
Curriculum-Based Support Groups (CBSG)

Program Brief FY 2020-2021

Prevention Prepared Communities - Logistics:

The **Livingston COMMUNITY PREVENTION Project (LCPP)** was formed in 2008 to prevent substance use



Livingston COMMUNITY PREVENTION Project
"Supporting community health and wellness"

disorders throughout Livingston County. Karen Bergbower & Associates, Key Development Center, Inc. and Livingston County Catholic Charities are the collaborative partners of LCPP. These agencies work together to implement several prevention programs that have been proven to impact substance use and related problems. LCPP provides an array of prevention services that target all sectors of Livingston County, including parents, schools, and the community.

LCPP has targeted Livingston County as a whole with special emphasis in the community of Pinckney. The Livingston County Community Alliance (LCCA) and It Stops with Students (ISWS)/Students Leading Students (SLS)/Students Taking a New Direction (STAND) work closely with all five school districts as well as local government, law enforcement, and community members. LCPP is also closely aligned with the Substance Use Disorder Prevention and Treatment Workgroup of the Human Services Collaborative Body as well as Wake Up Livingston, which is using the Project Lazarus model to decrease opiate-related overdoses and deaths.

Priority Areas, Primary Problems, and Associated Intervening Variables:

Offering prevention programming to the vulnerable children in grades 4, 5 and 6 was possible only by identifying an evidence-based model designed to reach these younger children. The current model, Project SUCCESS, was not validated for use with the younger grades. After several years of discussion and investigating appropriate models, the CBSG model was selected and national training acquired.

The targeted CMHPSM Priority Areas, Problems and Intervening Variables are:

CMHPSM Priority Area 1: Reducing Childhood and Underage Drinking

- a) Primary Problem: Early aggression, academic failure, school dropout
- b) Intervening Variables: Lack of perceived risk of alcohol

CMHPSM Priority Area 2: Reducing Prescription and Over the Counter Abuse/Misuse

- a) Primary Problem: Early aggression, academic failure. School dropout
- b) Intervening Variables: Lack of perceived risk of prescription medication

CMHPSM Priority Area 3: Reducing Illicit Drug Use

- a) Primary Problem: Early aggression, academic failure, school dropout
- b) Intervening Variables: Lack of perceived risks of illicit drugs

Evidence Based Intervention/Initiative and CSAP Prevention Strategies:

The CBSG (Curriculum Based Support Groups) program has been implemented in Livingston County's elementary schools since 2015.

The CBSG facilitators work with elementary level students in small group settings within the school. In the past, the program targeted students in fourth, fifth and sixth grades. At the request of the schools, CBSG was expanded this year to include third grade students. CBSG facilitators work collaboratively with school staff to refer students who need additional services to school counselors or can provide them with additional resources that may be helpful. The CBSG program is a support group intervention designed to increase resiliency and reduce risk factors among children and youth ages 4-17 who are identified as being at elevated risk for early substance use and future delinquency and violence (e.g., they are living in adverse family situations, displaying observable gaps in coping and social skills, or displaying early indicators of antisocial attitudes and behaviors).

Based on cognitive-behavioral and competence-enhancement models of prevention, the CBSG Program teaches essential life skills and offers emotional support to help children and youth cope with difficult family situations; resist peer pressure; set and achieve goals; refuse alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs; and reduce antisocial attitudes and rebellious behavior. Delivered in 12 weekly, 1-hour support group sessions, the curriculum addresses topics such as self-concept, anger and other feelings, dreams and goal setting, healthy choices, friends, peer pressure, life challenges, family chemical dependency, and making a public commitment to staying drug free and true to life goals. Lesson content and objectives are essentially the same for all participants but are tailored for age and developmental status.



CBSG trained implementers use information dissemination, prevention and intervention education, and problem identification as the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP) strategies.

Outcomes/Results:

NREPP measured outcomes for CBSG included antisocial attitudes, rebellious behavior, attitudes and intentions about substance use, and substance use. An overall rating of 3.7 on a scale of 4 applied to each of the four outcomes criteria in the research.

In accordance with the evidence-based CBSG model, the LCPP stated as its single outcome an increased pre/post test score of a 32 on a 10 item scale extracted from the Individual Protective Factors Index (IPFI, Springer & Phillips, 1977). Participants will demonstrate they maintain or improve their anti-substance-abuse attitudes and intentions via improved scores between pre and post tests or a minimum score of 32 on both tests. The improved score meets the criteria for the model's inclusion on SAMHSA's National Registry of Evidence-based Programs and Practices.

During the 2020-2021 school year, 17 CBSG groups were offered in Pinckney (Navigator) and Howell (Hutchings, Three Fires, Southwest and Voyager).

- 105 students participated in CBSG groups.
- Of the group participants, 49 students attended 10 or more groups. This number was lower than projected due to several students being in quarantine from COVID exposure, thereby missing groups.
- 81 students or 76% *maintained or improved their “non-use attitudes toward alcohol and other drugs”* as indicated by comparison of their post-survey scores against their pre-survey scores or a minimum score of 32 on both pre and post surveys.

“I have been a facilitator for both Project SUCCESS and Curriculum Based Support Groups for the past ten years. I’ve facilitated up to ten groups in multiple schools during one school week, so I think I’ve heard and seen just about everything there is to know about students and their families. Sometimes the stories the students talk about are heart-wrenching and sometimes they’re uplifting.

I decided to ask the students, during one of the groups I facilitate for fourth graders, what they liked most about their group. By the way, the name they chose for their group was “Pumpkin Pie Friends”. I wrote down what they said and here’s the list:

- *I get to see all my new friends*
- *I’m comfortable sharing*
- *I learn new stuff*
- *I learned about SIT (Lesson 4, Anger CBSG. It’s an acronym for Stop, Identify and Take Action)*
- *I get a break from the day and we talk. It’s not just good, but it’s very GOOD.*
- *My dad will be out of jail soon and I’m worried, but I know I can talk about it because everything is private*
- *Lots of caring*
- *We get candy*
- *We get to chill out and have good talks*

I’m sure that if I asked the same question “What Do You Like About Group” at my other schools, I would get the same responses. Thank you for the opportunity to share and I hope we can continue supporting our young and very vulnerable children and teens.”

- Jan Lobur, Prevention Specialist

CBSG and Project Success

The LCPP intends to continue offering CBSG in the lower grade levels. Facilitators, students, school administrators, and prevention advocates throughout the county are delighted with the CBSG curriculum and the students’ reaction to it. We look forward to continued use of the model in Livingston County’s prevention efforts.