



YOUTH FOCUSED BREAKOUT SESSIONS

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for more information and resources

We asked presenters of breakout sessions at this year's conference about whether the content they planned to present would be a good fit for a youth audience. The sessions that presenters indicated were youth-friendly are listed below, along with any notes or information breakout session presenters thought would be relevant for groups of youth thinking about attending the sessions. Several sessions at this year's conference are not only appropriate for youth, but presented by student coalition members!



Day One of the conference will be laid out with youth attendees in mind. Youth-oriented sessions will be hosted in Weidner/Clarke/Edelbrooke room all day. There will also be a performance by Hip-Hop artist, Thomas X, intended for a youth audience following Day One conference sessions. For more information, or a schedule of Day One activities, visit, mnprc.org/conference-youth.

Youth-oriented Breakout Sessions

Alternatives to Suspension for Commercial Tobacco Use in K-12 Settings **Wilson, Wed. Oct. 16, 10am**

Marisa Katz & Liz Johnson - Public Health Law Center & American Lung Association

Schools continue to be on the frontlines battling the youth vaping epidemic, contending with students who are addicted to high-nicotine products such as e-cigarettes and oral pouches. But punitive responses to commercial tobacco-free policy infractions, like suspension and expulsion, isolate—rather than support—youth who struggle with nicotine addiction. Given the impact of addiction on the adolescent brain, as well as the outsized role the tobacco industry plays in predatorily marketing to youth, it is vital for schools to address policy enforcement and accountability through supportive, rather than punitive, measures. This session will briefly

address the role the tobacco industry plays in targeting youth and how schools in Minnesota are addressing youth nicotine addiction. The rest of the session will feature a panel discussion—moderated by the presenters and allowing ample time for audience engagement—addressing alternative measures to suspension, including implementation of such alternative programs, providing cessation support, and incorporating other public health best practices that prioritize the health and well-being of students.

Change the Outcome - Harm Reduction Approach to Opioid Education for Minnesota Youth

Wilson, Tues. Oct. 15, 11:30am

Megan Wagner - Change the Outcome

Come learn about how Change the Outcome, a fully grant funded and evidence based program, is partnering with schools and communities, all across Minnesota, to combat substance use disorder, overdose and death through education. In this session you will watch our documentary, Reality of Hope, learn about our curriculum, and see what our data says about our impact. Experience firsthand the power of storytelling with a screening of our documentary, "Reality of Hope," which sheds light on the realities of substance use disorder and the journey towards recovery. Additionally, delve into the compelling data that underscores the impact of our initiative, providing tangible evidence of positive outcomes and transformations within school environments. Don't miss this opportunity to learn, connect, and be inspired as we collectively work towards creating safer and healthier communities through education and proactive intervention strategies. Join us and the 90,000+ who have experienced our free program and be a part of the movement to Change the Outcome.

A note from the presenter: We love to partner with young leaders who might be interested in having our program in their schools. This would be an awesome opportunity to come learn about the work Change the Outcome has done with 90,000 students across Minnesota

Conference 101

Weidner/Clarke/Edelbrooke, Tues. Oct. 15, 9:45am

Sheila Watercott, David Olson-Iverson & Nicki Linsten-Lodge

Welcome to the 50th annual MN Prevention Program Sharing Conference! We're glad you're here, and know that navigating a professional conference has lots of nuance. This session will guide conference attendees through ways to get the most out of their experience, orient attendees to the format of the conference, provide tools to process and dissect content, and build comfortability to engage with sessions and networking. While specifically focused on youth conference attendees, this session is open to other attendees looking to orient themselves to the basics of attending this conference.

Creating Safe Spaces for Intergenerational Conversations on Tobacco and Health

Swisshelm/Whitney, Tues. Oct. 15, 1:30pm

Jonathan Rose & Mimie Mogaka - Sierra Leone Community in Minnesota

Generational conversations which happen most often spontaneously as part of living within a family and community are the primary vehicles for creating cultural identity, and for developing the personal values that stay with a person during their lifetime. From the traditional family dining table, to classrooms, to interactions with siblings and relatives, these daily conversations shape and inform us. Studies show that family, community, and societal generations do not

intentionally converse across to each other about personal habits and challenges as much as they do within their peer groups. Children rarely discuss their challenges with drugs, tobacco, or alcohol with parents or teachers unless they are discovered and have no choice. Given the importance of intergenerational conversations in personal and community growth and wellness, it is important to create and facilitate safe spaces for critical intergenerational conversations about health and substance use that otherwise will never happen spontaneously. This session will describe two different youth summit sessions, one building on the other. The second session was an assembly of diverse community stakeholders within an African/African American community to discuss the use of commercial tobacco products, and talk about advocacy to prevent youth from using these products. The format was a panel of cross-sectional stakeholders including youth, an educator, a policy maker, a family consultant, Faith leaders, and parents.

Empowering Youth to Combat E-Cigarette Waste: Insights and Strategies from the Dakota County Vape Waste Team **Bell/Alexander, Tues. Oct. 15, 1:30pm**

Elyse Levine Less, Nabiha Kashif & Mekdelawit Tesfaye - Tobacco-Free Alliance

As an innovative way to reduce youth vaping initiation and address the public health problems caused by e-cigarette product waste, Tobacco-Free Alliance created the Vape Waste Team, comprised of 12 environmentally conscious high school students from Dakota County high schools. This youth-driven team disseminated a survey in fall 2023 to address the environmental harms of e-cigarettes (more commonly referred to as vapes, disposable vapes, e-cigs). The team members purposefully emphasized that the survey was led by teenagers and had no affiliation with any official school activities or initiatives. The survey was completed by 421 students from 13 Dakota County area high schools and provided valuable insights into perceptions, disposal knowledge, and practices related to e-cigarette waste among youth. Two highlights from their survey findings include: 78% of surveyed students were unaware that vapes cannot be thrown into the household trash or recycling bins. Almost all of the students surveyed would either ignore a vape found on the ground (55%) or throw it in the trash (38%). Using the survey data, the Vape Waste Team developed targeted communication strategies aimed at raising awareness and driving positive change. The team continues to develop and disseminate messages tailored to different audiences to spark discussions around necessary policy and program changes to address the environmental harms of e-cigarettes. In this session, we will explore the Vape Waste Team's proactive approach to addressing e-cigarette waste as a model for other communities to use. We will share how this model strengthens youth engagement, discuss data collection methods and communication strategies used, and lessons learned.

A note from the presenter: We would share the same material we would provide to our general audience.

Engaging Youth in Prevention Through Music, Art, and Culture **Weidner/Clarke/Edelbrooke, Tues. Oct. 15, 11:30am**
David Olson-Iverson & Thomas Barrett - Association for Non-Smokers & Thomas X

Engaging kids in prevention is all about relationships and interest. Music can be an effective tool to relate to others, motivate behavior change, and prevent substance use initiation. This session will highlight a collaboration between Deer River High School students, Hip-hop artist Thomas X, and local prevention advocates to create a powerful, youth-led anthem about overcoming

challenges and embracing change. The anthem, New Day, will be shown during the presentation. Presenters will discuss how student-created content and music can be utilized to successfully engage youth in prevention work in person, online and in social media.

Next-Gen Nicotine: Exploring Flavors, Formats, and Future Prevention

Bell/Alexander, Tues. Oct. 15, 11:30am

Willow Najjar Anderson & Molly Schmidtke - Public Health Law Center & Association for Nonsmokers Minnesota

This session has two parts designed to provide prevention professionals with the latest insights and strategies to counter the evolving commercial tobacco product landscape. Part One focuses on the rise of emerging commercial tobacco products like flavored vapes and nicotine pouches, and tobacco industry marketing strategies. Exploring how these products are promoted and made accessible online, this presentation highlights significant challenges for prevention professionals, especially regarding underage appeal. Attendees will understand these marketing tactics and gain practical knowledge to counteract misleading campaigns. Part Two examines the regulatory environment for these emerging commercial tobacco products. The FDA has authorized 34 e-cigarettes for sale, only four of which are menthol, yet the market is flooded with flavored products. This segment explores discrepancies between regulatory approvals and market realities, to uncover why and how unauthorized products persist. Potential actions to reduce these products' availability will also be discussed. By the end, prevention professionals will be better equipped with knowledge and tools to address sophisticated marketing of harmful commercial tobacco products and navigate the regulatory landscape to protect public health.

A note from the presenter: Individuals interested in the intersection of public health and law may find this session informative. While not specifically targeted towards youth, the session will cover topics in which young people are often experts and exposed to, such as emerging tobacco and nicotine products. The session will also provide examples of how the industry engages in youth-oriented marketing and manipulation.

Participatory Budgeting & Opioid Settlements: How to co-create and fund prevention strategies with the community

Mitchell/Schilplin, Wed. Oct. 16, 10:00am

Noelle Harden - University of Minnesota Extension

Public funding sources such as opioid settlements often come with an impetus to involve community members in budget decisions, but little guidance about how to do so. In this interactive session, we will draw on lessons from the fields of participatory budgeting and participatory grantmaking to explore how these techniques can be used to involve more people in decisions about money in the context of substance abuse prevention. Attendees will gain an understanding of how to use participatory methods in any budgeting process through hands on activities and personal reflection that connect concepts to real scenarios. Attendees will also learn about specific examples of how counties in Minnesota are using a variety of engagement methods in the allocation of opioid settlement funding. We welcome all attendees with any level of prior knowledge to this fun and highly interactive session!

A note from the presenter: Youth have an important voice to contribute to decisions about opioid settlements and other funding sources. I will feature at least one example of a youth-led participatory budgeting effort with positive health outcomes during my session.

Preventing Substance Misuse through Student-Led Podcasting

Weidner/Clarke/Edelbrooke, Tues. Oct. 15, 1:30pm

Emily Wheeler, Megan Wheeler & Michelle Esquivel - Martin

County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition

"Coffee and Clarity: Preventing Substance Misuse" is a student-led podcast aimed at engaging youth in discussions on substance misuse prevention. This session will share the journey of creating our podcast, which provides educational content to peers, parents, educators, and community leaders. Our podcast addresses substance use trends, prevention strategies, personal stories of resilience, and much more. By leveraging student perspectives, we foster a peer-to-peer learning environment that empowers youth to actively participate in prevention efforts. The podcast is designed to reduce stigma and provide information in a convenient, judgment-free format, allowing anyone to listen without fear. Not only has the podcast increased our community impact, but it has also engaged our coalition members and attracted new partners. By inviting adults outside the coalition to speak on various topics, we have enriched our content and expanded our network of supporters and collaborators. Our presentation will honor the past by reflecting on the evolution of substance misuse prevention, celebrate the present by showcasing our innovative podcasting approach, and build the future by inspiring attendees to adopt digital media strategies for youth-led prevention initiatives. Participants will learn about developing podcast content, technical production aspects, and strategies for engaging diverse audiences. We will discuss the podcast's community impact and share lessons learned. Attendees will gain practical insights on implementing similar youth-led initiatives using digital platforms to amplify prevention messages.

Prevention of Online Harms Affecting Young People

Bell/Alexander, Tues. Oct. 15, 9:45am

Maree Hampton - Digital Wellbeing Solutions

It is no doubt that our tech-filled world offers tremendous benefits. And yet, our children and young people have vulnerabilities that make them more susceptible to the harms of technology. Technology apps are designed to hold our attention for as long as possible and our children are particularly vulnerable to this design because of their developing brains. Sadly, the headlines remind us of the devastating effects of online harms such as when youth access drugs laced with fentanyl via social media, or youth participation in deadly online challenges. Depression, suicide ideation, eating disorders or addiction to pornography are some of the harmful trends related to technology use that we must take actions to reverse. It is hard not to feel dispirited and hopeless when facing the challenges of our 24/7 tech-filled world. We wonder what we can do to halt or prevent these trends from continuing. And, we see children younger and younger receiving smartphones. The good news is that we can all take action. Those in the prevention field have a particularly important role! In March, 2024, Jonathan Haidt, author and social scientist released, "The Anxious Generation: How the Great Rewiring of Childhood is Causing an Epidemic of Mental Illness." Haidt summarizes the research and describes four foundational harms of a phone-based childhood: social deprivation, sleep deprivation, attention fragmentation, and addiction. He calls on all of us to play a role in prevention. He provides action steps for parents, educators, schools, legislators, and young people. In this presentation, an overview of the four harms will be provided as well as the recommended action steps for prevention practitioners. Prevention strategies will be shared, and small group activities will provide participants with the opportunity to consider

how to bring prevention of online harms into their work as prevention specialists. Honoring the past will be highlighted by application of prevention strategies in substance abuse to strategies of online harms (i.e. positive social norms). Celebrating the present will be highlighted by the calls for action from the Surgeon General and scientists like Haidt. Building the future will be highlighted by specific action steps that we can all take to reverse the negative trends associated with technology misuse and overuse.

Youth Voices Speaking Truth to Big Tobacco

Wilson, Wed. Oct. 16,

Chelsey Skogen & Liz Johnson - American Lung Association

11:15am

Our initial goal in collecting youth responses to the question: “How have commercial tobacco and vaping impacted your life?” was to share these perspectives with decision-makers. We aimed to raise awareness about how Big Tobacco is targeting young people to create lifetime customers of their harmful products. What we discovered went far beyond our initial expectations. Our findings revealed that regardless of whether a young person has vaped, they are all affected by issues related to commercial tobacco at school and home. These include health problems, addiction, and behavioral changes due to high levels of nicotine. Youth identified significant impacts on mental health, bullying related to vaping in schools, immense peer pressure to use these products, loss of friendships, and changes in family relationships caused by vaping. Public health advocates and youth leaders will lead this session where participants will: (1) Learn the latest strategies used by Big Tobacco that have resulted in a teen vaping epidemic in Minnesota. (2) Gain insights from youth perspectives on the teen vaping crisis. (3) Acquire tools and information to assess this issue within their communities and empower young people to lead efforts in addressing the teen vaping epidemic. (4) Share personal stories and contribute to the collective voice calling for an end to the sale of fruit, candy, and menthol-flavored tobacco and nicotine products. This session is highly relevant for prevention professionals working to combat substance use (and its best friend, tobacco use) among youth. Understanding the youth perspective is crucial for developing effective prevention strategies.



Are you bringing a group of youth to this year's conference?

Visit mnprc.org/conference-youth for information about the conference relevant to youth attendees, including a focus flyer on breakout sessions, youth activities, photo release forms, and more!