

## Sample Document (for RMC training purposes)

### D. K-12 TOBACCO PREVENTION GRANT NARRATIVE

#### OVERVIEW

Very Fine School District is located in Very Fine County, 160 miles outside of the Denver metro area. Very Fine County covers approximately 3,000 square miles. The population has experienced dramatic changes over the last 15 years. A 614% increase in Hispanic residents occurred between 1990 and 2000, according to the United States Census. Additionally, the number of children under eighteen increased by 54% during the same time period. As the Very Fine County population has changed, so have the needs of our families, children and youth.

The towns and communities of the school district include Healthy, Energetic, Spirited, Peaceful, and Joyful. Approximately 3,000 students attend Very Fine School District. Each elementary school, located in a different part of the county, serves a specific community. Seventy-four percent of Very Fine School District students are Caucasian, and twenty-six percent are students of color, primarily Hispanic (23%). Twenty-four percent are eligible for participation in the free and reduced lunch program, and twenty-one percent are English Language Learners.

#### 1. EXISTING PRE-K-12 TOBACCO PREVENTION POLICIES AND PROGRAMS

##### School Policies Related to Tobacco Prevention

Very Fine School District conducted a thorough review of existing health related policies including district wellness and tobacco prevention in 2007. As a result of the year-long policy assessment, Very Fine School District implemented the following policy changes:

- Expanded wellness policies to address healthy school environment issues;
- Updated vending machine policy to include only water and 100% juice products;
- Expanded tobacco policies to cover all school-sponsored events; and
- Included an additional semester of required health education at high school.

##### K-12 Health Education Curriculum

Very Fine School District has a comprehensive K-12th grade health education curriculum, which includes tobacco prevention programming. The curriculum was designed by Very Fine School District staff, teachers, principals and administrators. Elementary level health education is taught by the classroom teacher and is incorporated within the science curriculum when appropriate. At the secondary level, grades 6-12, health education is required and is taught by the physical education teachers. Very Fine Middle School requires that all 6th, 7th and 8th grade students take physical education for the entire school year. Physical Education is scheduled every other day. One class period of PE is devoted to Health Education every two weeks. This translates to one hour of health out of five hours dedicated to PE every two weeks. During a school year, a 6th, 7th or 8th grade student will receive 17 hours of health education instruction. Very Fine High School's graduation requirement includes one semester of health education. Most students take the health class during 9th grade. These teachers supplement the curriculum with community speakers to address the curricular topic areas.

Our elementary level curriculum was evaluated during the 2001-02 school year. It is scheduled for revision evaluation again during the 2008-09 school year. The secondary health education curriculum (6-12) is currently undergoing program revision/evaluation. Curriculum adoption, resources and materials purchase, and staff development is scheduled for the 2009-10 school year. The Very Fine School District is planning to adopt the National Health Education Standards; previously we had used locally developed standards.

### **Staff Wellness**

Very Fine School District, over the past two years, has recognized the need to implement staff wellness programming. The Health Coordinator conducted a Zoomerang survey last fall regarding staff interest in a tobacco cessation program. Several staff members indicated that they or a family member would like to quit tobacco. The Health Coordinator and a school district nurse attended training on the American Lung Association's *You Can Wait* curriculum and will be implementing it in May.

### **Community Collaboration**

The Very Fine School District collaborates with several local community organizations to implement our tobacco prevention efforts. The Very Fine Prevention Coalition (VFPC), our community tobacco prevention and cessation organization, works with Very Fine Middle School and Very Fine High School to implement the *This is Us* campaign. The focus is a social marketing campaign that includes messages around tobacco use. Additionally, VFPC has begun a *Dialogue over Dinner* program to host dinners for secondary parents that focus on prevention topics, including alcohol, tobacco and other drug use prevention. The local law enforcement agencies in Very Fine County work with our 5th grade classrooms on the DARE program. This program includes tobacco prevention efforts. A *Healthy Choices* class, funded by Public Health Nursing, occurs at Very Fine Middle School for high-risk girls.

Very Fine School District has three school based health centers through the Very Fine Youth Services Center. The mission of the Very Fine Youth services Center is "To promote the health, safety and developmental assets of the youth of Very Fine County". The clinics are strategically located to reach the largest number of students (Very Fine Middle School, Very Fine High School) and to provide services to the students most in need (students of color, English Language Learners, and students living in poverty). Currently, tobacco prevention and cessation efforts are not offered as part of the school based health center services.

## **2. GAPS IN EXISTING PROGRAMS**

### **Identified Gaps in School Policies Related to Tobacco Prevention**

- The written policies are now strong. Enforcement and communication of these policies are areas that need work. Very Fine School District is interested in implementing non-punitive enforcement options for students caught using tobacco products on campus.
- We would also like to improve our communication of policies with students, staff, and community members who use our schools during evenings and weekends. We are noticing that an increasing number of students are using chew and we want to make sure that everyone understands that this form of tobacco is included in our "tobacco" policies.

### **Identified Gaps in K-12 Health Education Curriculum**

- There is no formal Pre-K curriculum for health education or tobacco prevention efforts;

- K-5 health education curriculum for tobacco prevention is not delivered consistently;
- Secondary health education curriculum for tobacco prevention is not research based;
- The current Health Education curriculum is not designed based on student risk behavior data regarding tobacco use and was written several years ago, prior to the increase in number of Hispanic students in the district;
- Elementary and secondary teachers have received very little professional development in Health Education; and
- Existing School Health Teams are not focusing on tobacco prevention or intervention.

### **Identified Gaps in Staff Wellness**

- The Very Fine School District has a Tobacco Free Schools policy, but procedures for communicating the policy to staff members, and training regarding effective policy enforcement do not exist.
- Currently we do not link staff who want to quit using tobacco to cessation programs or to the Quitline.
- Our staff wellness program is not well coordinated. We would like to improve the linkage between our physical activity, nutrition, and tobacco efforts.

### **Identified Gaps in Community Collaboration**

- There is very little coordination between the community organizations and the District Health Coordinator;
- Our district is only minimally involved with Very Fine Health Department in community tobacco prevention efforts impacting youth;
- Tobacco prevention and cessation efforts are not currently part of the school based health centers;
- The Health Advisory Council does not focus on tobacco;
- Community collaborative efforts do not include outreach and education to families regarding secondhand smoke;
- Community collaborative efforts do not include outreach and education to persons who speak English as a second language;
- The tobacco free schools policy lacks consistent enforcement; and
- Only one high school is using the *Not on Tobacco* high school cessation program.

## **3. DATA COLLECTION EFFORTS USED TO ESTABLISH NEEDS**

The Very Fine School District conducted the Healthy Kids Colorado Survey with all secondary students in December, 2005. The middle school results showed that tobacco use steadily increased from 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Two percent of students in 6<sup>th</sup> grade reported 30-day use of cigarettes, whereas, 9% and 10% of 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> grade students reported 30-day use of cigarettes. A smaller percentage of students reported 30-day use of chewing tobacco products. Additionally, students reported that the ease of access to cigarettes increases from 6<sup>th</sup> to 8<sup>th</sup> grade. Seventeen percent of 6<sup>th</sup> graders reported that it would be "sort of easy" or "very easy" to get cigarettes, whereas, 28% of 7<sup>th</sup> graders and 40% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders reported that it would be "sort of easy" or "very easy" to get cigarettes.

The high school results showed an increased rate, as compared to middle school students, of cigarette use and chewing tobacco use. A small percentage of students report "heavy" tobacco use. The data showed that 30-day use of cigarettes was 15% for 9<sup>th</sup> grade, 15% for 10<sup>th</sup> grade,

22% for 11th grade, and 31% for 12th grade. The 30-day use for chewing tobacco was 12% for 9th grade, 11% for 10th grade, 15% for 11th grade, and 11% for 12th grade. Two percent of all 9th through 12th grade students report "heavy" tobacco use.

Research shows that youth engage in substance use and abuse for a variety of reasons. In a recent needs assessment, the Drug-Free Community Coalition, facilitated by the Very Fine Prevention Coalition, found that factors influencing Very Fine County youth included “to be cool” and fit in, peer pressure, the party culture/environment of Very Fine County and having nothing else to do (or not engaging in the offered activities).

From existing data, the Drug-Free Community Coalition identified the following risk factors as priorities for Very Fine County:

- Low commitment to school- The degree to which students find school and homework interesting and important;
- Attitudes favorable to drug use - The extent to which respondents themselves feel that drinking, smoking or taking illicit drugs for youths their age is inappropriate;
- Peer use of ATOD - The number of a respondents friends who take illegal drugs, drink alcohol and smoke cigarettes;
- Low perceived risk of drugs - The extent to which respondents feel that people risk harming themselves if they smoke cigarettes, drink alcohol and smoke marijuana; and
- Perceived availability of drugs - The degree to which respondents think it is easy for youths to get alcohol, cigarettes and illicit drugs.

#### 4. PROPOSED STRATEGIES FOR FILLING EXISTING GAPS

Very Fine School District proposes to address the existing gaps in its tobacco prevention efforts using several strategies.

The first strategy is to designate a district level staff person to coordinate the tobacco prevention efforts within Very Fine School District. The District Health Coordinator will devote .3 FTE to the identified Pre K-12 health education curriculum gaps, address the Tobacco Free Schools Policy gaps and coordinate and align the tobacco prevention efforts of the Very Fine School District with the activities of the community based organizations. Additionally, the Health Coordinator will work with the School Health Teams to implement building level tobacco prevention efforts.

The second strategy is to purchase and implement research-based prevention curriculum and intervention programs for Very Fine School District students and staff. The secondary health education curriculum will focus tobacco prevention on middle school students. The tobacco cessation/intervention program will be focused at the high school level. Additionally, the school based health centers at the middle school and high school will begin screening students for tobacco use and facilitate referrals to cessation programs as necessary.

The third strategy is to provide professional development for teachers, staff and community members on tobacco prevention best practices, curriculum, and policy implementation. Additionally, teachers, staff, parents and community members will be involved in the enforcement of the Tobacco Free Schools Policy. Outreach efforts will be tailored to meet the needs of second language learners.

### **Evidence Supporting Proposed Strategies**

The proposed strategies align with the "Best Practices in Tobacco Prevention" presentation by Katy Kupecz, MPH, CHES at the *Using Best Practices in School-Based Health Programs* training in September 2005. Specifically, Very Fine School Districts strategies include enforcing the tobacco-free schools law at all school-sponsored events (district health coordinator focusing on district level prevention efforts); incorporating tobacco cessation messages and resources into staff and student wellness activities (school based health centers, coordinated school health initiative); implementing research-based tobacco prevention curriculum (district health coordinator overseeing health education curriculum process); providing data on the number of students who do not use tobacco (collaboration with VFPC on the *This is Us* campaign); incorporating a variety of strategies that help students and staff link the impact of tobacco use to other behaviors (coordinated school health initiative); incorporating information for family members about the benefits of not smoking around anyone, especially children, youth and young adults (school health teams); and encouraging school staff to model healthy behaviors for students (coordinated school health initiative and school health teams). Additionally, all of the activities outlined in the scope of work are "green light activities" (also from the above training), practices that are effective and essential to changing or adopting healthy behaviors.

### **Strategies are Linked to Essential Components**

The Very Fine School District will link our strategies to all the Essential Components of Effective Tobacco Prevention for Schools. Specifically,

*Component 1: Schools will institute and enforce comprehensive tobacco prevention policies.*

The District Health Coordinator will:

- Establish procedures for communicating the tobacco policy to students, school staff, families, and visitors;
- Provide students access to programs to help them quit using tobacco;
- Provide training to school staff regarding tobacco prevention policies and effective enforcement strategies;
- Work toward inclusion of tobacco policy enforcement within the district wellness policy; and
- Explore non-punitive enforcement strategies.

*Component 2: Schools will implement effective tobacco prevention classroom instruction, with special emphasis on the middle grades.*

The District Health Coordinator will:

- Oversee full implementation of standards-based developmentally appropriate multiple session curricula and assess annually;
- Provide training to school staff on effective tobacco use prevention curricula, including spit tobacco curricula; and
- Provide training to school staff on assessment of student health standards as they pertain to tobacco use prevention.

*Component 3: Schools will provide assistance to students (and staff) who want to quit smoking or using tobacco products.*

The school based health centers at Very Fine Middle School and Very Fine High School will:

- Implement research-based cessation programs;
- Identify and refer students to on-site school-based cessation programs; and
- Offer the program during school hours; conducted by health center staff.

The District Health Coordinator will:

- Provide referrals to the Colorado Quitline or Quitnet for school staff who want to quit using tobacco products.

*Component 4: School will involve parents and families in support of school-based tobacco prevention programs.*

The District Health Coordinator and the School Health Teams will:

- Communicate with families to explain district tobacco policies, enforcement strategies and prevention goals;
- Promote family involvement on committees to update tobacco-free school policies, select curricula, and provide secondhand smoke education; and
- Work with teachers to assign homework that encourages parental involvement in students learning about tobacco prevention concepts and skills.

*Component 5: School will create and maintain linkages to community-based tobacco prevention activities/events that target children/youth.*

The District Health Coordinator will:

- Serve as a liaison to the local tobacco prevention coalition; and
- Participate in planning and implementing community programs through the local coalition.

### **Relationship Between Tobacco Prevention and Other School Health Programs**

Very Fine School District is a Coordinated School Health pilot site, a grant funded opportunity through the Colorado Department of Education to address and implement a comprehensive and coordinated approach to school health based on eight component areas. The grant funds .7FTE of the district health coordinator, and these funds have been cut dramatically since the first year of funding. Additionally, Very Fine School District has four building level School Health Teams. There are two elementary level teams, a middle school team, and a high school team. These teams have attended a two-day Coordinated School Health training, conducted the School Health Index, and implemented goals and activities related to significant health concerns identified through the School Health Index. For the past two years, the focus of the four School Health Teams has been primarily nutrition and physical activity. The School Health Teams recognize the need to include tobacco prevention and cessation within our Coordinated School Health initiatives and are eager to begin addressing this area.

### **Tobacco Prevention Advisory Committee's Support of Efforts**

The district level coordinator will convene monthly meetings of the Advisory Committee to do the following:

- Develop and continuously monitor the task list to achieve grant objectives;
- Review progress on grant evaluation requirements;
- Determine ways to increase use of best practices in project activities;
- Develop semi-annual progress reports for the school board and make presentations;
- Explore opportunities to increase family involvement in curriculum decisions; and
- Assess advisory committee membership and make recommendations for new members who represent the diversity of the district