

Illinois Alliance on Reducing Underage Substance Use
December 6, 2023
2:30 – 4:00 pm

The Illinois Alliance on Reducing Underage Substance Use allows stakeholders to:

- Share current youth substance use prevention efforts being implemented in Illinois.
- Share information on best practices to reduce youth substance use.
- Share data and research on efforts to reduce youth substance use.
- Review the Illinois STOP ACT report.
- Unify prevention efforts in the State of Illinois.

MEETING MINUTES

Rafael Rivera, IDHS

Rafael opened the meeting by welcoming members to the Illinois Alliance quarterly call and overviewed the purpose of the meeting is to share information and discuss how to address underage substance use in Illinois. Rafael noted that the IL Alliance will have an expanded focus beyond underage alcohol moving forward and clarified that decision was based on information gathered by the Prevention First Alcohol Policy Resource Center (APRC) and Cannabis Policy Resource Center (CPRC). The expanded focus will include both underage alcohol use and cannabis use. Rafael acknowledged that alcohol and cannabis are two primary substances used by those underage. A joint meeting would allow for sharing information on both substances without adding an additional meeting or expanding the meeting time.

Rafael noted that the STOP ACT report should be coming out soon and the results will be shared at the next meeting. The STOP ACT report looks at programs, activities, and strategies we use in Illinois to address underage alcohol use.

Jody Heavilin, Prevention First Alcohol Policy Resource Center (APRC)

Jody welcomed participants and reviewed the agenda and speakers for the meeting. Jody noted that the Student Advisory Board (SAB) would be on the call, so the meeting won't be split by topics due to the SAB joining later in the meeting.

Marni Basic, the University of Illinois Center for Prevention Research & Development – Illinois Youth Survey

Marni provided an overview of the 2022 Illinois Youth Survey.

All survey numbers are somewhere between 2018 and 2020. So we did better than in the first pandemic year, but we're still not seeing the numbers we saw before the pandemic.

Schools

761 schools surveyed

744 received reports

Districts

289 districts participated

171 districts had enough participation to receive a report

Counties

87 counties were represented (participated)

63 county reports were created and posted

There are 102 counties in the state, so yes, we'd like to have more counties represented! More counties and better representation within counties.

Targets for 2024

- **Getting the sample.** We did not have enough participation for the sample in 2022, so our primary focus will be getting the sample in 2024.
- Get school **participation back to pre-pandemic levels.** The school participation number has varied quite a bit during the time CPRD has administered the survey, from a low of 616 schools (2020) to a high of 1,104 (2010). The average is 868. We'd love to see a number in the 900 to 1,000 range.

Also, in store for 2024

- We are reworking our gender and sexual orientation questions and will be making the identity and sexual orientation questions optional. These questions were contentious in 2022—we hear both from people and schools that don't want them asked and people who want them asked in more or different detail—so we're trying to find a solution that works for most people.
- Throughout spring 2022, we worked on various upgrades to make IYS information flow better and more quickly. It should result in a better experience for the school staff who administer the survey.
- IYS will be online only in 2024.

Jody Heavilin – Prevention First Alcohol Policy Resource Center (APRC)

Jody shared the following information.

- APRC Webinar – On Thursday, January 19, 2023, Dr. Aaron White will facilitate a webinar for the APRC. Alcohol Misuse and Mental Health in the Pandemic Era and Beyond will be from 10:00 am to 11:30 pm.
- Ready to Drink Alcoholic Beverages – Jody presented this topic to the YPRC's Student Advisory Board and at ILCC's College Town Summit. RTDs have become problematic due to how they are marketed to youth and their placement in retail locations. They are often in child-friendly sections, such as with cereal or school supplies. The ILCC has asked you to take RTD placement pictures and email them with the date and location. The emails are LCC.Enforcement@illinois.gov and ILCC.Legal@illinois.gov.
- Cocktails to Go is set to sunset on January 3, 2024. Prevention needs to inform the ILCC of Cocktails to Go violations by filing complaints on their website. If the ILCC isn't aware of issues such as drinks being served in a to-go cup, then when it comes time for the legislature to let it sunset or become permanent, the industry will ask for it to become permanent.

Jake Levinson – Prevention First Cannabis Policy Resource Center (CPRC)

Jake shared the following updates from the CPRC.

1. Ordinance Directory
 - a. Zoning and additional excise taxes are places municipalities can currently utilize policy. Going forward, Cannabis lounges will be coming online more frequently. We have the Wake N Bakery in Chicago, which serves hemp-derived Delta-9. Please share if you hear of/work with any communities that begin to work on ordinances related to lounges. Have been stops and starts at the state level with requirements to add ordinances.
2. School Policy: More and more, we are hearing there is a need for resources on school policies related to being caught on campus due to vaping concealability. Although data through legalization so far has not shown a significant rise in the number of youth using marijuana, many more are using vaping as their route of choice, and those that have already begun are using it more frequently and at higher potencies. We'll be looking to conduct research and develop resources in this area in the second half of the year.
3. Cannabis marketing violations. We're continuing to hear reports of marketing that violates state law. I want to remind folks that the "Reporting a Marketing Violation" resource that the Prevention Leadership Team out of DuPage developed can be accessed at our website.
4. Presentations, Exhibits: Along with APRC: IML, New Sheriff's training, IABH Conference
 - a. At IML, one community shared with us that a large-scale retreat business is looking to open. A website is live, but it's unclear how far along they are in the planning process. Concerns would include traffic safety and regulatory requirements – the description makes it sound like they would need cultivation, infusion, and dispensary licenses but unclear how they will secure them.
5. Continuing work on a derivatives resource guide. The infographic has been re-developed into a smaller size and will be printed soon. Hopefully, this size will be more useful as a printed product at exhibits or distributed electronically. The current infographic focuses more on the definition/difference – the resource guide will focus more on the regulations and policies communities should examine.
6. Webinars: Contracted with Dr. Ashley Brooks-Russell to present a webinar on Cannabis Impaired Driving and Injury Prevention on March 23 at 10 am. Registration should be available soon; please share with your networks.
7. TA - Met with a coalition from New York to provide some TA while their legalized market comes online. I hope this will be a good working relationship as NY's regulations are stricter in some ways and less in others.
8. Scoping for the Prevention Research Online Course is complete. The current goal date to have the course live is Q4 FY23.

Jake asked the Alliance members about current priorities or concerns around cannabis policy. What would you like to see CPRC and this group examine/produce? Is there a current initiative you would like support on?

IDPH, IDFPR, Ag, Revenue, ISP – CROO gathers data and shares best practices and information and ideally shares that back out with the public and other stakeholders to make cannabis regulation make sense.

CROO is working to create a possible cannabis-research center in partnership with other organizations.

State-wide prevention messaging to cannabis (messaging) NHTSA billboards, ARIDE class – wants to train the officers on all the substances, want every drug viewed as the same impairment amount—messaging to follow the sound best practice messaging.

Kellie Henrichs – Prevention First Director of Resource Centers

Kellie noted that any members interested in reviewing how the IL Alliance members communicate in between meetings should reach out. If there is enough interest, we can create a communications subcommittee to evaluate options for more frequent communication.

Several members of the Alliance brought up questions regarding who, how, and when officers are conducting cannabis compliance checks. If they are being done, are the checks similar to alcohol compliance checks? Catherine Spenser noted there is a lot of confusion amongst officers, as well as their City Manager. Kelly O'Conner confirmed there is a lot of confusion and questions about whose responsibility it is to complete cannabis compliance checks. Nate Steinfeld from the CROO noted the State Police do inspections and spot-check IDs. Nate suggested we contact the State Police and invite them to a meeting for more discussion. Members also had questions about scanners used for ID purposed and noted using scanners can create a false sense of security. Many members agreed the cannabis landscape can be confusing. Nate stated that there is a lot of data on dispensary transactions regarding seed-to-sale. While general sale data is available, there are some gaps in data, primarily due to an effort to protect consumers. Matt Cassity questioned if there are formal communications between the Illinois State Police and municipalities. Jake Levinson noted he was unaware of direct communication occurring but would contact Lt. Alejandre from ISP to pose these questions and invite him to attend the next IL Alliance meeting. Lastly, Samantha Gallagher asked if municipalities are home rule, does that impact their ability to conduct cannabis compliance checks?

Prevention First Student Advisory Board Members Adithya and Kaitlyn

Adithya and Kaitlyn discussed concerns about mismarketed alcohol products and how those products often appeal to a younger audience. Adithya highlighted how the marketing of certain alcoholic beverages is often unclear or confusing as to whether they contain alcohol. Kaitlyn noted the goals of the Student Advisory Board were to raise awareness of products being mismarketed and to promote transparency of marketing and whether or not alcohol is contained. Adithya noted the SAB would like to educate municipal leaders and encourage community members to file a complaint with ILCC (through their website) when products are placed in questionable areas in a store or contain labeling that is unclear as to whether the product contains alcohol.

Rafael thanked all members for their participation and thoughtful conversation.

The next IL Alliance is March 7, 2:30 – 4:00 pm.