



**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 individuals and community organizations working collaboratively to prevent and reduce youth substance misuse and encourage youth to make substance free healthy choices.

## Introduction to the 2023 Edition

A lot has changed since the first edition of this community planning toolkit. The impact of the COVID pandemic continues to have a profound effect on our communities and youth. Mental health issues across the country and in our local region are increasing the need for healthy communities that value and support our youth.

Awareness of health disparities and equity issues demand our attention. New local initiatives and opportunities reinforce that equity work is prevention work.

This emphasizes the importance of prevention work and the role we can all play within it.

As of 2022, retail cannabis is legal in Vermont. Cannabis now has a stronger presence in our communities, raising youth exposure through increased ease of access, visibility of advertising, and social norming. In this document the term “cannabis” is used in place of terms such as THC, marijuana, pot, and weed unless citing a source that used the term marijuana.

## What is Prevention?



Community Health



Education Support



Youth and  
Parent /Caregiver  
Engagement



Planning & Policy  
Support

**Note on Substance Use Trends and Data:** During the COVID pandemic, there may have been a temporary reduction in youth substance use (Youth Risk Behavior Survey 2021 Data Summary and Trends Report). Youth spent more time at home and less time with peers. As a result they had less access and fewer opportunities to use substances. We made the decision to show 2019 data in this 2023 edition to avoid giving a false impression of the trends based on the impact of COVID. As more data becomes available we will share it on our website at [healthylamoillevalley.org](http://healthylamoillevalley.org).

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

**We want your involvement and voice!**

[www.healthylamoillevalley.org](http://www.healthylamoillevalley.org) | [www.lamoillefamilycenter.org](http://www.lamoillefamilycenter.org)

Facebook: Healthy Lamoille Valley | Twitter: @HealthyLamoille | Instagram: @healthylamoillevalley

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You can download this Toolkit as a PDF  
and access up-to-date resources at:  
[healthylamoillevalley.org/prevention-toolkit](https://healthylamoillevalley.org/prevention-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 caring adults
- ◆ Local decision makers
- ◆ Treatment and recovery partners
- ◆ Leaders of local business, organizations, law enforcement, schools, faith-based institutions
- ◆ Physical and mental health providers
- ◆ You

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

## 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 the individuals, family, organizations, businesses, and systems level policies that impact substance prevention. This Toolkit highlights stakeholders from across the community demonstrating the role we each have to play.

*The Toolkit is available online with up to date resources:* [healthylamoillevalley.org/prevention-toolkit](http://healthylamoillevalley.org/prevention-toolkit)

## WHEN

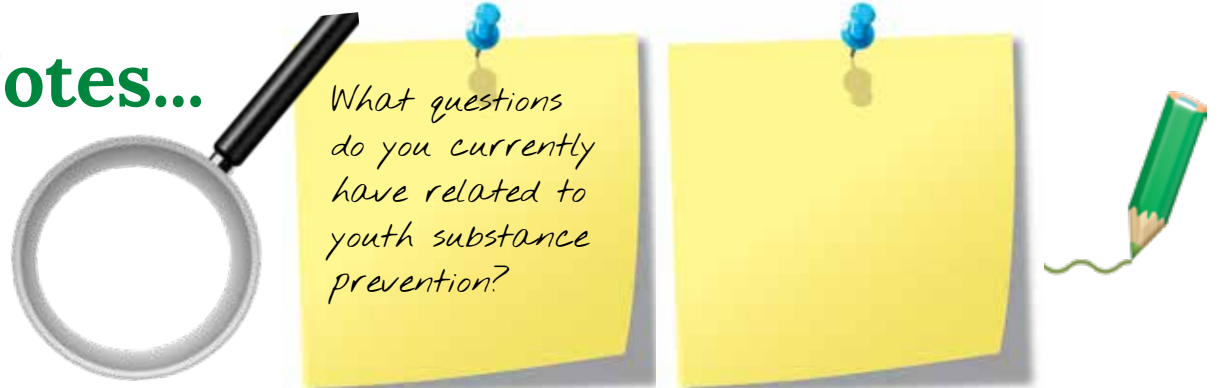
Our hope is that youth, parents, educators, business, organizational, and municipal leaders will all use this Toolkit in different settings to build protective factors and reduce risk factors in our community.

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

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

## Your Own Toolkit Notes...

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





## WHERE

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

Lamoille Valley Towns & Villages:

- ◆ Belvidere
- ◆ Cambridge/Jeffersonville
- ◆ Craftsbury
- ◆ Eden
- ◆ Elmore
- ◆ Greensboro
- ◆ Hardwick
- ◆ Hyde Park
- ◆ 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. Therefore, 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. There is a focus on systems and policies, organizations and businesses, relationships and family interventions.

Resources are provided to support actions that each of us can take through using a substance prevention lens across the spectrum of care (prevention, intervention, treatment and recovery).



# Community Prevention Lens

## Noticing what our 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 heighten our awareness of where youth see substances and the marketing of substances, and simply notice.*



**Use This Toolkit To... Understand how addressing both risk and protective factors fosters resiliency in youth.**

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

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

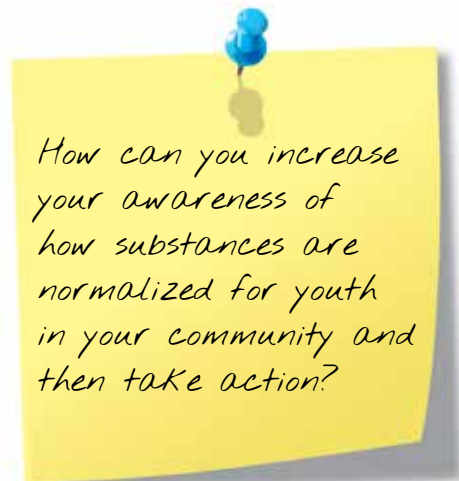
**Understand community norms**, messaging, and both risk and protective factors to foster resiliency in youth and create a healthy environment that prevents substance misuse.

**Identify a personal vision** for what it means to live in a healthy community that includes maximizing the potential so that healthy decisions become the norm.

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

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

**Be strategic** in your substance prevention efforts.



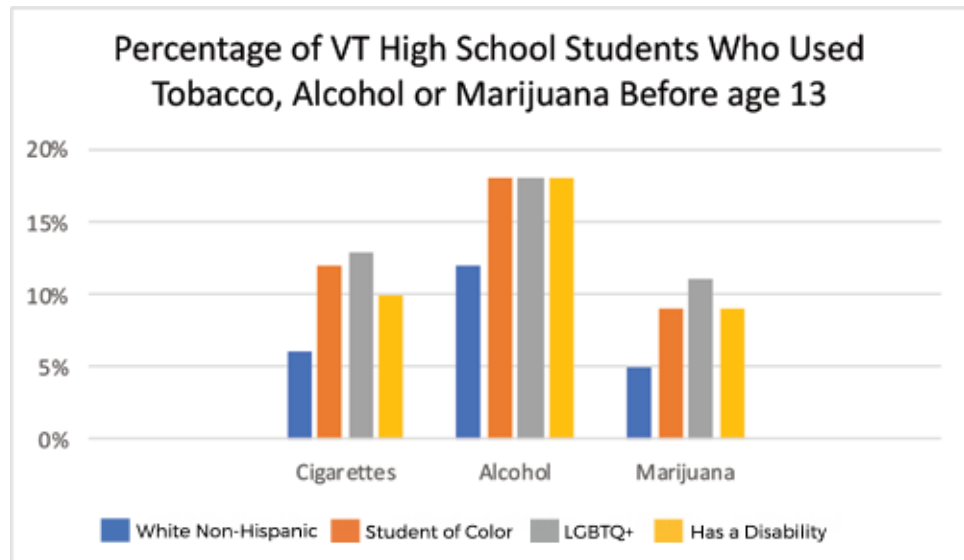
# Prevention Through An Equity Lens

## 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.

\*[healthylamoillevalley.org/resilient\\_lamoille/](http://healthylamoillevalley.org/resilient_lamoille/)

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

# 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.



## 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.

*National Institute on Drug Abuse.*



## 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, turnover, 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

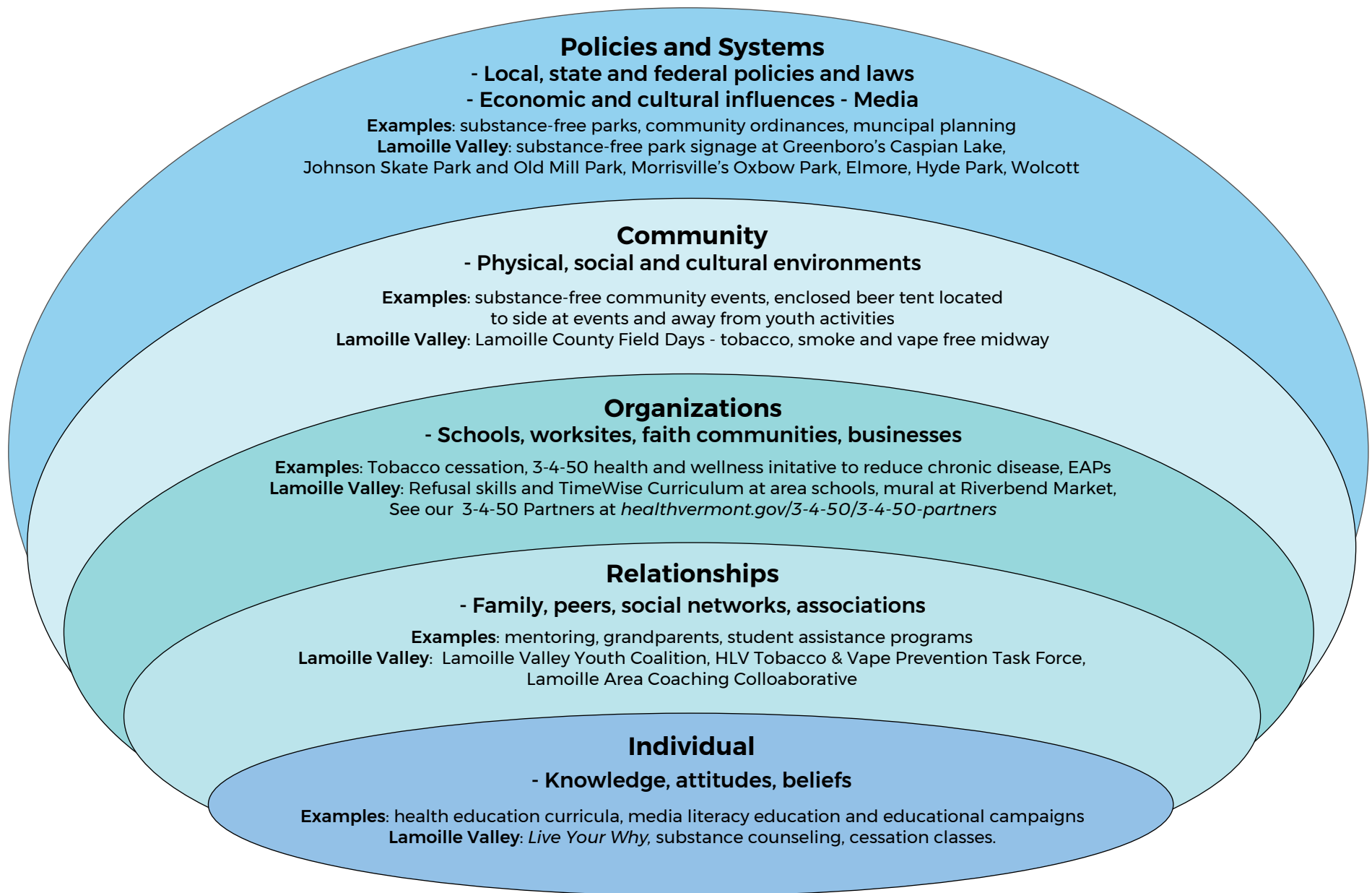
The misuse of substances drive up costs in healthcare, emergency services, and the criminal justice system, in addition to the loss of productivity.

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

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



# The Vermont Prevention Model



**Examples From Your Community:** \_\_\_\_\_

# Where Do Youth See Substances in our Community?

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



Adults drinking  
at youth  
birthday parties  
and offering  
youth mocktails

Vape devices  
in attractive  
flavors &  
colors

Abundance of  
retail marketing  
of substances  
geared towards  
youth

Use of  
tobacco,  
cannabis and  
alcohol at  
outdoor music  
events

Smelling  
cannabis while  
biking on the rail  
trail, at parks,  
and at events



Retail  
environments  
selling tobacco  
and cannabis  
paraphernalia

Cigarette and  
alcohol trash  
collected on  
Green Up Day



Alcohol use at  
community  
adult and youth  
sporting events

Alcohol  
sponsorships  
and the serving  
of alcohol at  
community  
fundraisers

Alcohol promotions  
at community  
events that promote  
healthy lifestyles  
(ski areas and  
5Ks)

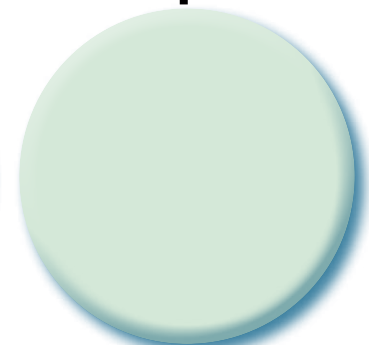
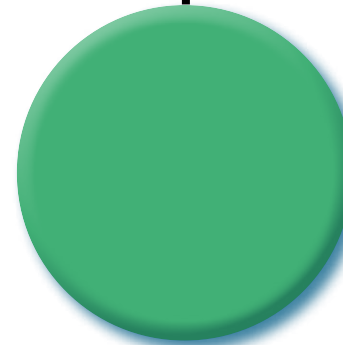
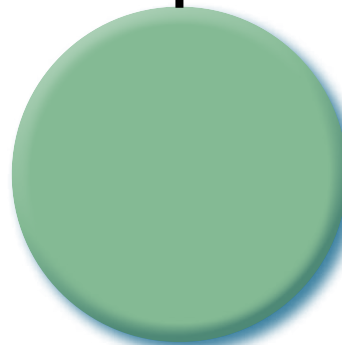
Peers offering  
vape devices,  
cannabis edibles  
and alcohol

Parents  
permitting  
underage use  
of substances  
in their home



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

*What would youth  
notice in your  
community?*



# 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.



## Community Norms

*Culture and norms impact our community in many ways and the culture around substance is no different.*

- ◆ 46% of Lamoille Valley adults said that some or a lot of alcohol is available and promoted at public events.

*HLV Community Survey 2023*

- ◆ The majority of Lamoille Valley towns have parks and public spaces where alcohol, smoking and vaping are allowed.

- ◆ Vermont has a legal retail cannabis market as well as a grow-your-own culture.

- ◆ Vermont has a prominent craft brewery culture.

## Access and Availability of Substances in Community

- ◆ The Lamoille Valley has 200+ alcohol outlets.

*Department of Liquor and Lottery*

- ◆ 33% of Lamoille County parents feel that it is very likely or somewhat likely that their child would be able to access alcohol in their home without their knowledge.

*VDH Vermont Parent Survey, 2019*

- ◆ 76% of Lamoille County youth believe it would be sort of or very easy to get electronic vapor products. *YRBS, 2019*

- ◆ Flavored tobacco is attractive to youth and 86% of retailers sold at least one kind of flavored tobacco product in 2018.

*VDH, Flavors Drive Tobacco Use in Vermont, January 2020*

## Low Perception of Harm by Parents and Youth

*Youth perceptions of harm of substance use tends to mimic those of their parents. If parents have low perception of harm, youth will likely have low perception of harm as well. This leads to higher rates of youth use.*

- ◆ Less than half of all high school students believe drinking, using marijuana or vaping regularly would cause great harm. *YRBS, 2019*

- ◆ 78% of Lamoille County young adults believe there is no risk or slight risk from using cannabis regularly.

*VT Young Adult Survey, 2022*

- ◆ 62% of Lamoille Valley adults believe underage drinking is seen as a rite of passage.

*HLV Community Survey, 2023.*

## Earlier onset “first use” of use of substances

*“There are several lines of evidence suggesting that adolescents are uniquely susceptible to the short- and long-term effects of drugs.”*

*Winters and Arria, 2011*

- ◆ 20% of Lamoille youth drink before the age of 13 compared to 14% of Vermont youth statewide. *YRBS, 2017*

- ◆ 10% of Vermont middle schoolers started drinking alcohol before age 11.

*YRBS, 2019*





# 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.

[healthylamoillevalley.org/  
prevention-toolkit](https://healthylamoillevalley.org/prevention-toolkit)

## Too Much

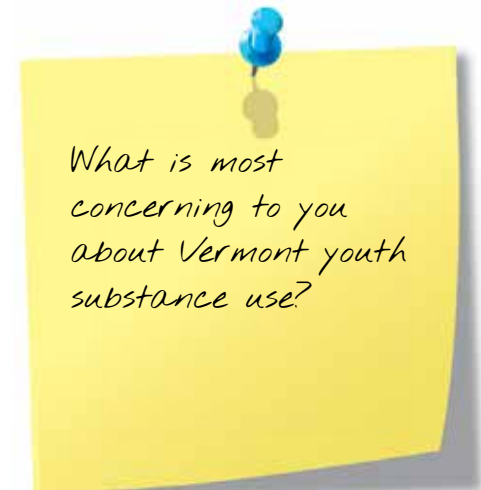
### **Of High School Students Who Vape**

- ◆ 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*



# Protecting Our Youth




**PROTECTIVE FACTORS**

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

*Public Health Dept,  
Lane County Oregon*



Let's Work Together to  
Increase Protective Factors  
and  
Decrease Risk Factors



**RISK FACTORS**

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

**Some risk and protective factors are fixed:** they don't change over time. Other risk and protective factors are considered variable and can change over time. Variable risk factors include income level, peer group, adverse childhood experiences (ACEs), and employment status.

**Individual-level risk factors may include** a person's genetic predisposition to addiction or exposure to alcohol prenatally. Individual-level protective factors might include positive self-image, self-control, or social competence.


*source: samhsa.gov*

*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.*

## Address Prevention Through Risk & Protective Factors Related to Health Equity

Health Equity is achieved when everyone has a fair and just opportunity to attain their highest level of health.

**The Healthy Equity Planning Toolkit and Resource Guide** was created by Vermont Regional Planning Commissions in collaboration with health partners through a VDH grant. These documents introduce the concept of health equity and how to incorporate it into municipal planning documents and bylaws. They can be found at [lcpvvt.org](http://lcpvvt.org)



*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 community 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 prioritize equity in addressing substance misuse?

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 Coalition 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 kind of community do we want for our youth?

***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

*To create long lasting sustainable change*

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

**A safe, supportive and healthy community**

***Alcohol and drug-free community***

***Youth are healthy and substance free***

***Substance use is not the norm***

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

***Healthy decisions become the default***

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.

*Healthy Community Policy, Hyde Park*

Building a town culture that promotes healthy behaviors and also significantly reduces risk behaviors such as substance misuse.

*Elmore Town Plan*

Achieve a healthier environment and community for its residents.

*Wolcott Town Plan*

# Policies and Systems

## Policies and laws; economic and cultural influences

**Who:** Municipal leaders, boards, commissions, policy decision makers, legislators.

### Consider Decreasing These Risk Factors:

- ◆ Systems, policies, laws, and community norms are unclear or favorable towards substance use.
- ◆ Marketing or distribution of substances in areas where youth are present.
- ◆ High density of substance related businesses.
- ◆ Presence of substances in spaces such as parks, trails, and playgrounds when youth are present.

### Consider Increasing These Protective Factors:

- ◆ Systems, policies, laws, and community norms that encourage non-use and prioritize healthy individuals, families, and communities.
- ◆ Policies limiting youth access and availability of substances.
- ◆ Consistently enforced laws and ordinances.
- ◆ Equal access to resources such as housing, healthcare, childcare, transportation, employment, recreation, etc..
- ◆ Youth voices considered and included when setting policy or planning events.



## Why It Matters:

*"Town policies are an important mechanism for creating a healthy culture because citizens, especially youth, get "messages" from what they see in their communities, thereby influencing their choices. The environment around our youth is inundated with substance industry tactics that drive youth misuse." - Elmore Town Plan*

Health promotion and substance prevention policies are important because they help change our environment in positive ways. They help make a healthy choice the default or easy choice for youth and adults. They also have an impact on social norms that lead to healthy behavior and greater health equity.

## Actions You Can Take

- ☐ Prioritize equity in your planning.
- ☐ Engage diverse community members in the planning process.
- ☐ Join coalitions and collaborate with others working on similar issues.
- ☐ Engage your town in a strategic planning process related to substance misuse prevention, treatment, and recovery.
- ☐ Include a health and wellness chapter in your town plan.
- ☐ Know your data and get a true picture of what is happening. Help town leaders and citizens learn about and implement local laws and policies based on the latest research and data.
- ☐ Develop policies for youth sporting events and clearly share them. For instance, parents and spectators may not have alcohol, cannabis, or tobacco products at the recreational facility.
- ☐ Create restrictions for alcohol, tobacco, and vape use in public places and parks. According to VT law, cannabis use is illegal in public spaces.
- ☐ Support efforts to post event signs and permanent town policy signs related to public consumption restrictions.
- ☐ Revise zoning bylaws to require a buffer around community facilities such as schools, child care centers, recovery centers, and parks.
- ☐ Restrict the number and placement of substance outlets within the community as well as limiting youth exposure through advertising.
- ☐ Help bolster community enforcement by making sure policies, laws, and ordinances are widely shared and consistently enforced in ways that do not penalize youth. Evidence shows that it is more effective to shift responsibility to adults and the substance industries.
- ☐ Your own idea \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



# Organizations & Community Partners

## Those Serving Others

**Who: Schools, Worksites, Youth Sports & Organizations, Faith Groups, Social Services**

### Consider Decreasing These Risk Factors:

- ◆ Community attitudes are unclear about or encourage substance use.
- ◆ Alcohol, THC cannabis, vape devices, and other drugs are easy to get.
- ◆ Low adult and parental perception of harm from underage substance use.
- ◆ Early first use of substances increases risks.
- ◆ Residents feel low sense of connection to community.
- ◆ High unemployment levels.
- ◆ Many residents at or below the poverty level.
- ◆ Lack of strong social institutions.
- ◆ Low academic achievement, low commitment, and bullying in schools.

### Consider Increasing These Protective Factors:

- ◆ Safe, supportive, and encouraging community.
- ◆ Opportunities for community involvement.
- ◆ Community service and other extracurricular opportunities for youth.
- ◆ Early intervention student services.
- ◆ Youth are recognized for their positive involvement in community and school.
- ◆ Exposure to evidence based programs and strategies for prevention
- ◆ Community resources (housing, healthcare, childcare, transportation, employment, recreation) are available and accessible to all.





## Why It Matters:

When substances are normalized in our families, schools, and communities, it is more likely that youth will use substances earlier in life, too often and too much.

Substance use, treatment, and recovery has a cost. *“By stopping substance use before it starts, or before it becomes substance misuse, prevention also works to save Vermont tax dollars.”*  
(Vermont Department of Health)

It is important to create a *“healthy culture because citizens, especially youth, get “messages” from what they see in their communities, thereby influencing their choices.”*  
(Elmore Addendum to Town Plan).

## Actions You Can Take

- ☐ Get connected with Healthy Lamoille Valley, your local substance prevention coalition.
- ☐ Join the Healthy Lamoille Valley Tobacco and Vape Prevention and Cessation Taskforce.
- ☐ Healthy Lamoille Valley has information on comprehensive substance prevention education for school partners, visit [www.healthylamoillevalley.org/schools](http://www.healthylamoillevalley.org/schools).
- ☐ Know and share Healthy Lamoille Valley's Youth Resources webpage and promotional materials with youth, visit [www.healthylamoillevalley.org/youthresources](http://www.healthylamoillevalley.org/youthresources).
- ☐ Become and build protective factors in the community by coaching youth sports and join Healthy Lamoille Valley's Lamoille Area Coaching Collaborative.
- ☐ Know the risk and protective factors that impact substance use.
- ☐ Support belonging and attachment for youth and young adults on a community level.
- ☐ Talk with the youth and young adults in your life about alcohol, tobacco, cannabis, and other substance use.
- ☐ Create opportunities and spaces for youth to have mentors and adults who listen to youth voices.
- ☐ Host and advocate for substance-free family friendly events in your community.
- ☐ Publicize and share information about substance prevention, including Vermont's social hosting laws.
- ☐ Organize groups to change community attitudes away from substance use, especially related to youth.
- ☐ Engage other community members in community planning processes.
- ☐ Collaborate with retailers to decrease substance promotions such as outdoor advertising and signage for alcohol, tobacco, vape and cannabis products.
- ☐ Engage in worksite wellness initiatives.
- ☐ Become a Recovery Friendly Workplace.
- ☐ Become a 3-4-50 partner with the Vermont Department of Health and work towards reducing chronic disease through reducing tobacco use and increasing healthy nutrition and physical activity.
- ☐ Create programs and opportunities, including volunteer work, where young people can grow, explore their options, succeed, and feel confident without using substances.
- ☐ Your own idea \_\_\_\_\_

# Substance Industry Retailers and Licensees

## Establishments that sell or serve substances

**Who: Retailers Selling Alcohol, Cannabis, Tobacco/Nicotine Products, and Paraphernalia**

### Consider Decreasing These Risk Factors:

- ◆ Lack of consistent carding.
- ◆ Untrained or unevenly trained staff.
- ◆ Product placement near youth friendly items or at youth sight lines.
- ◆ Substance marketing that appeals to youth.
- ◆ Substance-related products with flavors that appeal to youth.
- ◆ Lack of messaging to adult customers about safe storage.
- ◆ Price promotions that lead to an individual purchasing more than planned.
- ◆ Substance product placement near youth friendly items or in easily accessible locations for youth.



### Consider Increasing These Protective Factors:

- ◆ Well trained staff.
- ◆ Carding commitments and incentives for staff that pass compliance checks.
- ◆ Well-monitored store.
- ◆ Product placement that keeps substances separate from other products and puts them out of youth sight lines.
- ◆ Regular store safety audits to prevent youth access and exposure to substances.
- ◆ Clear messaging to customers about safe storage and use at home.
- ◆ Well monitored and lit parking lots.
- ◆ Good relationships with local law enforcement partners.
- ◆ Limiting or removing substance-related products that appeal to youth.
- ◆ Underage staff are well supervised.
- ◆ Include public health trainers or content when training staff.
- ◆ Consider limiting advertising or swapping it out for healthy youth messaging.

## Why It Matters:

Easy access, normalizing of use, inconsistent messaging, low perception of harm, and inconsistent enforcement of policies leads to youth use. The more risk factors there are, the greater the likelihood that youth will use. If we can reduce these risk factors, we can delay underage use of substances. Adults ages 26 and older who began drinking before age 15 are 3.5 times more likely to report alcohol use disorder in the past year than those who waited until age 21 or later to begin drinking.

*National Institute of Health*



## Actions You Can Take

- |   |  |   |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Have a clear loss-prevention plan if adult-use substances go missing.  | <input type="checkbox"/> Keep easy to steal items behind the register in locked cases.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Replace substance messaging with healthy community and prevention messaging                  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Meet with Healthy Lamoille Valley about our Prevention Retailer Campaign.  | <input type="checkbox"/> Protect youth from unintentional marketing by limiting advertising and limiting window space taken up by substance-related items. | <input type="checkbox"/> Choose to not sell substance related items that are attractive to youth, ie. flavored vapes. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Have all staff complete required trainings.  | <input type="checkbox"/> Keep at least 12 inches of space between substance-related products and youth-friendly products.                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> Choose not to sell paraphernalia.  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Participate in the Department of Liquor and Lottery's Just Ask Campaign. Have staff sign the pledge and display the poster in your store, visit <a href="http://liquorcontrol.vermont.gov/education">liquorcontrol.vermont.gov/education</a> . | <input type="checkbox"/> Know and follow all state regulations.  | <input type="checkbox"/> Your own idea _____  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Use Healthy Lamoille Valley's "We Card Because We Care" cards and messaging.   | <input type="checkbox"/> Provide education to your underage staff on the dangers of substance misuse.  | _____   |
|   |  | _____   |

# Relationships

## Parents, Caregivers, Teachers, Counselors, Advisors

### WHO: Family, Peers, Social Networks, Youth Coaches, Associations

#### Consider Decreasing These Risk Factors:

- ◆ Unclear expectations around substance use, communication, and house rules.
- ◆ Easy access to substances in homes and at parties.
- ◆ Casual or permissive attitudes towards substance use by adults around children and youth.
- ◆ Modeling substance use in front of children and youth.
- ◆ Unsupervised or unscheduled time for youth.
- ◆ Childhood trauma including homelessness, food insecurity, and lack of medical care.
- ◆ Family history of substance misuse, mental illness, interacting with the justice system.
- ◆ Peer attitudes, beliefs, social norms, or involvement in unhealthy behaviors.
- ◆ Youth feeling isolated or depressed.
- ◆ Loss of cultural identity or connection.
- ◆ Media exposure to substance use and unsupervised use of tech.
- ◆ Bullying others or being a victim of bullying.

#### Consider Increasing These Protective Factors:

- ◆ Youth engagement in out-of-school time programs and other positive and meaningful activities. Help youth learn how to use free time in healthy ways.
- ◆ Youth feeling valued and that they matter to others.
- ◆ Frequent conversations about the risks of substance misuse.
- ◆ Clear expectations around non-use, curfews, and when to communicate changes in plans.
- ◆ Monitoring and securing substances and medicines in the home.
- ◆ Parents/caregivers knowing where youth are and who they are with.
- ◆ Regular well child and well adolescent visits.
- ◆ Youth feeling connected to their family.
- ◆ Positive, warm parenting style.
- ◆ High parental expectations about school engagement.
- ◆ Positive friends and peer role models.
- ◆ Children and youth having strong self-esteem and control of their actions.
- ◆ Sense of cultural identity and connection.



## Why It Matters:

When adults communicate the risks of substance use and set clear expectations, youth are less likely to misuse substances. Youth often follow the behaviors they see adults modeling.



## Actions You Can Take

- ☐ Become an Askable Adult, visit [vtnetwork.org/askableadult](http://vtnetwork.org/askableadult).
- ☐ Show youth they matter. Help build a sense of belonging and attachment for youth.
- ☐ Help support youth mental health.
- ☐ Encourage and create spaces for youth voices to be heard.
- ☐ Secure and monitor all adult-use substances and medicines in the home.
- ☐ Use separate coolers for alcoholic and non-alcoholic beverages at gatherings.
- ☐ Separate tables if cannabis edibles are present around youth.
- ☐ Keep adult-use substances and medicines in the original packaging.
- ☐ Help youth learn the skills of how to manage their free time in healthy ways.
- ☐ Talk to children and youth early and often about the risks of substance use, visit [parentupvt.org](http://parentupvt.org) and [samhsa.gov/talk-they-hear-you/parent-resources](http://samhsa.gov/talk-they-hear-you/parent-resources).
- ☐ Encourage youth to adopt healthy behaviors.
- ☐ Help schools and the community support and reward youth who decide not to drink or use substances.
- ☐ Get to know other adults who care for and about youth.
- ☐ Find ways to model having fun or handling stress without adult-use substances.
- ☐ Make sure that your child has quality mentors and role models that they can talk to.
- ☐ Create opportunities and spaces for youth to have mentors and adults who listen to youth voices.
- ☐ Know and share high quality resources for youth, visit [healthylamoillevalley.org/youthresources](http://healthylamoillevalley.org/youthresources).
- ☐ Watch out for risk factors that may increase youth substance use.
- ☐ Stay involved in your children's lives. Know where they are, what they are doing and who they are with.
- ☐ Help youth find strategies for getting out of tricky situations such as being with a friend who offers them a vape, cannabis, or alcohol product.
- ☐ Be involved with your child's school.
- ☐ Create programs and opportunities, including volunteer work, where youth can grow, explore their options, succeed and feel confident without using substances.
- ☐ Your own idea \_\_\_\_\_

# Getting Started

## Now what? Next steps towards my 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

[healthylamoillevalley.org/prevention-toolkit](http://healthylamoillevalley.org/prevention-toolkit)

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

Alison Link, Policy & Community Outreach Coordinator, HLV, [alison@healthylamoillevalley.org](mailto:alison@healthylamoillevalley.org)  
[www.healthylamoillevalley.org](http://www.healthylamoillevalley.org) | Facebook: Healthy Lamoille Valley | Twitter: @HealthyLamoille

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## 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 include the topics of healthy community design, mental health, physical health and preventing chronic disease.*



*PA Student Getting to Y Presentation*



*Lamoille Area Youth at CADCA Leadership Summit*

# Collaborating to reverse the trend of youth substance misuse.



Healthy Lamoille Valley's 2023 *Community Planning Toolkit: Preventing Youth Substance Misuse and Building Protective Factors* and additional online resources are an update of the 2020 edition and an expansion of the original 2015 *Primer on Planning for Prevention*. These publications and resources 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 Drug Free Communities Program and a grant from the Vermont Department of Health. The original foundation document for this update was created in collaboration with the Lamoille County Planning Commission.

