Statewide Needs Assessment of Prevention for Substance Abuse

Presentation to Colorado’s Substance Abuse Trend and Response Task Force

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ABOUT US

We believe that sound evidence and solid analysis leads to better health policy, and that better health policy leads to healthier Coloradans. That is our work as Colorado’s leading nonprofit and nonpartisan health policy research group. And we are passionate about it.
Key Takeaways

1. **What we did:** CHI conducted a needs assessment of Colorado’s substance abuse primary prevention efforts in 2017.

2. **What we found:** There are opportunities to improve – at the community level, in local prevention programs, and statewide.

3. **Next step:** Develop a statewide substance abuse primary prevention strategic plan.
Our Key Question:

What do communities, local prevention administrators and statewide prevention funders need to strengthen Colorado’s efforts in primary prevention of substance use?
SNAPS BY THE NUMBERS

- 3,546 total miles traveled
- 16 forums conducted
- 80+ data indicators analyzed
- $32M primary prevention dollars analyzed
- 38 grantee survey responses
- 200+ forum participants statewide
- 40+ maps created
- 9 funding streams identified
Needs Assessment Results
What We Found

**Communities** need **regionally** targeted investments that change substance use social norms for **teens** and their **families**.

**Community substance use prevention program administrators** need **technical assistance** to adopt EBPs, and they call for **aligned reporting requirements** for funding.

**Statewide prevention funders** need a systematic way to **coordinate existing efforts**, reduce overlap and address unfunded needs.
CHI’s Recommendations

- Invest in 2Gen prevention.
- Invest in environmental approaches.
- Explore ways to align funding with “need.”

- Align grantee reporting requirements.
- Strengthen technical assistance – to identify EBPs, and evaluate and sustain existing programs.

- Collect and share consistent information.
- Align leadership.
- Coordinate and consolidate.
Many actors are working in primary prevention of substance abuse.
Figure 9. Most Commonly Used Substances in Colorado Youth, 2005-2015

- Alcohol
- Marijuana
- Tobacco
More youth think that alcohol is risky (70 percent). That’s compared with 48 percent who think marijuana is.

Most used substance among youth in Colorado

Easy to get
SNAPSHOT

MARIJUANA

Colorado's first-in-the-nation retail marijuana shops opened for business on January 1, 2014. Today, nearly four years later, 509 retail stores dot the state. Tax and fee collections are on track for a record-setting year. And more states are following Colorado's lead on legalization. The challenge for parents and policymakers—ensure that more Colorado youth don't start using marijuana.

Rate of Marijuana Use: Staying Steady

One of five middle school and high school students report currently using marijuana, a rate that didn't change from 2013 to 2015.

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<tr>
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<th>2013</th>
<th>2015</th>
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<tr>
<td>Colo.</td>
<td>21.7%</td>
<td>21.2%</td>
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<tr>
<td>U.S.</td>
<td>21.4%</td>
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Access

Top Five Colorado Counties: Rate of recreational and medical marijuana shops.

State average: 12.7 per 100,000

1. Costilla 118.6 (4 shops)
2. Gunnison 110.3 (11 shops)
3. Pitkin 107.2 (16 shops)
4. Routt 56.4 (4 shops)
5. La Plata 37.0 (12 shops)

(Note: Excludes counties with 0, 1 or 2 shops)

Nearly 6 of 10 high school students reported it was sort of easy/easy to get marijuana.

Colorado Youth: Who's Most Likely to Use Marijuana?

High school students on the Western Slope and in southwest Colorado had higher rates of use than those on the Eastern Plains. Pueblo County has the state's highest rate — 301 percent.

Percentage of High Schoolers Who Have Used Marijuana at Least Once in the Past 30 Days

First Use of Marijuana: Nearly Half by Age 14

More than 40 percent of high school seniors who say they have ever used marijuana had tried it by the age of 14.

41.3% have tried marijuana by age 14

Marijuana at Home

8 Percent of adults with children under 15 had marijuana products in or around their home.

16,000 Homes Had children under 15 with possible exposure to secondhand marijuana smoke or vapor.

6 Percent New mothers who used marijuana during pregnancy.

Perception of Risk

Percentage of kids who think regular use is risky:

2013 | 2015
---|---
54% | 48%
SNAPSHOT

TOBACCO

The earlier someone starts smoking cigarettes, the less likely they are to quit. In Colorado, 8.6 percent of high school students smoke cigarettes, slightly lower than the nationwide rate of 10.8 percent. The good news is Colorado’s rate is less than half of what it was 10 years ago. But nearly one of three (30.3 percent) of Colorado high schoolers say they currently use some form of tobacco, either cigarettes, electronic cigarettes, cigars or smokeless tobacco.

Rate of Cigarette Use:
Fewer high school students are smoking cigarettes in Colorado and nationally. Rates have more than halved in the last decade in Colorado and nationally.

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<th>Colorado</th>
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<tr>
<td>2005</td>
<td>10.4%</td>
<td>8.6%</td>
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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>5.0%</td>
<td>10.8%</td>
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Rate of Any Tobacco Use:
While the rate of current cigarette smoking is at a historic low, nearly one in three high school students in Colorado used a tobacco product in the last month, a trend mirrored nationally.

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<tr>
<td>2015</td>
<td>36.3%</td>
<td>51.4%</td>
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Access
More than half of high school students (57 percent) say it’s easy to get cigarettes. The state’s highest rate of high school students who say it’s easy to get cigarettes is in the Upper Arkansas Valley where it’s 67.3 percent. This region reports both highest use of cigarettes and the highest ease of access to cigarettes.

Colorado Youth: Who’s Most Likely to Smoke Cigarettes?
One of five high school students in the Upper Arkansas Valley (19.6 percent) smoke cigarettes, the state’s highest rate and more than double the state average. High school students in the Mountain Gateway counties, Pueblo County and the Eastern Plains counties smoke at higher rates as well.

Percentage of High Schoolers Who Have Smoked Cigarettes
on One or More of the Past 30 Days

Access
71.3% of high school students in the Upper Arkansas Valley say it’s easy to get cigarettes

Perception of Risk
The majority of high school students (84.3 percent) think smoking is risky, but this still means that 15.7 percent don’t think frequent cigarette smokers risk harming themselves. That percentage is holding steady.

71.3%
Next Steps
What could a statewide substance use primary prevention strategic plan look like and achieve?