



## STATE LEVEL PROJECT OVERSIGHT AND TRAINING TIP SHEET



### State Level Project Oversight

State level staff play a key role in providing oversight and support for the implementation of local Personal Responsibility Education Program (PREP) activities. This Tip Sheet provides guidance for the State PREP grantees on ways to ensure effective implementation of the project. These oversight and support responsibilities include monitoring contracts and sub-grants in states that choose to partner with outside organizations; providing training and advice to program facilitators working directly with youth; helping to coordinate PREP activities with broader efforts to reduce teen pregnancy in the state; and maintaining responsibility for the fiscal and administrative aspects of this federal grant, including monitoring the state and its sub-grantees' adherence to all assurances—express and implied—in accepting Federal funding.

### Establishing Roles and Documenting Responsibilities

States should establish clear roles and responsibilities for those involved in the PREP project.

Different states have different requirements about how to solicit and pay for certain goods and services, typically referred to as “procurement mechanisms.” These procurement mechanisms often have different reporting requirements as well. States can choose a procurement mechanism that will be most helpful for them to ensure the effective oversight of PREP program implementation, and the efficient collection of the information that will be required for federal program reporting. Since it is often the case that various procurement vehicles have unique reporting requirements, PREP state staff should seek guidance from the state’s procurement office about the best way to ensure that oversight authority is sufficient and that the required information is most efficiently obtained.

Once procurement mechanisms are in place, several steps can be taken to ensure that sub-grantees and contractors understand what is expected of them. As states work with sub-grantees and contractors, clear and timely communication regarding specific expectations, deliverables, and timelines is paramount to successfully running the project and managing relationships with funding recipients. States should include specific statements of obligations for contractors or sub-grantees within contract or sub-grant agreements, on topics which may include:

- Trainings sub-grantees or contractors must attend
- Trainings sub-grantees or contractors must provide to staff
- Reporting requirements

By including details regarding these types of obligations within contractual or sub-grantee documentation, states will be better able to ensure that program goals are well understood by PREP funding recipients and monitor activities and program progress. For example, states are obligated to ensure that sub-awardees institute procedures to document protections extended to prevent harassment and bullying of any youths. They should be prepared to record all corrective

actions they take in administering programs in a non-stigmatizing fashion if or when instances of bullying are reported.<sup>1</sup>

In addition to ensuring that sub-grantees and contractors understand what is expected of them, it is important to establish and clarify the roles of every entity involved in the project. For example, specific processes should be established and communicated regarding the following issues:

- Who may request training and technical assistance on a topic, and how to do so
- Who submits reports and data to the federal government
- Who is responsible for specific day-to-day tasks associated with program implementation (i.e. agreements with individual schools, recruitment of youth for programs, etc.)
- Who is responsible for monitoring sub awardees' compliance with ensuring anti-harrassment measures are enacted that monitor bullying or stigmatizing of sexual minority youth
- Additional issues specific to state PREP program implementation

States should also communicate closely with FYSB project officers to better understand what decisions about the project need approval from the federal government and which can be made at the program or state levels. Grantees should be clear about who has approval authority for awarding sub-grants and contracts; choosing curricula to be implemented; and proposed adaptations to the curricula during implementation. Clearly communicating about this structure and approval process will ensure that all entities involved in the project are in compliance with FYSB standards, and that all are working toward the same goals.

Ongoing communication not directly related to oversight of the grant can also help states build rapport with sub-grantees and contractors. States can send periodic updates to sub-grantees about new research on teen pregnancy prevention or adulthood preparation topics, funding opportunities from outside organizations, and other relevant announcements for those working in the fields of youth development, health promotion, and adolescent reproductive health. Electronic bulletins, emails, and online documents on blogs can serve the purpose of informing interested agencies.

Ensuring that all entities involved in the PREP project understand the role of all partners and are clear on what is expected of them can help achieve accountability and help grantees meet program goals in a timely fashion.

## Oversight: Monitoring Progress and Reporting Requirements

One way for states to monitor program progress and ensure accountability from sub-grantees and contractors is to require periodic reports – on a monthly, quarterly, or semi-annual basis. As states develop sub-grantee or contractor reporting requirements, consider:

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<sup>1</sup> From modified 2011 FOA: "As States design their programs, ACF also encourages them to consider the needs of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and questioning youth and how their programs will be inclusive of and non-stigmatizing toward such participants. (<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/open/foa/view/HHS-2010-ACF-ACYF-PREP-0125>)

- **Data collection** – states should require that reports capture information about the sub-grantees’ performance and the youth they are serving (see below);
- **Linking funding to reporting requirements** – states can stipulate that contractors and sub-grantees submit reports with information about activities for a specific period before payment is approved and made for that period;
- **Report timing** - states can define reporting period to allow sub-grantees and contractors adequate time to compile the most up-to-date data and information in order to include the information in state-level reports required by the Family and Youth Services Bureau (FYSB).

States should develop a report template or format that clearly identifies the required information for each of the five broad performance measure categories from FYSB:

1. Output measures (e.g., number of youth served, hours of service delivery)
2. Fidelity/adaptation
3. Implementation and capacity building (e.g., community partnerships, competence in working with the identified population)
4. Outcome measures (e.g., behavioral, knowledge, and intentions)
5. Community data (e.g. STIs, birth rates, etc.).

In addition, states can ask that sub-grantees and contractors:

- Highlight other information of particular interest, such as demographic information about the youth served;
- Identify obstacles encountered during program delivery;
- Provide input regarding specific technical assistance needs.

**Data Collection:** States can request that periodic reports include data that is useful for state-level work towards broader teen pregnancy prevention goals that fall outside the scope of the PREP project. For example, data from grant reports can inform a state’s work on its Maternal and Child Health (MCH) Block Grant (specifically, National Performance Measure Number #08: the rate of births per 1,000 for teenagers aged 15 through 17 years). Also, some states participate in youth surveillance activities related to health risk behavior like the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) administered on a biennial basis by the CDC-Division of Adolescent and School Health or US Department of Education Safe and Drug Free Schools data. Perhaps existing data collection already uses measures that can serve the purpose of reporting behavioral or other outcome data. Collecting or analyzing these data can serve as a tool for states to monitor and track the general performance of sub-grantees and contractors.

**Evaluation:** If planning a state-level evaluation of the project, consider the best method for collecting behavioral data from youth, especially if participants will be asked to provide information about sexual activity on pre- and post-tests. It may be difficult for some state agencies to obtain Internal Review Board (IRB) approval for evaluation tools if they will be administered to youth in elementary and middle school. States frequently assess local youth data in health planning for many purposes, like compliance with state regulation or participation in Healthy People 2020 planning. PREP staff should be aware of these ongoing efforts and coordinate where possible. Program administrators can use other data being collected at the state, county, and local levels, such as the YRBS or similar surveys.

## Training and Technical Assistance

Sub-grantees and contractors, particularly those who are working directly with youth, benefit from training and ongoing support to ensure that they are providing the best, most efficient services possible. Their needs may range from very specific information about delivering evidence-based and effective programs, to more general information about how to sustain a successful teen pregnancy prevention effort in their community. The state has an important role to play in ensuring that those receiving PREP funding within the state receive the necessary support to implement successful programs.

PREP technical assistance may be available by contacting a FYSB Project Officer, or other designated technical assistance provider, for specific questions about programs. In addition to this one-one-one technical assistance, states and their sub-grantees and contractors can take advantage of trainings on specific topics that will be provided by FYSB and other designated providers.

States should also making trainings and technical assistance available to recipients of PREP funding in the state as needed. Administrators should begin planning with low-cost needs assessments to determine what training is necessary – these needs may range from internal capacity building like support for staff or sister agency partners, to external training needs for sub-grantee staff, support and information for community based organizations, volunteers, teachers, educators, etc. Statewide grantee meetings may be an important opportunity for the sub-grantees and contractors in your state to obtain information on relevant topics such as evaluation, developing and managing data collection, fidelity, adaptation, and others. These trainings are beneficial to fostering better communication between the funded entities and state-level project staff, creating opportunities for peer-to-peer sharing, and improving outcomes for the youth in the state.

If grantees would benefit from training on topics that are outside of the expertise of the state's designated PREP project team, consider providing resources and training from within other departments in the state before turning to outside consultants or contractors. Examples include:

- The Office of the Attorney General - Domestic Violence and/or Healthy Relationships
- Office of Civil Rights
- The State Treasurer's Office - Financial Literacy

## References and Resources

- HHS, Office of Grants and Acquisition Policy and Accountability, Division of Grants, Grant Information for Current and Prospective HHS Grantees:  
<http://dhhs.gov/asfr/ogapa/aboutog/grantsnet.html>
- U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office of the Assistant Secretary for Resources and Technology Office of Grants, Grants Policy Statement:  
<http://dhhs.gov/asfr/ogapa/grantinformation/hhsgps107.pdf>

- Teen Pregnancy Prevention Resources, provided by the Family and Youth Services Bureau.  
[http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/fysb/content/docs/tpp\\_resources.pdf](http://www.acf.hhs.gov/programs/fysb/content/docs/tpp_resources.pdf)
- State Personal Responsibility Education Program Funding Opportunity Announcement.  
<http://www.acf.hhs.gov/grants/open/foa/view/HHS-2010-ACF-ACYF-PREP-0125>