

Request for Proposal (RFP): Youth Vaping Prevention and Treatment FY23 Enhancement Funding

Description:

In an effort to address the ongoing public health challenge of youth vaping, the Vermont Department of Health (VDH), Division of Substance Use (DSU) – formally Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs (ADAP), in partnership with the Division of Health Promotion and Disease Prevention (HPDP), is releasing funding over 3 years to prevent vaping of cannabis and nicotine by youth 21 and under.

These funds come through a Fiscal Year 2023 (FY23) state appropriation for substance use disorder (SUD) and tobacco prevention and cessation activities. Substance misuse prevention coalitions and community coalitions in addition to schools, community and youth organizations and non-traditional partners that are equipped to target youth vaping are eligible to apply. Efforts to address vaping must be coordinated and focus on 1) individual-level interventions, 2) school-level interventions, and/or 3) community-level interventions and use evidence-based approaches and related strategies to continue to build a coordinated state effort using effective strategies, programs and policies to prevent vaping among youth in Vermont.

Background:

Although the rate of smoking in Vermont has declined in recent years, the use of electronic vapor products (EVP) has dramatically increased. According to the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) in 2019, 8% of Vermont middle school students and 26% of VT high school students used EVPs. Also in 2019, the use of EVPs increased from 2% among 6th grade students to 34% among 12th grade students. Daily use of EVPs has tripled since 2015, with nearly one-third (31%) of high school students who use EVPs report using them daily. Over three-quarters (79%) of youth who tried a flavored tobacco product before age 13, currently use an EVP in high school.

The rate of EVP and cigarette use drastically increases with co-use of other substances. EVP use among Vermont high school students who also use cigarettes (93%), binge drink (79%) or use cannabis (80%) is much higher than among students who do not engage in these behaviors. Meanwhile, students who participate in extracurricular activities, have a teacher or adult to talk to in school or who feel valued in their community have lower rates of EVP use compared to those who do not.

Opportunity:

Using evidence-based or evidence-informed resources (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration/SAMHSA, Centers for Disease Control/CDC, National Institutes of Health/National Institute of Drug Abuse, Stanford University, Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America/CADCA, Truth Initiative, etc.), this funding supports the delivery of targeted individual-level, school-level and/or community level interventions focused on youth vaping. Decades of research show that the most effective prevention strategies are comprehensive, coordinated at the community





and state level, and include interventions at multiple levels. Proposals must include data measurement to demonstrate impact over the project period and support the Vermont Department of Health goals of preventing any substance use among youth under the age of 21.

Individual-Level Interventions - Individual-level interventions are specifically targeted towards supporting Vermont youth and their parents, guardians and families. These interventions typically focus on the characteristics of an individual that influence behavior change, such as knowledge, attitudes, behavior, expectations, and stigma. Individual-level interventions rely primarily on education to promote rational decision-making and are designed to affect an individual's social and cognitive skills and behavioral practices. It also includes treatment. Individual-level interventions should use prevention and treatment resources to support Vermont youth. Proposals are encouraged that promote and drive Vermont youth to quitting using My Life My Quit, designed for teens on a text-only platform. My Life My Quit is made available through the state's 802Quits vendor, National Jewish Health. Another intervention is [smokeSCREEN](#) which is a prevention video game aimed at changing risk perceptions, beliefs and knowledge about e-cigarettes and reduce early adolescent vaping. Applicants may also propose other evidence-based or evidence-informed interventions to increase prevention and/or reduction in vaping.

School-Level Interventions - School-level interventions focus on the implementation of interventions in school-based settings, including elementary, middle, high schools, technical and community colleges. These interventions may be implemented in individual classrooms, specific schools, or entire school districts (individual or as a region). "[CATCH My Breath](#)" is one such program, but there are numerous school-based programs and approaches for vaping prevention and reduction. These include peer-to-peer education, youth empowerment models including Vermont Kids Against Tobacco and Our Voices Exposed, implementing social justice programming, getting parents involved, offering counseling for stress, mental health, physical activity and more. Strengthening social norms about substance harm to youth is strongly recommended. State policy requires tobacco and cannabis free k-12 campuses and school-sponsored events; strategies that reinforce and strengthen school-based policies should be considered to help prevent and reduce youth vaping. These strategies include presentations, communications and trainings reinforcing tobacco-, smoke-, cannabis- and vaping-free campus and event policies, the passage and use of restorative justice policies and related strategies, onsite and referral systems for treatment, and more. Applicants may propose additional evidence-based or evidence-informed school-based interventions to increase prevention and/or reduction in vaping.

Community-level Interventions - Community-level interventions focus on the entire population within a state, region, community or town. These interventions work to influence youth (and adult) behavior by changing social norms and attitudes and addressing economic conditions and environmental factors that may impact vaping behaviors and address other conditions that give rise to youth vaping. This includes education and capacity building initiatives, media campaigns, policies (price policies, licensing, and zoning policies that reduce youth access and promotion within and around stores and schools) and more.

Grantees will focus on one or more of these interventions using both assessment and evidence-based approaches. Strategies can include but are not limited to:

- Educating and engaging youth, parents, decision-makers and communities about dangers of vaping;
- Increasing the perception of harm related to vaping;
- Engaging youth in planning vaping prevention activities;



- Engaging youth and community members in data collection and documentation of Electronic Vaping Product access, promotion and hazardous waste;
- Engaging parents, foster parents and other stewards of youth in vaping prevention activities;
- Increasing youth assets;
- Increasing youth cessation (nicotine and/or cannabis);
- Reinforcing a healthy school climate and using wellness policy actions;
- Reducing exposure to tobacco and cannabis industry marketing, including advertising, sponsorship, tobacco imagery, and promotions;
- Implementing strategies to increase the price, reduce promotion in and around retailers, reduce density or otherwise reduce youth access to vaping devices and products;
- Enhancing local law enforcement efforts;
- Educating and engaging health care providers.

Collaboration and coordination with regional and/or community partners as well as the state prevention team and its efforts is required. In addition, layered approaches are invited including using multiple strategies from best practices in substance prevention and tobacco control.

There will be a data collection component to this work which will include at the minimum a description of specific activities supported by the funds, a description of the number of people served and information on the outcomes achieved by this investment in consultation with the state prevention team.

VDH will also offer trainings to grantees related to vaping and invest in media campaigns to support this work. Grantees are expected to be prepared to show how their proposed project will support the state's goal of reducing youth vaping below 10% by 2025. Proposals will be accepted electronically through an Alchemer survey. See link and information below. Please note that in addition to filling out the survey, you will need to upload a project narrative, budget and a current certificate of liability insurance. More information is below.

Proposals will be scored on a scale of 1 to 10 for each of the following criteria:

- How likely will the proposed activities improve knowledge about youth vaping?
- How likely will the proposed activities decrease youth vaping under the age of 21?
- Does the proposal reference data sources and a data plan for monitoring the reach and impact of the proposed project over its timeline?
- Does the proposal identify risk and protective factors the project will contribute toward?
- How strong is the evidence-basis for the proposed activities?
- How well do the activities integrate with community partners and initiatives and link to state prevention efforts?
- How well does the applicant demonstrate internal capacity and resources to effectively implement proposed activities?
- Does the proposal prioritize a coordinated community and school approach?





In making funding decisions, VDH will consider reviewer recommendations, as well as an interest in building a balanced funding portfolio that reaches a variety of service areas and at-risk populations. The organization's current W-9 and a Certificate of Insurance are required to execute a grant with the State of Vermont. Should your proposal be selected for funding, this information will be requested at the time of award notification, if not currently on file.

Minimum Award: \$10,000 **Maximum Award:** \$30,000 Annual renewal for up to 2 additional years is likely and dependent on the success of meeting grant objectives.

Funding timeline: All FY23 (Year 1) funds must be spent by June 30, 2023.

Proposals must be received by: 4:30 pm **August 19, 2022.**

Questions and Answers: All questions must be submitted in writing to AHS.VDHADAPContracts@vermont.gov by **August 3, 2022**. Please put "Questions about Youth Vaping Prevention Grant" in the subject line. Responses to questions will be posted no later than 4:30 pm on **August 12, 2022**. No additional correspondence should be initiated on your part unless it is to update your contact information or retract your application. VDH will contact you if there are clarification questions for your application, or if VDH would like to fund your proposed project.

Single Point of Contact: AHS.VDHADAPContracts@vermont.gov – other methods of communication are not permitted and shall go unanswered.

Organizations must:

- Meet state's insurance requirements (found here on the [DSU/ADAP's website](#));
- Be [registered with the State of Vermont](#); and
- Not be debarred. [Debarment List can be found here](#).

If your organization does not meet the minimum requirements outlined above, we recommend partnering with a fiscal agent who does meet the above requirements.

To respond to this RFP, you must provide the following information through [this link](#) no later than 4:30pm on August 19, 2022:

1. Organization name and fiscal agent, if applicable
2. Organization description
3. Organization's primary point of contact's name
4. Organization's primary point of contact's position
5. Organization's primary point of contact's email address
6. Provide the following information:
 - a. If applicable, the grant number(s) for grants that your organization currently has with the Vermont Department of Health (DSU or HPDP). Example: 03420-XXXXX
 - b. Unique Entity ID (SAM.gov)
 - c. SAM expiration
7. Upload a current certificate of liability insurance providing minimum coverages detailed in Attachment C, provision #8





8. Upload a description (limit 3 pages) of how your organization will use the funds to address youth vaping using the interventions and strategies described in this RFP. It must include a proposed project description, proposed interventions and strategies, and rationale.
9. Upload a budget (using the REQUIRED template provided at [DSU/ADAP's website](#)) that details your anticipated spending that aligns with the activities described in Section 8 of this form. Please be sure to include your organization's indirect rate (usually 10%) in the budget proposal. If your organization has a federally-approved indirect rate, please upload a copy of the cost rate agreement.

Please be aware that any expenses your agency incurs in the preparation and submission of the proposal will not be reimbursed by the State. Your agency's continued interest in providing services and partnering with the State of Vermont is appreciated.

