



Presentation Title: Partnership for L.I.F.E (Learning in Firesafe Environments)

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I. Formative Evaluation – Planning

Data on the number of Chandler Unified Schools District (CUSD) school inspections conducted by the Arizona Office of the State Fire Marshal (OSFM), the number of complaints received from CUSD schools about inspections, and an assessment of Chandler Fire, Health & Medical Department's (CFHM) existing public education programs underscored the need to increase fire safety efforts at our schools. The target audience: 54,697 students attending CUSD schools.

The primary objective to increase fire safety in CUSD schools is being measured as follows: number of annual code-based school fire inspections completed by CFHM; percentage reduction in fire code violations at the schools; increase in student fire safety knowledge as measured by pre- and post-testing; increase in teacher/staff fire safety knowledge measured by inquiries from teachers about “what is allowable” in the classrooms; annual supervised fire drills completed; and the percentage of school staff completing CPR training.

II. Process Evaluation – Implementation

The program was designed to increase school fire safety by re-establishing annual fire inspections and implementing a self-inspection program in the schools. A 2012 Fire Prevention & Safety grant funded a temporary employee to conduct inspections and design the self-inspection program. Over the course of the grant, the project was expanded to create Partnership for L.I.F.E., a program that awards “firesafe” certification to elementary schools completing five requirements:

- Annual fire inspection - CFHM inspectors accompanied by CUSD employees on school inspections. This provided baseline data on the number of fire code violations in the schools. One inspector/ 25 schools - approximately 75 hours
- Classroom instruction for 1st and 2nd grades - Fire Pal educators/200 hours OT
- Bi-annual self-inspection program - training teachers/custodians to use a checklist of common fire hazards to inspect classrooms and common areas, bi-annually added to the code violation data. Admin Staff/ 20 hours week (split between 2 staff)
- Annual supervised fire drills - Operations (in service)/approximately 12.5 hours
- 10% CPR training for school staff – EMS Specialist & Fire Pal educator/12 classes - 4 hours each

Working with CUSD administrators ensured acceptance of the program by teachers and maintenance personnel and that fire safety lessons supported CUSD learning objectives.

Partnership for L.I.F.E. was developed in 2013/14, piloted in one elementary school in the spring of 2014, rolled out at all CUSD elementary schools during 2014/15, and currently is being established in CUSD junior and senior high schools, charter and private schools.

III. Impact Evaluation – Short Term Results

The following are the short term results/ *program goals reached during the first year*:

- Number of annual fire inspections completed by CFHM/ 51 Schools inspected (25 CUSD, 6 Kyrene, 3 Mesa, 17 Charter/Religious)
- Teachers and custodians use a self-inspection form to evaluate their areas for commonly found fire hazards/100% cooperation.
- Fire Pal program to educate all 1st and 2nd grade students in six fire safety subjects/ 6,000 1st and 2nd graders received 2 hours of instruction.
- Increase in student fire safety knowledge as measured by pre- and post-testing.
- Increase in teacher/staff fire safety knowledge measured by inquiries from teachers about “what is allowable” in the classrooms; significant decrease in number of calls to CFHM from educators with questions.
- Annual supervised fire drills completed/40,000 staff and students participated in CUSD supervised fire drills.
- Percentage of school staff completing CPR training/10% of the CUSD staff was CPR certified.

IV. Outcome Evaluation – Long Term Results

Partnership for L.I.F.E. is now in its second year of operation. Data show:

- A reduction in the number of fire code violations at each school.
- A reduction in inquiries from teachers about “what is allowable” in the classrooms - *from 1-2 inquiries per week to zero per week.*
- An increase in 1st and 2nd grader’s fire safety knowledge.

Recommendations for others:

Give yourself time. The one-year project timeline was ambitious. **Be willing to compromise to achieve an end solution.** Partnerships with outside agencies were crucial. **Keep people informed.** **Apply for grants.** CFHM would not have had the resources to accomplish this project without the grant funded position. **Use the same people for consistency** (i.e. fire inspector, admin support, Fire Pals, etc.).

Conclusions:

Success of the project relied on developing partnerships. Information, forms and lesson plans for the program are available at: <http://www.chandleraz.gov/default.aspx?pageid=952>