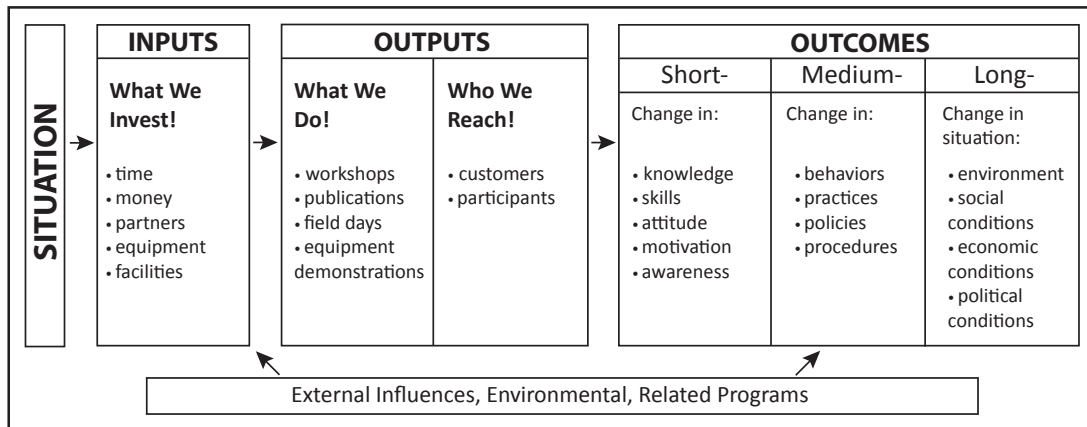


## Prevention Programs Need a Road Map

Like any successful journey, prevention programs need a road map. It is important to know what you want to accomplish, have a plan for getting there, and be able to evaluate your efforts along the way.

One of the most common tools used by program developers to plan programs is the 'Logic Model'. A logic model is a story or a picture of how a program or initiative is supposed to work. It describes logical linkages among program resources, activities, outputs, audiences, and short-, intermediate-, and long-term outcomes related to a specific issue or situation.

The diagram below shows an example of a logic model template.



- 1. Situation:** The situation is a statement of the issue, a description of who is affected by the issue and a list of who else is interested in the issue. To define the situation it is important that you do a needs assessment. Your needs assessment should provide as much information about the needs and assets of your community as possible - identify priority issues for your community, identify the risk and protective factors influencing the issue, identify available resources, identify projected costs of addressing the issue.
- 2. Inputs:** These are the things you invest in the program – human resources, teaching materials, research results, money, equipment, facilities, etc.
- 3. Outputs:** Your outputs are the things you do (activities) and the people you reach (participants).
- 4. Outcomes:** Outcomes should include, short -, medium-, and long-term changes that will occur as a result of your activities.

When developing your logic model follow the motto of: "plan backwards, implement forward" (Beverly Anderson Parsons). Once you have written your situation statement, start with your outcomes or objectives and work backwards. Starting with inputs and working through to outcomes may limit one's thinking to existing activities instead of asking the question "what needs to be done to achieve the desired outcomes?".

Like a road map, a logic model shows the route to take to reach a destination. A logic model should provide direction and clarity by presenting the big picture of change along with certain important details. The process of developing the model brings together stakeholders to articulate the goals of the program and the values that support it, and identifies strategies and desired outcomes of the initiative.

"If you don't know where you are going, how are you gonna know when you get there?"

Yogi Berra

## ASK AN EXPERT

### I know the community I work in really well. Should I still do a needs assessment?

Absolutely. Often, a deterrent to conducting a needs assessment is the assumption that the process has to be costly and drawn out. Not so. Failing to assess the local needs before starting a program is like setting out on a long hike without a plan or a map. The journey may be successful, but it may also turn unpleasant, quickly. And you now find yourself way down the path.

Here are some reasons why a needs assessment is vital even if you think you already know the answers.

**Establishing a baseline:** To know if your program is making a difference, you need to know where you are starting from. For example, without accurate information on local attitudes toward youth alcohol use, how can you measure what impact on attitudes your program is having?

**Identifying real needs:** Maybe you know the local prevalence of drug use, but do you know what people are

thinking, what they think is important about drug use? If your program focuses on an area that is not personal and relevant to people, you have a problem before you've even left the parking lot. A good needs assessment ensures you start out "where people are at."

**Securing buy in:** If your community is like most, it is important to have local stakeholders at your table. As you go about assessing needs, you may well uncover people or programs that can be of great assistance. People will hear about your intentions, and having local people take ownership and feel a part of the project from the outset is invaluable. No one can do it alone.

**Identifying possible challenges:** You can't assume to know what other people are thinking or predict what issues might arise unless you ask the questions. Being blindsided by unforeseen problems can put a well meaning project into damage control.

#### Identify areas of potential synergy:

At times it is tempting to get involved in a project on your own because it is easier than taking time to seek out partners who are interested in the same things you are. But you could be missing out on a chance to add horsepower to your project by collaborating with others. Remember, two heads are better than one.

**Avoid duplication:** Nothing is more frustrating than investing time in something only to learn it's already been done. A needs assessment can help you learn what already exists before you set about reinventing the wheel.

Therefore, before starting any project, keep these essentials in check. Get as much information as possible about the community you are serving and don't assume anything. Wise investment at the front end will help avoid disaster in the end.

**Colin Mangham, PhD**  
Population Health Promotion Associates

## ACTIVITY CORNER

There are times when bringing in guests to speak with students can enhance the messages you are trying to communicate in the classroom. When you do bring in guest speakers it is important that the presentation is supported by lessons before and after the guest does their session. Below is an example of a program that could support tobacco prevention education.

**Grade Level:** Grades 6-9

### Tobacco Free Sports Athlete Ambassador Program

This is a new program featuring some of Canada's top athletes. It promotes the message "be your best. be tobacco free". The Tobacco Free Sports (TFS) Athlete Ambassador program is a joint initiative driven by the Canadian Sport Centre Pacific in partnership with PacificSport, the Ministry of Health, Alcohol-Drug Education Service and regional Health Authorities that will be offering schools and community events an opportunity to have a high performance athlete relay this important life message.

TFS Athlete Ambassadors will be available to speak or make appearances at a variety of community events and individual school visits (grades 6-9) in each region of the province. For information on having the program come to your community or school, please contact Janet Filipenko (Program Coordinator) at [jfilipenko@cscpacific.ca](mailto:jfilipenko@cscpacific.ca), or phone 604-730-7273. As the program is funded provincially, there is no charge to book an athlete, however due to training and competition schedules advanced notice is recommended.

For more information [click here](#).

## RESOURCES

1. W.K. Kellogg Foundation, 2004, **Logic Model Development Guide**

[Click here](#) for Logic Model PDF



2. **Drug Prevention Network of Canada** (DPNC) [www.dpnoc.ca](http://www.dpnoc.ca)

### Available Resources & Workshops

#### Making Decisions Series

A leading education initiative to combat drug and alcohol abuse and encourage social responsibility.

**Grades 4, 6, 7, 8 & 9** [<more info](#)

#### Parents as Preventors™

Workshops designed for parents, emphasizing the central role parents play in influencing their children to make healthy choices regarding alcohol, tobacco and other drugs. [<more info](#)

#### Professionals as Preventors™

A customized drug prevention workshop for professionals at Pro-D days or community based events. [<more info](#)

[drugfacts.ca](http://drugfacts.ca)

[tobaccofreesports.ca](http://tobaccofreesports.ca)

For more information please visit our website [ades.bc.bc](http://ades.bc.bc) or contact our office.

To enjoy all the benefits of an Alcohol-Drug Education Service membership [click here](#) or contact our office.

For a regular subscription to this newsletter [click here](#) or contact our office.

#203-2550 Shaughnessy Street  
Port Coquitlam BC V3C 3G2  
Tel: 604 944-4155 • Fax: 604 944-4149  
[info@ades.bc.ca](mailto:info@ades.bc.ca) • [www.ades.bc.ca](http://www.ades.bc.ca)