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Background

- Funding for teen and young adult tobacco prevention and cessation programs rose from \$3 million to \$18 million annually from 2003-2010.
- The North Carolina Health and Wellness Trust Fund (HWTF), was abolished effective June 30, 2011.
- Funding shifted in 2011 to the NC Department of Health and Human Services, but funding uncertainty and breaks in grant contracts resulted in employee loss and decreased program activities.
- Continued threats to program funding forced a shift in focus from policy adoption and programmatic activities to advocacy for program funding.
- Funding continues to decline for FY 2012-2013

Methods

- Quantitative data collected from between 2009 and 2012 fiscal years from 46 grantees:
 - Monthly activity reports (programmatic activities)
 - Semi-annual surveys (progress, barriers)
- Qualitative data from two focus groups in 2012 (n=15)

Results

Progress Data from Semiannual Reports

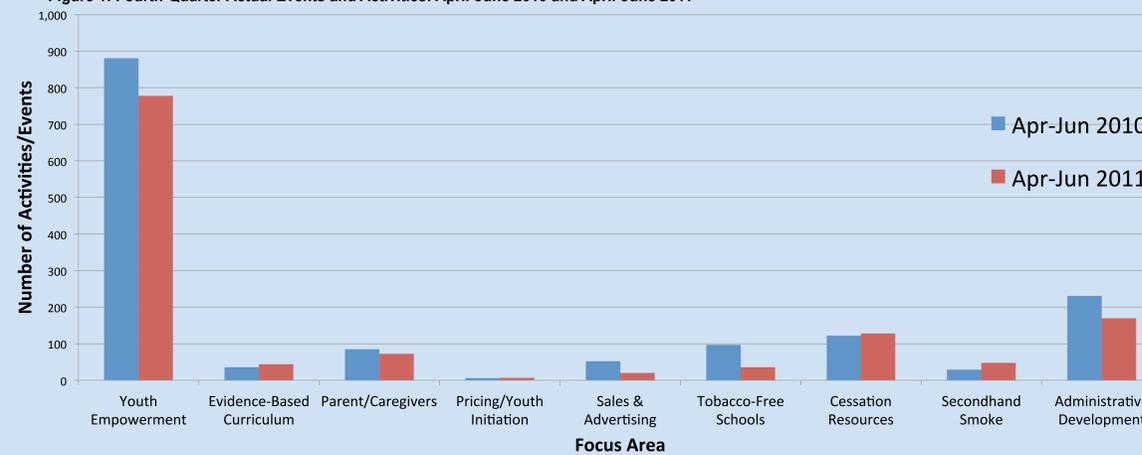
Figure 2. For the upcoming 6 months, rate to what extent you believe your program is or is not on target to achieving its program goals? (Likert Scale of 1-7)



In 2010-11 and 2011-12, grantees indicated that they were less on target to achieve programmatic goals January - July; hence grantees were more optimistic in the second half of 2009-10.

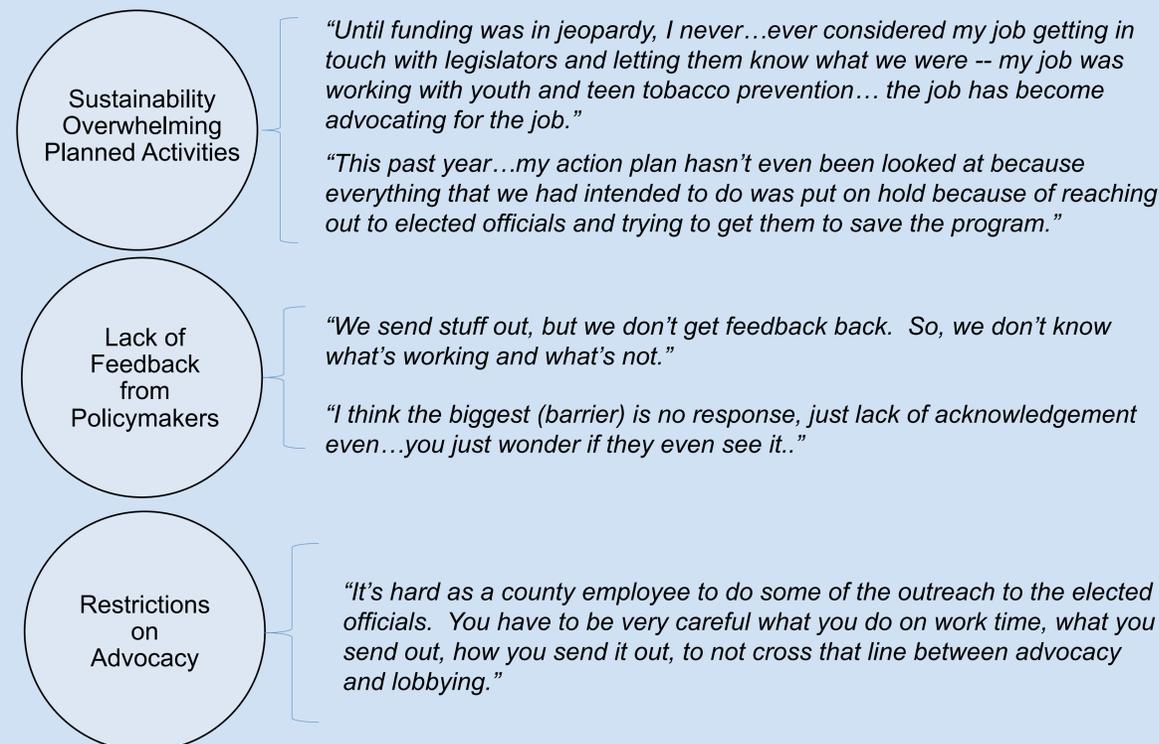
Programmatic Activity from Monthly Reports

Figure 1: Fourth-Quarter Actual Events and Activities: April-June 2010 and April-June 2011



Looking at fourth quarter activity only (April, May and June), for six of nine focus areas, programmatic activities were lower in the funding-threatened 2010-2011 fiscal year compared to the more fiscally stable fiscal year of 2009-2010. Total overall activity declined 15% from 1,539 in April-June 2010 to 1,303 in April-June 2011.

Focus Group Results: Barriers to Sustainability Efforts



Involved Youth

Figure 3: Total Active Youth, by Semiannual Period



After reaching an all-time high in January 2011, the number of involved youth fell 13% from 4,018 in January 2011 to 3,512 in January 2012.

Discussion

Threats of program demise adversely impact program outcomes

- In 2012, only 72% (31) of grantees completed their year-end semiannual surveys - grantees who were able to retain their jobs. Job loss threats impacted record keeping and accountability.
- Threats of loss of funding resulted in lower morale, personnel loss, and displacement of focus from programmatic activities to sustainability efforts, reducing program effectiveness and strength
- Grantees need to address overcoming barriers to effective sustainability**
 - Key strategies targeted include:
 - involvement with coalitions
 - effectiveness communication with policymakers
 - more effectively engaging youth

Conclusions

Threats of loss of funding have measurable impacts

- Sustainability strategies should be continuously incorporated into program objectives, goals and activities, not just when threatened with loss of funding
- Grant personnel should be trained in effective sustainability and policymaker communication strategies
- In grant applications, funding institutions should consider asking applicants to explicitly outline their plans to sustain funding beyond the grant period