

WINOOSKI PARTNERSHIP FOR PREVENTION

ANNUAL REPORT

2024



DEAR FRIENDS,

It's been a pleasure and honor to partner with Winooski to set our community up for success in reaching its health goals. Winooski has called itself Vermont's "opportunity city," and it certainly continues to live up to that ideal. Strong leaders advocating with authenticity and integrity exist in every sector, from the Downtown Association, city government, school administration, youth, and the many boards and committees that work in tandem and often in collaboration to continue making progress on all fronts.

If there is a silver lining to experiencing a global pandemic, perhaps it could be that it highlighted not only the gaps in services and need for stronger social connective tissue, it also provided an opportunity to reflect on the strengths and gifts of all of the people in our communities. This is to me what has always been the most exciting part of coalition work, that, like democracy itself, it requires all perspectives to be successful, that everyone who participates changes themselves a bit even as they also change the ultimate outcome. Like the country of Iceland's constant volcanic activity is remaking its landscape, humans are constantly forging new partnerships and remaking what it means to be a citizen of this planet. So is the case for how we are reshaping what it means to be healthy and working together with science and practice to reduce substance use disorders. Vermonters deserve health and our collective efforts are an important part of getting them there.



Kathryn E. Nugent

KATE NUGENT

*Winooski Partnership for Prevention,
Executive Director*

**Thank you to all of our supporters
in 2024.**

Ann Goering

Rita Martel

Patti Meyer

Ellen Hagman

Rita Martel

Ann Goering and Sharon Hooper

George Dotti Cross

Nick Tatatakis

Jessica LeClair

Anne Linton

Paul Sarne

**Association of Africans Living in
Vermont (especially Hina Vignola)**

CADCA

Carol Chapman

Cassie Tourre

David Jernigan

Michael Sparks

Alicia Sparks

Martine Gulick

Taylor Small

Daisy Barbeco

Jim Lockwood

Sarah Reed

Matthew Bernstein

Diana Buchanan

Lukas Zweeres

Karen Zweeres

Ray Coffee

Ray Coffee

Rayna Chase

Thalia Bennett

**Youth Leaders with Above the
Influence**

Chandra Duba

Amy Chase

Jason Ziter

Jaycie Putlitz

Jen Fisher

Kristine Lott

Liz Parris

Tina Roy

**Chittenden County Regional Planning
Commission**

Chittenden Prevention Network

**City of Winooski, including Ray
Coffey, Kristine Lott, Eric Vorwald,
and Elaine Wang**

Melissa Corbin

Ellen Hagman

Zahra Mohammed

Peter Bingham

Logan Bouchard

Ellen Ravelin

George and Dottie Cross

John Sheehan

Christopher Smith

Wilmer Chavarria



**Thank you to all of our supporters
in 2024.**

Melanie Gaiotti

Nan Spence

ONDCP and the Drug Free Communities Support Program

Outright VT

Patti Meyer

Prevention Works Vermont

Rita Martel

SAMHSA

Sharonlee and Jon Trefry

Skyler Genest

Steve Barbeco

Kayla Loving

Paul McNeil

Stephanie Thompson

Town Fair Tire Foundation

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and Amy Carmolla

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Winooski Family Health

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Barthiaume, Kate Grodin, Patrice Lamumba, Matt Gile, Jaycie

Puttlitz, Iskandar Kahn, Kathy, Wilmer Chavarria, Adam Hurwitz,

Amy Loomis, Betsey Dubuc



**A special thank you to our student
leaders who participated in Above
the Influence afterschool program.**

**Brendan Hil
Rayna Chase
Olivia Byamungu
Taliah Bennett
Nuevaine Mampuya
Natalie Dzessou
Keegan Boyd
Dahlia Michoma
Siyat Ahmed
Gabby Dzessou
Jibu Ruzingi
Kahmiley Kasongo
Fatuma Mayange
Falhado Ahmed
Mohamed Osman
Egay Hatto
Leyla Hussein
Abdi Osman**



THE YEAR IN REVIEW

WPP continued its efforts to engage and mobilize the Winooski community through Clean Up Days, Farmers Market tables, a Basketball Tournament, and movie screenings for youth and families.



WPP hosted another series of Community Dinners, featuring chefs specializing in food from Southern, Somalian, Nigerian, Latin, and Spanish cultures.

Many of these dinners were accompanied by a screening of the movie *Screenagers*, providing an excellent and simple avenue for increasing understanding of the risk and protective factors for substance use disorders. WPP held a license to use this movie until mid-summer of 2024, driving a large portion of community events.

[See here for a trailer.](#)

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

Courtesy Vermont Department of Health

WPP staff disseminated lockable medication bags across the community, which included printed information on safe storage of cannabis, medications, vapes, and other substances within the home.

In 2024, 150 bags were distributed and an order was placed for 250 more.



Staff distributed the bags at Community Dinners, Parent/Teacher Conferences, Farmers Market tabling events, and directly to cannabis retailers, pharmacies, and to individuals requesting a bag.



VT Helplink
Alcohol & drug support center

WPP staff connected with Vermont Dept of Health staff regarding improving naloxone distribution in Winooski. In addition to providing resources on 2-1-1 and VT Helplink, both of which offer naloxone distribution, WPP has handed out harm reduction kits that include naloxone, fentanyl test strips, and xylazine test strips.



THE YEAR IN REVIEW

WPP continued its regular coalition meetings in 2024, including a special presentation by Albert Gay, expert in alcohol industry targeting. Albert

Gay talked about the association of slavery, historic tobacco production, historic alcohol production (rum through sugar cane farming), redlining, and concentration of alcohol outlets and related health inequities we see today for black residents of the US.



Sector involvement increased significantly among schools, youth, and parents, and this has positively impacted our coalition's capacity to collect data on substance use and other important local data that is very important.

WPP has expanded coalition engagement from multilingual parents through targeted affinity group activities. We have new youth coalition members and new youth board members who have become leaders regarding substance use prevention among their peers.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

WPP hosted an outdoor clean-up day with students from WPP's afterschool program with the goal of increasing enforcement of smoke-free educational campuses, reducing visibility of tobacco and other substance-related litter, reducing normalization of tobacco use, and increasing visibility of the issue.



152 lbs collected
Thank you, Winooski!



Winooski Partnership
for Prevention
Education | Awareness | Engagement

These efforts documented the amount of butt litter by taking photos and then sharing them with school administrators. WPP has been working with the DREAM program staff to coordinate future Clean Up Days at this site and elsewhere. Clean up day events specifically engaged residents at Winooski Housing Authority Elm St apartments.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

WPP's primary vehicle for engaging youth continues through Above The Influence (ATI), our weekly after school program for middle and high school students. The club focuses on prevention of youth use of nicotine, alcohol, cannabis, and other drugs. ATI teaches leadership skills and substance use prevention, using the One Voice Youth Empowerment Model.



WPP provides youth with learning opportunities outside of school, including meetings with local leaders and community members to discuss youth substance use, summer internships and leadership conferences such as Our Voices Xposed, and board membership. The passion and involvement of students in ATI has been a real success. Membership has grown from about 8 to about 26 over the course of the year.



A major victory this year was the launch of a new campaign in partnership with WSD: Drug-Free 2030. This endeavor is more than just a goal; it signifies a collective commitment among students to prioritize their health and well-being. Students are currently working on marketing materials for this campaign and interviewing WSD staff and admin, and creating a vision for how this campaign can be passed on to future students.

THE YEAR IN REVIEW

The collaboration has focused on retailers in the Gateway Districts of Winooski, which have more traffic and different zoning regulations than the rest of the city. These efforts culminated in a case study measuring the effect of monitoring advertising ordinance compliance in this district.

WPP has been working with the City of Winooski staff for the past few years to document exterior signage at retailers that sell age-restricted products, including tobacco/nicotine, alcohol, and cannabis.

Visits provided education for all Winooski-based businesses on current exterior advertising ordinances, compliance, and resources for their customers or staff on 802 Quits, VT Helpline, and Howard Center Community Outreach services.

WPP used its healthy corner store checklist as a tool for youth visits to retailers. Retailers that get more than 5 items on a checklist received a certificate from WPP.

Store Name: _____ Date: _____

Stores that meet 5 criteria will get a framed certificate from Winooski Partnership for Prevention!

- Accepts SNAP benefits
- Accepts WIC benefits
- No code violations in the past year
- Water is the cheapest drink available
- Milk is available
- Eggs are available
- Cheapest alcohol costs more than 1 qt milk
- Fresh produce available
- Exterior ads take up less than 25% of windows
- Exterior ads are not for nicotine products
- Exterior ads are not for alcohol
- Exterior ads are not for cannabis (incl. CBD)
- No exterior ads are below 3 ft
- No more than 1 neon sign
- Adequate trash receptacles outside the store
- No graffiti on exterior of store
- There is at least 1 healthy item on (produce, water, etc.)

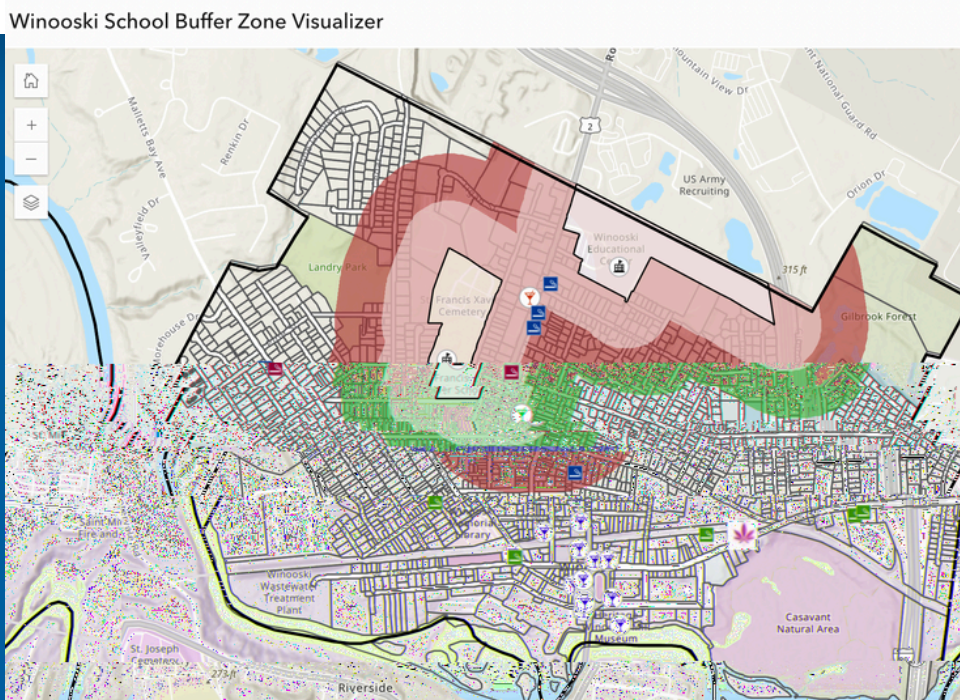
THE YEAR IN REVIEW

WPP is leading an effort to implement buffer zones for age-restricted products such as tobacco around schools as a public health best practice.

What is a buffer zone?

A buffer zone is a policy to protect underage youth from exposure to age-restricted products (alcohol, tobacco, and cannabis), and benefits the health of the whole community. Higher concentrations of retailers that sell and advertise age-restricted products near schools are associated with underage use of these products, as well as excessive alcohol use and related harms, such as crime and violence.

Substantial progress was made in 2024 exploring the potential impact of a school buffer zone policy, including development of model language, authority to implement, and public opinion about this policy option. WPP staff worked with a local planning organization to create a map of potential options. Work will continue next year on presenting public health best practice policy options for physical design of the City,



About the Map: The Winooski School Buffer Visualizer

This map shows school parcel locations in Winooski Vermont and envisions which areas would be affected by buffer zones of different sizes.

OUR 2024 STRATEGY:

PARTNERSHIPS: Our goal in 2024 was to create new partnerships and deepen existing ones.

Across 2024 we strengthened relationships within all sectors, including media and civic organizations, social services, local and state government officials, local businesses, and schools. We hosted coalition meetings and movie screenings that brought in partners, including treatment partners, who are now stronger collaborators, and teamed up with local organizations for events like Winooski Clean-Up Days.

EDUCATION: We believe that accessible information and data is empowering.

- We are nearing completion of a revision of our Community Assessment Report which documents our core survey data, YRBS data, focus group data, and demographic changes over time to inform substance use disorder prevention policy. We're looking forward to printing these and reflecting the community-identified stories and priorities back to decision makers and other partners.
- We expanded our core survey administration and were able to capture a census of students in grades 6-12. Students engaged with our coalition activities reported increases in knowledge and skills between pre and post tests.
- Core measures data continue to reflect lowering perceptions of harm of cannabis, consistent with state-wide measurements and increased use. The reported risk factors in YRBS and our core data would suggest higher substance use rates than what is reported in YRBS and our core data. It appears that there are protective factors, which may be the presence of this coalition, cultural factors specific to Winooski, or other factors that we haven't yet identified.
- WPP staff worked to continue to deepen ties with multilingual liaisons (MLLs) and other cultural brokers in order to better provide language access services to those who need it. We did a lot of prep to ensure that our youth survey was available to individuals with language access needs. It is now available in 6 languages, and we plan to add more languages next year.

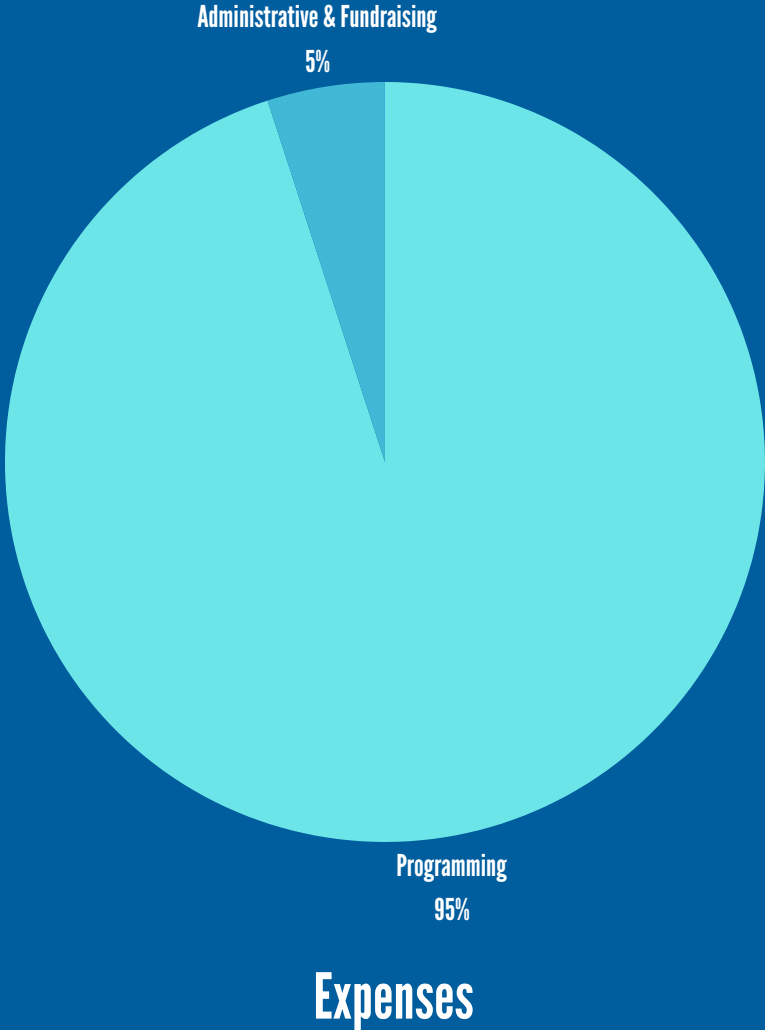
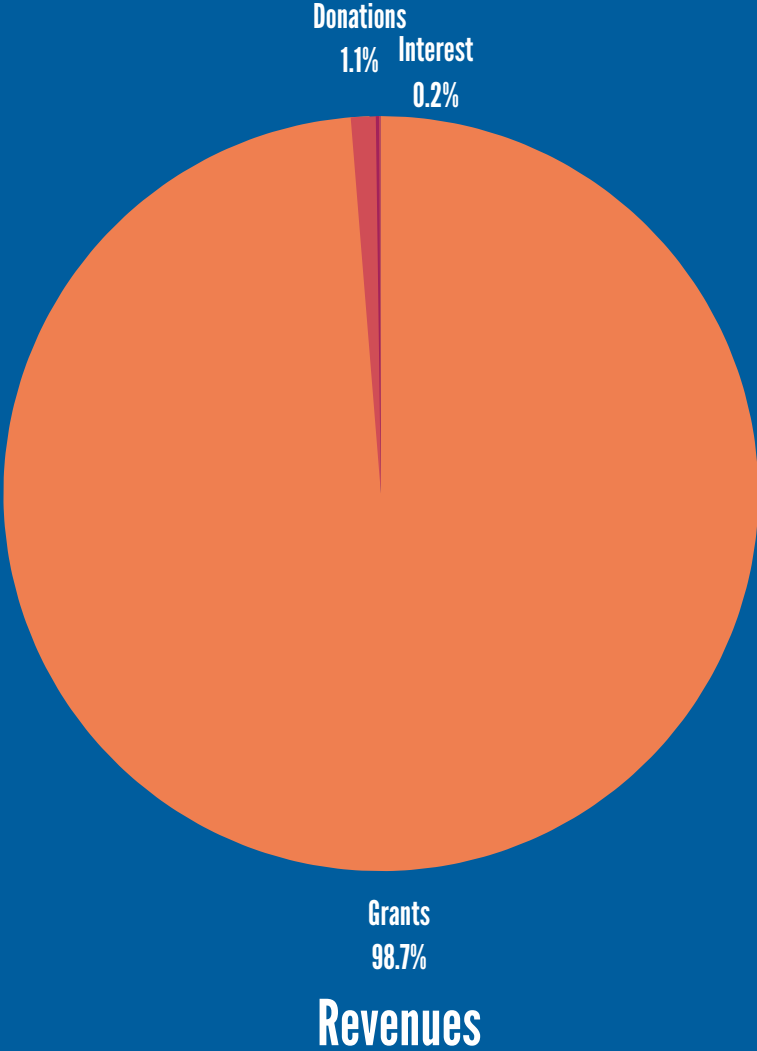
OUR 2024 STRATEGY:

- YOUTH EMPOWERMENT:** We uplift youth voices and perspectives on SUDs prevention and promote student self-efficacy in relation to making healthy decisions around substance use
- We built relationships with more school personnel and youth in the school through our afterschool program, leadership development training, public speaking practice, scheduling time with decision makers, and community events. Through the co-development of these youth leadership opportunities WPP promoted youth trustee positions, and elevated youth voices in SUDs-prevention related issues with City staff and community.
 - The WPP youth-focused staff member, Mukhtar Abdullahi, has been instrumental in attracting new youth to our programs and events .The afterschool group, Above The Influence (ATI), continued and expanded this year under his leadership. Mukhtar has been supporting youth through defining their goals for the school and community.

ADVOCACY AND POLICY CHANGE: We will continue to call for policies that give all members of Winooski a fair and just opportunity to be as healthy as possible.

- Acceptance into the Alcohol Policy Academy allowed us to test some of the policy ideas that coalition members had brought up with national level experts. This work has generated key strategic activities, including modeling the health, revenue and public safety impacts of an alcohol tax increase, and public opinion polling on a slate of prevention policies.
- We made significant progress in presenting and increasing understanding of local-level and business-level policies that would support prevention goals. Conversations about advertising restrictions and buffer zones at the municipal level, through an Advertising Monitoring Report and buffer zone presentation to the planning commissioners supported these efforts.
- As part of our policy strategy we supported our students in advocating for a flavored product restriction at the state level, which passed, but was vetoed by the governor. However, through that work students gained experience in public speaking, presenting to decision makers, and speaking with their peers about why they care about this issue.

FY21 REVENUES AND EXPENSES



FY24 FUNDING SUCCESS STORY

A highlight of this year has been WPP’s funding expansion. This year, WPP was awarded unsolicited donations from large donors such as Town Fair Tire Foundation. This is a great indicator for both the visibility and quality of the work WPP supports within in the community, allowing us to leverage our grant funds to more holistically serve Winooski.

PREVENTION IN 2025

Municipal Policy

WPP proposes to take a lead role as a technical assistance provider in point of sale policy - specifically, in two areas: an analysis of buffer zones around schools as a public health best practice, and adding conditions to local licenses. By June 2025 or earlier, WPP staff will create a report documenting the process of incorporating licensing conditions and municipal authority in Vermont to implement these strategies. We hope that this strategy would encompass all legal age-restricted substances.



Smoke-free Spaces

WPP proposes to continue work through public education and collaboration with City staff to make all parks in Winooski smokefree and create a reporting mechanism for residents to submit compliance observations. If interested, Winooski youth may take a lead voice in developing messaging.

By June 2025, WPP proposes to conduct outreach to landlords via Winooski's rental registry to offer education and resources on smoke-free housing policies. This may be in coordination with a code enforcement officer in Winooski if they have capacity.

Cessation Supports

WPP will continue outreach to Winooskians about treatment and cessation services through in-person events, digital presence, and use of community connections. This outreach will be tailored to multilingual populations, using liaisons or cultural brokers, and also will be tailored specifically to low-SES residents, BIPOC residents, LGBTQ students, among other priority populations. WPP staff will prioritize attention to ensuring that messages are appropriately translated.

WPP proposes to work with Walgreens, CHC Winooski Family Health, and other organizations to facilitate referrals for and distribution of Nicotine Replacement Therapy in the community.



PREVENTION IN 2025

Cessation Supports (continued)

By October 2025 or earlier, and then as needed afterward, WPP staff propose to integrate My Life My Quit resources into youth-serving venues in Winooski, including Winooski School District, Memorial Library, Myers Pool, and other venues.



**WHAT WOULD YOU GAIN
IF YOU
QUIT VAPING?**

Text "Start My Quit" to 36072 or
call 855-891-9989.
Free, confidential help to quit vaping, smoking
or chewing. Just for teens.

WWW.MYLIFEMYQUIT.COM MY LIFE MY QUIT.

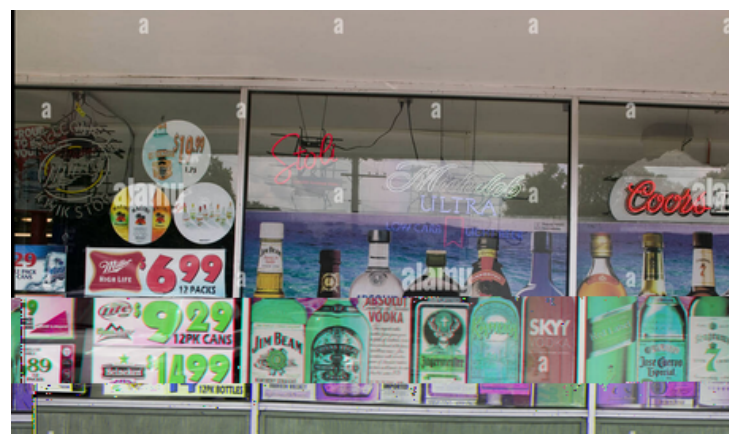
Parent Language Affinity Groups



WPP staff plan to host a parent series for language affinity groups. During parent focus groups and movie screenings for affinity groups this past year, parents expressed having lots of questions and not knowing how to get the answers. These affinity groups would be a place for WPP staff to gather questions from parents, and come back at a following parent affinity group meeting with some answers to continue discussion.

Retail Audits

WWPP staff and coalition members will conduct retail audits once a year and report any novel product findings to VDH. Retail audits will consist of an evaluation of exterior advertising and a visit to the inside of the store with youth to survey products, placement, promotion, and prices.



We're excited to connect with you in 2025.



winooskiprevention.org



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