This section of today’s training will discuss the selection of evidence-based programs and practices. Our objectives in this time today include: Helping you understand what resources are available for selecting evidence-based strategies, assisting you in identifying strategies that may work within your community using the resources available and lastly how to distinguish the best strategy for your community. After viewing this video, you should feel comfortable looking for a possible intervention for your community and evaluating it for its appropriate use in addressing the problems identified through the data collected about the risk and protective factors in your area.

We will be discussing two broad categories of prevention strategies today. Individual change practices and System change practices. Individual change practices are those practices that we already commonly associate with prevention. More specifically they are programs or curricula that reduce risk factors or strengthen protective factors of an individual. Programs like Too Good for Drugs and All Stars are individual changes because the difference the program is aimed at is at the individual person level. Practices that are system change oriented are for example, reducing access through compliance checks, media campaigns or policy change. These strategies, also referred to as environmental strategies, influence the environment in a way that encourages positive behavior and/or discourages negative behaviors for a large population. For example alcohol compliance checks decrease youth access to alcohol, which changes the behavior of a large group of people instead of impacting the behavior of an individual. After viewing these descriptions one can determine whether this is an individual change program or a systems/environmental change practice? To determine what type of change will occur consider will the strategy impact characteristics of an individual (such as attitudes or relationships)? If so, this would be an individual change strategy. Or, would the strategy change the environment within
which we all operate? If that is the case, then the strategy is system-change or an environmental strategy.

We will be viewing several registries of evidence based practices today. There are both individual and environmental change strategies on all of these registries. These registries provide a great number of evidence based programs and practices. But, these lists are not exhaustive. Your community may discover a program or practice that is not on any of these lists. In order to select this practice for use during the CTC process, we would like you to examine the program/practice using the Goodness of Fit worksheet. We will discuss this worksheet in a little later.

**NREPP WEBSITE:**

One of the most well known registry for prevention strategies is the National Registry of Evidence based Programs and Practices. NREPP, is a registry maintained by SAMHSA. This registry is located at [www.nrepp.samhsa.gov](http://www.nrepp.samhsa.gov). Please note that the NREPP website was recently re-designed and although all of the features in searching for interventions are still available, there are a few new tools and resources available as well. I will demonstrate now how you could use your data to select a program or practice using NREPP. On the main page click on Advanced Search. As you can see there are many different areas in which you can search. Based on your data you may have to make some inferences to select different categories. Select the categories that will help narrow your search based on what information your data has provided to you. For instance if your community has found risk factors that are significant related to academic failure beginning in late elementary school or availability of drugs for instance you could select Alcohol, drugs and education. Then you would select the type of geographic location in which your community is located and you could even select the age of the youth that your data shows to have the highest rate of use. Look at all of the categories to see if any apply to your data. Then press the search button. Then NREPP would provide you with a list of possible interventions. To find out more
information and further evaluate each of the listed options, select the name of the program or practice and read through the description to follow. The description of each evidence based program or practice includes the following: Information about all of the categories on the search screen, Costs, Adaptations, Outcomes from their research, The quality of research and how ready the program is to disseminate.

NREPP although very well known is not the only location of evidence based programs, policies and procedures.

YOUTH INFO WEBSITE:

Another registry is located at www.findyouthinfo.gov. To complete a search go to the Program Directory tab. By selecting a critical community risk factor or protective factor, which you would pull directly from your data, a list of evidence based programs and practices will be listed. Additional information about each program policy or practice can be viewed when clicking on the name of the practice. The information includes: A description of the intervention, the evaluation, the outcomes, the risk and protective factors addressed by the intervention and contact information for the originators of the strategy.

Findyouthinfo.gov ranks each program or practice as a level 1-3. The levels are assigned based on the amount of research each practice has completed. A level 1 program is ranked the highest on the scale because it has shown the most consistent positive results when the program is followed with fidelity. Level two shows results but are less robust. A level three program has started to show promising outcomes but has yet to have a great deal of research. To learn more about each level select Background and Methodology from the Program Directory tab.
BLUE PRINTS WEBSITE:

The third registry that will be examined today is the Blue Prints registry. The Center for Study and Prevention of Violence hosts a list for what are called Blue Print Model programs. Go to the website at http://www.colorado.edu/cspv/index.html and on the left side there is a menu. Click on Blue Prints and you will be taken to the page that further describes what Blue Print model programs are. Then to the left side again are either model programs or promising programs. Both are lists of programs that show evidence of success. However, model programs have the most concrete evidence of effectiveness.

When looked at each program, select the title. Information included is: Program summary, program background, which will have outcome information and research as well. Some programs have video vinettes, and there is also contact information.

After looking at all of these sites your community may have a good list of possible interventions, or may be looking for more.

NREPP WEBSITE RESOURCES PAGE:

There are many other resources for identifying practices that are evidence based. Listed under Resources and Tools on the NREPP website is a great deal of other registries and locations of programs and practices that may be applicable to your community.

SLIDE 3:

After spending some time looking through these registries, it may become evident that you’re community would benefit more from a systems-change strategy, and that there are fewer systems-change strategies listed upon each of the registries. Systems-change strategies include making changes in law and policy as well as methods for communicating with an entire community (media campaigns for instance). These types of changes can be very long lasting and impactful, but take a great deal of time
and patience for outcomes. And, it is critical if your community selects the use of a media campaign, that they are aware that most media campaigns work best in concert with other programs or practices, and are less effective when used alone. Although media campaigns are effective at increasing awareness of the problem and readiness to act, they are not likely to change behavior.

**SLIDE 4 & SLIDE 5:**

If selecting a program that is not listed on any one of the afore mentioned registries then the following criterion must be met to be considered a qualified program or practice for your community. 1. The program must be reported with positive effects in a peer-reviewed journal. A good place to look for these journal articles is Google scholar at [http://scholar.google.com](http://scholar.google.com). 2nd, documented effectiveness is supported by other sources of information and the consensus of judgment from experts. These experts must see that the program/practice meets all of the four guidelines: 1. The program is based in solid theory 2. Similar content and structure to interventions that are on registries or peer-reviewed literature 3. The intervention is supported by documentation that it has been effectively implemented in the past, multiple times, in a manner that follows scientific standards and that the results show consistent pattern of positive effects 4. The intervention has been reviewed by prevention experts: researchers, local prevention practitioners, key community leaders. If all of those items are met, then discuss this with the IPRC to ensure that the intervention selected can be reviewed once more for final approval.

We have now covered where to look for tested effective prevention strategies, and now we should discuss briefly what to look for when examining each of these sites.

**SLIDE 6:**

First, when starting your search, you must consider why would I want to select a particular strategy? Does this program or practice impact my community’s gaps? To understand this look for what risk and
protective factors are addressed by each program or practice. This may be done through your search. For example if your gap is in the area of alcohol accessibility, then you would start your search with that factor. As a result, you will likely eliminate a great number of strategies that don’t address your communities gap. Secondly examine how and with whom the program/practice was conducted. This means, was the program researched with a population like your community, unlike your community. Was it completed in a variety of locations, or just with a limited range of people? Understanding this may also help you understand if the intervention will be effective in your community. Thirdly, what is the target population for the program, and what is your target population, similarly to how this practice was researched, knowing what the intended population is for the program may assist in either qualifying a program for your community, or ruling out other possibilities. Program evaluation is another critical point. What type of scientific process was used, and how rigorous was it. Lastly, but most important perhaps is the results. What if this program has no positive results, only small results or incredible results? How might this information benefit your community? These results will likely mirror the results your community with experience. Therefore, the reported results should match the issue you are intending on addressing. If you are attempting to influence a particular risk factor with a program or policy, then the results of the program evaluation should show a positive change in that risk factor.

Now you have looked at a variety of resources, to find evidence based strategies, you know what to look for when you are utilizing the resources. Now, let’s look at the Goodness of Fit exercise that I’ve mentioned several times.

**SLIDE 7:**

Once you have narrowed your search using one or many registries and have selected several to examine closer, then your community is ready to complete the Goodness of Fit exercise. This worksheet will help you answer the questions: How well does this strategy address my community’s problem areas? How
feasible is it to implement? Is there adequate evidence of effectiveness? We will discuss this exercise in greater detail in a few moments.

The goodness of it exercise is in each of your DSA CTC manuals on page 7 of the Planning section. This worksheet helps you look at Conceptual Fit, Practical Fit and Evidence of Effectives. The goal of completing this worksheet is to examine how well this strategy will work within your community. Does the program address the community’s gap? Is it reasonable to believe our community has the resources to provide the program? Is the evidence of success strong enough to encourage our community that a difference can be made? The goodness of fit exercise can also serve as a method for directly comparing the impact a strategy may have with looking at several possible strategies.

**SLIDE 8:**

First, is conceptual fit. Does this strategy address what your needs are? For example, will it address your gap areas? Is the program for the correct population? Does this strategy have a positive outcome, with a consequence that you can predict—for example if you know it positively affects availability of drugs, is that through decreasing retailers or through increasing compliance checks? Either way, does this strategy clearly prepare you for the results? And will it make a difference in your community or “move the needle”. Finally for conceptual fit, does this strategy reinforce or add to an existing practice in the community? The best case scenario is that the strategy that you are looking at will have a positive result to each of the conceptual fit questions.

**SLIDE 9:**

Practical fit discusses how easily this program can go from planning to implementation. Does your community have the ability to fund this approach? If the intervention that is being reviewed is $10,000.00 will this be a realistic cost for using more than once, or would other programs fit the budget better? Can
the approach be implemented with fidelity? For instance, does the approach require 2 trained individuals or 50? How long does training take? Is funding available to purchase supplies needed each time the program is used? How will the fidelity be maintained and is it realistic? Does the approach take the readiness of the community into account? If your readiness was low, and then your approach requires the entire community buy-in, can this be done? Lastly what are the sustainability resources in your community? Connected to the resources for funding initially, how can you maintain the program? Is this program one that encourages connectivity among community groups? Will a major funder be required and if so how will this be handled? A program or strategy is considered the utmost of practical if yes is selected for each question. When we get together for the Community Planning Training, we will continue our discussion of the practical fit of programs and how critical practicality is to selecting a program. Another method for looking at the practicality is in the exercise we will complete at the CPT using the implementation cost work sheet, this will be a helpful tool in looking at practical fit from a purely dollars and cents stand point. And at that time we will also discuss how you look into the resources, skills and time available as each of these factors also play a role in selecting an intervention strategy.

SLIDE 10:

Evidence of Effectiveness is especially critical to review if the intervention you are looking at is not yet on a registry of evidence based strategies. However, even if the practice you are examining is on a registry double check the evidence of effectiveness. To ensure that the evidence is rich and through, double check by verifying that the approach is best on well-defined theory. What are the sources of documented effectiveness, where are the results reported and how successful are the outcomes? Were
the successful outcomes repeated? Once, many times? Lastly, has this approach been effective in the areas that you plan to address?

Once you have completed all of the questions, you will have a number of check marks in both yes and no columns. When comparing all of the strategies under consideration this will assist in the decision making process. Most often, the programs/practices with the most in the yes column have the best fit for the community. If a particular strategy has more than 2 “No’s” in a category, consider looking for a different strategy. Further instructions on the use of this tool will be distributed by the IPRC.

**SLIDE 11:**

At the Community Planning Training, the selection process for tested effective methods for your community will be discussed in even greater detail. And using that information and the information provided today, you will be equipped to begin to examine what strategies will best impact your community. Best of luck on your search for the evidence based program, policy or practice that will meet the needs in your area.