



RESOURCES

Why Project Amp?

A Provider Shares Her Experience

My name is Roberta Vena, and I am a Behavioral Health Consultant (BHC) at PHMC's Health Connection primary care office in Philadelphia, PA. Health Connection is one of two PHMC health centers participating in Project Amp this year. I have been a BHC for about two years and have found this to be a fulfilling role. I was previously a Licensed Clinical Social Worker at an inpatient psychiatric facility. I enjoyed this work very much, but felt a desire to be more connected within the community I wished to serve.

As a BHC, I work closely with primary care providers to assist patients who are having challenges in maintaining their wellness. This could mean helping someone with medication adherence or follow-up specialty care. I also support patients by assessing their symptoms and providing a therapeutic intervention as needed - which can range from a smoking cessation intervention to a level of care assessment for inpatient psychiatric services.

Project Amp has pushed me to assess more youth for substance use. Prior to PHMC's work with Project Amp, I conducted most regular assessments with adults. Using a Screening, Brief Intervention, and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) framework, I often used the AUDIT, CAGE, and DAST substance use screening tools, followed by a brief intervention if needed. Since launching Project Amp, all staff at Health Connection - from the front desk staff to medical assistants and providers - are encouraged to seek out youth ages 13-17 and refer them to me for a CRAFFT screening, which is a helpful tool for delivering SBIRT to adolescents.

[Telling Stories That Explain](#)

Review the *FrameWorks Institute's* recent report comparing media and organizational discourse on adolescent substance use.

[NIDA Drug Facts: High School and Youth Trends](#)

Review newly released data from the recent Monitoring the Future survey.

[Alcohol and Drug Prevention for Teens](#)

Check out this evidence-based prevention curriculum for students.

[SBIRT Apps](#)

Try out these free SBIRT apps for practitioners

[IRETA Webinars](#)

Register for upcoming IRETA webinars on SBIRT.

I assess youth based off their age, regardless of possible warning signs or lack thereof. This helps to ensure a more universal approach to screening and intervening with our young patient population. The CRAFFT is easy to use and youth have been responsive to the questions as well as the education provided during the session. In turn, the screening has encouraged a dialogue. When an adolescent is facing a negative situation, this dialogue might lead to a discussion about current stressors, family complications, or other pressures. SBIRT has been acting, in a way, as a doorway to more communication with youth.

When a youth first screens positive on the CRAFFT, they are given immediate support, provided with a brief intervention, and referred to either Project Amp or a treatment facility. For youth who screen negative, they are given positive reinforcement and I remind them that I am a support person they can come to if needed. The knowledge they receive during the session also allows them to be more mindful when presented with peer pressure or temptations to use.

Overall, SBIRT has been easy to use with youth because it is fluid and conversational, and I have a history of using it with adults. Youth have been very responsive to the short intervention and education provided. **They seem to soak in the facts and, in several sessions, youth have said, "I have a friend who should come here."**

Project Amp is also offering something in Philadelphia that is very hard to come by... mentorship. **Youth jump at the chance to have an adult provide them with guidance, attention, support, and direction.** Many have been excited to work with someone they see as successful. Frequently, youth ask if their mentor is in college or what they do for a living. Parents have also been excited to offer Project Amp to their children. They are keenly aware of the difficulty with local public schools and the lack of resources in the area. Parents want their children to have every opportunity available to them.

Project Amp has been a wonderful addition to Health Connection. It has helped to refine our culture, and incorporate a focus on prevention. I know I will continue to screen all youth starting at age 13 and going beyond 17, even when the pilot program ends. I want our youth to have every opportunity for success. We know that the evidence-based SBIRT approach can decrease risk for substance use, which ensures that youth can take advantage of opportunities that come their way.

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Encourage colleagues to [subscribe](#) to receive regular updates from Project Amp!

The Governor's Prevention Partnership

Review recorded presentations on mentoring system-involved youth.

Archived Updates

Check out archived email updates from Project Amp.

Why Project Amp?

Download the infographic and share it with colleagues.

Developing Peer Interventions to Reduce Substance Use Among Youth

Learn about how the Center for Social Innovation designed Project Amp with our 2015 background report.

EVENTS

Project Amp will be at the [21st Annual Conference on Advancing School Mental Health](#), taking place from September 29-October 1 in San Diego, CA.

Let us know if you will be at this event. We'd love to connect with you!

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