Our Coalition

The Mystic Valley Public Health Coalition is a collaborative serving Malden, Medford, Melrose, Reading, Stoneham, Wakefield and Winchester. We work together to build the collective responsibility to protect youth from harmful substances like alcohol, nicotine and other drugs. We collaborate with local, regional, and statewide partners to build and sustain environments where our youth grow up in supportive and healthy communities.

Highlights

- Held Community Justice Workshop with Somerville District Court, attended by 50 key stakeholders.
- Supported multiple communities to increase education and awareness among local officials about best practices to reduce youth access to alcohol.
- Co-hosted Dr. Nicholas Chadi, Adolescent Addiction Fellow from Boston Children's Hospital with Dowd Medical Associates in Reading and Cambridge Health Alliance in Malden.
- Re-launched "Trades" public service announcement reaching over 1.5 million radio listeners.
- Mailed over 700 resource packets to local construction/trades businesses.
- Held train-the-trainer for administering Naloxone, attended by over 50 people.
- Launched parent/guardian social marketing campaign reaching over 150k people.
- Hosted SBIRT panel presentation to provide the latest information and best practices to communities and districts.
- Supported best practices in positive youth development and social emotional learning.
The Coalition, with its partner WinCAM, aired nine videos as part of Winchester In The Know. Hosted by School Resource and Coalition Liaison Officer Dan Perenick, each video aims to raise awareness and share important information with community members on a variety of topics to make Winchester safer and healthier.

Medford hosted a five-part professional development series for teachers/staff across the district focused on substance use, positive youth development, motivational interviewing, and trauma-awareness. A training was also offered to highlight the interconnection between social and emotional learning and positive youth development principles to prevent youth high-risk behaviors.

The second edition of Team Medford’s "Health & Safety Guide" was created to provide parents/guardians and pediatricians with current substance use prevention information.

A member of the Youth Action Team, who is currently a statewide leader of the “84 Movement,” has been selected to be a Youth Ambassador for the National Tobacco Free Kids Campaign.

The YAT participated in the vaping education campaign, “Vapes and Cigarettes, Different Products-Same Dangers,” recently initiated by the MA Dept. of Public Health and the “84.” The YAT provided information on vaping in a variety of forms throughout the high school, as well as created and taught a lesson to 6th grade health classes.

The Reading Coalition Against Substance Abuse (RCASA) staff, Reading Police and the Burbank YMCA hosted a Hidden in Plain Sight exhibit for parents over 3 days at the Reading Police Department. Parents learned about substance abuse trends, ways to start a conversation with their teens, and how to get more involved in prevention.

RCASA continued our Chemical Health Education Program at Reading Memorial High School and provided 27 students with education and support to address their substance misuse school violations. Since 2012, we have reached 193 students through this program.

The Town of Stoneham passed and ordinance to implement a Social Host Bylaw, going into effect in May 2019. This law holds adults accountable for underage drinking or drug use on their property.

The Youth Action Coalition created a PSA focused on raising awareness around the harms of vaping, the need for communication between adults and youth, and encouraging other students to engage in healthy and safe activities.

Regional Tobacco Control Coordinator Maureen Buzby, Wake-Up Coalition Director Catherine Dhingra, Wake-Up Youth Leader Bill Stevens and a virtual Senator Jason Lewis led a well-attended break out session at the CADCA Conference in Washington, D.C. This workshop focused on the connection between youth, policy change at the local/regional level, and state laws.

Through a partnership with Wakefield Police Department, Health Department and Eliot Community Services, Wakefield now has access to a Recovery Coach. The coach will build relationships with individuals struggling with substance abuse, help them to navigate the care system and support their behavior changes in their journey toward recovery.

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The Coalition conducted a series of 13 Lunch & Learn’s with guest speakers addressing the issues of mental health, social and emotional behavior, vaping, ER activity, eating disorders and others.
Contact Us:

Health Directors/Agents: Christopher Webb (Malden); MaryAnn O'Connor (Medford); Ruth Clay (Melrose & Wakefield); Laura Vlasuk (Reading); John Fralick (Stoneham); Jennifer Murphy (Winchester)

Regional Coordinators: Elizabeth Parsons (Substance Abuse Prevention Collaborative), Lauren Chambers (Opioid Abuse Prevention Collaborative) & Maureen Buzby (Mystic Valley Tobacco Control Program)

Prevention Staff/Volunteers: Leanne Bordonaro, and Paul Hammersley (Malden), Penelope Funaiolo, Alysia LaGambina, and Lisa Bandoian (Medford), Kathy Guevara and Bob Savarino (Melrose), Erica McNamara (Reading), Shelly MacNeill, Kayla Vodka, Megan Samborski, and Elsbeth Simoni (Stoneham), Catherine Dhingra, Tracy Ascolillo, and Kara Showers (Wakefield), Dot Butler (Winchester).

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Sequential Intercept Model

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MVPHC was selected to host our federal funder at a recent site visit!

“[Our federal Project Officer] was incredibly impressed with your program, particularly with how you’ve coordinated your prevention efforts across the Mystic Valley and how you’ve embedded the SPF into your process. You were an easy choice to make when determining where to take our Project Officer, so thank you for continuing to be a shining example of how this work should be done!”

-Bureau of Substance Addiction Services staff person

Our Team

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Contact Us:

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