

College of Health and

**Human Services** 





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### INTRODUCTION

# **Project Purpose & Description**

This intervention was created to enhance community safety within the 90059 zip code, specifically focusing on child/adolescent substance use. The primary objective was to equip parents /caregivers with the tools and knowledge necessary to effectively communicate with their children, promote healthy lifestyles, and reduce drug use among youth. The project involved three psychoeducational workshops held at the Augustus Hawkins Mental Health Center. Each one-hour session provided education on the effects of substance use on adolescent development and taught communication strategies to help parents engage in open, supportive conversations with their children. Pre- and post-surveys were administered at the start and end of each session to evaluate changes in participants' knowledge, confidence, and attitudes.

### Social Problem & Target Population

Our community assessment revealed concerns about crime, safety, and a lack of awareness around available youth and family services. The target population included adults' children, and adolescents, with an emphasis on Latinx and African Americans. Thus, our three-day intervention aimed to provide knowledge to residents of the effects of alcohol and drugs on adolescents, how to mitigate these difficult conversations, and overall community resources in the 90059-zip code to seek support.

## **Scope of Social Problem**

#### **Community Stakeholder Interviews**

- "The biggest issue is that minorities are against each other instead of sticking together... gang violence and the unhoused have been a growing issue affecting Compton." (Helen Brown, Community Member Interview, 2024)
- A local licensed clinical social worker shared that "People here are very resilient... even with all the trauma they have gone through." (Alice, LCSW, Stakeholder Interview, 2024)
- Stakeholders highlighted a lack of awareness about existing youth and family services in Compton, despite the presence of resources. Professionals observed that many residents are unaware, overburdened, or lack support to access them. (Stakeholder Interview Themes, 2024)

#### **Secondary Data**

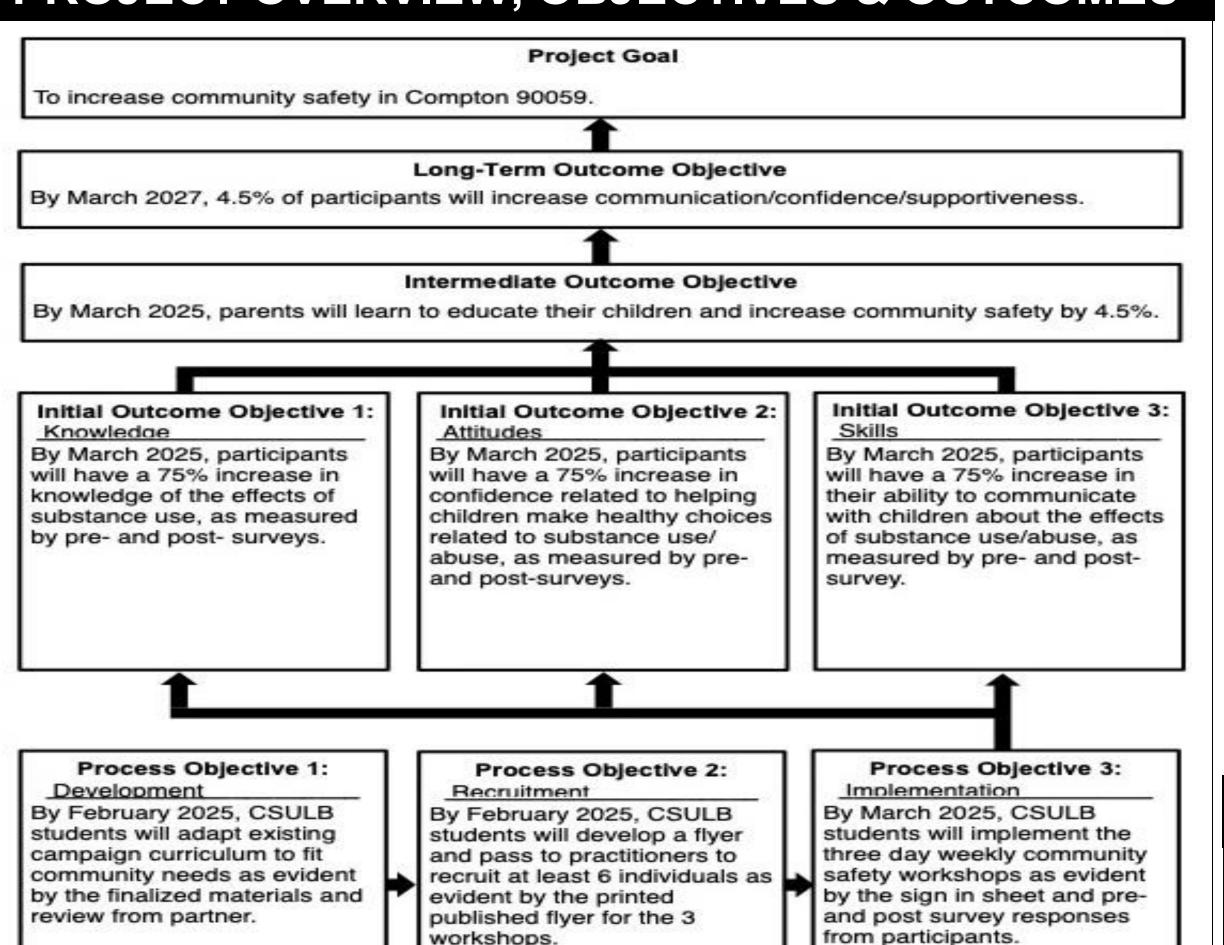
- Robbery rose by 5%, aggravated assault by 7%, and violent crime by 3% in Compton between 2023– 2024.( Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department, 2024)
- 10.2% of residents in 90059 lack healthcare coverage, compared to the national average of 6.5%, limiting access to both physical and mental health services. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 ACS 5-Year Estimates) • Only 19.1% of residents in 90059 earn between \$50,000–\$74,000 annually, while 12.8% fall into the

\$35,000–\$49,999 range—both well below LA County averages. (U.S. Census Bureau, 2020 Income Data)

## Alignment to Specialization

This project aligns with our specialization in integrated health by addressing the mental health and safety needs of youth through caregiver education and engagement. Integrated Health focuses on early intervention/prevention and emphasizes collaboration across multiple systems. By equipping parents with tools to prevent substance use and support adolescent development, the project promotes family well-being and community resilience.

## PROJECT OVERVIEW, OBJECTIVES & OUTCOMES



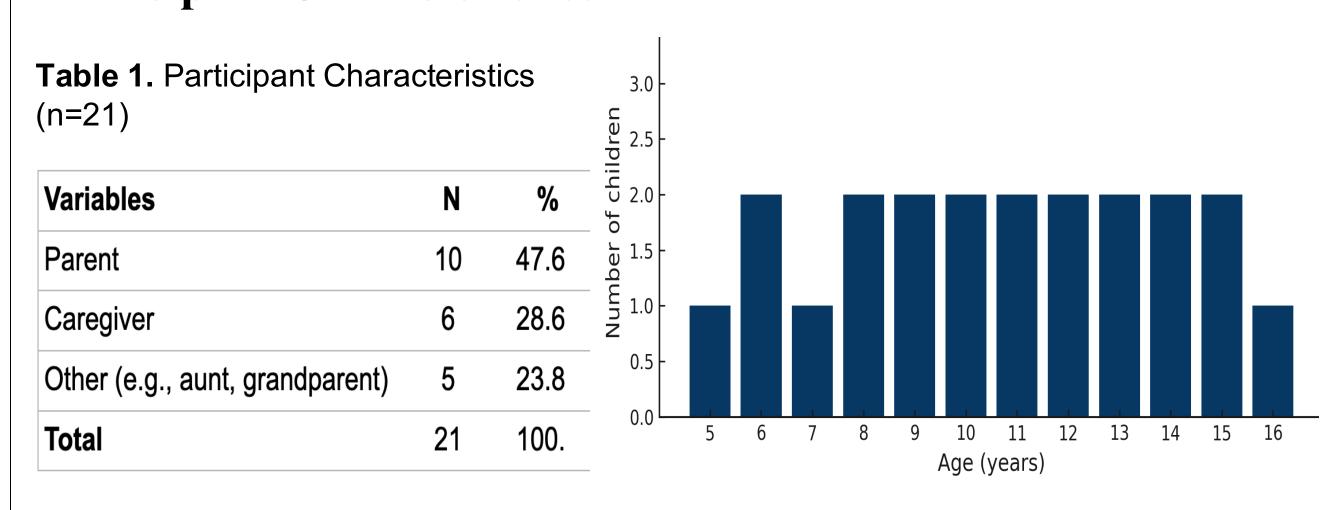
### **METHODS**

This project followed a three-session, pre-experimental design using a mixed methods approach to evaluate the impact of psychoeducational workshops for caregivers on youth substance use prevention. Pre- and post-surveys were administered during all three sessions to measure changes in participants' knowledge, confidence, and communication skills. A total of 21 caregivers were recruited through convenience sampling using flyers and staff referrals from Augustus Hawkins Family Mental Health Center.

Each survey included a total of nine Likert-scale questions, with three questions per indicator (knowledge, confidence, and communication skills). Responses were measured using a five-point scale ranging from 1 ("Strongly Disagree") to 5 ("Strongly Agree"). Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as means and frequencies in Microsoft Excel. One openended question on the post-survey was analyzed using thematic analysis to identify key patterns in participant feedback.

## RESULTS

# **Participant Characteristics**

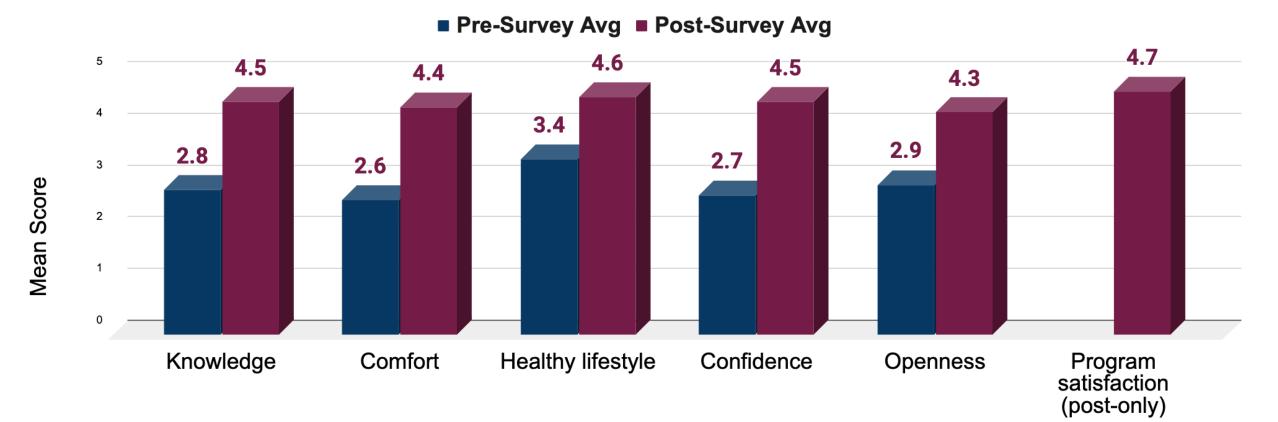


# Descriptive, Inferential, and Qualitative Results

**Graph 1.** Pre-Survey Avg and Post-Survey

Statistically significant from pre- to post-survey with p-value < 0.0001</li>

### Pre-Survey Avg, Post-Survey Avg and Change



Survey Indicator

**Table 3.** Qualitative Data from pre- and post- survey

Themes	Participant Responses
Improved Communication Skills	"I now feel like I know how to start the conversation."  "This helped me understand when and how to bring it up."
Increased Confidence and Supportiveness	"I feel more confident now talking about difficult topics."  "I think I can help guide my child better after this."
Desire for Continued Learning and Support	"I would love more workshops like this."  "It would be helpful to have take-home guides or follow-ups."

## RESOURCES

Hogue, A., Brykman, K., Guilamo-Ramos, V., Ilakkuvan, V., Kuklinski, M. R., Matson, P., McKnight, E. R., Powell, T. W., Richter, L., & Walker-Harding, L. R. (2024). Family-Focused Universal Substance Use Prevention in Primary Care: Advancing a Pragmatic National Healthcare Agenda. Prevention Science, 25(2), 307-317. https://doi.org/10.1007/s11121-023-01584-4 Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department. (2024a). Crime area 2022 2023 percent change. <a href="https://lasd.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Transparency\_Crime\_and\_Arrest\_">https://lasd.org/wp-content/uploads/2024/03/Transparency\_Crime\_and\_Arrest\_</a> 2023 Stations.pdf U.S. Census Bureau. (2022). Poverty Status in the Past 12 Months. American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Subject Tables, Table S1701.

https://data.census.gov/table/ACSST5Y2022.S1701?g=860XX00US90059 U.S. Census Bureau. (2022). Selected Economic Characteristics. American Community Survey, ACS 5-Year Estimates Data Profiles, Table DP03. Retrieved October 2, 2024, from https://data.census.gov/table/ACSDP5Y2022.DP03?q=90059 income and employment&g=860XX00US90059.

### CONCLUSION

### **Analysis of Findings**

After analyzing the pre- and post-survey scores, the results demonstrate a significant difference in the participants' prior knowledge compared to their knowledge after the workshop was conducted. Results indicate that the workshop increased communication and desire for continued learning and support. Overall, this workshop empowered caregivers with tools and confidence to engage in open conversations with their children, laying the groundwork for stronger community trust and healthier youth behaviors.

## Limitations & Improvements

- Recruitment challenges: Limited time to start workshop led to reduced recruitment efforts and fewer participants than expected.
- Allocate more time for recruitment efforts and extend beyond partner agency.
- Group Duration : Agency clinicians noted group meet community needs and expressed interest for longer-term sessions.
  - Extend number of sessions to better support long-term objectives/outcomes.

# **Recommendations & Implications**

**Practice** 

 This workshop series demonstrated that providing parents with effective communication tools and psychoeducation regarding substance abuse in adolescence can be effective. Incorporating caregiver-focused educational sessions into already existing programs can help maintain the program over time without requiring significant new resources.

#### **Policy**

 Public health policies and federal funding have focused primarily on treating those with chronic substance abuse problems, offering relatively little in funding for preventing initiation or the critical early-stage substance misuse found in adolescence (Hogue et al. 2024). Local government and agencies should allocate funds and resources for more community-driven prevention initiatives. Policies that prioritize sustained community engagement can lead to more equitable and lasting improvements, especially in high-risk communities.

### Research

 While results show potential, ongoing research is essential to determine sustained effectiveness. Future research should explore the long-term, impact of parent-child communication interventions on youth behavior and community improvement.



### COMMUNITY PARTNER

### **Augustus Hawkins Mental Health Center**

Our partner agency was Augustus Hawkins Mental Health Center located on the MLK hospital campus. Dr. Sacha Dovick allowed us to utilize their space and was integral to our recruitment efforts. Augustus Hawkins is a DMH-operated agency that provides outpatient mental health services and case management services to the community. Collaborating with Augustus Hawkins helped enhance community members' trust through the agency's established relationship with the community.

Name of Collaborator	Contributions
Sacha, Dovick, Psy.D.  Mental Health Program Manager  Augustus Hawkins Mental Health Center  SDovick@dmh.lacounty.gov	<ul> <li>Assisted with the recruitment of participants by informing all current practitioners and clients of the workshop.</li> <li>Provided food as an incentive for the first workshop.</li> <li>Contributed by attending workshops and providing guidance and feedback in the implementation</li> </ul>

process.

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Community Explorers would like to thank our workshop participants for their time and for sharing their views and stories regarding safety in their community. We are also extremely thankful for the support and assistance from our community partner, Augustus Hawkins. Lastly, we would like to thank Dr. Barreras for the constant encouragement and guidance throughout this process.