Delaware County Success Story

Implementation

Delaware County had numerous ways to implement the strategies for SPF-SIG in the area. Together with a very strong county coalition, the Delaware County Drug Abuse Coalition (DDAC), the SPF-SIG Coordinators in the project came up with many ways of getting the word out about the issues surrounding Underage Drinking and Adult Binge Drinking.

The underage drinking campaign was featured very prominently throughout the county by using posters, popcorn bag stickers, radio ads and movie theatre ads. Each of the three school districts in Delaware County displayed posters throughout the schools and used popcorn bag stickers at numerous sporting events. The radio ad campaign ran on Manchester’s local radio station, KMCH, and also on Q92.3. By using both radio stations, we were able to target a majority of youth (75%) throughout Delaware County. Manchester’s theater also took part in the campaign, displaying many of the ads to theatre goers on the big screen before each movie started. During the summer months, a movable billboard was placed at the West Delaware softball field so our message could reach athletes, students and parents. Popcorn bag stickers were also placed on tuxedo bags and corsage boxes at prom time to remind kids of the consequences of underage drinking.

With the adult binge drinking campaign, ‘Changes You,’ The coalition worked to get posters displayed in bars, restaurants and other business in the county. Posters were also taken to local flu shot clinics. KMCH in Manchester ran numerous radio ads and the ads were also displayed in the local theater. During the summer months, when many local festivals and gatherings take place, posters were also displayed. Citizens of Delaware County were able to see the ‘Changes You’ posters at the county fair, at the rodeo in Edgewood, Iowa and at a wellness fair in Manchester. These events also provided many opportunities for outreach where many citizens were able to hear more about DDAC, the SPF-SIG strategies in Delaware County, and the goals that the coordinator and coalition had in mind for Delaware County. These events also provided a lot of good feedback from citizens that were taken back to coalition meetings so we could continue to improve.

Compliance Checks were held in Delaware County twice each year, and SPF-SIG/DDAC has seen great results. At the start of Compliance Checks in the county, only 53% of liquor license holders were checked. There was a 100% compliance rate. However, on the next round, 89% of liquor license holders were checked with a 96% compliance rate. In the last round of compliance checks, 98% of alcohol retailers, with 89% of liquor license holders checked, were in compliance. This is seen as pretty successful since more alcohol retailers have been participating in compliance checks since the start of SPF-SIG.

The Cops in Shops strategy in Delaware County was tweaked into surveillance hours. There was not very much participation from retailers in the area to do the actual Cops in Shops—most were unwilling to allow that. So, this strategy was adjusted to become ‘surveillance.’ For surveillance, an officer from the Delaware County Sheriff’s office does two hours of surveillance at different retailers throughout the county. This is to deter anyone from purchasing alcohol, but then providing it to minors. Research has shown that many times, alcohol transfers can happen right in the parking lots of alcohol retailers. Our officer has never issued any citations for this during surveillance hours which is a great success for the strategy. He has, however, been quite diligent about addressing any suspicious activity he sees right away.

In Delaware County, many communities did not see Alcohol Use Restriction in Public Places as a priority. Through SPF-SIG, we targeted city parks as places where we would like to see policy changes. Members of DDAC, along with the SPF-SIG coordinator, presented to city councils, civic groups and youth focus groups to try to get communities to change park shelter rental agreements and put up signs saying that no alcohol was allowed in parks. We used a lot of county data and a lot of first hand stories to back up our strategy. We did have two places change policies for us, and had one community agree to put up signs in their local park reminding people that serving alcohol to minors is a violation of Iowa law. This is a strategy that will be sustained by DDAC; the coalition will continue to drive this forward by continuing to get backing from citizens throughout Delaware County, and hopefully those citizens will also participate in presenting to their city councils.

SPF-SIG has implemented a lot of new ideas and strategies in Delaware County. There is still room for improvement, but with a strong county coalition, the issues surrounding underage and adult binge drinking will still remain at the forefront for people to learn more about.