



IPFS Strategic Plan FAQ's



While reviewing the IPFS Strategic Plans and associated documents, a number of common themes were noted where clarification may be needed in regard to what is expected.

Review of this FAQ document, in conjunction with participating in the webinar on March 3 at 10:00, will cover many questions you may have once you receive feedback on your Strategic Plans, Logic Models and Action Plans.

1) Document Readability and Grammatical Errors

Make sure your strategic plan can be read and understood by anyone within or outside of your coalition and that it's free of errors. Think back to the first time you heard of the Tri-Ethnic Survey. Do not take for granted that your reader will know what this is. Be specific and make sure the resources, terms, steps and strategies you are using are clear for anyone who may read your document.

Also ensure that your document is grammatically correct. Acronyms need to be spelled out at least the first time they are used. Pay attention also to capitalization, punctuation and word usage.

Ask someone from outside of your coalition, perhaps an English teacher, to proof your strategic plan so it's both understandable and free from grammatical errors. The document you submit to IDPH should be ready for distribution, once approved; therefore it should be in its final, error free format when submitted.

2) IPFS Overview

The IPFS overview needs to include: What the IPFS grant is, how long it is, what it's for, and why. The following information may be helpful:

Iowa Partnerships for Success (IPFS) is a five year grant, funded through September 29, 2019, by the Iowa Department of Public Health through the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMSHA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. IPFS addresses the substance abuse prevention priorities of reducing underage drinking and youth binge drinking among persons aged 12 to 20. XX County is one of 12 counties in Iowa selected to receive the IPFS grant due to high rates of underage alcohol use. This was based on data including 30-day alcohol use and binge drinking data from the 2010 and 2012 Iowa Youth Survey. The IPFS grant utilizes the Strategic Prevention Framework. This is a five-step, data driven process used to 1) assess needs; 2) build capacity; 3) engage in a strategic planning process; 4) implement a strategic plan and 5) evaluate processes and outcomes. Cultural competency and sustainability are a focus across all five SPF steps.

3) Targets of Change vs. Agents of Change

In reading many of the strategic plans, there was some confusion regarding the target population for each strategy. The target of change should reflect the portion of the target population for the grant (youth ages 12-20) that this strategy will have an impact on. The agents of change are those persons whose behavior and actions will be addressed in order to effect change in the target population.

Targets of Change = The people who experience the problem or issue

- Those people who directly experience the problem or are at risk.
Youth 12-20 years old.

Agents of Change = The people who can help

- Those people who can establish a strong relationship with the person most affected.
Parents, guardians, teachers.
- Those people who can convince the person experiencing the issue of the need for a change.
Parents, guardians, teachers, faith leaders, treatment counselors, JCO.
- Those people who can make that change happen.
Parents, Teachers, Law Enforcement, County Attorney, Community Volunteers, City/County Leaders.
- Those people who can help maintain the change.
Parents, Teachers, Law Enforcement, County Attorney, Community Volunteers, City/County Leaders.

Example: RBST

Target of Change: Underage Youth 18-20 (data shows they are using fake ID's or are not getting their ID's checked because they look old enough)

Agent of Change: County alcohol retailers (they can require their employees to attend TIPS training)
Event leaders (they can require all volunteers to be TIPS trained)
City and county leadership (they can put a policy in place to require all establishments, which serve alcohol, to be TIPS trained before they get their liquor license renewed.)

4) Disparate Population

A disparate population is one who is disproportionately impacted by the priority issue. Disparate populations are a smaller subset of the target population for the grant. There are a variety of factors that you can look at when identifying this population. For example, is there a specific age group, within the target population, that seems to have higher use rates or suffers more consequences when compared to the target population as a whole? When you look at the data separated out by race, gender, socioeconomic status, involvement in activities, students at risk for mental health issues or academic problems, or other factors, do you see a group that is disproportionately impacted? You are required, as part of the strategic planning process, to identify a disparate population and discuss how your work will have an impact on this population.

5) Media Campaign

The media campaign is a required strategy that needs to be included to address the underage drinking priority. The media campaign, as well as the narrative section for all strategies, needs to include how the target audience was involved in the decision-making. The following, taken from page 48 of the Implementation Guide, can be included in your narrative to describe how the target population was included in planning for this strategy, as well as evidence of effectiveness:

The campaign is evidence-based as both foundational and creative validation research was executed with the targeted audiences. Foundational research was facilitated through focus groups in Iowa City to understand current drinking behaviors, attitudes and motivations. Later, creative validation research was facilitated through focus groups in Dubuque to evaluate multiple creative concepts and discover the most liked campaign.

The target population for this campaign is the 13-16 year old age group. Research indicates the audience should be reached before their critical decision moment. Younger students are much more impressionable, therefore the campaign is designed to give them the confidence to make a smart decision before they are faced with the decision to drink for the first time.

6) Sustainability Planning

Sustainability planning needs to be addressed for all strategies. Even strategies that involve a policy change require planning to sustain: without monitoring and enforcement they may not continue to be effective. For instance, if community event leaders sign a policy stating they will make sure to follow the Community Events Best Practices Policy, who will ensure this actually happens? How do you know they will send their volunteers to TIPS training? How do you know they will put out signage? Sustainability planning, at this point in the SPF process, involves identifying those portions of the strategy implementation or policy that will need to be considered for successfully sustaining outcomes, such as continued funding for implementation or enforcement or continued monitoring of compliance with policies. If you can identify specific stakeholders who will be needed for sustainability or who have already committed to sustaining work beyond the funding for this grant, that can be included as well. More detailed sustainability planning, including securing agreements from specific partners, will be completed later in the SPF process.

7) Long-Term Outcomes, Short-Term Outcomes and Action Steps

Outcomes should be written in SMART format:

- **Specific:** Who is the target population? What will be accomplished?
- **Measurable:** Is the objective quantifiable? Can it be measured? How much change is expected?
- **Achievable:** Can the objective be accomplished in the proposed time frame with the available resources and support?
- **Realistic:** Does the objective address the goal? Will the objective have an impact on the goal?
- **Time-bound:** Does the objective propose a timeline when the objective will be met

Long-Term Outcomes: Long-term outcomes are created to show how the overall objective of the program will be met, which will help instill change. There should be one long-term outcome per strategy.

- *Long-Term Example: By September 29, 2019, at least 50 percent of the staff from 100 percent of the 35 liquor retailers in Johnson County will participate in RBST training, according to certificates of completion.*
- *Long-Term Example: By September 29, 2019, 75 percent or 15 of the 20 community events organizers will adopt policies on serving alcohol in public places in Johnson County, according to event leadership signatures.*
 - Specific: 50 percent of staff members from 100 percent of the 35 liquor retailers in Johnson County will participate in RBST training
 - Measurable: 50 percent of staff from 100 percent of the 35 liquor retailers, according to certificates of completion
 - Achievable: Yes
 - Realistic: Yes
 - Time-bound: By September 29, 2019

Short-Term Outcomes: Short-term outcomes show progress towards the long-term outcome. These should also be written in SMART format. There needs to be at least two short-term outcomes per strategy.

- *Short-Term Example: By October 30, 2016, at least 50 percent of the staff from at least 3 liquor retailers will complete RBST training, according to certificates of completion.*
- *Short-Term Example: By July 30, 2016, coalition members will visit and help build awareness of RBST training in Johnson County to at least 50 percent (17) of the 35 liquor retailers as documented through a retailer visit form.*

Action Steps: Action Steps are steps to take to accomplish your overall long-term goal. There needs to be at least 3 action steps per strategy.

- *Action Step Example:* A press release about RBST and TIPS training will be written and submitted to the local media.
- *Action Step Example:* Materials to educate liquor retailers about RBST training will be created, ordered, and assembled.
- Action Steps should include Core Components from the Implementation Guide and should be adjusted according to the timeframe of the plan. For example, there may be seven ideas suggested, but not all seven should be accomplished in a six-month timeframe.
- The overarching details listed in the Action Plan should be noted in the narrative of the Strategic Plan.
- Review steps in the Action Plan and make sure they are timely. The Action Plan should not include any steps that should have been completed in the Planning phase.

8) Logic Model

Substance Abuse Consequences (death, OWI, injuries, school suspension/expulsion, etc.) that are listed in the logic model should also be supported with data in the narrative of the strategic plan.

Arrows need to be used in the logic model showing the relationship between each of the sections. Be sure to include the arrows.



9) Strategy Details

a. Implementation

Provide details on how the strategy will be implemented. Information may be missing about the focus of the strategy, policies to be implemented (ex. Type of Social Host ordinance or what school policy will change), who will facilitate the strategy, the locations of implementation, etc.

b. Titles

The strategy names in the Implementation Guide should be used in the Strategic Plan. These are evidence-based strategies and it's important their names are used. However, if there is a reason why a different name is used (ex. Best Practices for Community Events instead of Alcohol Restrictions at Community Events) it needs to be explained in the document.

c. Strategy Components

The Core Components that are listed in the Implementation Guide (Dosage, Required Key Steps, Capacity Building, Media Advocacy, Training) need to be listed in the narrative of the plan and in the action steps.

d. Dosage

There needs to be detail and justification when providing dosage and frequency (how many community events serve alcohol? How many have alcohol licenses? Who operates under someone else's license?) Provide baseline numbers so it can determine if the dosage is enough. For example, 50 percent of 4 events is different than 50 percent of 40 events. The dosage of some strategies was not enough to make change.

10) Fidelity

There needs to be enough details addressing fidelity and how it will be followed. Answer questions such as "who will oversee the process? Who will administer the checklist? Who will report the answers from the checklist? How will you ensure fidelity of the strategies will be followed?"