

Evidence-Based Ratings of Statewide Health Improvement Partnership Activities by Local Public Health

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Statewide Health Improvement Partnership (SHIP) implements evidence-based activities

The Minnesota Department of Health’s goal is to implement strategies and activities that will have the greatest impact and improve the lives of all Minnesotans. In the 2018 Legislative Session, SHIP statute was amended to add evidence-based standards for all grant activities with the goal of ensuring that Minnesotans’ tax dollars support evidence-based programs. This brief outlines how SHIP is meeting and exceeding those new statute guidelines.

SHIP implements evidence-based programs

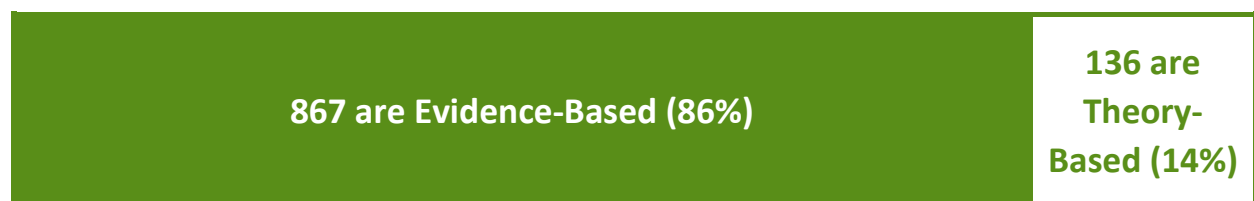
SHIP is a proven public health prevention strategy working to improve conditions and opportunities that support healthy eating, physical activity, and reduced use of commercial tobacco products through policy, systems, and environmental (PSE) change. These health behaviors influence health outcomes and risk for chronic disease. **Through SHIP, Minnesota has led the nation by creating and sustaining an approach to implement evidence-based, locally driven, population-level efforts to improve health and well-being.**

SHIP local public health (LPH) partners work closely with schools, worksites, health care partners, and community-based organizations to implement strategies to increase access and consumption of healthy food, access and participation in physical activity and decrease first use and promote cessation of commercial tobacco. For 2020-2021, SHIP is working with partners to address community need through engaging in work on over 1,000 activities.

- 86% of rated activities were evidence-based, rated either proven-effective or promising.
- An additional 14% of activities were theory-based.
- SHIP is also engaged in planning activities.

Figure 1. Evidence Ratings of SHIP Activities

Of 1,003 activities in 2020-2021 SHIP workplans:



Evidence rating categories

The categories of evidence SHIP uses are consistent with Minnesota’s Results First Initiative and definitions of evidence defined in Minnesota Statutes 2019, section 145.986, subdivision 1a.

Proven Effective (Evidence-based). A Proven Effective service or practice offers a high level of research on effectiveness for at least one outcome of interest. This is determined through multiple qualifying evaluations outside of Minnesota or one or more qualifying local evaluations.

Promising (Evidence-based). A Promising service or practice has some research demonstrating effectiveness for at least one outcome of interest. This may be a single qualifying evaluation that is not contradicted by other such studies but does not meet the full criteria for the Proven Effective designation.

Theory-based. A Theory-based service or practice has either no research on effectiveness or research designs that do not meet the above standards. These services and practices may have a well-constructed logic model or theory of change. This ranking is neutral. Services may move up to Promising or Proven Effective after research reveals their causal impact on measured outcomes.

Evidence-based stories from the field

Preventing tobacco use among youth

- We designed a quasi-experimental study to evaluate the effects of Tobacco 21 policies on youth tobacco use. Tobacco 21 policies are rated as “proven effective” using the standards of evidence described above.
- Using Minnesota Student Survey data, we collaborated with researchers at the University of Minnesota to analyze these data, examining changes in tobacco use between 2016 and 2019 for students in schools that were exposed to a Tobacco 21 policy (i.e., the city or county where the school is located implemented a Tobacco 21 policy) and those that were not.
 - Results from across the state showed that students in grades 8 and 9 who were exposed to Tobacco 21 policies reported less tobacco use than did 8th and 9th graders who weren’t exposed.
 - Students in grade 11 showed little difference in tobacco use regardless of exposure.
- Non-significant findings for 11th graders may be the result of 11th graders’ ability to drive to a neighboring community with looser tobacco control laws given that there was not a uniform, statewide Tobacco 21 policy in place at the time of the survey.
- We concluded that Tobacco 21 policies are an effective policy for curbing adolescent tobacco use, particularly for younger adolescents. We are in the process of publishing these findings in a peer-reviewed journal.

Making healthy food more available in Greater Minnesota

Butterfield, in southwest Minnesota, lost its only grocery store more than a decade ago, leaving residents, many of whom are elderly, without easy access to healthy and affordable foods. This strategy, point-of-sale, is rated as “promising” using the standards of evidence described above.

EVIDENCE-BASED RATINGS OF SHIP ACTIVITIES BY LOCAL PUBLIC HEALTH

The only options were to drive to other towns, a significant challenge for many, especially in the winter, or to buy highly processed foods at the local convenience store. That changed when the new owners of the local hardware store wanted to fill the void by also selling groceries. With the help of a startup grant from SHIP, in 2019 the hardware store owners bought a cooler, signage and the initial purchase of food products.

The new hardware/grocery store became an instant hit with residents because they now have a local place to buy healthy food. It has also become a community gathering spot, which has helped to strengthen the local economy.

This example demonstrates how SHIP support communities to apply and tailor an evidence-based strategy to meet local needs. In the unprecedented circumstances of COVID-19, SHIP remains committed to adapting to community needs and using evidence-based strategies to support healthy eating and improved health.

To learn more visit MDH [Statewide Health Improvement Partnership \(www.health.state.mn.us/communities/ship/index.html\)](http://www.health.state.mn.us/communities/ship/index.html).

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