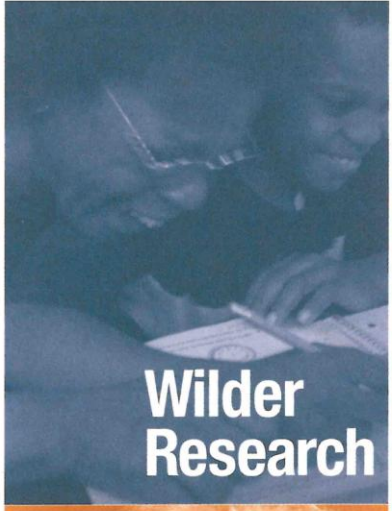

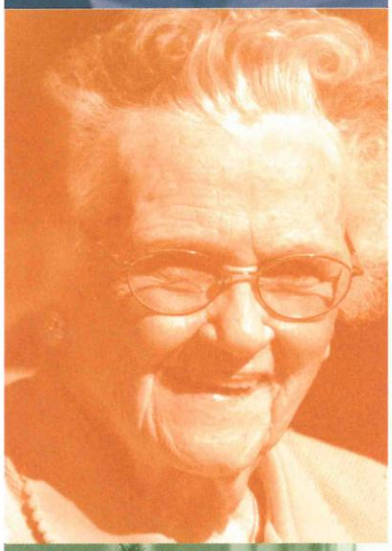

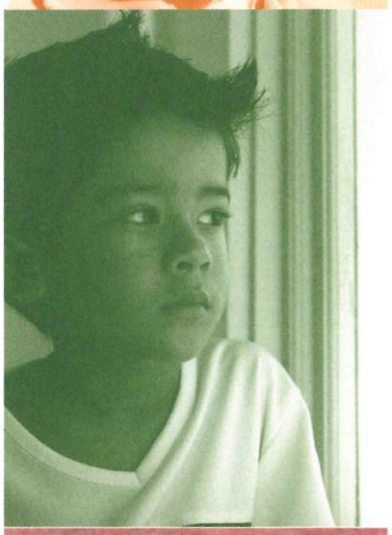

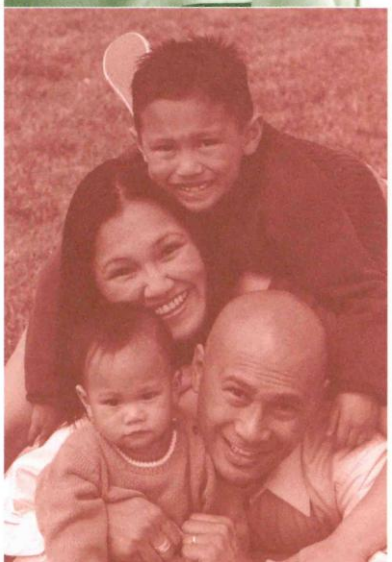

ATOD prevention coalition member interview results

Summary of key findings

JUNE 2011

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Summary of key findings

June 2011

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Summary

In 2006, the Minnesota Department of Human Services, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division, funded nine communities for five years to implement a comprehensive array of strategies aimed at preventing underage alcohol use. In each community, efforts are led by a Planning and Implementation (P&I) coordinator and a local coalition, comprised of professionals and other members of the community. In order to assess the role and functioning of the coalitions, and their ability to effectively oversee, implement, and sustain prevention activities during the five-year grant period and beyond, Wilder Research conducted in-depth interviews with a sample of members representing the nine coalitions.

Overview of the study

Overall, 93 people from the nine coalitions were interviewed by telephone in the spring of 2010. Interviews were conducted with between 8 and 12 members of each coalition. Respondents primarily included current, relatively active adult members of the coalition, but also included three former adult members and 10 current youth members. Interviews addressed the following research questions:

- How do coalition members perceive the purpose of their coalition and describe their involvement in their coalition?
- How do coalition members perceive the effectiveness of their coalitions' operations and activities, and what are the barriers to effectiveness?
- What are coalitions doing with regard to cultural competency and outreach to diverse populations?
- What is the perception among coalition members of the Department of Human Services' role in the coalitions?
- How are the coalitions developing sustainability in their work?

Key findings

The roles and responsibilities of the coalition members

While responsibilities were structured differently across coalitions, many common themes around members' perceptions of their role within the coalition emerged. For example, coalition members tended to strongly identify with the sector of the community that they represent and often described themselves as liaisons between their respective sector and the coalition. Also, many identified both with a professional sector and as parents. Initial involvement in the coalition frequently occurred through a work or volunteer-related invitation. A personal commitment to prevention motivated many members to participate in their coalition's work as well.

The goals of the coalition

For approximately half of the coalitions, members agreed that their coalition's goal is to reduce alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD) use in the community. Members of nearly all of the remaining coalitions felt that their goal is to reduce underage drinking in particular. Some respondents also saw their coalition's purpose as increasing education or awareness around substance use and promoting community collaboration. These other goals were often described as strategies that support a primary goal of reducing ATOD use and/or underage drinking. Overall, creating healthier communities was commonly upheld as the long-term goal of many coalitions.

Areas of coalition effectiveness

Most respondents reported that their expectations of the coalition were met, primarily because they felt that their coalition was effectively operated and its activities were implemented well, and because of the coalition's impact on youth in the community. The main activities coalition members perceived to be effective were: the Most of US® campaign and social norms related activities; youth activities, including youth groups, out-of-school time programming, and direct youth outreach or engagement; compliance-related activities, including compliance checks and Responsible Beverage Server Training; and community-based activities including town hall meetings and community events or celebrations.

Barriers to coalition effectiveness

Coalition members identified a few barriers to their coalition's effectiveness. The primary barriers included: challenges engaging specific populations in the community, including parents, other adults (seniors, young adults, and adults without children), and

specific community sectors (mostly business and faith communities); and community-based issues such as a culture of ATOD use in the community and a lack of buy-in related to the coalition's work or purpose among community members.

Outreach to diverse populations

Respondents mainly described the work their coalition does with diverse populations as outreach to racially or ethnically diverse populations. These outreach activities include having diverse members represented on the coalition, having a coalition work group dedicated to reaching out to a specific population, translating materials or messaging into other languages, and doing outreach to diverse populations through the youth group. Many respondents noted the lack of cultural (racial/ethnic) diversity in their community, although some noted socioeconomic diversity in their community.

The role of the Department of Human Services

Coalition members most commonly perceived the role of the Department of Human Services (DHS) as providing oversight and supervision for the grant; often this was described as a result of DHS' related role as funder. Many members also described the support, assistance, and training DHS provides to help guide the coalition in their work. Some respondents expressed concerns about the role of DHS, often requesting more local control or fewer reporting or approval requirements. Others did not have a clear understanding of DHS' role or the difference between DHS and the Regional Prevention Coordinators.

Sustainability

Most coalitions are engaged in at least some sustainability efforts, largely grant writing and fundraising, as well as strategic planning. Some coalitions were in the early stages of exploring grant opportunities, while others had already applied for and/or received new funds. Coalition members expressed concerns about sustaining the work. Concerns related to a need for funding to maintain prevention programs and activities, as well as for a leadership position to help the coalition maintain its work after the grant and P&I coordinator are gone. Strategies for sustaining the work included writing grants, forming new or expanded community partnerships, and streamlining activities.

Issues to consider

Results of these in-depth interviews suggest potential opportunities for individual coalitions (both current and future) and the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) to consider going forward.

Individual coalitions

Engaging and educating the community. There are several activities coalitions might consider related to community engagement including: educating members about the coalition's purpose and activities; expanding and diversifying membership; expanding outreach to other cultural groups; increasing their use of technology and media to reach new audiences; and reaching out to and engaging youth in innovative ways.

Enhancing coalition operations. To streamline and further improve coalition operations, coalitions might consider the following strategies: ensuring all members have a common understanding of coalition goals; reviewing coalition member roles and responsibilities; addressing sustainability and funding issues; and building in methods for regularly assessing coalition progress.

Expanding scope. Some coalitions may also wish to expand their focus in the future, particularly after the DHS grant expires. Opportunities include: focusing on other substances, if those substances are also an issue within the community; integrating a focus on early intervention and treatment into prevention work; and increasing efforts around addressing underage access issues.

Department of Human Services

In addition to supporting coalitions' efforts related to the activities described above, where possible, the Department of Human Services might also consider the following strategies to enhance the work of coalitions: clarifying the role of DHS and Regional Prevention Coordinators to all coalition members; allowing increased autonomy and decision-making among coalitions; building in flexibility around the grant focus area(s); supporting outreach to diverse cultural communities; and, using and sharing data with coalitions.

Introduction

Background

In 2006, the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division launched a five-year, statewide, youth alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD) prevention initiative. As part of this initiative, the Division awarded grants to nine communities across the state of Minnesota aimed at preventing underage alcohol use in these communities. In each community, the prevention efforts are led by a Planning and Implementation (P&I) coordinator, who is also responsible for coordinating a local coalition within the community.[1] Each local coalition is charged with implementing a compilation of prevention strategies within the community. Coalitions are comprised of professionals and other individuals representing distinct community sectors, including businesses, schools, government, civic groups, law enforcement, parents, youth, and other groups. The nine Minnesota communities and coalitions involved in the initiative and included in the study are identified in Figure 1.

1. Coalition communities (N=9)

Community (county or school district)	Prevention region	Name of coalition
Chisholm school district	Northeast	Chisholm Youth, Family, & Community Partnership
Mora and Ogilvie school districts	East Central	Substance Abuse Coalition of Kanabec County (SACK)
Pierz school district	East Central	Pierz Area Coalition (PAC)
Pine River-Backus school district	West Central	Pine River-Backus Working Together Coalition
Renville County	Southwest	Renville Alliance for the Prevention of Alcohol and Drugs (RAPAD)
Roseau County	Northwest	Roseau County Prevention Coalition (RCPC)
South St. Paul school district	Metro	South St. Paul Healthy Youth Community Coalition (HYCC)
Wadena County	West Central	Chemical Health Awareness & Meth Prevention Coalition (CHAMP)
Yellow Medicine County	Southwest	Chemical Health Coalition of Yellow Medicine County (CHC)

[1] Roseau County had two P&I coordinators up through the time of these interviews.

Overview of evaluation

In order to assess the effectiveness of these prevention efforts, the Department of Human Services contracted with Wilder Research in St. Paul to provide evaluation services related to this grant. One evaluation component focuses on the coalitions' role and functioning, and their ability to effectively oversee, implement, and sustain prevention activities during the five-year grant period and beyond. To assess this effort, Wilder Research conducted in-depth interviews with a sample of members representing the nine coalitions across the state.

Methodology

Information for this report was gathered through a series of in-depth qualitative interviews with members of the nine coalitions across the state. This section summarizes the guiding research questions for the project, the sampling process, the analyses performed, and the study limitations.

Research questions

The following questions were developed for, and were intended to be addressed by, the coalition key informant interviews:

- How do coalition members perceive the purpose of their coalition and describe their involvement in their coalition?
- How do coalition members perceive the effectiveness of their coalitions' operations and activities, and what are the barriers to effectiveness?
- What are coalitions doing with regard to cultural competency and outreach to diverse populations?
- What is the perception among coalition members of the Department of Human Services' role in the coalitions?
- How are the coalitions developing sustainability in their work?

Data collection

Members from the nine coalitions across the state were interviewed by telephone between April and June 2010. The interviews were approximately 30 to 45 minutes in length. As a thank you for their time, respondents received an incentive valued at $20 if they completed an interview. For the participants who were under the age of 18, parental consent was obtained prior to the interview.

Selecting respondents

In order to select key informants for the coalition interview, Wilder Research used a convenience sample of respondents who were identified by the P&I coordinator of each coalition. Wilder Research provided P&I coordinators with some basic criteria and instruction for selecting the sample to help ensure that interviews were conducted with a wide range of coalition members. P&I coordinators were asked to identify and provide

contact information for 10 to12 coalition members who represented the following types of membership:

- Diverse representation across sectors and workgroups or committees
- At least one member representing each of the following populations:
  - Coalition or workgroup chairpersons or leadership team members (other than the P&I)
  - A less engaged member (i.e., participates/contributes infrequently)
  - A former member
  - A youth member
  - A long-term member (at least 2 years of involvement)
  - A newer member (less than 6 months of involvement)

In practice, these criteria were used by P&I coordinators as general guidelines for selecting the sample. In most cases, the sample selected for each coalition included individuals representing many, but not all, of the above categories. In particular, few coalitions were able to identify former members, who are underrepresented in the sample.

Interviews were conducted with 93 people from the nine coalitions across the state, including between 8 and 12 members of each coalition. A total of 101 interviews were attempted, for an overall response rate of 92 percent. The sample of 93 included three respondents who were former members of their coalitions and 10 respondents identified as youth members of coalitions. Figure 2 shows the number of individuals who were interviewed by coalition, including the response rate for each coalition.

2. Respondents by coalition

	Number interviewed				
Coalition	**Current members**	**Former members**	**Youth members**	**Total**	**Response rate**
Chisholm KIDS PLUS	6	0	2	**8**	67%
Kanabec SACK	8	2	1	**11**	92%
Morrison PAC	8	1	1	**10**	100%
Pine River / Backus BWTC	10	0	1	**11**	100%
Renville RAPAD	10	0	2	**12**	92%
Roseau RCPC	11	0	1	**12**	100%
South Saint Paul HYCC	9	0	0	**9**	75%
Wadena CHAMP	9	0	1	**10**	100%
Yellow Medicine CHC	9	0	1	**10**	100%
Total	80	3	10	**93**	92%

Interview protocol

The instrument developed for the coalition member key informant interviews was comprised primarily of open-ended questions (no pre-determined answer categories) to give respondents opportunities to provide relevant, thoughtful, and unscripted feedback about their experiences with their coalitions. Questions focused on the member's role on the coalition and involvement in activities, their perceptions of the goals of the coalition, the effectiveness of coalition activities, outreach to and work with diverse communities, the role of DHS, and sustainability efforts. Basic demographic information was also collected about each member. A copy of the protocol is included in the appendix.

Data analysis

Data analysis of the coalition interviews included in-depth qualitative analysis and supporting quantitative analysis of participant responses. The project team used ATLAS.ti 6.2 QDA software to analyze the qualitative interview data. Using this software, a team of four researchers analyzed different components of the interview and independently categorized them into themes. Researchers met regularly during this process to review, discuss, and refine key themes, and worked together to summarize key findings for the following report. More detailed information about this process is available in the appendix.

Level of support for themes

All themes were explored both at the aggregate level and the coalition-specific level to identify the strength of support for the theme across participants. All themes presented in this report were supported by multiple respondents at the aggregate level. At the coalition-level, themes were considered "endorsed" if two or more respondents from the same coalition mentioned the idea. In addition, there was "agreement" among coalition members on any theme in which at least one-third of the participants from a specific coalition shared the perspective. Throughout this report, the terms "endorsement" and "agreement" refer to the level of support for a particular theme as described here.

Description of respondents

A total of 93 respondents, across the nine coalitions, participated in the interviews. These respondents were primarily White (97%), somewhat more likely to be female (65%), and generally worked on the coalition in a volunteer capacity (62%) (Figure 3). Most of the respondents (84% each) lived or worked in the community served by their coalition. Respondents represented a variety of "sectors" in the community, the most common sector being youth-serving organizations (58%). Nearly half also represented schools (48%) and civic or volunteer groups (46%). More than one-third of respondents (37%) identified as parent members of the coalition, while 12 percent identified as youth members (Figure 4).

More information about respondents' roles on their coalitions and involvement in coalition activities is presented in a later section of this report.

3. Demographic characteristics of respondents (N=91-93)

Item	N	%
Gender		
Female	60	65%
Male	33	36%
Race/ethnicity		
White/Caucasian	88	97%
Hispanic/Latino	3	3%
Connection to community		
Lives in the community served by the coalition	78	84%
Works in the community served by the coalition	78	84%
Role on coalition		
Volunteer	57	62%
Part of respondent's job	35	38%

4. Sectors represented by respondents (N=92-93)

Sector	N	%
Youth-serving organization	53	58%
School or educational institution	45	48%
Civic or volunteer group	43	46%
Parent member	34	37%
Spiritual or fraternal organization	29	31%
Business or business association	25	27%
State, local, or tribal government	24	26%
Law enforcement	16	17%
Healthcare agency	15	16%
Youth member*	11	12%
Media or news organization	7	8%

Note: *Respondents were asked whether or not they represent each sector in the table and were allowed to identify with as many sectors as they felt appropriate.*

* *"Youth members" were identified as part of the sampling criteria (see section on Methodology); respondents were also asked to self-report whether they were a youth member during the interview. Therefore, the number of respondents who reported representing the youth sector is slightly different from the total number of youth reported in the Methodology section.*

Introduction to key findings

As noted, the purpose of the coalition member interviews was to gather information about the prevention efforts taking place in each of the funded communities, from the perspective of coalition members who are responsible for overseeing the implementation of these efforts. The longevity of these efforts is dependent upon a coalition that is goal-oriented, organized, effective, diversified, and well-funded. Because it is expected that these coalitions will sustain the prevention efforts started under the Department of Human Services grant, the interview attempted to assess these qualities about the coalitions. The following sections summarize the key findings that emerged from the coalition member interviews. These findings reflect the perspectives of coalition members about the following issues:

- The roles and responsibilities of the coalition members
- The goals of the coalition
- Areas of coalition effectiveness
- Barriers to coalition effectiveness
- Outreach to diverse populations
- The role of the Department of Human Services
- Sustainability

Roles and responsibilities of coalition members

Beyond sector representation, respondents were asked to provide additional information about their role(s) on the coalition and what led to their involvement with the coalition. Coalition members tend to strongly identify with their sector and to see themselves as liaisons between their coalition and the area of the community they represent. Members became involved with a coalition for a variety of reasons, often including an invitation and a personal commitment to prevention.

Perception of role

Members often saw themselves as liaisons between their community sector and the coalition, representing the interests of the sector on the coalition and communicating the goals and purposes of the coalition to their peers in return. Many respondents also described their coalition work as an extension of their career, volunteer experiences, or positions on other committees.

> I handle a lot of the juvenile prosecution. The juvenile cases all come through my office. I sit through the [coalition] meetings and attend the [coalition-sponsored] events I have mentioned. I will do what I can to assist in things, like gathering the statistics that are needed in writing grants.

There was agreement among at least one-third of the respondents in eight coalitions regarding coalition members' strong identification with their community sector. Parent members, representatives of the media, law enforcement, and volunteers were most likely to identify with the sectors they represented.

Reasons for involvement

Respondents generally gave three reasons for being involved in the coalition: coalition activities related to their work or place of employment; they were personally committed to the field of prevention; or they were asked by the P&I coordinator to join the coalition.

Work or employment

Many respondents originally got involved with the coalition through their work. Respondents commonly reported that they were invited to participate in the coalition because of their professional position, they were required to participate as part of their job

duties (i.e., they had inherited the role), or they noticed a connection between their skill set and the purpose or needs of the coalition and wanted to contribute their expertise.

> I am also a family violence prevention advocate and I see a big connection there with violence, so to get in there and have an impact to help prevent violence because there is a big connection of alcohol and other drugs to violence. With youth, that connection seems to tie to alcohol. In my opinion, it starts with alcohol and the abuse of alcohol, and then they get into trying and abusing other things.

Coalition member involvement through employment was a common theme, reported by at least one third of the total respondents in five of the coalitions.

Personal commitment to prevention

A large proportion of members chose to get involved with their coalition because of a personal commitment centered on a "belief" in or "passion" for underage ATOD prevention. This commitment was often traced to a personal experience with substance use or the experiences of family, friends, or community members who were negatively affected by substance use. However, some members attributed their commitment to a more general passion for youth, the community, or parental concern.

> [I participate on the coalition] because I'm a recovering alcoholic and that's one way that I can get the word out; people can listen to my story. I want to help prevent kids going through what I went through.
>
> I have children, grandchildren, great-grandchildren. There have been some problems in my family with substance abuse. I wanted to learn about that and help to do something about it.

There was agreement about this theme among members of four coalitions.

Recruited by a P&I coordinator

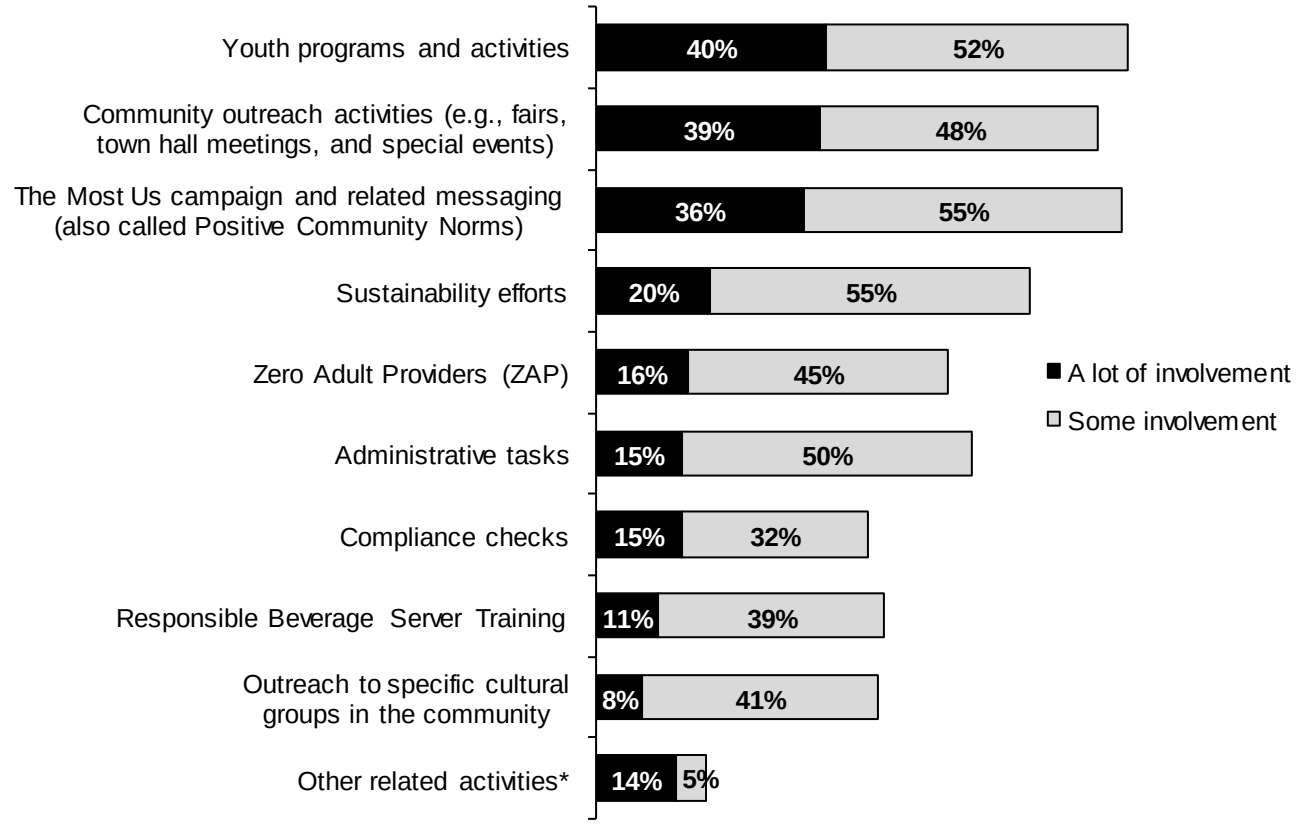
Several respondents described the P&I coordinator as instrumental in their joining the coalition initially. In many cases, the P&I coordinator personally invited the respondent to join the coalition, and, in some cases, an existing relationship with the P&I coordinator motivated the respondent to join the coalition.

How respondents spend their time on the coalition

When describing the activities on which they spend their time, respondents most often reported either attending meetings or being involved in coalition activities. They less frequently cited both activities.

When asked about their level of involvement in specific coalition-related activities, about 9 in 10 respondents reported having at least "some involvement" in youth programs/ activities (92%), the Most of Us® campaign (91%), and community outreach activities (87%). More than half of the respondents also reported "some" or "a lot" of involvement in sustainability efforts, administrative tasks, and Zero Adult Providers (Figure 5).

5. Types of coalition activity involvement



* *Other activities coalition members mentioned include the following: trainings (3); liaison (2); marketing of coalition (2); social-host ordinance work (2); surveys (2); awards ceremony; child abuse prevention; fundraising; law enforcement for summer events; parent education; recruitment; school-based programming; SHIP/healthy eating; sticker shock campaign; work with parents of incarcerated youth.*

The extent to which coalition members were involved in coalition-related activities varied widely. Overall, respondents reported spending, anywhere from 0 to 50 hours in a typical month on coalition-related work, including attending coalition meetings. The average amount of time per month dedicated to coalition-related activities was six hours; the median was about three hours (two respondents reported especially high estimates of their average monthly coalition-related hours [44 and 50 hours] which inflated the overall average).

Goals of the coalition

When asked to describe their perception of the overall goals and purpose of their coalition, respondents reported a number of different goals. The most common was reducing alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD) use in the community, or in some cases, more specifically, reducing underage drinking. Respondents also reported their coalitions' purpose to be increasing education or awareness, promoting collaboration in the community, and making their communities healthier.

Reduce ATOD use

The most prevalent coalition goal reported by respondents was the prevention, reduction, or elimination of ATOD use, particularly among youth. Respondents more often identified the reduction or prevention of ATOD use as a goal, as opposed to elimination.

> [The purpose of the coalition is] to reduce drug use and substance abuse in our community, primarily. And to identify [ways] to keep kids from using controlled substances, prevention of substance abuse, and also [the improvement of] the total community environment [through] identifying problems and strategies to correct these problems.

Overall, there was agreement from at least one third of members about this goal within five coalitions.

Reduce underage drinking

The prevention, reduction, or elimination of underage alcohol use, more specifically, was also a commonly reported goal of coalitions, although somewhat less common than reducing ATOD use more generally. Members who felt that the coalition's goal is to prevent underage drinking specifically were more likely to highlight the need to engage parents in the work.

> [The goal of the coalition is] to reduce underage drinking, through key methods: reduce access and availability, enforce existing laws relating to underage drinking, limit access through policy change in the county, and increase enforcement of existing laws. [Also, to] change people's perceptions that drinking is something everyone does as a rite of passage. Most young people don't drink, according to actual data in our county.

Overall, there was agreement about this goal within four coalitions.

Increase education and awareness

Whether the overall coalition goals included reducing ATOD use in general or ending underage drinking, coalition members saw education and raising awareness about ATOD use among different sectors of the community as an important step in accomplishing their coalition's goals. Respondents identified a number of ways in which they were increasing education and awareness, such as educating community members about the dangers and consequences of ATOD use, changing community perceptions about the prevalence of substance use, and educating community members about ATOD use in order to promote collaboration among stakeholders. At least one-third of respondents in seven coalitions agreed that including education and raising awareness is an important part of their coalition's purpose.

> The big one is making parents and kids aware of drugs and alcohol, and the peer pressures that are out there for kids. That would be the main thing, making people aware of what's going on out there.
>
> We are trying to let kids know that everybody does not drink, no matter the perception in the past. Just because friends drink, you don't have to; there are other healthy alternatives. We are trying to get the message to parents and the community as well, but the focus first is on the kids.

Promote collaboration

A smaller, but still substantial, proportion of members saw promoting community unification and collaboration as an essential part of their coalition's purpose. Most of these respondents referred to collaboration among the different community sectors as a means to accomplishing the larger goal of reducing substance use. Other respondents, representing primarily one coalition, reported community unification itself, especially between youth and various sectors of that community, as the ultimate goal of the coalition.

> [The coalition's goal] is a good working relationship between kids and community members – teachers, law enforcement, and coalition members. With myself [in law enforcement], for example, having a good relationship with kids helps them to be able to talk with you. We do things like sponsor activities, along with others in the community, to do things to take kids fishing, which helps build relationships. We also have a senior citizens center, where kids help out and where the seniors can teach things to kids.
>
> The first goal is to educate the community to bring down those rates [of substance use], and to get youth to make healthy decisions. Also, to make sure we are all on the same page. To make sure families, churches, businesses, and the schools are on the same page. We are like a little community within a community, so [the goal is] to bring all the partners together to make it stronger.

These respondents were primarily concentrated in two coalitions; however, at least one member of each coalition described community collaboration as one of the goals of their coalition.

Create a safe and healthy community

Some coalition members also highlighted a commitment to health and wellness and to creating healthier communities through reduced substance use as one of the coalitions' goals. These respondents, concentrated primarily in two coalitions, mentioned a focus on creating healthy alternatives to reduce substance use and promoting a drug-free environment. According to these coalition members, the ultimate goal of the coalition is to improve the quality of life and safety of community members.

> [The goals of the coalition] are to provide appropriate, safe, and healthy activities for children, families, and youth. [Also, to] foster collaboration with community entities, be they the city, professional organizations, or religious organizations. To bring in the players, so we are not duplicating services and have a shared focus on healthy behaviors.

Areas of coalition effectiveness

Members were asked to comment on the strategies and activities being implemented by their coalition, including their expectations of the coalition and the extent to which the coalition has met these expectations and been effective. Respondents went on to describe the impact of the strategies they perceived as effective, including increased awareness or knowledge, changed attitudes or norms, and reduced youth access to alcohol.

Expectations of the coalition

Most respondents (87%) reported that their coalition "mostly" met their expectations. Another 12 percent reported their expectations were "somewhat" met, and only one respondent (1%) reported that his/her expectations were "not at all" met.

Respondents described two primary ways in which their expectations of their coalition were met. First, their expectations were met because they thought the coalition and its activities were being implemented effectively. Second, respondents noted the coalition's impact on youth in the community as the reason it met their expectations.

Effective operation of the coalition

Respondents noted the ability of coalition members to work together and get things done as indications of their effectiveness. This included setting goals or deciding to implement a specific activity, and following those through to completion.

> [The coalition has met my expectations] because it is well run, stays on track, has excellent programs, good evaluation of programs in place, lots of ideas, and very hard working people.
>
> [The coalition has met my expectations] because I have seen its effectiveness. [The coalition] works really hard communicating with the members, and there are a lot of them. They communicate well with the students, and they work well with each other, even though they are such a large group. They work together exceptionally well.

For many coalition members, this effectiveness can be attributed to the leadership provided by the P&I coordinator. Many described their overall satisfaction with their P&I coordinator and the work she performs. These members felt that the P&I coordinator was an asset to the coalition. One participant illustrated this point by stating, "I just think the coordinator, [P&I], is the best, and the success of coalition is because of her and her commitment to us." Several members described specific strengths that they appreciated in their P&I coordinator, such as her work ethic, commitment, knowledge,

passion, and networking skills. For instance, a coalition member described how the P&I coordinator has "done an excellent job, she has networks available, has passion, is connected to the community."

Multiple respondents endorsed the effective operation or implementation of the coalition or its activities in five of the nine coalitions. In addition, at least one member in each coalition discussed their satisfaction with the P&I coordinator.

Impact on youth

Other respondents reported that their expectations of their coalition were met because of youth-related impacts associated with coalition activities. This impact on youth included increased participation by youth in community or ATOD-free activities, and actual or perceived decreases in youth ATOD use.

> I expected what is happening. Kids are not using drugs and alcohol as much, so I think [the coalition] was pretty effective…Just from the statistics that we get. [Youth ATOD use] is just going down. There are not as many kids using drugs or alcohol. So that pretty much proves it.

Multiple respondents endorsed the coalition meeting their expectations through its impact on youth in three coalitions and there was general agreement in one coalition.

Successful coalition activities

Respondents identified several strategies or activities that they felt had been effective in preventing substance use among youth. The most commonly cited activities include the Most of Us® campaign, various youth activities, compliance-related activities, and community-based activities.

Most of Us®

Respondents reported the Most of Us® campaign by name, or referred to the following components of that campaign, as examples of effective work being done by the coalition:

- Posters, billboards, or other media
- The student survey
- Activities intended to change student perceptions

Feedback regarding its effectiveness was often coupled with comments about the recognition and visibility it has received in the community. For example, one coalition

member mentioned that Most of Us® was "widely used and known about in the community." Another coalition member described this visibility in further detail:

> [The] Most of Us® campaign is visible in our community. Banners at each school and billboards as you enter town. It is visible! I don't think you could enter our community without knowing about the [coalition's] efforts.

Respondents also spoke more generally about how well Most of Us® activities were implemented, including the production, distribution, and presentation of high quality posters, billboards, or radio advertisements.

The perceived effectiveness of the Most of Us® campaign was endorsed by multiple respondents in all nine coalitions. There was general agreement by at least one-third of members in five of the coalitions.

Youth activities

Coalition members also perceived youth activities and the growth in youth participation to be effective. When describing youth activities, respondents mentioned the following components:

- Youth groups
- Youth out-of-school time programs like open gym, field trips, or ATOD-free events
- Youth engagement or outreach

Respondents noted increased youth participation and ownership in these activities as the primary reason for their effectiveness.

> I see the activities that they are doing. Our youth portion [of the activities] has grown every year. They have youth groups in each school and the participation has increased each year. It took us eight years, [but now] the kids are running [the programs].
>
> When [the coalition] started, I think we had two students represented. Then we had more [participation], and that is what I liked. Then we had the [student group]. You saw student leadership developing. You saw more participation, and that is what you want to see. Now you see students involved.

Respondents also linked the effectiveness of the youth activities to the attention and recognition these activities are receiving in the community. This recognition included local media attention, recognition of specific activities or youth among local residents, and the visibility of activities among their peers and other youth.

Multiple respondents in all nine coalitions endorsed the perceived effectiveness of youth activities. There was general agreement among respondents in four of the coalitions.

Compliance-related activities

Respondents reported that compliance-related activities were also effective. This included specific activities like compliance checks and Responsible Beverage Server Training, as well as general education for businesses and their employees regarding alcohol laws.

Compliance-related activities were reported to be effective because the businesses in the community know about, and recognize, these activities and their benefits. As a respondent representing the law enforcement sector noted, the Responsible Beverage Server Training "has helped various owners [understand] that we are supporting them and not [that we are] anti-drinking or anti-alcohol."

Multiple respondents endorsed the effectiveness of compliance-related activities in six of the nine coalitions. In addition, at least one-third of respondents agreed about this effectiveness in two of the coalitions.

Community-based activities

Respondents also perceived a broad range of community-based activities to be having an impact, including various individual activities, events, and gatherings. Among the most common were town hall forums, a presence by the coalition at county fairs or other special community events, ATOD-free activities provided to families and other community members, and holiday-specific celebrations. Respondents mentioned expanding participation, increased awareness or knowledge, and high satisfaction among participations as reasons for these activities being successful.

Multiple respondents endorsed the effectiveness of community-based activities in six of the nine coalitions.

Other successful activities among individual coalitions

Other activities were endorsed in specific coalitions, but did not emerge as prominent themes overall. This is likely due to variations in the focus of individual coalitions. Below are the other effective activities that were endorsed by multiple respondents in at least two coalitions.

- **Education and awareness activities.** Efforts to advertise, market, or educate the community about ATOD issues or the coalition specifically. This strategy was endorsed by multiple respondents in three coalitions.

- **ZAP and other law enforcement activities.** Efforts such as the Zero Adult Providers (ZAP) program or other similar law enforcement activities focused on reducing ATOD use or abuse. This strategy was endorsed by multiple respondents in two coalitions.

- **Parent engagement.** Inclusion of, or marketing and outreach to, parents in the community regarding ATOD issues or the coalition. This strategy was endorsed by multiple respondents in two coalitions.

Outcomes related to effective coalition activities

Respondents were asked to describe why they thought particular activities were effective and to identify the impact these activities have had on the community. The primary outcomes related to these perceived effective activities are described below.

Increased awareness or knowledge

An increase in awareness or knowledge among community members was the most common outcome respondents associated with effective coalition activities. This included increased awareness of the coalition itself and increased knowledge of issues related to ATOD use and abuse. Respondents associated this increased awareness or knowledge with all of the most effective activities described above.

Youth-related activities. Coalition members felt that, in particular, involving youth in coalition activities and relating coalition activities to youth were effective because they increased youth's awareness and knowledge of the consequences of ATOD use. One respondent described an "open and honest dialogue" among the youth that "raises awareness that not every student is drinking."

Compliance-related activities. Respondents perceived an increased understanding of and attentiveness to ATOD-related laws, and the consequences of breaking those laws, among the owners and employees of local establishments. For example, a coalition member representing law enforcement described the compliance activities as helping to "inform local bartenders that the consequence for providing to minors could lead to gross misdemeanor charges."

Most of Us® activities. Respondents generally felt that the Most of Us® survey data about perceptions of youth ATOD use helped to inform youth and the general public about substance use, and that this information is often used in conjunction with other youth or community activities. It should be noted that much of the knowledge and awareness gains mentioned by respondents coincided with, or were related to, the changed attitudes or norms described in the next section.

Community-based activities. A couple of respondents associated general community-based activities with increased awareness or knowledge of ATOD-related issues in their community.

Changed attitudes or norms

Another perceived impact of successful coalition activities was a change in the community's attitudes about and norms related to substance use. According to coalition members, this impact was primarily achieved through the Most of Us® campaign.

> [One of the most effective activities] would be the Science of the Positive®, the Most of Us® campaign. That is one of the most significant things we are doing, because we are changing people's perceptions. Most importantly, [these perceptions are changing] among youth, but [they are also changing] among adults.

Other respondents noted that the Most of Us® campaign was intended to change both the perceptions of youth and the broader community. This was often described in relationship to the many types of media the campaign has helped to present in the community including billboards, pre-movie public services announcements, radio ads, and other literature.

Along with the Most of Us® campaign, respondents also thought that general youth activities were helping to change attitudes and norms. For example, a coalition member representing a youth-serving organization explained that a youth group had been "going out and talking to the other teens in their schools and telling them they are not drinking." The respondent went on to explain that the students were changing a norm by "showing that they do not need to be [using] in order to be cool."

Reduced youth access to alcohol

Respondents also identified reduced youth access to alcohol as an impact of the coalition's work, which was primarily associated with compliance checks and Responsible Beverage Server Training. As evidence of this impact, respondents noted that local establishments were increasing their compliance and that servers were more likely to deny service to underage individuals.

> When I got involved [with the coalition], the discussion was to get money to do the compliance checks for alcohol and tobacco sales. The expectations were that, on the first round, there would be a really bad record. And there was. But also, over time, the expectation was that things would improve. [Now there is] a high rate of success, with very few failures, due to things like the beverage server training.

Barriers to coalition effectiveness

Coalition members were also asked to identify existing or potential barriers to effective coalition work. The primary barriers identified were issues with engaging certain populations in the work of the coalition and issues related to community perceptions of ATOD use and the coalition.

Engaging specific groups or populations

More than one-half (57%) of respondents reported that there were populations or groups that they felt their coalition was not reaching.

Parents

Parents were one group that respondents felt were not sufficiently engaged in the coalition's work. According to coalition members, there was a lack of participation among parents in coalition activities and more general ATOD prevention work. This included having too few parents involved, as well as too little diversity among the parents that are involved, which members saw as limiting the effectiveness of youth-focused activities. Some respondents also described poor turnout at parent meetings or forums, a lack of parent representation on the coalition itself, and a lack of parents volunteering for community-based activities.

> Inviting more parents to youth activities would help. They have youth activities through the groups at school and I think what needs to improve is getting more parents involved and inviting them to do things with the youth sometimes. That is something that is missing; parents are staying away from [the activities].

Parent engagement issues were also related to parent perspectives on ATOD use or the lack of buy-in for, or knowledge about, the coalition and its mission. As one respondent described, "parents don't want to be involved with the coalition, they have been more receptive to the school inviting them to kids' groups, but they stay away from the coalition." Another respondent mentioned that "parents not being as concerned about what their children are doing" is part of the issue with parent engagement.

Multiple respondents endorsed issues regarding parent engagement or outreach in six of the nine coalitions.

Other adults

Beyond outreach to parents, respondents identified challenges related to engaging other adults as well. Some respondents mentioned issues engaging specific groups of adults, including young adults and older adults (seniors). A few coalition members also identified a need to reach out to adults without children.

It should be noted that the lack of outreach to different age groups was not described as a barrier to effectiveness per se, but rather, it was simply acknowledged that these groups were absent from coalition work.

Issues related to outreach to other adults in general was mentioned by members in six of the nine coalitions, but was endorsed by multiple respondents in four coalitions. The need to engage seniors was endorsed by members of two coalitions, but none of the other groups of adults were mentioned by more than one person per coalition.

Community sectors

Some respondents also noted barriers related to engaging representatives from specific community sectors. The primary community sector that respondents reported issues attracting was the business community, and in particular, businesses selling alcohol or tobacco.

> I think building better relationships with business establishments that sell alcohol for their livelihood [has been least effective]… I think it was something was just something that was overlooked in our strategy. We did not see them as key stakeholders, but now we see that they are important stakeholders and should be brought to the table.

Other coalition members described a more philosophical struggle with business owners about the very idea or mission of the coalition. One particular coalition member described, in detail, a specific situation in which a community group was given an ultimatum between providing support to the coalition or continuing to receive support from bar owners. Despite some of these challenges, respondents reported that the Responsible Beverage Server Training was a useful tool for engaging businesses and promoting collaboration in the common cause of reducing underage ATOD use.

Even though there were a number of respondents reporting issues with business engagement, they were generally concentrated in one coalition.

A small number of coalition members identified engaging the faith community sector as an issue, although for the most part, they were limited to a single coalition.

Community perceptions

Another common barrier to effective work related to several areas of community perception. One of the most prominent issues was a prevalent community culture or cultural norms that promote or tolerate substance use or abuse. The other primary community perception issue was a lack of buy-in around the goals or work of the coalition. Although not a prevalent theme, several coalition members did feel that having to focus strictly on the prevention of underage alcohol use was somewhat limiting.

Culture of ATOD use in the community

One significant barrier to the work identified by respondents was an accepted culture of ATOD use in the community. Coalition members described adults, parents, and other residents in the community who did not believe that youth substance use was an issue. Respondents also described perceptions among younger youth that the "cool" older youth were using substances.

> I have lived in this area for over ten years, and it is kind of common place for families to feel like they know how to instruct their children to drink. I have been to a lot of graduation celebrations and there are adults letting their children's friends drink to make them popular, or whatever. And it does bring a lot of guests. They serve it freely or look the other way.
>
> Creating a completely different climate of viewing and using alcohol and other drugs is very difficult. Our culture is very saturated with [ATOD]. That is a big road block. We focus on making smaller differences. Maybe [the goals of the coalition] are achievable, but it may take [years] of concerted effort to achieve them.

Some respondents also described norms in which parents view youth ATOD use in the community as a part of growing up or a rite of passage. Respondents recalled some parents who make comments such as "I did it when I was young," and believe that it is acceptable for their children to use substances.

There was endorsement of the existence of these types of cultural norms in seven out of nine of the coalitions.

Lack of buy-in among the community

Respondents attributed two basic issues to the lack of buy-in among community members. First, respondents reported that some community members did not agree with, or like, the idea of the coalition in and of itself. This barrier represents a basic ideological split between the coalition and some members of the community, and closely relates to the

culture of ATOD use discussed previously. It also suggests that some members of the community do not have an accurate understanding of the coalition and its mission.

> Part of it is the community feels threatened. They had the perception [that our goals are] to stop all drinking when our goal is to stop underage drinking. So maybe, [that perception] is too strong and a wall is set up.

The second buy-in issue reported by respondents was that coalitions sometimes struggled with getting people directly involved in their work. This represented a more functional challenge for the coalitions, and included difficulties getting people to participate in the coalition as a "member," as well as helping with, or participating in, community activities related to the coalition. However, there appears to be some relationship between issues of participation and the larger issues of ideological buy-in.

> [Parents] are more receptive to the schools for some reason. I think they do not really like that the coalition is trying to change what they have been doing for years, serving alcohol to youth. Parents that drink think they know how to help their children control their usage, but they really can't. They are standoffish to the coalition, but the alcohol youth groups have activities and when they invite them, the parents are receptive. We do have good turnout at the town hall meetings, but parents don't attend coalition meetings. They have to work and stuff, too.
>
> [One goal of the coalition is] to educate children on the effects of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs. Some kids do not care. Some kids think the program we have is a big joke. But a large number do take it seriously. So, part of the goal is to get them to listen to the information.

Multiple respondents in four of the nine coalitions endorsed the presence of buy-in issues within their communities.

Limited focus of the coalition

Although this theme was not identified by many coalition members, several did feel that having to focus strictly on preventing underage alcohol use was limiting. These respondents suggested expanding the coalition's focus to address substances such as tobacco, prescription drugs, and methamphetamines because they were also issues for youth in their community. A few thought expanding the focus beyond prevention to include early intervention and treatment would be beneficial, because of the need to reach youth who are already using substances.

> This program is geared toward alcohol, but I wish it was more flexible to cover methamphetamines or some other drugs or tobacco, [substances] that we identify at the coalition [as issues] for our area.

> Prevention groups… can't seem to talk about treatment…I see the two going hand in hand. But we are not allowed. If that could ever change, that would be wonderful. I understand the separation. But there ought to be allowed some latitude when you are talking about the poverty level that we have here.

Outreach to diverse communities

Coalition members were asked to describe how their coalition works with diverse cultural communities. There was a great deal of variation across coalitions in the ways members define diverse communities, describe their outreach to diverse communities, and perceive the effectiveness of their outreach efforts.

Perceptions related to engagement of diverse communities

When asked if they felt that their efforts to work with diverse cultural groups have been effective, 19 percent of respondents said their coalition's efforts were "effective," more than one-third (35%) said the efforts were "somewhat effective," and 8 percent felt the efforts were "not at all effective." One-fifth (22%) of respondents reported they did not know whether their coalitions' efforts were effective in this area and could provide no further information regarding those efforts.

Fifty-seven respondents, when asked a specific question regarding their coalition's work with diverse communities, were able to describe ways in which their coalition engaged in culturally-specific outreach. However, the extent to which respondents identified these activities varied considerably across coalitions.

According to respondents, the way in which coalitions worked with culturally diverse populations revolved around either direct or indirect attempts to engage specific populations in outreach activities.

Racially or ethnically diverse populations

The engagement and outreach efforts of the coalitions were mostly directed toward specific racial or ethnic groups. The most common groups that members attempted to reach out to were Hispanic or Latino and Native American populations. Laotian and African American populations were also mentioned, but by fewer people.

The top two ways in which respondents described working with diverse cultural populations were:

- Members of the diverse group had representatives on their coalition or a youth group in the community.
- The coalition provided support to an existing group, or had their own sub-group or committee, intended to provide outreach or engagement to a specific culturally diverse population.

Respondents also mentioned, although less often, the following strategies related to cultural outreach:

- Developing, directing, or translating focused communication and literature material for a specific population.
- Directly reaching out to diverse cultural communities through their youth group, youth activities, or school-based programming.

Socioeconomic groups

There was some indication that coalitions were also engaged in outreach efforts to cultural groups other than racial or ethnic groups. Descriptions of these types of efforts were mostly related to working with socioeconomically diverse populations, primarily those living in relative poverty or receiving various public assistance benefits. Discussion of this theme was relatively infrequent, though it was endorsed by multiple respondents in three of the nine communities.

> [Our] county is one of the highest welfare counties. We have to do a lot to work with third and fourth generation welfare recipients. It's hard to break through the perceived norm.

"We don't have cultural diversity"

Overall, 35 respondents mentioned a lack of diversity in their community in direct response to a question about their coalition's work with diverse groups or populations. This belief was endorsed by multiple respondents in seven of the nine coalitions.

For the most part, respondents who felt there was a lack of diversity in their community provided little information about how their coalition worked with diverse communities. However, there were a few respondents who stated their community lacked diversity yet went on to describe ways in which the coalition engaged a specific cultural group in their community. For example, a coalition member reported, "I know there are people from the Native American culture involved with our coalition, but we do not have a lot of diversity. The coalition asks Native Americans to be a part of the meetings and activities." Another coalition member talked about a lack of diversity along with, what appears to be, some racial tensions in the area:

> We don't really have a diverse population here. There are a lot of [specific group] in one of the schools that the coalition works with, and they were talking about how they can work with them. There is quite a breech between the populations there, and they were talking about what they could do to make it not so big.

In general, some respondents seemed to associate "diversity" primarily with specific racial or ethnic groups, rather than a broader definition that encompasses other non-mainstream groups. One coalition member illustrated this by saying, "we don't really have a diverse cultural community here. We have more poverty-type cultural issues."

The role of the Department of Human Services

Interviewees were asked about the role and impact of the Department of Human Services (DHS) on their coalition. Respondents mostly described DHS as providing oversight and supervision, funding, and support or assistance. Some acknowledged concerns about the role of DHS, while others did not have a clear understanding of DHS' role.

Perception of role

Oversight and supervision

Most people perceived DHS' role as providing oversight and supervision of coalition activities, particularly as they pertain to spending grant funds. This was endorsed by at least two people in all nine coalitions, and particularly prevalent in five coalitions, where at least half of the respondents attributed this role to DHS. Many coalition members identified the role of the P&I coordinator as liaison between the coalition and the oversight DHS provides.

> I would say we are an arm of the Department of Human Services, trying to implement a strategy to help achieve statewide goals of reducing underage substance abuse. I think they are intricately involved in every aspect of the development of our strategies. Everything has to be approved. They are a watchdog over every aspect. Not only do they supply funds, they also make sure we are using evidence-based practices, and that we are following our strategies and our action plan pretty closely.

Funding

Another prominent, and related, theme that emerged was the role of DHS as funder. The majority of members who discussed the funding provided by DHS referred to the current grant funding, however, several members also mentioned their hope for continued funding. In addition, many participants believed there would be negative consequences for their coalition as a result of DHS funding ending. There was agreement among at least one-third of respondents about the role of DHS as funder in eight of the nine coalitions.

Support and assistance

Nearly half of the coalition members also felt that DHS was there to support the coalition by providing advice, assistance, and training. Respondents from seven of the nine coalitions were in agreement about DHS' supportive role.

> Giving suggestions, guidelines and policies and practices that would be effective to be used. They have also set up speakers and make them available to all grantees and participants of coalition to better educate them on prevention strategies.
>
> They are the key to us being successful…They facilitate us. They are our support system and the source of our resources. When they jumped on board, for example, saying they were going to fund us doing the Most of Us, that one thing has had the biggest reverberation throughout everything we do.

Desire for more local autonomy

While the overall perceptions of DHS' role were largely positive, there were several respondents who voiced concerns about the role DHS played in their coalition. These concerns were primarily described in relationship to the oversight DHS provides. Respondents felt that their coalitions should be granted more local control because they have a deeper understanding of their communities' needs and what will be effective in their communities. In some instances, respondents felt that the approval process for ideas and initiatives was often too time-consuming, and that it undermined the coalition's autonomy and ingenuity. Although few coalition members described these concerns, two or more respondents within five coalitions shared this opinion.

> One of the big challenges is that they ask us to be creative, look at our own situation, and come up with solutions. But they control what we can do through a complex process of needing to have things approved before we could do them. So we did not have the kind of freedom that we thought would have been most helpful. On a positive side, we certainly received a lot of support in funding, and also in personnel and advice and training. So there were a lot of helpful things, as well.

Lack of clarity around the role of DHS

It should also be noted that many coalition members were unclear about the role of DHS in their coalition. While many members described DHS as providing funding and oversight, others were unable to answer questions about DHS because they did not feel that they had enough information about the agency's role.

> I don't see a lot of their role – the [P&I] coordinator is the only one who attends the DHS meetings. We don't really have any connection with them.

In many cases, the respondent seemed unclear about the difference between the Regional Prevention Coordinator (RPC) and DHS. The RPC was mentioned as a representative of DHS in several cases, and the support provided by the RPCs and DHS was often discussed interchangeably.

> DHS provides the grant and overseeing the grant to see that it is managed correctly. And they provide support, there is a support person at every meeting, a regional support person.
>
> I don't know if I know who our person from DHS is that is on our coalition. If it is [RPC], she is always there at our meetings, providing great trainings and information.

Sustainability

With the end of the DHS grant approaching, coalition members were asked to comment on their coalition's sustainability activities, including current efforts, concerns, and suggestions for sustaining the work.

Current efforts

According to respondents, grant writing and fundraising, as well as some form of strategic planning were the primary sustainability-related activities in which their coalitions were involved. A few respondents were unable to describe what their coalition was doing regarding sustainability.

Grant writing and fundraising

Coalitions have been engaged in a variety of sustainability activities, primarily grant writing and fundraising. Half of the respondents (51%) mentioned these activities when asked about their coalition's current sustainability efforts. This theme was endorsed by respondents in eight coalitions, and there was general agreement among at least one-third of respondents in seven coalitions.

At the time of the interviews, most coalitions were in the process of seeking out grant opportunities, primarily Drug Free Community grants. Some had already applied and had either received a grant or were awaiting the outcome of their grant proposal. For many coalition members, securing additional funding is so critical to continuing the work that they have developed a committee dedicated to funding and other sustainability efforts.

> We have currently started a new committee that will look for grants, meeting monthly to find out what is out there that will support and sustain our group as we move forward. We don't want to lose what we have worked on so far. We are very aware that the money is coming to a close.

At least a couple of respondents said their coalition was partnering with other groups to jointly apply for funding. A fair number acknowledged that their coalition was "thinking" about these types of efforts, but did not know the details and could not identify specific grant writing or fundraising activities.

Strategic planning

In addition to grant writing and fundraising, several coalitions were also engaged in some form of strategic planning related to sustainability. Most commonly, this took the form of

general planning, discussions, and brainstorming related to funding ideas and identifying potential community partners. For others, as noted above, this involved convening workgroups or committees devoted to the topic. This planning also involved identifying a focus on increasing membership as a way to garner additional community support.

> I know they are having some leadership meetings to say what we should do. And I know they have been bringing it up with movers and shakers within the county government.
>
> I think we have been trying to reach out to grow the coalition, contacting people we know and inviting them and informing them about the coalition.

Strategic planning was endorsed by two or more respondents in five coalitions, while there was agreement among respondents in two coalitions.

Concerns

Respondents reported some concerns about the sustainability of their coalition and its work. These concerns were primarily related to a need for ongoing funding and leadership to help the coalition maintain its work.

Ongoing funding

Many coalition members were concerned about sustaining their prevention efforts after the DHS grant ends and fear that some programs and activities will cease without this financial backing. Concerns related to funding going away were endorsed by respondents in eight of the coalitions; there was agreement about this concern in five coalitions. Several respondents went on to note that the current economic climate made other funding sources scarce.

> My concern is the lack of funding, with the economy the way it is, to get funding at the level it is now. You can't run ad campaigns for free.

A few felt there was a need for even longer-term funding (i.e., more than five years) because of the amount of time needed to gain support for and embed such a large-scale initiative in the community. Without sustained funding, some were fearful that the progress made in their community would be reversed.

A number of respondents also felt that the coalition and/or some of its current activities were in jeopardy. Many thought that they would not be able to sustain certain activities, or maintain the same level of an activity, a concern endorsed by respondents in seven of the coalitions. While most did not specify the activities in jeopardy, a few did, citing

school-based programming including Project Northland, CASASTART, and Reconnecting Youth, or other youth-related activities.

> With less funding, we would have to streamline... As far as funding for, say, the leadership program for students, I see that program as going. [We would have] a reduced activities number because of funding.

Some respondents also felt that some of the Positive Community Norms-related activities might go away, especially expensive components like the billboards.

Ongoing leadership

Related to the concerns about funding, there were also deep concerns about the lack of a paid coordinator going forward, endorsed by respondents in five coalitions. Several felt that a paid coordinator was needed to sustain the coalition's momentum and to perform tasks that volunteers may not be able to do.

> Without some money to maintain a basic infra-structure, it would be hard to continue; you need a coordinator to rally volunteers. We need a paid, even part time, position for a coordinator.
>
> In a very practical sense, we will miss the P&I more than we even realize, so we are a little fearful. She does so much work to facilitate this. She is liked by everybody. For example, I can be polarizing, but she doesn't offend anybody. It is a huge strength. She is really a connector. She produces the newsletter. She gets the Most of Us stuff together and submits it. I look at all she does and say 'I am not going to do that.' Some of her job, we can't do. But someone is going to have to take that. We are hoping for another grant, so she can stick around.

Despite these concerns, a few individuals expressed confidence about the continuation of the coalition's work, attributing this to their ability to embed some initiatives (e.g., compliance checks and school prevention curricula) into everyday practice. A couple of respondents noted that their coalition had received a Drug Free Communities (DFC) grant. Some simply stated that they felt they were doing good work and thought the community would continue it. In general, however, few respondents felt they had been successful thus far in finding a way to sustain their coalition's efforts, and most were concerned about the future.

Strategies for sustaining work

Coalition members identified some strategies for sustaining their work. Some of these strategies are a continuation of their current efforts, including grant writing, while others are new ideas, such as developing or expanding community partnerships, and streamlining activities.

New revenue and funding

When asked to suggest ideas for sustaining their coalition's work, the most common response was to focus on fundraising and/or grant writing. This recommendation was endorsed by respondents across seven coalitions, with agreement expressed by at least one-third of respondents in five coalitions. Most suggested seeking out "other" unspecified sources of funding and grants; some indicated city, county, state, or federal sources, and a few recommended businesses or others in the private sector.

> I think we have to constantly look for funding possibilities [at the] local, state and federal level. I believe we have recruited some crusaders who believe in this work and will not easily let it die. Some of it will rely on those volunteers.

Partnerships and volunteers

A number of individuals suggested seeking out new partnerships in an effort to sustain the coalition, an idea endorsed by respondents in four coalitions. Several suggested partnering with the "community" in general, or more specifically, businesses and other civic organizations to not only secure more funding, but to increase their involvement on the coalition.

> The school district can provide some funding. Some will need to come from community sources. We will need more community support for more longevity.

Several felt their coalition would need to rely on volunteers more, although some identified the need to hire a paid coordinator, as previously noted. A couple of respondents mentioned establishing partnerships with nearby coalitions. A few suggested relying more on the youth themselves and inspiring them to be leaders, take action, and maintain momentum.

Prioritizing programs

Some individuals identified the need to prioritize programs as part of their sustainability efforts, a suggestion endorsed by two or more respondents in three coalitions. With less money, these respondents felt that they will be forced to focus on fewer programs or activities. A few went on to say that they are trying to evaluate which activities are having the most impact to determine which they should maintain. A couple of respondents noted that their coalition is also trying to determine how they might sustain positive social norms campaigns without Most of Us® materials.

> We will scale back on some of programming. Realistically, knowing that we will have limited resources, [we will need to] rank order things [and] some programs will not be able to be done. Either [we have to] find volunteers to do those jobs or the programs, or they will have to fall along the way side.

Other strategies

Although some strategies were only cited by one or two individuals, their ideas may be useful to consider nonetheless. These other suggestions included: additional marketing to increase the coalition's visibility, including sharing information about its progress (i.e., data); expanding coalition membership; hiring a grant writer; eliminating non-essential coalition activities ("trim the fat"); and, obtaining additional training for the coalition. Although also not rising to the level of a theme, several members did suggest that their coalition should consider expanding their focus area or mission. This generally included references to addressing substances other than alcohol, such as tobacco or prescription drugs, although a couple of respondents thought the focus should also be expanded to address early intervention and treatment in addition to prevention.

Conclusions and issues to consider

Overall, the coalition members interviewed were satisfied with the work of their coalitions. Respondents felt that their coalitions were running smoothly and that many of their efforts were having a positive impact in their communities. For example, members describe increasing the community's awareness of the coalition as well as their knowledge of ATOD-related issues. Other perceived impacts include more youth involvement in and ownership of positive youth-led activities, changed attitudes among the community about underage substance use, and reduced access to alcohol among youth.

Members did identify opportunities to continue and enhance the work of their coalitions. Ideas included reaching out to diverse and underrepresented populations, and engaging community members to build greater buy-in and counter community norms that tolerate underage substance use. Many members are committed to sustaining their coalition's work and noted efforts such as grant writing and building community partnerships to this end.

Based on these findings and suggestions, the following issues to consider are presented below, including potential opportunities for individual coalitions (both current and future) as well as the Minnesota Department of Human Services (DHS) to consider going forward.

Individual coalitions

Engaging and educating the community

- **Educate the community about the coalition**. Given some of the misconceptions about the coalition's role and activities in the community, find ways of educating community members about the purpose of the coalition to dispel some of the myths and increase buy-in.

- **Expand and diversify membership**. Engage others in coalition activities and leadership roles, including parents, community members, businesses, young adults, and youth. Ensure the coalition has broad representation from many sectors.

- **Expand outreach to other cultural groups**. Consider whether more outreach is needed to various cultural groups in the community. In addition to racial/ethnic groups, consider a broader definition of cultural groups including people of different ages, incomes, religions, and sexual orientations. Determine whether the current activities, strategies, and messages are culturally appropriate and reaching all segments of the community.

- **Increase use of technology**. Consider opportunities to use different forms of technology, such as the internet/social media, TV, and radio, to communicate the coalition's message and reach new and broader audiences.

- **Consider new ways to reach youth**. Identify additional strategies to reach youth, such as offering chemical-free activities in the community; partnering with schools around educating youth, including targeted groups such as sports teams and coaches; and, having older youth "mentor" younger youth.

Enhancing coalition operations

- **Clarify coalition goals.** Involve all members in reviewing the mission and goals of the coalition and making any necessary modifications. Ensure that all members are clear about the coalition's goals and strategic purpose.

- **Review roles of coalition members**. Review the coalition activities in which members are involved and assess whether some activities could benefit from additional support or involvement by coalition members, based upon members' interests and skills, and the time and resources needed to carry out the activity.

- **Address sustainability**. Delegate a group of individuals to address the issue of sustainability, who are responsible for seeking out and writing grants, identifying community partners, etc. Consider partnering with other communities to jointly apply for funding and/or find opportunities to learn from other communities who have been successful in obtaining grants.

- **Assess coalition progress**. Using the Wilder Research-developed coalition survey and/or other methods, regularly collect information to assess the extent to which the coalition is meeting its goals and opportunities to enhance the work.

Expanding scope

- **Expand focus to other substances**. Beyond alcohol, other substances such as tobacco, methamphetamines, or prescription drugs may also be problematic for a segment of the community. Use available data, such as the Minnesota Student Survey, to determine whether other substances are an issue locally. If so, consider opportunities to enhance the coalition's current work by identifying new people committed to this issue and funding streams that support this focus area, and leveraging these resources to strengthen the coalition overall.

- **Expand focus to early intervention and treatment**. While Planning and Implementation funding cannot be used for treatment and intervention, consider ways

of enhancing prevention efforts by identifying new partners and funding streams that are committed to early intervention and/or treatment, in order to address the issue of substance use holistically and strengthen the coalition overall.

- **Increase focus on underage access**. Continue to focus on addressing underage access issues, including strengthening efforts around instituting social host ordinances and finding opportunities to partner with and educate parents who may serve as that access point for youth.

Department of Human Services

- **Clarify role of DHS and RPCs**. Given some misunderstandings among coalition members about the roles of DHS and the Regional Prevention Coordinators, DHS may want to share more information about the roles and responsibilities of the State and regional coordinators with all coalition members, through the local P&I coordinator. This may enhance a sense of partnership between DHS and the coalitions, increasing coalition members' buy-in and commitment to the project.

- **Allow increased autonomy among coalitions.** Consider ways of giving coalitions some decision-making authority related to the activities implemented within their communities, acknowledging their expertise about their own community and the importance of their buy-in to the success of the work.

- **Consider flexibility around grant focus area**. Coalition members identified substance use issues in the community beyond alcohol that they were interested in addressing. Even if these issues are not as prevalent as alcohol use, consider ways of supporting some of these efforts in order to maintain members' interest and buy-in and expand coalition membership.

- **Support outreach to diverse cultural communities**. Many coalition members described a lack of diverse representation on their coalitions and limited outreach to various cultural groups within their community. Consider ways of promoting the importance of cultural competence in the work, perhaps using the Strategic Prevention Framework, and offering coalitions information and training on the subject.

- **Use and share data with coalitions.** Identify opportunities to link these findings with other evaluation results and share this information with coalitions to promote data-driven decision making and reinforce successes.

Appendix

Description of data analysis methods

Coalition member interview

Description of data analysis methods

The 93 key informant interviews produced transcripts totaling approximately 96,000 words, which is roughly equivalent to 400 pages of text. The high volume of qualitative data collected through the interviews required a team of four researchers to process and analyze.

Coding

Coding is a process by which the analyst assigns specific ideas, thoughts, or information (codes) to textual content so they can refer to those codes, by looking for the specific prevalence of themes in the data or the relationship between those themes, during the data analysis and interpretation.

To develop the coding structure for the coalition interview data, the project team reviewed a random selection of about ten percent of the interview responses. Each analyst then developed a list of codes independently and, after comparing and discussing the code lists, the project team refined and agreed on a common final list of codes. The project team divided the interview data and each coded a portion of the interviews using ATLAS.ti 6.2 Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA) software.

The project team discussed, developed, and documented rules for using codes. At multiple times in the process, the project team also gathered to discuss the data analysis and coding process. Finally, each analyst's coding was checked by other analysts in the project team. All of these steps were taken to ensure consistency and reduce bias among the coding and to increase the overall quality of the analysis.

Analysis

The project team used ATLAS.ti 6.2 QDA software for the analysis of the interview data. Because each of the research questions described above was analyzed independently, by an individual member of the project team, a set of common procedures was developed to help standardize the process and ensure consistency. The basic steps of these procedures are described below, in their general sequence:

- **Develop overall themes.** The analysts looked for specific themes to emerge out of the overall data when all respondents are pooled together. The constitution of a theme varies by research question, but the general consideration is the relative strength (compared to other themes) of the evidence provided by respondents. Strength may be determined by the overall number of respondents as well as the level of detail provided by those respondents.

- **Define relationships.** As part of the analysis, relationships between themes and among other independent variables were also explored and analyzed.

- **Check coalition prevalence.** Along with looking at the themes that emerge in the overall analysis, the analysts looked at the numbers of coalitions that showed evidence of the overall themes and other themes that were evident at the coalition level. Levels of evidence vary by research question and theme, but the basic level of evidence is that a theme can be verified by multiple respondents in the same coalition.

- **Analyze for coalition-specific themes.** Analysis was also done for individual coalitions to identify the ways in which they are similar to or different from the overall findings. These analyses are reported separately in the coalition-specific summaries.

Coalition interview

Project code: 70896 ID: _____

ATOD – P&I grantees
Key informant interview with community coalition members

Hello, my name is _____ and I am calling from Wilder Research in Saint Paul on behalf of [P&I NAME] and the Minnesota Department of Human Services. We are contacting individuals involved in community coalition efforts across the state. [P&I NAME] identified you as someone on [NAME OF COALITION] we should speak with about that coalition's work in the community. We would like to ask you some questions about your experience on the coalition, including your perceptions of the coalitions' goals, the effectiveness of its activities, and its future. This information will be used to assess the impact of community coalitions across the state and will help to inform programs related to community coalitions. This interview should take about 30-45 minutes but the timing really depends on what you have to say. As a thank you for your time, you will receive a $20 gift card to your choice of Target, Wal-Mart, or Amazon.com. Your responses will be kept confidential and combined with the responses of other coalition members. If there are any questions you would rather not answer, just let me know and we will skip the questions.

1a. In your own words, what do you currently see as the primary goals of your coalition? (**IF NEEDED:** What does the coalition seek to accomplish?)

_____

_____

_____

Don't know .....(SKIP TO Q. 2).....-8

1b. Do you think these goals are achievable? Would you say…

These goals **are** achievable,.....(SKIP TO Q. 2)..... 1
Some of these goals are achievable, or 2
These goals are **not** achievable? 3
Refused.....(SKIP TO Q. 2)..... 7
Don't know .....(SKIP TO Q. 2)..... 8

1c. Can you tell me why these goals are not achievable?

_____

_____

_____

2. On what activities do you think your coalition should be focusing its time and energy? (**PROBE:** Which activities do you think are **most** worth the time, energy, and resources invested in them? The biggest bang for your buck.)

_____

_____

_____

3. What is your current role or function on the coalition? (**PROBE:** Do you sit on any committees? Do you have a leadership position in the coalition?)

_____

_____

_____

4. What led you to become involved in your coalition? (**PROBE:** When was that?)

_____

_____

_____

5a. On average, about how many hours per month do you spend on coalition activities, including the coalition meetings?

_____ Hours

Refused.....-7

Don't know .....-8

5b. What coalition activities do you spend most of your time on?

_____

_____

_____

6. I am going to read a list of activities in which coalitions might be involved. For each item, please rate your level of involvement in the activity. When rating your involvement, please consider not only the time you devote but also your overall connection to the work. [INTERVIEWER NOTE: IF PARTICIPANT RESPONDS "DON'T KNOW," PLEASE FOLLOW-UP TO DETERMINE IF THEY ARE UNSURE OF THEIR LEVEL OF INVOLVEMENT OR IF THEY ARE UNSURE ABOUT WHAT THE ACTIVITY IS]

	Would you say you have had…					If "DK"	
How about…	**A lot of involvement,**	**Some involvement, or**	**No involvement?**	**REF**	**DK**	**DK amount of involvement**	**DK what activity is**
a. The Most of Us campaign and related messaging (also called Positive Community Norms)	1	2	3	7	8	1	2
b. Zero Adult Providers (ZAP)	1	2	3	7	8	1	2
c. Compliance checks	1	2	3	7	8	1	2
d. Responsible Beverage Server Training	1	2	3	7	8	1	2
e. Youth programs and activities	1	2	3	7	8	1	2
f. Community outreach activities (e.g. fairs, town hall meetings, and special events)	1	2	3	7	8	1	2
g. Sustainability efforts	1	2	3	7	8	1	2
h. Outreach to specific cultural groups in the community	1	2	3	7	8	1	2
i. Administrative tasks	1	2	3	7	8	1	2
j. Any other activities related to the coalition: (Specify: _____ _____)	1	2	3	7	8	1	2
k. Any other activities related to the coalition: : (Specify: _____ _____)	1	2	3	7	8	1	2

7a. Of all the activities in which your coalition has been involved, please list which activities you think have been **most effective** in preventing substance abuse **among youth**?

_____

_____

_____

Don't know .....(SKIP TO Q. 8a).....-8

7b. Why have these strategies been most effective? (**PROBE:** What kinds of changes or impacts have you seen because of these activities?)

_____

_____

_____

8a. Which coalition activities, if any, do you think have been **least** effective or **not** effective?

_____

_____

_____

None.....(SKIP TO Q. 9)..... 0

Don't know .....(SKIP TO Q. 9).....-8

8b. Why have these strategies been least effective?

_____

_____

_____

Don't know .....(SKIP TO Q. 10a).....-8

8c. How would you recommend improving these activities?

_____

_____

_____

9. Would you recommend eliminating any coalition activities or focus areas? (**PROBE:** Which ones? Why?)

_____

_____

_____

10a. Thinking about who your coalition is trying to reach, are there groups or populations in your community that you are **not** reaching? Would you say…

Yes 1

No.....(SKIP TO Q. 11a)..... 2

Refused.....(SKIP TO Q. 11a)..... 7

Don't know .....(SKIP TO Q. 11a)..... 8

10b. What groups or populations do you feel you are not reaching?

_____

_____

_____

11a. In what ways does your coalition work with diverse cultural communities? (PROBE FOR SPECIFIC CULTURAL GROUPS.)

_____

_____

_____

Don't know .....(SKIP TO Q. 12a).....-8

11b. Do you feel that these efforts to work with diverse cultural groups have been effective? Would you say they have been…

Effective, ... 1

Somewhat effective, or 2

Not at all effective? 3

Refused..... 7

Don't know 8

12a. Is there anything your coalition is **not** currently doing around youth substance abuse prevention that you think they **should** consider for the future?

Yes 1

No.....(SKIP TO Q. 13a)..... 2

Refused.....(SKIP TO Q. 13a)..... 7

Don't know .....(SKIP TO Q. 13a)..... 8

12b. What should your coalition be doing around youth substance abuse prevention that is **not** currently being done?

_____

_____

_____

Now I would like to ask you a few questions about the Minnesota Department of Human Services – DHS - and their involvement in your coalition.

13a. What is your perception of the role of the Department of Human Services in the work of your coalition? **[PROBE:** How would you describe the support DHS provides to your coalition's work?]

_____

_____

_____

13b. Please describe how DHS has influenced the overall strategy or mission of the coalition.

_____

_____

_____

13c. How has DHS influenced the day-to-day activities of your coalition?

_____

_____

_____

As you may or may not know, one form of support that DHS has been providing to your coalition is financial support. I would like to ask about how you believe your coalition will function after this financial support ends in June of 2011.

14a. Do you think the coalition will continue to operate after the DHS grant expires in June 2011? Would you say it…

Definitely will, ... 1

Maybe will, or 2

Will **not**?.....(SKIP TO Q. 15a) 3

Refused.....(SKIP TO Q.15a) 7

Don't know .....(SKIP TO Q.15a) 8

14b. Do you think the coalition will maintain the same focus areas and structure after the DHS grant expires in June 2011? Would you say it…

Definitely will, ... 1

Maybe will, or 2

Will **not**?.....(SKIP TO Q. 15a) 3

Refused.....(SKIP TO Q.15a) 7

Don't know .....(SKIP TO Q.15a) 8

14c. What changes, if any, do you think your coalition will make after the DHS grant has expired? (**PROBE:** Would you describe these potential changes as positive or negative?)

_____

_____

_____

Now I would like to ask you a few questions about how your coalition is preparing for its future.

15a. Are you personally aware of any planning activities in your coalition about how it will sustain long-term? Would you say you are…

Aware of sustainability planning activities, and actively involved in the planning,..... 1

Aware of sustainability planning activities taking place, but not involved in these activities, or 2

Not aware of any sustainability planning activities taking place in your Coalition? .....(SKIP TO Q. 16a)..... 3

Refused.....(SKIP TO Q. 16a)..... 7

Don't know .....(SKIP TO Q. 16a)..... 8

15b. What sustainability planning activities has your coalition been involved with?

_____

_____

_____

15c. What **suggestions**, if any, do you have for sustaining your coalition's work?

_____

_____

_____

15d. What **concerns**, if any, do you have about the sustainability of your coalition?

_____

_____

_____

Now I have a few questions about your experience with your coalition.

16a. When you started with your coalition, what were your expectations of the coalition?

_____

_____

_____

16b. Overall, has the coalition met your expectations? Would you say…

Mostly,..... 1

Somewhat, or 2

Not at all?..... 3

Refused.....(SKIP TO Q. 17)..... 7

Don't know .....(SKIP TO Q. 17)..... 8

16c. Why do you say that?

_____

_____

_____

17. In what ways, if any, has your thinking about ATOD prevention, or about the issue of youth substance use, changed since you became involved in your coalition?

_____

_____

_____

18. Do you have any other comments about the work of the coalition or about your role in the coalition?

_____

_____

_____

Before we finish, we would like to learn a little bit about you in order to gain a picture of the range of people interviewed.

19. I am going to read a list of possible segments of the community that you might identify with in your life outside of the coalition. For each group, just tell me whether you represent the group in your work with the coalition.

Do you feel you represent…	**Yes**	**No**	**REF**	**DK**
a. A business or business association?	1	2	7	8
b. A media or news organization?	1	2	7	8
c. A school or educational institution?	1	2	7	8
d. A youth-serving organization?	1	2	7	8
e. Law enforcement?	1	2	7	8
f. A spiritual or fraternal organization?	1	2	7	8
g. A healthcare agency?	1	2	7	8
h. State, local, or tribal government?	1	2	7	8
i. A civic or volunteer group?	1	2	7	8

20. Are you a **youth** member of your coalition?

Yes 1
No 2
Refused 7
Don't know 8

21. Are you a **parent** member of your coalition?

Yes 1
No 2
Refused 7
Don't know 8

22. Is your role on this coalition considered part of your employment?

Yes, my work on this coalition is part of my job 1
No, my work on this coalition is as a volunteer 2
Refused 7
Don't know 8

23. [NOTE TO INTERVIEWER: ONLY ASK IF UNSURE]. Are you…

Male or 1
Female? 2
Refused 7
Don't know 8

24. How do **you** describe your race or ethnicity? [NOTE TO INTERVIEWER: DO NOT READ RESPONSE OPTIONS AT FIRST. IF RESPONSE GIVEN DOES NOT FIT INTO ONE OF THE OPTIONS BELOW, PLEASE FOLLOW-UP TO IDENTIFY A CATEGORY].

African-American or Black, ... 1
American Indian or Native American, ... 2
Asian or Pacific Islander, ... 3
Hispanic or Latino, ... 4
White or Caucasian, ... 5
More than one race, or 6
Something else? (Please describe: _____) ... 7
Refused ..... -7
Don't know ..... -8

25. Do you **live** in the community your coalition serves?

Yes 1
No 2
Refused 7
Don't know 8

26. Do you **work** in the community your coalition serves?

Yes 1
No 2
Refused 7
Don't know 8

Those are all of the questions I have for you today. Thank you for taking the time to complete our interview. As a thank you, we would like to send you a $20 gift card to either Target, Wal-Mart, or Amazon.com. Which would you prefer?

Target 1

Walmart 2

Amazon.com 3

You can choose to either have your gift certificate sent to you by email or through the mail. If you choose to have your gift certificate sent to you through **email**, the gift certificate can **only** be use for **online** purchases. If you would prefer to use your gift certificate **in the store,** or you would simply prefer to have a physical card, it will be sent by certified mail within the next week or two. This means that the mail carrier will bring it to your door for someone to sign for it, so we know that it wasn't lost in the mail or stolen. Would you prefer to have your gift certificate sent to you by email, or through the mail? [INTERVIEWER; IF CERTIFIED MAIL IS A PROBLEM, GIVE R A CHOICE OF HAVING IT SENT ELSEWHERE OR HAVING IT SENT BY REGULAR MAIL AT HIS/HER OWN RISK. THIS MEANS THAT IF THEY DON'T RECEIVE IT, WE WILL NOT REPLACE IT.]

Email 1

Certified 2

Regular mail 3

What name and address should we send the gift card to?

Name: _____

Address [IF CHOSE TO HAVE **MAILED**]: _____

_____

_____

Email Address [IF CHOSE TO HAVE **E-MAILED**]: _____

Thank you again for your time!