



Alcohol and Other Drugs Program

Strategic Prevention Plan

Summary of Findings on Use and Abuse Prevention Data

Across the Alcohol and Other Drug (AOD) consumption, contributing factor and consequence data, some key trends emerge that should be used to guide the county's substance use disorder (SUD) prevention work moving forward, with a focus on youth in our community:

- Alcohol and cannabis have the highest consumption rates and they are at or above statewide averages in most instances. Nevada County youth participate in risky behavior related to alcohol and cannabis use at rates above state averages and have easier perceived access to both substances than their peers across California. The county's past SUD prevention efforts have focused on these two substances and the data suggests continued efforts are necessary. Opioids, given the consumption data severe consequences seen in AOD-related death data, also deserve attention.
- Alcohol and cannabis use and age of onset increased dramatically in 9th and 11th grade, as did perceived ease of access to these substances. Moreover, across many data points, the county saw less progress in reducing AOD use and perceptions in 7th grade compared to older students. These data points highlight the importance of SUD prevention programming in earlier grades to ensure students have access to information and protective factors when peer use and exposure increase in later grades.
- Students in non-traditional schools report much higher rates of consumption and risky behaviors as well as lower perceptions of harm than students in traditional schools. While the data isn't surprising given many students are in non-traditional schools as a result of traditional schools not meeting their needs, the disparity highlights the importance of focusing SUD prevention resources on this population.
- Existing SUD prevention data sources have a number of limitations for Nevada County, as discussed in the data limitations section. As a result, the county should explore the development of other local data sources as part of its SUD prevention work, including but not limited to student-led research and data collection.

Accordingly, Nevada County will focus its SUD prevention efforts primarily on underage drinking and cannabis use while prioritizing resources for younger students and students in non-traditional schools.