

Local Evaluation Plan for Proposition 64 Public Health and Safety Program, Cohort 3

City of Vallejo - Youth Prevention and Opportunity Program

Grantee: City of Vallejo

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Project Background

Purpose and Objectives

The City of Vallejo has launched the Youth Prevention and Opportunity Program in response to growing concerns regarding youth development and public safety. This initiative targets high-risk youth, aged 14-21, providing them with invaluable work experience and employment opportunities within the Green Jobs sector. Furthermore, the program integrates evidence-based interventions on substance abuse and public health education. Another key objective is to bolster public safety by partnering with various City departments. This collaboration aims to pinpoint and clean up prominent substance use areas and enhance select locations with improved safety and security measures.

Target Audience

The program is intended for high-risk youth, particularly those aged 14-21, who are either already involved in substance abuse or are at a higher risk due to their living conditions and social environments.

Eligibility Criteria

To be eligible for this program, candidates must fall within the age bracket of 14-21 years, reside in the City of Vallejo, and be at risk due to factors such as substance-related offenses or living in high-risk neighborhoods.

Intervention Strategy

Participants will undergo a needs assessment upon joining the program, which will inform tailored interventions for them. These could include work experience opportunities, mentorship, and educational workshops in substance abuse and public safety.

Community Needs and Context

Local Landscape

Vallejo, an Economic Priority Community, has 21% of its 126,090 residents (Census 2021) under 18. Issues around retail cannabis dispensaries and rising instances of youth substance abuse, especially marijuana, contribute to the urgency of this program.

Identified Gaps

Service gaps exist in targeted drug prevention efforts and coordinated youth intervention programs. This initiative aims to fill these gaps by synergizing with schools, nonprofits, and businesses within the community.

Data-Driven Needs

According to the 2015-2016 California Healthy Kids Survey, substantial percentages of Vallejo's middle and high school students find it easy to access marijuana. Additional data from local High Schools underscore the need for early prevention and intervention.

Implementation Plan

Roles and Responsibilities

In the original proposal, the coordination with the Vallejo Unified School District was to be managed by the grant-funded Drug Prevention and Intervention Counselor. However, this task has now been shifted to Club Stride, which will be leading the coordination efforts. Club Stride will also be offering 24 workshops per year, in addition to the 12 workshops annually conducted by Advance Peace. Furthermore, instead of directly hiring a Communications Dispatcher and Code Enforcement Officer, the initiative will now provide support to these roles. Their primary function will be to collaborate with Healthy Vallejo in identifying areas that require community clean-ups.

Community and Stakeholder Involvement

Extensive outreach has been conducted with key stakeholders, including Vallejo Unified School District board members, non-profit entities, and youth advocates, to assess community needs. Regular engagement is planned throughout the program's term.

Program Longevity

The program aspires not just for immediate improvements but for lasting impacts that extend beyond the grant period. With community involvement and exposure to career opportunities, the aim is for youth to redirect their life paths positively. By combining hands-on work experience, evidence-based educational workshops, and strong community partnerships, the Youth Prevention and Opportunity Program aims to create a transformative and sustainable impact on the lives of Vallejo's youth.

The Proposed Project to Address Identified Needs

The City of Vallejo is initiating a comprehensive program targeted at hard-to-reach youth, offering them constructive opportunities to contribute to their community. The program intends to surround these youths with a network of supportive adults to bolster self-esteem and diminish dependency on harmful substances. Utilizing a triad approach—comprising Program Purpose Areas (PPAs) in Youth Development, Public Health, and Public Safety—the program aims to create a "win-win" situation where participants can earn while making meaningful contributions to their community.

Engagement Methods

The targeted demographic, aged 14-21, will be reached through engagement strategies such as door-to-door canvassing, school workshops, partnerships with local nonprofits and faith-based organizations, and community engagement opportunities and events.

Service Areas

The program will target neighborhoods most impacted by crime and substance abuse. Given the timeline and the current status of our police department, direct hiring of a Code Enforcement Officer and a Communications Dispatcher presents challenges. Instead, the involvement of these positions will be essential to coordinate with local law enforcement and public works departments to identify target areas.

Strategic Goals

Our Workplan focuses on three key goals designed to insulate vulnerable youth from the harmful effects of substance abuse and related criminal activities.

Goals and Objectives

Goal 1: Enhance Employment Prospects for At-Risk Youth

Objectives:

- A. Annually recruit and hire at-risk youth
- B. Facilitate job training programs
- C. Arrange mentorship opportunities
- D. Conduct feedback sessions through pre/post interviews

Goal 2: Elevate Awareness on Substance Abuse Facts, Prevention, and Intervention

Objectives:

- A. Conduct educational workshops
- B. Collaborate with schools for an educational series on substance abuse

Goal 3: Augment Public Safety and Health Measures

Objectives:

- A. Identify and clean up high-risk areas
- B. Support dedicated personnel like a Communications Operator and Code Enforcement Officer
- C. Increase safety and security measures in high traffic marijuana use areas.

In an urban community grappling with challenges like unemployment, substance abuse, and safety concerns, a new initiative launches with a tri-fold mission. The first goal actively targets at-risk youth, giving them a viable path toward success. Every year, the program scours the community to identify and recruit young individuals who stand to benefit the most from employment opportunities. After hiring them, the program enrolls these youth in specialized job training programs, equipping them with the skills they need for long-term employment. Moreover, the initiative integrates mentorship programs into the curriculum to provide valuable life guidance. Continuously, the program evaluates its effectiveness through a series of pre and post-interviews, ensuring an adaptive approach to meet participants' needs.

Simultaneously, the initiative addresses the widespread issue of substance abuse, particularly among the youth. The program adopts a comprehensive approach: it will offer community-based workshops and collaborate with local schools to cover the dangers, prevention, and intervention strategies related to substance abuse. Club Stride will also engage in community activities, gathering genuine feedback from Vallejo residents, which will be instrumental in shaping our activities and workshops. By intertwining educational outreach with real community input, the program aims to enhance awareness and foster a more informed and resilient community.

Finally, the program emphasizes public safety and health as pivotal areas for immediate intervention. Volunteers and staff take to the streets to pinpoint high-risk areas requiring attention. Once identified, they execute clean-up operations to enhance safety in these zones. To strengthen these efforts, the program collaborates with a Communications Operator, who aids in identifying hot spots using VPD data, and a Code Enforcement Officer, who provides insights based on "See Click Fix" data or observations during their inspection routes. This multi-faceted strategy serves as the program's blueprint for enhancing public safety measures, with the overarching goal of fostering a healthier, more secure environment for all residents.

Project Goals, Needs, and Expected Impact Under Proposition 64

In an urban community grappling with significant challenges such as youth unemployment and substance abuse, a transformative initiative is underway to provide gainful employment opportunities for at-risk youth. Recognizing the critical need for resources focused on work experience, guidance, and life skills, the program leaps into action. It facilitates job training for these young individuals and enrolls them in comprehensive mentorship programs. This multi-

faceted approach ensures that the youth acquire the skills needed for long-term employment, positively affecting their life trajectories and enriching the community at large.

Running parallel to this, another aspect of the initiative aims to increase knowledge and skills related to substance abuse facts, prevention, and intervention. Understanding the need for targeted drug prevention education and intensive community engagement, specialized workshops and partnerships with local organizations are launched. The expected impact is nothing short of transformative—a quantifiable reduction in substance abuse among participants, leading to healthier families and safer neighborhoods.

Lastly, the program is devoted to enhancing public safety through targeted clean-ups around the city, upgrading safety and security measures at identified hotspots, and reinforcing code enforcement and communications roles. Recognizing pressing issues like cannabis and drug abuse hotspots, the program undertakes strategic actions. By supporting code enforcement and optimizing communication systems, the initiative aspires to substantially uplift the living conditions in the targeted areas. This dedicated approach not only ensures a safer community but also promotes it as a more appealing place for residents to flourish and thrive.

Rationale and Evidence-Based Interventions

The project will implement proven, evidence-based interventions focused on adolescent substance abuse prevention and education. We plan to partner with established organizations skilled in high-risk youth development.

Utilization of Existing Resources

Existing resources from the Vallejo Police and Public Works Departments, the City Manager's office, as well as classroom spaces provided by the Vallejo Unified School District, will be combined with the support of non-profit partners and local businesses to maximize the project's impact.

Staffing and Partnerships

The program will be primarily managed day-to-day by Club Stride. Support and oversight will be provided by staff from the City Manager's Office, including the Grants Analyst and the Community Youth Coordinator, Victoria Grace, who boasts extensive experience in youth services. Collaborations will encompass local nonprofits such as Healthy Vallejo Community Support Services and Advance Peace, among others.

Project Logic Model

The City of Vallejo has developed a preliminary logic model to outline its project funding framework, aiming to create a comprehensive and actionable program for at-risk youth in the

community. This model is organized into multiple columns, each representing different aspects such as the project's goals, measurable objectives, and activities. These components are closely aligned with the needs and intentions specified in the grant proposal. Through this structured approach, the City of Vallejo aims to effectively address the unique challenges faced by its at-risk youth, providing a roadmap for tangible change and community improvement.

Inputs/Resources	Short-Term Outcomes¹	Mid-Term Outcomes²	Long-Term Outcomes/ Impacts³
Staff	Increase in youth employment	Reduced youth substance abuse	Improved community safety
Funding	Cleaner community areas		Reduced Substance Usage Rates
Equipment	Increased access to youth healing		
	Increase in youth connectedness to peers and supportive adults		
	Mobilization of youth forward movement (i.e. connection to employment and education)		

The logic model serves as a framework for tracking the project's performance and impact over time. It is crucial to align the activities and resources with the intended outcomes and guide the evaluation process.

Evaluation Overview

¹These short-term outcomes are grounded in the underlying theory of change that the City of Vallejo has utilized for its community-based initiatives.

² This stage is the least theorized at the moment. We expect that the achievement of short-term outcomes will influence individual choices leading to positive behavioral changes. However, data from the first year of evaluation will be crucial in understanding how these short-term outcomes contribute to individual behavioral changes.

³ Ultimately, these long-term impacts aim to manifest as collective benefits, such as reduced neighborhood violence and increased public safety.

The City of Vallejo will complete both a process and outcome evaluation for the project, which are detailed below:

Process Evaluation

To continuously monitor the effectiveness of project implementation, the evaluation team will use a process evaluation approach that relies on administrative data. The evaluative questions to be answered include:

- Did the project meet its contractual obligations?
- What activities were instrumental to the project's start-up and implementation?
- How effectively was the project recruiting targeted youth most impacted by unemployment and public health concerns?
- Which outreach activities were most successful in engaging the target communities?
- How many participants were involved in activities like workshops and clean-ups, and what were their characteristics?

We will monitor key performance indicators such as the number of participants, average age, and the percentage who found employment or completed a public health program. Staff hours spent on specific activities like workshops, clean-ups, and other community engagements will also be recorded. Moreover, we aim to understand the role of staff in providing relevant interventions to the participants. For example, a significant percentage of our team consists of individuals who have personally experienced challenges similar to those faced by our target audience. Understanding the demographics of our team will help us evaluate the effectiveness of our approach.

Outcome Evaluation

The outcome evaluation will focus on assessing the tangible impacts of the project on the lives of participating youth. A participatory action research approach will be used to evaluate the following questions:

- Did the project increase employment opportunities for targeted youth?
- Was there a measurable improvement in public safety and health as a result of the project?
- Did the community-based services offered by the project enhance ease of access for participants?
- How did the project gain the trust of community members?
- What short-term behavioral changes were observed that could contribute to long-term community benefits?

Research Design and Methods

The evaluation team will employ various research methods to assess both the process and the outcomes of the project. Our tasks include:

- Quarterly meetings with City of Vallejo staff to discuss project reports and any challenges or successes.
- Informal monthly observations and conversations with project staff to track progress.
- Compilation and analysis of quantitative and qualitative data, including pre-and post-participation surveys, crime and public health statistics, and interviews.

The quantitative data will be analyzed using SPSS statistics software, employing descriptive statistics for process evaluation and chi-square tests for outcome evaluation. We will also explore additional statistical tests to capture broader social impacts based on available data.

Additionally, we will partner with community organizations to lead a YPAR project. This will involve having youth participants lead data collection and analysis, essential for including those most impacted in the evaluation process.

Evaluation Roles and Responsibilities

The project is a collaborative effort that involves the City of Vallejo, government agencies, and community organizations, while Ceres Policy Research serves as the main external evaluator. The City of Vallejo is responsible for meeting the reporting requirements and for direct service provision. We will also collaborate with other partners for referrals, data collection, and sharing. We are committed to ensuring the evaluation process maintains its integrity through quality control, regular communication, and ongoing review of published research trends. This will enable us to inform the City of Vallejo and other partners about best practices and emerging strategies. Through a blend of qualitative and quantitative methods, we aim to provide a comprehensive understanding of community dynamics and the impact of the project's interventions.