

Afterschool and Substance Use

Beyond California's Proposition 64

Opportunities

- National conversation and news coverage on substance use linked to use of opioids and other drugs
- New state and local revenue from legal sale of marijuana in states beyond California
- Renewed interest in positive youth development and resiliency tied to discussions on social-emotional development and character
- Growing understanding of Adverse Childhood Experiences and Trauma-informed Approaches
- Efforts at juvenile justice reform
- New school discipline reform concepts such as restorative practice
- Greater interest in community school models
- Focus on needs of unique populations: “Opportunity Youth”, LGBTQ Youth, Girls of Color, Boys of Color, homeless youth, and more
- New federal opioid funding and legislation
- Discussion on student mental health needs since Parkland school shooting

Challenges

- Connecting the dots among the opportunities
- Identifying best practices and research-informed program models
- Going beyond “just say no” program models
- Need for funds exceeds available dollars; leads to competing interest groups focused on different age ranges, target groups and types of interventions
- Lack of workers trained in effective substance use disorder prevention, education and early intervention
- Bringing in authentic youth perspectives on this topic
- How to tackle topic while avoiding stigmatizing youth or certain sub-groups of youth
- Finding best ways to position afterschool in the conversations on substance use and mental health

The Scale of the Opioid Crisis

- Recent data says that there were 174 deaths from drug overdoses every day in 2016, one every 8 1/2 minutes.
- According to some public health experts the opioid epidemic is now deadlier than the AIDS epidemic at its peak.
- More than 42,000 Americans died of opioid overdoses in 2016, a 28% increase over 2015.
- The number of people fatally overdosing on fentanyl and other synthetic opiates more than doubled, from 9,580 in 2015 to 19,413 in 2016.

Ways afterschool can help

- *Responding to Immediate Needs*
 - Provide family supports and two generation solutions
 - Become part of a community ecosystem of supports and response
 - Helping rebuild social capital in impacted communities

- *Providing Safe Space During Hours of Risk*
 - Offering positive social, recreational and artistic activities
 - Caring adults
 - Mentoring
 - Hope, future focus

- *Afterschool as Prevention*
 - Build protective factors
 - Develop resiliency
 - Offset adverse childhood experiences through trauma informed practice
 - Heal toxic stress through nutrition, exercise, mindfulness and more

Parallel and Overlapping Topics

- School wellness policies
- Community schools
- Juvenile justice reform/restorative practice
- School discipline reform/PBIS
- Chronic absence
- Social emotional learning
- Character education
- Teen suicide prevention

Communities Needing Extra Focus

- Homeless youth
- Foster youth
- LGBTQ youth
- Neighborhoods impacted by war on drugs
- Areas seeing high numbers of "deaths of despair"
- Rural areas