



Watertown Healthy Youth

Addressing behaviors and choices that affect our youth's health and safety.

Drug Free, Alcohol Free, Safe and Healthy

To mobilize community partners to support and implement evidence-based practices, policies, and programs to prevent and reduce substance use among youth.

The Coalition

The Watertown Healthy Youth (WHY) coalition is a community coalition focused on educating our community on risk taking behaviors and choices that affect our youth. We focus on efforts that will change our community's behaviors and attitudes that tolerate underage drinking and other unhealthy risk taking behaviors to make Watertown a safe place for our youth.



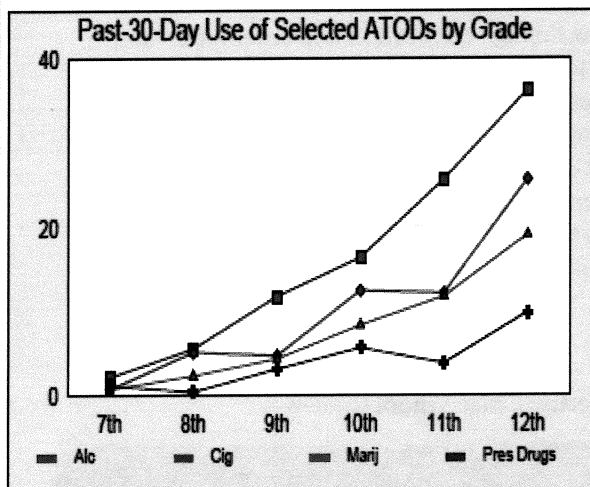
Dedicated to Promoting Safe & Healthy Families, Schools & Communities

The Issue

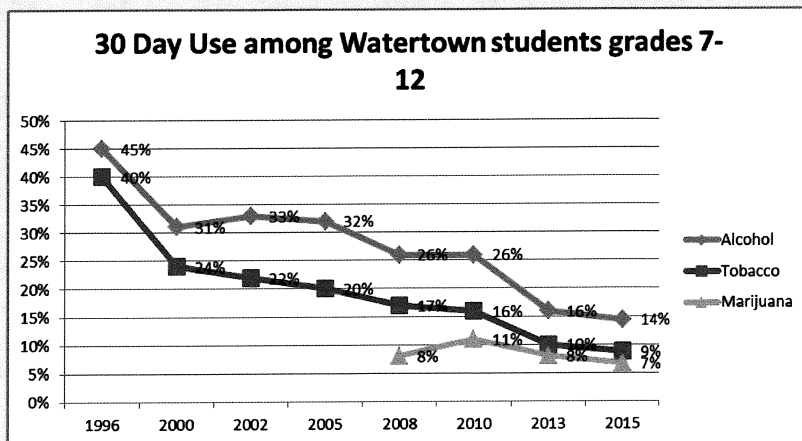
According to the 2015 Pride survey data, 36% of 12th graders reported alcohol use in the last 30 days. The trend we continue to battle is the increase of use as students get older. Peer influence, social access (getting it from friends, relatives, or from home), and community norms that accept underage drinking contribute to use of alcohol among Watertown youth ages 20 and under. We need to educate on the norms that are data-driven, debunk the misperceptions, and promote healthy behaviors.

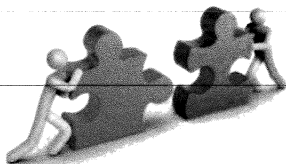
The Trends

Our local trend data shows that from 1996-2015 our youth use rates have decreased dramatically. We believe the coalition's efforts over the last 19 years have impacted use rates effectively with the collaborative efforts of community partners and the implementation of data-driven programs and strategies. Based on these trends, the Watertown Healthy Youth coalition know their efforts to raise awareness of the youth issues and concerns, and the risks involved with alcohol, marijuana and other drug use are making a difference in the Watertown community. There is still more work to be done to change attitudes and behavior by providing the tools, the knowledge and the motivation to make the community capable of change.



Data Sources
Search Institute's Profiles of Student Life:
Attitudes & Behaviors survey 1996-2010.
PRIDE survey 2013 & 2015.





The Response

Watertown Healthy Youth coalition takes an active role in advocating for and implementing programs, policies and practices that will make Watertown stronger, healthier and drug free for our youth and families.

- Carrying out awareness and media campaigns such as Red Ribbon Week, 4D Month, Parents Matter/Parents Who Host Lose the Most, and other SD Highway Safety endorsed campaigns
- Educating and enforcing policies, laws, ordinances that impact youth and their health & safety
- Implementing and sustaining school and community evidence based prevention programs that are data-driven

Accomplishments

- Implementing Project SUCCESS in our middle and high schools – reaching 1800 students by providing educational classes, referrals, screenings, individual and group sessions and school-wide awareness projects.
- Partners with Extension Services to implement Strengthening Families Program.
- An active SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) organization at the Middle School and Peer Helpers program at the High School.
- CMCA (Communities Mobilizing Change on Alcohol) implementation and partnering with community resources and services.
- Media campaigns of Red Ribbon Week, 4D Month and Parents Matter reach over 30,000 people in the area
- Partner with law enforcement on compliance checks and education on laws/ordinances to increase enforcement.
- Committees formed under the WHY umbrella to address Suicide Prevention, Tobacco Prevention and the Juvenile Justice Reinvestment Initiative.
- Hosted Town Hall meetings.
- Suicide Prevention Awareness – organized walk/run; and implemented crisis texting program for Watertown high school students.

Your Help is Needed!

In 2015, 14% of Watertown students in grades 7-12 reported drinking alcohol in the last 30 days – a **reduction of 31% from 1996**. This success is due largely to the work of the Watertown Healthy Youth coalition and the support of the Watertown community.

The current grant that is sustaining the coalition work is time-sensitive and will end in fiscal year 2019. Unless we can secure state and community support through existing and new community partnerships, the successes we have seen in our community will be threatened. We are in need of funds to sustain staff for our school and community based prevention programming. Without continued financial support, the momentum gained on reducing youth substance use in our community and school work will be lost.

Community Partners

Boys and Girls Club of Watertown

Brown Clinic

City of Watertown

Codington Co. Court Services

Codington County Sheriff's Office

Human Service Agency

Lake Area Technical Institute

Prairie Lakes Healthcare System

SD Dept of Corrections

SD Office of Highway Safety

SDSU Extension Service
Codington County 4-H & Youth Development

Watertown Community Foundation

Watertown Initiative to Prevent Sex Trafficking

Watertown Police Department

Watertown School District



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