

The Vermont Department of Health, Division of Substance Use Programs (DSU) invests in substance use prevention in Vermont schools. Substance use among youth is influenced at the individual, peer, family, school, community and societal levels. School communities increase the likelihood of positive outcomes when multiple levels of influence are addressed using evidence-based prevention programs and practices. To promote a safe and healthy school environment, substance use prevention and early intervention work best when they are robust and integrated into the school's whole approach.

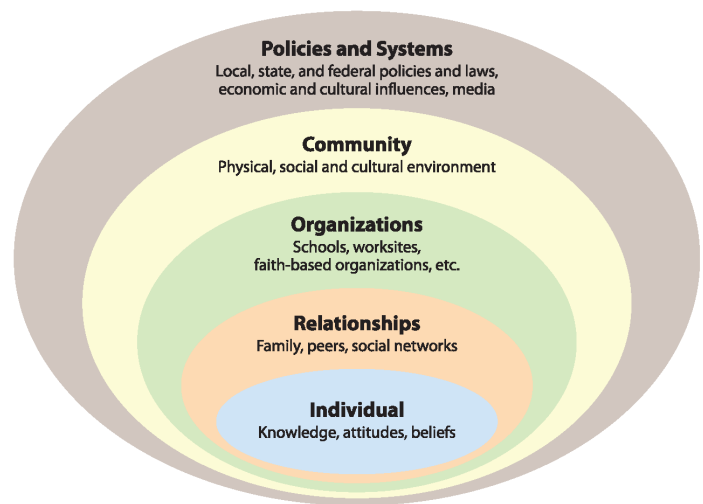
KEY HIGHLIGHTS

- **5,160 students participated in prevention curriculums**
- **878 students were screened for substance use**
- **2,590 school staff were assessed and provided training in substance use**

Goal

Successful substance use prevention among youth significantly decreases the likelihood of substance misuse and dependence in adulthood. The "School Substance Use Prevention" grants are focused on the following [Healthy Vermonters](#) 2030 objectives:

- Decrease percent of youth who binge drink
- Decrease percent of youth who used cannabis in the past 30 days
- Reduce the percent of people who need and do not receive treatment for alcohol use
- Decrease percent of young people that feel sad or hopeless in the last 30 days



Grants Program

Between July 2023 – June 2024, 21 of Vermont's Supervisory Unions/School Districts were awarded between \$45,000-\$60,000 each to provide and enhance substance use prevention and early intervention services. These are 1-year grants with the opportunity to continue for an additional year or two contingent on satisfactory performance and the availability of funds. Training and evaluation services are also supported.

All grantees are required to conduct the following activities:

- Screening, referral and educational support groups
- Integration of substance use prevention into the coordinated school health initiatives
- Assess and provide school staff training
- Advising and training peer leadership groups
- Evidence-based curricula

Summary of activities and outcomes

Screening, referral and educational support Groups	878 students were screened for substance use disorder. Of those screened, 292 were referred out for further assessments. 596 were screened for mental health. Of those that were screened, 227 were referred out for further assessment.
Integration of substance use prevention into the coordinated school health initiatives	261 people were involved in school health initiatives meetings.
Assess and provide school staff training	2590 school staff were assessed and provided training on substance use.
Advising and training peer leadership groups	806 students participated in these groups.
Evidence-based curricula	5,160 students participated in evidence-based curricula with a primary focus of substance misuse education

For more information, contact AHS.VDHDSU@vermont.gov.