



# **WV Healthy Lifestyles**

# **Annual Legislative Report**

## **2024**



Office of Community Health Systems and Health Promotion  
350 Capitol Street, Room 515  
Charleston, WV 25301

## **Healthy Lifestyles Legislative Report July 2023 - June 2024**

### **Overview**

During the 2023-24 fiscal year, \$902,808 in state funding was allocated to Healthy Lifestyles and equally divided between the West Virginia Division of Health Promotion and Chronic Disease (HPCD) and the West Virginia Division of Tobacco Prevention (DTP). Both divisions are housed within the West Virginia Bureau for Public Health's Office of Community Health Systems and Health Promotion.

### **DIVISION OF HEALTH PROMOTION AND CHRONIC DISEASE**

HPCD's Healthy Lifestyle budget for 2023-24 totalled \$451,404. HPCD works in partnership with community-based organizations to disseminate health education, community programming, and capacity-building funding to improve statewide health around physical activity and nutrition. Two positions supported by Healthy Lifestyles funding are integrating strategies with current chronic disease prevention and management projects for better impact. Evaluation for our capacity-building grant program is provided by the West Virginia Prevention Research Center (PRC). Partners Active Southern West Virginia (ASWV), the Center for Active West Virginia (CAWV), Mountaineer Food Bank (MFB), and Try This West Virginia disseminate funding to organizations to improve their capacity and implement planned strategies to increase community nutrition and physical activity access. Funded organizations for these projects include schools, cities, healthcare clinics, recreational organizations, environmental conservation groups, youth development programs, and others. Additionally, HPCD is in the fourth year of running the Celebrating Healthy West Virginia (CHWV) Community Recognition Awards Program (previously known as Healthy People Healthy Places). This work focuses on improvements in communities around physical activity, nutrition, and tobacco prevention/cessation and is only possible through a collaboration between internal bureau partners, university/academic partners, and subject matter experts within the community.

The impressive synergies between the grant-facilitating organizations and their grantees continue to build the infrastructure needed to address the health of West Virginia residents. Even with some additional technical assistance needs, grantees were able to complete a number of equitable and sustainable policy, system, or environmental (PSE) changes that will help create a context in which the healthy choice is the easier choice.

### **Partnerships, Collaborations and Staffing**

#### **Center for Active West Virginia – \$154,193**

During the 2023-24 grant cycle, the CAWV funded 11 projects across West Virginia to increase access to physical activity. The projects reached a total estimate of 70,915 individuals. The CAWV grantees completed a total of 17 project activities, which included 14 (56%) of 25 proposed activities. In addition, they completed two environment changes and one non-PSE change that were not originally proposed. The activities included improving public access to parks, installing bike racks, providing exercise equipment, and teaching exercise classes, among others. Sixteen out of the 17 completed activities were

PSE changes. Of the completed PSE changes, grantees implemented 11 environmental changes (69%), four systems changes (25%), and one policy change (6%). This shows that the grantees prioritized making physical changes to the environment to improve access to physical activity and other healthy behaviors. As with previous years, implementing policy changes at the community level remains a challenge. Grantees are expected to consider health equity in their applications and specify which groups experiencing health disparities their project will reach. The most frequently listed population reached by CAWV grant partners were children (60%) and older people (50%). Other populations included people with low incomes, people living with a disability, and those in rural communities. Most commonly used strategies targeted the recruitment of priority populations and ensuring that the project location was accessible. The most commonly reported successes among CAWV grantees were increasing opportunities and access to engage in healthy behaviors (80%) and positive feedback, interest, and excitement from participants (50%), followed by expanding partnerships (30%). This re-emphasizes the program's strengths in creating sustainable opportunities for physical activity and healthy lifestyles, as well as forging lasting partnerships and collaborations. Notably, one grantee mentioned addressing health equity concerns as a success (10%). Demonstrating an improved understanding of how to make the program more accessible. Funded projects included: Bike West Lib at West Liberty University, Southern Jackson County Community Foundation pickleball courts at the Green Center, Lincoln County Olive Hager Memorial Park renovation, City of Hamlin trail enhancements, Potomac Valley Hospital Move for Health initiative, Marshall County Family Resource Network increasing access to drinking water in Moundsville Parks, West Virginia Botanical Garden Visitor's Center pedestrian trail connector, Kanawha Valley Trail Alliance bicycle repair stations, Mon River Trails Conservancy, Charleston Thunder Sled Hockey off-ice equipment, Town of Wardensville Movement Matters disc golf course and trail enhancements.

#### **Active Southern West Virginia – \$132,039**

During the 2023-24 grant cycle, Active Southern West Virginia (ASWV) funded 14 projects across West Virginia to promote workplace wellness. The projects reached a total of 1,362 individuals. ASWV grant recipients completed a total of 28 project activities (65%) of 43 proposed activities. The completed activities focused on promoting physical activity and healthy eating by providing equipment, facilities, educational programming, and wellness challenges. Grantees completed an additional 15 activities that they did not originally propose in their applications for a total of 43 complete activities at the end of the grant year. PSE changes made up for 93% of all completed activities. The 40 PSE changes consisted of four policy changes (10%), 23 systems changes (58%), and 13 environmental changes (33%). The other three activities were individual-level changes that were not PSE changes. The most frequently reached health equity populations included women (100%), followed by people with low-incomes and older populations (75%). Most commonly identified strategies for health equity considerations included having an accessible project location (100%), taking safety considerations into account (27%), and providing financial assistance (27%). Ten grantees reported increased opportunities and access to engage in healthy behaviors as a result of the grant program (91%), and nine grantees reported increased educational opportunities or improved knowledge about health (82%). Other successes included receiving positive feedback, interest, and excitement from participants (73%). Funded worksites this year included: WV Department of Motor Vehicles, Workforce Development Region 1, Healthnet Aeromedical, Rupert Elementary School, Liberty High School, Cabell Huntington Health Department (CHHD), Southern Appalachian Labor School (SALS), and the Family Care Health Systems at Patrick Street, St. Albans, St. Albans East, Teays Valley, Eleanor, and Cross Lanes. ASWV hosted the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual Workplace Wellness Conference at Glade Springs, WV, in the fall of 2023. Sixty participants which included providers, members, speakers, and keynote guests gathered to promote a healthier and happier workforce in West

Virginia. Throughout the day of presentations and networking the conference brought barriers to health to the forefront of discussion while brainstorming solutions to decrease and overcome these barriers at the workplace.

ASWV also provides fiscal oversight for the CHWV Recognition Program which began in 2019 (then known as Healthy People Healthy Places) and grew out of a state engagement meeting led by HPCD and the National Association of Chronic Disease Directors. CHWV acknowledges exceptional communities and community leaders who work together to create healthier places to live, learn, work, eat, and play. Communities and organizations can apply or be nominated and are assessed by the programs they have implemented around water consumption, healthy eating, physical activity access, and tobacco prevention or cessation. The 13 award recipients for 2024 include a diverse range of organizations making significant strides in health promotion and community wellness. Those organizations are: Columbia Forest Products, SALS, Nitterra North America Inc., CHHD, MFB, Elk River Trail Foundation, Keep Your Faith Corporation, Faith in Action of the Greater Kanawha Valley Inc., The Amputee Center, KEYS 4 HealthyKids, Monongalia County Child Advocacy Center, Spotted Owl Healthcare Organization, and Potomac Valley Audubon.

#### **Mountaineer Food Bank – \$45,804**

The Mountaineer Food Bank (MFB) used funding to host a Health and Hunger Summit during which participants had the chance to engage in discussions with nutrition experts and participate in workshops that covered nutritional guidelines, policy, grant writing and more. The summit equipped food pantries with the tools and resources that they needed to increase access and helped empower food pantries across the state to begin implementing nutrition strategies to increase access to healthier food. The MFB used funding to help bear the heavy financial cost of attending a two-day training. The grant supported attendance for food pantry representatives and other partners who have little to no budget for travel expenses. Scholarships were provided for 75 food pantry representatives and other partners to attend the conference where they received the tools and knowledge to increase nutrition standard guidelines statewide. According to a post-conference survey, 100% of attendees “learned something of value,” 98% of attendees were extremely satisfied with the content of the conference and would attend again, most attendees said their favorite part of the event was getting to network/learn from their peers.

#### **Try This WV – \$34,790**

HPCD is a founding member of Try This WV. The organization’s mission is to knock West Virginia off the worst health lists. Expertise on building community capacity to assess, plan, and partner for obesity prevention initiatives have resulted in communities obtaining a \$15 dollar return on investment for every \$1 spent through the initiatives funded by Try This WV. In 2024, 14 communities whose outreach touched 21 different counties received funds to promote physical activity and/or access to nutritious food. Communities proposed nine system changes (50%) and nine environmental changes (50%) for a total of 18 PSE changes. Funded projects this year included: Programming Support at the Amputee Center in Wood County, Upshur County Trails Repair & Race, Taylor County Try the Tygart, Ohio County Yoga and Recycling Summer Series, Ohio Valley Junior Roller Derby, Loveland Community Garden Shed, JarHead Farms Mobile Coolers in southern West Virginia, Resilient Roots: Cultivating Sustainable Futures in Mineral County, Keeping it Fit in Mingo County, McComas Hope Community Gardens, Cultiv8 Training and Enrichment Garden in Kanawha County, Happy Kids Club in Hardy and Mineral County, Team Hydro in Grant County, and the Garden Rebuild in Fayette County.

## **HPCD Staffing – \$84,578**

### **Health Promotion and Coordination Branch Manager**

This is the lead contact for the Healthy Lifestyles programs. The person in this position is also the subject matter expert for obesity prevention, oversees administrative duties related to the Healthy Lifestyles programs and the contractual partnerships, and provides technical assistance to communities.

### **Health Promotion and Coordination Branch Coordinator**

As the lead contact for the Work@Health state grant program and subject matter expert for the CDC Work@Health program, the person in this position will assist ASWV in overseeing the contractual partnership.

### **Epidemiology and Evaluation Branch Manager**

This person assists with evaluation and the data process for reporting performance measures and outcomes. The manager also assesses and utilizes current measures that HPCD or other partners are using to assist in reporting evaluation outcomes for the Healthy Lifestyles programs.

## **Statistical Data**

All data provided are from the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention 2023 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System Prevalence & Trends Data Tool, unless otherwise indicated.

### **Weight Status**

- Obesity (Body Mass Index of 30.0 or above): the crude prevalence of West Virginian adults who have obesity was 41.2%, compared to the median rate of 34.3% among all states and DC
- Overweight (BMI of 25.0-29.9): the crude prevalence of West Virginian adults who are overweight was 32.0% compared to the median rate of 34.4% among all states and DC

### **Physical Activity**

- Exercise: the crude prevalence of West Virginian adults reporting **no** physical activities during the past month was 32.0% compared to the median rate of 24.2% among all states and DC (Note: this question specifically **excludes** any physical activity as part of a person's regular job.)
- Met the US Department of Health and Human Services Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommendations:
  - Met aerobic activity guidelines (150 minutes or more of aerobic physical activity per week): the crude prevalence of West Virginian adults reporting they met aerobic physical activity guidelines was 53.1% compared to the median rate of 59.9% among all states and DC
  - Met strength activity guidelines (participated in muscle strengthening exercises two or more times per week): the crude prevalence of West Virginian adults reporting they met strength activity guidelines was 30.7% compared to the median rate of 41.2% among all states and DC
  - Met full Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommendations (both aerobic and muscle activity guidelines): the crude prevalence of West Virginian adults reporting they met full guidelines was 20.6% compared to the median rate of 30.4% among all states and DC

### Nutrition (Most recent data from 2021)

- Fruit consumption: the crude prevalence of West Virginian adults who reported consuming fruit **less than** one time per day was 46.0% compared with the median rate of 40.8% among all states and DC
- Vegetable consumption: the crude prevalence of West Virginian adults who reported consuming vegetables **less than** one time per day was 18.9% compared with the median rate of 19.7% among all states and DC

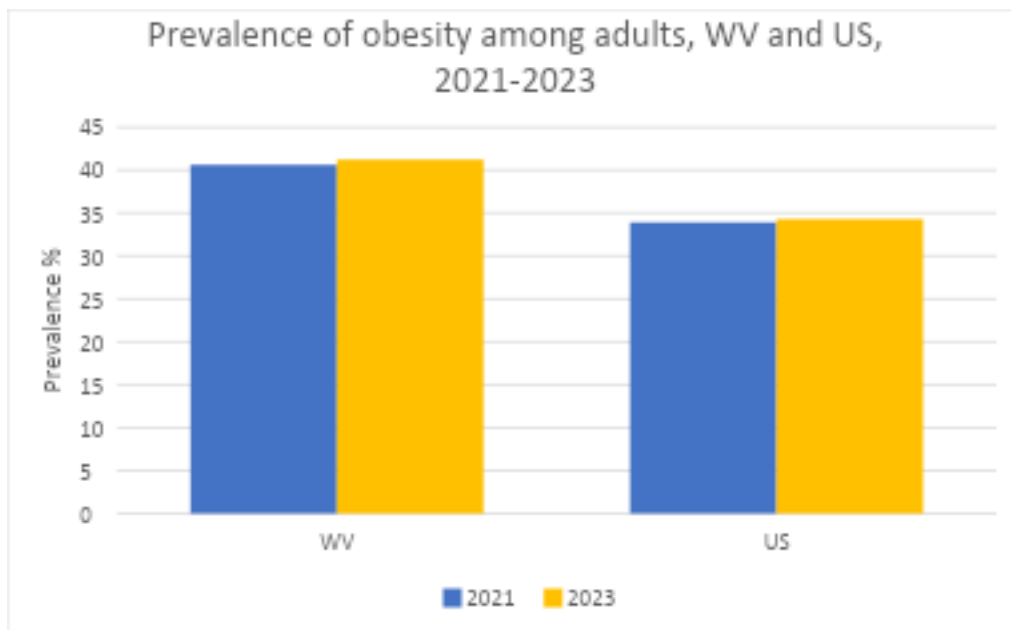
### Health Status

- Fair or poor health: the crude prevalence of West Virginian adults reporting fair or poor health was 26.5% compared to the median rate of 18.2% among all states and DC

### Additional Data

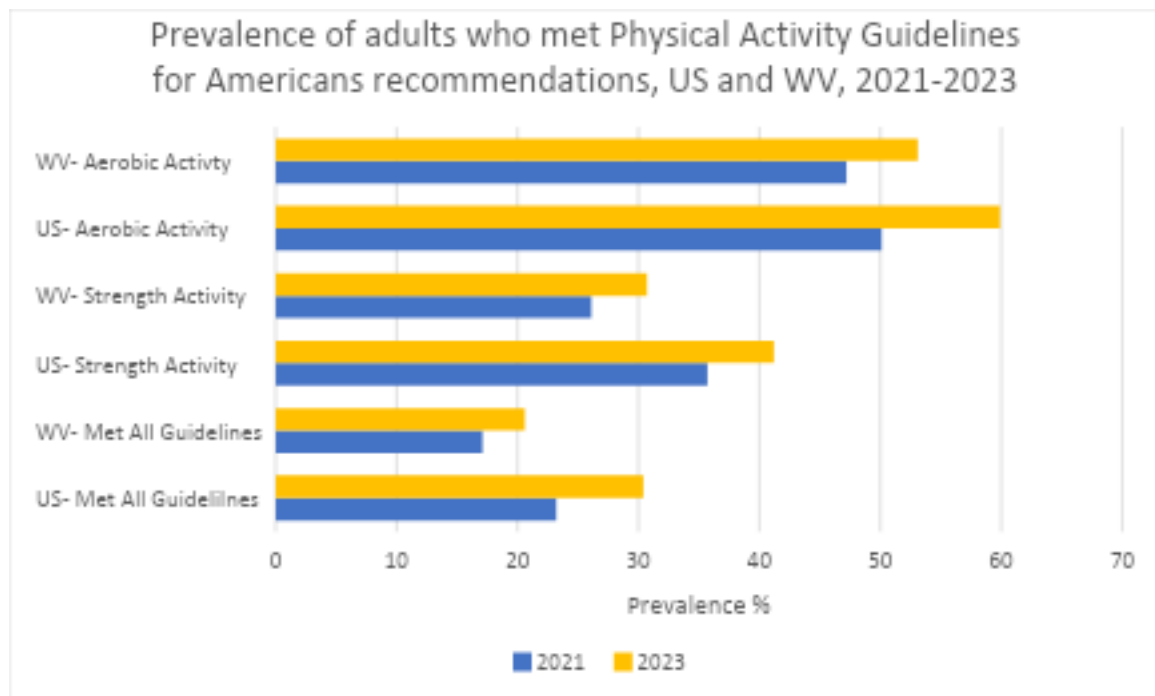
- Access to exercise opportunities: according to the 2024 County Health Rankings Report, the percentage of the population in West Virginia that had adequate access to locations for physical activity was 58% (counties ranging from 1% to 99%) compared to the national value of 84%

**Graph 1. Prevalence of obesity among adults, WV and US, 2021-2023**



Data source: CDC BRFSS 2021 & 2023

**Graph 2. Prevalence of adults who met Physical Activity Guidelines for Americans recommendations, US and WV, 2021-2023**



*Data source: CDC BRFSS 2021 & 2023*

### **DIVISION OF TOBACCO PREVENTION**

The Division of Tobacco Prevention (DTP) is the lead state agency for comprehensive tobacco prevention, cessation, and control, and works to prevent and reduce tobacco use in West Virginia – the leading cause of preventable disease, disability, and death in the United States. The DTP partners with local coalitions, community agencies, and state and national organizations to implement and evaluate effective tobacco prevention and cessation activities that strive to:

- Eliminate secondhand tobacco smoke.
- Promote quitting among adults and youth.
- Prevent youth tobacco use initiation including vaping and other electronic delivery devices.
- Identify and eliminate disparities among populations.

DTP's Healthy Lifestyle budget for 2023-24 totalled \$451,404. Partners included Community Connections, McDowell County Commission on Aging, the West Virginia Perinatal Partnership (WVPP), the American Lung Association (ALA) of West Virginia, the Coalition for a Tobacco Free West Virginia (CTFWV), Covenant House, and First Choice Services.

## **Partnerships, Collaborations, and Staffing**

### **Community Connections (Drug Free All-Stars and Vaping Cessation Barn) – \$8,000**

Efforts were geared toward addressing youth vaping in ways which are creative and engaging. Community Connections implemented a program that targeted youth in eight schools throughout the state by engaging in fun and interactive activities focused on youth vaping prevention. Additionally, plans were made to promote vaping cessation messages through a unique marketing strategy of painting replicas of old “Mail Pouch” barns. These statewide activities targeted areas where vaping rates among youth were highest. Activities included:

- The production and distribution of marketing materials promoting vaping and tobacco prevention as well as the West Virginia Tobacco Cessation Quitline.
- The “Barn Artist,” Scott Hagan, was hired to develop a vaping prevention/cessation barn design.
- A potential barn to be painted was identified in Hardy County.
- Drug Free All Stars conducted half-day interactive events for eight schools that engaged youth in topics such as how to make good decisions, the negative effects of vaping, options to resist peer pressure, along with other positive messages. Events were held at:
  - Liberty Middle School, Raleigh County
  - Liberty High School, Raleigh County
  - \*Sun Valley Elementary, Mercer County
  - \*Athens Elementary School, Mercer County
  - Chapmanville Middle School, Logan County
  - Chapmanville High School, Logan County
  - Pineville Middle School, Wyoming County
  - Mullens Middle School, Wyoming County

Event held for both schools at Athens Elementary School\*

### **McDowell County Commission on Aging (Smokeless Tobacco - Spit it Out WV!) – \$50,000**

In West Virginia, eight out of every 100 people use smokeless tobacco (the 2nd highest rate in the nation). Smokeless tobacco users in West Virginia are often of low socioeconomic status, have low educational attainment, and limited access to healthcare. There is also a strong cultural connection between hunting, fishing, and outdoor activities and smokeless tobacco use. The purpose of this project was to:

- Give current smokeless tobacco users the support and skills needed to make successful quit attempts.
- Increase knowledge about the dangers of smokeless tobacco use among blue-collar workers, senior citizens, and college-age students.

Counties targeted for workshops: McDowell, Mercer, Raleigh, Wyoming, Mingo, Summers, Monroe.

Counties targeted for media: all counties in West Virginia.

- Ninety-one invitations for organizations to host tobacco cessation workshops were sent out.
- Five tobacco cessation workshops were conducted at local organizations with a total of 71 participants.
  - Keystone City Hall: seven participants
  - Sound Mind Recovery Home (Mullens, WV): eight participants
  - Sound Mind Recovery Home (Raleigh County, WV): six participants



- Summers County Fire Department: nine participants
  - Recovery Point (Mercer County, WV): 41 participants
- Two partnerships were developed with local mental health system providers to offer tobacco cessation workshops to their clients.
- Ten tobacco cessation workshops were conducted at the mental health pavilion with a total of 34 participants.
- Six press releases linking smokeless tobacco cessation to major holidays and events were created.
- Eleven media pieces for Through with Chew week were created.
- Four videos were created with local dentists and other statewide champions regarding the health effects of spit tobacco and the WV Tobacco Quitline Services.
- Thirty dental offices distributed Through with Chew Week media pieces.
- Sixty-three thousand three hundred and seventy-five citizens were reached by Through with Chew week campaign materials.
- Two presentations on the work in tobacco control were done in West Virginia.
- Twelve tobacco education workshops were conducted with a total of 363 participants.

#### **WV Perinatal Partnership (Baby and Me Tobacco Free) – \$35,000**

West Virginia has the highest rate of women who smoke while pregnant, with a rate that is triple the national average. Smoking/vaping, especially for women of reproductive age, is a major public health problem causing serious harm to pregnant women, infants, and children. Smoking before, during, and after pregnancy is associated with a number of risks, including preterm birth, low birthweight, birth defects, fetal growth restriction, childhood respiratory illnesses, and sudden infant death syndrome.

Evidence-based smoking cessation initiatives are the key to improving maternal and infant health outcomes. To address the high prevalence of tobacco and vaping use among women in West Virginia during pregnancy, WVPP partnered with the Baby and Me Tobacco Free Program (BMTFP). BMTFP is a proven, evidenced-based prenatal/postpartum cessation program, effective in reducing premature births and low birth weights, including reducing exposure to second and thirdhand smoke. BMTFP's impact, through program fidelity and data collection, assists in reducing morbidity and mortality and improving the lives of families in West Virginia. The BMTFP online referral system offers an easy and efficient process for all healthcare providers throughout the state to refer pregnant tobacco users into BMTFP telehealth services.

- Three hundred thirty-nine pregnant individuals were referred to BMTFP.
- Eighty-three pregnant women served by the program.
- Three hundred fifty-one educational sessions on quitting tobacco were conducted.
- Eighty-three carbon monoxide monitors and/or saliva tests for tobacco-use status were given to participants of the program.
- Three hundred twenty-three vouchers were dispersed.
- Twelve collaborative meetings with partners took place.
- Twenty-eight referrals to the West Virginia Tobacco Cessation Quitline were made.
- Five promotional sessions on the BMTFP and West Virginia Tobacco Cessation Quitline services were conducted.
- Two hundred healthcare professionals were reached.

#### **American Lung Association of West Virginia (Raze) – \$175,404**

DTP worked alongside the ALA to reduce the prevalence of tobacco use among West Virginia youth and young adults. Funding supported network maintenance for both school and community-based Raze

crews as well as capacity building in communities for providing cessation services to West Virginia youth and young adults.

- Fiscal year 2023-24 messaging focused on E-cigarette/vaping education and prevention for teens.
- INDEPTH and Not on Tobacco (N-O-T), both evidence-based tobacco cessation programs, were promoted as tools to help decrease the burden of tobacco use in West Virginia.
- CATCH My Breath, an evidence-based prevention program, was promoted as a tool to help prevent youth tobacco/vaping use.
  - Sixty-five Raze adult advisor training sessions were completed.
  - Sixty-six Raze mini-grants were distributed to 31 high school crews, 27 middle school crews and eight community crews.
  - Three hundred total service calls for adult advisors were completed which provided technical assistance, disseminated information, and addressed any issues related to RAZE. The calls primarily related to assistance with paperwork, questions about events, and programming.
  - Seven new Raze crews and 70 new student members were created/identified through the Raze Recruitment Campaign.
  - Recruitment activities held between July and November of 2023 occurred at the Student Success Summit, Cabell County Schools, Marion County Schools, Morgan County Schools, the Shape Conference, Point Pleasant Junior/Senior High, and the West Virginia Department of Education Student Support Conference.
  - Five hundred thirteen crew members and 42 adult advisors attended the Raze Youth Summit held Oct. 18, 2023.
  - Two hundred eighty-three crew members and 23 adult advisors attended Tobacco-Free Day on Jan. 23, 2024.
  - Raze had 11 Raze Ambassadors and four Junior Ambassadors from across West Virginia. The 11 Raze Ambassadors each received a \$1,200 scholarship and the four Junior Ambassadors each received a \$700 scholarship.

#### **Coalition for a Tobacco-free West Virginia – \$50,000**

The CTFWV worked to educate the public about tobacco-related issues and advocate for policies that reduce, with the intent to eliminate, tobacco use in West Virginia.

- There were 107 participating member organizations, which was a 7% increase in participating organizations compared to last fiscal year.
- Nine membership meetings took place, with 307 attendees.
- A total of 32,803 emails were sent out.
- Collaborative partnerships were formed with three national organizations.
- Three mini-grants were awarded to organizations that work directly with disparate populations.
- Six statewide events were attended to promote CTFWV membership recruitment and goals.
- Nine presentations on preemption were given to CTFWV membership.
- Three West Virginia Legislature decision-makers were identified as preemption opposition champions.
- Five champions for smoke-free air in West Virginia were identified.
- Regional coalition chairpersons were provided with resources to promote tobacco control in their region.

#### **Covenant House (LGBTQ+ Program) – \$25,000**

Given the level of experience and interaction with the Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer or Questioning inclusive community (LGBTQ+) population, Covenant House is ideally situated to implement LGBTQ+ programs that will effectively address smoking-related issues. During the 2023-24 fiscal year, Covenant House used funds, concentrating within the LGBTQ+ community, to increase awareness of tobacco-related issues, expand tobacco cessation opportunities, promote the benefits of living a tobacco-free lifestyle, create a variety of LGBTQ+ support groups, and increase the capacity among grantee leadership and connecting organizations.

- Attended six Pride events. Number of engagements included:
  - Charleston – 461
  - Parkersburg – 272
  - Rainbow Run – 51
  - Huntington – 263
  - Lost River – 61
  - Putnam – 109
  - Total = 1,217
- The website ([www.drrainbow.org](http://www.drrainbow.org)) has had 4,000 hits since Dec. 31, 2023.

There have been two key successes during this fiscal year. First, the organization continued to spread awareness about the harms of tobacco, both at the six Pride events they attended and on the website that they run, which is a valuable resource for the LGBTQ+ community in West Virginia. Both resources, physical and virtual, serve to deepen the organization's foothold as a trusted resource to this population and one appropriately suited to continue spreading tobacco cessation information in the future.

Second, Covenant House built internal and external organizational capacity. Working with the CTFWV and other outside organizations, Covenant House helped guide decision making at both the state and local level, giving a voice to the LGBTQ+ community. Covenant House has been successful in building internal capacity by attending training intended to create welcoming spaces in healthcare, ultimately adding a much-needed tool to their toolkit.

#### **McDowell County Commission on Aging (West Virginia African American Tobacco Prevention Network) – \$25,000**

Although African Americans smoke at lower or similar rates compared with other racial and ethnic groups, they are disproportionately affected by tobacco use in several ways. For example, African Americans have higher death rates from tobacco-related causes and are more likely to be exposed to secondhand smoke.

The tobacco industry has targeted African Americans and strategically marketed its products to appeal to the community for decades, including placing more advertising in predominantly black neighborhoods and in publications that are popular with black audiences. The most striking example of these methods relates to menthol cigarettes, which are easier to smoke and harder to quit. Today, nearly 90% of all African American smokers use menthol cigarettes, and more than 39,000 African Americans die from tobacco-related cancers each year. Experts believe that racial differences in smoking habits, socioeconomic factors, and the metabolism of tobacco carcinogens may all play a role.

WVAATPN's efforts centered around: A) building capacity in the African American community to address tobacco prevention and cessation efforts at the grassroots level by partnering with faith-based and community organizations to carry out evidence-based programming that explicitly targets areas with a high population of African Americans; B) increasing tobacco cessation attempts among African American tobacco users.

- Twenty-four churches and organizations actively participated in the WVAATPN.
- Sixty-one churches and organizations were contacted.
- Over 30 media outreach pieces encouraging African Americans to get involved with the network were posted on social media websites; 2240 citizens were reached.
- The WVAATPN's social media accounts have 394 followers.
- There are 27 active WVAATPN network members.
- Four meetings took place.
- Three new partnerships were created.
- Thirty-nine individuals representing 23 different organizations were trained on relevant curricula and strategies that were deemed helpful in educating community members, including the following:
  - Youth tobacco prevention
  - *"Follow the Signs"*
  - "No Menthol Sunday" events
- Twenty-two mini-grants were awarded to organizations to implement tobacco prevention and control best practices within their congregations and communities. \$55,000 awarded in total.
- Two hundred eighty-six African Americans participated in a WVAATPN-sponsored tobacco education program.
- One thousand WV Tobacco Cessation Quitline brochures were distributed to members of the community.
- Three letters advertising tobacco cessation events were printed in local newspapers.
- Forty-three African Americans participated in WVAATPN-sponsored tobacco cessation workshops.

### **West Virginia Tobacco Cessation Quitline – \$10,000**

The West Virginia Tobacco Cessation Quitline's goal is to assist residents with quitting tobacco use including Electronic Nicotine Delivery System (vaping) products.

- West Virginia residents who receive Medicaid or are uninsured and/or underinsured were eligible for enrollment with the Quitline.
- Services are free for tobacco users who want to stop tobacco use.
- Participants received four calls with a Certified Tobacco Treatment Specialist (CTTS) to assist during the quit process and are allowed unlimited reactive coaching calls.
- Participants received an eight-week supply of nicotine patches, lozenges, or gum (Nicotine Replacement Therapy or NRT).
- Pregnant women and people under 18 may enroll and receive NRT with physician approval..

During this fiscal year, 6,882 West Virginians enrolled for Quitline services (both Medicaid and uninsured/underinsured). The WV Tobacco Cessation Quitline was managed by First Choice Services, a West Virginia-based company.

### **DTP Staffing – \$73,000**

#### **Tobacco Cessation Coordinator**

Charged with managing the Tobacco Cessation program. Duties include overseeing the operation of WV Tobacco Quitline vendor, managing subrecipient grants for tobacco cessation and prevention for the West Virginia African American population and LGBTQ+ community members. Additionally, this position

represents DTP at regional and national meetings and conferences that are about tobacco cessation and prevention. The current staff member is a Certified Tobacco Treatment Specialist.

## **Statistical Data**

### **WV Adult Tobacco Use**

- 21.0% of adults are current smokers compared to the national rate of 14.0%.
- 7.7% of adults use smokeless tobacco products (chewing tobacco, snuff, or snus), which is second highest in the nation (3.4%).
- 9.3% of adults currently use electronic vapor products (such as e-cigarettes, vapes/vape pens, etc.) compared to the national rate of 7.7%.

### **WV Youth Tobacco Use**

- 6.2% of high school students reported currently using smokeless tobacco products.
- 9.7% of high school students reported currently smoking cigarettes or cigars.
- 48.8% of high school students reported ever using an electronic vapor product.
- 27.0% of high school students reported currently using electronic vapor products.
- 13.0% of high school students reported daily use of electronic vapor products.
- 28.5% of high school students reported currently smoking cigarettes or cigars or using smokeless tobacco or electronic vapor products.
- Among high school students who reported using any tobacco products during the 12 months before, 55.6% reported they tried to quit using all tobacco products in the past year.
- Among high school students who reported the past month use of electronic vapor products, 3.4% reported buying them themselves in a convenience store, supermarket, discount store, or gas station.

### **Health Outcomes**

- West Virginia had the second-highest rate of tobacco-associated cancers in the U.S. at 223.1 cancers per 100,000 people.

### **Cost of Tobacco**

- Smoking in West Virginia is estimated to cost over \$1 billion annually in direct healthcare costs, including \$298.1 million in Medicaid costs.

### **Sources**

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