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Community Tobacco Prevention Grant Awards Announced

BURLINGTON – In an area where nearly 1 out of 4 high school students in the North Country Supervisory Union reported being a current smoker, Northeast Kingdom Learning Services is preparing for new and expanded partnerships to advance tobacco prevention – with the help of a Community Prevention Grant from the Vermont Department of Health.

Northeast Kingdom Learning Services is one of 13 organizations across the state to be awarded a grant, which comes from the state’s global commitment fund. The Community Prevention Grants, which total \$715,000, aim to prevent tobacco use among youth, reduce youth and adult tobacco use, and reduce secondhand smoke exposure. Community-led interventions, such as smoke-free parks and downtowns, and raising awareness of how tobacco products are locally promoted, marketed and sold, are proven best practices for promoting the health of Vermonters.

Michelle Tarryk, executive director at Northeast Kingdom Learning Services, said the funding provides an important boost to her organization’s community outreach. “We’re excited about what this means for our work,” said Tarryk. “We have a great partnership with North Country Hospital, and this grant will allow our tobacco prevention coordinator Allyson Howell to build on our innovative approaches to reaching the young people in our communities, and to work with businesses to better protect their employees’ health,” Tarryk said. “One thing we’ve learned over the years is that if we let up, kids light up.”

Of the 13 total grants, three were non-competitive and awarded to organizations in service areas that have a significantly higher tobacco burden, including Northeast Kingdom Learning Services.

The 10 additional grantees were chosen through a competitive selection process based on capacity, proposed work plan, impact of proposed interventions, identified community need and tobacco burden.

Non-Competitive Grantees

- Northeast Kingdom Learning Services
- Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital
- Youth Services of Windham

Competitive Grantees

- Greater Falls Connection (serving the Windham Northeast Supervisory Union)
- Mt. Ascutney Prevention Partnership
- Burlington Partnership for a Health Community
- The Collaborative (serving Windham, Windsor and Bennington Counties)
- Milton Community Youth Coalition
- Winooski Coalition for a Safe and Peaceful Community
- Franklin Grand Isle Tobacco Prevention Coalition
- Lamoille Family Center
- Deerfield Valley Community Partnership
- Central Vermont New Directions.

For more information about Vermont's state and local community partners in tobacco control and prevention, visit healthvermont.gov/wellness/tobacco/state-and-community-partners.

To see the latest Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance Survey and related youth data, visit healthvermont.gov/stats/surveys

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