Oak Harbor School District, Island County
Washington State Incentive Grant
1st Year Community-Level Evaluation 1999-2000

Department of Social and Health Services

Research and Data Analysis Division and the University of Washington, Washington Institute for Mental Illness Research and Training, Western Branch

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Executive Summary

Oak Harbor School District is one of eighteen Washington State Incentive Grant (SIG) community grantees. Eighty-five percent of SIG funds are allocated to communities to prevent the use, misuse, and abuse of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and other drugs by Washington State youth.

This document is a baseline community-level evaluation report, examining the history of the Oak Harbor community's partnership and substance abuse prevention efforts within the last decade and the community's initial challenges and successes in providing SIG-funded prevention services for youth. Reports are provided as feedback on Oak Harbor School District's SIG-related efforts to date and as a partial record of those efforts for state and federal funding agencies.

Once a rural community, Oak Harbor is experiencing rapid growth and commercial development. SIG prevention services target youth and families throughout the city, which is located on Whidbey Island in Island County. The Oak Harbor SIG project is administered by the Oak Harbor School District in collaboration with Community Network, Partnership with Youth, and Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Island County. Unique to the Oak Harbor SIG site is the presence of the Whidbey Island Naval Air Station. The presence of the Navy not only provides a large economic base and employment source, but in addition, 60% of Oak Harbor School District students come from families connected to the Naval Base.

Community norms are somewhat permissive toward drug and alcohol use, misuse, and abuse. Use of tobacco, alcohol, and drugs is viewed by youth as an easy way to kill time. Until SIG, there were no organized activities available for young people after school.

Prevention History and Resources

Prevention activities are not new to the community of Oak Harbor. Prior to SIG, collaboration efforts, such as Community Mobilization and the Island County Stanwood Community Public Health and Safety Network, provided community members and prevention providers an avenue in which to increase coordination and communication with each other. The school district's involvement in collaboration efforts has been limited. Partnerships between service providers, the schools, and the community are now improving.

These collaborative efforts also provided the community a setting for collaborative planning with prevention partners. The Oak Harbor community had already begun using data for planning, as well as for the evaluation of program outcomes before SIG funding was received. The community's desire for more evaluation data was an integral factor in the application of SIG funding.

The program selection process involved assessment of community need and service gaps. Programs are provided primarily in the Oak Harbor community.

Challenges

Challenges reportedly experienced by local SIG staff while attempting to implement the SIG project included difficulty recruiting qualified staff under school district salary regulations and policies, underestimating the amount of administration time required for the project, and confusion regarding the Everest Database program.

Oak Harbor School District, Island County
Baseline Community-Level Evaluation

Introduction

Oak Harbor School District is one of eighteen Washington State Incentive Grant community grantees. Eighty-five percent of State Incentive Grant (SIG) funds are allocated to communities to prevent the use, misuse, and abuse of alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and other drugs by Washington State youth. The grant consists of a three year, $8.9 million award from the federal Center for Substance Abuse Prevention to Washington State through a cooperative agreement with Governor Gary Locke's office. State agencies participating in SIG have goals of coordinating resources and reducing duplication of effort. Communities will reduce key risk factors and promote protective factors in their efforts to reduce youth substance use, misuse, and abuse. Specific goals and objectives for state agencies and communities are stated in the *Washington State Incentive Grant Substance Abuse Plan,* pages 4 and 5, published in March 1999, by the Governor's Substance Abuse Prevention Advisory Committee. Appendix A contains a detailed list of those objectives. Here is a summary:

Goals:

1. Prevent alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, and other drug use, misuse, and abuse by the state's youth.
2. Make the community-level system more effective.

Objectives:

1. Establish local prevention partnerships.
2. Use a risk and protective factor framework for the community prevention plan.
3. Participate in joint community risk and protective factor and resource assessment.
4. Select and implement effective prevention actions.
5. Use common reporting tools.

The SIG evaluation, of which this report is a part, is a research evaluation intended to provide feedback to state agencies and communities on their progress toward the goals and objectives stated in the *Washington State Incentive Grant Substance Abuse Plan.* Interim reports are provided as an integral part of that feedback. Research methods are described in Appendix B. This document examines the prevention history of the area, relevant social indicators, and SIG-funded program implementation. Future reports will include discussions of program effectiveness, community partnerships, and plans for continued funding beyond SIG.

Oak Harbor Community's Application for SIG Funds

The history of the Oak Harbor Community State Incentive Grant (SIG) application process is an example of island-wide partnering and communication between agencies, school districts, and communities. During the preliminary community meetings about applying for SIG, islanders decided that increasing island-wide partnerships was a priority, as was island buy-in regarding school participation in the Washington State Survey of Adolescent Health Behavior. These preliminary meetings included members from the organizations listed below, among others:

- Island County/Stanwood Community Public Health and Safety Network
- Coupeville School District
- Oak Harbor School District
- South Whidbey School District
- Partnership With Youth
- Big Brothers/Big Sisters of Island County

It was decided during these preliminary meetings that Oak Harbor School District would be the focus of the island's SIG application efforts. Of the three schools districts, Oak Harbor School District was the only district without a student assistance program. The creation of a student assistance program would provide youth with an after-school program in which they would have a safe and positive environment to "hang-out." To support Oak Harbor School District's desire to create a student assistance program and expand resources and intervention strategies within the its service area, the Island County /Stanwood Community Public Health and Safety Network and the two other Whidbey School Districts agreed that the SIG proposal should target the Oak Harbor School District.

By making the Oak Harbor School District the primary prevention service providers, the district's participation in the Washington State Survey of Adolescent Health Behavior (WSSAHB) was insured. Although South Whidbey and Coupeville School Districts had regularly participated in the WSSAHB, the Oak Harbor School District had not since 1994. Ensuring the future participation of the District would reduce this information gap. Many community members believed that, with the survey participation of all three school districts, Whidbey Island would be able to better compete for future funding.

Description of Oak Harbor

Oak Harbor School District boundaries delineate the geographic area served by the local SIG project. The district serves primarily the north and central areas of Whidbey Island. It is bounded by Deception Pass to the north and the Coupeville School District to the south. The Oak Harbor School District includes both the city of Oak Harbor and the Whidbey Island Naval Air Station.

Oak Harbor is Whidbey Island's largest incorporated community. The city is growing, and there are concerns by some residents that the city is changing in character, as well. National brand-name stores now populate what was once a "mom-and-pop" shopping area in the Oak Harbor downtown district. The biggest example of commercialization is the recent opening of a Wal-Mart in downtown Oak Harbor, even though the opening was strongly opposed by residents.

Social Demographic Characteristics[1]

Age

Fifteen percent of Central and North Whidbey Island's 7,236 people are in the age group of 10 through 19. North Whidbey Island School District and Oak Harbor School District together encompass 77% of Whidbey Island residents.

Oak Harbor also has a significant senior population living within district boundaries. Respondents stated that the combination of transient young families associated with the Naval Air Station, low to moderate-income status, and a significant senior population create an environment of low community support for youth. As a result, community members and local agencies, such as the Island County Community Health Advisory Board (CHAB) have identified youth as one of the six most important issues facing Whidbey Island.

Ethnic Diversity

The ethnic diversity of Oak Harbor is relatively high given the small population. The target population for the Oak Harbor Student Assistance Program will be primarily at-risk youth in grades 6 through 8, attending either Oak Harbor or North Whidbey Middle Schools and referred by teachers or counselors. The ethnic distribution among all middle school students in Oak Harbor and North Whidbey students, as of April 1999, is displayed in the following table:

Ethnicity	Number of Students	Percentage
Black	80	6%
Asian	200	14%
American Indian	9	1%
Hispanic	43	3%
Caucasian	1,072	76%

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[1] Information for this section was obtained from the Island County/Stanwood Community Network's *Proposal to Solicitation No. 991346, For Grants to Communities to provide services for the prevention of Alcohol, Tobacco, Marijuana and other Drug Use, Misuse and Abuse.* June 1999.

Educational Achievement Levels

Academic failure was identified in the 1994 Washington State Survey of Adolescent Behaviors as a risk factor in the Oak Harbor School District. The percentage of students failing one or more subjects during the third quarter of 1999 at the two middle schools in the Oak Harbor School District ranged from 21% to 46%:

**Number and Percentages of Students with Failing Grades,
by Grade Level, Oak Harbor School District**

Grade Level	Oak Harbor Middle School		North Whidbey Middle School	
	Number	*Percentage*	*Number*	*Percentage*
6th	57	23%	68	30%
7th	47	21%	64	30%
8th	60	26%	102	46%

Naval Air Station Impact

The presence of the Whidbey Island Naval Air Station has a large impact on the Oak Harbor community. Sixty percent of Oak Harbor School District students come from families connected to the air station. Oak Harbor School District draws a large portion of its students from the Whidbey Island Navy Air Station. A majority of Navy families have lived in and experienced areas other than Oak Harbor. They move frequently. The large number of people who move in and out of the district during a year's time leaves Oak Harbor with a greater challenge than most towns in creating and maintaining a sense of community.

Often, a parent is deployed for a period of time, sometimes as long as six months. As a result, many children attending Oak Harbor schools reside in temporarily single-parent homes.

Respondents stated that the general community is frustrated with the Navy. They had expectations that the Navy would support the schools and community more so than it has.

Whidbey Island Naval Air Station is Oak Harbor's largest single employer. Other major employers in the area include the school districts, the hospital, private businesses, and businesses involved in the tourist trade.

Schools

Oak Harbor School District's SIG project provides substance abuse prevention programs in two middle schools, North Whidbey and Oak Harbor. The two middle schools are temporarily next to each other as the Oak Harbor Middle School building is undergoing renovation.

Voters have not approved an Oak Harbor School District levy in twenty years. This indicates a low level of community support for the schools. Oak Harbor School District is one of the only school districts in the state that does not have a free and reduced fee lunch program. Such a program provides lower-priced or free lunches to students from low-income families.

Respondents noted a general level of apathy towards school among some members of the community, attributing it to the large transient population that is associated with the Navy base.

Affordable Housing

Respondents stated that there is little adequate housing for low-income families in Oak Harbor. Respondents estimate that 40 to 60% of Oak Harbor homes qualify as low income. Average salaries are 20% lower than the state average. Many low-income families live in subsidized housing, apartments, or trailers.[2]

Site Description

Collaboration History

Two major efforts of community partnering occurred on Whidbey Island before SIG. Those efforts were Community Mobilization and the Island County/ Stanwood Community Public Health and Safety Network.

Community Mobilization was created about ten years ago to provide an avenue for community building and partnering. Community Mobilization includes people from all of Whidbey Island, as well as neighboring Camano Island. They provide community members with an opportunity to meet, to communicate concerns, share ideas, and improve collaboration.

Island County/Stanwood Community Public Health and Safety Network also functions as a partnering opportunity in Oak Harbor. The network includes volunteer citizens and representatives of local governments, schools, agencies, and other service providers. Their strategies have emphasized prevention, early intervention, local decision-making, collaboration among agencies, and measurement of results. The network created a strategic plan to address problem behaviors, such as child abuse and neglect, teen substance abuse, teen pregnancy and teenage male parentage, and domestic violence.

Respondents stated that, despite the efforts of these two partnerships, Oak Harbor School District did not consistently participate in the collaboration that existed before SIG. Specifically, Oak Harbor School District in the past has not been as

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[2] Information for this section was obtained from the Island County/Stanwood Community Network's *Proposal to Solicitation No. 991346, For Grants to Communities to provide services for the prevention of Alcohol, Tobacco, Marijuana and other Drug Use, Misuse and Abuse.* June 1999.

open to collaboration or partnering attempts by the other schools districts and community members or agencies.

Current partners with Oak Harbor School District in the SIG project are Island County/Stanwood Public Health and Safety Network, Island County Health Department, Partnership with Youth, Big Brothers and Big Sisters of Island County, and local law enforcement.

Optimism

People in the Oak Harbor area are generally optimistic about the future of their community, as well their own futures. People moving to the Oak Harbor area have a true desire to live there. As one respondent stated, "If people live in Oak Harbor, it's because they choose to be in Oak Harbor." People of the community, for the most part, show a strong interest in keeping their community a healthy and safe environment.

However, some community members are frustrated. One community group is concerned with the recent development and commercialization of the downtown area. Many people in the community moved to Oak Harbor seeking a small town atmosphere. These people feel that further community development will only contribute to the growing trend toward suburbia. Other concerns about the development of Oak Harbor are the initiation of more construction, an increasing population, and damage to small businesses.

Community Perceptions about Substance Abuse

Oak Harbor has few things to do and places to go for either adults or young people. Use of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs is viewed by some as an easy way to "kill time." Respondents and other human service providers perceive community norms to be permissive toward alcohol and other drug use, misuse, and abuse.

SIG encourages communities to use a risk and protective factor framework. David Hawkins, Richard Catalano, and others at the University of Washington developed a research framework about community, school, family, peer, and individual influences that either increase the likelihood that a child will someday abuse substances or that help lessen the impact of those risks. Influences that increase the likelihood of substance abuse are known as risk factors; those that lessen the impact of risk factors are known as protective factors.

During Island County/Stanwood Community Network's community assessment of risk and protective factors, two risk factors were identified as priorities: *friends who use* and *favorable attitudes toward drug use*. In a 1998 study of youth needs in Central and North Whidbey Island, conducted by the City of Oak Harbor and Partnership With Youth, 26% of middle school students surveyed indicated that they worry about the number of youth around them abusing substances. Twenty percent of middle school students surveyed indicated that they worry about adults around them abusing drugs and alcohol. Middle school

counselors and nurses report that parental attitudes appear to be permissive toward alcohol use.

Resource Assessment

Because of the transient nature of much of the Oak Harbor community, identification with the neighborhood and community is rather low. The city of Oak Harbor does not have a city center to facilitate a sense of identity. Excluding the Naval Air Station, there is no major industrial or corporate presence to help facilitate a sense of place. The community generally serves as the retail hub for the Navy Base and lacks many of the services usually associated with a city of its size. For example, the city of Oak Harbor does not have youth programs such as the Boys and Girls Club and does not have a place for youth to "hang out," such as a shopping mall. The common perception is that there is nothing to do in Oak Harbor.

Social service agency and school staff report a lack of services and facilities for youth. Oak Harbor does not have many of the services that can usually be found in a community the size of Oak Harbor. For example, Oak Harbor does not have mental health services. It lacks public recreation facilities, such as gyms or other indoor recreation options. At the time of this evaluation, a community assets and resource inventory was to be conducted by the Student Assistance Program staff. The results of this inventory were not available but will be reported during the next evaluation period.

Risk and Protective Factors

Orcas Island prevention planners selected prevention programs to address the risk factors they found highest in their community and the protective factors they found lacking. David Hawkins, Richard Catalano, and others at the University of Washington developed a research framework about community, school, family, peer, and individual influences that either increase the likelihood that a child will someday abuse substances or that help lessen the impact of those risks. Influences that increase the likelihood of substance abuse are known as risk factors; those that lessen the impact of risk factors are known as protective factors.

Below is a table of risk factors on which Oak Harbor School District is focusing and for which archival data are available.[3] Numbers in the table below are summary measures, which compare county data to the state average. Ninety-five percent of county rates will have a summary measure between –2.00 and 2.00 around the state average, which, for these purposes, is zero. These summary measures are based on archival data. Archival data are collected for purposes other than measuring risk factors for substance abuse, but are strongly correlated

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[3] Becker, Linda et al. 1999. 1999 *County Profile on Risk and Protection for Substance Abuse Prevention Planning in Island County.* Olympia, WA: Department of Social and Health Services, Research and Data Analysis.

with direct measures of risk factors for substance abuse, such as those found in the Washington State Survey of Adolescent Health Behavior (WSSAHB).

The far right column of the table below contains summary measures for counties like Island County. These are counties similar to Island County in their population ages 10-24, percentage of deaths related to alcohol and other drugs, and geography. In the table below, Island County summary measures are compared to those of Clallam, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, San Juan, Lewis, Mason, Pacific, Skagit, and Wahkiakum Counties.

**Standardized Summary Measures for Risk Factors
In Island County and Counties like Island[4]**

Risk Factor	Island County	Counties like Island
Early initiation of problem behavior	-0.12	0.75
Low school achievement	-0.37	0.58
Lack of commitment to school	-0.21	0.03

All three risk factors on which Oak Harbor School District is focusing and for which county level data are available are less of a problem in Island County as a whole than in the state on average and in similar counties. Island County's greatest summary measure, *Transitions and mobility,* is only minimally higher than the state on average. Prevention planners felt that local data showed that other problems were of greater urgency for the Oak Harbor and North Whidbey School Districts.

Because Island County is so geographically, economically, and demographically diverse, summary measures for the county as a whole and in comparison to similar counties were not found useful by Oak Harbor School District prevention planners. This is evidence of the need for more data at sub-county levels.

Below is a list of risk and protective factors that Oak Harbor School District SIG project planners found to be of greatest priority.

Risk Factors

- Early initiation of problem behavior
- Early and persistent anti-social behavior
- Favorable attitudes toward drug use
- Academic failure
- Lack of commitment to school

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[4] Modified from Becker, Linda et al. 1999. *1999 County Profile on Risk and Protection for Substance Abuse Prevention Planning in Island County.* Olympia, WA: Department of Social and Health Services, Research and Data Analysis.

Protective Factors

- Opportunities for pro-social involvement
- Rewards for pro-social involvement
- Healthy beliefs and clear standards
- Social skills

Prevention Program Status

Oak Harbor School District's SIG project established a Student Assistance Program. This program is a nationally recognized prevention program, rigor level 3, that provides a systematic way to identify, assess, refer, and support students at risk for substance abuse in the school. Prevention services comprising the program include after-school tutoring, a community mentoring program, and support groups.

The Student Assistance Program is progressing toward meeting its first year objectives and goals. Big Brothers/Big Sisters has received referrals and has set up mentoring matches. Partnership with Youth has expanded their after-school program from one day a week to four days a week. The two middle schools involved in the Oak Harbor Community Project have begun individual group sessions and an after-school program. The after-school program is divided into two sessions and provides students with a safe and healthy environment.

Outcomes and Plans for Accomplishing Outcomes

Anticipated immediate outcomes for Oak Harbor Schools District's SIG project include the following:

Outcome 1: At-risk students, grades 6-8, in the Oak Harbor School District will report an increase in understanding of the harmful effects of tobacco, marijuana, alcohol, and other drugs.

Outcome 2: Youth will increase their commitment to school.

Outcome 3: At-risk students will improve their ability to negotiate, say no, and deal with negative peer pressure.

The Oak Harbor Student Assistance Program was implemented in order to achieve these outcomes. The program focuses on middle school students and has addressed the issues of substance abuse problems and other high-risk behaviors through these components:

- Education of school staff
- Identification and referral
- Support groups
- Prevention activities

- Evaluation
- Community networking
- Program leadership and administration

General Community Organization/Partnering

Prior to the State Incentive Grant, representatives from various agencies often came together to discuss issues relating to substance abuse prevention. These groups were frequently divided and politically charged. However, partnerships between various service providers, schools, and the community do exist, and they are working toward strengthening their partnerships.

The Island County/Stanwood Community Public Health and Safety Network, along with several other partners, is currently working toward strengthening the community coalition. The goal of this coalition is to pursue prevention programs for youth across not only Oak Harbor, but across Island County as well. Organizations that already are or will be involved in this collaboration piece include the following:

- Island County Health Department
- Community Mobilization
- Coupeville School District
- Oak Harbor School District
- Readiness to Learn
- Partnership with Youth
- Central Whidbey Youth Coalition
- WSU Cooperative Extension

- Big Brothers/Big Sisters
- Stanwood/Camano Family Resource Center
- Island County Sheriff's Department
- City of Oak Harbor Police Department
- Island Mental Health
- The Recovery Center

A criticism of the coalition, voiced by respondents, is that not all community members are represented in the coalition. Those most conspicuously missing from meetings are homeless and the unemployed.

Challenges/Barriers

In carrying out the State Incentive Grant, several unforeseen barriers and challenges have occurred. These include the following:

- *Fiscal Management by the Oak Harbor School District.* It has been a difficult process for the partners in the SIG project to recruit qualified people under school district regulations and policies.

- *Unfamiliarity with the evaluation process.* Respondents have expressed some concern about a lack of knowledge of evaluation requirements and details. Efforts have been made by the evaluation team to alleviate these concerns and confusion.

- *Everest Database Program.* Respondents expressed a sense of confusion and frustration with the Everest database. They were unclear as to requirements and process. Doubts were expressed regarding database accuracy and applicability.

Conclusion

As SIG applicants and grantees, the community of Oak Harbor was required to enter a process that involved intense planning, coordination, community assessment, hard work, and collaboration. Communities underwent a thorough assessment of local resources, examining the availability of programs and services for both youths and families in the fields of prevention. In conducting a resource assessment, the community of Oak Harbor successfully identified gaps in prevention services, leading to the prioritization of need within the community. It also identified risk and protective factors that were specific to the island and, in turn, helped choose the appropriate programs for those in need.

SIG has influenced the manner in which alcohol and other substance abuse prevention services are carried out in the Oak Harbor community. Through partnerships with several local agencies, the district is currently serving students and their families, as well as increasing collaboration between the local schools and service agencies. SIG allowed participating schools to place a greater emphasis on staff education, prevention activities, community networking, and the creation of support groups and activities.

SIG provided funds for the creation of a Student Assistance Program in the Oak Harbor School District. Through the Student Assistance Program, Oak Harbor youths now have an after-school program, providing students with a safe and healthy environment.

Along with providing students families with needed services and assistance, SIG helped strengthen partnerships and collaboration efforts in the Oak Harbor and, in a broader scope, the Whidbey Island area.

In conclusion, while strong partnership efforts existed before SIG, the introduction of the SIG prevention model helped focus efforts toward science-based substance-abuse prevention services and increased access and information sharing between the Oak Harbor School District and island social service agencies and organizations.

What is next?

In addition to carrying out substance abuse prevention services, there are other expectations associated with SIG. These involve changes in the system by which local prevention services are planned, delivered, and evaluated. The SIG community-level evaluation has four components:

- **Process evaluation**: examines organizational capacity and prevention planning processes.
- **Program implementation fidelity**: a record of what was actually done in presenting a prevention program and how it compares to what was planned.
- **Program effectiveness**: how effective the program was, measured by participant pre-tests and post-tests and examined in light of program implementation fidelity.
- **Long-term community-wide changes in substance abuse prevalence and risk and protective factors**: measured by the Washington State Survey of Adolescent Health Behavior (WSSAHB), prevalence and risk/protective factor changes are assumed to result from prevention system changes in community organization and planning and from the provision of prevention program services to targeted populations.

For Oak Harbor School District's SIG project, seven items will be important during Year 2:

1. Continued implementation of prevention programs.
2. Continued participation in program effectiveness monitoring (Everest database and other agreed upon measurement methods when the Everest database is inappropriate for use with a particular program).
3. Participation in program implementation fidelity measures.
4. Continued development of a system for community-wide prevention planning, delivery, and evaluation.
5. Continued participation in process evaluation, consisting of interviews and document review.
6. Ensuring district schools' participation in the autumn 2000 administration of the Washington State Adolescent Health Behavior Survey (WSSAHB).
7. Developing specific plans to track progress toward and achieve anticipated immediate changes from the Community-Based Prevention Action Plan Implementation Matrix (column 7) and the community-level goals from the *Washington State Incentive Grant Substance Abuse Plan* (see Appendix A).

Appendix A:
Community-Level Goals and Objectives[5]

Goal:

Communities selected to receive State Incentive Grant funds will work to prevent alcohol, tobacco, marijuana and other drug use, misuse and abuse by the state's youth in these communities. They will develop and implement prevention plans which will foster changes in the prevention system at the community level to make the system more effective.

Objectives:

1. To *establish partnerships* which include existing agencies and organizations and families, youth, school and workplaces to collaborate at the local level to prevent alcohol tobacco, marijuana and other drug use, misuse and abuse by youth.

2. To *use a risk and protective factor framework* to develop a community prevention action plan which reduces factors which put youth at risk for alcohol, tobacco, marijuana and other drug abuse and increase factors which protect or buffer youth from these risks.

3. To *participate in joint community risk and protective factor and resource assessment* by collecting, assessing and prioritizing community-level information for: a) youth alcohol, tobacco, marijuana and other drug use, misuse and abuse; b) risk and protective factor indicators and c) existing resources and service gaps.

4. To *select and implement effective prevention actions* that address priority risk and protective factors in the community by filling identified gaps in resources.

5. To *use common reporting tools* which provide information on what works and what does not work to reduce youth alcohol, tobacco, marijuana and other drug use, misuse and abuse.

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[5] Governor's Substance Abuse Prevention Advisory Committee. 1999. *Washington State Incentive Grant Substance Abuse Prevention Plan*. Olympia, WA: Department of Social and Health Services, Division of Alcohol and Substance Abuse, State Incentive Grant Project.

Appendix B:
Methods

Information Sources

Interviews

Audiotaped interviews were conducted with lead agency contacts, as well as prevention service providers and community members. Interviewees were informed at the beginning of each interview that the audiotapes were confidential, were for the purpose of ensuring accuracy, and would be erased as soon as notes were taken from them. Questions were based on an interview guide, as well as related topics that arose during the interviews. Interview guides were modified after initial site visits were completed based on the evaluation team's ability to obtain the desired information from the questions asked.

Document review

a. Proposal: The Oak Harbor School District's proposal requesting funds from the Washington State Incentive Grant was used as a primary source for contacts, needs, resources, prioritized risk and protective factors, target populations, and geography, and local plans to meet substance abuse prevention needs.

b. Matrices: Prevention programs intended to address desired outcomes and associated risk and protective factors are described in detail in matrices created by the Oak Harbor School District, as lead agency, and the State Incentive Grant administrative staff. These matrices were used to guide inquiry into the process of achieving anticipated local outcomes.

c. Becker, L et al. 1999. *County Profile on Risk and Protection for Substance Abuse Prevention Planning, Island County.* Olympia, WA: Department of Social and Health Services, Research and Data Analysis.

d. Local documents reviewed include the following:

    i.   The Community Health Monitoring Checklist.
    ii. Community Public Health and Safety Networks Primer.
    iii. Supporting Youth in Island County – Technical Planning & Evaluation Document. Island County/Stanwood Community Public Health & Safety Network and partners.
    iv. Two-Year Plan: Summary – Island County/Stanwood Community Network. 1999.
    v.   Whidbey Islander. The Greater Oak Harbor Chamber of Commerce. 1999.
    vi. Whidbey Island, Northwest Washington State. MacGregor's.
    vii. 1999-2000 Whidbey Island Newcomers' & Visitors' Guide.

    viii. Year 2000-2004 Community Health Process Plan A: Full Funding. Island County Community Health Advisory Board.

    ix.   Youth & Family Summit Progress Report (One year Later). Island County Youth & Family. June 1999.

Observations

Meetings observed included Island County Community Health Advisory Board, Community Coalition Planning Meeting, Grant Writers Meeting, and Island County/Stanwood Community Public Health & Safety Network.

Surveys

Sub-recipient Checklist: COSMOS Corporation designed the Sub-recipient Checklist under contract with the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention to conduct a cross-site evaluation. It is intended to document prevention activities semi-annually. Questions are asked about the sub-recipient's most important prevention program or actions, although more than one form can be completed if the sub-recipient wishes to describe other programs. The "most important" prevention program is defined as that which is most likely to produce measurable outcomes. Oak Harbor School District SIG project staff completed the survey as requested.

Accessing Informants

a.   Key Informants: Initial informants were identified through the Island County/Stanwood Community Network's SIG proposal.

b.   Snowball Sampling Strategy: Key informants were asked for names of community members who could provide insight into Island County's history of challenges, successes, and substance abuse prevention services.

Analysis

This report is the first step in a case study. Data analysis occurs throughout the research process in a case study, from the process of formulating the topic through the write-up. During and after interviews, information gathered is weighed in light of previous information. Questions and topics are modified as indicated by the new information. Data verification occurs through cross checking information from informants with that from other informants, documents, observation and the researcher's journal entries.

Data analysis in a case study occurs by creating categories of information, broad at first, then becoming more specific. As familiarity with the study topic occurs, categories are related to one another and to theory. The Center for Substance Abuse Prevention and COSMOS Corporation created broad data categories; around which interview questions and inquiry topics were framed. Data were gathered in the process of this evaluation with the intent of answering specific questions about system change in planning, providing and evaluating prevention services for youth in local communities.