



2025

KEY FINDINGS REPORT

Training Needs Survey STATEWIDE

The purpose of this survey was to identify the greatest needs and interests that would best support anyone working in alcohol, tobacco, and other drug (ATOD) prevention. Coalition staff and individuals from all sectors were encouraged to voluntarily complete the survey.

The survey was administered October 14 - December 12, 2025. There were 194 total responses from across the state of Minnesota.

This survey report is based on the following sample size (n=194) and will not be fully representative of all prevention professionals in the state of Minnesota.

This project was funded by the MN Department of Human Services, Behavioral Health Administration.

WHO TOOK THE SURVEY?

What role or sector best describes you?

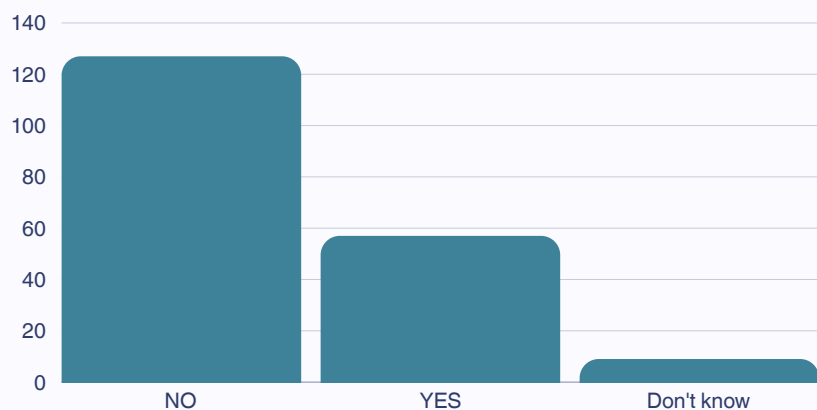
Sector	Number of Responses
Public Health Dept	82
State, Local, Tribal Gov	23
School	17
Coalition Staff	15
Youth Serving Org	15
Healthcare	8
Recovery	7

Sector	Number of Responses
Civic or Volunteer Org	4
Youth	4
Treatment	3
Law Enforcement	2
Media	1
Parent	1
Spiritual or Fraternal	1
Business	1

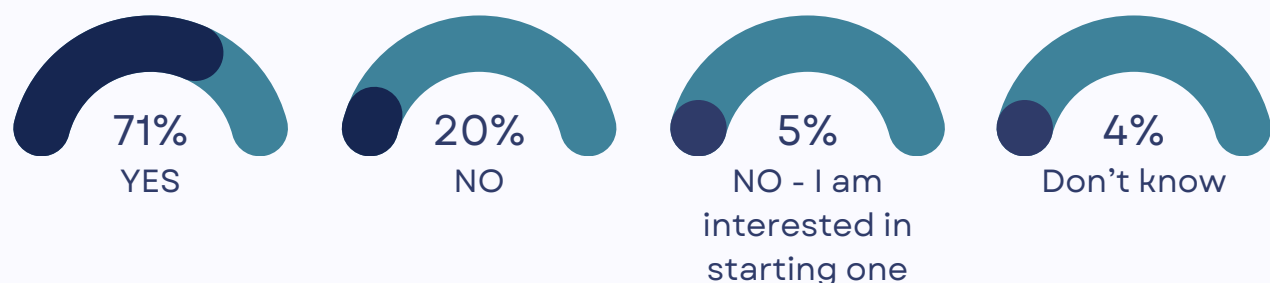
Other: Educator

Are you a paid staff person for a coalition?

NO	127
YES	57
Don't know	9



Do you participate in a coalition in your community?



What is the greatest

CHALLENGE

your community and/or coalition is facing?

Coalition Volunteers



Funding & Capacity

Funding cuts, need for stable funding to support work, delayed funding, grant availability, insecure future with politics, no year 6 DFC funding, staffing shortages, capacity of schools to implement new programs, staff turnover



Access to Services & Resources

Limited referral options, rural area with few providers, lack of treatment options for youth, long wait times for services, people not accessing needed resources, limited mental health & substance use providers



Community Engagement & Buy-In

Lack of community engagement, community understanding the importance of this work, getting the work into the broader community, buy-in from schools & decision makers, reaching parents, connecting with those that need the most help



Community Issues

Transportation (specifically for youth & after day time hours), housing, homelessness, poverty, declining-aging population, unhealthy family systems, jobs, social isolation, connectivity, cyclical parent/student drama, loneliness

What is the greatest **CHALLENGE**

your community and/or coalition is facing?

Coalition Volunteers



Prevention Education & Awareness

Lack of knowledge about prevention, getting elected officials to understand prevention, changing the perception of youth use, community misunderstanding cannabis risks, youth not knowing consequences



Coalition Capacity & Participation

Turn over of members, same few people show up, lack of involvement in making things happen, limited membership in coalition, quality coalition coordinator, consistent coalition leadership, youth participation



Substance Misuse & Mental Health

Vaping, cannabis, methamphetamine, alcohol, availability of substances, parents usage and acceptableness of cannabis, mental health, suicide prevention, denial of issues, stigma



Partnerships

Finding lasting partnerships, limited capacity of partners, connecting with partners in rural area, working with schools, coordinating work with others who have similar goals



Equity, Language, & Cultural Barriers

Racism, segregation, health disparities, need for culturally diverse training, lack of culturally specific resources and resources in different languages



What is the greatest **CHALLENGE** your community and/or coalition is facing?

Paid Staff



Funding & Sustainability

Lack of current and future funding, overall sustainability



Engagement & Partnerships

Lack of community & coalition participation, retention of coalition members, working in silos, building relationships, substance misuse education in schools, working with the school district



Capacity

Having enough time to get things done, staffing, finding champions to lead efforts, people power



Youth Engagement

Lack of youth involvement, difficult to integrate youth in coalition work, recruiting youth, need for community space for youth to hang out/support each other



What is the greatest **CHALLENGE** your community and/or coalition is facing?

Paid Staff



Community Awareness, Readiness & Buy-In

Lack of buy-in due to stigma or lack of knowledge related to substance misuse and prevention, political readiness, lack of support for change, indifference, polarization around health topics



Coalition Functioning

Collecting student data, framing prevention messages & aligning them with evidence based approaches, picking one need to focus on, strategy selection, lack of training on public speaking & prevention for members



Cannabis Climate & Substance Misuse

Youth vaping, low perception of harm & lack of concern around cannabis, new stores - concern about impact on youth, education around new cannabis products - safe use



Mental Health & Other Community Issues

Stigma around mental health, lack of coping skills among youth, poverty, transportation, bullying, food insecurity



Access to Services & Resources

Few treatment options for adults and youth, access to care, language barrier, lack of resources in Spanish



What is the greatest **BARRIER TO YOU** being successful in your substance misuse prevention work?

Coalition Volunteers

Time, Capacity, & Staffing

Lack of time & capacity, trying to balance multiple roles, too much work to accomplish, staffing capacity, not having designated substance use position within the county, working full time in another capacity while chairing coalition

Funding

Lack of funding, funding cuts, insufficient public/private investment in upstream prevention to adequately cover staff time, figuring out how to work within grant requirements - what community wants doesn't always align with what funding allows

Community Engagement

Limited community buy-in and participation, lack of people attending coalition meetings, not having enough volunteers to do the work, community states they want one thing - but then no one shows up when it is offered, more parent & teen involvement

Training & Education

Need more training & credentials, knowledge of substances, not trained in prevention practices, lack of formal training, being younger & not having as much control or being able to say as much, limited experience, need more training opportunities in our area





What is the greatest **BARRIER TO YOU** being successful in your substance misuse prevention work?

Coalition Volunteers

Partnerships & Collaboration

Working through silos in community, connection with other agencies who do similar work, lack of partnerships, having partners buy-in & implement EBP, schools not participating in MSS, working with schools to reach younger children

Leadership Barriers

County commissioners & admin being indecisive on how they want funding spent, lack of support & direction from management, gathering buy-in from decision makers, decision makers not understanding value of prevention, lack of consequences at the county level

Access to Services & Resources

Need more youth housing resources, long waitlists for mental health services, limited referral options, lack of treatment beds, no LADC, resource availability, need for cultural-language staff

Norms, Culture & Stigma

Norms around alcohol use, parent use, denial of use of substances, stigma around mental health & substance misuse, community favors scare tactics verse positive norms, deep-seated stigma in small communities



OTHER: Getting messages to have lasting effect with students, focus on intervention rather than prevention, young adults not being concerned with effects of misuse, marketing, geographic location



What is the greatest **BARRIER TO YOU** being successful in your substance misuse prevention work?

Paid Staff



Time & Capacity

Lack of time & capacity, wearing many hats & involved in multiple projects, stretched too thin, too many responsibilities to give the best quality work

Community Engagement

Lack of community support & participation, people not showing up to events, knowing how to engage with the community & create buy-in, getting info out to the community, reaching populations in need

Coalition Capacity & Development

Not enough help to do the work, noncommittal people, need more involvement from subject matter experts, delegating work to the coalition, leading effective meetings & structuring initiatives with action steps, need a plan to educate coalition, currently don't have a coalition



Funding & Resources

Lack of funding and resources for the community, reliant on time-bound grant funding





What is the greatest **BARRIER TO YOU** being successful in your substance misuse prevention work?

Paid Staff

Youth & School Involvement

Time to get into and involve the schools, lack of support from school staff, engaging youth, hands on activities with students, reach out to youth who need help, transportation for youth to participate in activities



Partnerships

Lack of partnerships, building new partnerships after current ones retire or move on, getting into spaces to do the work



Implementation

Limited evidence based practices, how to address barriers to implementing evidence based practices

System Barriers

Complex bureaucratic/procedural challenges, systemic barriers to buy-in for change, county bureaucracy, internal government bureaucracy

OTHER: Lack of awareness, cultural stigma, providers specific to substance misuse, communication, being confident in what I'm doing



Interest in PREVENTION TOPICS

*The number in parenthesis indicates the number of people who were VERY INTERESTED in each topic.

Coalition Building

Engaging and/or retaining YOUTH coalition members (112)

Motivating members to contribute to the coalition's efforts (106)

Identifying and building leadership skills within the coalition (80)

Engaging and/or retaining ADULT coalition members (77)

Facilitating meetings effectively and/or reaching decisions (66)

Delegating work to others (55)

Understanding coalition basics (e.g. bylaws, coalition functioning) (50)

Assessment & Sustainability

Sustaining coalition activities when current funding ends (96)

Measuring outcomes/impact (87)

Promoting or publicizing ATOD programs or activities (79)

Strategic planning (76)

Reviewing and understanding DATA with outside support (68)

Assessing community NEEDS for ATOD prevention (65)

Grant writing and fundraising for ATOD prevention (49)

Prevention Strategies

Finding prevention strategies, programs, or activities that are a good fit for the needs and resources of the community (125)

Communicating prevention messages to the community (124)

Parent education (121)

Involving YOUTH in ATOD prevention (115)

Using evidence based prevention curricula in schools (113)

Promoting healthy alternative activities (111)

Culturally appropriate strategies or resources (102)

Positive Community Norms messaging (97)

Using social media in ATOD prevention (97)

Facilitating policy change strategies (84)

Facilitating environmental strategies (environmental scans & compliance checks) (64)

Responsible Beverage Server Training (39)

SUMMARY

OVERALL TOP TRAINING TOPICS

- 1 Finding prevention strategies, programs, or activities that are a good fit for the needs and resources of the community
- 2 Communicating prevention messages to the community
- 3 Parent education
- 4 Involving YOUTH in ATOD prevention
- 5 Using evidence based curricula in schools

TOP TRAINING FORMATS

- 1 Live webinars (online)
- 2 “Lunch and Learn” (over lunch hosted locally)
- 3 Single day in-person group training

PREFERRED FORMAT BY MONTH

	Preferred Format
Jan	ONLINE
Feb	ONLINE
Mar	ONLINE
Apr	IN PERSON
May	IN PERSON
June	IN PERSON

	Preferred Format
July	ONLINE
Aug	ONLINE
Sept	ONLINE
Oct	EITHER
Nov	ONLINE
Dec	ONLINE