



Summary and Highlights from AVA Connect Call February 20, 2025 @2:00pm (ET)

Number of Attendees: 27

Facilitator: Jackie Hoover, Grant Program Manager, Montana Board of Crime Control and AVA Board Member

CALL HIGHLIGHTS:

1. Ice Breaker

Prompt: *During this “hectic” time of uncertainty, what has been your comfort food? What is your go-to when you’re stressed out, when you’re happy, or when you’re sad?*

- Participants shared various comfort foods, including chicken and dumplings, pizza, cake, noodles, cheeseburger & fries, anything pasta, grilled cheese, homemade marshmallows, caramel dipped in chocolate with salt on top, Asian food, chips with salsa & lots of cheese, Fritos covered with chili, Indian food (butter chicken and naan bread), chili & cinnamon roll or with fry break, girls scout cookies, Nothing Bundt cupcakes, and more.

2. STOP Implementation Planning Discussion

I. Challenges

- **Engagement with Tribes:**
 - The group discussed the importance of documenting engagement efforts
- **Gathering Input from Direct Service Providers/Tribes**
 - We have coalitions distribute to their member programs.
 - We’ve been sending out polls for availability to try and pick our meeting dates and get the ball rolling for tribal listening sessions,

but it's a bit harder for us this time around because we are required to meet in person and meeting the quorum in person.

- We're going to be doing listening sessions across our state in person and follow up with an option to provide input and feedback via a form or poll to get involved.
- We sent it to program to provide feedback by an indicated date.
- We also had a needs assessment, and we will be doing listening sessions this year since we have more flexibility with travel this go round.
- We've been having regular one on one conversations with committee members on where we're thinking of taking the plan and kind of prep them for planning committee process.
- **Data Disappearing**
 - We've been going through and trying to save information—but that also feels frustrating right now because if data is being wiped out, how can it still be required?
- **TA provider resources being pulled down.**

II. Easier Aspects of the Process

- Documentation of funding request and community needs to identify gaps and support.
- Collaboration with everyone on the committee—this was mentioned as both an easy and challenging aspect.

III. Timeline for Implementation Plan

- Timeline is available on ALSO website.

IV. New Guides and Templates

- No updates have been made since 2019. The guides and templates have been available since the last time we went through this process.

V. Additional Comments/Questions/Discussion

- Participants encouraged peers to continue working on implementation plans despite current uncertainties.
- The importance of not tasking the committee with specific duties to keep the process moving.

- Leveraging data for planning—such as census data and state reports, to back up trends and facilitate the planning process. Compiling annual report information seems like it'll be helpful and a pretty good starting point for barriers and needs that providers are seeing.
- What to expect for on-site review?

3. Impact Tool: Use and Challenge

- Individuals shared challenges with using the new online impact tool and the need for user feedback to inform improvements.

4. Additional Concern

- **OVW's removal of funding announcement from website**
Mark Hertweck shared insights from a recent webinar featuring Elizabeth Pyke from NCJA. Elizabeth has a lot of experience and insiders' knowledge, and shared her thoughts on what's going on in Washington D.C. these days and how that's impacting the work that we're doing. She mentioned that it's standard practice for federal agencies to temporarily pull-down funding opportunities during changes in administration to allow a review of programs and how they might align with the new administrator's priorities.

5. Resource Shared

- [STOPGrants.org](https://stopgrants.org) has lots of resources and there's also the AVA website.

6. Announcements/Upcoming Events

- **Next AVA Connect Call-** April 17, 2025 @ 2:00pm (ET).