



# Plan Before You Budget:

## Implementation costs to keep in mind

Having accurate information on implementation costs is critical during the EBP selection and implementation process. If grantees understand the factors that can affect their budget when implementing an EBP, they can more effectively negotiate costs with distributors/developers and trainers. The Office of Adolescent Health (OAH) asked the first cohort of TPP grantees to share lessons learned related to budgeting. Grantees discussed their experiences with estimating program implementation costs during their budgeting process, including whether they had adequate access to cost information. Grantees also talked about unexpected costs or additional expenses that were necessary in order to implement the program with fidelity. This tip sheet includes a summary of the cost advice that the first cohort grantees shared, followed by some questions that can be helpful when negotiating with developers and distributors.

### Costs

*Below is a summary of the general information that key informants shared related to implementation costs, including sources of unexpected expenditures and cost-saving tips.*

#### Materials/resources

- Consider the length of the program, accessibility of the implementation site, and timing of the program to determine the need for **incentives, raffles, and additional marketing** to assist with recruitment and retention.
- Budget for items that can **commemorate completion of the program**, such as water bottles, completion certificates, and pens.
- Prepare for **miscellaneous costs** that can arise due to inclement weather (e.g., delaying the program until participants are able to go back to school, providing participants with transportation to and from the program site).
- Familiarize yourself with your **state's and schools' policies regarding the transportation** of minors. Some schools and districts may require you to pay for school buses or certified school cars.
- Ask the site coordinator about the **materials that will be provided to you**. This allows you to make preparations and budget accordingly for the materials (e.g., photocopier, media equipment) you need to bring and/or purchase.
- Consider how materials will be transported from site to site. For example, **rolling containers** may be a useful purchase in order to better transport curricula materials.



- **Bundle purchases of materials annually** to ensure that you do not have to spend money constantly on things that will delay program implementation.
- Consider **using supplemental materials from peer grantees** (e.g., anatomy and/puberty lessons, video clips, etc.) instead of recreating them from scratch. Keep in mind these materials may need OAH approval.
- Consider using an **electronic data system** to collect fidelity and performance measure data to **reduce administrative costs**.
- Remember to **consider the time it takes to complete facilitator and observer logs** as well as fidelity logs for OAH when budgeting staff time.
- Consider **laminating program materials** (e.g., posters, reusable program materials). This can help cut costs that may stem from having to reprint materials due to wear and tear from heavy usage.
- Check with the developer or your OAH Project Officer to see if materials have been translated to a language of interest if you are working with youth whose primary language is not English. If not, allocate resources to **hire translators** to translate program materials. Keep in mind that translations should be approved by the developer/distributor and OAH.

## Curriculum

- Make sure to **ask about new versions/revisions** to the curriculum that may be coming out soon so you can plan your purchases accordingly. Having to repurchase updated materials shortly after buying a previous version can be an added unplanned expense.

## Training

- Contact training organizations about the **materials needed in order for training** to be conducted (e.g., a set of curricula for each person to be trained).
- **If program materials are updated**, look carefully at the changes made to **determine if additional training or booster sessions are necessary**.
- Consider the **travel costs** associated with sending staff to training sites or the travel costs associated with having trainers come onsite to facilitate the training.
- When possible, have some staff trained **as master trainers** to reduce future training costs. Make sure to ask about certification requirements to ensure that any training of the trainer (TOT) training you receive meets those requirements.
- **Partner with other organizations** – especially other TPP-funded grantees – to coordinate training. Consider contacting the training organization to gather information about other organizations that are seeking trainings for the program to coordinate training together.
- Remember to factor **staff time** into your training costs in addition to the cost of training itself.

## Negotiation

**Key informants also shared advice related to assessing the true cost of program implementation and negotiating costs with developers and distributors. Below is a list of some questions that grantees may find useful to ask the developers/distributors and trainers as they are gathering cost related information. While you may find these questions to be relevant for conversations with multiple individuals, suggestions as to whether the questions are most appropriate for developers/distributors or trainers have been included.**

### Curriculum/materials (developer/distributor)

1. How much does it cost to purchase the curriculum?
  - Do you have to purchase pieces of the curriculum from several different vendors?
  - Are there parts of the curriculum materials that are optional?
  - Is it possible to preview the curriculum before purchasing it?
  - Do you have any planned updates to the curriculum?
2. How much does it cost to implement the program?
3. Does this program have replication fees?
  - Are these one-time fees?
  - Are these annual fees?
4. Are there any compliance activities that need to be done (e.g. site visits)?
  - If so, what is the cost associated with these activities?
5. Are there any additional materials that need to be purchased for fidelity monitoring? Are they included in the curriculum package?

### Program Implementation (developer/distributor)

1. What strategies have been used to successfully recruit and retain participants by others implementing this program?
  - Is it challenging to recruit and retain participants for the duration of the program?
  - What types of incentives have been most helpful?

### Adaptations (developer/distributor)

1. Is there a list of program adaptations?
2. What minor adaptations within the curriculum's activities and lessons have previously been approved?
3. Do you have guidelines for acceptable adaptations?
4. Are there any adaptation kits available?
5. Do you have any supplemental materials or activities (e.g. anatomy lessons, inclusivity supplements) that can be purchased?

## Training (trainer; developer/distributor)

1. What types of training are offered?
2. How much training is needed?
  - Are there any mandatory trainings?
  - How often are you required to be trained?
  - Which staff do you recommend attend the training?
3. What are the costs for training for the program?
  - Are travel costs for trainers coming onsite included in the training fee?
  - Are there any additional fees during the first year of implementation compared to subsequent years?
4. What materials must be purchased prior to training?
  - How many people can share materials during the training?
5. How long are the trainings? (this helps with budgeting for staff time)
6. Are training of trainers (TOT) or master trainings available?
  - Are there fees to become a master trainer?
  - Do you have to pay recertification fees? If so, how often?
  - What are the pre-requisites for staff to take the TOT training or become a master trainer?
7. Can training be coordinated or bundled with other organizations?
8. Can multiple trainings, not related to the curriculum, be bundled during the training period? This would include additional trainings and professional development around topics like trauma informed care, LGBTQ inclusivity, and positive youth development.
9. Are additional refresher and/or booster trainings available? Are they mandatory?
10. Do you have experience in providing training for particular target populations?
11. What is the format of the training (e.g., interactive, online)?

## Technical Assistance (trainer; developer/distributor)

1. Do you provide technical assistance?
2. How is technical assistance provided?
3. What is offered within technical assistance?
4. Is it provided on an ongoing basis? If not, what is the duration of the available TA?
5. How much does technical assistance cost?

## Communication (trainer; developer/distributor)

1. What is the best way to contact you if we need additional support?
2. How long does it take to get a response on questions that we have?
3. What can we expect from you in terms of support for implementation?

*This publication was developed by Child Trends under contract #GS-10F-0030R/HHSP23320130043G for the Office of Adolescent Health; US Department of Health and Human Services as a technical assistance product for use with OAH grant programs.*