

# Engaging in the Process: Opportunities for Prevention in a Changing Marijuana Landscape

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## OBJECTIVES



- ✓ Identify three types of policies shown to be effective in preventing youth marijuana use.
- ✓ Identify two lessons learned from states that have adult-use marijuana.
- ✓ Describe two strategies for engaging community members in efforts to prevent youth marijuana use.

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## THE ROLE OF PREVENTION IN REDUCING YOUTH MARIJUANA USE



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## SETTING YOUR PREVENTION STAGE



- Why is youth marijuana prevention important to your community?
- Which intervening variables make youth prevention a priority?
- What is the role of equity in your prevention process?

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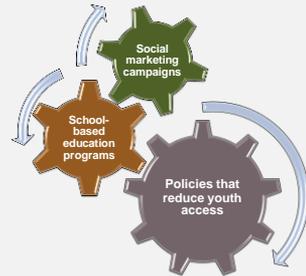
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### What Works in Prevention



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## POLICIES THAT ADDRESS YOUTH USE



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## POLICY AND YOUTH BEHAVIOR



- Since youth behavior is affected by price . . .
  - Increasing the cost of a product decreases youth use.
- Since youth respond to advertising, marketing, and packaging . . .
  - Restricting advertising and marketing that target youth reduces the likelihood of use, as does limiting the placement of ads.
- Since youth purchase paraphernalia . . .
  - Restricting access to paraphernalia decreases youth use.

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## KEY STATE POLICY ELEMENTS



Consider choosing elements of a marijuana policy that will protect youth:

- Restrict youth access to retail shops
- Require vendor training
- Conduct lab-testing of all products
- Impose label requirements
- Restrict maximum number of establishments
- Limit or restrict public advertising

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## KEY COMMUNITY POLICY ELEMENTS



Critical elements of community-level policies:

- Location (e.g., # of establishments, outlet density, advertising)
- Revenue (e.g., local taxes on marijuana products, host community agreements)
- Ownership (e.g., who can own marijuana dispensaries, local preference, policies that support equity)

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## EMERGING POLICY NEEDS



- Housing (e.g., smoke-free buildings)
- Mail and home delivery
- On-site vs off-site consumption
- Dangers of use (e.g., driving under the influence)
- Edibles (e.g., safe storage, THC concentration, packaging)
- Vaping (e.g., restricting access)

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## EDIBLES



- Overall restrictions
  - Form of the edible (e.g., shapes)
  - Regulations on sale
  - THC concentration
- Safe storage
- Packaging

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## VAPING



- Consider:
  - Adult vs. youth use
  - Nicotine vs. cannabis use
  - Opportunities for educating community members on the evolving nature of vaping
- Regulate:
  - Sale of vape pens
  - Sale of concentrates (e.g., flavors)

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## CASE STUDY: MASSACHUSETTS



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## A PUBLIC HEALTH APPROACH



Massachusetts Cannabis Control Commission:

- Restricts access to marijuana dispensaries for individuals under the age of 21
- Requires EACH entity (e.g., drivers, producers) that comes into contact with marijuana to participate in a vendor training.
- Mandates lab testing for quality control
- Specifies requirements of product labeling
- Limits the number of vendors within a geographic area

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## COMMUNITY ROLES



Massachusetts state law allows communities to:

- Require Host Community Agreements
- Impose additional tax
- Develop outlet density regulations
- Make additional security requirements
- Mitigate traffic, parking, and accessibility issues

*Be prepared to address unintended outcomes of well-meaning policies!*

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## EMERGING POLICY ISSUES



As legalization rolls out, Massachusetts is grappling with additional policy issues:

- On-site consumption (e.g., licensing requirements, outlet density issues)
- Mail and home delivery issues
- Restrictions on who can obtain a license to sell

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## COLLABORATION: ENGAGING COMMUNITY PARTNERS




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## WHO IS IN OUR "COMMUNITY"?



- Parents
- Schools
- Afterschool programs and other youth-serving organizations
- Public safety
- Businesses/Chamber of Commerce
- Existing dispensary and/or retailer owners/managers

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## BENEFITS OF COLLABORATION



- Building support for preventing youth use
- Aligning priorities
- Ensuring appropriateness
- *"Nothing about us without us"*

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## ROLE OF COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT



- Build community knowledge of marijuana, particularly consequences of underage use
- Build knowledge of types of policies that can reduce youth access and prevent youth use
- Address health disparities that may affect youth use (e.g., trauma, other adverse childhood experiences)

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## COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT: WHAT MIGHT YOU ENCOUNTER?



- Questions
- Concerns
- Knowledge
- Perspectives



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## TAILORING YOUR MESSAGING



- Universal populations
  - General public
- Selective populations
  - Exposure to general risk factors
  - Communities with higher rates of experimentation (e.g. lifetime use)
  - Youth who identify as "alternative"
- Indicated populations
  - Presence of multiple risk factors/intervening variables
  - Populations with higher rates of regular use (e.g. 30-day use, frequency of use)
  - Populations who have experienced adversity and trauma

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## TARGETED COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS



Conversation Focus	Definition	Example
Universal	Targets the entire community	Town hall meeting on the general risks of youth marijuana use
Selective	Targets specific community sectors and perspectives	... on the legacy of marijuana incarceration on specific communities
Indicated	Targets communities/sectors at greater risk	...addresses the role of adversity and trauma in use

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## KEY ENGAGEMENT STEPS



- Assessment
  - Community mapping
  - Equity awareness
- Collaborations and Building Partnerships
- Capacity-building
  - Equity in capacity
  - Components of community agreements
  - Education programs

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### LET'S RECAP

- Consider policies proven effective in preventing other types of substance misuse (e.g., underage drinking)
- Draw upon lessons learned from past effective prevention efforts in your community
- Engage your community members and leaders in discussions about how prevention can support a public health perspective in this evolving landscape

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