

NCHS Resilient Youth Initiative

proven programs to support social-emotional learning & substance use prevention

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

General

1. What do you mean when you say “evidence-based social-emotional learning and substance use prevention programs”?

“Evidence-based” programs are those with high-quality research showing short- and long- term outcomes related to substance use, mental health, behavior, and other factors. Evidence-based social-emotional learning and substance use prevention programs teach decision-making, communication, emotional self-regulation and other skills designed to help students make sound choices. These programs are generally curriculum-based and taught during school hours over several class sessions.

Evidence-based programs are available at the elementary, middle and high school level. Programs may be either universal (i.e., provided to all students) or targeted (i.e., provided only to students at higher risk of substance use or who are already involved in substance use).

For this initiative, NCHS is utilizing the list of approved evidence-based programs the Indiana Prevention Resource Center created for the Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation Prevention Matters initiative. The list can be found in the Request for Proposals and at nchsi.com/resilient.

2. What are examples of evidence-based substance use prevention programs?

Two examples of evidence-based substance use prevention programs are LifeSkills Training (LST) and Good Behavior Game (GBG). LST is a classroom-based program for middle school students that teaches personal self-management skills, social skills and resistance skills specifically related to substance use. GBG is a classroom-behavior management strategy for elementary school, generally first or second grade, designed to reduce aggressive, disruptive behavior. These programs, and others like them, have been shown to not only reduce short- and long-term substance use but also improve academic achievement, attendance and other outcomes.

For this initiative, NCHS is utilizing the list of approved evidence-based programs the Indiana Prevention Resource Center created for the Richard M. Fairbanks Foundation Prevention Matters initiative. This list is based on certified lists from state and national experts and is intended to identify programs that are evidence-based and appropriate for the schools participating in the Resilient Youth Initiative.

NCHS will make technical assistance providers available at no cost to help planning grant recipients identify the evidence-based programs that are most appropriate for their school or schools and align with their broader goals.

3. Are there non-evidence-based substance use prevention and social-emotional learning programs? If so, what are they?

It is important to be aware there are a number of substance use prevention and other programs that do not have strong evidence for an impact on substance use or other important outcomes, but nonetheless may be commonly used. These programs may be appealing because they deliver a powerful and compelling message, through videos or one-hour convocations. However, they generally have little to no evidence of reducing substance use and positively impacting other important student outcomes.

If a program is not included on the Resilient Youth Initiative list of approved programs, it is not considered to meet the evidence-based requirements for the purposes of the grant opportunity. Resilient Youth Initiative technical assistance providers will offer guidance on choosing an evidence-based program and avoiding programs that do not demonstrate effectiveness.

4. My school would like to implement a new, innovative program that has not yet been evaluated. Is this eligible for funding?

No. The Resilient Youth Initiative only provides funding for evidence-based programs, as described above. Although NCHS believes innovation is important, this initiative is focused on supporting programs that have already proven their effectiveness when implemented with fidelity (i.e., in accordance with how the program was designed and evaluated).

5. My school is interested in a program that is specific to one type of substance use prevention (e.g., alcohol). Is this eligible for funding?

Yes, provided that this program is an evidence-based substance use prevention program, as described above. The technical assistance providers will help planning grant recipients choose the most appropriate program for their school or schools, which may include focusing on programs that might target specific substances. However, we encourage schools to carefully review existing survey data or other relevant data about youth substance use, if available, before deciding to focus exclusively on one substance. It is highly probable that students will be exposed to multiple substances during their K-12 education. Technical assistance providers can provide guidance on available data as well.

6. Does NCHS prefer programs that are implemented during the school day vs. after school?

While evidence-based programs are generally taught during school hours, programs can be coordinated with other efforts to support students in out-of-school-time activities as appropriate. The technical assistance providers can offer guidance on questions regarding scheduling and implementation.

7. Does NCHS prefer programs that are offered to all students vs. a targeted, at-risk student population?

NCHS does not have a preference because there are evidence-based programs that are both universal (i.e., offered to all students) and targeted (i.e., offered specifically to students at higher risk of substance use or are already involved in substance use). However, planning grant recipients should consult their technical assistance provider to discuss what is most appropriate for their school or schools.

8. My school is interested in a family-based prevention program. Is this eligible for funding?

NCHS is willing to consider funding a family-based program if it is aligned with a student-based program offered at school. Schools should consult with the technical assistance providers to determine if a family-based program is appropriate and necessary to achieve their objectives.

9. My school serves an adult student population. May we apply for funding?

Schools that serve an adult population are not eligible for funding through this particular initiative.

10. I represent a hospital or community organization that offers substance use prevention programming. Is my organization eligible for funding?

Applications must come from individual, single-site schools, school corporations, charter school networks or private school organizations. However, planning grant recipients may partner with organizations that can further their goals of implementing evidence-based substance use prevention programs effectively and sustainably.

11. Does NCHS plan to allocate a certain share of grants to public (traditional, charter and innovation network) and private schools?

The allocation across public (traditional, charter and innovation network) and private schools will depend on the number and quality of applications.

12. May school corporations or charter schools apply for funding through a fiscal agent or other entity?

No. The Resilient Youth Initiative is open only to individual, single-site schools, school corporations, charter school networks or private school organizations. Grant recipients may collaborate with other entities to pursue contracts or other established partnerships, but NCHS grants will be made directly to selected individual, single-site schools, school corporations, charter school networks or private school organizations. Although the grant recipients may engage other community partners in their planning and implementation efforts, the grantees will have ultimate responsibility to NCHS for proper stewardship of the grant funds, reporting and other obligations.

13. Are planning and implementation grant recipients allowed to partner with other organizations in the community (hospitals, nonprofits, community centers, etc.)?

Yes. All identified community partners should share a commitment to implementing evidence-based programs as designed, and applicants must include a letter of support from each community partner describing the nature of the existing and/or new partnership, the organization's capacity to support a partnership, and the resources committed by the partnering organization(s) to support implementing an evidence-based prevention program with fidelity.

Planning Grants

1. How much funding can my school or schools request during the planning grant phase?

Applicants should request the necessary planning support up to the maximum allowable amount for their self-identified funding category. The funding categories and corresponding maximum allowable planning grants, are as follows:

School corporations may request up to \$30,000.

Charter school networks or private school organizations representing more than one school site may request up to \$20,000.

Individual, single-site schools not part of a corporation, charter school network, or private school network may request up to \$15,000.

2. What should I do if I'm uncertain which funding category my school qualifies for?

If you are uncertain which funding category your school qualifies for, please contact the NCHS staff at Virginia.Vought@nchsi.com or 765-423-1604. We are happy to help.

3. How will you measure school enrollment?

Planning grant applicants should report the number of enrolled students as of September 2018, as reported on the Indiana Department of Education website. Implementation grant amounts requested should reflect updated student enrollment as of 2019.

4. How much money will NCHS award in total during the planning grant phase?

Planning grants will be awarded on a non-competitive basis. The number and total dollar amount of planning grants awarded will depend upon the number of eligible planning grant applications received.

5. What does it mean that the planning grants are non-competitive?

Every eligible individual, single-site school, school corporation, charter school network or private school organization that applies for a planning grant; is located within Benton, Carroll, Clinton, Fountain, Montgomery, Tippecanoe, Warren, or White counties; and adheres to the planning grant application requirements will be awarded a planning grant.

6. What activities are allowable with planning grant funding?

Examples of allowable activities include: compensation for substitute teachers to cover time for teachers, leaders and other staff to engage in planning activities; hiring consultants to facilitate planning sessions or provide implementation proposal grant writing support; costs associated with site visits to schools doing exemplary prevention work; or meeting expenses for school-based prevention discussions with parents, students and other school community partners. Applicants may propose other activities as long as they support the overarching objectives of Prevention Matters.

7. Are there any activities for which we may not use planning grant funds?

Planning grant recipients are required to engage with the technical assistance providers selected by NCHS for support in selecting among evidence-based substance use prevention programs, creating a plan for implementation with fidelity, and developing a plan for sustainability. Since this technical assistance is offered at no cost to applicants, planning grant funds should not be used for additional consulting support for these purposes.

8. Why is NCHS awarding multiple planning grant amounts?

NCHS recognizes that there is a greater level of complexity to identify the appropriate prevention program(s) for a broader base of students (grade level and total number of students) across multiple school buildings. NCHS also recognizes the additional complexity of curriculum and funding authority at a school corporation. Thus NCHS has determined multiple funding categories to address these needs.

9. Can I skip the planning grant phase and still apply for an implementation grant?

No. NCHS believes the planning grant phase is necessary to help schools identify the evidence-based program that best meets the needs of their students and teachers and that can be implemented as designed and sustained following the initiative's three years of implementation funding support.

10. Will NCHS require planning grant recipients to provide receipts or other proof of use of funds from the planning grant?

Planning grant recipients that apply for an implementation grant will be asked to describe the use of planning grant funds within the implementation grant application. Planning grant recipients that do not apply for an implementation grant will be required to submit a planning grant report following the planning period. In all cases, planning grant recipients will need to provide a description of how planning funds were spent, compared to the budget provided in the planning grant application, in addition to a discussion of activities and outcomes for the planning period.

11. I work for a traditional public school, but my school corporation is not planning to apply for the planning grant. Can my school apply on its own?

No. NCHS believes that even though social-emotional learning and substance use prevention programs will be implemented at the school-site level, administrative support from the school corporation is essential for long-term effectiveness. Therefore, traditional public schools may only be considered as part of the school corporation's application.

12. I work for a charter school that is part of a network of charter schools, but my network is not planning to apply for the planning grant. Can my school apply on its own?

No. NCHS believes the support of a school's administration and governing body is essential for long-term program effectiveness. Therefore, charter schools that are part of a charter school network may only be considered as part of the charter school network's application.

13. I work for a private school that is part of a network but is not the network is not including my school within its plans. Can my school apply on its own?

No. NCHS believes the support of a school's administration and governing body is essential for long-term program effectiveness. Therefore, private schools that are part of a network may only be considered as part of the network's application.

14. Will planning grants be paid at once or in installments?

Planning grant recipients will be notified in December of 2018 and will be paid in a single installment after receiving their notification.

15. Is there a timeframe during which planning grant recipients must use the planning grant?

NCHS expects each Resilient Youth Initiative planning grant recipient will use the grant to help decide whether to apply for an implementation grant for implementation during the 2019-20 school year, and if so, to prepare for the implementation grant application by May 31, 2019. If planning grant funds remain following the submission of an implementation grant application (or if no such application is submitted), schools will have until December 31, 2019, to expend those funds for purposes that enhance the applicant's substance use prevention and social-emotional learning programs. A report on the activities pursued during the planning grant process and an accounting of how the planning grant funds were used will be due to NCHS by January 31, 2020.

16. If a group of schools or school corporations anticipates submitting a combined implementation grant application, should they also submit a combined planning grant application?

Two or more individual, single-site schools, school corporations, charter school networks or private school organizations may apply for planning or implementation grants either independently or collaboratively, as they deem appropriate. There may be benefits to pooling funds, even during the planning period, but the decision whether to submit independent or combined applications at either stage of the initiative is entirely up to the applicants.

Implementation Grants

1. How much funding can applicants request during the implementation grant phase?

NCHS anticipates that the amount requested in the implementation grant application will reflect the applicant's selection of evidence-based social-emotional learning and/or substance use prevention programs that best meet the applicant's needs. Applicants should give strong consideration to an appropriate per-student program cost that can be sustained at the end of the initiative's three years of support. Technical assistance providers will help applicants determine implementation costs.

2. Can my school(s) receive an implementation grant if we did not participate in the planning grant phase?

No. NCHS believes the planning grant phase is necessary to help schools identify the evidence-based program that best meets the needs of their students and teachers, and that can be implemented as designed and sustained following the initiative's three years of implementation funding support.

3. How much money will NCHS award in total during the implementation grant phase?

The number and total dollar amount of implementation grants will depend upon the amount of planning grants awarded, the number and quality of implementation grant applications received, and the amount of funding requested in the implementation grant applications. NCHS expects to award up to \$2 million in planning and implementation grants combined.

4. What does “the implementation grants will be evaluated on a competitive basis” mean?

Because NCHS anticipates receiving requests that together total more than the amount budgeted for the initiative, NCHS may not be able to award grants for all applications submitted. Favorable consideration will be given to implementation grant applications that best demonstrate a commitment to implementing an evidence-based substance use prevention program with fidelity (i.e., in accordance with how the program was designed and evaluated), provide a feasible plan for financial sustainability beyond the three years of implementation grant funding from NCHS, and demonstrate a commitment to evaluate the selected program’s impact on student outcomes. For additional information, please see the “Grant Considerations and Guidelines” section in the Request for Proposals.

5. Will my school(s) receive the full amount of money requested in the implementation grant application?

Due to the competitive nature of the implementation grant process, applicants may receive full, partial or no funding from NCHS.

6. If my organization does not receive an implementation grant, can we apply to NCHS outside of this process for funding?

The Resilient Youth Initiative is a special NCHS-initiated grant opportunity developed to address critical community health needs documented in the NCHS and River Bend Hospital Community Health Needs Assessment. NCHS does not otherwise currently accept unsolicited (non-RFP) requests for grant funding from schools. More information about NCHS grantmaking guidelines can be found at www.nchsi.com/grantmaking.

7. Will implementation grants be paid at once or in installments?

Implementation grants will be paid in three annual installments. Grant recipients will be required to submit a grant report at the end of each school year. NCHS staff will review the grant report to ensure the school is implementing its prevention program with fidelity before releasing the next grant installment.

8. When must each implementation grant recipient begin implementation?

Schools receiving implementation grants will be notified of their grant award in July of 2019, and should begin executing their plans for implementation at the start of the 2019-2020 school year. Implementation grants may be used through the end of the three-year grant period, June 30, 2022.

9. The criteria include that implementation grant recipients must have a plan for financial sustainability. What does this mean?

By the start of the 2022-2023 school year, schools should be able to cover the costs of continuing their evidenced-based program with fidelity and without any further financial support from NCHS.

Technical Assistance Providers and Consulting Support

1. Are planning grant recipients required to engage with the technical assistance providers?

Yes. The technical assistance providers have been chosen by NCHS due to their expertise in assisting schools in implementing evidence-based programs as designed. This expert counsel is offered at no cost to schools to help ensure planning grant recipients carefully think through the steps required for successful program implementation.

2. Can planning grant recipients choose a different technical assistance provider?

Each planning grant recipient must work with one of the technical assistance providers chosen NCHS for the purposes of evaluating and selecting one or more evidence-based prevention programs. However, planning grant recipients may engage other consultants to assist in other aspects of planning, grant writing or other functions the planning grant recipient deems important.

3. What is the role of the technical assistance providers?

The technical assistance providers have expertise and experience in assisting schools in selecting, implementing and sustaining evidence-based programs. The technical assistance providers will assist planning grant recipients in choosing evidence-based social-emotional learning and/or substance use prevention programs appropriate for the schools and aligned with the schools' broader goals, creating a plan for implementation with fidelity (i.e., in accordance with how the program was designed and evaluated) and developing a plan for sustainability once the implementation grant funding is complete. *Technical assistance providers will not write schools' grant applications.*

4. Can planning grant recipients hire additional consultants to help with planning and completing the implementation grant application?

Yes. If planning grant recipients identify a need for support for planning aspects beyond what is offered by the technical assistance providers, they may use planning grant funds to address these needs. Examples of allowable support from an additional consultant include grant writing or facilitating planning discussions.

MORE INFORMATION

For more information about the Resilient Youth Initiative, visit nchsi.com/resilient. We encourage you to contact us with questions about the grant opportunity at Virginia.Vought@nchsi.com or (765) 423-1604.