



Northeast Prevention Coalition

We come together to support prevention and promote education for youth, as well as all ages, concerning substance use, misuse, and abuse.

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

Winter 2025

NPC News and Updates:

What's Really Happening with Youth in Our Community? These Surveys Can Provide Key Insights

How often are local teens using alcohol, nicotine, and cannabis? Do they think these substances are risky? Are parents and peers influencing their choices?

The 2025 Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) and the Northeast Prevention Coalition's (NPC) Youth Core Measures Survey will soon be given to 6th-12th graders in Caledonia and Lower Essex counties to help answer these questions.

These surveys provide a crucial snapshot of youth substance use trends—data that helps schools, parents, and prevention groups understand what's really going on. The results help communities:

- Identify risky trends early
- Strengthen prevention efforts and education
- Ensure youth and families have the resources they need
- Secure funding to keep vital prevention programs going

The more we understand, the better we can act. To learn more, request NPC's 2024 report at s.lesnik@nvrh.org or explore the 2023 YRBS data.

WELCOME NEW TEEN ENGAGEMENT LEADERS

EMILY LUMBRA & AUTUMN DESPINS

Both are 11th graders at St. Johnsbury Academy and play on the Field Hockey team.

They have been supporting NPC with a group of 8th graders at the St J Middle School with an afterschool program focused on social skills.

They can also be found at the Teen Center on Main St. chatting with peers, and collecting ideas for discussion & programs.



WINTER SELF-CARE

Keep yourself healthy this season with some key respiratory virus prevention tips from the Vermont Department of Health.

Stay up to date with vaccines. Vaccines are your best defense against severe illness. They can make your symptoms milder and shorter if you do get sick.

Wash your hands often with soap and warm water and cover your coughs and sneezes with your elbow or tissue.

Avoid contact with others if you or they are sick and consider staying home if you feel unwell to prevent spreading illness.

Take steps for cleaner air. This can mean bringing in fresh outside air, purifying indoor air, or gathering outdoors.

Know your treatment options. Treatments vary depending on the type of respiratory illness. Antibiotics help with bacterial infections. Antiviral medications may be prescribed for certain viral illnesses like flu and COVID.

For more information visit healthvermont.gov

On days when marijuana was used, individuals also consumed:

0.45

more alcoholic drinks

0.63

more cigarettes

De La Torre et al. Associations between cannabis use and same-day health and substance use behaviors, 2025

A study that was published in Addictive Behaviors found that alcohol and tobacco are more likely to be used on days when marijuana is used. For more information visit: thedrugreport.org



Featured Member

Desiree Kepper

As my time as the NPC Substance Misuse Prevention Specialist comes to a close, I find myself reflecting on the incredible relationships, meaningful accomplishments, and the sense of community I've been so fortunate to be a part of. This past year has been transformative- personally rewarding and professionally invaluable.

Over the past year, we've been able to make meaningful strides in sustainable prevention work. We've provided multi-grade, evidence-based curricula to schools, updated school substance use policies to align with prevention best practices, facilitated the "Move Your Body" in Bandstand Park, Lyndonville with the assistance from Carolyn & Jimmy of the VT National Guard and supervised 2 teen leaders.

It has been an honor to contribute to this vital work. I'm grateful for this opportunity Thank you to my team and to this community for showing me what it means to come together for change.

Join me in congratulating Desiree as she moves on to a new position focusing on Teen Suicide Prevention with the Vermont Dept. of Health.

Prevention Resources

Gambling Help – Support Available 24/7 for You or a Loved One

Whether you're seeking to talk about your own gambling, take a break from sports betting, or find resources to support a loved one or client, we're here for you!

All calls and messages are free and confidential. Reach out today at 1-800-GAMBLER or visit vtgamblinghelp.org/ to get the support you need

Free 30-Hour Training for Clinicians to Expand Specialty in Problem Gambling

The Vermont Department of Health is offering a free 30-hour training program this early winter, designed for clinicians who want to incorporate problem gambling into their practice. Registration is now open! For more information or to register, please contact Elliott McElroy, LADC (she/her), Responsible Gaming Program Coordinator at the Vermont Department of Mental Health. You can reach her at 802-798-4718 or via email at Elliott.McElroy@vermont.gov.

Contact Us:

Carolyn Towne, Director, Substance Misuse Prevention, NVRH 802-748-7551, c.towne@nvrh.org

Cheryl Chandler, Prevention Program Coordinator, NVRH, 802-748-7555, c.chandler@nvrh.org

Susanne Lesnik-Emas, Prevention Coalition Coordinator, NVRH. 802-748-7356, s.lesnik@nvrh.org

NPC MONTHLY MEETINGS RETURNING TO IN-PERSON FORMAT

WHEN:

The 3rd Tuesday of the month

3:00 pm - 4:00 pm

February 18

March 18

WHERE:

Kingdom Recovery Ctr.

297 Summer St.

St Johnsbury

CONTACT:

Susanne Lesnik-Emas

802-748-7356

s.lesnik@nvrh.org

Quote of the Quarter

NOT EVERYTHING THAT IS FACED CAN BE CHANGED, BUT NOTHING CAN BE CHANGED UNTIL IT IS FACED.

-James Baldwin



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[@NEKVibes](https://www.instagram.com/NEKVibes)



www.npcvt.org



In December of 2020, on behalf of the Northeast Prevention Coalition, NVRH was awarded a Drug-Free Communities Program Grant by the White House Office of National Drug Control Policy, in cooperation with the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention.

