

What does it take to create CAST community support?

Creating Community Readiness—Steps to Take!

Strong partnerships are required when schools seek to implement best practice suicide prevention programming with fidelity. Cultivating and involving all constituencies (e.g., school faculty & staff, youth, parents, community partners [crisis center, community mental health centers, youth service providers, faith communities]) in the process of adopting a program is critical to successful transfer from research to practice. Taking these steps early in the process of program selection and start-up portends success.

Directions: Use the *Administrative Worksheet* below to accomplish the important steps of information dissemination, infrastructure development, and building school-community partnerships.

Administrative Worksheet

Developing Community Readiness for CAST Implementation

Task	Role	Name	Date	Details	Complete
➤ Develop a partnership model with parents, students, teachers and community agencies to gain school community support for implementation of CAST as designed	Administrator				
➤ Collaborate with counseling and/or health-care staff as well as relevant community agencies	Administrator & CAST Coordinator				
• Facilitate collaboration between CAST, school staff and community agencies	Administrator				
• Include relevant community members in planning meetings and CAST training	Administrator				
➤ Develop/obtain reliable information about CAST for community presentations	CAST Coordinator				
• Obtain brochures, handouts for presentations (e.g., download and print the Developers CAST brochure; access SPRC's Web site description of CAST)	CAST Coordinator				

Developing Community Readiness for CAST Implementation (cont.)

Task	Role	Name	Date	Details	Complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain PowerPoint slide show addressing “What is CAST? Why implement it in our community”? [Addresses: needs related to school/federal mission(s); evidence that CAST works; costs and required resources; importance to your setting] 	CAST Coordinator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rehearse presentations (prepare various versions— 5, 10, 15, and 30 min options); know your audience and your subject; anticipate questions and develop persuasive, succinct responses 	Administrator & CAST Coordinator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Conduct/support CAST informational presentations to key stakeholders; involve them in supporting CAST 	Administrator & CAST Coordinator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> School and District administration; School Board members 	↓				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Community leaders/social service providers 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relevant teachers, parents and school personnel at each potential high school 					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Recruit/select participating high schools; obtain written agreements to implement CAST as designed; then, 	Administrator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet with key personnel to determine the timing of CAST during the school semester as well as the sequencing of the pull-out activities during the school day (e.g., days of the week, period of the day) 	CAST Coordinator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish a procedure for identification of CAST participants 	CAST Coordinator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Arrange for access to student records (transcripts, disciplinary actions) with school district data manager to: create the CAST ‘pool’ of potential students and measure school indicators (grades, credits earned, attendance for 2 semesters prior to, during and subsequent to the CAST group participation) 	Administrator & CAST Coordinator				

Developing Community Readiness for CAST Implementation (cont.)

Task	Role	Name	Date	Details	Complete
➤ Support and guarantee the implementation of CAST as designed re: policies & procedures, support, and fidelity	Administrator CAST Coordinator & CAST Team				
• Required CAST policies and procedures related to the 3 program goals	CAST Coordinator & CAST Team				
• Collaboration with school counseling and/or health-care staff	CAST Coordinator & CAST Team				
• CAST scheduling and group size requirements; space requirements	CAST Coordinator				
• Student selection criteria and invitation process	CAST Coordinator				
• CAST Leader selection criteria	Administrator				
• Training and ongoing support for CAST Leaders/Coordinator and Administrators/principals	Administrator & CAST Coordinator				
• Fidelity of CAST program implementation	CAST Coordinator				
➤ Seek technical assistance					
• Explore the CAST Web site as directed under “Is CAST for You?” to garner all essential program information	Administrator & CAST Coordinator				
• Contact the developers to arrange for training and consultation related to any of the above	CAST Coordinator				

What does it take to ensure CAST School Readiness?

Creating School Readiness—Steps to Take!

For CAST to be delivered with fidelity, any differences between district/school policy and procedures and CAST policies and procedures need to be reconciled. Key policies and procedures related to Depression & Suicidal Behaviors, Anger/Aggression, Drug Involvement and School Performance must be in place for CAST to be implemented as designed.

Directions: Use the following worksheet to guide your dialogue with key school personnel. Initiate all activities necessary to provide clear guidelines for CAST Leaders and Coordinators that are consistent with both agency and CAST Program policy.

Arrange for Implementation of CAST Policies and Procedures

Task	Role	Who	Date	Details	Complete
1. Related to Depression & Suicidal Behaviors , obtain CAST group and curriculum policies and procedures & develop/implement school crisis response plan					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establish/review prevention and reporting policies regarding suicidal risk behaviors 	Administrator & CAST Support Team				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Obtain copies of the school district's crisis response plan and compare with the Reconnecting Youth (RY) School Crisis Response Plan (See CAST Web site) 	CAST Coordinator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Review and use the RY Crisis Response Plan support materials—i.e., checklist, sample educational session, general guidelines for teachers, identifying & helping a suicidal youth 	CAST Coordinator & CAST Support Team				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Resolve any key differences between present school district procedures and RY Crisis Response Plan procedures such that CAST can be implemented as designed to prevent suicidal-risk behaviors 	Administrator & CAST Support Team				
2. Related to Anger/Aggression , obtain CAST group and curriculum policies and procedures—resolve differences between school and CAST procedures					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiate/establish policies and procedures such that CAST can be implemented as designed to prevent anger/aggressive behaviors 	Administrator & CAST Support Team				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the CAST classroom management and discipline model guiding principles to teach anger control strategies and manage behaviors in group 	CAST Leader				

Arrange for Implementation of CAST Policies and Procedures (cont.)

Task	Role	Who	Date	Details	Complete
3. Related to Drug Involvement , obtain CAST group and curriculum policies and procedures—resolve differences between school and CAST procedures.					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiate confidentiality and discipline rules concerning discussions in CAST of drug use among the students consistent with the CAST Model—CAST cannot function as a prevention program without these rules 	Administrator, CAST Coordinator & CAST Leader				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students known to be dealing drugs are not permitted to participate in CAST—establish policies and procedures for student selection that will reduce this possibility 	Administrator & CAST Coordinator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Confidentiality does not apply if it is discovered that a student is dealing drugs once in CAST or use escalates requiring treatment—establish a policy and procedure that defines how such youth are removed from group and referred for appropriate assessment and intervention. 	Administrator & CAST Coordinator				
4. Related to School Performance , obtain CAST group and curriculum policies and procedures—resolve differences between school and CAST procedures.					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiate/support on-campus suspension as a school policy 	CAST Coordinator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Seek alternatives to off-campus suspensions that would support the CAST program goals to increase school attendance and achievement 	Administrator & CAST Support Team				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Negotiate and establish policies and procedures for CAST group attendance during on- or off-campus suspensions 	CAST Coordinator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use the CAST classroom management and discipline model guiding principles to increase attendance 	CAST Leader				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify and mobilize support services for enhancing CAST students' school achievement 	CAST Support Team				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure access to CAST students' transcripts and school records 	CAST Coordinator				

Arrange for Implementation of CAST Policies and Procedures (cont.)

Task	Role	Who	Date	Details	Complete
5. Abuse—physical and emotional & illegal activities					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Follow school district, state-level and federal policies for reporting 	CAST Leader & CAST Coordinator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide CAST students with continued support during the reporting and follow-up processes 	CAST Leader & CAST Coordinator				
6. Provide CAST Leaders/Coordinator with lists of available referral resources					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within the school (e.g., counselors, health care staff, tutors, etc.) for issues related to 1 – 5 above 	CAST Support Team				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Within the community for issues related especially to 1 – 3 above 	CAST Support Team				

Getting Started—CAST Selection Model!

Setting the Stage for CAST Success—Steps to Take!

Ensuring an optimal environment and adherence to the CAST selection model, identifying and recruiting students for whom the program was designed, is key to achieving desired program outcomes. Consider time, space and materials and assure that the student invitation process is consistent with the CAST Model—rehearse strategies for working with CAST students prior to initiating recruitment.

Directions: Use the *Recruitment & Screening Worksheet* below to create the environment and implement the CAST selection Model.

Important Note: It is recommended that CAST be implemented as an indicated prevention program—that is, students at high-risk for school dropout are further screened, using a brief paper and pencil questionnaire, to identify those students who report elevations in depressed mood and/or direct suicide-risk behaviors. The CAST group then is offered only to those students who meet both potential school dropout and the emotional distress criteria. The items detailed below describe these procedures. Should you choose to implement CAST as a selective prevention program—that is, offer it to students known to be members of a high-risk group (e.g., potential high school dropouts) but who are not screened to determine suicide-risk status—the detailed procedures described below apply with the exception of those printed in **bold italic**. When implementing CAST as indicated prevention follow all procedures (i.e., both **italic** and non-italic).

Recruitment & Screening Worksheet

A. Identifying and Recruiting Intended Students

Task	Role	Name	Date	Details	Complete
➤ Implement procedure to identify and select CAST students	CAST Coordinator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create potential student 'pool' from total school enrollment using CAST selection criteria for high-risk youth: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Behind in credits for grade level, in top 25th percentile for absences, and GPA less than 2.3 or recent precipitous drop of $\geq .7$ OR – Referred by school personnel and meeting 1 of the above criteria OR – Prior dropout 	CAST Coordinator & CAST Team				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remove from the above created pool any students in special education, diagnosed as severely emotionally or behaviorally disturbed, and students in need of drug treatment or known to be dealing drugs 	CAST Coordinator & CAST Team				

A. Identifying and Recruiting Intended Students (cont.)

Task	Role	Name	Date	Details	Complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Randomly select from screened pool for invitation to possibly join CAST—<i>the first step in the procedure is completion of a brief paper and pencil questionnaire</i> 	CAST Coordinator				
➤ Recruit CAST Students by <i>Invitation</i> —invite (never assign) randomly selected students to possibly join CAST:	CAST Coordinator & Recruiters				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Meet students at school and conduct individual face-to-face invitations—provide written material for student and parent 	Recruiters				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invite using CAST Recruitment Brochure and an informed consent approach; anticipate likely questions 	Recruiters				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the link between CAST participation and questionnaire procedures 	Recruiters				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain the 1st step in CAST participation is a face-to-face interview –review confidentiality issues related to interview 	Recruiters				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Discuss CAST confidentiality policy and consent forms 	Recruiters				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Notify parents of students who accepted the invitation—speak with parents by phone, explain the program, allow opportunity for questions and encourage the parent to talk with their teen about the program and review written materials together. 	CAST Coordinator & CAST Leader				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assure that the invitation process is consistent with the CAST Model—review and rehearse strategies for approaching and working with CAST students 	CAST Coordinator & CAST Leader				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Invitation outcome should produce a richly diverse group of both sexes, in grades 9 – 12, with varying levels of risk for potential dropout as well as varying degrees of emotional distress. <i>Assigning all the riskiest/neediest youth is outside the CAST model: do not consider.</i> 	CAST Coordinators				

B. Implementing the CAST Screening and Assessment Components

Task	Role	Name	Date	Details	Complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Select appropriate and valid screening and assessment tools <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review list of screening instruments, visit Web sites, discuss and decide on the most appropriate tool for your circumstance • Review list of brief assessment interviews, visit Web site, discuss and decide on the most appropriate assessment strategy for your circumstance 	Administrator, CAST Coordinator & CAST Team				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop policies and procedures consistent with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selected screening tool • Selected assessment strategy 	CAST Coordinator & CAST Team				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identify staff members with essential skills to conduct screening and assessment activities. Determine time constraints, work assignment adjustments and the need for supplemental staff. Create a pool from which screening and assessment personnel can to drawn. 	Administrator, CAST Coordinator, & CAST Team				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select and train key personnel in administration and scoring of the screening tool. Selected personnel should express interest in the task, enjoy working with youth one-on-one and in small groups, be organized and attentive to detail. 	CAST Coordinator & CAST Team				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Select and train key personnel in the conduct of the follow-up assessment. Selected personnel should express interest in the assignment; enjoy and have the specialized skills to conduct brief suicide-risk assessment. 	CAST Coordinator & CAST Team				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Develop the policies and procedures defining the social connection and school bonding components of the assessment follow-up 	CAST Coordinator & CAST Team				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure a social connection to support resources and encourage school bonding following each assessment 	CAST Coordinator				

B. Implementing the CAST Screening and Assessment Components (cont.)

Task	Role	Name	Date	Details	Complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure assessment follow-up telephone contact with parent/guardian 	CAST Coordinator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and obtain written resources for students and parents <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Card with local and national 24 hour crisis line number – Watch for the Signs brochure – School-based resource list – Community-based resource list 	CAST Coordinator & CAST Team				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide all youth with resource materials, provide parent/guardian with verbal resources, follow-up with mailed resources 	CAST Coordinator & Assessment Team				

Getting Started—CAST Leader Selection & Training!

Setting the Stage for CAST Success—Steps to Take!

Implementing CAST with fidelity requires the right CAST Leader as well as a system of support. First and foremost, the CAST Leader must be invited not assigned to the position—key to working with distressed teens is a strong desire to do so, coupled with an aptitude for such work as well as the required training. Recruitment of the successful CAST Leader employs the CAST Leader selection model. Supporting CAST implementation fidelity requires that the CAST Leader participate in a developer-sponsored training and engage in ongoing supervision conducted by a trained CAST Coordinator who is part of a network of CAST-specific administrative support.

Directions: Use the *CAST Leader Selection, Training & Support Worksheet* to initiate preliminary steps to CAST implementation fidelity.

CAST Leader Selection & Training Worksheet

Implementing the CAST Leader Selection Model

Task	Role	Name	Date	Details	Complete
➤ Provide oversight of and ensure adherence to the CAST Leader Selection Model	Administrator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solicit nominations from the principal, other administrators, faculty peers, and high-risk youth for individuals who are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Seen as effective with students identified as potential dropouts and – Evidence a desire to work with youth who are emotionally distressed (depressed and/or may be thinking about suicide) 	CAST Coordinator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather information from nominated individuals to determine if they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Report working effectively with high-risk/distressed students (self-assessment) – Evidence a healthy sense of self-esteem – Express a strong desire to lead CAST groups following a thorough review of the CAST Web site 	CAST Coordinator				

Implementing the CAST Leader Selection Model (cont.)

Task	Role	Name	Date	Details	Complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Express a willingness and ability to attend a CAST Training for Leaders – Commit to attending CAST supervision sessions (every week when CAST is being conducted—8 meetings over a 2 month period, each semester/trimester) – Agree to provide the CAST Coordinator with one videotape of a CAST session/week and participate in a review of this tape as a part of supervision 	CAST Coordinator				
➤ Ensure the CAST Leader completes a developer-approved CAST Training conducted by a CAST certified trainer.	CAST Coordinator				
➤ Promote and support CAST being taught as designated by CAST Training, the CAST Curriculum, and as detailed in the Leader Guide and Student Notebook, (e.g. purchase required materials, integrate CAST responsibilities into job description)	Administrator				
➤ Actively seek information and express understanding of the rationale of CAST program model, curriculum design and guiding principles.	Administrator, CAST Coordinator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pave the way through school culture prior to, during and following key planning, start-up and implementation events 	Administrator				
➤ Support CAST model and program staff in meeting the CAST program goals with selected students; provide support, encouragement and consultation to leader/program coordinator as needed	School Support Team				

Getting Started—CAST Coordinator Selection & Training!

Setting the Stage for CAST Success—Steps to Take!

Implementing CAST with fidelity requires CAST Leader support in the form of the right CAST Coordinator in the context of a strong administrative infrastructure. The CAST Coordinator must be invited, not assigned, to the position. Key to this position is a strong desire to provide the necessary supervision and support as well as the interpersonal competencies essential for team building, establishing consensus and problem solving. Successful recruitment of the right CAST Coordinator employs the CAST Coordinator selection model. Supporting CAST implementation fidelity requires that the CAST Coordinator participate in a developer-sponsored training (CAST Leader Training plus Coordinator Advanced Training) in preparation for participation as part of a network of CAST-specific administrative support.

Directions: Use the *CAST Coordinator Selection, Training & Support Worksheet* to initiate preliminary steps to CAST implementation fidelity.

CAST Coordinator Selection & Training Worksheet

Implementing the CAST Coordinator Selection Model

Task	Role	Name	Date	Details	Complete
➤ Ensure adherence to the CAST Coordinator Selection Model	Administrator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Solicit nominations from other administrators, faculty, pupil services personnel and staff for individuals who: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Have strong leadership, team building, and supervisory skills – Evidence a desire to facilitate the CAST infrastructure and supervise the delivery of CAST groups 	Administrator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather information from nominated individuals to determine if they: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Report evidence of leadership, team building and supervisory skill (self-assessment) – Evidence a healthy sense of self-esteem – Express a strong desire to create a supportive infrastructure for CAST and provide leader supervision 	Administrator				

Implementing the CAST Coordinator Selection Model (cont.)

Task	Role	Name	Date	Details	Complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Verify experience in prevention programming and skill and comfort in working with high-risk youth – Express a willingness and ability to attend CAST Training for Leaders and Coordinators – Commit to conducting weekly CAST supervision (every week when CAST is being conducted—8 meetings over a 2 month period, each semester/trimester) – Agree to review and code one videotape of a CAST session/week and conduct a review of this tape as a part of supervision 	Administrator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Ensure the CAST Coordinator completes a developer-approved CAST Leader and Advance Coordinator Training conducted by a CAST certified trainer 	Administrator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Collaborate with the CAST Coordinator to promote and support CAST infrastructure development (e.g., purchase required materials, provide necessary FTE, integrate CAST responsibilities into job description, ensure institution of Crisis Response Plan, establish School Support Team) 	Administrator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Actively seek information and express understanding of the rationale of CAST program model, curriculum design and guiding principles 	Administrator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Pave the way through school culture prior to, during and following key planning, start-up and implementation events 	Administrator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Support CAST model and program staff in meeting the CAST program goals with selected students; provide support, encouragement and consultation to leader/coordinator as needed 	School Support Team				

Getting Started—Scheduling, Space & Materials!

Setting the Stage for CAST Success—Steps to Take!

Implementing CAST with fidelity requires careful preparation. The CAST space and materials must be consistent with the demands of the Program and support the efforts of the CAST Leader and participating students.

Directions: Use the *Scheduling, Space & Materials Worksheet* below to ensure an optimal CAST environment.

Scheduling, Space & Materials Worksheet

Scheduling the CAST Group—Right Time/Right Place

Task	Role	Name	Date	Details	Complete
➤ Schedule CAST pull-out groups	CAST Coordinator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider optimum time during semester/trimester—goal to select a six-week block that can be continuous, without holiday or testing interruptions (e.g., in winter the group should finish before the December holiday break; in spring should start after mandatory testing) 	CAST Coordinator & CAST Team				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider optimal days of the week—at least one day between session (e.g., Tuesday, Thursday) 	CAST Coordinator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Create a detailed calendar, rotating the group through the school day so that students do not always miss the same period. Consider all predictable variations (e.g., days when a particular period is shorter, assembly schedules, multiple lunch periods) 	CAST Coordinator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Group size (for specially-selected students; 6 - 7 students only) 	CAST Coordinator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CAST group schedule must provide for at least 600 min (12 days x 50 min/day) 	CAST Coordinator				

Scheduling the CAST Group—Right Time/Right Place (cont.)

Task	Role	Name	Date	Details	Complete
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> CAST student enrollment is complete after Session 2; no “rolling” enrollment—i.e., after Wk 1, no added students 	CAST Coordinator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consider the match between CAST Leader time and the criteria above when scheduling. Remember that the CAST Leader needs to be specially selected by CAST & school staff and participate in certified training 	Administrator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assign no more than 2 CAST groups at a time to a single CAST Leader (approx. 4 FTE depending on case management load left to Leader vs. Coordinator) 	Administrator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Identify and enforce assignment of a consistent group space and authorize procurement of essential program materials 	Administrator & CAST Coordinator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designate a group space for CAST suitable for small group work and confidential discussions. Space must provide physical security (i.e., privacy of sight and sound) during the scheduled periods and for the students’ CAST work left in the space overnight. The CAST group space should not rotate—the same space must be available for all sessions. 	Administrator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ensure the CAST Leader has a workspace with secure storage—CAST Agendas, Student Notebooks, flip chart, snacks etc. 	CAST Coordinator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Order CAST Student Notebooks well in advance of the planned start date. 	CAST Coordinator				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a budget and specify the mechanism for accessing funds to cover materials and incentives (e.g., pencils, Post-it® notes, pens, stickers, snacks, flipchart paper): ~\$125/group exclusive of flipchart stand (~\$50) 	Administrator				