

Department of Homeland Security (DHS)
FY2020 Targeted Violence and Terrorism
Prevention (TVTP) Grantee Evaluation

Site Profile

Bay Area Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI)



Developed for



Science and
Technology

Developed by RTI International

List of Abbreviations

CM	Community Matters
CAPO	Compliance Assurance Program Office
COE	County Offices of Education
DHS	Department of Homeland Security
IMP	Implementation and Measurement Plan
IRB	Institutional Review Board
SSA	Safe School Ambassadors
SCCOE	Santa Clara County Office of Education
TVTP	Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention
TTT	Train-the-Trainer
UASI	Urban Areas Security Initiative

Executive Summary

The Department of Homeland Security Science and Technology Directorate funded RTI International to conduct research and evaluation of the Bay Area Fiscal Year 2020 Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention grant to examine program accomplishments, challenges, and recommendations. A process evaluation was conducted for the three projects that made up the Bay Area Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) grant, in addition to an outcome evaluation of its Community Awareness Briefing, Behavioral Analysis, and Prevention Strategies Train-the-Trainer (TTT) courses. To conduct this evaluation, the research team reviewed training curricula and other program materials, conducted an observation of a training, interviewed training participants, and analyzed pre-, post-, and follow-up test data. A brief summary of findings for each project can be viewed in Table ES-A.

Bay Area UASI was able to demonstrate completion of almost all of its objectives. Through data collected before and after the Community Trainings TTT course (Project 1 and 4)^a, Bay Area UASI established that the trainings were effectively educating participants and expanding knowledge regarding community awareness briefings, behavioral analysis, and prevention strategies in the Bay Area. Two TTT participants already conducted trainings of their own demonstrating that their training has promise for sustainability and continued growth beyond the end of their period of performance. Safe School Protective Factors (Project 2)^a engaged five schools in implementing the Safe School Ambassadors program, with four of them continuing implementation through a second year with trained teachers leading the effort. Through collaborations with local counties, a dashboard with student behavior data was developed and launched for Bay Area school districts and County Offices of Education in the Data Dashboard for Risk Assessment (Project 3)^a. Throughout the grant, their TTT and dashboard implementation activities promoted sustainability beyond the grant-funded period of performance.

^aBay Area Urban Areas Security Initiative referred to these projects by their project numbers, but for the sake of clarity in this report more descriptive titles are provided.

Table ES-A: Summary of Findings

 <p>Community Trainings (Projects 1 and 4)</p>	Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop community relationships with schools and houses of faith to administer Community Awareness Briefing, Behavioral Analysis, and Prevention Strategies trainings
	Outputs and Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Created the California Prevention Practitioners Network Delivered 10 Community Awareness Briefing, Behavioral Analysis, and Prevention Strategies trainings Delivered eight TTT sessions 108 participants trained to replicate trainings Increased the average participant knowledge score from 32% before to 67% immediately after trainings
	Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pivoting delivery methods due to COVID-19 restrictions
	Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adopt an asynchronous and shortened format for training delivery Tailor trainings based on the target audience Provide TTT participants with time, materials, and forums that facilitate training replication
 <p>Safe School Protective Factors (Project 2)</p>	Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Deliver the Safe School Ambassadors (SSA) training program in at least five Bay Area middle schools Equip those schools to sustain the program through a TTT component
	Outputs and Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Five middle schools completed the SSA Year 1 training program 340 students trained in the SSA training program 44 school staff trained in the SSA training program 13 middle school faculty and staff completed the TTT course Five middle schools completed the SSA Year 2 training program Five middle schools implemented the SSA training program
	Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Unanticipated institutional review board (IRB) and Compliance Assurance Program Office (CAPO) delays shortened the implementation timeline Recruiting and maintaining participation from both teachers and students
	Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide direct support to schools, including program materials and additional funding to incentivize participation in the program Coordinate regularly with school staff to ensure program fidelity, provide ad hoc support, and facilitate peer-to-peer discussion Break trainings into shorter sessions for a teenage audience Incorporate IRB and CAPO tasks into implementation timelines
 <p>Data Dashboard for Risk Assessment (Project 3)</p>	Objectives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and extend the DataZone dashboard to house relevant student behavior data for local schools, school districts, and County Offices of Education Onboard local stakeholders to include their data and utilize the dashboard
	Outputs and Outcomes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identified an existing data framework appropriate for expansion Socialized the DataZone dashboard with five County Offices of Education Expanded the dashboard to house increased information flow and provide more relevant information
	Challenges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Change in subcontractor during implementation
	Recommendations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop relationships and lines of communication early on to facilitate more efficient implementation

Site Profile: Bay Area Urban Areas Security Initiative

The Bay Area Urban Areas Security Initiative (UASI) was awarded a two-year grant by the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Center for Prevention Programs and Partnerships in 2020 and was selected in 2021 to undergo an independent evaluation. This site profile reviews Bay Area UASI's grant design, implementation, accomplishments, challenges, and relevant recommendations for future programming in targeted violence and terrorism prevention. A process and an outcome evaluation of Bay Area UASI's Fiscal Year 2020 Targeted Violence and Terrorism Prevention (TVTP) grant was conducted, both of which are detailed in this report. These evaluations provide a deeper understanding of the processes of Bay Area UASI's projects to learn what mechanisms may contribute to a project's effectiveness. Additionally, the process evaluation details project accomplishments at the output level. The outcome evaluation provides insights into the effectiveness of trainings as a tool for improving community awareness and connecting community leaders with necessary skills and resources.

Bay Area UASI

UASIs were established by the Federal Emergency Management Agency to manage federal funding allocated to high-risk urban areas. UASIs use DHS grant funding to improve understanding of regional risk as well as grow local capacity to prevent and respond to both terrorist incidents and other catastrophic events. Bay Area UASI serves all jurisdictions within a 12-county metropolitan service area including Alameda, Contra Costa, Marin, Monterey, Napa, San Benito, San Francisco, San Mateo, Santa Clara, Santa Cruz, Solano, and Sonoma counties. Bay Area UASI serves public safety entities with disaster preparedness and terrorism prevention services and provides annual funding for the regional fusion center to enhance intelligence and information sharing capabilities.

Bay Area UASI's Fiscal Year 2020 TVTP Grant Summary

Bay Area UASI's TVTP grant from DHS was divided into three separate projects with distinct goals, activities, and target audiences. As such, this report has three separate sections examining each of Bay Area UASI's projects in detail. An overall discussion of findings follows the project profiles, in addition to findings from the grantee partner survey. The three projects are as follows¹:



Community Trainings, Projects 1 and 4 (combined):

Bay Area UASI sought to deliver trainings on two of its projects. To be efficacious, they combined them into a single training on Community Awareness Briefing (Project 1), Behavioral Analysis (Project 4), and a newly added section on Prevention Strategies. Bay Area UASI aimed to conduct 10 training seminars and eight instructor-led Train-the-Trainer (TTT) seminars to promote sustainability.



Safe School Protective Factors, Project 2:

Bay Area UASI sought to develop protective factors and reduce risk factors to violence in youth communities by implementing the Safe School Ambassadors (SSA) training program in five schools across the Bay Area.



Data Dashboard for Risk Assessment, Project 3:

Bay Area UASI sought to reduce targeted school violence by establishing a Targeted School Violence database and cross-jurisdictional use of these data.

For Bay Area UASI's full Implementation and Measurement Plan (IMP), which outlines each project's goals, target audiences, objectives, activities, inputs, time frame, anticipated outputs, performance measures, and data collection plan, contact DHS.

¹ Bay Area UASI referred to these projects by their project numbers, but for the sake of clarity in this report more descriptive titles are provided.



Community Trainings Project

Bay Area UASI's Three-Part Trainings Lead to Local Partnerships and TTT Courses for Sustainability

Bay Area UASI delivered one pilot training and nine instructor-led standard trainings in addition to eight TTT sessions to promote sustainability of course content through training replication. The training content focused on Community Awareness Briefing, Behavioral Analysis, and Prevention Strategies. This project sought to engage with faculty and staff at Bay Area high schools and houses of faith. All 10 standard trainings were conducted virtually, and all eight TTT sessions were conducted in person.

Bay Area UASI contracted SenseMakers, an organization that provides disaster preparedness consultancy services. To design and deliver these trainings, SenseMakers attended the two-day DHS TVTP certification program and used that training as well as staff expertise to create the curriculum. This training was refined as SenseMakers learned throughout the project to include more information specific to Bay Area resources and context.

The TTT sessions differed from the regular trainings in that the trainer walked through the presentation for each of the three modules, summarizing and providing advice regarding how to deliver the content. The trainer used the remaining time to assign participants to a particular section that they in turn presented to the group, with the trainer providing feedback. Participants were given binders containing the curriculum and accompanying lesson plan. As part of the TTT session, participants completed a pre-and posttest to measure learning outcomes.

As part of this project, Bay Area UASI consulted with a variety of major local- and state-level organizations including religious organizations, school offices, and the State Threat Assessment Center. Through these contacts Bay Area UASI established the California Prevention Practitioners Network, which has a charter and holds quarterly meetings. The California Prevention Practitioners Network was initially created to help Bay Area UASI build partnerships with leaders and stakeholders and

establish a multidisciplinary team of practitioner working groups to support its work under Projects 1 and 4. This network was used to announce the Bay Area UASI training program and familiarize relevant target audiences with it. Since its establishment, the California Prevention Practitioners Network's activities have expanded beyond the scope of the grant.

Design and Methods for Process and Outcome Evaluation

A process evaluation of the Community Trainings was conducted along with an outcome evaluation specifically looking at the TTT courses.

For the outcome evaluation, researchers collected attendance data, pre- and posttests, and follow-up tests. Pre- and posttests were given to TTT participants immediately before and after each training, and the follow-up tests were sent to participants four months after the training. The quantitative data that were produced from the pre- and posttests were analyzed to examine the confidence of TTT participants to conduct the training, their perceptions on leading causes of radicalization in their local area, and their knowledge of key elements of radicalization and extremism as taught in the training. Descriptive analyses were conducted to compare pre- and posttest performance to gauge whether participants on average were better able to answer each knowledge question correctly following the TTT training.

Additionally, for the process evaluation of the Community Trainings (both standard and TTT trainings), researchers conducted interviews with participants, reviewed the training curricula and attendance data from Bay Area UASI, and interviewed two staff members from the subcontractor, SenseMakers, who were directly involved in the development and delivery of all Community Trainings. These interviews described the more nuanced and less formalized processes associated with project implementation. The research team used thematic analysis to identify meaningful patterns in the data. Additionally, all material documentation was reviewed, including training curricula, to ascertain the relevance of the content.



Process and Outcome Evaluation Findings

Standard Trainings Provide a Wealth of Information

This section examines the process evaluation findings regarding the standard trainings, which correspond with Goal 1, Objective 1.1 in Bay Area UASI's IMP.

OBJECTIVE 1.1:

Build partnerships with leaders and stakeholders representing 55 schools and 100 faith-based organizations, establish regional multidisciplinary team practitioner working groups, deliver 10 culturally competent Community Awareness Briefing trainings to 55 schools and 100 faith-based organizations by Q4 2021.

Bay Area UASI conducted a total of 10 trainings from June 2021 to December 2021. Due to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions, all standard trainings took place over Zoom. Audience knowledge polls were conducted throughout.

A Variety of Sectors Attend Trainings

Bay Area UASI began conducting introductory meetings with contacts at local religious and educational organizations to garner buy-in for the training project. These partnerships developed into a multidisciplinary team of practitioners working at the regional level called the California Prevention Practitioners Network. The California Prevention Practitioners Network established a Working Charter to guide its mission and began holding quarterly meetings. Over the course of the grant period, the California Prevention Practitioners Network conducted five meetings with a total of 400 people in attendance. During meetings, the California Prevention Practitioners Network facilitated cross-sectoral relationship building, hosted subject matter experts to present on prevention practices, and shared information relevant to implementing prevention programming in California.

Bay Area UASI tracked limited data regarding training attendees through the Eventbrite page that was used for registration and, while Bay Area UASI did not consistently record the number of attendees, registered participants ranged from 22 to 168

for each training. Per guidance provided by DHS's Compliance Assurance Program Office (CAPO), Bay Area UASI did not systematically track participant attendance because it would need to collect personally identifiable information to do so. Bay Area UASI disseminated information regarding the training in its newsletter to members of the California Practitioners Network and to personal contacts to recruit training participants. Bay Area UASI also worked with its local Fusion Center to extend its reach and identify new points of contact. Training participants varied widely. Bay Area UASI did not systematically document participants' sectors and geographic location, but the data that was gathered show that trainings garnered participation from law enforcement, education, houses of faith, nonprofit, emergency services, and private sectors across the Bay Area, as well as a few participants from outside the Bay Area. While it is unclear if Bay Area UASI met the exact quantitative targets in its IMP for the number of schools and houses of faith engaged in these trainings, it is clear that some stakeholders from these target audiences did participate.

Participants' Reflections on Training Experience and Length

Interviews with eight trainees were conducted to include their perspective in the evaluation. Overall, participants appreciated the training content, stating that it was useful, timely, and well organized. They noted that the trainer was energetic and effective both in presenting the curriculum and using experience to work through participant questions. Several individuals who attended the TTT course noted that the whole of community framing was a particularly impactful component of the training. In one training, a local school safety officer introduced the training by speaking from their personal experience. One participant mentioned that the school safety officer created a sense of purpose and encouraged the trainer to continue bringing in guest speakers. Some participants believed that the three-hour format was too long to keep the audience's attention in a virtual format and, because of the vast amount of material to cover during the three hours, that there was little time to absorb the content before moving on to the next piece. Interestingly, when interviewing participants, it was discovered that two participants had taken this training multiple times, with one participant attending six times in total. They noted that they needed to take the training multiple times to fully absorb the material. Because the trainings took place over Zoom, repeated participation by one individual did not reduce the amount of space for others to participate.



TTT Course Increases Knowledge and Sustainability

This section examines the process and outcome evaluation findings regarding Bay Area UASI's TTT courses, which fall under Goal 1, Objective 1.2 in Bay Area UASI's IMP.

OBJECTIVE 1.2:

Build cadre of Targeted Violence Prevention trainers for 55 schools and 100 faith-based organizations, deliver 8 train-the-trainer courses to extend and sustain Community Awareness Briefings across the Bay Area, and evaluate the project by Q3 2022.

Training Audience Varies in Prior Experience

Each TTT course was a half-day, in-person event and had between 7 and 16 participants, with a total of 108 people completing the course. Bay Area UASI drew on the California Prevention Practitioners Network and previously identified community contacts to recruit TTT participants. Additionally, Bay Area UASI reached out to specific faith-based organizations to better reach that target audience.

Although this was a TTT course, which did not go through the curriculum itself in detail, completion of the standard training was not a prerequisite. Through interviews with TTT participants, RTI found that many had not taken the standard training or knew that their fellow participants had not taken it prior to attending the TTT course. However, without systematic registration data, RTI cannot confirm exactly how many TTT participants took the standard training beforehand. It is unclear how this may have impacted the TTT course, as some participants noted that the lack of familiarity with the curriculum seemed to hinder participation. Interviewees observed that individuals from the law enforcement sector seemed more familiar with the training material than those from other sectors, even without having taken the standard training previously. When asked why they took the TTT course without having taken the standard training, participants stated that they only found out about the trainings once Bay Area UASI had completed all the standard trainings, so they enrolled in the TTT course to gain access to the curriculum.

Participants' Reflections on Training and Networking Experience

As part of data collection, nine TTT participants and the TTT trainer were interviewed to gain feedback on their experience with the training. Overall, participants appreciated the smaller class size and stated that the in-person format allowed the TTT course to be highly interactive and participatory. Interviewees found the materials to be well put together and to contain useful information. The use of personal narratives and experiences was particularly meaningful. However, some reported feeling rushed and not ready to provide training on their own due to the breadth of material covered in a short time.

Participants noted that a variety of professionals were in attendance, such as those working in emergency management, law enforcement, and educational sectors, and appreciated the opportunity to hear other perspectives while forming connections in these other sectors. In the interviews, a few participants mentioned that they hoped these connections would provide future resources to draw upon. Some noted they would like even more time to network with these other participants. However, others suggested that the training be tailored to address the needs of their sector to make it as relevant and clear as possible.

Attendees Intend to Adapt Training Information Across Multiple Sectors

TTT participants were interviewed shortly after they had participated in the training, so none of them had hosted a training of their own yet. One participant mentioned having incorporated some of the TTT curriculum into a different training, and another stated having used the material in conversations with schools. Multiple participants talked about planning to adapt the training materials to their specific context. Researchers followed up seven months later and learned that two TTT participants began leading trainings of their own, demonstrating that the underlying goal of training replication to sustainably continue this work is beginning to take place. In addition to those two, 10 TTT participants later stated that they had plans to facilitate a training in the future.

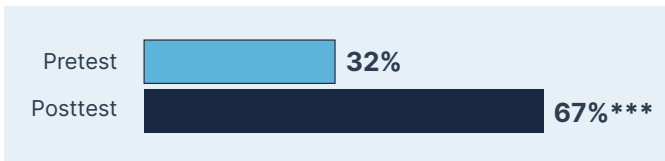


Pre- and Posttest Indicate Significant Knowledge Gain

Knowledge was measured by questions about extremist threats, pre-incident indicators, radicalization factors, and the influence of social media.

In order to assess the impacts of the TTT training, participants were given a pretest to determine their existing radicalization knowledge and a posttest to measure their knowledge gained immediately following the training. Pre- and posttests contained questions on the nature of extremist threats, pre-incident indicators, radicalization factors, and the influence of social media. Researchers were unable to connect any individual's pre- and posttest performance because the tests were administered anonymously, so this report displays the overall performance of TTT participants. Overall, outcome data show that knowledge improved on average for the entire TTT cohort after training. On the pretest (light blue), the average score on the knowledge questions was 32%, increasing to 67% on the posttest (dark blue) out of 10 questions. This increase was statistically significant (Figure 1), suggesting that this increase was not due to chance.

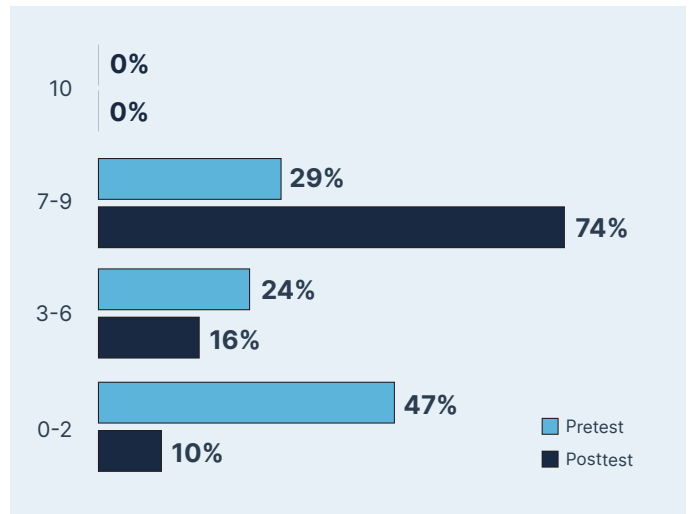
Figure 1: Average Pre- and Posttest Scores for Quiz Questions



***These differences were statistically significant using two-tailed t-tests ($\alpha = 0.001$). This means that there was less than a 0.1% likelihood that a difference of this much or greater would occur due to chance.

The impact of the TTT trainings for individuals is evident when the data are presented as a set of ranges (Figure 2). While no participant got every question correct, the percentage of participants that got seven or more answers correct rose by 45% in the posttest. Also marking radicalization knowledge growth, the percentage of TTT trainees scoring two or fewer decreased by 37% in the posttest compared with the pretest. While individual pre- and posttest performance could not be connected, these cumulative findings indicate that gains in radicalization knowledge were achieved broadly across the TTT cohorts.

Figure 2: Number of Questions Answered Correctly in Pre- and Posttest



Pre-, post- and follow-up questions tested participants on:

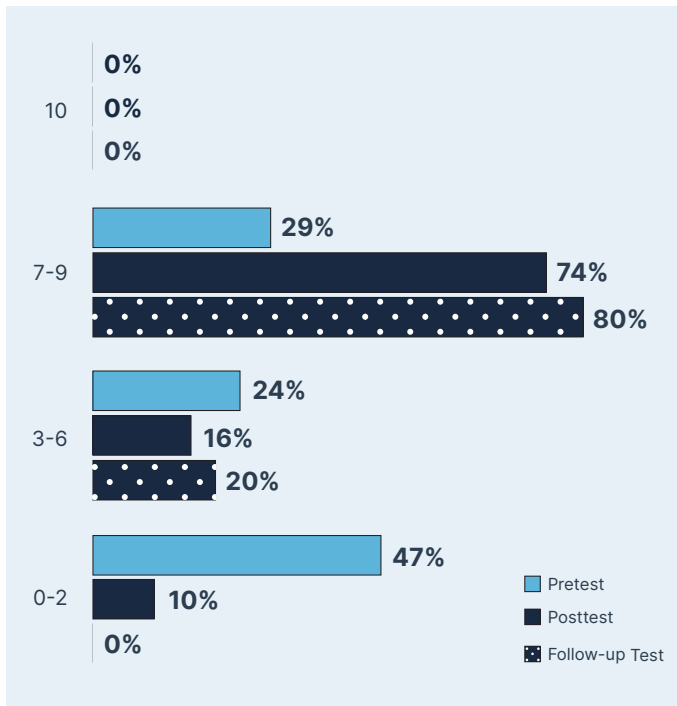
- Risk and protective factors
- Trends in domestic violent extremism
- Extremist use of the internet and social media
- Recruitment pathways and attack cycles
- Resources for those concerned about specific individuals
- Effect that the internet and social media have had on violent extremist threats
- Factors potentially leading someone to radicalize
- Behavioral analysis
- Pre-incident indicators
- Community actions to counter threats
- Student threat assessment goals



Follow-Up Tests Suggest Knowledge Retention

To measure whether the knowledge gained from TTT sessions was retained, a follow-up test was administered to all trainees four months later. This follow-up test contained identical questions and answer options as in both the pre- and posttest. The average score for the follow-up test was 74%, which was higher than the average posttest score of 67%. This initial finding is promising; however, it should be noted that the majority of posttest participants did not complete the follow-up test, with only 15 posttests being completed. As those who did not score well on the previous tests may have been less likely to participate in the follow-up test, this finding should be interpreted with caution.² These follow-up test results do, however, indicate that TTT knowledge was retained at least four months after the training. As can be seen in Figure 3, a higher percentage of participants scored between 7 to 9 correct answers out of 10 on the follow-up test compared with both earlier phases of testing.

Figure 3: Number of Questions Answered Correctly in Pre-, Post-, and Follow-up Test



² Despite numerous attempts to engage all former participants, only 15 out of the 70 people who completed the posttest also completed the follow-up test (21.4% completion). As RTI was unable to exclude the impact of a range of potential response biases and due to the low number of responses, formal hypothesis tests could not be conducted. Consequently, all findings comparing the pre- and posttest data to the follow-up test data are not definitive and should instead be viewed as potentially indicative of the overall knowledge retention rate.

Challenges

COVID-19 Pandemic. Bay Area UASI designed its program before the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic but began implementation in the fall of 2020 when many parts of the Bay Area were subject to strict quarantine regulations. For this reason, Bay Area UASI had to adapt its standard Community Trainings to a virtual format, which fundamentally shifted the type of participation and level of engagement that was possible. The virtual format allowed Bay Area UASI to reach a wider and larger audience, but some believed audience engagement suffered, despite interactive polls interjected throughout the training. Furthermore, participants interviewed noted that they struggled to maintain focus through a three-hour long online course and admitted to multitasking at times.

IMP Accomplishments

Bay Area UASI achieved the objectives described in its IMP by building partnerships with Bay Area organizations from relevant sectors (Objective 1.1), developing and delivering 10 trainings (Objective 1.1), and conducting eight TTT courses (Objective 1.2). However, as discussed, Bay Area UASI cannot establish whether it delivered the trainings to the 55 schools and 100 houses of faith that it specified as the target audience (Objective 1.1-1.2). Through data collected before and after TTT courses, Bay Area UASI did establish that the trainings were effectively educating participants and expanding knowledge regarding Community Awareness Briefing, Behavioral Analysis, and Prevention Strategies in the Bay Area. The fact that two TTT participants are already conducting trainings of their own demonstrates that the training has promise for sustainability and continued growth beyond the end of the period of performance.

From the participant information that Bay Area UASI did have, it appears that training participants reflected a wide breadth of sectors, including the targeted sectors of schools and houses of faith. Trainings included a much more diverse population than initially outlined in the IMP, which may have expanded the impact of programming. However, RTI is unable to assess whether the program is reaching the intended communities (or if the intended communities have changed) and whether the communities reached are the ones that should be targeted.



Recommendations

Through the evaluation, RTI identified the following recommendations for future TVTP initiatives similar to Bay Area UASI's Community Trainings:

- ✓ Consider holding standard trainings in an asynchronous virtual format, followed by a longer in-person TTT workshop when a TTT component is desired. Trainings tend to have greater impact in adult populations when they are broken up into smaller sections and presented in a collaborative manner that emphasizes integrative learning and practical applications (Thoms, 2001).
 - Alternatively, if keeping standard trainings in a synchronous format, ensure that they are conducted in person and allow enough time for participants to absorb and discuss the material.
- ✓ Consider tailoring training curricula to participants' sectors or discuss more explicitly how the training applies to each sector. Sector-specific trainings would reduce participants' abilities to meet, learn from, and network with professionals in other sectors, so these tradeoffs should be considered.
- ✓ Make all standard trainings a prerequisite for attending a TTT session.
 - Ensure read-ahead materials for TTT courses are sent early enough for everyone to complete them.
- ✓ Consider including a section in TTT courses in which participants create their training plan to encourage and facilitate future training replication.
- ✓ If conducting a local training, include a discussion and/or forum in which TTT participants can discuss partnering or otherwise supporting each other to facilitate future training replication.
 - Another consideration for a local training is to invite local guest speakers to provide relevant context.
- ✓ Create a website or other forum where TTT participants can connect and share best practices, resources, examples, and relevant updates.



Safe School Protective Factors Project

Bay Area UASI’s SSA Program Empowers Students and Schools to Reduce Bullying

The Safe School Protective Factors project sought to develop protective factors and reduce risk factors to violence in youth communities by implementing the SSA training program in five middle schools. To do so, Bay Area UASI partnered with Community Matters (CM), an organization based in Santa Rosa, California, that is dedicated to improving school climates throughout the nation by delivering SSA training to students. As shown in Figure 4, the full training program included three trainings per school: (a) an SSA training in Year 1 facilitated by a CM trainer, (b) a TTT course³ with each school’s program advisor and other relevant staff, and (c) a Year 2 training, in which TTT participants co-lead an SSA training alongside a CM trainer to prepare them to deliver trainings in the future by themselves.

Figure 4: Progression of Safe School Ambassadors Program Implementation



These trainings presented the SSA curriculum to school staff and students; schools were then expected to implement program activities that make up the SSA curriculum in between and alongside these trainings. Activities included meetings in which trained staff and students come together to discuss mistreatment in their school and how to respond when faced with these behaviors.

CM additionally managed the recruitment of schools to the program, targeting staff, administrators, and students from five schools located in the 12-county, three-city region and aimed to have training participants reflect these schools’ demographic distributions.

³ Bay Area UASI and CM refer to these trainings as Training of Trainers (TOT). However, for consistency, RTI will refer to it as Train-the-Trainer (TTT). These terms can be used interchangeably.



RTI's Design and Methods for Process Evaluation

A process evaluation of the Safe School Protective Factors project was conducted which sought to develop protective factors and reduce risk factors to violence by implementing the SSA training program. The evaluation strategy was tailored to appropriately examine whether the Safe School Protective Factors project met its operational goals. Due to the order of events, grantee and evaluation timelines, and the fact that this project involved minors, observation and data collection abilities were slightly hindered, but enough information could be gathered from adult participants and the site point of contact to conduct the process evaluation. Researchers observed the SSA TTT course in March 2022 and conducted interviews with the SSA program advisor from each of the five schools participating in the Safe School Protective Factors project. Two additional interviews with relevant CM staff were conducted at the end of the grant. A thematic analysis was used to identify meaningful patterns in the data. In doing so, researchers strived to identify the most pertinent and representative comments that typified the range of responses. Importantly, these interviews described the more nuanced and less formalized processes associated with project implementation.

Numerous program documents and training materials were reviewed to supplement these data, including SSA advertising, recruitment, and selection materials; SSA training curriculum; SSA TTT curriculum; SSA TTT feedback forms; and Year-End Surveys administered to school staff at the end of the first semester. Researchers reviewed all material documentation received to ascertain the relevance of the content. These documents reflected the formalized expectations and agreements that served as the foundation of project implementation.

Findings

Year 1 Trainings Implemented in Midst of Challenging School Conditions

This section examines the process evaluation findings regarding the SSA Year 1 trainings, which correspond with Goal 1, Objective 1.1-1.2 in Bay Area UASI's Project 2 IMP.

OBJECTIVE 1.1-1.2:

Five schools in the Bay Area will be selected and confirmed to implement the Safe School Ambassadors (SSA) Program by Q4 2021. Up to 40 students and five faculty per school (230 total) in five schools implementing and evaluating SSA training in Year 1.

CM successfully completed all five Year 1 trainings, although schools faced challenges in recruiting adult and student participants.

CM Identifies and Recruits Local Middle Schools for Program

CM conducted outreach to middle schools from 12 counties in the Bay Area by emailing all the schools in its databases as well as reaching out to County Offices of Education (COEs) and districts. The emails provided preliminary information about the SSA program and invited them to attend public webinars to learn more about it. Following this period of outreach, schools submitted applications, which CM evaluated based on when they applied, the degree of administrative support they had, whether they could have maximum student participation, and whether other schools in the county already had participated in the program. By mid-November 2021, five schools were selected and began the onboarding process with CM. Through the onboarding process, a program advisor was identified at each school to serve as a point of contact for CM and lead programming throughout the semester. Program advisors served in this capacity in addition to their other professional role.

Schools Struggle to Recruit Socially Influential Students

Once the five schools were identified, SSA program advisors were asked to recruit socially influential students to participate in the program. Guidance provided to teachers for identifying these students emphasized those who guide opinions among their friends, have developed communication skills, and have a strong sense of justice when confronting interpersonal conflicts. These characteristics were to be determined based on staff observations. Staff at each school were asked to observe these traits and recommend a diverse group of students representing different social cliques on campus. However, each school implemented different recruitment strategies, with some schools asking for students to volunteer for the training while



others asked for teachers and other staff to nominate students. At least one school drew on a preexisting student group rather than recruiting a new cohort of students.

Four school staff interviewed noted several challenges in recruiting students to be ambassadors in the SSA program. First, staff members championing the SSA program did not have a detailed understanding of what the program focused on or entailed, which in turn meant that they struggled to communicate this to the broader school staff. Without this understanding, staff struggled to effectively nominate students. Second, staff struggled with recruitment to the program because many students were concerned about the perception that they would be seen as “snitches.” Staff then tried to use more effective messaging and spoke more generally about the training to avoid alienating possible student ambassadors, again reducing the effectiveness of nominations. Concerns of being labeled as a snitch also meant that some students who would have been ideal ambassadors did not want to take part in the program. CM staff corroborated this experience and reported that some schools struggled with program implementation due to poor student ambassador selection for the program. Consistent with that sentiment, multiple schools noted that they did not think they had recruited the appropriate students for the Year 1 trainings. Specifically, these schools noted that their student participants were not social leaders or were not representative of the variety of groups that exist at the school.

Strained Resources Limit Adult Staff Participation

SSA program advisors also recruited other adult staff members, such as teachers and school counselors, at their schools to participate in trainings and other activities. Multiple schools found it difficult to recruit the adequate number of adults. Due to external factors resulting from the COVID-19 pandemic, like teacher shortages and high substitute teacher turnover rates, many adult staff members lacked time or energy to properly contribute to the program. No SSA programs had the financial resources to compensate adult staff members for the additional time and energy they would spend working on the SSA program which occurred without a reduction in their usual duties. Finally, program advisors commented that they felt they could not adequately describe what kind of commitment to expect from the program, making adult recruitment more difficult.

Training Format and Audience Size

The initial two-day Year 1 SSA trainings were completed in January 2022. Student attendance at the training varied between schools with a minimum of 28 students and a maximum of 38 accompanied by a minimum of two adults and a maximum of seven adults. Within the trainings, students were divided into “Family Groups” with each group including a variety of students accompanied by one or two adult supervisors. These Family Groups were intended to remain the same for an entire program year. The trainer led the entire group through ice breaker activities to build trust and comfort among participants. The rest of the activities alternated between the group working through content together, performing roleplaying exercises, and discussing materials.

Participants’ Reflections on Training Experience and Length

Experiences varied widely across schools. Most program advisors noted that the content of the training was relevant to their students and school climates. They commented that the initial Year 1 trainings were highly interactive and students seemed engaged in and excited by the material. Critically, they stated that the training encouraged cross-group community building among students and relationship building between students and staff. One school noted that students had become noticeably more comfortable with one teacher in particular and began seeking advice from that teacher, creating new relationships. Some schools did note, however, that their students struggled with focusing for two full days.

During the TTT course (discussed below), teachers shared benefits of Year 1 trainings, including the following:

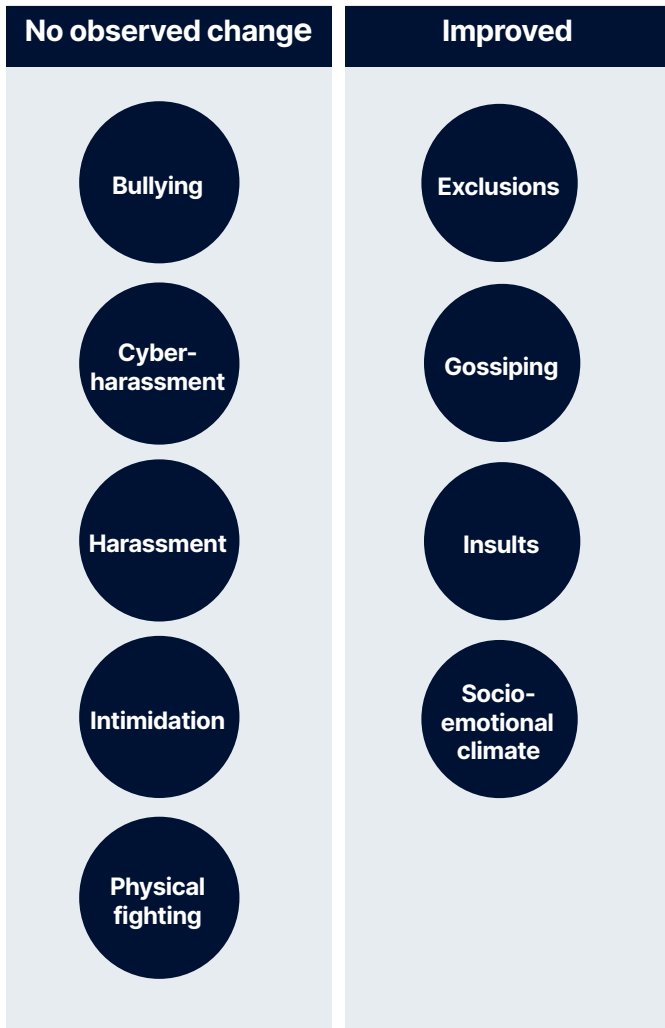
- Students were more conscious or aware of their behavior and were expected to be accountable for it
- The training fostered empowerment and independence in dealing with conflicts
- There was more teacher-student interaction
- The training provided an opportunity to reshape school culture and behavioral norms as students return to in-person learning from virtual learning (due to the COVID-19 pandemic)
- Students applied the curriculum to interactions with teachers (not just peers)



Implementing SSA Curriculum Through School Semester

Once the initial trainings were completed, schools were asked to implement the SSA curriculum, which entails students applying the skills and knowledge that they gained in social interactions, in addition to school staff holding group meetings with students to continue discussing, absorbing, and applying the curriculum in practice.

Figure 5: Observed Changes in Student Social Cohesion



At the end of the first semester of curriculum application, school staff were asked about changes in school since the SSA training took place, with three of the five schools completing the survey. Figure 5 shows dynamics that respondents believed improved versus those that stayed the same. This may be due to the fact that the survey was administered after just one semester of implementation, so students improved in less weighty social interactions like gossiping but could not yet apply the curriculum to more serious conflicts like physical fights.

When asked how students had translated the content into action following the training, some schools remarked that students seemed engaged with the material and activities but did not necessarily implement the tools they had learned in the wider school environment. These schools noted that students believed they had not encountered “major” acts of bullying or mistreatment and therefore did not have opportunities to apply the curriculum.

Other schools struggled with student engagement in group meetings, which typically took place during lunchtime. Specifically, students did not show up consistently to group meetings at the scheduled times, meaning there were often not enough students to conduct the planned activities. These schools attempted to remedy this issue by having all program participants meet together instead of in their smaller groups. Additionally, schools varied the cadence of group meetings to adapt to student availability, ranging from meeting once a week to meeting once a month. In some schools, the content was informal and focused on issues or questions generated by students, while others stuck closely to the curriculum and planned exercises.

Though no one shared an overarching explanation as to why implementation varied widely, it is likely due to differences in internal school support and resources available to devote to the program. CM staff aided schools with less support by stepping in when there were not enough school staff in attendance.



TTT Course Builds School Staff Training Capacity

This section examines the process evaluation findings regarding the SSA TTT course, which correspond with Goal 2, Objectives 2.1–2.4 in Bay Area UASI's Project 2 IMP.

OBJECTIVE 2.1–2.4:

2.1 Five individuals are identified and confirmed to participate in the Training-of-Trainers (TOT) by Q1 2022.

2.2 Five individuals attend two SSA training sessions by Q3 2022.

2.3 Five individuals complete the TOT sessions by Q3 2022.

2.4 Five individuals each lead one SSA training session at 5 schools by Q3 2022.

Training Format and Audience Size

The TTT course was two days long, held March 9–10, 2022, in Rohnert Park, California. The course was led by a CM lead trainer who delivered each of the Year 1 trainings. The TTT course was attended by 13 staff members from five schools. Participants were provided with a training binder that contained the curriculum for Year 2 training alongside other supplementary materials for additional activities during the school year. During the TTT course, the trainer walked participants through the logic and process of each activity, provided facilitation types, and assigned participants training activities to present to the group to practice delivering the content. Individuals received feedback and advice both from their peers and the trainer.

Participants' Reflections on Training Experience and Length

Overall, multiple participants stated that the TTT course made them more confident in their knowledge of the curriculum and their ability to lead trainings in their schools. Participants found the trainer to be energetic and stated that the trainer provided meaningful feedback on how to best present the SSA curriculum. Most TTT participants found practicing their role as trainer for various activities to be very useful. However, some participants were overwhelmed by the quantity of material they were expected to present as trainers in the Year 2 trainings.

Several individuals commented that they appreciated that the TTT course brought fellow teachers from different schools together to discuss successes and challenges in implementing the program. CM intends to promote this unexpected benefit by creating a forum for ongoing contact among program implementers to provide support to each other and share resources.

Several staff appreciated that the TTT brought teachers from different schools together to discuss successes and challenges in implementing the program.

At the end of the TTT course, participants were asked to assess their confidence regarding a number of upcoming tasks. Participants were very confident in their ability to build and maintain buy-in for the program from school administrators, but confidence was low for their ability to recruit students and adults. This reflects the challenges mentioned previously. Additionally, teachers gave mixed responses regarding their readiness to collect data at their school.

Year 2 Trainings Co-led by School Staff

This section examines the process evaluation findings regarding the SSA TTT course, which correspond with Goal 3, Objectives 3.1–3.4 in Bay Area UASI's Project 2 IMP.

OBJECTIVE 3.1–3.4:

3.1 Up to 40 new students and six new adults at five schools identified to participate in the SSA Program by Q4, 2022.

3.2 SSA training is completed for an additional 230 students and faculty by Q4, 2022.

3.3 Implementation, and sustainment provided to new SSA trainers and ambassadors through bi-annual meetings and family group facilitators in Q3 and Q4 2022

Training Format

At the beginning of the 2022–2023 school year, staff trained at the TTT course led the Year 2 training at their schools, alongside the CM trainer who provided them with facilitation support and coaching before, during, and immediately after the training.



Each school recruited a minimum of 19 students and two adults to participate in the SSA program for the year with the maximum number of students being 50 and adults being five. One CM staff member noted that schools with a higher number of adult participants seemed to be more prepared to lead trainings on their own. In addition to factors like administration buy-in and turnover, this difference in adult participation sometimes meant that these schools had thought “outside the box” regarding which staff might attend. For example, school staff might include administrative or maintenance staff, in addition to teachers. By the time of the Year 2 trainings, several schools involved had been able to ingrain the program more deeply into the school infrastructure by incorporating it as part of a Peer Advocacy class or making it part of their school safety plan. These practices garnered greater support for the initiative and will likely help sustain the program beyond the grant period of performance.

Four Out of Five Schools Complete All Program Steps

Unfortunately, one school that originally participated in the Year 1 training and implementation and TTT course did not complete the Year 2 training and was replaced by another school for the remainder of the grant. The school that did not implement the SSA Year 2 training stopped participating because the program advisor, who was the program champion and sole staff person from that school to attend the TTT course, resigned. This illustrates the importance of buy-in among school administrators and staff to ensure enough participation to allow for continuity; however, this is a difficult task given the high levels of turnover schools currently face.

Practices that encouraged successful implementation of the SSA curriculum:



Identifying a higher number of adults participants by including school staff beyond teachers (e.g., administrative or maintenance staff)



Incorporating programming into the school infrastructure (e.g., incorporate into an existing class or the school safety plan)

Challenges

Implementation Delays. Due to this project’s engagement with students who are minors, project staff found out after the grant award that they were required to receive Institutional Review Board (IRB) and CAPO approval. CM had already begun recruiting schools prior to learning that this was required and therefore had to halt recruitment while it awaited approval. The approval process resulted in program implementation delays, as it took a significant amount of time for CM to receive the necessary approvals. CM began recruiting schools prior to the knowledge that these approvals were required and had to halt recruitment. It took a significant amount of time for CM to receive the necessary approvals, and the delays meant CM had to start school recruitment anew. This delay in recruitment and, subsequently, in program implementation meant that the Safe School Protective Factors project began conducting trainings later than originally expected, with only nine months left in the grant period of performance. Schools had less time to absorb and apply the SSA curriculum. The research team was not able to establish any impact this might have had on the program’s effectiveness through its process evaluation.

Staff and Student Recruitment. Recruitment into the program presented an ongoing issue for implementation and had cascading impacts on activities. School program staff members noted in interviews that they struggled to communicate to the broader school staff a detailed description of the program, which impacted both student and staff recruitment for the program as well as administrative buy-in. The lack of clarity surrounding the program translated into distrust of the messaging and, at times, a perception that students were being taught to tell on each other. CM staff corroborated this experience and reported that some schools struggled due to poor student selection for the program. Furthermore, several schools reported concerns regarding teacher turnover and burnout and the corresponding prevalence of substitute teachers in schools, as these made it difficult to maintain continuity with the program.

Because many teachers were not compensated for the extra time and effort they contributed to the program, several program advisors could not guarantee ongoing adult staff support to sustain the program.



COVID-19 Pandemic. Finally, the COVID-19 pandemic presented an additional challenge to implementing the SSA program in schools. Due to school quarantine rules, in-person trainings had to be modified to keep students physically separated and/or required all participants to wear masks. This was a particular challenge because the SSA program places significant emphasis on social interaction to process and demonstrate the material. Additionally, participants noted that the Year 1 training took place immediately after their winter break, when many students and teachers were out of school due to COVID-19. In one school, not having the same adults consistently participate in the program contributed to challenges for building trust.

The aforementioned challenges with implementing anti-bullying programming in schools are well documented in the literature and can be mitigated through strong leadership, high public commitment to addressing bullying from a principal, and a trial period for the training programs. Furthermore, programs are more effective when the school administration perceives the program as consistent with school culture and priorities and preferable to the status quo (Pearce et al., 2011).

IMP Accomplishments

Bay Area UASI met all its stated objectives by completing SSA Year 1 trainings, TTT courses, and Year 2 trainings at five schools in the Bay Area. The Safe School Protective Factors IMP did not provide minimum targets for participants. Instead, it provided maximum numbers, which the program did not reach. This was attributed to challenges related to the COVID-19 pandemic and high teacher turnover rates resulting in low adult participation. Bay Area UASI and CM succeeded in recruiting five individuals, one from each school, to serve as program advisors (Objective 1.1). These program advisors attended both the SSA Year 1 trainings (Objective 1.2) in addition to the TTT course (Objectives 2.1–2.3). Four of the five program advisors went on to lead Year 2 SSA trainings at each of their schools in the fall semester of 2022, (Objective 2.4). Unfortunately, one program advisor left the school after the TTT course, meaning that one school was not able to complete the full SSA program, as it was not able to conduct a Year 2 training. As discussed above, this was due to high teacher turnover rates.

Recommendations

The following recommendations for future TVTP initiatives similar to Bay Area UASI's Project 2 were identified.

- ✓ Ensure that programs working with minors incorporate elongated tasks relating to CAPO and IRB into their implementation timelines.
- ✓ Provide greater direct support to school staff that are championing programs to school administrators and other staff to improve buy-in and understanding. This may take the form of program brochures or staff speaking at meetings to present such materials and answer questions.
- ✓ Provide funding to schools to pay for (a) compensation for staff to account for time attending trainings and implementing curriculum and (b) incentives (e.g., food) to encourage students to participate in school-based program activities.
- ✓ Ensure trainings are broken up into shorter sessions across a greater number of days to improve student focus and engagement.
- ✓ Examine the fidelity of curriculum adherence among schools and clarify with school staff which parts of the curriculum should be closely adhered to and which parts might be tailored.
- ✓ Hold regular check-ins with newly trained school staff to assist in problem solving.
- ✓ Facilitate regular discussions between school staff to enable information sharing and peer support. Consider hosting meetings with teacher cohorts implementing the same program.



Data Dashboard for Risk Assessment Project

Bay Area UASI Expands Data Dashboard for COEs

Within the Data Dashboard for Risk Assessment, Bay Area UASI sought to reduce targeted school violence by establishing a Targeted School Violence database and encouraging cross-jurisdictional use of these data. The target audience for these activities was the 12 County Offices of Education located in proximity to the Bay Area. Bay Area UASI began by conducting regional outreach and socialization and published threat assessment resources and protocols to help guide the use of the database. During this process, Bay Area UASI found that the Santa Clara County Office of Education (SCCOE) had worked with DataZone to develop a similar dashboard. In pursuit of their shared goals and to improve the efficiency of the project, Bay Area UASI therefore collaborated with SCCOE through a Memorandum of Understanding to expand SCCOE's existing database to include data from other counties under Bay Area UASI's purview and aggregate the data at the county level. The resulting dashboard tool included necessary metrics, including attendance, behavior, enrollment, and programs as well as county-level filtering capabilities. The dashboard was reviewed by staff at Bay Area UASI and SCCOE for feedback and quality assurance purposes.

Design and Methods for Process Evaluation

A process evaluation of Bay Area UASI's Data Dashboard for Risk Assessment project was conducted. Researchers reviewed all the documents developed for Project 3: the Statement of Work, Letter of Commitment, and Memorandum of Understanding. The research team met with DataZone staff and received a detailed demonstration of the draft system, in addition to meeting with staff at SCCOE who had experience with the district-level dashboard implementation. Upon completion of the dashboard, materials regarding the data wireframe and screenshots of the interface once finalized

were reviewed to examine whether the data dashboard met its operational goals.

Findings

Bay Area UASI received a Letter of Commitment from SCCOE and DataZone to leverage their prior data model and enhance capabilities to fulfill requirements for a county-level dashboard. DataZone and SCCOE created a county dashboard wireframe, and Bay Area UASI recruited San Mateo and Napa COEs to participate alongside SCCOE as the first three of the 12 counties it hoped to involve. Now that the dashboard has been completed as part of the TVTP grant, all three counties will contribute their county- and district-level data through a prescribed data integration process going forward. DataZone meets regularly with both the San Mateo and Napa COEs to ensure that their onboarding and usage procedures have gone smoothly. At the time of this report, county- and district-level data are available to COEs and school staff through the DataZone dashboard.

The dashboard provides data warehousing and analytics looking at a range of factors, including enrollment, attendance, academics, behaviors of concern, incidents, suspension, expulsions, and student mental health (Figure 6).

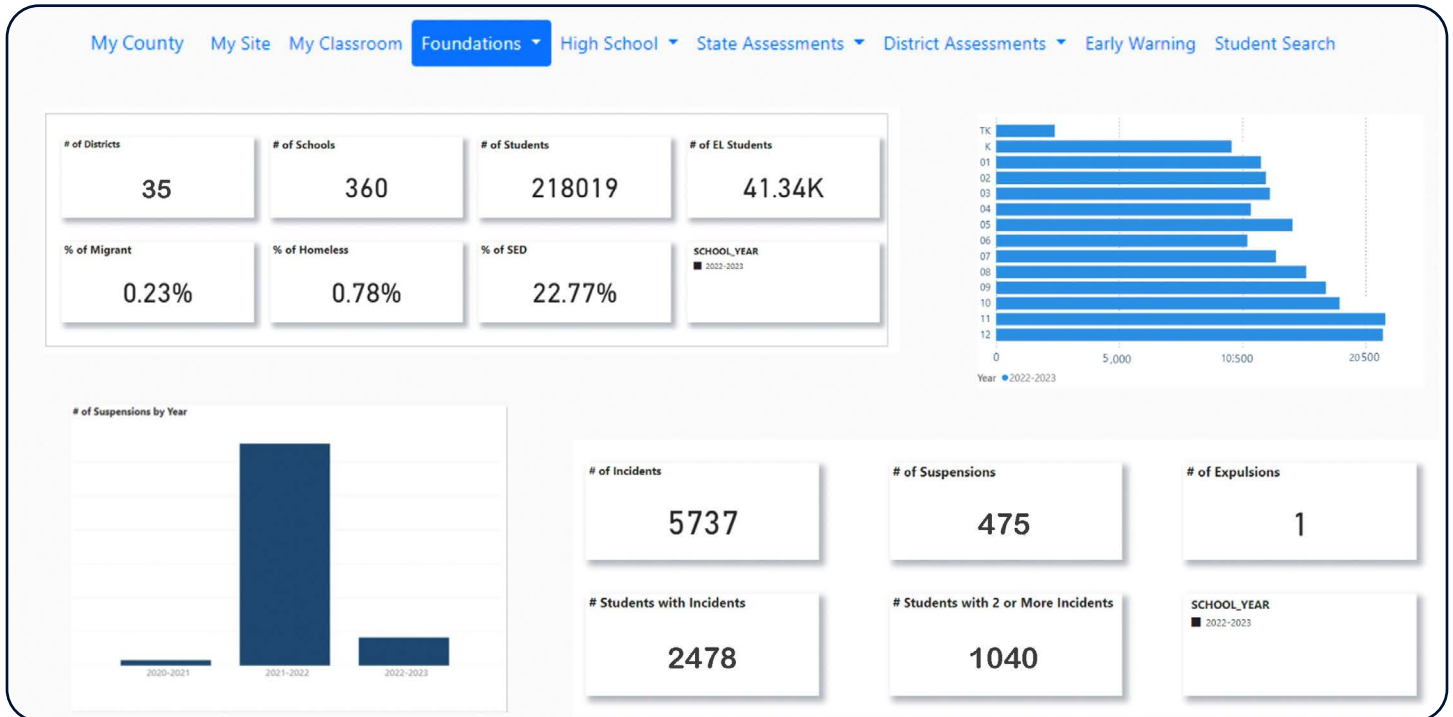
Figure 6: Dashboard Data Categories





For example, COEs and school staff can view data such as the number of students enrolled in special or alternative education, percentage of students experiencing homelessness, or number of incidents resulting in suspension by offense type. As shown in Figure 7, the information can be filtered at either district- or county-levels, and the dashboard uses this information to provide risk assessments.

Figure 7: Snapshot of Santa Clara County Office of Education DataZone Dashboard



Note: This is a fictional snapshot generated by the Santa Clara County Office of Education DataZone team. Discipline data are not listed in data sharing agreements with districts for public-facing dashboards.

Challenges

Change in Subcontractor. Initially Bay Area UASI worked with a subcontractor, identified through SenseMakers, which developed many of Bay Area UASI’s operational documents, including school violence impact stories, architecture framework for data integration and management, Proof of Concept, and Concept of Operations framework, in preparation for the creation of the database. However, Bay Area UASI found these materials to be unsatisfactory and the subcontractor did not communicate in an effective and timely manner or include Bay Area UASI in the development process. Therefore, Bay Area UASI decided to terminate its agreement with the contractor a year into the grant. Fortunately, around that time, Bay Area UASI learned about the SCCOE DataZone dashboard and overcame that challenge by partnering with SCCOE.



IMP Accomplishments

Bay Area UASI and DataZone fully completed all objectives outlined in their IMP by developing necessary regional partnerships (Objective 1.1), developing threat assessment materials and making them accessible through those partnerships (Objectives 1.2, 2.1), and expanding a data dashboard for three COEs to use for risk assessment purposes (Objectives 3.1–3.2, 4.1–4.4).

Recommendations

Through the evaluation, the following recommendation for future TVTP initiatives similar to Bay Area UASI's Data Dashboard for Risk Assessment project were identified.

- ✓ If channels of communication are not already established throughout the targeted region, create those channels of communication first and foremost. Through its outreach campaign, Bay Area UASI learned that one of its 12 target counties was already doing something similar to Project 3. This discovery also facilitated the continuation of the project after having to terminate the initial dashboard development contract.

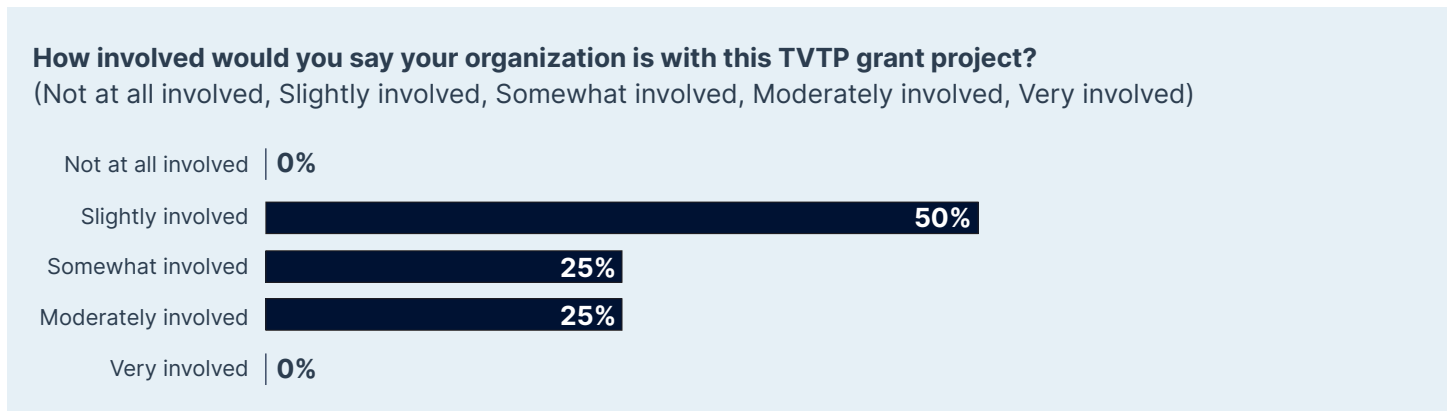
Bay Area UASI Partner Survey Findings

Bay Area UASI engaged a range of partners to facilitate each of its three projects, all eight of which participated in an evaluation survey conducted by the research team. This section provides data stemming from that survey. It is also important to note that prior to working with Bay Area UASI, only 50% of these partners had previous experience working in the TVTP field.

Nature of Partnerships

On grant projects such as these, having codified relationships with partners is critical to achieving project objectives. It is clear from their responses that Bay Area UASI's partners provided varying levels of project collaboration and were in different stages of their relationships working with Bay Area UASI. For example, half of Bay Area UASI's partners considered themselves only slightly involved in the project, while the other half believed they were either somewhat or moderately involved (Figure 8).

Figure 8: Partner Organization Involvement



When asked about collaboration history, roughly two-thirds of partners shared that their organization had worked with Bay Area UASI prior to the TVTP grant (Figure 9). Appropriately, half of partners (four out of eight) believed their organization had an established relationship with Bay Area UASI (Figure 10). When asked about the strength of the relationship, two out of those four partners indicated it was an excellent relationship; the two other partners with an established relationship reported that their relationship was good (Figure 11). The four other partners believed their organization had an excellent, good, or poor relationship with Bay Area UASI.

Figure 9: Prior Partner Collaboration

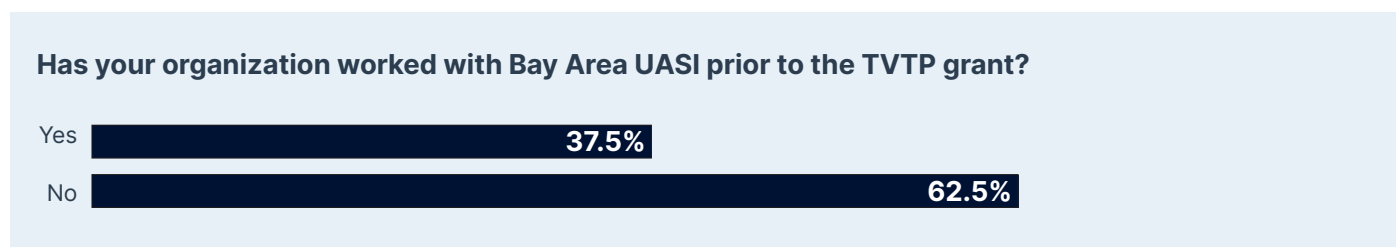


Figure 10: Partner Organization Relationships



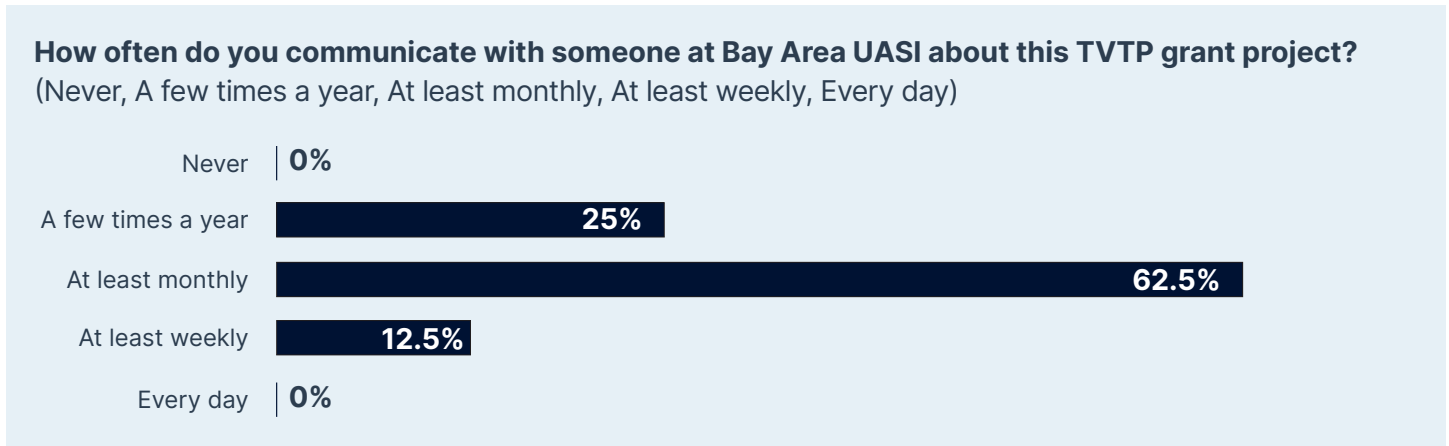
Figure 11: Strength of Partnership



Communication

The vast majority of partners believed that communication with Bay Area UASI was both consistent and transparent. Most partners also stated that they engaged in communication at least monthly, with two respondents indicating that they communicated a few times a year (Figure 12).

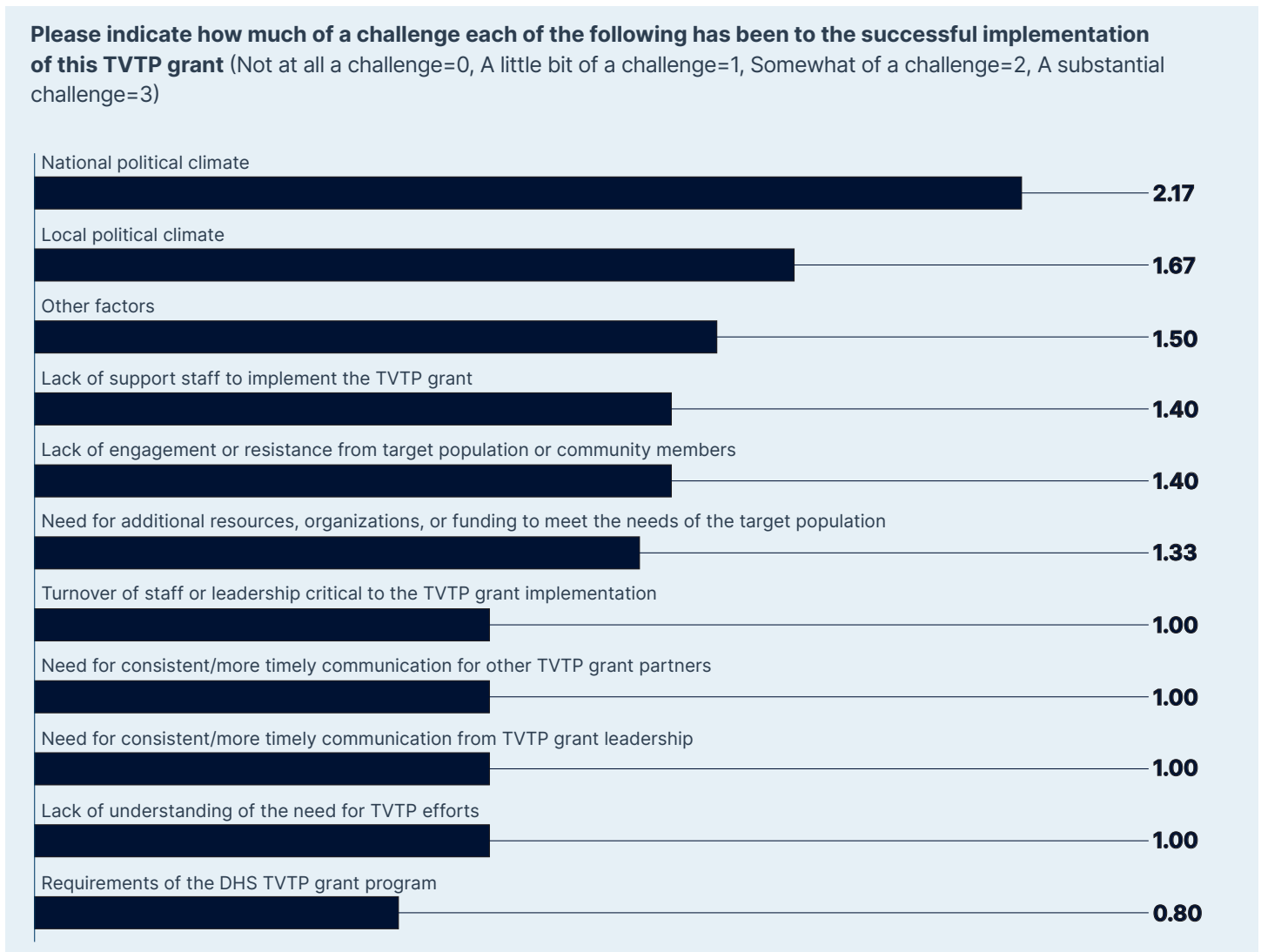
Figure 12: Communication With Partner Organizations



Challenges

Partners of Bay Area UASI identified a range of important implementation challenges. Based on a four-point scale ranging from zero (“not a challenge at all”) to three (“a substantial challenge”), the national political climate was viewed as the biggest challenge out of those identified and was a bigger challenge than the local political climate (Figure 13). Out of the maximum average value of three, the national political climate was the only factor that averaged above two on this scale (2.17), with the local political climate being the second biggest challenge (1.67). This suggests that the political climate in general was seen by partners of Bay Area UASI as the greatest perceived challenge overall.

Figure 13: Perceived Challenges to Successful Implementation of TVTP Grant

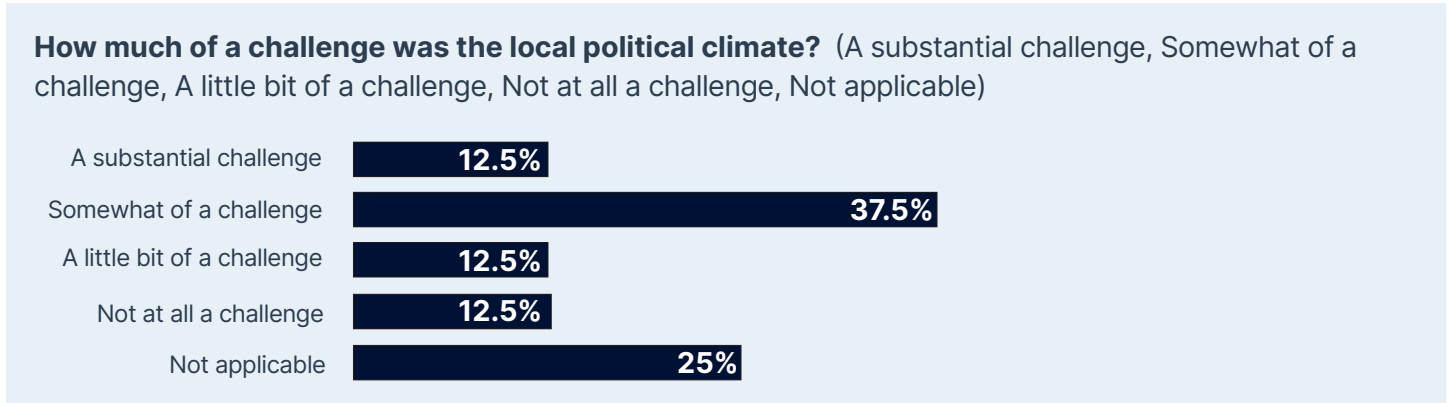


Note: Responses were coded as 0= Not at all a challenge, 1= A little bit of a challenge, 2= Somewhat of a challenge, 3= A substantial challenge. Not Applicable responses were excluded from this analysis.

In comparison, access to resources, target population resistance, and staffing were seen to be less impactful challenges. Besides political climate, no other identified factor averaged above 1.5 out of a maximum of three. The next highest rated challenges were the lack of support staff, lack of engagement from the target populations, and the need for additional resources. DHS grant requirements were rated as the least challenging factor and was the only factor that averaged lower than one on this scale. This indicates that while these issues were not seen to be major problems, additional assistance in these areas would be of benefit.

Local and National Political Climate

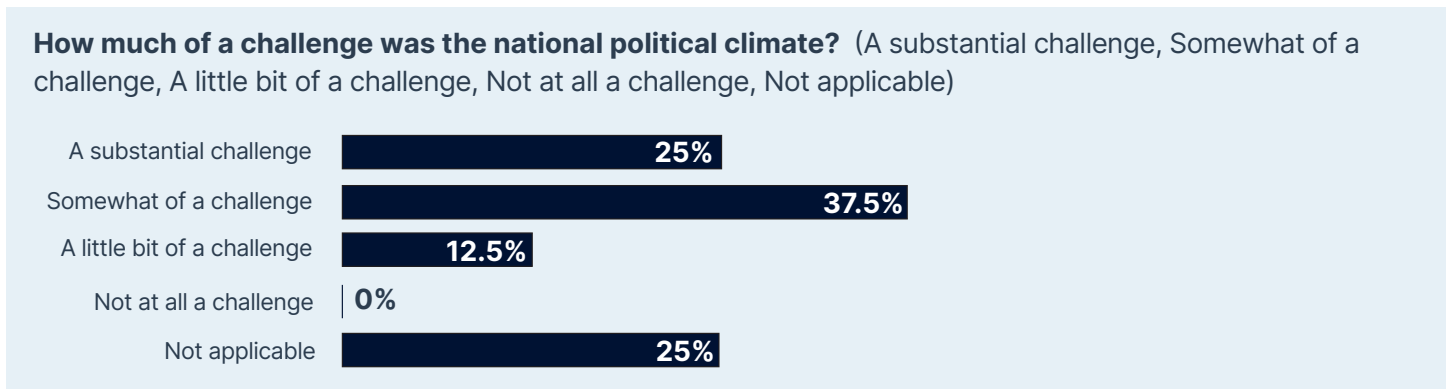
Figure 14: Partner Perceptions of Local Political Climate



When partners were asked about the nature of political challenges, they mentioned important differences in their source and impact (Figures 14 and 15 show the extent to which partners felt that local and national political climates posed a challenge to their work). They noted that the legacy of previous government actions in countering violent extremism and TVTP still carry a stigma that raised a number of implementation hurdles. One partner stated:

Misrepresentation of prior violence prevention programs has led to a modicum of distrust in the local community about the origin of TVTP funding and its connection to the larger entity of DHS. While DHS has made marked strides in improving relationships, conducting outreach, and clarifying the mission of its violence prevention efforts, the original fears about surveillance, targeting of ethnic and religious minorities, and first amendment challenges remain.

Figure 15: Partner Perceptions of National Political Climate



One partner highlighted that inaction in broader counterterrorism efforts also set a problematic precedent for its work. In this case, the lack of accountability following a domestic terror attack was presented as having negative cascading impacts for TVTP:

Locally and nationally, the failure to confront the violence of January 6 as domestic terrorism complicates efforts to combat the ideologies that inspired the violence of that day and the attempt to subvert the 2020 election. We cannot police thought, or what people post on social media, but we must call out the violence of January 6 as a threat to the rule of law, to our democracy, and by extension to all communities those laws protect. Treating the topic with kid gloves undermines TVTP efforts.

Discussion

Ultimately, Bay Area UASI achieved its objectives across all three projects and, upon examination of its process and outcomes, provides a wealth of information regarding methods to empower communities to better prevent and respond to the threat of violent extremism. Across all three projects, Bay Area UASI and its contractors emphasized the importance of building a strong network of connections within the community. Several partners noted that the flexibility and passion that Bay Area UASI brought to the projects was an energizing force throughout implementation, especially given the necessary adaptations to programming due to changing circumstances.

Under the Community Trainings project, Bay Area UASI and SenseMakers conducted extensive community outreach and engagement to increase knowledge surrounding TVTP. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, standard trainings were held in an online format, limiting active audience engagement. However, the content of the trainings themselves were relevant and meaningful to attendees. This feedback carried through to the TTT courses, in which the small, in-person format enabled participants to further discuss and practice presenting the material. Knowledge gain tests demonstrated that this resulted in an increase in participant knowledge regarding key elements of radicalization and responses to radicalization. These knowledge gains were evident for nearly all questions asked and were connected to increases in confidence in facilitating future trainings. It is not clear, however, how many individuals from each sector participated and if those who participated came from sectors that would maximize the utility and replication of these materials.

For the Safe School Protective Factors project, Bay Area UASI collaborated with CM to implement its SSA program in five schools to reduce bullying. It achieved each of its objectives in this regard, although timing concerns, COVID-19 pandemic limitations, and high school staff turnover presented significant challenges to the program and may limit the project's results. One school did not complete the full SSA program. Though no outcome data were available for this evaluation, anecdotal feedback from schools indicates that they have witnessed changes in student relationships and interactions with each other and with school staff. With an expanded timeline for data

collection, future research could investigate the measurable outcomes of the SSA programming.

Finally, Bay Area UASI completed its objectives under the Data Dashboard for Risk Assessment project by developing and expanding a targeting school violence database and receiving the buy-in and data to make it cross-jurisdictional. Bay Area UASI's experience pivoting from its initial subcontractor and identifying an existing database that could be built upon indicates that existing data products may provide an easier and cheaper route to developing tools that can be used for TVTP purposes.

Sustainability

Bay Area UASI's projects incorporated sustainability efforts as a fundamental part of its implementation. Both the Community Trainings and the Data Dashboard for Risk Assessment projects included substantial outreach to the community regarding the threat of targeted violence and terrorism. Bay Area UASI used these relationships to establish the California Prevention Practitioners Network, which will maintain dialogue surrounding TVTP in the state through ongoing quarterly meetings. The creation of this forum will sustain the impact of Bay Area UASI's initial projects and build on its momentum.

Additionally, both the Community Trainings and the Safe School Protective Factors projects involved sustainability components by hosting TTT sessions. By the end of the performance period, Bay Area UASI was notified that two participants of the Community Training TTT sessions had implemented their own training. Furthermore, four of the five schools that attended the SSA TTT session implemented the Year 2 training in their own schools, with some also embedding the program within existing infrastructure, further indicating its sustainability. The TTT model empowers community members to sustain and extend the content of the training in future years.

Finally, the data dashboard for Project 3 was explicitly designed to account for further expansion in the future, as additional COEs may join and provide their data.

Recommendations for the TVTP Grant Program

Three recommendations were identified that can be drawn from the implementation of Bay Area UASI's Fiscal Year 2020 TVTP grant to apply to future TVTP programming.

✓ Incorporate IRB-Related Timing and Data Considerations Into Program Design.

Prior to its Fiscal Year 2020 TVTP grant, Bay Area UASI and its partners had not been required to seek IRB oversight. IRB discussions and processes at the beginning of the grant period required significant time staff had not accounted for and presented challenges to implementation. Due to IRB and privacy restrictions, Bay Area UASI was not able to systematically track training participants for the Community Trainings, meaning that it was not able to fully assess their engagement with various sectors and could not ensure that it delivered TTT courses to the individuals that would most effectively use the training. Had Bay Area UASI been aware of these concerns prior to the beginning of the project and/or been informed of alternative methods of data collection, it may have been able to gather more data on training participants while maintaining privacy standards. Delays because of unanticipated IRB considerations meant that the timeline for the Safe School Protective Factors project was effectively cut in half, presenting challenges in recruiting and implementing the curriculum. In the future, DHS should make IRB-related processes and guidelines clear to grantees applying for TVTP grants, particularly as many grantees may not have prior experience working with IRB. This may take the form of a webinar, for example, explaining the primary considerations around what an IRB does, how it might apply to different TVTP grants, and the process DHS utilizes for grantees that do not have their own IRB. In turn, grantees should account for this in their program design, building in staff time to work on IRB protocols and to adjust implementation timelines accordingly.

✓ Maximize the Sustainability of Training Interventions by Creating Forums for Trainees to Connect and Access Resources.

Trainees from the Community Trainings and School Protective Factors projects stated that they would benefit from a forum through which they could access materials, view relevant case studies or news, talk to other trainees to assist in problem solving, and share promising practices with each other. Such forums could take the form of an online discussion group, website, or regular calls and meetings. These resources would support the sustainability of training interventions by encouraging and supporting trainees when applying the curriculum or hosting a training of their own.

✓ Have Local Grantees Adapt Existing Resources for TVTP Purposes, as Relevant.

Bay Area UASI's experience implementing the Data Dashboard for Risk Assessment project indicates that products may already exist that can be expanded or adapted for TVTP purposes. Grantees should therefore conduct research and outreach to relevant parties prior to developing a new product to identify potential opportunities to build from an existing resource or partner with a collaborator developing complementary resources. However, grantees should consider any potential sensitivities or unintended negative effects that might occur if existing resources are brought under the TVTP label. For example, while this was not a concern for the data dashboard, community members and partners in other contexts may be concerned about the use of student data specifically for initiatives that are labeled as seeking to prevent terrorism.

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Developed for:

The U.S. Department of Homeland
Security (DHS) Science and
Technology Directorate (S&T)



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