

Prop 64 Public Health and Safety Grant Local Evaluation Plan

Grantee: Alameda County Probation Department

Authors:

Audrey Clubb, Probation Specialist, aclubb@acgov.org

Naseem Badiey, Probation Specialist, hbadiey@acgov.org

Giana Gallo, Probation Specialist, ggallo@acgov.org

Project Time Period: 10/1/2020-3/31/2024

Funding Source: Bureau of State and Community Corrections (BSCC) Prop 64 Public Health and Safety Grant

Project Background: Proposition 64 & Alameda County Health Impact Assessment

In January 2018, Proposition 64 (Prop 64) legislation took effect in Alameda County, making it legal for adults age 21 and older to possess, buy, and grow cannabis for non-medical use. The legalization of cannabis in California brought relief from criminalization in low-income communities of color that were disproportionately impacted by the War on Drugs. In response to concerns regarding the potential impacts of legalization on the health and development of California youth, the Alameda County Board of Supervisors conducted a health impact assessment exploring ways in which legalization affects health, youth and schools, and public safety in Alameda County.

The key findings of this evaluation identified that:

- (1) Youth use cannabis to cope with stress, anxiety, depression, and trauma.
- (2) Youth lack safe spaces to talk about cannabis, and they are unaware of prevention, education, and treatment programs available to them.
- (3) Youth find abstinence-only messaging ineffective.

In addition, the assessment identified persistent misconceptions among youth regarding potential health effects of cannabis use.

Grant and outcomes

In 2020, the County of Alameda applied for a grant from the Board of State and Community Corrections' Proposition 64 Public Health and Safety Grant Program, which provides tax revenue from the sale of cannabis to cities and counties to mitigate public health and safety issues arising from the sale of cannabis. The County of Alameda requested and received \$1,000,000 over 42 months to implement a multi-pronged intervention that combines juvenile prevention and intervention programming with awareness campaigns to reduce the use of cannabis among youth and young adults in Alameda County.

The Alameda County Probation Department (ACPD) is the lead public agency for this grant and will coordinate all grant activities to ensure successful implementation of the grant program. ACPD will subcontract with community-based service providers in North County (*Youth Alive!*) and South County (*Union City Child and Family Services*) to implement cannabis prevention and intervention programming for juveniles. ACPD will also contract with a social marketing firm, *The Social Changery*, to design and implement a cannabis awareness social media campaign and an academic institution (Stanford University) to train youth-serving agencies in cannabis education curricula.

The aim of the grant is threefold:

- (1) to increase juvenile cannabis and substance use prevention and intervention programs;
- (2) to raise awareness about the health and social impacts of adolescent cannabis use for youth, parents, caregivers, and schools;
- (3) to improve evaluation of programs and their effectiveness on reducing juvenile cannabis use.

Sub-contractors/providers

In pursuit of these goals, ACPD has contracted with *Youth ALIVE!*, *Union City Youth and Family Services (UCYFS)*, the *Social Changery*, and *Stanford University* to implement programs and training that will provide education, resources, and service referrals for youth at high risk of system engagement and/or substance use.

Program activities across the three sub-contractors include: (1) youth-targeted, prevention-focused education and awareness programming; (2) adult-targeted education and awareness programming; (3) youth-targeted, intervention-focused outreach and engagement; and (4) deployment of an education and awareness media campaign. The education and awareness programming will be based on the *Stanford Cannabis Awareness and Prevention Toolkit*.

The providers are diverse and offer distinct approaches, programming, and services:

- *Youth Alive!* is a Community Based Organization (CBO) that develops youth leaders and peer violence prevention educators by activating groups of students who want to make a difference in some of the County's most violent communities.
 - For this subcontract, they will provide cannabis awareness and education to youth through their *Teens on Target (TNT)* program and curriculum.
 - Additionally, they will provide one-on-one mentoring to each TNT youth leader, as well as mentoring and case management to a subset of high-risk youth involved in the *Teens on Target* program annually through their *Pathways* program.
- *Union City Youth and Family Services (UCYFS)* is a city agency dedicated to providing services that prevent and intervene in youth violence by addressing the underlying issues that contribute to violence in the community.
 - UCYFS will utilize the *Stanford Cannabis Awareness & Prevention Toolkit* for awareness and education sessions that will be designed and facilitated using an adult-youth approach which borrows from youth leadership development and peer-to-peer models.
 - They will also provide outreach and engagement for additional youth annually in South County including service referrals and intervention.
- *The Social Changery* is a local communications and marketing firm, which will design and implement a comprehensive, county-wide youth marijuana education initiative, *Cannabis Decoded*, to educate youth and young adults about the facts on cannabis use.

Stanford University will provide training to services providers in Alameda County on their **Cannabis/Marijuana Awareness & Prevention Toolkit**. The Toolkit includes theory-based and evidence-informed resources created by educators, parents, and researchers aimed at preventing middle and high school students' use of cannabis/marijuana. Executive Director, Dr. Bonnie Halpern-Felsher, is Professor of Pediatrics at Stanford University and is the Director of Research for the Division of Adolescent Medicine. Bonnie is a developmental psychologist whose research has focused on cognitive, psychosocial and environmental factors involved in adolescents' and young adults' health-related decision-making, perceptions of risk and vulnerability, health communication, and risk behavior. Her research has focused on understanding and reducing health risk behaviors such as tobacco use, alcohol and marijuana use, risky driving, and risky sexual behavior

Key components of their program activities and offerings are summarized in Table 1.

Table 1			
Provider	Program(s)	Program description and participant numbers	Duration
Youth ALIVE!	Teens on Target	Prevention-focused program targeting high-risk youth in North County. High-school aged youth are trained to deliver a six-session curriculum focusing on the root causes of violence, including the potential impacts of substance use. Participants then deliver this training to middle school youth. This grant funds training for 30 student trainers annually.	April 2021 - March 2024
	Pathways	Outreach and engagement for 10 of the 30 youth served annually in North County. Youth and their caregivers work with an intervention specialist who can provide coaching, mentoring, and service referrals.	April 2021 - March 2024
UCYFS	Stanford Cannabis Awareness and Prevention Toolkit	UCYFS will deliver seven (7) six-week cannabis education courses to youth living in Union City, Newark, and Fremont. Each course will include 10 youth. Contractor will use the Cannabis Awareness & Prevention Toolkit (Toolkit) as the primary curriculum for these education courses. The Toolkit was developed by researchers from Stanford School of Medicine and provides instruction on basic facts about cannabis, the health effects of using cannabis, the impact of THC on the brain, and refusal skills and social norms pertaining to cannabis use. Following participating in the six-week cannabis course, participants will be able to identify and discuss reasons for cannabis use, articulate the impact of cannabis use during and after adolescence, and discuss strategies for dealing with peer pressure to use cannabis.	April 2021 - March 2024
	Community forums	UCYFS will deliver 7 two-hour community forums that will target parents, caregivers, residents, and service providers to raise awareness about adolescent cannabis use and potential consequences. Forums will be conducted quarterly in Union City, Newark, and Fremont. Content from the Toolkit will be used for these forums to ensure messages to adults are consistent with those to youth. The forums will be planned and facilitated with local police departments, faith-based organizations, and schools	April 2021 - March 2024
	Targeted youth outreach	87 youth identified as needing cannabis use intervention services will be referred to UCYFS's internal and external network of providers that deliver services including individual counseling, case management, civic engagement, mentoring, diversion, life skills, crisis support, and parent/caregiver support. All services delivered will be culturally and linguistically relevant. Program staff will engage youth and young adults in planning and implementing outreach strategies	April 2021 - March 2024

		that connect high-need youth to support services in their community.	
Social Changery	Cannabis Decoded	Social media campaign to educate youth and adults about cannabis use and potential impacts to make informed decisions on use. Campaign includes advertisement and link through social media platforms to the Cannabis Decoded website as well as other local media and marketing (e.g., radio, television, billboards).	April 2021 - March 2024
Stanford University	Training on Stanford Cannabis Toolkit	Stanford University will train the sub-contractors for the Prop 64 grant, as well as public school educators and service providers in Alameda County on their cannabis toolkit. Jamie Yee (Health Care Services Agency) is serving as a liaison between ACPD, Stanford, the school district, and local service providers. Jamie has been working for the agency director on cannabis related issues and is helping with outreach to enroll educators and service providers in the Toolkit trainings. Stanford will hold 4 trainings with a max of 40 people each. These trainings are available to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Public school educators (may include social workers, health teachers, and other staff) 2) Service providers – any community organization operating in Alameda County can sign up. 3) The sub-contractors for this grant 	April 2021 - March 2024

Participation in each of the programs is voluntary. Youth will be recruited through a variety of methods, including scouting in low-income, high-crime areas in the community.

For Youth Alive! Teens on Target, there will be no eligibility requirements or risk assessments to identify at-risk youth. Teens on Target recruits from Castlemont and Fremont Schools. They do not use risk assessments to identify at-risk youth for the TNT program; participation will be open to youth who want to join the program. However, to be enrolled in case management, youth have to complete a risk assessment tool developed by the Oakland Department of Violence Prevention, and they have to meet 4 out of 5 risk factors.

UCYFS determines eligibility by accepting referrals of youth at risk of truancy or suspension from school from schools, law enforcement, non-profit organizations, and the probation department. The intake process allows them to determine the needs of the individual. The project is open to anyone willing to participate.

For *Teens on Target*, *Pathways*, and the *UCYFS Stanford Cannabis Awareness and Prevention Toolkit program*, the progress of participants will be tracked by recording start dates, attendance, dropouts, and successful program completions. For Youth Outreach (UCYFS), the progress of participants will be tracked by referrals, and program and service enrollment data.

Stanford University will conduct pre and post-surveys of their training of facilitators. Their training also includes training to teach facilitators how to administer pre and post surveys for youth who have participated in the Cannabis Toolkit curriculum. They have agreed to add our questions to the pre and post surveys for youth and to make this data available for our evaluation. We are in the process of formalizing an agreement to use their data for our evaluation.

Project evaluation: research design

Alameda County Probation will conduct the evaluation of the programs and services delivered by the three providers using a research design that employs a common set of goals and measurable outcomes (see Table 2).

Table 2	
Goals	Outcomes
(Goal 1): Increase juvenile cannabis and substance use prevention and intervention programs	ACPD contracts with local service providers to provide cannabis substance use prevention and intervention programming
	Increased awareness of available services and programs in the community for youth and parents/caregivers
	Improved access to services and programs to address unmet service needs which may drive youth cannabis use
	Successful identification, referral, and enrollment of eligible youth who need services
(Goal 2): Raise awareness about the health and social impacts of adolescent cannabis use for youth, parents, caregivers, and community members.	Stanford hosts trainings for Prop 64 sub-contractors (UCYFS and Youth Alive!), public school educators, and service providers in Alameda County.
	Increased awareness of risks of cannabis use for youth
	Increased knowledge of reasons for use and alternatives for youth
	Increased understanding of social context of use and correlation with criminal justice involvement for youth
(Goal 3): Improve evaluation of programs and their effectiveness on reducing juvenile cannabis use.	Increased knowledge and awareness of risks and issues related to youth cannabis youth for caregivers, parents, and community members
	ACPD designs and implements evaluation of the programming provided by the sub-contracted service providers – Youth Alive!, UCYFS, and the Social Changer. ACPD partners with Stanford to design pre and post surveys for youth who receive the Cannabis Toolkit curriculum.

Alameda County Probation’s Research and Evaluation Unit will conduct a comprehensive analysis of program implementation. The intent is to evaluate the implementation and impact of activities funded under this grant as elements of one project, though the method of evaluation for each program may differ based on the scope, timeline, and target population. Evaluation tools will be applied in a standardized way across providers, and we will provide them with results and recommendations at the completion of the evaluation.

The project evaluation consists of two key components: process evaluation and outcome evaluation.

Process evaluation

The process evaluation examines the reach and quality of the training delivered by Stanford University, and the reach and quality of the programs delivered by the three grantees. Process evaluation components will examine the extent to which the described services have reached their intended audience and have been administered in accordance with the described scope to achieve *Goal I: to increase availability of juvenile cannabis and substance use prevention and intervention.*

It examines the success of the programs in terms of:

- (1) program reach (how many educators and service providers were trained on the Cannabis Toolkit; how many youth were enrolled in programs with sub-contractors; how many adults, caregivers, and community members participated)
- (2) program completion (how many educators and service providers completed the training on the Cannabis Toolkit; how many youth completed the programs offered by the sub-contractors)
- (3) identification, referral, engagement, and retention of eligible youth who need services
- (4) provider staff participation in and utilization of the Stanford Cannabis Toolkit curriculum

Outcome evaluation

Outcome evaluation components will focus on the extent to which education and messaging related to cannabis use has been effectively delivered to program participants consistent with *Goal II: to raise awareness about the health and social impacts of adolescent cannabis use for youth, parents, caregivers, and schools.*

It examines the success of the programs in terms of the following evaluation questions:

- (1) were juvenile cannabis and substance use prevention and intervention programs increased?
- (2) did the interventions increase awareness of the risks of cannabis use?
- (3) did the interventions increase knowledge of reasons for use and alternatives?
- (4) did the interventions increase awareness of available services and programs in the community for youth and parents/caregivers?
- (5) did the interventions increase understanding of social context of use and correlation with criminal justice involvement?
- (6) was the evaluation of programs and their effectiveness on reducing juvenile cannabis use improved?

ACPD will track project performance for all three sub-contractors/sub-grantees over time, including both implementation and impacts, using pre- and post-surveys of knowledge and awareness of marijuana risks, data on service referrals, enrollment and participation in community events, and participants' completion status.

Data Collection and Analysis

The evaluation will utilize a mixed-methods approach including both quantitative and qualitative elements. Quantitative results may demonstrate trends in program participation, qualitative data can help explain trends in behavior and identify strengths and challenges associated with programming.

Table 3	
Outcomes measured	Data sources
Did the intervention increase awareness of the risks of cannabis use?	Pre- and post-surveys
Increased knowledge of reasons for use and alternatives	Pre- and post-surveys of youth (administered by Stanford)
Increased understanding of social context of use and correlation with criminal justice involvement	Pre- and post-surveys of youth (administered by Stanford)
Increased awareness of available services and programs in the community for youth and parents/caregivers	Pre- and post-surveys of youth (administered by Stanford)
Program reach	Participation rosters for educators and service providers trained on the Cannabis Toolkit. Participation rosters and client demographic characteristics for youth participants and attendees of community events; website analytics for social media awareness campaign (number reached, influenced visits, which assets performed best with audiences, etc.)
Program completion	Participation rosters for educators and service providers trained on the Cannabis Toolkit. Participation rosters and client demographic characteristics for youth participants
Effective training of Service Providers on the Stanford Cannabis Toolkit	Stanford pre- and post-surveys for training provided to Service Providers
Successful identification, referral, and enrollment of high-risk youth who need services	Data on referrals and program/service enrollments, including date of referral and program/service type for each participant (deidentified)
Improvement in evaluation of programs and their effectiveness on reducing juvenile cannabis use	Successful completion of ACPD program evaluation for all program activities

Table 3 outlines the outcomes measures and the key data sources.

Quantitative Data Collection and Analysis

Quantitative data will be used to analyze program participation, population characteristics, and changes in knowledge and attitudes towards cannabis use. Quantitative analysis will include descriptive and potentially also inferential statistics examining the population served and changes in knowledge and attitudes over the course of enrollment in the program. ACPD will use Excel and Stata to clean data and conduct quantitative analyses.

Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis

The COVID-19 pandemic precludes the planning of focus groups and in-person interviews with program participants. Outcomes will primarily be determined by assessing the knowledge and awareness youth gain from their participation in the *UCYFS* and *Youth Alive!* Programs through pre- and post-surveys. Open-ended questions will be included in the pre- and post-surveys to allow participants to enter information that may not have been considered by the research team and/or to elaborate on their responses. The impact of the *Social Changery* media campaign will be determined based on number of youth reached (Click Through Rates and other media metrics).

If COVID-19 safety protocols can be assured, the ACPD research team may engage in virtual interviews with select participants from the Youth Alive! Teens on Target and UCYFS Cannabis Toolkit programs at a point in time during Year 2 and Year 3 of the evaluation in order to obtain qualitative data about their experiences with program activities. We will also interview select staff from service providers (Youth Alive! And UCYFS) and conduct program observations as needed.

The collection of qualitative data will be focused on understanding the following topics:

- Effectiveness of identification, screening, and enrollment process
- Fidelity to proposed program models, including services delivered and staff competencies
- Perceptions of service providers' cultural responsiveness and ability to provide services to youth
- Implementation successes and challenges
- Participant and parent/caregiver satisfaction
- Perceived outcomes of youth participants and families
- Identification of how Cannabis Toolkit was utilized in program/service implementation

Interviews and program observations will focus on providers' ability to provide services to youth in a culturally-sensitive manner, participant satisfaction, and perceptions of participants' progress and success. Gift card incentives will be offered for participation.

Interviews with service providers' staff, supervisors, and leadership will focus on:

- (1) successes, challenges, and lessons learned in program identification, referral, engagement
- (2) system coordination, service delivery, as well as reflections on the effectiveness of the program in increasing knowledge/awareness of youth participants and caregivers

Moreover, field observations of the program will help understand how service provision is enacted and the degree to which best practices are adhered.

ACPD will interpret qualitative data using a variety of methods.

Reporting

Data will be collected for quarterly reports, a mid-point evaluation brief, and a final evaluation report. Quarterly reports will be developed from administrative data. Interviews and program observations will be conducted at a point in time during Year 2 and Year 3 of the evaluation. Mid-point and final evaluation reports will use both quantitative and qualitative data.

Human Subjects Protections

ACPD will follow all human research subjects protocols designed to be appropriate for diverse participants that come from a range of cultural, linguistic, and educational backgrounds. For all methods, the evaluation will employ procedures to safeguard respondent rights including obtaining informed consent (via ACPD) for sharing personal data for the evaluation and assent to participate in focus groups and interviews, ensuring confidentiality and voluntary participation, limiting access to identifying information, and properly securing data.

Logic Model

Project Goals:

Goal 1:	to increase juvenile cannabis and substance use prevention and intervention programs
Goal 2:	to raise awareness about the health and social impacts of adolescent cannabis use for youth, parents, caregivers, and schools
Goal 3:	to improve evaluation of programs and their effectiveness on reducing juvenile cannabis use

