



# Prevention Community of Practice

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### Using a Data Driven Approach to Empower Individuals and Communities: Strategies for Prevention Professionals

1/8/20

#### Questions and Answers

**Q1. Participant shared that their experiences talking to youth have been all around very negative. How do you reach those students?**

A1. This strategy has felt very approachable for many types of students. Many of the students that are involved in this have had suspensions for substance use violations. This approach validates all perspectives and experiences. We have found that all students can engage in meaningful way. The students are the experts in this, and we respect that. We always see a few students that remain hopeless, but using a strengths-based approach, we have found that almost everyone can find at least one positive/hopeful outcome.

Presenter shared a story of a student who felt hopeless and negative, but during the exercise, the student became a leader a saw himself as part of the solution/having a platform. During the reflection part, the student felt comfortable sharing his personal story.

**Q2. In Nashua, there are two high schools and three middle schools. They all do YRBS, the schools get their individual results, but these have never been shared school-by-school with the communities. How do you handle this pushback?**

A2. In VT, the schools get their individual results and usually we only compare these to the state results, not to neighboring communities. We also present the option of using any level of data (state or countywide). The students usually want to see the school data because they feel more ownership of it.

**Q3. How does VT fund middle school YRBS?**

A3. Through the Department of Health.

**Q4. Can anyone share experiences they have had using data to drive decisions among youth/younger adults?**

A4.

- Sullivan county participant shared that an important thing to remember is to look at where you are located. Some communities are very self-contained, but others cross town or state lines. Looking at those communities as a whole is helpful.
- At the NH Teen Institute, the Leaders in Prevention (LIP) Program in middle schools has kids attend a Leaders in Prevention weekend to go through a public health planning

process to talk about what's going on in their community, root causes, action plans, impacts, etc. We have not brought in as much town-specific data, because we have students coming in from out of town or out of state. One of the groups did a vaping awareness project that WMUR featured. It began with the small group of students from the retreat, but they brought it back to their schools, and then more students became involved. Another example was shared of students focusing on bullying who put together a festival for their entire community (their town and 8 surrounding towns) 2-300 people attended. WMUR attended and reported on it. Diversity was another subject that was discussed at LIP.

**Q5. Organizations thinking about bringing these ideas back to their organizations?**

A5.

- SMPC shared idea to bring parents and students together to discuss stress.
- Coalition in Keene plans to bring these ideas back to the Keene area.
- Winnepesaukee PHR is having a Youth Regional Summit that is being planned and facilitated by youth.

**Q5. How fast does this work using YRBS data?**

A5. It is often very slow!

**Discussion:**

- In Manchester, we have many different high schools, so we do a district-wide analysis. There are some wealthier communities in the district, and the students mostly found that all communities, regardless of wealth, experienced the same problems.
- Participant shared experience of doing similar work. Some students shared that they only attended in order to skip class. Once the students attended and felt empowered, they became more involved in the work.
- Participant shared idea of saying "youth of promise" instead of "youth at risk".