



Preventing

A Community Planning Toolkit

**Youth Substance Misuse
and Building Protective Factors**



A Program of the Lamoille Family Center





Who We Are

Healthy Lamoille Valley is a coalition of community organizations and individuals working collaboratively to reduce youth substance misuse and encourage youth to make substance free healthy choices.

What We Do



Community Health



Education



Youth Engagement



Town Planning

Join Us and Work to Reduce Youth Substance Misuse in Our Community!

We want your involvement and voice!

www.healthylamoillevalley.org | Facebook: Healthy Lamoille Valley | Twitter: @HealthyLamoille

What's Inside

About This Toolkit	pp. 4 - 5
Community Prevention Lens	p. 6
Vermont Prevention Model	p. 7
Where Do Youth See Substances In Our Community?	pp. 8 - 9
Risk Factors That Lead To Youth Use	p. 10
Vermont Youth Are Using Substances	p. 11
Prevention Through An Equity Lens	p. 12
Substance Misuse Impacts Our Communities	p.13
Protecting Our Youth	pp. 14 - 15
What Is Your Vision For Youth In Our Community?	p. 16
Community Visioning: Where Are We Going?	p. 17
Strategies - Addressing Risk & Protective Factors	p. 18
Your Town Has A Say	p. 19
Getting Started	p. 20
Resources	p. 21

You can download this Toolkit as a PDF and access up to date resources at:
www.healthylamoillevalley.org/community-policy-toolkit



About This Toolkit

WHO

Ever wonder what you and others can be doing in our community to reduce substance misuse?

This Toolkit is designed for all:

- ◆ Community members and leaders
- ◆ Youth and adults who care for and about them
- ◆ Local decision makers
- ◆ Selectboard members
- ◆ Village Trustees
- ◆ Municipal Administrators and Managers
- ◆ You

We encourage those with all identities, affiliations and experiences to join us in this effort.

Your Own Toolkit Notes...

Record your thoughts, brainstorm and questions in this interactive Toolkit.

WHAT

This Toolkit is a community planning guide focusing on reducing youth misuse of alcohol, tobacco, cannabis and prescription drugs, while supporting efforts to help youth make healthy substance-free choices. There are many factors, including on family and individual levels, that impact youth substance misuse. The purpose of this Toolkit, however, is to focus on the community, policy and systems levels.

The Toolkit is also available online with up to date resources at: www.healthylamoillevalley.org/community-policy-toolkit



WHEN

This Toolkit can be used as part of town or organizational planning processes or as a stand alone resource to support healthy community and policy development.

Healthy Lamoille Valley is available to facilitate group discussions and help create substance prevention plans.



WHERE

This Toolkit highlights local data, examples and resources from Vermont's Lamoille Valley.

Lamoille Valley Towns & Villages:

- ◆ Belvidere
- ◆ Cambridge
- ◆ Craftsbury
- ◆ Eden
- ◆ Elmore
- ◆ Greensboro
- ◆ Hardwick
- ◆ Hyde Park
- ◆ Jeffersonville
- ◆ Johnson
- ◆ Morrisville / Morristown
- ◆ Stannard
- ◆ Stowe
- ◆ Waterville
- ◆ Wolcott
- ◆ Woodbury

WHY

The brains of young people are still developing until they are 25. This puts them most at risk for substance misuse, especially if they start using at an early age, increasing their likelihood of becoming dependent and experiencing negative health outcomes.

The environment around our youth is inundated with substance industry tactics that drive youth misuse. Additional pressures and consistent stressors on families that build up, for some more than others, can lead to higher rates of misuse.

Our job and responsibility is to reduce the risks in our communities that lead to substance misuse and to increase the factors that protect our youth through facilitated conversations and intentional planning.

HOW

This Toolkit is designed to help support those working to create healthy communities and to take some of the guesswork out of the process. The focus is on a systems and policy level intervention.

Planning resources are provided to create policies that use a substance prevention lens to help build healthy communities and reduce youth substance misuse.



Community Prevention Lens

Noticing what your community teaches youth about substances

Each of us can make a difference in our community toward reducing youth substance misuse, whether through actions in our personal lives or by changing community norms and policies. It is our responsibility to the generations to come. As a first step, we can start to heighten our awareness and simply notice.

Use This Toolkit To...

Focus your attention by taking steps to see through a youth substance misuse prevention lens.

Understand community norms, messaging, and both risk and protective factors to foster resiliency in youth and create a healthy environment that prevents substance misuse.

Identify a vision for what it means to live in a healthy community that includes maximizing the potential that youth will make healthy decisions - that healthy decisions become the norm.

Become a change agent for bringing about lasting change to reduce substance misuse in your community.

Be strategic in your substance prevention efforts.

Ensure that all populations are welcome, invited and considered in the planning process.

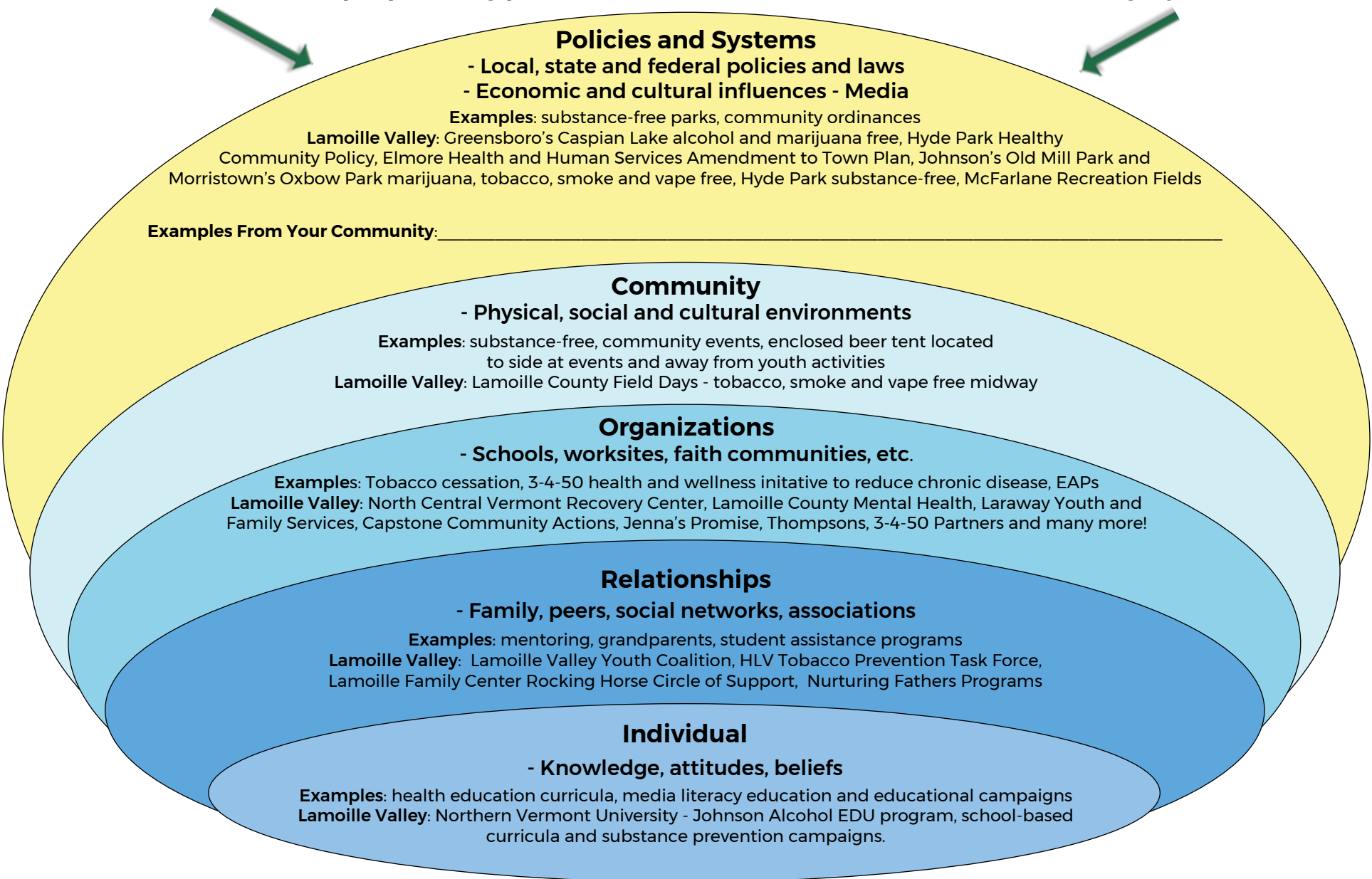
Promote awareness towards creation of, or change of, health and substance related policies.



How can you increase your awareness of how substances are normalized for youth in your community and then take action?

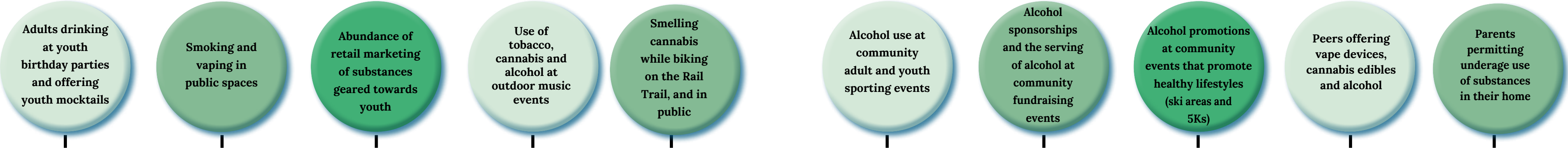
The Vermont Prevention Model

This Toolkit is focused on the **“Policies and Systems”** level of intervention. Most municipal planning prevention activities will fall under this same category.

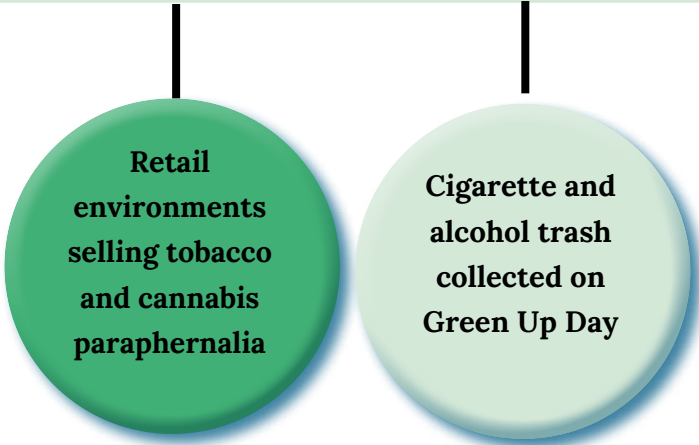


Where Do Youth See Substances in our Community?

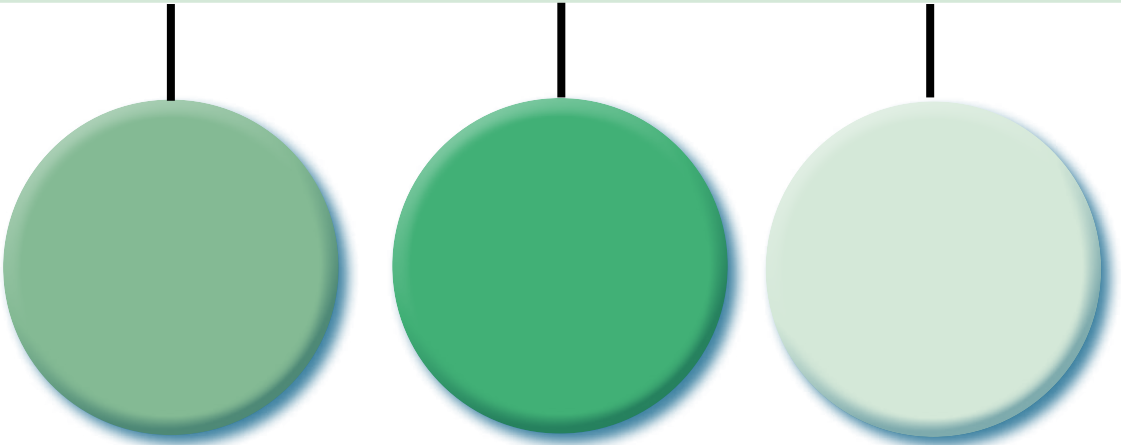
We spoke to area youth and here's what they say they've noticed...



8 Youth appealing items are found adjacent to tobacco products and cannabis paraphernalia.

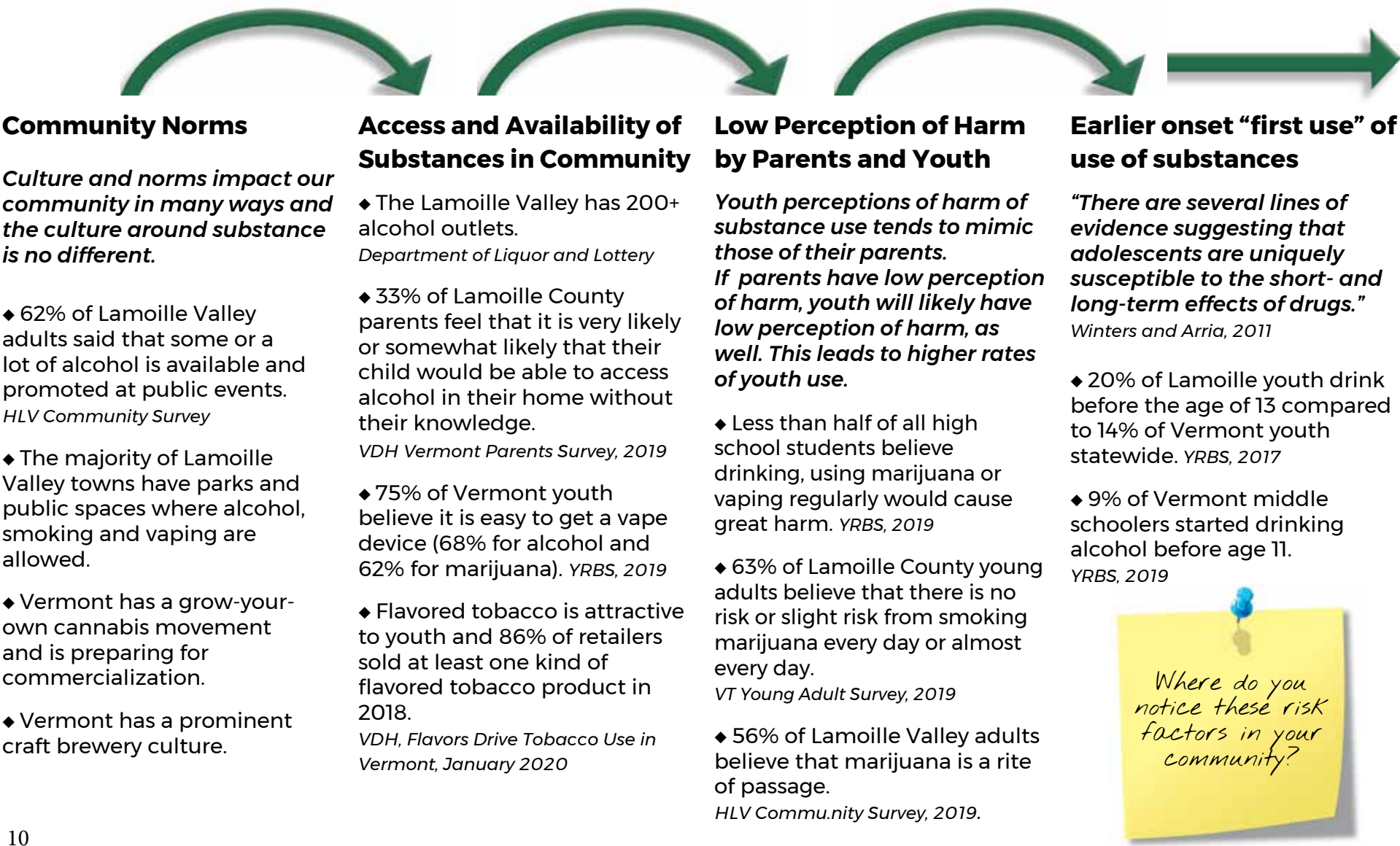


Take a fresh look at your community through a prevention lens.



Risk Factors that Lead to Youth Use

Risk factors are characteristics at the biological, psychological, family, community, or cultural level that are associated with a higher likelihood of negative outcomes.



Throughout Vermont Youth Are Using Substances

Early In Life

Vermont Youth Substance Use Before the Age of 13

- ◆ Flavored Tobacco 15%
- ◆ Alcohol 13%
- ◆ Marijuana 6%
- ◆ Cigarettes 7%



Too Often

In the Past 30 Days

- ◆ 7% of middle school students reported drinking alcohol
- ◆ 31% of high school students reported drinking alcohol
- ◆ 27% of high school students reported using marijuana
- ◆ 26% of high school students reported vaping (up from 12% in 2017)

Your Local Data

Find out **how your community compares** to state and national data and review trend data for your area.

Look for the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) in the Data section of our online Toolkit.

[www.healthylamoillevalley.org/
community-policy-toolkit](http://www.healthylamoillevalley.org/community-policy-toolkit)

Too Much

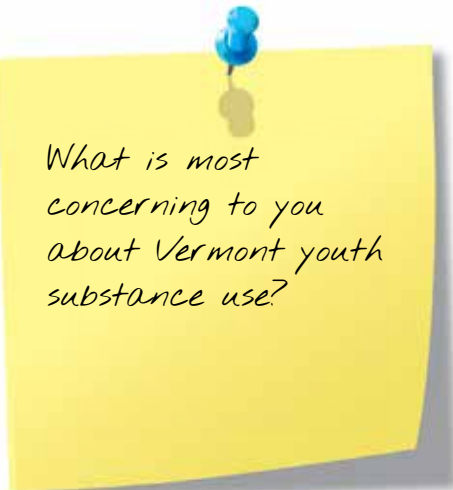
Of High School Students Who Vape

- ◆ 43% use 20 or more days/month
- ◆ 57% use 10 or more days/month
- ◆ 88% use 6 or more days/month

Alcohol Binge Drinking

- ◆ 15% of high school students binge drink at least once per month (25% of seniors).
- ◆ Out of middle schoolers who drink, one in five have five or more drinks in a row.

Data on this page from YRBS, 2019. Adapted format from CADCA midyear presentation by Angela De Re, CADCA trainer, 2019



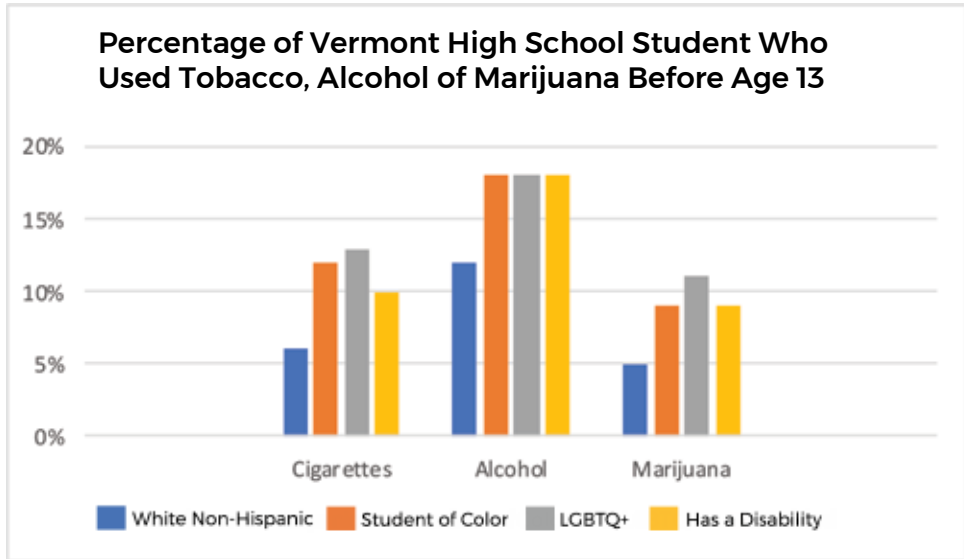
Prevention Through An Equity Lens

Substance misuse is often an equity and justice issue.



An Example: Age of First Use

As we look at *Age of First Use* data, we see that health inequities exist in Vermont from a very young age.



For more data see 2019 YRBS Populations In Focus, in our Online Toolkit.

“Health equity exists when all people have a fair and just opportunity to be healthy, especially those who have experienced socioeconomic disadvantage, historical injustice, and other avoidable systemic inequalities that are often associated with social categories of race, gender, ethnicity, social position, sexual orientation and disability.”

Vermont Department of Health, Health Equity

It is crucial that we consider equity when creating policies and actions that support prevention.

What leads to inequity?

- ◆ Substance industry tactics often target more vulnerable populations.
- ◆ Individuals and communities with fewer resources are likely to endure more stress and less access to medical and mental health services. The pressures that exist in an environment affect substance use. As pressures accumulate, they can increase health problems and related risks.
- ◆ Some additional stressors that lead to inequity include food insecurity, income inequality, structural discrimination and racism, intergenerational trauma and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs)*, housing instability, lack of access to quality education, and higher rates of substance exposure.

*https://www.healthylamoillevalley.org/resilient_lamoille/

This section was adapted from ChangeLab Solutions, originally adapted from Frameworks; parts of the language above are quoted directly.

A child who gets through age 21 without smoking, misusing alcohol or using illegal drugs is almost certain never to do so.

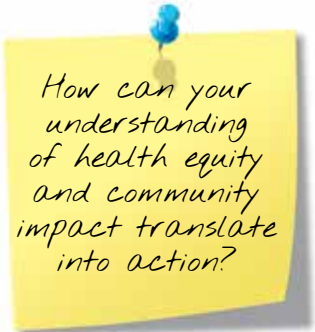
CASA National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University

Substance Misuse Impacts Our Communities



Education

The human brain isn’t fully developed until around age 25. Youth who use substances tend to perform poorly in school, develop self-esteem issues, and engage in even riskier behaviors. Substance use is also associated with failure to complete high school or college.



Community impact language in this spread adapted from North West Regional Planning Commission and Franklin County Caring Communities Primer: Planning for Prevention: A Guide to Community Health Initiatives



Health & Mental Health

Addiction and misuse cause or contribute to more than 70 other conditions requiring medical care. Substance use disorders have high rates of co-occurring mental illness and vice versa (NIDA).



Public Safety

Substance misuse contributes to an increase in motor vehicle crash fatalities, suicides, domestic violence situations, and unintentional injuries, increasing law enforcement and emergency service costs.



Employment

Substance misuse can lead to an increase in missed days at work, increased workplace accidents, decreased productivity at work, and higher health insurance costs for the employer. It can impact an individual employee directly, or through a co-worker, family member or friend’s misuse.



Economic Impacts of Substance Misuse

The misuse of substances drive up costs in healthcare, emergency services, and the criminal justice system, in addition to the loss of productivity.

- ◆ Substance misuse costs our nation over \$600 billion annually. NIH, National Institute of Drug Abuse
- ◆ Evidence-based school prevention programs can save Vermont \$18 for every \$1 invested. VDH 2017 How Prevention Works 13

Protecting Our Youth



PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- ~ Policies and norms encourage non-use.
- ~ Opportunities exist for community involvement.
- ~ Laws and ordinances are consistently enforced.
- ~ Community service opportunities are available for youth.
- ~ Resources (housing, healthcare, childcare, jobs, recreation, etc.) are available

The Risk and Protective Factor Model is based on the work of J. David Hawkins, Ph.D., Richard F. Catalano, Ph.D., and a team of researchers at the University of Washington in Seattle.



Increasing Community Protective Factors
and



Decreasing Community Risk Factors

Lead to healthier youth & communities

Protective factors are conditions that buffer young people from the negative consequences of exposure to risks.

Protective factors reduce the impact of risk or change the way a person responds to risk.

Public Health Dept, Lane County Oregon

See our resources online

www.healthylamoillevalley.org/community-policy-toolkit
for a more complete list of risk and protective factors.



RISK FACTORS

- ~ Community norms and laws that lead toward substance use.
- ~ Access and availability of substances in the community.
- ~ Low perception of harm among parents and youth.
- ~ Early onset of "first-use" of substances.

What can you do to increase protective factors in your community?

Think more about protective strategies...

To address the issues of youth substance misuse and early age of onset, we need to address both protective and risk factors related to local conditions.



What is our community doing to provide a healthy environment for ALL of our youth?

How does our town culture invite people to be healthy?

What do our community norms say to our youth?

What can we do to prevent or delay the onset (first use) of substances of youth in our community?

Which risk and protective factors can we address first?

What can our community do to take more action?

How can we prioritize what is best for our youth?

How can we use an equity lens to approach substance prevention?

How can the policies we set (and advocate for) improve the future outcomes of our youth?

What Is Your Vision For Youth In Our Community?

What’s the dream and why does it matter?

A few examples of personal visions for their community from Healthy Lamoille Valley Steering Team and Lamoille Area Youth Council members...

Community culture where youth make healthy decisions and are supported in a successful path from childhood to adulthood.

A safe, healthy and supportive community where youth are aware of the risks of substance use and empowered to resist using.

Community is free of alcohol and other drug addiction, misuse and related outcomes.

A safe community that cares for the youth, offers help, and empowers them with Knowledge.

What is your personal vision for your community related to the topic of youth substance misuse?

What values do you want to pass on to youth in your community?

What accomplishments do you hope your community will reach with respect to youth substance prevention?

Community Visioning: Where Are We Going?

What sample language resonates with you?

A world where all people live free of the burden of drug misuse

LIVE IN A COMMUNITY THAT ADDRESSES NORMS, MESSAGING AND COMMUNITY LEVEL FACTORS IN ORDER TO FOSTER AN ENVIRONMENT RESISTANT TO SUBSTANCE MISUSE

Youth are healthy and substance free

To create long lasting sustainable change

To be the community leader in eliminating the impact of substance misuse

Alcohol and drug-free community

A safe, supportive and healthy community

Community is free of alcohol and other drug addiction, misuse and related outcomes

Healthy decisions become the default

Substance use is not the norm

A safe and vibrant community where youth choose to live substance free, and are collectively supported by their peers, parents and community members in making healthy decisions

Thanks to Drug Free America, SAMHSA and substance prevention coalitions across the US for inspiration of this sample language

Write your ideas for a vision statement for your community...



Examples from local town plans and policy

Create and sustain a healthy community for all residents and visitors. <i>Healthy Community Policy, Hyde Park</i>	Building a town culture that promotes healthy behaviors and also significantly reduces risk behaviors such as substance misuse. <i>Elmore Town Plan</i>	Achieve a healthier environment and community for its residents. <i>Wolcott Town Plan</i>
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Strategies – Addressing Risk and Protective Factors

Which community level protective strategies can you influence?



- ☐ Organize groups to change community thinking and norms around substance use, especially related to youth.
- ☐ Know your data to get a true picture of what is happening.
- ☐ Host and advocate for substance-free family friendly events (and even create incentives for others to do the same!).
- ☐ Revise zoning bylaws to require a buffer around community facilities such as schools, child care centers, and parks.
- ☐ Create equitable policies and norms that encourage non-use.
- ☐ Restrict the number and placement of substance outlets within the community.
- ☐ Engage diverse community members in planning processes.
- ☐ Get connected to Healthy Lamoille Valley, the local substance prevention coalition.
- ☐ Engage your town in a strategic planning process related to substance misuse and prevention.
- ☐ Help town leaders and citizens learn about and implement local laws and policies based on the latest research and local data.
- ☐ Create restrictions for alcohol, tobacco, and vape use in public places and parks.
- ☐ Publicize and share information about Vermont's local social hosting laws.
- ☐ Revise zoning bylaws and collaborate with retailers to decrease substance promotions, such as outdoor alcohol and tobacco signage and advertising.
- ☐ Support efforts to post event signs and permanent town policy signs.
- ☐ Develop policies for youth sporting events and clearly share them (e.g. parents and spectators may not have alcohol, cannabis, or tobacco products at the recreational facility).
- ☐ Help bolster community enforcement by making sure policies, laws and ordinances are shared widely and consistently enforced.
- ☐ Apply an equity lens to your planning: Ask who has been harmed? Who stands to benefit? How can future harms be prevented? (*ChangeLab Solutions*)
- ☐ Your own idea_____

Which of the following can you do to make a positive difference?

- ☐ Be aware of factors that may increase the risk of substance use.
- ☐ Help to foster a sense of belonging and attachment with youth.
- ☐ Encourage youth and parent involvement in school.
- ☐ Talk with youth in your life about alcohol, tobacco, cannabis and other drug use. (*ParentUpVT.org*)
- ☐ Stay involved in your children's lives.
- ☐ Create opportunities for mentors and adults who listen.
- ☐ Encourage youth to adopt healthy beliefs and offer them clear standards.
- ☐ Work to ensure that schools and the community support and reward young people's decisions not to drink or use substances.
- ☐ Be a positive peer or adult role model.
- ☐ Support the youth in your life and give them space to grow, while setting appropriate limits and clear rules.
- ☐ Create programs and opportunities, including volunteer work, where young people can grow, explore their options, succeed and feel good about themselves without substances.
- ☐ Know where your kids are, what they are doing, and who they are with.

Your Town Has A Say

Creating a healthy environment for our youth

WHAT TOWNS CAN DO

- ◆ Create rules and policies that support prevention.
- ◆ Encourage residents to participate in prevention activities.
- ◆ Ensure all populations are included, considered, invited and welcomed to your process.
- ◆ Take actions with regional partners to reduce current risk factors and build protective factors.
- ◆ Listen to the community, know your local data and make program adjustments based on new concerns.



Lamoille County Field Days Tobacco Smoke and Vape-Free Midway

A few local examples

- ◆ Healthy living and wellness promotion language in town plans for Wolcott, Morristown, and Jeffersonville.
- ◆ Johnson's Old Mill Park and Morristown's Oxbow Park are tobacco, smoke, vape and marijuana free.
- ◆ Elmore's addendum to its Town Plan includes prevention language: *"Building a positive town culture that promotes healthy behaviors also significantly reduces risky behaviors such as substance misuse. Town policies are an important mechanism for creating healthy culture because citizens, especially youth, get "messages" from what they see in their communities, thereby influencing their choices."*



Greensboro Caspian Lake - Alcohol and Marijuana Free



Hyde Park - Healthy Community Policy, Substance Free Parks and Trails and 3-4-50 Partner

Links to the specific policies can be found in our Online Toolkit.

Getting Started

Now what? Next steps towards my community action plan



My vision for substance prevention in my community _____

My top 3 priorities for strategic change during the next six months:
1) _____ 2) _____ 3) _____

Where do I have power or influence to make change in my community?

Resources and data I will use and/or need:

What support do I need?

Who else can I engage in this work?

What are my next steps?

How can I ensure this work continues?

Resources

Healthy Lamoille Valley, working with the Vermont Department of Health, is a resource for you when you are considering actions and recommendations that will make your community healthier.

Please refer to our online version of the Toolkit, which is regularly updated, for additional information, planning documents, data, checklists and other resources.

Contact

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www.healthylamoillevalley.org | Facebook: Healthy Lamoille Valley | Twitter: @HealthyLamoille

Thank You

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www.healthylamoillevalley.org/community-policy-toolkit

Topics to view on our online Toolkit

- Toolkit and Planning Materials for Making Change
- Education and Information by Substance
- Statewide and Local Data
- Community-Wide Strategies for Town Plans and Policy Development
- Resources For Building Healthy Communities

Explore sample language for policies and town plans, links to local data and resources for strategic planning for the health of your community.

Additional resources available are on the topics of healthy community design, mental health, physical health and preventing chronic disease.



2019 PA Student Getting to Y Presentation



Lamoille Area Youth at CADCA Leadership Summit

Collaborating to reverse the trend of youth substance misuse.



The “**Community Planning Toolkit: Preventing Youth Substance Misuse and Building Protective Factors**” (2020) is an updated version of the Healthy Lamoille Valley document, “**A Primer on Planning for Prevention**” (2015).

Both documents were created thanks to grants from the Vermont Department of Health to decrease statewide substance misuse rates for youth. Initial funding was from the **Partnership for Success** and current funders for this update are the **Regional Prevention Partnership** and the **Tobacco Control Program**.

