



Department of Health  
Agency of Human Services



## Health Department Awarded \$3.5 Million Substance Abuse Grant

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BURLINGTON – Vermont has been awarded a three-year \$3.5 million federal grant to reduce substance abuse in six areas of the state that have high rates of underage drinking or prescription drug misuse among youth and young adults.

A total of \$1.18 million per year was awarded to the Health Department by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). While Vermont is generally considered one of the healthiest states, we have the highest rate of underage drinking in the nation (for young adults), according to SAMHSA. Prescription drug abuse is also a growing concern as treatment demand for opiates has increased.

Six of the Health Department's 12 district offices (Brattleboro, Morrisville, White River Junction, Burlington, Barre and Rutland) will guide these "Partnership for Success" regional prevention projects.

"Community coalitions receiving SAMHSA grant funds have reduced binge drinking in comparison to communities that did not receive funding," said Health Department Deputy Commissioner Barbara Cimaglio. "This grant enables us to continue to build on that success."

The Brattleboro Area Prevention Coalition is an example of a Health Department grant recipient that has focused on underage drinking in the past several years. A personalized online alcohol assessment and intervention tool that educates students about high-risk drinking called *eCHECKUP TO GO* ([www.echeckuptogo.com](http://www.echeckuptogo.com)) will be used by Brattleboro Union High School as part of a comprehensive approach to address underage drinking.

"As students complete the assessment, they can receive feedback about their own individual drinking patterns, specific health and personal consequences, unique personal and family risk factors and get access to school and local community resources as they need it," said Beth Shrader, director of Brattleboro Area Prevention Coalition. "With today's media savvy youth culture, an online tool that provides customized support within the school environment is an important component in addressing underage drinking."

For more information about alcohol and drug abuse programs go to [healthvermont.gov/adap/adap.aspx](http://healthvermont.gov/adap/adap.aspx).

Visit the Health Department's website at [healthvermont.gov](http://healthvermont.gov). Follow us on [Twitter](#) and join us on [Facebook](#) for health information and alerts.

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