

Ventura County

Project SafeNet

Project SafeNet in Ventura County seeks to improve school attendance, connectedness, and achievement while reducing incidences of substance abuse and violence in both school and community settings. The project will provide family, youth and peer advocacy services and youth development activities to at least 120 at-risk youth and their families in both a traditional and continuation high school setting. Youth development services will be provided through a partnership with the Friday Night Live Program. In addition, the program will implement the Parent Project which is designed to provide parents with the tools to appropriately address the most detrimental and destructive of adolescent behaviors.

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Program Component 1

Implementation of family advocacy services.

- Family Advocates work one-on-one with families for between one and three hours per family using an in-home visitation and case management model.
- Meetings occur on a weekly basis.

- Families are provided with family strengthening tools, referrals to community resources, and assistance in utilizing community resources.

Population(s) Served

- Approximately 120 at-risk students and families.
- The following 2 schools are being targeted: Pacifica High School and Pacific View (a Continuation High School).
- Approximately 60 9th and 10th grade students and their families at each school site.
- Youth who have dropped out of school and their families.

Program Component 2

Parenting Classes will be provided utilizing The Parent Project model program.

- *The Parent Project* is a parent training program for parents of strong-willed or out-of-control adolescents.
- Parents work in small group settings facilitated by the Family Advocates.
- Parents meet in weekly one-hour classes.
- Parents learn to identify escalating negative behaviors and provide appropriate interventions.

Population(s) Served

- Parents of 9th and 10th grade at-risk youth.
- The following 2 schools are being targeted: Pacifica High School and Pacific View (a Continuation High School).

Program Component 3

Navigators work one-to-one in weekly one-hour small group settings to provide culturally competent youth and peer advocacy activities.

- Activities include assistance with homework, discussions regarding the pitfalls of engaging in detrimental substance abuse and violence-related behaviors, and introductions to positive community activities.

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Population(s) Served

- Approximately 120 at-risk students.
- The following 2 schools are being targeted: Pacifica High School and Pacific View (a Continuation High School).
- Approximately 60 9th and 10th grade students at each school site.

Program Component 4

Implementation of the Friday Night Live (FNL) youth development model at two high school campuses.

- FNL-sponsored activities include dances, community service and social activities, movie nights, and participation in advocacy for drug-free and safe environments.
- FNL youth are trained to serve as mentors and tutors.

Population(s) Served

- Approximately 120 at-risk students.
- The following 2 schools are being targeted: Pacifica High School and Pacific View (a Continuation High School).
- Approximately 60 9th and 10th grade students at each school site.

Science-Based Criteria

- *The Parent Project* (identified by former Governor Pete Wilson as one of three exemplary [prevention] programs in California).
- Implementation of a number of prevention strategies.

Program Settings

- School-based, during school (Secondary)
- School-based, after school (Primary)
- Community-based (Minimal)

Program Strategies

- Friday Night Live/Club Live affiliation
- Youth Development
- Mentoring
- Parent Training/Education
- Violence Prevention
- ATOD Prevention (Primary)

Risk Characteristics of Target Population

- Risk is identified at three levels, the community, school, and individual level.
- At the community level, the targeted service community has high levels of crime, ATOD use, and gang violence.
- At the school level, risk was identified by CHKS data and API scores.
- At the individual level, youth with poor school attendance, low levels of academic achievement, little or no parent supervision, and high rates of ATOD use and violence are targeted for service activities.

Planning and Collaboration

- A collaborative partnership has formed between the Ventura County Behavioral Health Department—Alcohol and Drug Programs, parents, youth, school staff, and community-based service providers.
- The Youth Service Providers Network was formed and made up of VCBHD-ADP administration and staff; individuals, agencies, and organizations providing substance abuse-related services to Ventura County youth; parents; and youth.
- The Youth Service Providers Network established a project management team that meets monthly to track the implementation of the project.

Evaluation

- The VCBHD-ADP contracted with an external evaluator from the Ventura County Superintendent of Schools Office Department of Research and Evaluation.
- Evaluation components include the Substance Abuse Subtle Screening Inventory, the CHKS resiliency and youth development module, and school/district student achievement and performance data.

Sample Performance Indicators

- Long-Term:
 - Improve school attendance
 - Increase student connectedness to school
 - Increase academic achievement
 - Increase family stability
 - Reduce ATOD use among youth
 - Decrease violence among youth