

IDENTIFYING SUBSTANCE-USE PREVENTION AND INTERVENTION PROGRAMS AT VIRGINIA'S COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

STUDY PLAN

Study Mandate

- During the 2017 General Assembly Session, Delegate Chris Peace and Senator Bill Carrico introduced respective budget amendments, Item 146#3h and Item 146#5s, which requested the State Council of Higher Education for Virginia to work with the Virginia Alcohol and Beverage Control to identify the current recreational substance-use awareness and education programs at colleges and universities in the Commonwealth.
- Budget amendments, Item 146#3h and Item 146#5s, called for a list of best practices to be compiled in a plan for Virginia's colleges and universities to implement. The list of best practices may include, but not be limited to, student-initiated or student-led peer-to-peer education programs and college recovery programs. In order to achieve the above goals, both budget amendments requested a \$25,000 appropriation out of Fiscal Year 2018. Finally, both the House and Senate member request budget amendments asked that a final report be made to the Commission on Youth by the end of 2017.
- The General Assembly did not adopt the budget amendments.
- The Commission on Youth in cooperation with the Virginia Department of Alcohol and Beverage Control prior to the 2018 General Assembly Session will:
 - i. identify the current substance-abuse prevention and intervention programs including programs that address recreational and illicit drug use at colleges and universities.
 - ii. compile a list of best practices to be considered for Virginia's colleges and universities to implement. This may include, but not be limited to, student-initiated or student-led peer-to-peer education programs and college recovery programs.

Identified Issues

- Colleges and universities are required by federal law to develop and implement a program to stop the unlawful possession, use, or distribution of illicit drugs and alcohol by students and employees. Each college and university must write a biennial review on its program's effectiveness. These programs do not necessarily focus on substance-use prevention.
- Currently, there is no statewide compilation of campus policies or the biennial reports completed by the colleges and universities. However, many of the policies are accessible online.
- Collaboration among colleges and universities does occur by way of the Virginia College Alcohol Leadership Council (VACALC). VACALC is a voluntary professional organization that provides leadership and professional advice regarding the prevention of high risk and hazardous alcohol, tobacco, and other drug related behavior.
- Recent prevention methods have focused on motivational interviewing, use of screening, brief intervention and referral to treatment (SBIRT), promotion of social norms, peer-to-peer education programs, implementation of harm reduction and bystander training programs, and use of recovery support programs.
- One example of a college or university program is the Gordie Center for Substance Abuse Prevention at the University of Virginia. The Gordie Center approach combines peer education, recovery support, self-assessment tools, and screening and intervention programs.
- Colleges and universities face a complex and growing problem among incoming students. According to the 2015 Behavioral Health Barometer, 9.4 percent of youth aged 12 to 17 years old are currently using an illicit drug.

- According to 2015 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, approximately 1 in 5, or 22.3 percent of adults aged 18 to 25, are currently using an illicit drug. Moreover, studies show that college students are more at risk to abuse substances, particularly alcohol, than are their non-college peers.

Study Activities

- Identify and work with impacted stakeholders
 - Virginia’s colleges and universities
 - Council of Independent Colleges in Virginia
 - State Council of Higher Education for Virginia
 - Substance Abuse Services Council
 - Virginia College Alcohol Leadership Council (VACALC)
 - Virginia Department of Alcohol and Beverage Control
 - Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services
 - Virginia Department of Education
 - Students for Sensible Drug Policy
 - Student Council Association
 - Pan-Hellenic Council
 - Related student clubs or contracted independent organizations
- Conduct extensive background and literature reviews
 - Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)
 - Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC)
 - National Institute on Drug Abuse
 - University of Michigan’s Monitoring the Future study
 - Drug-Free Schools and Communities Act (DFSCA)
 - Literature on best practices related to student-initiated or student-led peer-to-peer education programs and college recovery programs
 - Other states’ statutes, regulations, studies, and activities
- Survey and analyze Virginia’s colleges and universities
 - Identify the current substance-abuse prevention and intervention programs
 - Compile a list of best practices to be considered for implementation by Virginia’s colleges and universities
- Synthesize findings of literature review and interviews
- Develop findings and recommendations
- Solicit feedback on recommendations
- Refine findings and recommendations
- Present findings and recommendations to the Commission on Youth
- Prepare final report