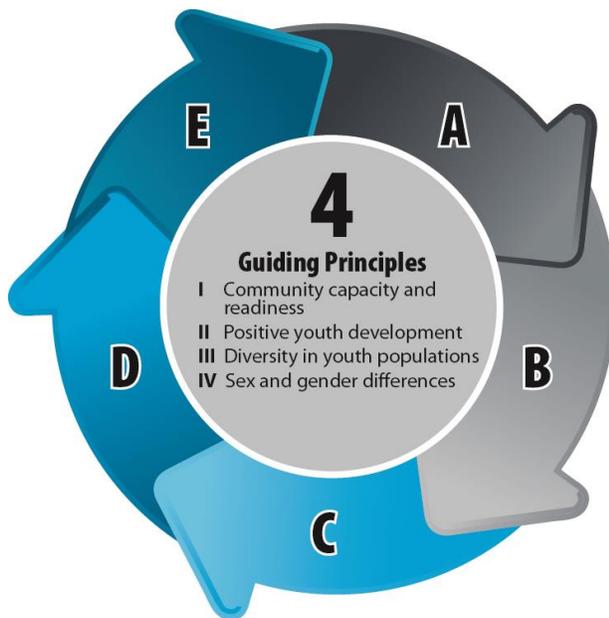




## Community Standards at a Glance

The 18 Standards below provide an evidence-informed framework for community health promotion teams and prevention committees to use when planning, implementing or evaluating youth substance abuse prevention initiatives. The Standards are based on the best available research of what works in prevention as described in the Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse (CCSA) workbook, *Stronger Together: Canadian Standards for Community-based Youth Substance Abuse Prevention*. Standards at a Glance will help you better understand each of the Standards so you can identify the ones that need to be developed or strengthened in your initiative. It is best used with the Planning, Self-Assessment and Action Sheet. The results of your assessment can be used as a baseline to monitor your initiative's progress in meeting the Standards from year to year.

The Standards framework can be used by all initiatives, whether they are well developed or are just getting off the ground. Although the Standards are organized within a five-phase planning cycle, given that community prevention work is non-linear by nature, they may be implemented in a different order depending on your particular context. In addition, considering all 18 Standards at one time may not be practical; it may be more valuable or feasible to focus on developing or strengthening only a limited number of Standards. For a deeper understanding of each Standard or to complete a more detailed self-assessment, consult the *Stronger Together* workbook, which can be found under the Youth Drug Prevention priority at [www.ccsa.ca](http://www.ccsa.ca).



### A. ASSESS

1. Determine youth substance use patterns and associated harms
2. Learn factors linked to local youth substance use problems
3. Assess current activities, resources and capacity to act

### B. ORGANIZE

4. Engage youth partners in the initiative
5. Develop organizational structure and processes
6. Build and maintain team capacity
7. Clarify members' perceptions and expectations

### C. PLAN

8. Ensure plan addresses priority concerns and factors, and current capacity
9. Develop logic model showing how initiative will bring desired change
10. Plan for sustainability of the initiative

### D. COORDINATE & IMPLEMENT

11. Promote quality of existing and planned initiatives
12. Strengthen coordination among local initiatives
13. Give attention to community policies and processes
14. Monitor the initiative

### E. EVALUATE

15. Conduct a process evaluation of the initiative
16. Conduct an outcome evaluation of the initiative
17. Account for costs associated with the initiative
18. Revise initiative based on evaluation



## Getting to Know the Standards

### Phase A. ASSESS the situation

<b>1. Determine youth substance use patterns and associated harms</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Draw on more than one reliable source or gather new information to learn about substances being used, prevalence, hazardous use, associated harms and age, gender and risk-group differences</li> </ul>
<b>2. Learn factors linked to local youth substance use problems</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish the risk and protective factors that appear to be connected to particular substance use concerns (e.g., personal, family, school, social, community and social determinants of health)</li> </ul>
<b>3. Assess current activities, resources and capacity to act</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Identify frameworks, programs and initiatives currently in the community into which youth substance abuse prevention could be integrated (e.g. Healthy Communities, Safe Schools, mental health frameworks, anti-bullying programs)</li> <li>• Identify the activities of agencies and groups addressing youth substance abuse, health and social development</li> <li>• Review relevant community policies and procedures specific to youth</li> <li>• Assess the general capacity of the community in terms of knowledge, concern, interest, technical expertise, leadership, trust, participation, partnership and funding</li> </ul>

### Phase B. ORGANIZE the team and build capacity

<b>4. Engage youth partners in the initiative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clarify the role of youth in relation to other prevention team or committee members and their involvement in decision making</li> <li>• Establish a mutually defined, transparent and inclusive recruitment process</li> <li>• Conduct orientation sessions to prepare youth and adults to work together effectively and respectfully</li> <li>• Facilitate active and meaningful youth participation (e.g., eliminate jargon, provide transportation, encourage their contributions and leadership)</li> </ul>
<b>5. Develop organizational structure and processes</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure the team has a diverse complement of members to promote credible, comprehensive action</li> <li>• Develop mutually defined terms of reference to define mandate, roles, expectations, processes and approach</li> <li>• Design processes to maintain healthy group dynamics, manage possible power imbalances, and ensure open and respectful discussion</li> <li>• Identify a credible lead organization, preferably one that can provide in-kind support</li> </ul>
<b>6. Build and maintain team capacity</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create practical, interactive learning opportunities to increase the team's potential for success</li> <li>• Tap into the expertise of team members or external resources to build the team's knowledge and skills in the areas of leadership, collaboration, cultural competence, financial capacity and technical knowledge (e.g., prevention, evaluation, advocacy and media)</li> </ul>
<b>7. Clarify team members' perceptions and expectations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Discuss team members' perceptions of substance use issues</li> <li>• Identify expectations for the initiative, outcomes and approach</li> <li>• Align approach with research-based prevention approaches (e.g., risk and protective factors, systems-based response, a focus on policy, coordination between organizations and strengthening existing programs)</li> </ul>



### Phase C. PLAN a logical and sustainable initiative

<p><b>8. Ensure the plan addresses priority concerns and factors, as well as current capacity</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establish the theory and approach to guide the initiative (e.g., social ecological systems theory)</li> <li>• Determine a clear, long-term goal (or goals) for substance abuse prevention</li> <li>• Prioritize the targeted factors, issues and gaps to ensure a comprehensive initiative (e.g., targeted substances, behaviours and perceptions; risk and protective factors; at-risk and gender groups; developmental periods; community concerns; programming, policy and coordination gaps; organizational structure and capacity to be developed)</li> <li>• Confirm the initiative is realistic by appraising the goal(s) and priority factors and concerns to be addressed against the time, capacity and level of coordination available to implement the initiative</li> </ul>
<p><b>9. Develop a logic model showing how the initiative will bring about the desired change</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Outline the long-term goals, medium-term outcomes and immediate outcomes, as well as the activities and resources required to achieve them (this becomes the initiative's roadmap to keep the team on track)</li> <li>• Establish performance indicators to measure progress for monitoring and evaluation purposes</li> <li>• Verify with the team (and beyond) the completeness of the logic model and the likelihood that it will bring about the desired change</li> </ul>
<p><b>10. Plan for sustainability of the initiative</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create a 3–5 year strategic or sustainability plan that includes ways to strengthen the initiative and obtain resources to support it</li> <li>• Cultivate a broad base of community support, actively involve local government and key influencers, strengthen links with parents and partners, and groom enthusiastic champions</li> <li>• Align your efforts with community culture, activities and events, and embed prevention policies and practices into routine institutional processes and programming</li> <li>• Ensure dedicated time for coordination, secure a committed lead agency and seek diverse funding streams</li> <li>• Build credibility through evaluation and publicly profiling your work</li> </ul>





### Phase D. COORDINATE *and* IMPLEMENT *evidence-based activities*

<p><b>11. Promote quality of existing and planned initiatives</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Adopt evidence-based programs when relevant and applicable</li> <li>• Exercise care when adapting evidence-based programs to maintain the core components</li> <li>• Adhere to best practice guidelines prepared by credible organizations if the team chooses to develop a program rather than adopt or adapt an existing program</li> <li>• Monitor and critically reflect on prevention work (e.g., form a community of practice among prevention workers)</li> <li>• Introduce in phases new prevention policies and activities</li> </ul>
<p><b>12. Strengthen coordination among local initiatives</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase consistency, coordination and integration of current activities in the community before implementing new activities</li> <li>• Create mechanisms for relationship building and communication between partner organizations and prevention workers</li> <li>• Explore protocols to ensure high-risk youth are not slipping through the cracks</li> <li>• Coordinate outreach efforts to other organizations that share an interest in promoting youth health or development, and explore ways to mutually support each other's work</li> <li>• Identify ways in which agencies can collaborate to attract new funds</li> </ul>
<p><b>13. Give attention to community policies and processes</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assess existing policies in the organizations on the prevention team and within the community</li> <li>• Identify and prioritize regulatory, programmatic, social and economic policies that would help you reach your outcomes and long-term goal(s) (e.g., access to alcohol and drugs, housing policies, parenting support for new parents)</li> <li>• Build your team's capacity to address policy issues and advocate for policy change</li> </ul>
<p><b>14. Monitor the initiative</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create tools to capture and share observations, data and feedback</li> <li>• Create opportunities or mechanisms to critically reflect on your group's work</li> <li>• Document any lessons learned and use them to adjust and improve your approach, logic model and upcoming efforts</li> </ul>





### Phase E. EVALUATE and REVISE initiative accordingly

<b>15. Conduct a process evaluation of the initiative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess the degree to which the initiative has been implemented as intended and assess its quality using monitoring documentation (e.g., by asking what was intended, what happened, and how and why it happened)</li> <li>Discuss the results and implications of the process evaluation to improve effectiveness and empower the team</li> </ul>
<b>16. Conduct an outcome evaluation of the initiative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Assess the degree to which the initiative had the desired effect (i.e., did it work?) in addition to unintended outcomes (both positive and negative)</li> <li>Secure evaluation expertise to establish indicators, baseline data and benchmarks for success at the beginning of a program</li> <li>Involve the broader team in the evaluation to ensure consensus and ownership of its purpose, scope and analysis—and the resultant future directions for the initiative</li> </ul>
<b>17. Account for costs associated with the initiative</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Measure the return on investment of the initiative by comparing the economic, in-kind and human resource costs with the perceived or actual outcomes or benefits</li> <li>Discuss the risks of doing and not doing the initiative, the most efficient ways to get the results, the cost implications of expanding or shrinking the initiative, and its overall sustainability</li> </ul>
<b>18. Revise initiative based on evaluations</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Identify new directions for the initiative based on the evaluations and cost/benefit analysis as well as any changes in your situation (e.g., context, community needs, target groups, team composition), then revise your strategic plan and logic framework accordingly</li> <li>Re-assess team structure, processes and ways of working</li> <li>Consider new evidence-based prevention research and adjust your approach</li> </ul>

The Standards are part of *A Drug Prevention Strategy for Canada’s Youth*, which aims to reduce illicit drug use by Canadian youth between the ages of 10 and 24. To find out more about the Standards initiative, please visit [www.ccsa.ca](http://www.ccsa.ca) or contact us at [youth-jeunes@ccsa.ca](mailto:youth-jeunes@ccsa.ca).



Canadian Centre  
on Substance Abuse  
Centre canadien de lutte  
contre les toxicomanies

The Canadian Centre on Substance Abuse changes lives by bringing people and knowledge together to reduce the harm of alcohol and other drugs on society. We partner with public, private and non-governmental organizations to improve the health and safety of Canadians.

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