Community Readiness Assessment: Is It An Issue?

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Problem / Question
Is Sedalia ready to address substance abuse in adolescents?

Objectives
• To reduce substance use in adolescents
• To encourage healthy behaviors in adolescents with the support of parents
• To gauge the communities readiness to address the issue of substance use

Project Overview
Assessment
• According to Missouri Student Survey in 2014, 30% of students said marijuana was easy to get and 12% said they used the drug.
• Parents and youth organizations reported that alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana were the three main substances abused by the adolescents. (Adolescent Health Coalition)

Project
• The coalition conducted a community readiness assessment to measure attitudes, knowledge, resources, and efforts of the community members and leaders to address substance use.
• Due to time constraints and the design of assessment, the coalition decided to concentrate on marijuana.
• The target population was adolescents (age 10-19), parents, and the Sedalia community.

Variables
• 6 Key Respondents: Law Enforcement, Medical Personnel, High School Staff, Religious Leader, Elected Official, and Community Volunteer
• 9 Stages of Readiness: No Awareness, Denial/Resistance, Vague Awareness, Preplanning, Preparation, Initiation Stabilization, Expansion, Community Ownership
• 5 Dimensions: Community Knowledge of Efforts, Leadership, Resources, Community Climate, Community Knowledge of Issue

Methods
The coalition used the Tri-Ethnic Center Community Readiness Handbook to conduct the study.
• Identify and clearly define issue
• Identify and clearly define and delineate your community
• Prepare your interview questions
• Choose key respondents
• Conduct and transcribe your interviews
• The interviews were led by two people from May to July 2016
• Score your interviews
• Calculate your average dimension scores

Results

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<tr>
<td>Community Climate</td>
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Average Dimension Scores of Key Respondents

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Conclusion
• The results show that the community is between a three and a four on the nine stages of readiness. This means that the community is at vague awareness or preplanning stage.
• Even though the community assessment was on marijuana specifically, the researchers found that all of the resources and efforts are towards substance abuse in general.
• A possible limitation is the key respondents were selected by the Adolescent Health Coalition, so there could be selection bias and they may not represent the entire community.

Next Steps
• Organize a health summit to promote understanding and advocacy for substance abuse prevention
• Adapt health class curriculum in schools
• Develop and post flyers, handouts, and billboards in the community
• Create a parent and adolescent peer group to address substance abuse

Works Cited
• Adolescent Health Coalition https://pettiscountyhealthcenter.com/adolescent-health/