-perceptions and can help administrators, faculty and staff gauge resilience in a student population, the overall state of youth development in terms of assets, the school's climate, or conditions for learning, the prevalence of alcohol, tobacco or other drug use, violence, and bullying. They can reveal problematic attitudes along with current or looming problems. Insights from such surveys help provide focus for student assistance programming.

Faculty surveys – Faculty and staff surveys on school climate or conditions for learning provide adult perspectives on questions involving overall student populations, and groups of students within such populations.

Parental surveys – Surveying parents can help educators appreciate a student population's internal and external assets in the areas of family support, expectations of parents and teachers, safety within and outside of school, interpersonal competence, and attachment to school.

Other surveys – Community service agencies and local groups with youth involvement are other potential sources of information on trends in youth problems and the extent of specific problems a community may be facing.

Schools and community youth agencies and services need the information surveys provide for planning and development, applying for funding resources, and for making reports to various stakeholders. A variety of reliable, scientifically valid surveys are at their disposal, typically at some cost for the survey's use and subsequent analysis. Most survey companies provide research-based recommendations on which surveys are best for specific information needs. Following is a brief list of survey resources:

- Pride International Survey Associates offers a variety of teaching and learning surveys for students and teachers that focus on conditions for learning. Parent surveys as well as other elementary student surveys, are also available. For details, visit <http://www.pridesurveys.com/index.html>.
- Search Institute conducts surveys to measure the 40 developmental internal and external assets of students from elementary school through high school. Learn more at <http://www.search-institute.org/survey-services/surveys/attitudes-behaviors>.

- Safe and Supportive Schools offers a compendium of school climate surveys that have been vetted through the USED. More information can be found at <http://safesupportiveschools.ed.gov/index.php?id=133>.

Every two years, the Virginia Youth Behavior Survey updates the picture statewide.

Through a grant provided by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, the Virginia Department of Health has spearheaded the distribution of the *Commonwealth of Virginia Youth Behavior Survey*, which is similar to the National Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS) that CDC developed in 1990. The YRBSS monitors priority health risk behaviors that contribute markedly to the leading causes of death, disability, and social problems among youth and adults in the United States. The most noteworthy of these behaviors that often establish during childhood and early adolescence are the following:

- alcohol and other drug use
- behaviors that contribute to unintentional injuries and violence
- inadequate physical activity
- tobacco use
- unhealthy dietary behaviors

The YRBSS includes national, state, and local school-based surveys of representative samples of students in grades nine through 12. These voluntary surveys are conducted every two years, usually during the spring semester. The Department of Health conducts the Virginia Youth Survey to obtain data representative of public high school students statewide. The Virginia Youth Survey is an integral tool for collecting information about the health behaviors of Virginia's high school youth.

In 2011, the importance of collecting youth survey data was reinforced by the General Assembly and the Governor by amending the *Code of Virginia* at § [22.1-79.3](#) Policies regarding certain activities. The amendment:

requires the Department of Health to develop and administer a random survey of students in public middle and high schools to facilitate planning and implementation of effective programs for substance abuse prevention through collection of information identifying trends in alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use and the assessment of risk and protective factors among youth of the Commonwealth. The bill provides that a student shall not be required to participate if his parents refuse consent in writing prior to administration of the survey, and requires local school boards to develop policies for the notification of parents of students selected for participation in the survey.

The complete *Code* Section may be found at <http://lis.virginia.gov/cgi-bin/legp604.exe?111+sum+SB1094>.

The implementation of the statewide survey is key for Virginia to meet the programmatic outcomes of its prevention and health education programs across state and local agencies. The Virginia Youth Survey will help agencies meet the goals and reporting requirements for programs under the federal Elementary and Secondary Act of 1965 and other related national and state health, prevention, and education funded programs.

Surveys can uncover all sorts of youth problems that when left unchecked can have long-term, negative consequences.

Adverse childhood experiences (ACEs) have been found to play a significant role in the development of youth problems from mental and physical health to substance abuse. A joint study by the Centers for Disease Control and Kaiser Permanente entitled "The Relationship of Adverse Childhood Experience to Adult Health: Turning Gold into Lead" looked at eight ACE categories related to childhood abuse or household dysfunction in two broad areas:

Abuse	Household Dysfunction
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Recurrent physical abuse• Recurrent, severe emotional abuse• Contact sexual abuse• Depression, mental illness, suicidal thoughts	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Incarcerated household member• Violently treated mother• Alcoholic or drug-user in household• Childhood loss of parent(s)

Research associated with the study also found that when more than one such category was associated with a given child, the greater that child's likelihood of experiencing the following:

- alcoholism;
- diabetes, heart disease, and other serious physical ailments;
- drug use, hepatitis and HIV;
- mental illness, including depression and suicide;
- smoking, and diseases related to it; and
- unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases.

A quick look at one prevalent problem shows how far-reaching its negative consequences can be.

Consider what one survey revealed about underage drinking

In the 2005 Virginia Community Youth Survey conducted by the Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (formerly known as Mental Health, Mental Retardation, and Substance Abuse Service), responding students in grades eight, ten, and twelve reported the following:

- Fifty-nine percent had at least one drink of alcohol on one or more days during their life.
- The average age for the first drink of alcohol, other than a few sips, was 13.
- Thirty-two percent had at least one drink of alcohol on one or more occasions in the past 30 days.
- Sixteen percent had five or more drinks of alcohol in a row (i.e., binge drinking) in the past two weeks.

Dr. Ted Miller, Director, Public Services Research Institute of Pacific Institute for Research and Evaluation has conducted studies to measure the associated costs of underage drinking in Virginia. In 2005, underage drinkers spent \$418 million on alcohol, causing the alcohol industry to profit by \$202 million. The medical care, work lost, and other negative consequences associated with underage drinking cost Virginia citizens \$1.2 billion in 2005.

Along with the above, consider the following:

- Research suggests that youth who use alcohol before age 15 are four times more likely to suffer alcoholism than those who wait until 21.
- The likelihood of alcoholism lowers by 14 percent for each year older a young person is before first use.
- A University of Maryland's Center for Substance Abuse Research report showed that 47 percent of people who drank alcohol before age 14 became problem drinkers later. Only nine percent of those who started after 20 did.

In short, combine risk and cost with age of onset and the chances for alcohol dependency compound. In-school surveys combined with those on a state and national level can help educators understand what youth problems they are dealing with, and address them earlier and more effectively for the benefit of individual schools and individual students.

1 – 14 The conditions for learning seen in greater detail

Conditions for Learning	
Critical Components	Desired Practices/Outcomes
Safety and Well-Being	
1. Rules and Expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Clearly communicated rules and policies regarding discipline and behavioral expectations to the school community Adequacy and fairness of policy enforcement
2. Physical Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students and adults feel safe from physical harm at school and school events
3. Social-Emotional Security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students and staff feel safe from verbal abuse, excessive teasing, exclusion or other forms of harassment
4. Substance Use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The lack of substance use among youth Absence of substance use and trade on school grounds
5. Wellness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The availability of school-based physical and mental health supports for students and staff Healthy food choices
Teaching and Learning – Academic Environment	
6. Learning Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use of supportive teaching practices, such as encouragement and constructive feedback Varied opportunities to demonstrate knowledge and skills Support for risk-taking and independent thinking Atmosphere conducive to dialogue and questioning Academic challenge Individual attention Consistent and effective classroom management
7. Social and Civic Learning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support for the development of social and civic knowledge, skills, and dispositions including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ effective listening ➤ conflict resolution ➤ self-reflection and emotional regulation ➤ empathy ➤ personal responsibility ➤ ethical decision making
Interpersonal Relationships - Engagement	
8. Respect for Diversity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mutual respect for individual differences (e.g., gender, race, culture, etc.) at all levels of the school: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ student-student ➤ adult-student ➤ adult-adult ➤ school-community

Conditions for Learning	
Critical Components	Desired Practices/Outcomes
9. Adult Social Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pattern of supportive and caring adult relationships for students including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ high expectations for students' success ➤ willingness to listen to students and to get to know them as individuals ➤ personal concern for students' problems ➤ welcoming and facilitating parent involvement
10. Student Social Support	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pattern of supportive peer relationships for students, including friendships for: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ socializing ➤ problems ➤ academic help ➤ new students
11. Professional Relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive attitudes and relationships among school staff that support effectively working and learning together

School Environment

- | | |
|--------------------------|---|
| 12. Connectedness | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Connectedness is demonstrated by: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ a positive identification with the school ➤ regular and timely student attendance ➤ participation in school activities and governance ➤ open communication among all school community members |
| 13. Facilities | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cleanliness • Order and appeal of facilities • Adequate resources and materials |
| 14. Leadership | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administration that creates and communicates a clear vision • Accessible to students, families and community stakeholders • Supportive of school staff and professional development |

Adapted from:

The 12 Dimensions of School Climate Measures. National School Climate Center, 2011, schoolclimate.org

ESEA Reauthorization at the Office of Safe and Drug-Free Schools Webinar Session. Kevin Jennings, Assistant Deputy Secretary, U.S. Department of Education, 2010. Web site: <http://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/osdfs/webinar41410.ppt>

Appendix B – Chapter 2 – SAP Core Team Training

2 – 18 Sample form: SAP Core Team Student Referral Notes/Student Support Plan

Roanoke County Public Schools

SAP Core Team Student Referral Notes/Student Support Plan

Student's Name:	
Referral Source:	Date of Referral:
Referral Information:	
Behavior Checklist Date and Summary:	
Relevant History:	
Interventions Attempted to Date:	
Core Team Initial Planning Meeting for Student:	Date:
End of Year Goal(s) for Core Team Intervention:	
Short-Term Goal(s)/Strategies to meet goal(s)/Person(s) Responsible:	
Date and Description of Parent/Guardian Contact:	
Complete the information below for each review.	
Core Team Meeting Review (every two months)	Date:
Current Status:	
Plan Revisions and Person(s) Responsible:	
Date and Description of Parent/Guardian Contact:	

2 – 19 Making referrals to community-based resources

Problems beyond the scope of the expertise within the school requires outside, professional resources within the community. Line up these resources before the need for them arises for such problems as these:

- depression and suicidal adolescents
- child abuse
- concerns about sexual orientation
- family problems
- alcoholic or drug dependent parents
- eating disorders

In addition, prepare or obtain booklets or information that describes local resources along with directions on how to access them. Available service agencies should be contacted in advance to determine these things:

- the range of services offered
- strengths and weaknesses of each agency
- the extent to which each is prepared to deal with children and adolescents
- how agency staff members feel about working closely with the school
- who is and who is not eligible for services at each agency and under what conditions
- what fees are charged
- when insurance covers the cost of services

Sharing Information

Schools, courts, and social service agencies should establish procedures that allow them to share confidential information in a manner consistent with clients' needs and rights. As an experienced SAP counselor says, "Nothing will sabotage a program sooner than not being able to get information back and forth between people regarding students."

Assessment counselors need to know what a young person's problems are in school, and schools need to know how to integrate post-treatment plans into the school's schedule. This is a significant issue, and counselors invest a great deal of time maintaining a feeling of trust and cooperation with community agencies. Standard procedures for the release of confidential information forms should be established, and regular meetings with those agencies should be conducted.

When people begin to make changes in their lives, they frequently need encouragement and support. Occasional brief contacts with SAP staff who offer a sympathetic ear can be a big boost to people who have been referred to

agencies outside the school. Many communities have information and referral agencies that publish books describing local services that may fit the needs of students accessing SAP services. It may be possible to obtain and distribute these booklets at little or no cost to the SAP.

Community Resources

Basic Services

- suicide prevention hotlines
- telephone counseling and referral
- drop-in services
- homeless shelters
- food banks
- clothes banks
- employee assistance programs
- health department services
- physical health services
- parks and recreation services
- after school programs
- child care services

Assessment and Diagnostics Centers

- special alcohol/drug assessment services
- interviews by social workers, licensed professional counselors, psychiatrists, psychologists, drug and alcohol abuse specialists
- psychological testing
- neurological testing

Inpatient treatment. This usually refers to services provided by hospitals or residential treatment centers to clients who reside on site.

Residential treatment center. Clients live and participate in a therapeutic community.

Day treatment. Clients do not reside in a hospital or treatment center, but spend weekdays participating in therapeutic activities. Some day treatment programs are established in the school setting.

Outpatient services. Clients attend regularly scheduled group or individual therapy sessions.

Aftercare. Services provided to clients after completion of inpatient treatment.

Halfway houses. Long-term residences for people with mental health or drinking and drug use problems, after they complete more intensive treatment.

Self-help groups. Alcoholics Anonymous is the most well-known of these self-help groups and nonprofessional organizations.

Specialized Services for Adolescents

- counseling and psychotherapy
- sex education and counseling
- birth control services
- services for problems with marijuana and/or other drugs
- services for runaways
- drop-in centers
- youth organizations such as Boys and Girls Clubs, Boy or Girl Scouts, and 4-H

Drug and Alcohol Services

- outpatient alcohol/drug treatment
- inpatient alcohol/drug services
- general medical hospital or unit treatment
- specialized alcohol or drug dependency hospital or unit treatment
- education concerning drug/alcohol use
- self-help groups
- Alcoholics Anonymous. The major self-help program for alcoholics is a nonprofit organization run almost entirely by recovering alcoholics. The goal of AA is to help alcoholics to stop drinking by following the Twelve Step program.
- Narcotics Anonymous for those addicted to narcotics and drugs other than alcohol
- Al-Anon and Al-Teen, for spouses, children, and friends of alcoholics

Family and Marital Services

Parents of students participating in SAP supports may need many other services, including marital and family counseling, family planning, debt management, legal assistance and more. A facilitator is not likely to be in a position to recommend these services without having established considerable personal rapport with the parents.

Mental Health Services

- individual therapy or counseling
- group therapy or counseling
- self-help groups
- emotions Anonymous
- recovery Anonymous

Appendix C – Chapter 3 – The Early Identification Process

3 – 12 Sample form: Elementary School Behavior Checklist

Adapted from documents used by Allegheny Intermediate Unit 3 Homestead, Pennsylvania and Myers Elementary Student Assistance Program, Bellwood-Antis School District, Bellwood, Pennsylvania

Elementary School

Student Assistance Behavior Observation Checklist

Student _____ Grade _____

Completed by _____ Date _____

Subject(s) taught _____

Current Grade(s) _____

Number of absences to date _____ Number of tardies to date _____

Please check all applicable items in the following:

1. Student strengths

Attentive ____ Appropriate sense of humor ____ Considerate ____
Cooperative ____ Creative ____ Good attendance ____ Organized ____
Polite ____ Shows leadership skills ____ Works hard ____
Works well independently ____ Works well in a group ____

2. Classroom performance

____ Does not complete assignments
____ Does not turn in assignments on time
____ Has difficulty following written directions
____ Disorganized materials and work area
____ Has difficulty following verbal directions
____ Has difficulty working independently
____ Never has enough time to finish
____ Declining grades
____ Remembers information one time, but not the next
____ Neglects assignments and responsibilities
____ Performing below grade level
____ Does assignments carelessly
____ Has difficulty participating in classroom activities/discussions
____ Gives up easily
____ Incomplete homework
____ Does not do homework

- ___ Has difficulty concentrating
- ___ Demonstrates poor listening skills
- ___ Easily distracted
- ___ Has difficulty translating thoughts into words (verbal/written)
- ___ Requires eye contact in order to listen successfully
- ___ Reluctant to ask for help
- ___ Short attention span

3. Interpersonal and behavioral skills

- ___ Displays inappropriate behavior when others receive attention or are praised
- ___ Lacks self-control
- ___ Daydreams frequently
- ___ Difficulty relating to peers
- ___ Tends to interact with younger or older children
- ___ Frequently whines and cries
- ___ Disturbs other students
- ___ Appears unhappy or sad
- ___ Appears anxious
- ___ Disrespectful toward authority
- ___ Appears lonely
- ___ Has difficulty accepting criticism
- ___ Exhibits outbursts of anger
- ___ Is demanding
- ___ Acts on impulse
- ___ Hits and/or pushes other students
- ___ Argues with teacher
- ___ Teases other students
- ___ Withdrawn
- ___ Frequent ridicules from classmates
- ___ Frequently in arguments or fights with other students
- ___ Uses obscene language/gestures
- ___ Exhibits attention-getting behavior
- ___ Give an example _____
- ___ Seeks constant reassurance

4. Physical symptoms

- ___ Over or under weight
- ___ Inappropriately dressed
- ___ Does not seem to care about appearance
- ___ Tired, listless, apathetic, unmotivated, not interested in school
- ___ Has unexplained, frequent physical injuries
- ___ Frequently complains of nausea/headaches
- ___ Poor hygiene
- ___ Appears sleepy, lays head on desk

5. Rules and expectations

- ☐ Steals or forcibly takes things from others
- ☐ Brings inappropriate materials to school
- ☐ Is not where he/she is to be during the school day
- ☐ Has difficulty following classroom guidelines

- 6.** Do you wish to speak to a SAP Core Team member directly? ☐ yes
☐ no

7. Other comments you want to share:

3 – 13 Sample form: Middle/High School Teacher/Staff Behavior Checklist

Roanoke County Public Schools

Middle/High School Behavior Checklist



Student's Name _____ Grade _____ Date _____

Your name (optional) _____

Grades _____

Period/time of contact with student _____

Number of times tardy _____ Number of times absent _____

The Student Assistance Program Core Team provides prevention and intervention in the areas of violence, tobacco, alcohol, other drugs, and difficulties contributing to truancy, low grades, school dropout, discipline problems, and the inability to succeed in the educational setting.

The above student has referred him/herself or someone else has expressed concern for the student. Please complete the following confidential form giving your observations. Please secure this document in a secure place and discuss it only for professional reasons.

This document does not become a part of the student's permanent record. Thank you for your help.

Check all that apply:

Strengths

- _____ Helps others
- _____ High Achiever
- _____ Cooperative
- _____ Good peer relations
- _____ Participates in class
- _____ Participates in extra-curricular activities
- _____ Regularly attends class
- _____ Family Support

Behavior

- _____ Inconsistent behavior
- _____ Mood swings
- _____ Sleeps in class
- _____ Argumentative
- _____ Obscene language
- _____ Lying
- _____ Writes/draws chemical and/or violent graffiti
- _____ Seldom expresses feelings/emotion

Academic

- _____ Attitude affects work
- _____ Easily frustrated
- _____ Dissatisfaction with school
- _____ Achieving below potential
- _____ Lacks motivation
- _____ Cheating
- _____ Overreacts to less than perfect grade
- _____ Skips, Frequently Absent/Tardy

Social Interactions

- _____ Boasts "partying", "getting high"
- _____ Change in friends
- _____ Sudden popularity
- _____ Forceful with Peers/Bullies
- _____ Peer exclusion
- _____ Isolation from others
- _____ Possess/view inappropriate media
- _____ Is victimized by others
- _____ Others talk about his/her use of substances

- _____ Excessive restlessness
- _____ Extreme irritability
- _____ Extreme Impulsivity
- _____ Displays intense anger
- _____ Lack of respect for adults/defiant
- _____ Makes threats (bullies)

- _____ Others talk about his/her aggressive/violent behavior
- _____ Writes or makes sexual comments/gestures
- _____ Passive
- _____ Poor conflict resolution skills

Appearance/Health

- _____ Neglects personal Appearance
- _____ Glassy, bloodshot eyes
- _____ Lacks coordination
- _____ Slurred speech
- _____ Frequently complains of illness
- _____ Smells of alcohol, pot, smoke
- _____ Report evidence of student cutting/burning/mutilating self
- _____ Pregnancy
- _____ Lethargic
- _____ Possesses paraphernalia
- _____ Reported/Observed concern about weight/eating patterns

Special Concerns

- _____ Frequent absences, tardiness or suspensions
- _____ Frequent requests to go to bathroom
- _____ Found in inappropriate places
- _____ Student/others report family problem
- _____ Suffered recent loss in family (death, divorce, moved)
- _____ Concerned about possible physical, sexual, or emotional abuse
- _____ Another person has expressed concern about student
- _____ Large amounts of money
- _____ Student/others report having been arrested
- _____ Student/others report being on probation with courts

Interventions tried:

Additional comments:

RETURN THIS FORM TO _____

VIRGINIA TEACHER IMMUNITY LAW

Code of Virginia, § 8.01-47. Immunity of school personnel investigating or reporting certain incidents: In addition to any other immunity he may have, any teacher, instructor, principal, school administrator, school coordinator, guidance counselor or any other professional, administrative or clerical staff member or other personnel of any elementary or secondary school, or institution of higher learning who, in good faith with reasonable cause and without malice, acts to report, investigate or cause any investigation to be made into the activities of any student or students or any other person or persons as they relate to conduct involving bomb threats, firebombs, explosive materials or other similar devices as described in clauses (vi) and (vii) of § [22.1-279.3:1](#) A, or alcohol or drug use or abuse in or related to the school or institution or in connection with any school or institution activity, shall be immune from all civil liability that might otherwise be incurred or imposed as the result of the making of such a report, investigation or disclosure.

3 – 14 Sample form: Behavior Checklist Summary

Roanoke County Public Schools

SAP Core Team Behavior Checklist Summary (Tally all individual checklists here)



Student's Name _____ Grade _____ Date _____

Grades _____ Number of times tardy _____

Number of times absent _____

Strengths

- _____ Helps others
- _____ High Achiever
- _____ Cooperative
- _____ Good peer relations
- _____ Participates in class
- _____ Participates in extra-curricular activities
- _____ Regularly attends class
- _____ Family Support

Academic

- _____ Attitude affects work
- _____ Easily frustrated
- _____ Dissatisfaction with school
- _____ Achieving below potential
- _____ Lacks motivation
- _____ Cheating
- _____ Overreacts to less than perfect grade
- _____ Skips, Frequently Absent/Tardy

Behavior

- _____ Inconsistent behavior
- _____ Mood swings
- _____ Sleeps in class
- _____ Argumentative
- _____ Obscene language
- _____ Lying
- _____ Writes/draws drug and alcohol and /or violent graffiti
- _____ Seldom expresses feelings/emotion
- _____ Excessive restlessness
- _____ Extreme irritability
- _____ Extreme Impulsivity
- _____ Displays intense anger
- _____ Lack of respect for adults/defiant
- _____ Makes Threats (bullies)

Social Interactions

- _____ Boasts "partying", "getting high"
- _____ Change in friends
- _____ Sudden popularity
- _____ Forceful with Peers/Bullies
- _____ Peer exclusion
- _____ Isolates from others
- _____ Possess/view inappropriate media
- _____ Is victimized by others
- _____ Others talk about his/her use of substances
- _____ Others talk about his/her aggressive/violent behavior
- _____ Writes or makes sexual comments/gestures
- _____ Passive
- _____ Poor conflict resolution skills

Appearance/Health

- _____ Neglects personal Appearance
- _____ Glassy, bloodshot eyes
- _____ Lacks coordination
- _____ Slurred speech
- _____ Frequently complains of illness
- _____ Smells of alcohol, pot, smoke
- _____ Report/evidence of student cutting/burning/mutilating Self
- _____ Pregnancy
- _____ Lethargic
- _____ Possesses paraphernalia
- _____ Reported/observed concern about weight/eating patterns

Special Concerns

- _____ Frequent absences, tardiness or suspensions
- _____ Frequent requests to go to bathroom
- _____ Found in inappropriate places
- _____ Student/others report family problem
- _____ Suffered recent loss in family (death, divorce, moved)
- _____ Concerned about possible physical, sexual, or emotional abuse
- _____ Another person has expressed concern about student
- _____ Unusually large amount of money
- _____ Student/others report having been arrested
- _____ Student/others report being on probation with courts

Please list interventions tried on back of summary sheet

3 – 15 Balancing legal requirements for alcohol and drug confidentiality

Unlike providers of mental health and substance abuse treatment services, schools must abide by the statutes of Virginia's system of public education. Use of these outside treatment services is typically voluntary except in instances of court intervention; whereas, education is compulsory. Because of federal funding of public education, federal law protects the privacy of children and parents, and so school policies must reflect these constraints.

For schools, the principal law on matters of student confidentiality is the Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act (FERPA, 1974). FERPA regulations protect student records regarding behavior as well as grades. They also explain when and under what circumstances information can be divulged. Thus, restrictions apply to SAP and any services it directs a student to seek to ameliorate a problem of some substance use.

Federal law on confidentiality relating to drug and alcohol use (by those under age 18) and FERPA conflict

The Legal Action Center, a non-profit organization that advocates on behalf of people in recovery, states in its 1991 handbook, *Legal Issues for School Based Programs*, that, "Any program that specializes, in whole or part, in providing treatment, counseling and/or assessment and **referral services** for students with alcohol and drug abuse problems must comply with the federal confidentiality regulations 42 U.S.C. 290 dd-3 and 290 ee-3; 42 C.F.R. Part 2."

The handbook also adds that:

"The federal regulations explicitly provide that specialized school-based substance abuse programs are subject to the regulations' confidentiality requirements ...

"A program that is run by a school district and staffed by school employees must comply with the federal law ...

"The federal regulations apply only to programs that are federally assisted, but this includes indirect forms of federal aid such as tax-exempt status, or state or local government funding that originated with the federal government."

In response to these apparently conflicting federal regulations, the Family Policy Compliance Office and the Alcohol, Drug Abuse and Mental Health Administration, both within the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services, put out a joint memorandum on confidentiality in recordkeeping as it relates to FERPA. Three options to resolve the federal law-FERPA conflict were given:

- The student's consent for parental access to his or her SAP record could be requested or required at the start of the student's SAP case.

- A student's SAP record could be released only with written consent from the student or in response to a court order.
- SAPs should minimize record keeping.

In explaining the memorandum's findings, the *Answer Book on Family Educational Rights and Privacy Act* states the following:

"... the [joint] memorandum took the position that a school that requires a student seeking [drug and alcohol treatment] services under the SAP to consent to disclosure of any resulting documentation to their parents, to the extent required by FERPA, does not violate the confidentiality provisions of the drug and alcohol abuse confidentiality regulations.

"Only individuals who have 'applied for or received' services from a program are protected by the federal law. Thus, if a youth has not yet been evaluated or counseled by a program [school SAP}, and has not sought the program's help, the program is free to discuss the youth's drug or alcohol problems with others. However, from the time the student applies for these services, the program must comply with federal regulations when disclosing any information that would identify him or her as an alcohol or drug abuser, according to the *1991 Legal Issues for School Based Programs*."

The question then becomes when does a student become a client of student assistance programming? In the first stage of assistance, the core team is gathering information and does not know with certainty what the student's problem is, so the student would most likely not be considered a client. In the second stage of assistance, referral to service and its delivery, the client designation would, in most instances, hold true.

Appendix D – Chapter 4 – Evidence-Based Programming

4 – 13 Educational institutions, organizations and government agencies that evaluate evidence-based programs

Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice (CECP) Part of the American Institutes for Research ([AIR](http://air.org)), and funded under a cooperative agreement with the Office of Special Education Programs ([OSEP](http://osep.ed.gov)), U.S. Department of Education ([ED](http://ed.gov)), with supplemental funding from the Center for Mental Health Services ([CMHS](http://cmhs.hhs.gov)), U.S. Department of Health and Human Services ([HHS](http://hhs.gov)).
<http://cecp.air.org/guide/websites.asp>

CECP supports and promotes preparedness on behalf of the healthy development and adjustment of children with, or at risk of developing, serious emotional disturbance. In this role, the CECP collaborates at federal, state, and local levels on the production, exchange, and use of knowledge about the best practices to use. Online, CECP provides research and a comprehensive list of evidence-based strategies, practices and programs.

Center for Study and Prevention of Violence, Blueprints for Violence Prevention, University of Colorado
<http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/>

The Center continuously reviews research on violence and drug abuse programs to determine which are grounded in evidence and exemplary as well. The list of selected programs is online, along with background information on the criteria and review process. The list includes programs for schools and after-school programs as well as those done in collaboration with community agencies. The Center also provides detailed information on rating methods from other entities, and a matrix of program reviewed by them.

Collaboration for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL)
<http://casel.org/publications/safe-and-sound-an-educational-leaders-guide-to-evidence-based-sel-programs/>

CASEL provides information and reviews of 80 multiyear, sequenced Social, Emotional and Learning (SEL) programs designed for use in general education classrooms. Comprehensive and narrowly focused programs, such as drug education and anti-violence programs that can be combined with others, are included. Guidance on how to integrate isolated or fragmented efforts with other school activities and academic instruction shows how to put the pieces together.

Institute of Education Science (IES) What Works Clearinghouse, U. S. Education Department (USED)
<http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/findwh>

What Works Clearinghouse defines its goal as “to provide educators with the information they need to make evidence-based decisions.” To do that, it rigorously evaluates each evidence-based program’s practices, policies and strategies to

[atworks.aspx](#)

determine its overall effectiveness. Reviews of programs in the following areas are available:

[Adolescent Literacy](#)
[Beginning Reading](#)
[Character Education](#)
[Children Classified as Having an Emotional Disturbance \(ED\)](#)
[Dropout Prevention](#)
[Early Childhood Education](#)
[Early Childhood Education for Children with Disabilities](#)
[Elementary School Math](#)
[English Language Learners](#)
[High School Math](#)
[Middle School Math](#)
[Students with Learning Disabilities](#)

National Dropout Prevention Center/Network (NDPCN)

<http://www.dropoutprevention.org/home>

The National Dropout Prevention Center/Network endeavors to increase high school graduation rates through research and the use of evidence-based solutions. To help achieve this goal, the NDPCN identified 15 strategies, and corresponding model programs, that in tandem have the most positive impact on dropout rates. NDPCN provides information plus a database of these research-based programs for schools, organizations and other programs to consult, along with its online [rating scale](#).

National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP), Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services

Administration of the U. S. Department of Mental Health and Human Services (SAMHAS)
<http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/>

The National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP) evaluates programs and approaches that can be readily disseminated in the field to help prevent or treat mental health and substance-abuse disorders. Each intervention in NREPP's online registry has been reviewed and rated by one or more independent reviewers. Curricula and programs are applicable to schools, after-school programs, and programs put on in collaboration with community agencies.

Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention, Model Programs Guide (MPG), U. S. Department of Justice

<http://www.ojjdp.gov/mpg/>

The easy-to-use MPG database enables quick research on scientifically proven education programs on a wide range of youth problems, including substance abuse and mental health. Programs cover the youth-services continuum, from prevention through consequences, from interventions through transitioning back into

school from a correctional facility.

**Promising Practices Network
on Children, Families and
Communities (PPN)**, Operated
by the RAND Corporation
[http://www.promisingpractices.net
/default.asp](http://www.promisingpractices.net/default.asp)

PPN offers online descriptions of evaluated programs that improve outcomes for children and families, including those that can be done in school settings. Programs submitted to PPN undergo a robust evaluation process. PPN identifies effective and promising programs in four broad outcome areas: healthy and safe children, children ready for school, children succeeding in school, and strong families.

4 -14 Risk and protective factor framework chart

The following chart supports a theoretical framework of risk and protection enhancement. Developments in prevention and intervention science have shown that there are characteristics of individuals and their families and their environment that affect the likelihood of negative outcomes (problem behaviors). Other characteristics (protective factors/assets) serve to protect or buffer to moderate the influence of the negative characteristics, identified as risk factors.

	Risk Factors	Adolescent Problem Behaviors						Protective Factors	Social Development Model (SDM)
Domains	Risk factors are characteristics of individuals, their family, school, and community environment that are associated with increases in alcohol and other drug use, delinquency, teen pregnancy, school dropout, and violence. The below risk factors have been identified that when present increase the likelihood that children and youth develop such problem behaviors.	Substance Abuse	Depression and anxiety	Delinquency	Teen Pregnancy	School Drop Out	Violence	Factors associated with reduced potential for problem behaviors. Protective factors encompass family, social, psychological and behavioral characteristics that can provide a buffer for the children and youth. These factors mitigate the effects of the risk factors that present in the child or youth's environment.	SDM is a synthesis of three existing theories of criminology (control, social learning and differential association). It incorporates the results of research on risk and protective factors for problem behaviors and a developmental perspective of age, specific problem, and prosocial behavior. It is based on the assumption that children learn behaviors.
Community	Availability of alcohol/other drugs	■						Opportunities for prosocial involvement in community	<pre> graph TD IC([Individual Characteristics]) --> O[Opportunities] IC --> S[Skills] IC --> R[Recognition] O --> BAC([Bonding Attachment Commitment]) S --> BAC R --> BAC BAC --> HBCS([Healthy Beliefs and Clear Standards]) HBCS --> HB[Healthy Behavior] </pre>
	Availability of fire			■				Recognition for prosocial involvement	
	Community laws and norms favorable to drug use, firearms, and crime	■		■					
	Transitions and mobility	■	■	■					
	Low neighborhood attachment and community disorganization	■		■					
	Media portrayals of violence								
	Extreme economic deprivation	■	■	■	■	■	■		
Family	Family history of the problem behavior	■	■	■	■	■	■	Bonding and attachment to family with healthy beliefs and clear standards	
	Family management problems	■	■	■	■	■	■		
	Family Conflict	■	■	■	■	■	■	Opportunities and recognition for prosocial involvement	
	Favorable parental attitudes and involvement in problem behavior	■		■					
School	Academic failure beginning in late elementary school	■	■	■	■	■	■	Bonding and attachment to school	
	Lack of commitment to school	■	■	■	■	■	■	Opportunities and recognition for prosocial involvement	
Individual/Peer	Early and persistent antisocial behavior	■	■	■	■	■	■	Bonding and attachment to peers with healthy beliefs and clear standards	
	Rebelliousness	■		■		■			
	Friends who engage in the problem behavior	■		■	■	■	■	Opportunities and recognition for prosocial involvement	
	Favorable attitudes toward the problem behavior (including perceived risk of harm)	■		■	■	■		Increase of social skills	
	Early initiation of the problem behavior	■		■	■	■	■		
	Gang involvement	■		■	■		■		
	Constitutional factors	■	■	■			■		

This chart is available at

<http://www.hsd.state.nm.us/Synar/pdf/Hawkins%20and%20Catalano%20Risk%20and%20Protective%20Factor%20Framework.pdf>

4 – 15 The Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets

External Assets	
Support	<p>Family Support - Family life provides high levels of love and support.</p> <p>Positive family communication - Young person and her or his parent(s) communicate positively and young person is willing to seek advice and counsel from parent(s).</p> <p>Other adult relationships - Young person experiences caring support from three or more non-parent adults.</p> <p>Caring neighborhood - Young person experiences caring neighbors.</p> <p>Caring school climate - School provides a caring, encouraging environment.</p> <p>Parent involvement in schooling - Parent(s) are actively involved in helping young person succeed in school.</p>
Empowerment	<p>Community values youth - Young person perceives that adults in the community value youth.</p> <p>Youth as resources - Young person is given useful roles in the community.</p> <p>Service to others - Young person serves in the community one hour or more per week.</p> <p>Safety - Young person feels safe at home, at school and in the neighborhood.</p>
Boundaries and Expectations	<p>Family boundaries - Family has clear rules and consequences, and monitors the young person's whereabouts.</p> <p>School boundaries - School provides clear rules and consequences.</p> <p>Neighborhood boundaries - Neighbors take responsibility for monitoring young people's behavior.</p> <p>Adult role models - Parent(s) and other adults model positive, responsible behavior.</p> <p>Positive peer influence - Young person's best friends model responsible behavior.</p> <p>High expectations - Parent(s) and teachers encourage the young person to do well.</p>
Constructive Use of Time	<p>Creative activities - Young person spends three or more hours per week in lessons or practice in music, theater, or other arts.</p> <p>Youth programs - Young person spends three or more hours per week in sports, clubs, or organizations at school and/or in the community.</p> <p>Religious community - Young person spends one or more hours per week in activities in a religious institution.</p> <p>Time at home - Young person is out "with friends with nothing special to do" two or fewer nights per week.</p>

Internal Assets	
Commitment to Learning	<p>Achievement motivation - Young person is motivated to do well in school.</p> <p>School engagement - Young person is actively engaged in learning.</p> <p>Homework - Young person reports doing at least one hour of homework every school day.</p> <p>Bonding to school - Young person cares about her or his school.</p> <p>Reading for pleasure - Young person reads for pleasure three or more hours per week.</p>
Positive Values	<p>Caring - Young person places high value on helping others.</p> <p>Equality and social justice - Young person places high value on promoting equality and reducing hunger and poverty.</p> <p>Integrity - Young person acts on convictions and stands up for her or his beliefs.</p> <p>Honesty - Young person tells the truth even when it is not easy.</p> <p>Responsibility - Young person accepts and takes personal responsibility.</p> <p>Restraint - Young person believes it is important not to be sexually active or to use alcohol or other drugs.</p>
Social Competencies	<p>Planning and decision making - Young person knows how to plan ahead and make choices.</p> <p>Interpersonal competence - Young person has empathy, sensitivity, and friendship skills.</p> <p>Cultural competence - Young person has knowledge of and comfort with people of different cultural/racial/ethnic backgrounds.</p> <p>Resistance skills - Young person can resist negative peer pressure and dangerous situations.</p> <p>Peaceful conflict resolution - Young person seeks to resolve conflict nonviolently.</p>
Positive Identity	<p>Personal power - Young person feels he or she has control over "things that happen to me."</p> <p>Self-esteem - Young person reports having a high self-esteem.</p> <p>Sense of purpose - Young person reports that "my life has a purpose."</p> <p>Positive view of personal future - Young person is optimistic about her or his personal future.</p>

4 – 16 Guidance for support-group facilitators

The support-group facilitator should have knowledge and skills that promote healthy group interaction and meetings that are successful for everyone in attendance.

A facilitator prepares

- Knows the material and feels commitment to the process.
- Plans a focus for each meeting with goals and objectives.
- Has longer-range goals and objectives for the group.
- Has a cooperative relationship with school's administration.
- Has a co-facilitator, if one is available.
- Sits in on other groups to learn and consults their facilitators.
- Arranges meeting room so participants easily see one another.

A facilitator brings a certain outlook to the group

- Takes a positive and learning attitude to each group meeting.
- Knows being sincere, open, and non-judgmental puts others at ease.
- Realizes it is OK to make mistakes if one also learns from them.
- Can say, "I don't know. I'll have to find out."
- Wants to act as an empathetic support person for group participants.
- Remembers that people are different and respects all participants.

A facilitator manages a support group for everyone's benefit

- Keeps the group meeting interesting, upbeat, and when possible, fun.
- Steers each meeting's discussion, but does not monopolize it.
- Asks open-ended questions to stimulate dialogue among participants.
- Shares own feelings and ideas and encourages others to do likewise.
- Allows time for each talker, mindful that all get the chance to speak.
- Listens patiently and closely to what each participant says.
- Acknowledges speaker by nodding, commenting, or asking a question.
- Links together related parts of discussion when opportunity affords.
- Praises people for their accomplishments and insightful comments.
- Offers ideas about coping with and solving problems.

- Provides information and finds answers whenever necessary.
- Allows animated exchanges – but not arguments or personal attacks.
- Confronts with an evenhanded, sensitive tone.
- Never acts shocked by what is said.
- Refers problems that are beyond the scope of the group to deal with.
- Evaluates each meeting afterwards to prepare for the next meeting.

Some pitfalls every facilitator should avoid

- Think the group's success or failure is his or her sole responsibility.
- Allow gossip or judgmental comments about absent participants.
- Be a patronizing know-it-all who gives advice despite not knowing.
- Attempt to do group therapy.
- Tell members what they should or should not feel.
- Reassure members excessively that they are achieving.
- Remain passive during group discussions.
- Carry the problems of group participants over into personal life.

4 – 17 Characteristics of healthy support groups for teens overcoming alcohol and other drug problems

According to the educational student support group curriculum, *Helping Teens Overcome Problems with Alcohol, Marijuana, and Other Drugs*, one of the primary responsibilities of a group facilitator is to create a healthy, productive climate in the group. The group should exhibit these qualities:

Safe. Participants should feel safe to express their anger, opinions, and any information without ridicule or attack, either from you or from other participants.

Confidential. Participants must know that anything they reveal will not be confided to anyone outside the group. Anything said by participants is confidential. However, you must tell the students that you will immediately report to the appropriate authorities students who might pose threats to themselves or other people, or be abused. And you must report.

Confrontational. Caring confrontation is part of the group process. Participants who aren't being honest, who do not get their facts straight, or who are not participating in a caring manner, will hear about it from you and sometimes from other participants. However, confrontation must be used sparingly and judiciously. Heavy handed, treatment-oriented techniques are not appropriate in an educational student support group.

Caring. Students who participate in a SAP educational support group often live painful lives. Your care and concern must always come through.

4 – 18 Facilitator’s program-planning checklist

- Develop program procedures and curriculum.
- Inform the staff about the group(s) that will be instituted.
- Plan meeting dates and times on a master calendar so groups meet consistently each week, avoiding holidays. Groups should meet during alternating periods on the same day of the week.
- Order all materials, including curriculum, student workbooks, videos, demonstration aids, paper, markers, and audiovisual equipment.
- Review prospective participants’ school records to see if they have special concerns, such as reading problems or learning difficulties.
- Create a roster for each group.
- Send out invitations followed by reminders to prospective participants on the group’s meeting time.
- Display the monthly or yearly group schedule in a central location.

4 – 19 Mechanics of setting up school-based support groups

Length of Sessions

Support groups generally meet weekly for 6-12 weeks. The length of each session depends upon the age of the students:

- Pre-K/Early Education: 20 to 30 minutes/session
- K-2, 30 minutes/session
- 3-5: 30-40 minutes/session
- 6-12: 40-60 minutes/session

Number and Mix of Participants

The size of the group and the mix of participants can affect both the group processes and outcomes. The number of students per group depends upon the age of the students. Consider the following guidelines:

- Preschool/early education: 4 students/group
- K-2: 4-6 students/group

- 3-5: 6-8 students/group
- 6-12: 8-10 students/group

In regard to the mix of participants, it may not be best to group siblings and cliques of friends together, particularly if doing so impedes open, honest communication.

Meeting Room/Space

Groups should meet in a quiet, private room with enough space to comfortably sit in a circle and conduct group-related activities. Students may sit on chairs or on the floor. It is best if the facilitator remains seated with the participants during discussion, except when it is necessary to stand and point to items or conduct an activity.

Rules of Group Participation

The policies and procedures of the school determine what specific rules or guidelines facilitators follow during group. The following group rules are introduced in the first session:

- Everything said in-group is confidential, with the caveat that the facilitator must immediately report participants who may pose threats to themselves or others or show signs of abuse.
- All participants will be respectful of one another.
- No put-downs or abusive behavior will be allowed.
- It is important and OK to share feelings.
- Take turns talking.
- Support each other.
- Be an active participant during the meeting.
- Start on time and end on time.

4 – 20 What to keep in mind when running a support group

Curriculum Structure

Support group facilitators should use evidence-based curricula as the basis for each meeting, and conduct the meeting in the following manner:

- Check in by taking attendance and conducting an opener, icebreaker, or energizer.
- Introduce the educational focus (topic) of the day's group.

- Lead conversation and conduct activities that support the goals and objectives of the day's group.
- Close group by summarizing the outcome of the day's group and conducting a closing activity.

Parent Communication and Contact

Parent and guardian involvement is one of the primary principles of effective SAPs. Maintaining appropriate communication with parents and guardians is essential to the support and success of groups. Involving parents/guardians in productive ways requires advance planning, as well as skilled and considerate communication.

Parental Permission for Student to Participate in Group

Schools require written parental permission for student participation in activities outside the classroom. Divisions handle this in various ways. Some send a permission form home at the beginning of the school year listing the various school-sponsored activities in which their child could participate. Parents either do or do not give their permission for participation. Other divisions require permission for each school-based activity as it arises.

5 – 10 The National Student Assistance Association’s suggested philosophy and mission statement, ethical guidelines and standards of practice**SAP Statement of Philosophy**

SAP is a school-based comprehensive prevention and intervention program process for students in Kindergarten through Grade 12 characterized by a Core Team approach. This professional, systematic process is designed to provide education, prevention, early identification, intervention, referral, and support services for students exhibiting risk-behaviors that are interfering with their education. The positive influence of SAP curriculum and services encourages student success in the school environment, fosters risk reduction and positive asset development, provides a safe environment, and promotes opportunities for knowledge, skill, and attitude development. Key components are developmental curriculum and education, policy, staff and community in-service and education, early identification, development of support processes, use of community resources, and ongoing evaluation of program effectiveness.

Mission Statement for Student Assistance Programs

SAP uses a multidisciplinary SAP Core Team and intervention system to remove the educational and behavioral barriers that interfere with student learning, and works to enhance the developmental assets of students. This goal is accomplished by providing strategies and support to the school community and parents to improve their ability to help students succeed in school. The team also marshals other school and community resources as necessary for effective interventions.

This document includes ethical guidelines and standards of practice for those people involved in a SAP in any capacity. These guidelines and standards are intended to clarify the ethical responsibilities to students, families, school staff, SAP Core Teams, community, school support groups, and the profession of student assistance.

ETHICAL GUIDELINES AND STANDARDS OF PRACTICE

These guidelines were developed by the National Student Assistance Association to identify the standards of conduct necessary to maintain and regulate the high standards of integrity and leadership among persons involved in a SAP's work. They are meant to stimulate reflection, self-examination, and discussion of issues and practices.

A. Responsibilities to Students

Those involved in the Student Assistance Program will do the following:

- have primary responsibility to the student, who is to be treated with respect and dignity and with concern for confidentiality
- be responsible to offer student assistance components to all students who indicate a need for such services; and include all students with evidence of risk behavior
- promote and enhance students' strengths, skills, and capabilities while addressing their developmental needs
- inform the student of the purposes, goals, and procedures under which he/she may receive student assistance; include the possible necessity for consulting with other professionals and legal or other authoritative restraints
- maintain current knowledge of laws relating to SAP practice and ensure the rights of students are adequately protected
- make referrals to appropriate service providers based upon a student's needs and monitor the student's progress
- protect the confidentiality of student records and exchange personal data only according to prescribed laws and school policies
- provide and act upon only accurate, objective, and observable data regarding a student's behaviors
- inform appropriate authorities when the student's condition or statements indicate clear and imminent danger to the student or others (done after careful deliberation and when possible in conjunction with other professional consultation)
- provide explanation to parents/guardians and those who provide services to the students of the nature, purpose, and results of screening or assessment interviews
- account to each student referred to the SAP by continued evaluation of student success and needs and provide additional assistance whenever necessary

B. Responsibilities to Families

Those involved in SAP are assigned these responsibilities:

- have primary responsibility to the family of the student, who is to be treated with respect, dignity, and with concern for confidentiality

- respect the inherent rights and responsibilities of parents for their children and endeavor to establish a cooperative relationship with parents
- inform parents of the SAP role with emphasis on its positive nature; and the role of confidentiality between students, staff, and families
- treat information received from families in a confidential and ethical manner
- share information about a student only with those persons properly authorized to receive such information
- offer ongoing support and collaboration with families for the success of their children

C. Responsibilities to School Staff

Those involved in SAP will take responsibility for these:

- establish and maintain a cooperative relationship with faculty, staff, and administration to facilitate the provision of optimum SAP services
- promote awareness and adherence to laws and ethical guidelines regarding confidentiality, including the distinction between public and private information
- provide staff with concise and objective data necessary to assist the student
- offer appropriate in-service training and current SAP information for all staff
- encourage awareness and use of organizations and agencies to which the student may be referred
- provide services within their board-approved job descriptions and with an awareness of the specific areas of responsibilities and limitations

D. Responsibilities to Student Assistance Team Members

The responsibilities of those involved in SAP efforts are as follows:

- select multidisciplinary teams based upon the goals and mission of a SAP as defined by appropriate state entities and implemented within the particular needs of each individual school system
- support the components included in a SAP with an emphasis on prevention, asset/resiliency development, confidentiality, referral, identification, intervention, support, and evaluation
- include team members who meet the guidelines of General Education Interventions (Section 439 of General Education Provisions Act 20 U.S.C. 1232(h)) amended 1994, and Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 34 C.F.R 104 (Federal Law)
- select team members possessing leadership and communication skills plus expertise on youth and family issues
- act upon referrals to the team by collecting observable data and planning developmentally appropriate levels of interventions
- treat information received from school staff, students, parents, and community resource in a confidential and ethical manner - maintain records according to the Federal Educational Rights and Privacy Act (20

U.S.C. - 1232(g)), (34 C.F.R., 99) (42 C.F.R., part 2). (Federal Law)

- provide staff with concise and objective data to assist the student
- know and use community resources and services for referrals

E. Responsibility to the School and Community

Those involved in SAP process and services will handle these responsibilities:

- inform officials of conditions that may disrupt or damage the school's mission, personnel, students or property
- work cooperatively with the community agencies, organization, and individuals in the school
- delineate and promote the SAP role and function in meeting the needs of those served
- assist in the development of curricular and environmental conditions and programs appropriate for the school and community to meet student needs
- develop a systematic SAP evaluation process
- offer ongoing educational opportunities on youth issues for families and community members
- provide an ongoing cooperative link between school and community services

F. Responsibilities to School Support Groups

Those involved in SAP efforts must do the following:

- adhere to the "Ethical Guidelines for Group Counselors and Professional Standards for Training of Group Work" approved by the Association for Specialists in Group Work and promote knowledge of these guidelines among peers
- emphasize that school-based student support groups are psycho-educational and information groups, not therapy groups

G. Responsibilities to the Student Assistance Profession

Those involved with SAP are accountable in these ways to their profession:

- conduct themselves in a manner that brings credit to SAP practice
- actively participate in local, state, and national associations that foster development and improvement of SAP process and services
- adhere to ethical standards applicable to SAP practice and other professional practices, school board policies, and relevant statutes established by federal, state, and local governments
- clearly distinguish between statements and actions made as a private individual and as a representative of the school's SAP

H. Responsibility to Self

Those involved with SAP have responsibilities to themselves as well:

- monitor one's own physical, mental, and emotional health and professional effectiveness
- refrain from any action or use of inadequate services that may harm a student or themselves
- take personal initiative to maintain professional competence and keep abreast of innovations, trends and legal issues related to the field of Student Assistance Programs
- understand and act upon their commitment and responsibilities to the Student Assistance Program

Appendix F – Chapter 7 – School Board Policy and Student Assistance

7 – 8 Sample school board SAP policy

Pulaski County Public Schools

Board Policy

STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

It is necessary that public schools ensure a safe, secure, and drug-free environment to create a productive learning climate. Furthermore, Pulaski County Public Schools believes Student Assistance Programs should be designed to establish and support policies and programs that emphasize prevention and the creation of a positive school environment. In accordance with the No Child Left Behind Act: Title IV, Part A, Subpart 1-Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities, these policies and programs should (1) prevent or reduce violence; (2) prevent or reduce the use, possession, or distribution of illegal drugs, and delinquency; (3) prevent or reduce delinquency; (4) create a well-disciplined environment conducive to learning that includes consultation between teachers, principals, and other school personnel to identify early warning signs of drug use or violence; (5) provide behavior interventions as part of classroom management strategies; (6) promote the involvement of parents; and (7) promote coordination with community groups and coalitions, as well as government agencies.

The purpose of Pulaski County Public School System's Student Assistance Program is to provide programs and services that address and meet the needs of all students by delivering PK-12 prevention, intervention, and support services designed to reduce student risk factors, promote protective factors and increase asset development. The nine SAP components set forth by the National Student Assistance Association described below are endorsed by the Pulaski County Public School Board as the minimum requirements needed to reduce barriers to learning and to ensure student success in safe, disciplined and drug-free schools and communities.

Student assistance programming goals are the following:

School Board Policy - To define the school's role in creating a safe, disciplined and drug-free learning community and to clarify the relationship between student academic performance and the use of alcohol, other drugs, violence and high-risk behavior.

Staff Development - To provide all school employees with the necessary foundation of attitudes and skills to reduce risks, increase protective factors, and foster resilience through SAP services.

Program Awareness - To educate parents, students, agencies and the community about the school policy on alcohol, tobacco, other drugs, disruptive behavior and violence, and provide information about Student Assistance services that promote resilience and student success.

Internal Referral Process - To identify and refer students with academic and social concerns to a multi-disciplinary, problem solving, case-management SAP team.

Problem Solving Team and Case Management - To evaluate how the school can best serve students with academic or social problems through solution-focused strategies.

Student Assistance Program Evaluation - To ensure continuous quality improvement of student assistance services and outcomes.

Educational Student Support Groups - To provide information, support and problem-solving skills to students who are experiencing academic or social problems.

Cooperation and Collaboration with Community Agencies and Resources - To build bridges between schools and parents, and between schools and community resources through referral and shared case management.

Integration with Other School-based Program - To integrate student assistance services with other school-based programs designed to increase resilience, improve academic performance and reduce student risk for alcohol, tobacco, other drugs and violence.

Appendix G – Chapter 9 – Assessing needs and evaluating process

9 – 14 The SAP process flows from left to right in the model

To develop a SAP logic model, first break out the model's theory-of-change categories. For most logic models of this kind, six categories—theory, personnel and organization models, programs/services, early outcomes, intermediate outcomes, and final outcomes—are shown. In this order, they portray the theory-of-change as a left-to-right progression. Right-pointing arrows between category columns emphasize the sequential relationship of each category's components to those to its right.

Here is what such a programming logic model might look like at this embryonic stage of development.

Theory → Personnel/Organization Models → Programs/Services → Early Outcomes → Intermediate Outcomes → Final Outcomes

9 – 15 A well-done logic model aids an effective evaluation

When a school commits to having a SAP, deciding how to evaluate it must be part of the start-up process. SAP Coordinators and Core Teams need to know what their SAP is accomplishing. So do administrators, teachers and staff. So do parents. So do community organizations and leaders. And of course sources of funding want to know as well.

Deciding on the scope of evaluation—what to evaluate and designing the evaluation to do that—is best done during the program's implementation stage using the logic model developed for the SAP. Methods of data collection built into the SAP process are what make evaluation possible.

Different audiences will use any SAP evaluation. The principal uses of an evaluation include the following:

- Making school, board and advisory council policy.
- Making day-to-day decisions on SAP staff and supervisory personnel.
- Making program modifications that help program administrators, school superintendents, and collaborating agencies/organizations.
- Informing teachers, students, parents and the community.
- Making decisions on continued or additional funding; and sources of funding.

In addition to student outcomes, a SAP evaluation considers how well collaboration occurs with other groups and service providers and how self-sustaining the SAP is for that school.

9 – 16 What to scrutinize to evaluate outcomes

Education constitutes a long-term outcome – In comparison, long-term outcomes resulting from school-linked services can be difficult to quantify, or break out as a consequence of interventions. But academic performance, student discipline, absenteeism, on-time promotion to the next grade and graduation, though not always directly related to services, are still long-term indicators given the link between them and well-being. Documented service outcomes should of course be included in an evaluation. And any other documented school measures that have a bearing on student-assistance outcomes would also be indicators for possible use in an evaluation.

Examine a variety of long-term outcomes – The more outcomes a SAP examines, the clearer its overall success becomes. Consider the following examples.

A New Jersey program looked at four areas: process outcomes, or the availability of needed, well-designed services; treatment outcomes resulting from program components; prevention outcomes that helped youths avoid problems altogether; and developmental outcomes that showed how counseling, workshops and other resources helped youths transition into productive adults.

To measure productivity of dropouts who returned and graduated, an Iowa program used six indicators of positive productivity – job income, post-secondary education, volunteerism, political participation, homemaking and childrearing, and talents and skills – and two indicators of negative productivity – use of public assistance and any time spent in jail.

A Kentucky program examined aspects of four broad areas to gauge its level of success: classroom performance, social interaction, global change and perceived risk.

Connect long-term outcomes to services provided – To qualify for evaluation, an outcome must be the *reasonable* result of a program's intervention. To state that another way, outcomes must relate directly or indirectly to a program's actual services. So it behooves evaluators to choose with care the outcomes they study. Then context is key, meaning outcomes should be expressed in terms of how the SAP operates.

Looking at student assistance processes and intermediate outcomes combined with a theory-of-change approach helps reveal connections between services and outcomes.

Recognize early outcomes to demonstrate success – Given the length of time, often in years, for long-term outcomes to occur, an evaluation should cite short and intermediate outcomes to demonstrate effectiveness. Early in a SAP's inception, this can also relieve pressure for quick results.

Current and recent classroom indicators can lend substance to interim outcome findings. Using social capital theory – the idea that the presence of certain social and family structure resources can be essential to improving lives – can be another way to establish links between near-term and long-term outcomes.

Document processes to substantiate outcomes – The value of early and intermediate outcomes can be demonstrated further by documenting the nature of each service (including accessibility and comprehensiveness), the ways they are used in combination, how they are integrated and made culturally appropriate, and each one's overall quality. How SAP services complement a school's educational mission should be noted, too. Such an explanation might include how visible prevention and intervention efforts are, how knowledgeable faculty and staff are to the problems of youth as well as their support for the SAP Coordinator and Core Team's work, and how school practices incorporate SAP process and services on behalf of students.

A theory-of-change approach can unravel complexities – Under a theory-of-change approach, a logic model depicts how activities relate to expected outcomes, and at what points along the way that school-based or community service providers may integrate in the process. Logic model development – best undertaken during the early days of a school's SAP development – should make indices of change easy to identify so they can be tracked and documented.

9 – 17 What to examine to evaluate collaborations

Because SAP helps students receive assistance from various service providers, collaboration with those providers should be part of ongoing and annual evaluations. This involves choosing what aspects to evaluate and using the resulting findings to improve overall programming.

Structure – Look closely at the agreement with each provider and how the provider's services are financed. Topics to address would be the following:

- who provides what services
- which services are housed in school facilities
- how providers and school together plan and shape services, including job descriptions
- where other available resources are
- how school and SAP budgets integrate

Character – Collaboration has one overriding goal: the best possible delivery of services. Collaboration occurs within the school, between the school and service providers, and among service providers outside of school. The following are subjects to examine on behalf of SAP:

- how the SAP Coordinator and/or Core Team participate on school committees and in school activities and functions
- how often faculty and staff participate in SAP activities, and to what extent
- how SAP factors into the school's response to problems
- extent of student and parental participation in SAP awareness activities
- participation level of community members and groups in SAP activities
- extent to which a SAP Coordinator and/or Core Team are seen as a resource
- how SAP Coordinator and/or Core Team training includes service providers
- how cosponsors of grant proposals submitted by a SAP coordinate efforts
- level of ongoing communication between SAP and service providers on delivery of services

Image – The perception of SAP should be in sync with programming goals. A few ways to assess the image of SAP are these:

- student and parent surveys
- SAP mention and placement in the student handbook
- visibility of SAP brochures in prominent places
- inclusion of SAP information in the school's curriculum

Parents/families – Collaboration includes how parents and families participate in the SAP process and services from providers. Assessing communication methods – letters, surveys, telephone calls, home visits, newsletters, conferences at school, parent workshops and classes, and reports of student progress – helps determine their efficacy.

Other opportunities for family involvement – planning an individual student's assistance program, parent/family counseling, participation in decision making, youth opportunity fairs, and other awareness activities for parents and families – should all be evaluated for how well they fulfill the need for collaboration.

Private sector – If SAP includes involvement of one or more private-sector companies, the SAP Coordinator or Core Team should address the following topics with each:

- availability of financial aid for SAP Core Team training
- availability of part-time jobs for referred students to gain valuable, paid work experience
- availability of scholarship funds for post secondary training of at-risk youth
- equipment donations for job-related training
- job fair sponsorship

- mentoring, whether through the company in question, or with private individuals by way of the company
- willingness to help youth learn about careers
- volunteering of company personnel in classrooms
- job-shadowing opportunities for students

Collaborate on assessments – Inviting collaborators to help evaluate their schools can strengthen agreements and bring any disagreements to the surface to address. A dual questionnaire – one for the SAP Coordinators and/or SAP Core Team members, and a second for service providers and other collaborators – can make such a co-assessment easier to do.

Both questionnaires can look at shared vision, content, governance, barriers to work, strengths, interaction styles, financial needs, service delivery, perceptions of clients, the future, and equity and diversity.

The SAP Coordinators and/or SAP Core Team’s questionnaire can inquire about collaboration history, meeting attendance, funding sources, governance, employees, clients served in a time frame, staff composition, and services delivered.

Questionnaire response rates are good when kept anonymous and in the knowledge that review is limited to third-party outside researchers.

9 – 18 What to consider to evaluate SAP sustainability

Experts have identified four aspects of SAP sustainability to measure: relationships, funding sources, outcomes and ability to learn.

Look at SAP-to-school relationships – Depending on a given SAP structure, topics would include the following.

- support offered by local educational leaders
- SAP presence (i.e., staff and services within the school[s])
- SAP budget as a percentage of the division/school’s budget
- planning collaboration between the SAP and school staff
- knowledge and support of SAP by key administrators
- teacher knowledge and support of SAP
- SAP Coordinator and/or Core Team participation on school committees and in activities and functions (and vice versa)
- SAP incorporation into the school's planned responses
- use of the SAP Coordinator and/or Core Team as classroom resource(s)

Study SAP-to-community relationships – Assess engagement by parents, students, community agencies, and other stakeholders with the school’s SAP structure, including:

- how SAP-beneficiaries feel their needs are met;
- indicators that show that SAP makes a difference;
- any controversy related to SAP process and services; and
- use of resources for SAP justified relative to other potential uses.

Consider funding stability and adequacy – While SAP sustainability depends on many factors, few rank higher than funding. A thorough evaluation includes questions on funding that deals with aspects such as:

- examining all funding sources (i.e., federal, state, local, and private) in light of their long-term, funding potential;
- researching how other SAP systems acted on potential funding sources;
- considering step-by-step actions to take to ensure continued funding from current sources, and in applying for new funding;
- looking at cost to program per referred student, and cost of service for each time there is contact with a student;
- establishing the priority of SAP and related services that must continue;
- determining the administrative support that each service requires;
- indentifying agencies with which resources can be shared to meet common goals; and
- doing follow-up analysis on projects after initial funding to find out reasons for survival or demise.

Investigate outcome sustainability – Examine outcomes at the universal (i.e., school and community), selected (i.e., at-risk groups) and indicated (i.e., individual students) levels of prevention and intervention efforts, with particular attention to:

- at the indicated level, the persistence of positive outcomes or reduction of negative ones in individual students;
- at the indicated level, the development of individual abilities that carry over to other areas of life;
- at the selected level, the presence of peer and adult support for youth development; and
- at the universal level, the establishment of a system of services for youth needs.

Consider SAP as a learning organization – The more that people associated with SAP learn, the more sustainable that SAP becomes. Learning to find answers, conserve resources, analyze efforts, and disseminate information can help sustain prevention and intervention efforts.

9 – 19 How to approach evaluation design in the right way

An evaluation is only as good as its design. This includes deciding on an evaluation approach and considering the different ways to collect data.

Begin evaluation design with a participatory mindset – Obtaining perspectives from stakeholders ensures an evaluation process that reflects their ideas on how to use collected data and the outcomes to be evaluated.

And start early – Building trust takes time. The sooner a SAP Coordinator or Core Team begins to design an evaluation process, the more time there is to foster understanding and buy-in on parameters, including any constraints on data collection. Though evaluation of SAP outcomes and overall impact has to wait until the program is reasonably mature, the focus of early work on collecting information also furthers the process of program implementation.

Maintain evaluation standards – Fair evaluations depend on precise questions whose meaning is not open to interpretation. As laid out in *The Program Evaluation Standards* by the Joint Committee on Standards for Educational Evaluation (1994), sound and fair evaluation practices embody utility, feasibility, propriety, and accuracy – characteristics that questions should adhere to during the evaluation-design process.

9 – 20 Design in data collection features to take advantage of

Make data collection an early emphasis – Consider data collection when conceiving any prevention or intervention project. This way, collection methods can be designed to fully exploit the opportunity to learn. When that is not possible and data is unavailable, indirect measures must be used, such as later interviews with teachers and parents, or questionnaires sent to them soon after a project's conclusion. Teacher and parent perceptions can reveal positive changes in students that they themselves might not as readily admit.

Make data collection a collective effort – Information from stakeholders results in better ideas about how to collect the most useful data. Of course the SAP Coordinator and Core Team members will collect most information. Others, too, can be trained to collect data in easy-to-do, speedy ways. Showing how collected information benefits a project, students, or specific student proves its worth to all concerned.

Balance data requirements and data collection costs – Strike a balance between effort to collect information and its usefulness. Surveys, for example, can be costly to develop and use. If less expensive alternatives can be found, consider using them.

Use appropriate instruments – Ways of capturing data should be able to measure gradual changes that are realistically possible over the given time frame. Use pre-validated methods when available. If they enable comparison with national databases, all the better.

Develop a data system – Consider establishing a database to collect, collate and monitor data, whether it comes from intake processing, staff questionnaires, case studies, or student and parent surveys. SAP staff with such databases can analyze and discuss outcomes, which in turn means better evaluations.

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Section 6: Resource Descriptions and Web sites

Resource	Description
ASCD: The Whole Child	ASCD proposes a broader definition of achievement and accountability and espouses a whole-child approach to education. ASCD is a global leader in developing and delivering innovative programs, products, and services that empower educators. The organization has some 160,000 members from more than 140 countries supporting its work. http://whatworks.wholechildeducation.org/podcast/
Blueprints for Violence Prevention (BVP) , a project of the Center for Study and Prevention of Violence at the University of Colorado	BVP provides answers to what works in preventing violence by reviewing the research on programs to determine which are exemplary and grounded in evidence. Why? Because many programs despite good intentions do more harm than good; ineffective programs are a waste of scarce funding. BVP strongly believes that ongoing evaluations maintain high, scientific standards. http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/blueprints/
Center for Effective Collaboration and Practice	The Center promotes being prepared to help children having or at risk of serious emotional or behavioral problems so that they might develop and adjust well. It collaborates with federal and state agencies and localities on the creation of effective practices and exchange of knowledge about them. http://cecp.air.org/guide/websites.asp
Center for Innovation and Improvement (CII)	The Center on Innovation & Improvement (CII) supports school reform efforts and offers online resources on topics such as families and schools, charter schools, school and division improvement, and restructuring and turnaround process. The Center is supported by the USED's Office of Elementary and Secondary Education. http://www.centerii.org/
Center for Mental Health in Schools, UCLA	The Center for Mental Health in Schools pursues theory, research, practice, and training as they relate to school-based interventions that address mental health and psychosocial concerns.

	<p>Improving practitioner competencies and collaboration between schools and families and communities are key focuses.</p> <p>http://smhp.psych.ucla.edu/</p>
Center for Safe and Supportive Schools (CSSS)	<p>Funded by the USED's office of Safe and Healthy Students, the CSSS provides training, products, tools, and research findings to states in order to improve schools' conditions for learning through measurement and program implementation.</p> <p>http://safesupportiveschools.ed.gov/index.php?id=01</p>
Center for School Mental Health (CSMH) , University of Maryland School of Medicine – International Alliance	<p>CSMH's mission is to strengthen policies and programs in school mental health to improve learning, and to these ends analyzes information, develops and disseminates briefs, promotes use of knowledge and actions to advance successful school policies, and hosts national and regional conferences.</p> <p>http://csmh.umaryland.edu/partner_proj/intl_alliance/index.html</p>
Center for School-based Mental Health Programs (CSBMHP)	<p>The CSBMHP at Miami University builds collaborative relationships with schools and community agencies to promote expanded mental health programs and services to reduce barriers to learning. CSBMHP commitments include ongoing research, education of future clinicians, and in-service training of educators.</p> <p>http://www.units.muohio.edu/csbmhp/</p>
Child Trends	<p>Child Trends is a nonprofit, nonpartisan research center that studies children at all stages of development. Areas of research include child poverty and welfare, early childhood development, fatherhood and parenting, teen sex and pregnancy, and youth development. Guidance on policy and practice is evidence-based.</p> <p>http://www.childtrends.org/index.cfm</p>
Collaboration for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL)	<p>CASEL works to advance three goals: to advance the science and evidence-based practice of social and emotional learning (SEL), to expand integrated, evidence-based SEL practice, and to strengthen the field of SEL and its effect. CASEL believes these goals essential to education.</p> <p>http://casel.org/publications/safe-and-sound-an-educational-leaders-guide-to-evidence-based-sel-</p>

	programs/
Find Youth Info	This federal Web site provides resources and interactive tools to help groups and communities plan and effect proven youth programs that address risk and protective factors. http://www.findyouthinfo.org/
Hamilton Fish Institute (HFI) , The George Washington University	HFI focuses on analysis and development of better ways to prevent and reduce violence in and around schools. Other focus areas are testing promising strategies and disseminating findings. HFI services include assisting schools, training, providing information, consulting on model programs, and helping policymakers at all levels. http://www.hamfish.org/
National Center for School Engagement (NCSE)	NCSE has generated many resources about school attendance, attachment, and achievement. NCSE provides training and technical assistance as well as research and evaluation – all to school divisions and to agencies from law enforcement to federal and state levels. http://schoolengagement.org/
National Dropout Prevention Center/Network (NDPC/N)	Serving as a clearinghouse on dropout prevention, the NDPC/N is an established, national resource for sharing solutions that help young people develop the academic, social, work and life skills needed to graduate from high school and lead productive lives. NDPC/N conducts third-party evaluations and program assessment review and makes them available. http://www.dropoutprevention.org/home
National High School Center	The National High School Center identifies research-supported improvement programs, offers easy-to-use products, and offers technical assistance, all as a source of information and expertise on high school improvement. http://www.betterhighschools.org/
National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) , National Institutes of Health, a component of the U. S. Department of Health and Human Services	NIDA brings the power of science to bear on drug abuse and addiction through two critical components. The first is conducting research across a broad range of disciplines along with strategic support for such research. The second is the rapid dissemination of research results to improve prevention and treatment and inform policy relating

	<p>to drug use and addiction. http://www.drugabuse.gov/Prevention/examples.html</p>
<p>Office of Justice Programs, Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Model Programs Guide (MPG)</p>	<p>The MPG assists practitioners and communities in putting evidence-based prevention and intervention programs into practice by way of a database of over 200 evidence-based programs. MPG makes it easy to research scientifically proven programs that address a wide range of problems, including substance abuse, mental health, and education programs – the entire continuum of youth services from prevention through sanctions to re-entry. http://www.ojjdp.gov/mpg/</p>
<p>Preventing Mental, Emotional, and Behavioral Disorders Among Young People: Progress and Possibilities, The National Academies Press (NAP)</p>	<p>The NAP publishes reports by the National Academy of Sciences, the National Academy of Engineering, the Institute of Medicine, and the National Research Council. This report focuses on research and program experience with younger populations since 1994 on mental health and prevention of disorders, catalysts for a variety of problems that carry over into adulthood if left unchecked. http://www.nap.edu/catalog.php?record_id=12480</p>
<p>Program Development and Evaluation Unit, University of Wisconsin - Extension</p>	<p>The Unit provides training and technical assistance for school faculties and staffs to plan, implement and evaluate high quality educational programs, from a small, individual workshop to a community initiative to a county or statewide program. http://www.uwex.edu/ces/pdande/evaluation/evallogicmodel.html</p>
<p>Promising Practices Network on children, families and communities (PPN)</p>	<p>PPN's Web site can be thought of as "best practices" or a "model program" site that provides information on prevention and intervention programs that work. PPN screens and posts evidence-based information on service delivery. It also links to additional research in children's mental and physical health, academic success, and economic security. http://www.promisingpractices.net/default.asp</p>
<p>Public Impact</p>	<p>This national education policy and management consultancy helps education leaders and policymakers improve learning in K-12 education. The firm finds, develops, retains, and expands the impact of great teachers and leaders; equips states</p>

	<p>and divisions with tools to turnaround failing schools; evaluates, replicates, and expands the supply of charter schools; and improves other areas of K-12 policy and management. Clients have included foundations, policymakers, divisions, charter organizations, child advocacy non-profits, and reform-oriented leaders.</p> <p>http://publicimpact.com/</p>
<p>Research and Training Center for Children's Mental Health, University of South Florida</p>	<p>Founded to meet the needs of children with serious emotional and behavioral disabilities, and their families, the Center conducts research, synthesizes and shares knowledge, provides training and consultation, and serves as a resource for other researchers, policymakers, administrators, and organizations representing parents, consumers, advocates, professional societies, and practitioners. The Center's annual conference is the principal national forum for exploring research and evaluation findings related to the implementation of systems of care.</p> <p>http://rtckids.fmhi.usf.edu/rtcpubs/study04/default.cfm</p>
<p>Resources for Families-Schools</p>	<p>The Families-Schools Web site is stocked with a constantly growing library of resources for parents supporting their child's learning, and for schools' efforts to work with families. Education materials, tip sheets, activities, and more are available in an easy-to-search database. http://www.families-schools.org/</p>
<p>SAMHSA'S National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices (NREPP)</p>	<p>NREPP is a searchable online registry of more than 220 interventions that connects members of the public to intervention developers to learn how to put intervention approaches into practice in communities. NREPP rates the quality of research supporting outcomes along with the quality and availability of training and implementation materials. NREPP ratings are not endorsements or reflections of effectiveness, and any questions about an intervention should be directed to its developer. http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov/</p>
<p>Search Institute</p>	<p>The non-profit Search Institute uses its knowledge and resources to help motivate and equip caring adults to create schools, communities, and families where young people thrive. The Institute has</p>

	published over 150 books and worked with schools and youth-serving organizations in more than 60 countries to help solve challenges in the lives of young people. The Institute's 40 Developmental Assets® are the most widely recognized and cited approach to positive youth development in North America, and serves as the foundation of the organization's work. http://www.search-institute.org/assets/
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) , Prevention of Substance Abuse and Mental Illnesses	Established in 1992 by Congress, SAMHSA focuses on eight strategic initiatives to reduce the impact of substance abuse and mental illness. SAMHSA administers a combination of competitive, formula, and block-grant programs and data-collection activities. SAMHSA has demonstrated that prevention works, treatment is effective, and people recover from mental and substance-use disorders. http://www.samhsa.gov/prevention/
The Prevention Research Center for the Promotion of Human Development (PRC) , Pennsylvania State University	PRC research examines how communities can work together with families, schools, and community groups, and industry to promote healthy lifestyles for children, youth, and families. PRC faculty conduct a diverse range of projects, including studies of risk and protective factors, making the Center the focus of research, technical assistance, and program development in prevention science in Pennsylvania. http://www.prevention.psu.edu/
What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) , Institute of Education Science (IES), United States Department of Education	To help educators make informed choices, WWC has reviewed thousands of studies on hundreds of education programs, products, practices, and policies and provides transparent reviews of research that critically assesses its underlying evidence. Its "Find What Works" tool makes it all easily accessible. http://ies.ed.gov/ncee/wwc/findwhatworks.aspx
Youth Violence Project , Curry School of Education, University of Virginia	In the quest for effective methods for youth violence prevention and school safety, the project promotes systematic, sustained attention on them by reliance on evidence-based practices. Its Web site devotes major sections to current research, violence in schools, bullying, threat assessment, prevention, and juvenile violence. http://youthviolence.edschool.virginia.edu

Select Student assistance programming resources

Resources	Description
California SAP Resource Center	<p>The California SAP Resource Center's Web site provides resources for school officials using SAPs to support student achievement by reducing behavioral, disciplinary, and substance-use problems. The site provides evaluations of programs that fit a general SAP-type model and having empirical, if not rigorous, evidence on the outcomes that were achieved.</p> <p>http://casapresources.org/home.php</p>
Connecticut Governor's Prevention Partnership – Student Assistance Program	<p>The Partnership offers training, technical assistance and online resources for school staff that would like to set up a SAP to interrupt problem behaviors and affect positive change through activities that strengthen the individual and his or her environment. Training services offered include basic SAP team training, individual team member training, advanced student assistance training, and special topics.</p> <p>http://www.preventionworksct.org/studassistprog.html</p>
Indiana University – School of Education - Student Assistance Program	<p>Co-sponsored by Batchelor Middle School and Indiana University Center for Human, this program features individual, group, and family interventions and provides confidential, professional services at Batchelor Middle School and at the Center for Human Growth. Any Batchelor Middle School student referred by a school counselor in conjunction with parental consent can participate in the program.</p> <p>http://education.indiana.edu/Default.aspx?tabid=4256</p>
Masonic Model Student Assistance Program	<p>The National Masonic Foundation for Children established in 1986, is a nonprofit 501(c)(3) charitable organization that seeks to promote programs in schools, particularly the Masonic Model Student Assistance Program, to identify the barriers preventing students from achieving academic success and provide intervention to help the youth of this country lead productive, useful, and healthy lives. More than 36,000 educators have attended Masonic Model training which has resulted in more than half a million school children being successfully referred to and helped by this program.</p> <p>http://www.masonicmodel.org/our-programs/masonic-model.html</p>

National Association for Children of Alcoholics	<p>NACoA is the national nonprofit 501 (c) 3 membership and affiliate organization working on behalf of children of alcohol and drug dependent parents. NACoA works to raise public awareness, provides leadership in public policy at the national, state, and local levels, and advocates for effective education and accessible prevention services. NACoA creates videos, booklets, posters and other educational materials and maintains a toll-free help line.</p> <p>http://www.nacoa.org/studenta.htm</p>
Pennsylvania Student Assistance Program, Pennsylvania Department of Education	<p>The Pennsylvania Network for Student Assistance Services uses collaborative prevention, intervention, and post-intervention services to remove barriers to learning and enhance student academic achievement collaborative prevention, intervention, and post-intervention services. The SAP helps schools identify students who are experiencing behavior and or academic difficulties, and offers them and their families support. http://www.sap.state.pa.us/</p>
St. Clair County (Michigan) Homeless Student Assistance Program	<p>The Homeless Student Assistance Program networks with schools and agencies to ensure educational continuity and eliminate barriers to success for homeless or shelter-program youth. The staff works with districts to write policies that comply with current legislation, offers in-service opportunities to districts about the school's responsibilities and roles regarding homeless students, provides tutors to meet with students in varying locations, coordinates recordkeeping activities, arranges transportation, schedules medical assistance, and trains shelter staff on how to work with schools.</p> <p>http://www.sccresa.org/countyeducation/districts/homelessstudentassistanceprogram/</p>
Students Taking a Right Stand (STARS) Nashville Student Assistance Program, National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP)	<p>STARS – SAP is highly rated by SAMHSA's NREPP; based on an employee assistance model, it provides comprehensive school based prevention for students in kindergarten through 12th grade. Program service components include health promotion for all students; attend to students who are at special risk for substance abuse, teen pregnancy, violence/bullying, academic failure, school suspension or dropping out; and early problem identification, referral and intervention for students exhibiting problem behaviors.</p> <p>http://starsnashville.org/programs/student-assistance-program-sap/</p>

<p>Student Assistance Prevention-Intervention Services Program (SAPISP), Office of the Superintendent of Public Instruction, State of Washington</p>	<p>SAPISP services foster safe school environments, promote healthy childhood development and prevent alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse. SAPISP provides early alcohol and other drug prevention and intervention services to students and their families, assists in referrals to treatment providers, and strengthens the transition back to school for students who have had problems of alcohol and other drug abuse.</p> <p>http://www.k12.wa.us/PreventionIntervention/default.aspx</p>
<p>Student Assistance Programs, California Department of Education (CDE)</p>	<p>The CDE provides information for implementing new Student Assistance Programs (SAPs) along with resources for strengthening existing SAPs, the common goals being to reduce behavioral and disciplinary violations and substance use habits while improving school attendance and academic performance through the referral and use of assistance services. Online information includes sections on why SAPs are needed, information proving their effectiveness, guidelines for starting a SAP, the cost to operate a SAP, and SAP resources and references.</p> <p>http://www.cde.ca.gov/ls/he/at/sap.asp</p>
<p>Student Assistance Services, National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices (NREPP)</p>	<p>Student Assistance Services developed the Residential Student Assistance Program (RSAP) in 1987 and "Project SUCCESS" (Schools Using Coordinated Community Efforts to Strengthen Students) in 1995. Both programs are recognized by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) Center For Substance Abuse Prevention as effective evidence-based programs designed to prevent and reduce substance abuse among students 12 – 18 years of age. RSAP and Project SUCCESS are highly rated by SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence-Based Programs and Practices. The programs are being replicated in 38 states.</p> <p>Student Assistance Services provide certified training and consultation in the "Olweus™ Bullying Prevention Program".</p> <p>http://sascorp.org/</p>