STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM (SAP) LIAISON HANDBOOK

SFY 2024-25

STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAM
SAP
SINCE 1984-1985
IN PENNSYLVANIA

pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF DRUG AND ALCOHOL PROGRAMS

SAP Liaison Handbook

Guide to Important Information and Tasks

Contents

Preface

As a SAP liaison you have many roles and responsibilities. We're all doing so much, and it can be hard to find time to slow down and really document the important pieces of the work that we do. This can leave us unprepared when someone new needs to take on the SAP liaison role.

When a new SAP liaison comes on board at your agency, they may be asking themselves:

- What exactly am I supposed to be doing?
- What does my role as a SAP liaison entail?
- Where should I start?

This handbook has been designed to help outline important resources and information for new (or even existing) SAP liaisons. It also outlines a number of important tasks that may need to be completed throughout the year. The handbook is designed to be customized by each agency/organization. It includes a list of many possible resources, tasks, etc. This document is NOT intended to be a list of everything that every SAP liaison should do.

In the Important Tasks by Month section you would need to outline the items relevant to your agency. Examples of some common tasks, events, etc. have been provided. The calendar provided is for SFY 24/25 and would need to be updated annually.

The goal is for this handbook to be a starting point that you can work from to outline the important information relevant to your agency/organization.

Please note that this document includes links to a variety of websites/resources. Inclusion of those websites and resources should not be considered an endorsement of the content on those sites.

Important Note about Handbook Content

In PA there are three types of liaisons, Drug & Alcohol Liaisons, Mental Health Liaisons and Behavioral Health or dual Liaisons who serve as both a Drug & Alcohol and Mental Health Liaison. This handbook was specifically created for liaisons who are funded through Single County Authorities and therefore the content may be less relevant for Mental Health Liaisons or liaison work not funded by SCAs. This handbook could still be utilized for liaisons not funded by an SCA but would likely require a greater level of customization to ensure content, resources and tasks are relevant to their roles/responsibilities.

Getting Started

If you're a new SAP liaison, there are a number of important things you'll need to know as you're getting started. Below are important documents, websites, partners, etc. that you'll want to get familiar with.

Acronyms/Terms

As you begin to review documents, attend meetings, learn requirements, etc. you'll come across a wide variety of acronyms or other terms. Below is a list of common acronyms/terms you may encounter.

- ATOD – Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs
- CASSP – Child and Adolescent Social Service Program
- DDAP – Department of Drug & Alcohol Programs
- FASD – Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders
- IEP – Individualized Education Program
- LOA – Letter of Agreement
- MH/IDD – Mental Health/Intellectual & Developmental Disabilities
- MHTTC – Mental Health Technology Transfer Center
- MTSS – Multitiered System of Supports
- OMHSAS – Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
- PASAP – Pennsylvania Association of Student Assistance Professionals
- PASTP – Pennsylvania Approved SAP Training Provider
- PAYS – Pennsylvania Youth Survey
- PBIS – Positive Behavior Interventions & Supports
- PCCD – Pennsylvania Commission on Crime and Delinquency
- PDE – Pennsylvania Department of Education
- PDE 4092 – PA Department of Education school SAP reporting form
- PNSAS – PA Network for Student Assistance Services
- PTTC – Prevention Technology Transfer Center
- S2SS – Safe to Say Something
- SAMHSA – Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration
- SAP – Student Assistance Program
- SCA – Single County Authority
- SEL – Social Emotional Learning
- SOC – System of Care
- SRO – School Resource Officer
- TMS – Training Management System
- IU – Intermediate Unit
- 504 Service Agreement – Plan to provide support/remove barriers for students with a disability

Websites to Know

Below are several important websites you should be familiar with.

- PA Network for Student Assistance Services
    - SAP Liaisons page
    - SAP Teams page
    - SAP Connection (PNSAS monthly newsletter)
- SAP Liaison Annual Reporting System
- SAP PDE 4092 Reporting System (to view school SAP reports)
- PA Department of Drug & Alcohol Programs
- PA Department of Education Office for Safe Schools
- PA Department of Human Services Office of Mental Health and Substance Abuse Services
- PA Commission on Crime & Delinquency
- Pennsylvania Association of Student Assistance Professionals (PASAP)
- Pennsylvania Positive Behavior Support Network (PAPBS)
- Social Emotional Learning Alliance for PA (SEL4PA)
- Center for Safe Schools
- Safe2Say Something (for reporting safety concerns to help prevent violence and tragedies)
- Prevent Suicide PA
- Prevent Suicide PA's Online Learning Center
- PTTC and MHTTC (SAMHSA training and technical assistance networks)
- DDAP Training Management System
- ChildLine (for reporting child abuse and general child well-being concerns)
- PA Youth Survey
- PA WITS (DDAP Treatment & Prevention Data System)
- PA WITS Training Resources
- Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
- Behavioral Health Learning Collaborative of PA (learning collaborative site for liaison agencies/others using the Behavioral Health Screen (BHS) screening tool)
- School districts' websites

Documents to Know

Below are several important documents you should be familiar with.

- SAP Best Practices by Phase
- SAP Frequently Asked Questions and Best Practice
- SAP Liaison Frequently Asked Questions
- SAP Liaison Best Practice Guidelines
- SAP Best Practice Guidelines for Fidelity
- Sample Letter of Agreement between school and liaison agency
- Legislation/policy relevant to SAP
    - Summary of Laws Pertinent to SAP
    - School policies for each district you serve
    - Internal agency policy/procedures related to records, consents, confidentiality, etc.

- [DDAP Prevention Manual](#)
- [DDAP Prevention Coding Guide](#) – See final page in guide for summary of key info related to how to enter SAP liaison services into WITS (e.g. IOM category and population to use for each service code.)
- [DDAP Prevention Program Listing](#)
- [Prevention Staff Handbook](#) (Handbook was developed for prevention staff at SCAs or other ATOD prevention provider agencies. Content may not be relevant or applicable to staff or agencies only providing SAP liaison services and not other ATOD prevention services.)
- Contract with funding agency – If you are an agency who contracts with the county, an SCA or other funder to provide SAP liaison services, it is important to read through the contract you have with that agency to understand what they expect you to do.
- Agency Plan/Needs Assessment
- Agency Annual Report

School Specific Documents/Info to Know

- Behavior checklist
- Referral form
- Compilation form
- Releases of information
- Parent/guardian consent form
- Case manager check list
- Truancy plan
- District/board policies related to topics like policy violations, suicide, etc.
- District SAP policy
- SAP Letter of Agreement between your agency and each school district
- [aSAP](#) or other electronic systems schools are using to manage SAP
- School calendars

People/Partners to Know

- Other SAP Liaisons in your agency or at the schools you serve (D&A or MH)
- SAP Liaisons at other agencies in your county/region
- [PNSAS Regional Coordinator](#)
- [PA Approved SAP Training Provider](#) in county/region
- School districts' coordinator for SAP
- School coordinator for tiered system such as MTSS and PBIS
- School threat assessment team coordinator
- School safety and security coordinator
- School Resource or Police Officer – can provide information on current trends
- Other community organizations you can refer students to for services/support
- [County CASSP Coordinators and Children's Behavioral Health Contacts](#)
- County Systems of Care contact person/coordinator (not in all counties)
- Intermediate Unit contacts (interagency coordinator, school safety coordinator, etc.)
- County/local Handle with Care initiative contacts (not in all counties)

Use the table below to list your key partners.

Important Partners			
Agency/Organization	Contact Person	Email	Phone

Skills to Build

Liaisons should have a knowledge and skill set in the following areas. SAP Best Practice Guidelines for Liaisons provides more detail on each of these areas.

- Collaboration and Consultation
- Facilitation
- Information, Intervention and Referral
- Laws, Regulations, Policies

Liaison Roles/Responsibilities

The Best Practice Guidelines for Liaisons document outlines in detail many of the roles and responsibilities of liaisons. Some common roles for liaisons are listed below.

- Attend core team meetings
- Attend/assist with parent meetings
- Make referrals
- Conduct screenings and/or assessments
  - o Screening – Screening can identify areas of concern and determine if a further evaluation is necessary. A screening does NOT determine if treatment is needed nor what level of care might be needed.
  - o Assessment – Assessment determines if treatment is needed and what level of care is needed. For drug and alcohol assessment, assessment refers to level of care (LOC) assessments which would involve the application of the ASAM criteria in making placement determinations.

- Follow-up with/about students
- Assist with postvention
- Provide technical assistance to core teams on team process, functioning, etc.
- Facilitate or co-facilitate school-based educational support groups
- Participate in the planning of county coordination/district council meetings for SAP teams throughout county

It is also important to be aware of what liaisons do NOT do. While some of the items below will vary by agency, liaisons generally do not do the following:

- Diagnose a substance use or mental health disorder
- Provide counseling
- Transport students
- Conduct home visits
- Conduct threat assessments (screenings done by liaisons are not threat assessments and should not be treated as such)

Utilize the table below to list the specific roles/responsibilities of liaisons at your agency. Your letters of agreement or contracts with schools should define what services liaisons need to provide for each school.

Liaison Roles/Responsibilities		
Responsibility/Service Provided	Description	Schools Service Provided To

Agency Funding Sources

On this page, list the key sources of funding that your agency receives for SAP.

Funding Source	Type of Funding/Description	Grant Start/End Date (if applicable)

Important Tasks by Month

Outlined below are important tasks, meetings, conferences, events, due dates, etc. that occur throughout the year. **[*You should customize each month to outline the items relevant to your agency/position. Examples of some common tasks, events, etc. have been provided. The calendar below is for SFY 24/25 and would need to be updated annually. Examples of events have been entered into the calendar. Other examples of awareness days, weeks, etc. that could be added to the calendar appear in the events/meetings/trainings box for each month.*]**

General Tasks

Below are important tasks you will need to complete throughout the year. [*This section can be used to outline on-going tasks or tasks that aren't specific to a certain period of time. Below are tasks that vary in when they occur. You may want to move some of these items to the months they take place for your agency/organization.*]

Training

- Develop training/professional development plan for self or other staff
- Complete required DDAP training as outlined in the DDAP Prevention Manual
- PASAP provides a free webinar series to members beginning in fall and ending in spring

Meetings

- Coordinate or attend SAP County Coordination/District Council meetings (if coordinate should prep 1-2 months in advance)
- Attend CPA/CTC regional meetings – Meetings occur twice a year in Fall and Spring. Check CPA website for dates/details.

Other Important Tasks

- Provider monitoring – Find out when SCA conducts monitoring and what you will need to do/prepare
- Keystone Exams – If providing liaisons services to high school teams, identify the dates Keystone Exams will take place as they could affect team meeting schedules and times for holding SAP groups.

July

PLANNING/PREP

- Set SAP maintenance training schedule
- Plan for school in-service days and school open houses
- Prepare files/folders for SAP (e.g. gather forms)
- Prepare SAP Letters of Agreement with schools
- Follow-up with schools about signing SAP Letter of Agreement (if prepare LOAs in Spring)
- Review and update as needed list of resources or resource binder

EVENTS/MEETINGS/TRAININGS

- CADCA Mid-Year Training Institute
- National Council on Problem Gambling Annual Conference
- National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month
- Provide needed trainings for staff

REPORTS/DUE DATES

- SAP Liaison Annual Report for prior SFY due 7/31
- Enter all prevention data in WITS for prior SFY by 7/31

OTHER

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Special Note: July can be a great time to **Take a Break!**

July 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
	1 National Minority Mental Health Awareness Month	2	3	4	5	6
7	8	9	10	11	12	13
14 CADCA Mid-Year Training Institute July 14-18	15	16	17	18	19	20
21	22	23	24	25	26	27
28	29	30	31 23/24 SAP Liaison Annual Report Due Due date for entry of SFY 23/24 prevention services in WITS			

August

PLANNING/PREP
• Review annual schedule as part of preparation for new school year • Contact schools to confirm or find out when team meetings will be held • If new liaison, contact schools to make introduction • Prepare any maintenance, education or updates that will be provided to SAP teams • Obtain any needed clearances before school year starts • Order any needed supplies • Prepare for school orientations and open houses

EVENTS/MEETINGS/TRAININGS
• Provide training or other information to schools during in-service • National Night Out • Overdose Awareness Day • Back to School Nights/ School Orientations/ School Open Houses • Provide needed trainings for staff

REPORTS/DUE DATES
• Correct services for prior SFY showing on WITS data entry error report that are truly errors by 8/15

OTHER
• Review data from sources such as PDE 4092, SAP Liaison Annual Reporting System, or data from screenings conducted to help evaluate services provided in prior school year and inform planning for upcoming school year.

August 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1	2	3
4	5	6 National Night Out	7	8	9	10
11	12	13	14	15 WITS data entry error corrections for prior SFY due	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31 Overdose Awareness Day

September

PLANNING/PREP
• Plan for Red Ribbon Week • Plan/prepare for SAP Groups, including informing schools of what agency can offer • Meet with/reach out to schools who are not receiving SAP liaison services to see if they need any services (this would be dependent on whether agency has funding to provide services to these schools)

EVENTS/MEETINGS/TRAININGS
• Hold meetings to reconnect with schools • Back to School Nights/ School Orientations/ School Open Houses • FASD Awareness Month • National Recovery Month • Suicide Prevention Month • National Family Day

REPORTS/DUE DATES
•

OTHER
• Encourage schools to inform students about SAP and the services available (could be done by school counselor). Some liaisons may assist the school in presenting to students about SAP. • Check PAYS website to see if schools have signed up to participate in PAYS and remind them to sign-up if they have not (in odd years).

September 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Start of FASD Awareness, Suicide Prevention, and Recovery Month	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9 International FASD Awareness Day	10 World Suicide Prevention Day	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23 National Family Day	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

October

PLANNING/PREP
•

EVENTS/MEETINGS/TRAININGS
• Provide team maintenance or other trainings/presentations during in-service days • Red Ribbon Week • National Bullying Prevention Month • National Depression and Mental Health Screening Month • World Mental Health Day • DEA Prescription Drug Take Back Day

REPORTS/DUE DATES
• SAP Letters of Agreement between SAP provider and school district must be completed/signed by 10/31 • Complete SAP Liaison Information Survey sent by PNSAS (survey may go out later in fall some years)

OTHER
•

October 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Start of Bullying Prevention and Depression and MH Screening Month	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10 World Mental Health Day	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23 Red Ribbon Week Begins	24	25	26
27	28	29	30	31 Red Ribbon Week Ends		

November

PLANNING/PREP
• Ask schools if there is anything else they need • Find out how school buildings handle closings and delays   ○ Determine process for being notified of or checking for delays/closings

EVENTS/MEETINGS/TRAININGS
• PaBPS Implementers Forum • Great American Smokeout • Veterans Day • PLCB Alcohol Education Conference • PA DUI Association Annual Meeting

REPORTS/DUE DATES
•

OTHER
• Promote SAP at parent/teacher conferences • Review data from sources such as PDE 4092, SAP Liaison Annual Reporting System, or data from screenings conducted to help identify any trends/needs/issues, determine if things are going as expected, and inform planning for rest of school year. (This may be a task that is repeated at other times during school year.)

November 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
					1	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9
10	11 Veterans Day	12	13	14 PLCB Alcohol Education Conference	15	16
17	18	19	20 PA DUI Association Annual Meeting Nov 20-22	21 Great American Smokeout	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30

December

PLANNING/PREP
•

EVENTS/MEETINGS/TRAININGS
• National Impaired Driving Prevention Month

REPORTS/DUE DATES
•

OTHER
• Identify resources for students during the longer holiday break

December 2024

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1 Start of National Impaired Driving Prevention Month	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30	31				

January

PLANNING/PREP
• Discuss with teams SAP Groups to hold for rest of year • Plan/coordinate any needed trainings for Spring

EVENTS/MEETINGS/TRAININGS
• National Birth Defects Prevention Month

REPORTS/DUE DATES
•

OTHER
• Register for PASAP Conference

January 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
			1 Start of National Birth Defects Prevention Month	2	3	4
5	6	7	8	9	10	11
12	13	14	15	16	17	18
19	20	21	22	23	24	25
26	27	28	29	30	31	

February

PLANNING/PREP
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EVENTS/MEETINGS/TRAININGS
• PASAP Conference • CADCA National Leadership Forum • SAMHSA Prevention Day • Children of Addiction Awareness Week

REPORTS/DUE DATES
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OTHER
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February 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9 Start of COA Awareness Week	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20	21	22
23 PASAP Conference Feb 23-25	24	25	26	27	28	

March

PLANNING/PREP
• Talk to team about upcoming testing to see how will impact team meeting times or schedules

EVENTS/MEETINGS/TRAININGS
• Problem Gambling Awareness Month • Take Down Tobacco National Day of Action • National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week • National Inhalants & Poisons Awareness Week (NIPAW) • Registration opens for CPA Conference • Council on Compulsive Gambling of PA Statewide East and West Conferences

REPORTS/DUE DATES
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OTHER
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March 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1 Start of Problem Gambling Awareness Month
2	3	4	5	6	7	8
9	10	11	12	13	14	15
16	17 Start of National Drug & Alcohol Facts Week	18	19	20	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31 Take Down Tobacco National Day of Action					

April

PLANNING/PREP
•

EVENTS/MEETINGS/TRAININGS
• Alcohol Awareness Month • DEA Prescription Drug Take Back Day • Stress Awareness Month • National Public Health Week • National Minority Health Month

REPORTS/DUE DATES
•

OTHER
• PAYS school and county reports become available (in even years) • Sign up for fall administration of PAYS begins (in odd years); can remind/encourage schools to participate *PSSA testing happens in schools in April, which could affect team meeting schedules and times for holding SAP groups.

April 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
		1 Start of Alcohol Awareness, Stress Awareness and Minority Health Month	2	3	4	5
6	7 National Public Health Week April 7-13	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

May

PLANNING/PREP
• Work with teams to wrap up the year and make sure they are prepared to complete PDE 4092 reporting • Prepare/send SAP Letters of Agreement with each school district (may happen early or later in year depending on agency) • Prepare communication/resources to share with families for needs that may arise during the summer months

EVENTS/MEETINGS/TRAININGS
• National Social and Emotional Learning Conference • National Prevention Week • Mental Health Awareness Month/Day • World No Tobacco Day

REPORTS/DUE DATES
•

OTHER
• Work with school-based providers to transition students for summer • Get feedback from teams/schools about how the year has gone and any adjustments in liaison services that may be needed

May 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
				1 Start of Mental Health Awareness Month	2	3
4	5	6	7	8	9	10
11 National Prevention Week Begins	12	13	14	15	16	17
18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31 World No Tobacco Day

June

PLANNING/PREP
• Start planning for fall team maintenance • Finish creating plans for students for summer • Revisit forms, contracts, etc. to see if any updates/changes are needed

EVENTS/MEETINGS/TRAININGS
• Commonwealth Prevention Alliance Conference

REPORTS/DUE DATES
• Schools must complete and submit PDE 4092 report by 6/30

OTHER
• Evaluate how the year went and determine if any changes are needed for next school year

Special Note: As the year comes to a close take time to **Celebrate Successes!**

June 2025

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1	2	3	4	5	6	7
8	9	10	11 CPA Conference June 11-13	12	13	14
15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					