

OCTOBER 14-15, 2025 • THE DECC, DULUTH, MN



2025

**MINNESOTA PREVENTION
PROGRAM SHARING
CONFERENCE**

**Moving Upstream: Strengthening Connections
and Cultivating Hope in Prevention**



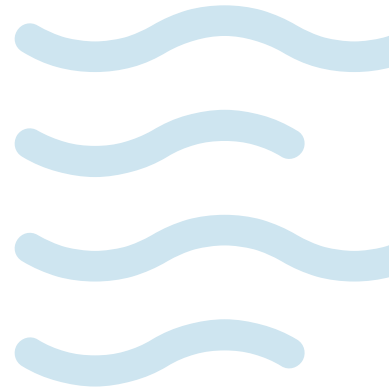
MPRC is funded by the MN Department of Human Services Behavioral Health Administration.



2025

MINNESOTA PREVENTION PROGRAM SHARING CONFERENCE

Welcome prevention champions! We are excited to spend the next two days learning, growing and sharing with you. Preventing substance misuse before it starts means looking upstream. This year's conference theme will highlight our focus on the risk and protective factors that influence substance use, provide opportunities to build connections between all sectors of our work, and invite hope as we look forward together.



CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Check-in will be open in the main lobby of the conference **from 4-6pm on Monday Oct. 13th** and **during breakfast on day one of the conference.**

TUESDAY, OCT. 14

- 07:30 AM Breakfast & Check-in
- 09:00 AM Keynote: Navigating Intergenerational Trauma: Understanding Cultural Scripts and Attachment Styles to Increase Impact
- 10:45 AM Meet Your Region Networking
- 11:45 AM Lunch
- 12:45 PM Breakout Session 1
- 02:00 PM Breakout Session 2
- 03:15 PM Breakout Session 3
- 04:15 PM Networking Hour sponsored by Charlie Health

WEDNESDAY, OCT. 15

- 08:00 AM Breakfast
- 09:00 AM Keynote: Linking Risk and Protection Through the Social Determinants of Health
- 10:45 AM Breakout Session 4
- 11:45 AM Lunch
- 12:45 PM Breakout Session 5
- 02:15 PM Conference Close

find the conference schedule online at
mnprc.org/2025-conference-agenda

**Wi-Fi
info:**

NETWORK: MPRC2025
PASSWORD: duluth2025

KEYNOTE SESSIONS

Navigating Intergenerational Trauma: Understanding Cultural Scripts and Attachment Styles to Increase Impact

Tuesday, October 14th - 9:00am



Stacey Diane A. Litam, PhD

Join Dr. Stacey Diane Arañez Litam as she unpacks the origin of scarcity mindsets, unhelpful relationship tendencies, and limiting cultural scripts. Informed by Litam's lived experiences as a Filipina and Chinese immigrant as well as by her professional identities as a professor, researcher, and mental health clinician, this keynote provides the foundation for timely conversations, offers a new framework for cultivating relationships that heal our wounded inner child, and centers the importance of generational healing, personal growth, and unlocking the power behind our stories.

Dr. Stacey Diane Arañez Litam (she/her/siya) is an Associate Professor of counselor education at Cleveland State University, licensed professional clinical counselor and supervisor, and a clinical sexologist with the American Board of Sexology. An immigrant of Chinese and Filipina descent, she is internationally recognized for her research on COVID-19 related discrimination and its impact on Asian American mental health. She has published over 50 peer-reviewed articles with work archived in the World Health Organization's Global Database on COVID-19 literature.

A keynote speaker and racial equity strategist, Dr. Litam specializes in decolonizing mental health, mental health equity and belonging, sexual wellbeing, intergenerational trauma, and Asian American concerns. She has been featured in the White House, Forbes Health, NPR, NBC, the BBC, Discover Magazine, The Filipino Channel, and legislative arenas, partnering with Fortune 500 companies, professional sports teams, and policymakers. Dr. Litam has received numerous prestigious awards and provides clinical trainings, workshops, and keynotes on topics including anti-Asian hate, decolonizing mental health frameworks, equity and belonging, intergenerational trauma, sexual wellbeing, discrimination, and sex trafficking. Her book, "Patterns That Remain: A Guide to Healing for Asian Children of Immigrants" combines research, storytelling, and history to provide a practical framework to heal diasporic wounds, break intergenerational trauma patterns, and strengthen relationships.

KEYNOTE SESSIONS

Linking Risk and Protection Through the Social Determinants of Health

Wednesday, October 15th - 9:00am

Albert Gay, MS



Within this keynote address, the speaker aims to inform both public health professionals and youth participants about how upstream factors affect downstream health outcomes. Discover how the places we live, learn, work, and play shape our relationship with substances and our capacity for health and wellbeing. This keynote examines the powerful connection between social determinants of health and substance misuse prevention. It provides a framework for understanding how environmental, economic, and social factors link to the Risk and Protective Theory developed by Hawkins and Catalano and thereby

influence vulnerability and resilience in communities. Participants will gain insights into how addressing root causes through policy and community-level interventions can create lasting prevention outcomes that extend far beyond our lifetimes and for future generations to come.

Albert Gay, is a national trainer and consultant in the field of substance use prevention. Over the years, he has worked on many federal, state, county, and local level projects. While working within the field of public health, he has directed substance misuse and HIV prevention strategies. He has trained healthcare workers, the United States military, and multiple coalitions within a collaborative strategy framework. Within his community, Albert has served as chair and coordinator for local prevention coalitions. Albert is dedicated to ministry and faith-based initiatives, youth work, public health and mental health promotion, cultural humility, and organizational development.

Albert Gay is currently the President of Albert Gay Incorporated. He provides training and technical services to non-profit, faith-based, community organizations, and governmental entities.

CONFERENCE YOUTH TRACK

The Youth Track will take place concurrent to the regular conference schedule on Tuesday, October 14th.

- ✓ Find the detailed **youth track schedule** on **pages 5-6** of this program, in the right-most column.
- ✓ Find detailed information about youth track **breakout sessions** on **pages 15-16** of this program.
- 3 ✓ All Youth Track sessions will be held in **room 205**

CONFERENCE YOUTH TRACK

PATCH for Teens: Peer-to-Peer Workshop



Tuesday, October 14th - 9:00-10:30am

09:00 AM Welcome, Orientation

09:15 AM PATCH for Teens: Peer-to-Peer Workshop

10:15 AM Facilitated Networking

This session is intended to orient youth track participants to the conference, give them opportunities to connect with each other, and build leadership and self-advocacy skills related to their health and well-being.

The Workshop: The 60-minute PATCH for Teens: Peer-to-Peer Workshop is intended to empower young people, ages 12-18, to learn to manage their own health care, and equip them with the knowledge and skills needed to navigate and advocate for youth-friendly services.

Because of the workshop:

- Youth will understand the importance of learning to manage their own health care experiences.
- Youth will learn how to advocate for their own health and well being in health care settings.
- Youth will explore steps they can take to make sure they get the care they need and deserve.

NOTE: Breakout sessions in the Youth Track are open to all conference attendees, but this conference-kick off session is intended for high-school-aged conference attendees, and all other conference attendees are encouraged to attend the keynote that will also be occurring during this time.



A recorded “**Conference 101**” video is available to orient first-time attendees at mnprc.org/conference-youth



A space on the 2nd level will be open for **games, crafts and reflection activities** during breaks (see map for details).

Find information, helpful resources and more at mnprc.org/conference-youth

TUESDAY, OCTOBER 14TH

YOUTH TRACK

302

202

203

204

205

7:30

Registration, Breakfast, Exhibits Open
3RD FLOOR BALLROOM, FOYER & LOBBY, BREAKFAST SERVED IN BALLROOM

9:00

Welcome & Keynote: Navigating Intergenerational Trauma: Understanding
Cultural Scripts and Attachment Styles to Increase Impact
STACEY DIANE A. LITAM, PHD
3RD FLOOR BALLROOM

PATCH for Teens: Peer-
to-Peer Workshop
—
PATCH YOUTH
COUNCIL

10:30

Break, Exhibits Open, Refreshments available
3RD FLOOR BALLROOM AND FOYER

10:45

Meet Your Region: Networking
MN ATOD REGIONAL PREVENTION COORDINATORS
meet in 3RD FLOOR BALLROOM to find your region

11:45

Lunch, Exhibits Open
3RD FLOOR BALLROOM AND FOYER

900 SECONDS: Big
Impact in Just 15
Minutes
—

ANGELA GRAHAM AND
BRINA ELLISON

Community Walk
—

NICKI LINSTEN-LODGE,
MELISSA PERREAULT,
AND LAURA BENNETT

The Minnesota
Prevention Alliance
Foundation (MPAF) and
Supporting Cannabis
Use Prevention
Practices in Schools
—

LAURA DAAK AND KEN
WINTERS

Addressing Risk Factors
for Youth Substance
Misuse on the Road to
Prevention Success
—

KRIS REED

The Power of Peer
Connection in
Substance Misuse
Prevention
—

MORGAN MCCORKELL,
BRIGGS HELMERS, AND
CLARE STRIEMER

1:45

Break, Exhibits Open, Refreshments available
3RD FLOOR BALLROOM AND FOYER

YOUTH TRACK 205	204	203	202	302
Youth are the leaders we've been looking for — WIL SAMPSON- BERNSTROM	What Does NOT Work in Substance Misuse Prevention — KRIS REED	Speaking of Cannabis: Collaborating Regionally and Messaging Purposefully on a Campaign for Prevention — JENNA OLSON, MARY PARSATOON, ANDREA OREST, MAGGIE MYERS	An Updated Resource for Prevention Professionals: How the New Substance Use in Minnesota (SUMN.org) Website Can Help You Find Your Community Data — JACQUELYN FREUND	The PAUSE Process: Strengthening Protective Factors Through Connection — MERRI GUGGISBERG
Break, Exhibits Open 3RD FLOOR BALLROOM AND FOYER				
IGNITE-IFY Youth Transformation — MEGAN JENSON AND KAREN PIFHER	Introduction to the Minnesota Prevention Alliance (MPA) Coalition and the Drug Free Communities (DFC) Grant Program AND Reducing Youth Substance Misuse through Positive Community Norms — LAURA DAAK AND ANGELA GRAHAM, JASON MCCOY	Leading from Within: Aligning Leadership + Values to Transform Communities AND Upstander Behavior: Being More Than a Bystander — NICKI LINSTEN-LODGE, LAURA BENNETT, AND GINA SCHOENFELD, DAVID ANDERSON	Fear Appeals in Prevention: Considerations and Alternatives for Working with Youth and Partners AND Rethinking the Mock Crash: Unintended Harm, Unclear Impact — MADELINE BREMEL, PATTI SMITH	The Youths: Building Upstream Solutions Through Youth-Led Prevention, Leadership, and Belonging — STACI ALLMARAS
Social Hour sponsored by Charlie Health, Refreshments available 3RD FLOOR BALLROOM AND FOYER				

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15TH

	302	202	203	204	205
8:00	Breakfast, Exhibits Open 3 RD FLOOR BALLROOM				
9:00	Keynote: Linking Risk and Protection Through the Social Determinants of Health ALBERT GAY, MS 3RD FLOOR BALLROOM				
10:30	Break, Exhibits Open, Refreshments available 3RD FLOOR BALLROOM AND FOYER				
10:45	Synergy in Prevention: How the Communities That Care Model Complements the Strategic Prevention Framework LIL PINERO AND SHONEE PHILLIPS	Understanding NEAR Science: Building Self- Healing Communities — JENNA Z. SCHMIDT	An evolving industry: New trends and marketing strategies of the tobacco industry — MOLLY SCHMIDTKE	Beyond the Principal's Drawer: Using Vape Waste as a Catalyst for Policy Change — WILLOW ANDERSON AND ELYSE LESS	
11:45	Lunch, Exhibits Open, MN Prevention Achievement Award Announcements, Prizes 3RD FLOOR BALLROOM AND FOYER				

302
Getting in the Weeds: Cannabis Landscape in Minnesota, Emerging Products, & Upstream Prevention Efforts
—
HEIDI GLESMANN AND
ILIZAH WOODWARD

202
The Changing Landscape of Smoke-Free Housing in Minnesota **AND** No Constitutional Right to Smoke or Toke:
Debunking "Right to Smoke" Claims and Empowering Public Health Advocates to Strengthen Smoke-Free Laws **AND** Breathe Easy: Policies for Smokefree Outdoor Spaces
—
ALEXANDRA EBERHART AND JACLYN FRANK,
MARISA KATZ,
WILLOW ANDERSON AND KATIE ENGMAN

203
Shaping the Narrative: Statewide Cannabis Prevention Messaging
—
JADE HIPPI AND
ROSEMARY UGBOAJAH

204
From Flavor Bans to Full Prohibition: How Clay County, MN Ended the Sale of Vaping Products **AND** Protecting Youth from Commercial Tobacco: The Ball is in Your Court
—
JASON MCCOY, RACHEL CALLANAN AND
KATHLEEN STAPLETON

205

12:45

2:15

Goodbyes, Nametag drop-off, grab a snack and some hot apple cider before you go!
2ND FLOOR LOBBY

SEE YOU IN 2026



MINNESOTA PREVENTION
PROGRAM SHARING
CONFERENCE

OCT 13-14, 2026
ST. CLOUD, MN

EXHIBITORS



Don't miss exhibit booths in the 3rd floor ballroom and foyer. Exhibits will be open during all meals and breaks.

find more information about exhibitors online at mnprc.org/exhibitors

Basalt Level



Quartz Level



a huge
thank you
to this year's
SPONSORS!

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

find information about breakout sessions online at mnprc.org/breakout-sessions

900 SECONDS: Big Impact in Just 15 Minutes

Angela Graham and Brina Ellison - Hubbard in Prevention, Minnesota Suicide Prevention Regional

Discover how 900 SECONDS in just 15 minutes can create big change. This program is an innovative, time-conscious social-emotional learning (SEL) program designed to equip youth with the tools they need to thrive emotionally, mentally, and socially. Grounded in the framework of Strengthen and Empower Youth, Teach Healthy Coping Skills, Provide Opportunities to Build kNowledge, and Discover Support Resources, 900 SECONDS breaks down critical life topics into short, focused lessons that are easy to implement—and impactful. This session will explore how 900 SECONDS delivers age-appropriate instruction on key topics such as managing stress, building resilience, understanding substance misuse risks, improving screentime habits, addressing bullying, and accessing support systems. Attendees will gain insights into the program's structure and learn how the micro-session format builds skills through conversation and practical strategies to bring this powerful SEL tool into their own schools and communities. Come discover how just 900 SECONDS can make a lasting difference.

Addressing Risk Factors for Youth Substance Misuse on the Road to Prevention Success

Kris Reed - Great Lakes Prevention Technology Transfer Center

How can we prevent substance misuse unless we understand what places kids at greater risk of misusing drugs? During this session, we will explore the risk factors that place youth at greater risk of substance misuse, as identified by the Social Development Research Group through systematic reviews of the research literature. Time will be spent exploring each risk factor to ensure that preventionists understand the meaning of each factor in order to address them effectively.

An evolving industry: New trends and marketing strategies of the tobacco industry

Molly Schmidtke - Association for Nonsmokers-Minnesota

The tobacco industry's marketing strategies have been constantly evolving. Previously, in-store coupons and direct mail coupons lead the promotions sent out by the industry. Now, with so much of our world being online, the tobacco industry has shifted to this space as well. Instead of those direct mail coupons, the industry has shifted to email subscriptions, online sales and rewards programs. Along with the shift in coupons, so much of the marketing and promotions are happening online. Social media marketing of commercial tobacco products have exploded in recent years due to platforms like TikTok, Instagram, and Twitter. On TikTok alone, the hashtag "vape", has over 1 billion views. Influencer and celebrity depictions with products influences youth and young adults. In this session, we will be providing an overview of the latest marketing and promotional trends, social media influencers and marketing. We will also be sharing current marketing trends of the tobacco industry such as rebranding initiatives to skirt regulation, latest products and their outreach strategies.

An Updated Resource for Prevention Professionals: How the New Substance Use in Minnesota (SUMN.org) Website Can Help You Find Your Community Data

Jacquelyn Freund - EpiCog

The Substance Use in Minnesota website (sumn.org), was built in 2008 to serve as a one-stop-shop for the data needs of prevention partners in the state. And the site just got a makeover! Join us in exploring the new website features, including the ability to search resources

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

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by topic, and an automated county substance use dashboard. We'll also use the data search function to find your new 2025 Minnesota Student Survey (MSS) data, including data on substance use, mental health, protective factors, and adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). This session is also a chance to provide feedback about your community's data needs.

Beyond the Principal's Drawer: Using Vape Waste as a Catalyst for Policy Change

Willow Anderson and Elyse Less - Public Health Law Center, Tobacco-Free Alliance

The widespread presence of vapes in schools places an unfair burden on teachers and students while creating environmental waste and public health risks. Disposing of e-cigarette cartridges and "disposable" vapes is not simply littering—it's a visible symptom of a larger issue: industry practices prioritizing profit over community health, education, and environmental stewardship. These products contain toxic chemicals, heavy metals, and non-biodegradable plastics that pollute schools and divert time from academic learning. Blaming youth for use and addiction to these products and improper disposal misses the point—the real responsibility lies upstream, with manufacturers and industry. This session will explore safe vape collection in schools, and how data from school-based vape collection can drive meaningful policy change, such as flavor bans and extended producer responsibility requirements. These efforts aim to reduce nicotine product prevalence and waste in school communities and beyond. Collaboration is essential. Public health advocates, schools, waste facilities, environmental groups, and policymakers need to work together to enact sustainable solutions that truly protect children, schools, and the environment. Join this session to learn practical strategies, legal technical

assistance, and see real-world examples of communities shifting accountability to manufacturers, so students and educators are no longer left "holding the bag."

Breathe Easy: Policies for Smokefree Outdoor Spaces

Willow Anderson and Katie Engman - Public Health Law Center, Association for Nonsmokers - Minnesota

This session explores how local policy can be leveraged as a primary prevention strategy to reduce commercial tobacco and nicotine use in outdoor public spaces. Beginning with a landscape overview, Katie Engman (Program Director- Policy & Compliance, ANSR) will describe the health risks and community concerns related to smoking and vaping in outdoor public areas, emphasizing the importance of intervening upstream before health impacts occur. Willow Anderson (Senior Staff Attorney, Public Health Law Center) will guide participants through the language and scope of the Minnesota Model Policy, clarifying how legal frameworks can directly address these risks by restricting access in defined outdoor settings that go beyond the Minnesota Clean Indoor Air Act. Selena Salfen, MPH, RD (Ramsey County Public Health Specialist) will share a firsthand account of leading successful adoption policy adoption in her county. By highlighting the legal and advocacy processes, this presentation directly supports the conference theme of "Moving Upstream: Strengthening Connections and Cultivating Hope in Prevention." It demonstrates how shared efforts between, advocates, legal experts, and local public health departments can create environments that proactively prevent commercial tobacco use—laying the foundation

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

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for long-term health and community resilience. Attendees will learn (1) concrete strategies, (2) policy language, and (3) partnership models to move upstream in their own communities.

Community Walk

Nicki Linsten-Lodge, Melissa Perreault, and Laura Bennett - Pine River Backus Family Center, Polk County Public Health, Carlton-Cook-Lake-St Louis Community Health Board

Learn how to use the Community Walk Tool, an experiential community mapping and assessment process, to help to better understand your local community from a new perspective. Understand how this Community Walk process can contribute to meaningful relationships with community partners. Learn how this can create awareness of hopes, concerns, gaps and what other information might need to be gathered in order to better understand the community. Increase understanding on how this process can help you to see whose perspectives, voices, lived experiences might be missing or invisible from your current data and be inspired to create new strategies to improve health and safety in your community.

Fear Appeals in Prevention: Considerations and Alternatives for Working with Youth and Partners

Madeline Bremel - Minnesota Prevention Resource Center

Fear appeals are often used in prevention work because of the strong and overt emotional effects

they withdraw in their audience. While the effect may be powerful, these strategies can also cause harm, and don't necessarily lead to the consistent and positive behavior changes that are assumed. Furthermore, they can increase risky behavior by modeling it. While fear appeals sometimes lead to changes in perceptions or behavior, they are far less effective than strategies that model skills and solutions to limit risk behaviors. This presentation will explore the research on fear appeals in prevention work, why they should be avoided, what can be used instead, and how to begin having conversations in your community around different approaches. This session will be interactive, and will draw on conversations attendees are already having in their community around the use of fear appeals. We will explore different perspectives, compare insights, and search for common ground together.

From Flavor Bans to Full Prohibition: How Clay County, MN Ended the Sale of Vaping Products

Jason McCoy - Clay County Public Health

What began as an initiative to restrict flavored tobacco products evolved into one of the most comprehensive local tobacco control policies in Minnesota. In 2024, Clay County made the landmark decision to end the sale of all vaping products. Initially focused on reducing youth access to flavored nicotine, the proposed policy shifted dramatically thanks to ongoing education efforts, community engagement, and a surprising turn of events: a county commissioner who had originally opposed the policy became one of its strongest supporters. Influenced by data, testimony, and continued dialogue, the commissioner ultimately proposed expanding the ordinance to prohibit all vape product sales. This session will examine how persistence, partnerships, and public health framing helped

Winners of the first ever



**MN PREVENTION
ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**
will be announced during
lunch on Wednesday

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reshape the conversation and achieve a bold public health win. Presenters will share insights into the policy's evolution, the challenges of building consensus, and the strategies that led to its passage.

Getting in the Weeds: Cannabis Landscape in Minnesota, Emerging Products, & Upstream Prevention Efforts

Heidi Glesmann and Ilizah Woodward - Minnesota Department of Health, Office of Cannabis Management

The recent legalization of adult-use cannabis in Minnesota marks a major shift in the state's approach to substance use prevention and treatment efforts. Cannabis presents unique challenges due to its medicinal properties, regulation nuances, and industry practices. Organizations involved in substance regulation, prevention, education, and treatment need up-to-date information. With potential state budget deficits and federal funding cuts, addressing cannabis-related challenges will require innovation, program integration, and strong community partnerships. Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) is one agency within the state enterprise who are tasked with leading cannabis prevention efforts, especially for youth under 25. Office of Cannabis Management (OCM) oversees the development and regulation of the state's cannabis market. Presenters from MDH and OCM will provide insights into Minnesota's current cannabis landscape, prevention programming, and share their experiences working in cannabis and substance use prevention outside of Minnesota. This session will explore: (1) the current status of the adult-use cannabis market in Minnesota, (2) new and emerging cannabis products, (3) current status and future of prevention and education related cannabis programming, and (4) the move

upstream – integration of cannabis into general substance use prevention and other directly or indirectly related programming (housing, transportation, and more). While the topic will focus primarily on prevention efforts, legal adult-use of cannabis and harm reduction will be included in the presentation and discussions.

Introduction to the Minnesota Prevention Alliance (MPA) Coalition and the Drug Free Communities (DFC) Grant Program

Laura Daak and Angela Graham - Minnesota Prevention Alliance (MPA), Hubbard in Prevention (HIP) Coalition

Join Substance Use Prevention Specialists and Program Coordinators, Angela Graham and Laura Daak as they share information about the Minnesota Prevention Alliance (MPA) Coalition and the Drug Free Communities (DFC) Grant Program. MPA is working at the statewide level to reduce alcohol, tobacco and other drug use rates among youth and adults. MPA provides and/or shares advocacy information, capacity/skill building events and materials, valuable networking opportunities, relevant speakers, expertise in substance abuse prevention resources as well as partnering with many state and national organizations. The presenters will go into detail about MPA's strategic action plan and share how they can help with your local level goals in relation to substance use prevention. They will also outline how a coalition can prepare for and apply for a DFC grant application with the CDC. This session is for anyone who is interested in learning about MPA's work, becoming a member of MPA, starting a coalition or building the capacity of a funded/unfunded coalition in their community. Finally, they will briefly discuss other grant funding opportunities.

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

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Leading from Within: Aligning Leadership + Values to Transform Communities

David Anderson - Metro State University

Transforming communities impacted by issues related to mental health and substance use requires more than just programs—it demands visionary, values-driven leadership. This interactive breakout session will explore how transformational leadership principles can empower prevention professionals to inspire change, build trust, and mobilize collective action. Participants will examine the character strengths and core values that guide meaningful engagement and sustainable impact in communities. Through real-world examples, reflective exercises, and peer dialogue, attendees will gain tools to lead with purpose, align their work with their values, and ignite a shared vision for healthier communities.

No Constitutional Right to Smoke or Toke: Debunking “Right to Smoke” Claims and Empowering Public Health Advocates to Strengthen Smoke-Free Laws

Marisa Katz - Public Health Law Center

Smoking remains the leading cause of preventable death in the United States. Exposure to secondhand smoke is estimated to have killed approximately 2.5 million non-smokers in this country since 1964. State and local smoke-free laws continue to limit the extraordinary harm that commercial tobacco and cannabis smoke inflict on individuals and communities and have been a huge public health success by reducing the health harms associated with smoking and exposure to smoke. As long as smoke-free laws have been around, however, there have always been opponents of such laws who argue that they infringe upon “my right to smoke.” And, indeed, there have been “smoker protection” laws passed

and “cannabis café” bills introduced in some states that undermine otherwise strong, comprehensive smoke-free laws. This session will first provide an overview of common Constitutional claims made by smokers’ rights groups- from Free Speech to Equal Protection- and why such arguments do not create the right to smoke tobacco, cannabis, or any other substance. The presentation will next cover issues specific to Minnesota, including the product sampling exception provision in the Clean Indoor Air Act and recent litigation on this subject, as well as the challenges posed to smoke-free spaces under the cannabis law. The session will conclude with tips on how advocates can seek to strengthen smoke-free laws in their communities that will advance public health by restricting smoking and vaping.

Protecting Youth from Commercial Tobacco: The Ball is in Your Court

Rachel Callanan and Kathleen Stapleton - Public Health Law Center, Public Health Law Center

This session will be an interactive workshop reviewing your current tobacco retail licensing ordinance so please bring your computer to access your local ordinance via the internet. If you are unable to bring a computer, we will have hard copies of county ordinances. Did you know that Minnesota communities are required by the state to license tobacco retailers? The state requirement puts the ball in your local government’s court to protect youth from the predatory commercial tobacco industry. This hands-on workshop will give you the opportunity to learn what point of sale policies your local communities have in place and where the policies could be strengthened to protect youth and reduce commercial tobacco use. Presenters will help you find your local tobacco retail

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

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Youth Track Sessions

A dedicated “Youth Track” is available for student groups that attend day one of the conference (Tuesday, October 14th). The Youth Track will include a morning session for student groups and youth coalition members to get to know each other, followed by three breakout sessions described below. Other conference attendees are also welcome to attend breakout sessions in the Youth Track.

The Power of Peer Connection in Substance Misuse Prevention

Morgan McCorkell, Briggs Helmers, and Clare Striemer - Martin County Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition

Youth have a powerful influence on their peers—especially when equipped with the tools and support to lead. This session will highlight a peer-to-peer prevention model where high school students deliver engaging, age-appropriate presentations to younger students on a variety of topics related to substance misuse prevention, mental health, and overall wellness. During the 2024–2025 school year, 48 Empower students led 34 presentations across nine schools, reaching over 600 students. These presentations aren’t just informative—they’re relational. Peer-led education boosts protective factors like leadership development, positive peer modeling, and school connectedness, while addressing key risk factors such as low perception of harm, peer pressure, and poor coping strategies. Participants will learn how students are trained, how content is developed and delivered, and how peer-to-peer education promotes connection, credibility, and early

intervention. Survey data and student reflections reveal positive outcomes, including stronger refusal skills, improved understanding of substance-related risks, and greater confidence in making healthy choices. Three student presenters will lead this session, sharing what makes youth-led prevention powerful, what they’ve learned, and how others can replicate or scale similar efforts. Attendees will leave with practical tools, strategies for youth preparation, and a plan for what to start, stop, or continue doing regarding youth-led peer education in their own communities.

Youth are the leaders we’ve been looking for

Wil Sampson-Bernstrom - Minnesota Dept. of Health

Join us to learn about the youth created 988 Lifeline – Someone To Talk To peer-to-peer program, an initiative aimed at increasing awareness of mental health and substance use support for youth. This project combines the efforts of the Minnesota Department of Health’s Young Adult Contractors (YACs) and the Youth Are Life Leaders (YALL) cohort to engage young people as proactive advocates for mental health and wellbeing in their

BREAKOUT SESSIONS

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communities. Participants will learn about the trends uncovered by the YACs regarding youth perceptions of resources and how the YALL cohort has been trained to offer peer-to-peer education through the 988 Lifeline – Someone To Talk To presentation. We will explore innovative approaches to empower young leaders, enhance community engagement, and facilitate peer led conversations about mental health and substance use. Attendees will walk away with practical strategies and insights that can be implemented in their own communities to create a more supportive environment for youth mental wellbeing.

IGNITE-IFY Youth Transformation

Megan Jenson and Karen Pifher - Creating Community Consulting

What if transforming youth outcomes

wasn't about reinventing the wheel—but igniting what already exists in your community? In this high-energy, hands-on session, participants will explore Creating Community Consulting's youth centric model of community engagement and mapping—a dynamic, accessible approach to systems change that bridges community development theory with practical tools anyone can use. Designed for educators, youth advocates, nonprofit leaders, and systems thinkers, this session distills powerful concepts from change management and community engagement into clear, actionable steps. Through real-world examples, guided activity, and collaborative reflection, you'll learn how to activate the full potential of your community—whether you're just starting out or seeking to deepen your impact.

licensing ordinances and will walk you through the key elements of a good policy, a strong policy, and a “grand slam” policy. Good policies meet all the state and federal requirements for tobacco sales; a strong policy will have some additional public health protections such as stronger retailer penalties or prohibiting smoking at all tobacco retailers; while a “grand slam” policy will have public health policies that go the extra mile such as prohibiting the sale of flavored products or limiting the number of retailers. Not every community is ready for “grand slam” policies, but starting with a good policy is a key first step to protecting your youth. We can help you get there! “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has.” (Margaret Mead)

Reducing Youth Substance Misuse through Positive Community Norms

Jason McCoy - Clay County Public Health

Community Norms influence the choices we make every day. Learn how Positive Community Norms can be used to increase the behaviors we want to encourage, leaning into the good that already exists in our communities to make meaningful, lasting change. The PCN Framework is an evidence-based approach used to prevent child maltreatment, prevent teen substance use, reduce drinking and driving, and increase utilization of mental health services; it is about telling the truth with data while balancing hope and concern with the issues your community is facing. You will leave this session equipped with the tools needed to create a PCN message and the reinforcing energy of knowing the solutions exist within your community.

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Rethinking the Mock Crash: Unintended Harm, Unclear Impact

Patti Smith - Kanabec County Community Health

For decades, mock crash reenactments have been a staple in youth safety programming, designed to shock students into making better decisions behind the wheel. But are these dramatic events truly effective—or are they doing more harm than good? In this session, we will critically examine the mock crash tradition, exploring its emotional impact on students, its questionable long-term effectiveness, and the potential for unintended trauma. This presentation will challenge participants to consider alternative approaches to prevention education that engage, rather than distress, young people. It's time to rethink what works—and what doesn't—when it comes to saving lives.

Shaping the Narrative: Statewide Cannabis Prevention Messaging

Jade Hipp and Rosemary Ugboajah - Minnesota Department of Health, Neka Creative Inc.

Minnesota's recent legalization of commercial cannabis use has created an urgent need for effective, inclusive public health messaging. As cannabis products become more accessible, prevention efforts must evolve. Tailored communication strategies are essential to ensuring that accurate, relevant information reaches communities effectively. The Minnesota Department of Health (MDH) is leading two initiatives to strengthen statewide cannabis prevention messaging. The first is a short-term media campaign focused on educating youth and influential adults—including parents, teachers, and community leaders—who shape youth perspectives on substance use. This campaign prioritizes culturally responsive messaging for

American Indian/Alaskan Native populations, Black/African Americans, and Spanish-speaking communities. The second initiative is an RFP-driven project developing prevention messaging for individuals who are pregnant, planning pregnancy, breast/chestfeeding, and youth under 25. MDH's short-term campaign is in progress, with findings to be shared at the conference, including strategies for addressing biases, adapting messaging to social norms, and navigating cannabis commercialization and evolving product types. The role of influential adults in youth substance prevention will also be explored, alongside barriers they face when discussing cannabis use with youth. Presenters will discuss how insights from the short-term campaign will shape MDH's broader RFP-driven prevention efforts, guiding future messaging strategies. Attendees will gain actionable insights into fostering trust with diverse audiences and implementing culturally competent communication strategies. This session will offer practical guidance on adapting outreach, strengthening engagement, and enhancing prevention in local communities. Materials from the short-term campaign will also be readily available for organizations to integrate into their prevention efforts.

Speaking of Cannabis: Collaborating Regionally and Messaging Purposefully on a Campaign for Prevention

Jenna Olson, Mary Parsatoon, Andrea Orest, Maggie Myers - Carlton-Cook-Lake-St. Louis Community Health Board, Cook County Public Health and Human Services, St. Louis County Public Health and Human Services

In summer 2025, the Carlton-Cook-Lake-St. Louis Community Health Board (CHB) will launch Speaking of Cannabis, a regional communications campaign developed to address emerging

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knowledge gaps following cannabis legalization in Minnesota. This campaign aims to educate and empower parents, mentors, and other adults with kids in their lives across a four-county region (and beyond) to:

1. Know how cannabis can affect the developing brain.
2. Initiate supportive and effective conversations with youth about not using cannabis.
3. Practice safe storage, for those adults who use cannabis.

This session will share key strategies behind the campaign, built through MDH Infrastructure Grant funding and rooted in the foundational public health capabilities of communication, partnership, and assessment. Cross-county collaboration was central. Public health staff from six jurisdictions contributed local context and insight, ensuring the messages reflected real community needs and complemented existing efforts like school programs, coalitions, events, and peer education.

'share' v.

- a. to partake of, use, experiment, occupy, or enjoy with others
- b. to tell (thoughts, feelings, experiences, etc.) to others
- c. to post on social media

Sharing takes many forms, and we invite you to participate in all of them at our conference. Sit with strangers. Ask questions. Tell stories. Talk about your unique experiences in prevention. Learn from and with your peers, then share what you've learned - because sharing prevention grows prevention. Oh - and if you post on social media, tag us :)

To bring the campaign to life, we partnered with Sek Design Studio. Their creative process supported the team in finding the right tone—informative, non-judgmental, and rooted in public health values—and developed a visual identity, templates, and a website to support broad distribution. Evaluation efforts included collecting pre-launch feedback from regional partners and will include tracking digital engagement post-launch. Options for using surveys to assess message recall and behavior change among parents may also be explored. The campaign is designed for adaptation and scale. All materials are available as editable templates, and the website www.speakingofcannabis.org offers more information, sources, and resources for taking action.

Synergy in Prevention: How the Communities That Care Model Complements the Strategic Prevention Framework

Lil Pinero and Shonee Phillips - Minnesota Department of Health

This session explores the alignment and integration of two powerful, evidence-based prevention approaches: Communities That Care (CTC) and the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF). While each framework is grounded in public health best practices, their combined application creates a robust infrastructure for sustainable, data-driven prevention efforts. Participants will learn how CTC provides an operational model that naturally implements the five steps of the SPF—Assessment, Capacity, Planning, Implementation, and Evaluation—while infusing community ownership, tested and effective programs, and youth engagement. Using real-world examples and lessons learned from communities across the U.S., this session will highlight how CTC strengthens

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each stage of the SPF process, reinforces cultural competence and sustainability, and improves long-term prevention outcomes.

The Changing Landscape of Smoke-Free Housing in Minnesota

Alexandra Eberhart and Jaclyn Frank - Association for Nonsmokers - Minnesota

The smoke-free housing landscape in Minnesota has changed dramatically in recent years. This presentation will provide updates on Minnesota's smoke-free multi-unit housing laws and explore how recent changes intersect with existing commercial tobacco-focused protections. We will discuss effective communication strategies for educating property managers, owners, and residents of multi-unit housing on best practices for implementation, including proactive outreach through mailing, calling, and emailing. Additionally, we will provide an overview of updated resources and materials available for implementation of comprehensive smoke-free housing policies. Whether you're a seasoned advocate or new to the smoke-free housing world, this session will have something for everyone. By the end of the presentation, attendees will leave feeling empowered and ready to address challenges and opportunities in the ever-changing landscape of smoke-free housing.

The Minnesota Prevention Alliance Foundation (MPAF) and Supporting Cannabis Use Prevention Practices in Schools

Laura Daak and Ken Winters - MPA Foundation, Oregon Research Institute (MN location) & Research Advisor, MPAF

Join Substance Misuse Prevention Specialist Laura Daak and Dr. Ken Winters as they share information about the Minnesota Prevention

Alliance Foundation (MPAF)'s project, funded by the MN Department of Education (MDE), to assist MN School Districts to fulfill the MN State Statute (120B.215) cannabis prevention education requirements for the 2026-2027 school year. There are 14 requirements in the bill, all of which will be reviewed. These requirements include implementing a model program that educates students on the health risks of cannabis use and signs of addiction to cannabis; risks of using other substances; dangers of fentanyl use; how to identify and respond to a drug overdose; coping skills; and information on local services.

The PAUSE Process: Strengthening Protective Factors Through Connection

Merri Guggisberg - MKG Parent Coach

Preventing substance misuse starts with connection. In this session, participants will explore the PAUSE Process—a five-step, relationship-based framework that helps adults build protective factors in families and communities. Grounded in mindfulness and early prevention principles, the PAUSE Process (Present, Attentive, Understand, Support, Explore) equips parents, caregivers, educators, and prevention professionals with practical tools to foster emotional regulation, connection, and resilience in young people and themselves. Attendees will learn how emotionally supportive adult relationships act as a buffer against risk factors and how the PAUSE Process can be applied in schools, homes, and communities to reduce stress and promote well-being. Through story sharing, reflection, and real-world examples, this session offers a compassionate and actionable approach to upstream prevention—rooted in the belief that strong relationships and emotional awareness are essential for substance misuse prevention.

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The Youths: Building Upstream Solutions Through Youth-Led Prevention, Leadership, and Belonging

Staci Allmaras - Lakes Country Service Cooperative

Background: In rural Minnesota, youth mental health struggles, social disconnection, and limited access to inclusive extracurricular opportunities are increasing risk factors for substance misuse. Recognizing that prevention must start long before use begins, The Youths program was launched to address these upstream root causes by strengthening protective factors like belonging, connection, civic leadership, and cultural inclusion. This community-based initiative centers youth as partners in prevention and invites intergenerational collaboration across school, family, and community systems. Description of the Work: Launched in Pelican Rapids, The Youths is a youth-led, adult-supported leadership initiative designed to bridge school and community, develop civic agency, and co-create opportunities for belonging. Supported by Otter Tail County's opioid settlement funds, the program integrates the

Beyond Civics curriculum, youth-designed community action projects, and mentoring models with trusted adults. A youth advisory team meets regularly to plan prevention-based initiatives and advise on space, programming, and policy that influence local systems. Lessons Learned: This model highlights the importance of honoring youth voices in designing protective spaces and policies. Early indicators show increased civic confidence, community connection, and self-reported improvements in mental wellness and school engagement. Youth feel seen and valued, creating a foundation of trust that reduces risk factors for substance use. Adult allies report deeper understanding of youth needs and increased commitment to youth-led change. Practical Applications: Conference attendees will leave with an adaptable model for upstream youth engagement that can be scaled across rural or urban communities. Strategies include co-creating youth advisory boards, applying prevention funds to belonging-centered programming, integrating

youth

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youth voice into decision-making, and training adult mentors to shift from directive to collaborative leadership. Attendees will explore how belonging, cultural identity, and civic participation function as protective factors in substance use prevention.

Understanding NEAR Science: Building Self-Healing Communities

Jenna Z. Schmidt - FamilyWise Services

The Understanding NEAR Science: Building Self-Healing Communities presentation highlights key findings from neurobiology, epigenetics, Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACEs)/public health, and resilience research – and combines key concepts from all of these fields into a single framework, which we refer to as NEAR science. The goal of the presentation is to build a common language and understanding about these concepts of NEAR science and Self-Healing Communities as a starting point. This collection of research represents a paradigm shift in human understanding about individual and collective health and well-being. Our presenters want to acknowledge that the content may be a heavy topic as it personally impacts all of us in one way, shape or form as most of us have experienced ACEs, have loved ones or ancestors who have experienced generational and/or historical trauma. The 2025 Minnesota Prevention Program Sharing Conference's Understanding NEAR Science: Building Self-Healing Communities presentation will be used to highlight how understanding NEAR Science is important in substance use prevention work as well as many other prevention realms within our communities. Our goal is that audience members leave the presentation with a message of hope that our actions really matter and that ACEs are not destiny.

Upstander Behavior - Being More Than a Bystander

Nicki Linsten-Lodge, Laura Bennett, and Gina Schoenfeld - Pine River-Backus Family Center, Carlton-Cook-Lake-St Louis Community Health Board, Project Turnabout

Have you ever been in a situation where you thought "Should I say something? Should I do something?" Together we will dive into what Upstander Behavior is and how this concept was shared with youth and adults in Minnesota communities. Upstanders are someone who recognizes when something is wrong and does something to make it right. We can all do something to make a situation better. Learn key action steps of Direct, Delegate, and Distract and when to use them. This approach can help prevent substance misuse, violence, bullying and other high risk situations.

What Does NOT Work in Substance Misuse Prevention

Kris Reed - Great Lakes Prevention Technology Transfer Center

In the world of substance misuse prevention, we often hear about what does work—research-backed strategies that make a real impact. But what about the methods that don't work? Many communities continue to use outdated, ineffective, or even harmful prevention practices despite decades of research showing they fail to deliver. This session will explore the common approaches still in use, shedding light on why they don't work and the unintended consequences they can create.

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Food

Lake Ave Restaurant
New Scenic Cafe
OMC Smokehouse
Northern Waters Smokehouse
Oasis Del Norte
Dubh Linn Irish Brew Pub
Bellisio's Italian Restaurant
Fitgers Brewhouse
Valentini's Vicino Lago
Gannucci's Italian Market
Hanabi Japanese Cuisine
PhởHolic Taste of Vietnam
Alto Pino Duluth
Duluth Whole Foods Co-op
At Sara's Table Chester Creek Cafe
Zeitgeist Arts Cafe
Dovetail Cafe
Studio Cafe
190 Coffee and Tea
Duluth Coffee Co.
Ursa Minor Brewing
Canal Park Brewing Co.
Third Street Bakery
Duluth's Best Bread

Love Creamery
King of Creams
Rocky Mountain Chocolate Factory

Historic Sites

Aerial Lift Bridge
Glensheen Historic Estate
Enger Park & Tower
Duluth Civic Center Historic District
Lake Superior Maritime Visitor Center

Outdoor Areas & Activities

Superior National Forest
Superior Lakeshore
Hartley Nature Center
Hawk Ridge Nature Reserve
Mission Creek Bike Trails
Kayak Adventures
Leif Erickson Park & Rose Garden
Oberg Mountain Loop
Park Point Recreation Area
Duluth Golf - Enger Park

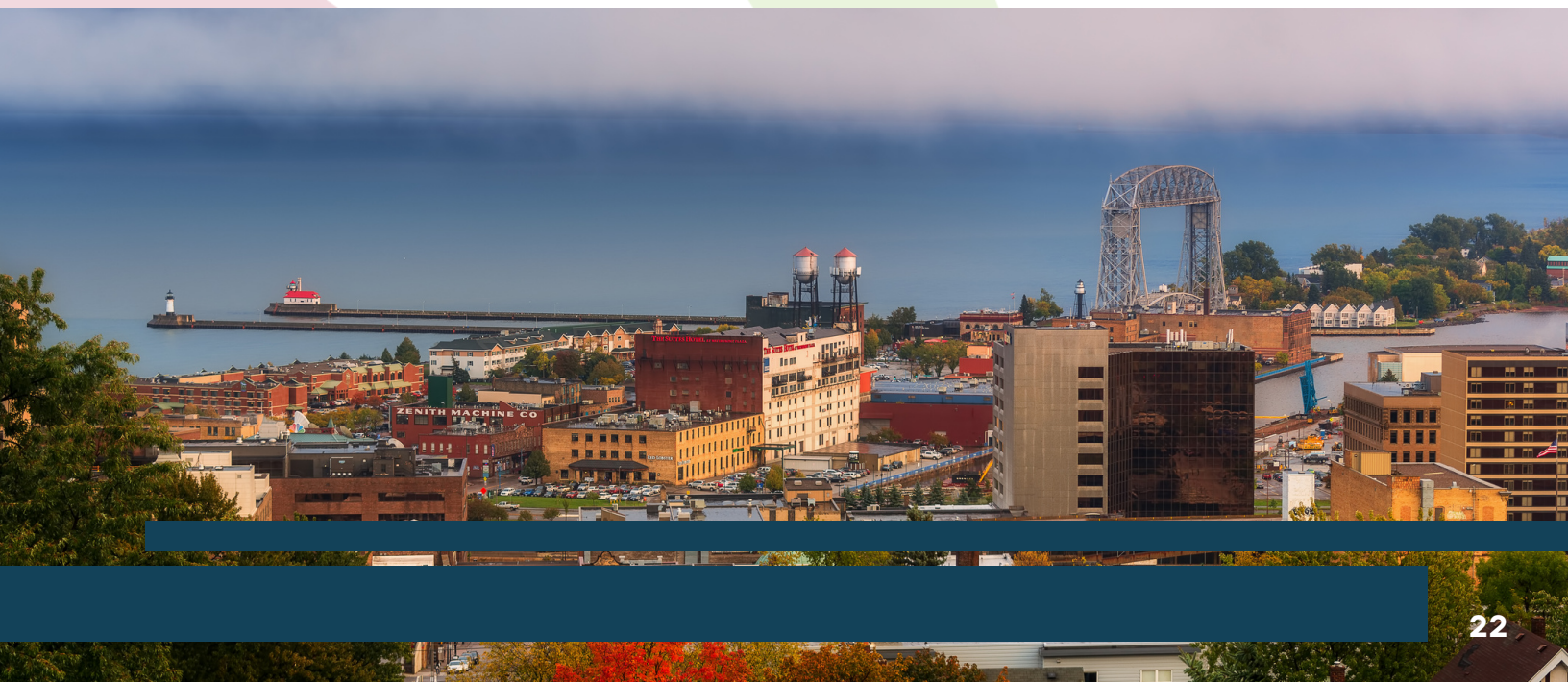
Enger Tower
Lakewalk
Gichi-ode' Akiing (Lake Place Park)
Waabizheshikana (The Marten Trail)
Saint Louis River Estuary
North Shore Scenic Drive
Skyline Parkway

Arts & Culture

Duluth Art Institute
Duluth Symphony Orchestra
Duluth Playhouse
The Depot, St. Louis Co. Heritage & Arts Center
Fond du Lac Reservation Cultural Center & Museum
Lake Superior Railroad Museum
MWA Planetarium
Great Lakes Aquarium
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Seasonal Attractions

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