

# PREVENTING OPIOID MISUSE AMONG GIRLS COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE (COP) - ACCOMPLISHMENTS TO DATE

## ABOUT THE COMMUNITY OF PRACTICE

The Travis County Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition (YSAPC) in partnership with Cardea received a federal grant in July of 2017 from the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Office on Women's Health to prevent prescription and non-prescription opioid misuse among girls ages 10 to 17, especially pregnant and parenting girls.

The goal of the project is to develop, implement, and evaluate a *Preventing Opioid Misuse Among Girls Community of Practice (CoP)* that will offer educational activities to healthcare professionals in Region 13 schools and Travis County community health centers to learn about opioid misuse among adolescents, especially girls; and relevant prevention policies and practices.

The project is funded for three years (July 1, 2017 - June 30, 2020) and has accomplished the following in its first year:

- Conducted 20 informant interviews to identify extent of opioid misuse among adolescents, local trends, and existing educational/training efforts.
- Identified health professionals in schools and clinics to engage in CoP; and created YSAPC listserv with over 400 contacts.
- Identified training needs of health professionals in schools and clinics in regard to preventing opioid/substance misuse among adolescents.
- Updated YSAPC website and social media tools to enhance awareness of the CoP and YSAPC.
- Worked with media to enhance awareness of the project resulting in 2 news stories.
- Worked with CE, CNE and CME providers to develop training, marketing, and evaluation content for webinars and face to face trainings.
- Conducted face to face workshops, webcasts, webinars, focus groups, and technical assistance calls with health professionals that enhanced prevention practices.

## *Training Needs Related to Preventing Opioid Misuse*

Based on training needs identified to date, the CoP will strive to enhance awareness of the following:

- Addiction and adolescent brain development
- Opioids and how they differ from other drugs
- Local, statewide and national data and trends
- Warning signs of opioid misuse
- Risk and protective factors of misuse
- How to talk to adolescents
- Gender-responsive & trauma-informed approaches
- Motivational interviewing
- Evidence-based prevention interventions
- How and when to screen for misuse
- Information and referral to local resources
- Ways to integrate prevention into primary care

## WORKSHOPS

In March of 2018, Dr. Lori Holleran Steiker, distinguished professor at the University of Texas at Austin Steve Hicks School of Social Work and Director of Instruction Engagement and Wellness for Undergraduate Studies; and Jessica Cance, M.P.H., PH.D., Texas Department of State Health Services Data Analytics Unit, conducted a 3-hour workshop for Education Service Center Region 13 school personnel.

Over 20 school nurses and counselors participated. Workshop topics included bio-psycho-social aspects of substance misuse and substance use disorders; recognizing opioids (street names, packaging); articulating the dangers of opioids for youth; risk and protective factors; indicators/signs of opioid misuse; and prevention strategies.

An on-line post-evaluation was emailed to participants; and 12 participants responded. Over 90% of respondents to the evaluation reported significant enhancement to knowledge and awareness in regard to the ability to describe the scale of the opioid epidemic, discuss how opioids

affect the adolescent brain, screen adolescents for opioid misuse, and provide information on opioid misuse prevention and resources.

Also, 75% of workshop participants reported that they intend to make changes to practices as a result of their participation in the workshop; and over half requested more information on using effective communication techniques with students.

Building on feedback from the March training, Region 13 requested a follow-up presentation to a much larger audience of approximately 107 school nurses at the Region 13 School Nurse Conference held at Dell Children's Medical Center in June of 2018.

## WEBCASTS

Based on feedback from workshop participants requesting more information on communicating with adolescents, Dr. Holleran Steiker recorded a webcast entitled *Opioid Misuse in Adolescents: Tools for Intervention* that covers signs of misuse, screening tools, effective communication techniques, and other considerations when speaking with adolescents about opioid and substance misuse. This webcast is available at [www.tcysapc.org](http://www.tcysapc.org).

## WEBINARS

In May of 2018, Dr. Lori Holleran Steiker conducted a webinar entitled *Opioid Misuse in Adolescents: Prevention and Detection* to an audience of health professionals from the Central Texas region and beyond. Over 230 health and other professionals registered, and 124 participated in the webinar. Health professionals included school nurses, counselors, medical assistants, case managers, social workers, therapists, peer support specialists, public health educators, youth recovery leaders, and others. About 70 attendees requested continuing education

credits (33 CNEs, 35 SW/LPCs, 5 non-physician CMEs).

Of the 124 webinar participants, 93 completed evaluations. Feedback was positive. As a result of the webinar, 83 out of 93 (89%) respondents increased their ability to describe the scale of the opioid epidemic, discuss how opioids affect the adolescent brain, screen adolescents for opioid misuse, and provide information on opioid misuse prevention and resources.

On a scale of 1 (poor) to 5 (excellent), the average rating for participant ability to address webinar objectives prior to the webinar was 2.82. After the webinar, the average rating increased to 4.02.

Furthermore, 78% of webinar attendees indicated that they plan to make a change in their practice.

- 24 mentioned making changes to screening tools (e.g. using CRAFFT) and/or questions asked.
- 11 plan to provide resources, information or training to parents, co-workers or others.
- 16 indicated making changes in communication style with youth, such as using motivational interviewing techniques.
- Others plan to bring up the issue of opioids in their work places, promote use of less addictive medications, look into policies related to use of NARCAN, and use data to enhance awareness.

A recording of this webinar is available at [www.tcysapc.org](http://www.tcysapc.org).

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**CoP Partners:** Travis County Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition, Cardea, Texas Education Agency Educational Service Center Region 13, Children's Optimal Health, Dr. Lori Holleran Steiker, and Robin Peyson of RLP Consulting.

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