

# “Brave Little State” has BIG plans for Workforce Development

# About Prevention Works!VT

We are a statewide network of community prevention leaders and staff, prevention specialists, service providers and individuals with an interest in and a commitment to, substance misuse prevention across the state of Vermont. PW!VT partners help shape how substance misuse prevention is valued in VT and lend their commitment, knowledge and action to strengthen the prevention and public health community in Vermont.

- ❖ **Vision Statement:** PW!VT is a strong, sustainable and unified system to prevent substance misuse in Vermont.
- ❖ **Mission Statement:** PW!VT seeks to unify voices and be a guiding force on policy, practice and attitudes that promote substance misuse prevention, health and wellness in Vermont.

# Overview Of Today's Presentation

- Share information about our Brave Little State including what makes it special, and some demographic information.
- Describe the Vermont Working Landscape
- Describe the process for Workforce Development planning
- Share data sources used to inform the planning process
- Provide an overview of the VT Workforce Development Strategic Plan
- Present other Workforce Development strategies happening in VT

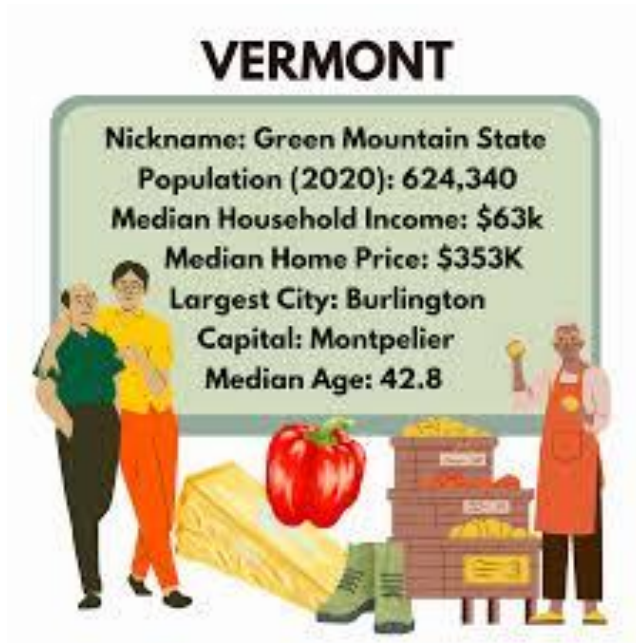
# Welcome To Vermont



PREVENTION  
WORKS<sup>VT</sup>



# Workforce Landscape



“Living in Vermont” – the Honest Local

**Total population = 647,064 (2022)**

2nd least populous state behind Wyoming

**Poverty Rate = 10.53% overall**

Child poverty rate in 2023 is 10%.

# Vermont Workforce Landscape

The unemployment rate in April of 2024 was 2.1%  
(New England 3.3 %, US 3.9%)

→ Employee of private company workers	54.7%
→ Private not-for-profit wage and salary workers	16.9%
→ Local, state, and federal government workers	14.4%
→ Self-employed in own incorporated business workers	4.8%
→ Self-employed in own non-incorporated business workers and unpaid family workers	9.2%

# The Prevention Workforce in Vermont

## ❖ Community Based Staff



- The majority of the workforce is 36 years of age and older. Almost half are over the age of 50.
- More than 80% of the workforce is employed in full time positions.
- Three quarters (76%) work in rural settings. ( 10% in urban, 10% suburban)
- The percentage of mid-career professionals (6-10 years) is decreasing with almost half of the workforce in the early career bracket of 1-5 years.
- One-third have plans to leave the prevention field within the next three years. Of those planning to leave, most were newer professionals with five or fewer years of experience.
- Those with 10 plus years of experience were less likely to be satisfied with the professional development opportunities.



# The Prevention Workforce in Vermont

## ❖ School Based Staff



- One third have been in the field for less than 10 years. 19% less than 5 years. 14% 5-10 years and 18% 11-25 years
- The majority work a full time position (89%)
- 20% were dissatisfied with the opportunities for career advancement
- The challenges most identified by school based staff were supervision/mentoring and time/access/funding for professional development.
- When asked if they had any plans to leave their position in the next 3 years, 10% said yes and 37% said maybe. Of those yes or maybe, 20% were planning on leaving the prevention field.

# Vermont Workforce Development: Planning Process

**Goal:** To increase the capacity of qualified prevention professionals to address prevention needs in their communities

Prevention Works! VT and its partners in workforce development will work toward:

- Broadening the concept of workforce
- Strengthening the workforce
- Initiating structures to support the workforce

## The Workforce Development Advisory Group: **The HEART** of the planning process



### Goals of WFD Advisory Group:

- 1) To identify strengths and gaps in collaboration, course work, inclusion of other aligned professions
- 2) To develop a strategic plan
- 3) To support and coordinate with regional entities to meet the needs identified by regional grantees/subgrantees

# Foundational to Workforce Development: The Strategic Plan

Step 1: Review WFD surveys and needs assessments. Review workforce-related strategic plan goals from other states.

Step 2: Identify additional partners and stakeholders

Step 3: Identify available resources and existing initiatives to address workforce needs

Step 4: Explore a range of strategies

# Step 1: The Assessment Process

Review WFD surveys and needs assessments as well as workforce-related strategic plan goals from other states.

List of assessment sources

- NEPTTC VT Workforce Survey Result 2023-Thirty-three VT respondents
- New England Prevention Technology Transfer Center Workforce Assessment-Public Consulting Group LLC, Happens every 2 years, Comparison of
- Final School Based Prevention Staff Survey Results 2023- Sixty-three respondents
- College based staff survey-low response rate

Other state's WFD plans reviewed: Hawaii, South Carolina, Maine

# Example Of Feedback

Activity: Strengths, Challenges and Opportunities  
Jamboard



## Step 2: Identify additional partners and stakeholders

“Additional partners or stakeholders that share an interest in prevention workforce goals can bring an important perspective to the discussion or may be able to secure other resources or value to the work”.

### Prevention Aligned Professions

- ❖ Certified Health Education Specialists
- ❖ Youth Development
  - Vermont After School
  - Career Centers
  - SVT Area Health Education Centers
  - HOSA

Invited new partners join:

Susan White SVT AHEC and

Roy Belcher-DSU WFD Committee

## Step 3: Identify available Resources and Existing Initiatives

It was critical for the process to include reviewing existing initiatives addressing WFD and to inventory resources that could support or enhance our process or knowledge of the workforce.

- Were there other organizations that looked at WFD in aligned fields? Or was there credentialling in fields that had similar workforce opportunities?
- Did public health organizations have initiatives that we could piggy back on rather than create our own?
- Were there resources from the VT Department of Labor or other state government departments that could be helpful to our workforce?

Utilized collaborative process to engage Advisory Group through google drive and [spreadsheets](#).

Example of Existing Initiative: VT HOSA



## Step 4: Explore a Range of Strategies

**Engage:** Engagement strategies consist of outreach and related activities that increase awareness, knowledge, and interest in various types of health careers and/or practices in specific fields or geographic regions.

**Recruit:** Recruitment strategies encourage and/or incentivize individuals to pursue careers in specific fields or geographic areas.

**Train, coach, and monitor:** Training strategies build competencies of both the existing and the future workforce, supporting successful implementation and service delivery with acceptable fidelity.

**Retain and advance:** Retention strategies encourage and/or incentivize individuals in health careers to continue to work in rural areas. Relatedly, advancement strategies promote individuals to continue to learn new skills and to achieve more advanced scopes of practice or levels of licensure.

**Expand:** Use technologies to expand the reach of trained professionals to provide care, supervision, and mentorship.



## Tapping Into New England PTTC

- Review data already gathered regarding gaps in services, goals, and strategies
- Select Strategies that best suit the data and trends
- Ensure local conditions and gaps in service are being met by strategies selected
- Identify steps to accomplish selected strategies
- Identify partners to call into the planning process now and overtime
- Plan steps for refinement

Goal: [Insert Goal]						
Objective #1						
Strategy						
Activities	Timeline		Who Is Responsible ?	External Partners	Cost and Possible Funding Source	Track Progress (metrics/ indicators)
	Start Date	End Date				

Objective #2						
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# Developing & Refining the Strategic Plan

## Goal One: RECRUIT.

To implement systematic recruitment strategies for the prevention workforce

**Objective: Increase the awareness of prevention as a career opportunity to aligned professionals, high school students and college students**

*Strategy:* Promote and educate about a prevention career to students at high schools, colleges and universities

# Developing & Refining the Strategic Plan

## Goal Two: RETAIN.

To enhance the infrastructure available to support and coordinate prevention workforce development

**Objective #1: Increase the knowledge and support to provide long term benefits**

*Strategy:* Gather information on long term benefits and provide information to organization leadership

**Objective #2: Increase support for certification/credentialing and advancement for prevention professionals**

*Strategy:* Provide information on and support to the Certified Prevention Specialist Certification in Vermont

*Strategy:* Explore and share alignment with other credentials  
(example Certified Health Education Specialists)

# Developing & Refining the Strategic Plan

## Goal Three: SUPPORT.

To support existing prevention professionals in achieving career goals

**Objective #1: Increase the availability of resources and opportunities for all career levels of prevention professionals**

*Strategy:* Develop resource hub for all level of careers (newly hired, mid career and advanced career)

*Strategy:* Identify and support the professional development goals of advanced career prevention professionals

**Objective #2 Increase supports for new prevention staff**

*Strategy:* Develop outline of required education for prevention workers starting out in the field

# Status of the Workforce Development Strategic Plan Today: Where are we now?

**WHAT IS SUBSTANCE MISUSE PREVENTION?**

It's an arm of public health that works to delay the onset of substance use, and prevent substance misuse by reducing harms through:

- Partnerships
- Education
- Community engagement
- Public policy
- Proven best practices

**WHICH SKILLS CAN HELP?**

- Communication/marketing
- Community organizing
- Health and wellness knowledge
- Ability to work with youth/families
- Empathy

**CHOOSE A CAREER THAT COULD CHANGE LIVES:**

## SUBSTANCE MISUSE PREVENTION

**PREVENTION WORKS!**

**WHAT ARE SOME CAREER SETTINGS?**

- COMMUNITY**
  - Prevention coalitions
  - Educational programs
  - Communications and marketing
  - Policy Development
- GOVERNMENT**
  - State and local health departments
- COLLEGES**
  - Counseling/Support services
- PRIMARY/SECONDARY SCHOOL**
  - School based prevention
  - Youth activities and groups
  - Classroom counseling and instruction

**WHAT'S A PATH TO FOLLOW?**

**COLLEGE MAJORS:**

- Education
- Public health
- Health sciences
- Social work
- Communicational/marketing
- Human services
- Psychology
- Youth development

**ALIGNED CAREERS:**

- Community health worker
- Educator
- Health care
- Social worker
- Recreation
- Counselor
- After school program staff

**IMPROVE THE HEALTH AND WELL-BEING OF COMMUNITIES**

Learn more at [preventionworksvermont.org](http://preventionworksvermont.org)



## CONSIDER A CAREER IN SUBSTANCE MISUSE PREVENTION!

**WHAT IS SUBSTANCE MISUSE PREVENTION?**

An arm of public health that works to delay the onset of substance use, and prevent substance misuse by reducing harms through:

- Partnerships
- Education
- Community engagement
- Public policy
- Proven best practices

**WHAT MIGHT MY CAREER LOOK LIKE?**  
*(see duties vary depending on where you work)*

- COMMUNITY**
  - Prevention coalitions
  - Educational programs
  - Communications and marketing
  - Policy development
- GOVERNMENT**
  - State and local health departments
- COLLEGES**
  - Counseling/Support services
- PRIMARY/SECONDARY SCHOOL**
  - School-based prevention
  - Youth activities and groups
  - Classroom counseling and instruction

**NO 2 DAYS ARE THE SAME!**

**PATHS TO THIS CAREER:**

**COLLEGE MAJORS:**

- Education
- Public health
- Health sciences
- Social work
- Communications/marketing
- Human services
- Psychology
- Youth development

**ALIGNED CAREERS:**

- Community health worker
- Educator
- Health care
- Social worker
- Recreation
- Counselor
- After school program staff

**FIND OUT MORE ABOUT THIS FULFILLING CAREER**





**PREVENTION WORKS!**  
[preventionworksvermont.org](http://preventionworksvermont.org)

## My First Year in Prevention:


### A Guide to Learning the Field

for the Vermont prevention professional





**New England (HHS Region 1)**  
**PTTC** Prevention Technology Transfer Center Network  
Funded by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration



**SAMHSA**  
Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration

\*\* and the Vermont Prevention Hub



# Complementary Workforce Development Strategies

- Statewide Prevention Conference
- Development and promotion of a specialized hub for prevention workforce
- Development of prevention workforce materials, infographic and other educational and promotional materials
- Embed prevention workforce development into aligned professions such as school based prevention staff and college prevention staff
- Raise the profile of prevention profession within the state among stakeholders groups, state level decision makers, state government departments.
- Continue to manage, promote and expand the Certified Prevention Specialist Program



**Lessons learned and next steps.....**

# THANK YOU

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The content shared during our presentation can be found  
[HERE](#)