

NORTHWEST + CENTRAL VT PREVENTION NETWORK

MEETING NOTES

March 13th, 2025

Meeting Goal

Providing an opportunity for people and organizations across Northwest and Central Vermont to come together to share information, make connections, and explore opportunities related to prevention of substance misuse and promoting wellbeing in our communities.

Welcome & Agenda Overview

Agenda:

Prevention Updates

Backbone Updates

Eating Disorders & Substance Use: Understanding the Relationship, Annie Valentine

Flavors Hook Kids Vermont, Marcus Aloisi

Wrap-Up

Prevention Partner Updates

Erin Creley, VDH: Franklin County is hosting a Community Volunteering Fair on Thursday May 22nd, 3:00pm – 5:00pm. If your organization serves folks in Franklin County and needs volunteers, sign up to table! If you know folks who are looking for volunteering opportunities, this is a great chance for them to get involved. Here is the [link](#) to the registration form for individuals and organizations.

Franklin County is also hosting a free documentary viewing of a movie called “Recovery City”, on Tuesday April 29th at 6:00pm at the Welden Theatre.

- If you are interested in the community engagement activity in St Albans around housing insecurity, substance use, crime and community volunteerism, please email me to get an invite to our Friday meetings (next is tomorrow at noon) and also let me know if you're interested in helping us craft workshops for community members looking to support people as they seek recovery, housing, relief and safety.

erin.creley@vermont.gov

- **Megan Bridges:** [Volunteer Connection](#) is a good resource from United Way.

Christie Holmes, TPCCC: There is a movie viewing on March 26th from 6:00pm – 8:00pm at Main Street Landing. The event is to raise awareness in our community about addiction and mental health. The movie was made by a local director and used local actors and will be followed by a panel discussion. The tickets are free and please share widely; you can reserve your seat [here](#).

TPCCC is also looking for volunteers for a planning sub-committee. Anyone who is interested in joining, please reach out.

Fridays from 11:00am – 12:00pm they have free acupuncture at the Turning Point centers for those who are in recovery.

Amy Brewer, FGI Tobacco Prevention Coalition: Partnering with the Maple Run school district to do a nicotine and tobacco prevention presentation to the community on Thursday, March 20th at 5:30pm at BFA St. Albans. The event is open to the entire Maple Run Community. Click [here](#) for more information.

Sultana Khan, MOSAIC: Washington County convened last Friday and held their own priority summit in which they looked at data and shared ideas together. 30 folks attended the summit at North Branch Nature Center. Sultana is putting a summary together and will send

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it out as soon as it is available. Something that came up at the Summit was that there are not enough opportunities like it where people can connect face-to-face. It cost about \$1,000 to put on, including food provided. She would love to support people if they would like to put on an event like this, and welcomes anybody to reach out.

Nick Tatakis, VDH: Prevention Day is happening on April 3rd, and people of all ages are welcome to attend. Here is the [link](#) to register.

Marcus Aloisi: First community breakfast with Flavors Hook Kids VT and Vermont Moms is happening on March 21st from 9:30am – 11:00am. Here is the [link](#) to register for free.

Pam Quinn, Twinfield Together: Tuesday March 18th from 5:30pm – 7:30pm at the Barre Old Labor Hall there is a Public Town Hall Community meeting. The purpose is to learn about the proposed Scott/Saunders education reform plan, and for those to ask questions and share feedback about the education proposal.

Mark Hughes, VT Racial Justice Alliance & Richard Kemp Center: The second Monday of every month is the Prevention Equity meeting. Reach out to Mark for more information and how to join.

There is also an information session happening for their third trip to the National Museum of African American History and Culture in Washington, DC.

Youth movie night is on the 2nd and 4th Fridays of every night from 6:00pm – 9:00pm at the Richard Kemp Center; you don't need to have kids to come.

On the first Saturday of every month at 4:00pm there are discussions about health and wellness.

Backbone Updates

- The RFP is going to be rolled out tomorrow afternoon. If you don't receive our emails, please put your email in the chat and we will make sure to include you. Applications are due on April 11th. Please reach out to megan@unitedwaynwvt.org if you have any questions.
- Q&A related to the RFP on March 28th from 11:30 – 12:30pm
- The Funding Committee has held two listening sessions this month and heard valuable feedback from the community relating to their allocation plan. We really appreciate those who took part in those listening sessions.

Eating Disorders & Substance Use, Annie Valentine

Encouraging us to have a Brave Space together. The topic today covers eating disorders, which are the second leading cause of death in mental illnesses.

- Eating disorders include anorexia nervosa, bulimia nervosa, binge eating disorder, avoidant restrictive food intake disorder, pica, rumination disorder, unspecified feeding or eating disorder
- Eating disorders are often misunderstood and reinforced by the diet culture. They are complex and difficult to both prevent and treat.
- Food insecurity is impacting binge eating disorder in a significant way; thinking of it in a scarcity model in which people don't know when they will next eat, so they intake a lot and then either consciously or subconsciously restrict themselves.
- Up to 25% of individuals dependent on alcohol or other drugs have also had eating disorders, a rate 11 times greater than the general population
- Some people who drink alcohol are 'saving' their calories for their alcohol intake and skipping out on food – this used to be called 'drunk anorexia', but that name has not been used a lot due to it being extremely insensitive.

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- SAMHSA has reported that of those admitted for substance use disorder treatment, 16% of women and 3% of men had also reported an eating disorder. This suggests that these disorders are not independent of each other but rather have common root causes of triggering factors.
- Up to 50% of individuals with eating disorders use alcohol or illicit drugs, a rate five times higher than the general population
- Roughly one in five individuals with an ED will develop an SUD at some point in their lifetime.
- Often, eating disorders happen first, because food is readily available for people of all ages to control their intake.
- Domestic and sexual violence also cooccurs with eating disorders and substance misuse.
- In 2015, the YRBS run by the CDC removed questions about fasting, diet pill use, and purging.
- Lacking that basic data has downstream consequences, as data is necessary when talking to policymakers about why these matters and why we need more money and resources for treatment. When we don't have data, we don't have money for treatment.
- There is a Work Group in Vermont that is looking to train people on how to talk about eating disorders, what is appropriate language to use, and how equity is involved in this. Beginning with training for parents, educators, and youth. The work group is pushing for more funding, more screening for folks and training.
- Suppressing appetites happen with many different substances and this leads to the cycles of food restriction and exercise obsession.

Questions:

Mark Hughes: Thank you for your service and all your contribution to this important subject. Can you go back to the very beginning with a list of categories about folks. I think you should include race in it next time because it is central in everything.

Flavors Hook Kids Vermont, Marcus Aloisi

Volunteered last year for Flavors Hook Kids, now the Field Director.

- The 2024 Flavors Hook Kids Campaign was a success, but bill S.18 passed in the legislature, but was vetoed by Governor Phil Scott. 68% of Vermonters supported the ban. The Governor received hundreds of emails to the office, letters to the editor, testimony from youth, educators, and doctors.
- The 2025-26 legislature is made up of a 30 member Senate and a 150 member House. With the new Federal Administration, things are moving a lot slower at the state legislature because there are so many laws and bills being brought up.

History of E-Cigarettes

- 1990s: tobacco companies begin research on noncombustible cigarettes
- 2003: first e-cigarette is created in China, and in 2009 it becomes mainstream
- 2015: youth tobacco/nicotine and e-cigarette use is at an all time low, until Juul is launched, targeting youth, and included nicotine salts added to increase "hit" and flavors highly advertised
- 2017: the FDA gives warning to big tobacco, giving e-cigarettes companies more room to innovate

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- 2018: youth vaping is up 78% in one year
- 2019: flavors limited due to their appeal to young people
- 2020: over 2,000 lawsuits against Juul and other companies – this increased disposable vape purchases
- 2022-2024, big cannabis/big tobacco/e-cigarette companies inextricably tied, Juul settles \$500 million to 34 states

- The FDA issued warnings to companies who are marketing e-cigarettes that are packaged to look like toys, food, or cartoon characters which promotes unauthorized use.
- According to the CDC, 81% of Black cigarette users use menthol cigarettes; 53% of young adults use menthol cigarettes and 54% of LGBTQ+ people use menthol cigarettes. This is not a coincidence. The marketing tactics that Big Tobacco uses are strategic and focused on the communities that they want to get hooked.
- To fight corporations, we educate those who hold responsibility over Vermont's young people. Emphasize the people they're attacking. Being experts on the role big tobacco plays in continuing to marginalize and create health disparities for BIPOC and LGBTQ+ communities.
- With so many people doing meaningful and impactful work – how do we share the work you are doing and work with lawmakers on the need to protect the youth of Vermont and all of our communities from the dangers of flavored tobacco.

How can you help?

- Share your stories
- Sign on as an organization to our 2025 org: sign on letter
- Meet 1:1 with Marcus to develop our multi-year strategy
- Submit a message to Front Porch Forum
- Submit a letter to the editor

Questions:

Mark Hughes: Very proud of the work you are doing. Just flagging that the Health Equity Advisory Commission was tasked with reviewing S.18. They did not do it because they did not have enough time or capacity. Just the fact that that would be a matter of deliberation is something to consider. Some folks do not want people to make decisions for them based on their lifestyles and personal decisions. To avoid having the conversation is condescending for all of us. We will be having those deliberations within the Health Equity Advisory Commission, and we look forward to it.

Looking Ahead

Next meeting: April 10th, 2025

10:00am-11:30am

NEW MEETING LINK: [Join the meeting now](#)

