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Agency Releases Targeted Tobacco Use Prevention Grants Student Survey Shows Regions of the State with High Tobacco Use

BARRE – The Vermont Agency of Education today announced a new method of school-based tobacco use prevention grants, by highlighting the significant disparity across the state regarding youth smoking rates.

“When it comes to youth smoking in Vermont, it is truly a good-news, bad-news story,” said Bob Uerz, the Agency’s Tobacco Use Prevention Coordinator. “Overall, we have reduced smoking by youth statewide, but in some regions of the state, almost a quarter of our students identify themselves as smokers.”

Great strides have been made in reducing youth smoking through school and community efforts since 1995, when Vermont’s youth smoking rate was 38%. Today that rate¹ is 13%, according to the 2013 Vermont Youth Risk Behavior Survey. However, there are regions of the state wherein this is still a significant challenge, as rates range from a high of 24% to a low of 6% (See List and Map on following pages).

The Vermont Tobacco Control Program goal is to reduce Vermont’s youth smoking rate to 10% by 2020.

Today, tobacco remains the single most significant cause of preventable mortality and morbidity in Vermont. Approximately 90% of adult smokers report that they began to use tobacco before their 18th birthday, according to the American Lung Association. Therefore, delaying the onset of smoking initiation and use by students is a critical priority.

In January the Agency will release a new Tobacco Use Prevention Grant, focusing on the supervisory unions with high rates of youth smoking and poverty measures, which also demonstrate readiness for success. This grant will require supervisory union-wide activity in each of six strategy areas of *curriculum, assessment, policy, youth asset development, teen cessation,* and *community engagement* to address existing youth smoking rates, and to proactively address e-cigarette use among youth over the next four years.

In the past, noncompetitive, non-targeted grant making offered funds to all Supervisory Unions and School Districts across Vermont to address this serious problem by requiring them to implement at least one single strategy from the aforementioned list. In 2015-2016, 52

¹ Vermont state rate of high school students who have smoked (1+ times) in the last 30 days.

Supervisory Unions and School Districts were funded with twenty (20) receiving the base amount of \$5,800.

This new approach, still funded by the Master Tobacco Settlement (national dollars provided to Vermont from the tobacco industry) will employ a competitive process to rank Supervisory Unions for awarding four year grants of \$30,000 each beginning in July 1, 2016.

Secretary Holcombe said, "By targeting the regions with the greatest need and providing each with sufficient resources to really make a difference, we hope to have a greater impact on this problem."

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Connect with the Vermont Agency of Education on Twitter (<https://twitter.com/VTEducation>), Facebook (www.facebook.com/VTEducation), and YouTube (www.youtube.com/VTEducation).

Vermont Youth Smoking Rate by Supervisory Union/School District (highest percentage to lowest percentage)

HIGH SCHOOL RESULTS

	Supervisory Union Name	%
31	North Country SU	24%
39	Rutland-Windsor SU	24%
29	Orange North SU	21%
20	Franklin Northeast SU	20%
35	Orleans Southwest SU	20%
50	Windsor Northwest SU	20%
21	Franklin Northwest SU	19%
27	Orange East SU	18%
47	Windham Northeast SU	18%
1	Addison Northeast SU	17%
36	Rutland Northeast SU	17%
42	Washington West SU	17%
48	Windham Southeast SU	17%
25	Lamoille North SU	16%
34	Orleans Central SU	16%
46	Windham Central SU	16%
57	Blue Mountain SU	16%
40	Rutland City SD	15%
4	Addison-Rutland SU	14%
12	Chittenden East SU	14%
26	Lamoille South SU	14%
30	Orange-Windsor SU	14%
38	Rutland Southwest SU	14%
41	Washington Northeast SU	14%
6	Bennington-Rutland SU	13%
10	Milton SD	13%
13	Chittenden Central SU	13%
28	Orange Southwest SU	13%
45	Montpelier SD	13%
49	Windham Southwest SU	13%
53	Windsor Southwest SU	13%

51	Windsor Central SU	12%
54	Hartford SD	12%
56	Springfield SD	12%
61	Barre SU	12%
3	Addison Central SU	11%
23	Franklin Central SU	11%
32	Washington Central SU	11%
43	Washington South SU	11%
62	Rivendell SD	11%
2	Addison Northwest SU	10%
5	Southwest Vermont SU	10%
7	Colchester SD	10%
15	Burlington SD	10%
17	Winooski SD	9%
37	Rutland Central SU	9%
52	Windsor Southeast SU	9%
16	South Burlington SD	8%
55	SAU #70	7%
14	Chittenden South SU	6%
22	Franklin West SU	6%
24	Grand Isle SU	#
19	Essex North SU	#
33	Rutland South SU	NR
18	Essex-Caledonia SU	NR
11	St. Johnsbury SD	NR
9	Caledonia Central SU	NR

NR not reported

too few students

*Caledonia North SU and Essex Town SD
do not have schools

MIDDLE SCHOOL RESULTS

The Vermont state rate of middle school students who have smoked (1+ times) in the last 30 days is 2%. Six supervisory unions had smoking rates over 5%; 19 supervisory unions had smoking rates among middle school students of less than 2%.

	Supervisory Union Name	%
25	Lamoille North SU	7%
29	Orange North SU	7%
28	Orange Southwest SU	6%
1	Addison Northeast SU	5%
35	Orleans Southwest SU	5%
47	Windham Northeast SU	5%
3	Addison Central SU	4%
5	Southwest Vermont SU	4%
8	Caledonia North SU	4%
17	Winooski SD	4%
20	Franklin Northeast SU	4%
21	Franklin Northwest SU	4%
36	Rutland Northeast SU	4%
40	Rutland City SD	4%
30	Orange-Windsor SU	4%
48	Windham Southeast SU	4%
49	Windham Southwest SU	4%
53	Windsor Southwest SU	4%
61	Barre SU	4%
27	Orange East SU	3%
31	North Country SU	3%
34	Orleans Central SU	3%
52	Windsor Southeast SU	3%
13	Chittenden Central SU	2%
15	Burlington SD	2%
23	Franklin Central SU	2%
54	Hartford SD	2%
56	Springfield SD	2%
7	Colchester SD	1%
12	Chittenden East SU	1%
26	Lamoille South SU	1%
14	Chittenden South SU	1%

24	Grand Isle SU	#
38	Rutland Southwest SU	#
50	Windsor Northwest SU	#
51	Windsor Central SU	#
4	Addison-Rutland SU	#
6	Bennington-Rutland SU	#
10	Milton SD	#
22	Franklin West SU	#
32	Washington Central SU	#
42	Washington West SU	#
43	Washington South SU	#
45	Montpelier SD	#
55	SAU #70	#
59	Essex Town SD	#
2	Addison Northwest SU	#
16	South Burlington SD	#
19	Essex North SU	#
37	Rutland Central SU	#
62	Rivendell SD	#
41	Washington Northeast SU	#
46	Windham Central SU	#
39	Rutland-Windsor SU	#
11	St. Johnsbury SD	NR
9	Caledonia Central SU	NR
33	Rutland South SU	NR
18	Essex-Caledonia SU	NR

NR Not reported

Too few students

Blue Mountain SU had no school