

WELCOME TO OUR ONLINE

PREVENTION LEGISLATIVE BREAKFAST

Hosted by members of the
**Norwalk, Westport, Weston &
Wilton substance misuse
prevention coalitions** and **The
Hub** for our state legislators.

**PLEASE INTRODUCE
YOURSELF IN THE CHAT!**



11 JANUARY 2024, 9AM - 10:30AM



About the Local Prevention Coalitions (LPCs)



LPCs are the state-designated entity for community substance prevention work. They are coalitions of 12+ stakeholder groups working together using a public health model, usually focused on youth. In recent years, suicide prevention has been added to their mandate, and LPCs frequently work on mental health promotion, which is closely related to substance misuse prevention work.

Agenda

I. Welcome & Introductions

- Margaret Watt, Prevention Director, Positive Directions-The Center for Prevention & Counseling
- Diamond Sead, School-Based Health Center Coordinator, Human Services Council
- Legislator Introductions

II. Human Resource Needs for Prevention

- Melissa McGarry, Parent & Preventionist, Westport Prevention Coalition
- Kaitlin Comet, Program Manager, The Hub
- Margaret Watt
- Kevin Godburn, Director of Youth Services, Town of Westport
- AnaVivian Estrella, Human Services Director, City of Norwalk
- Q&A

III. Retailer Compliance & Enforcement

- Chief Jim Walsh, Norwalk Police Department
- Detective Ashley DeVecchio, Westport Police Department
- Q&A

IV. Closing Comments

- Nicole Hampton, Community Liaison, High Focus Treatment Centers
- Ginger Katz, Founder, Courage to Speak Foundation

Human Resource Needs for Prevention

LPC Resources

Communities receive no designated funding for mental health promotion. Communities receive LPC grants between \$2K-\$10K per year for substance misuse prevention (vaping), and may receive SOR grants of \$5K per year for opioid prevention. Only a few hundred dollars are for admin/coordination.

	LPC Grant (DMHAS)	SOR Grant (DMHAS)	DFC Grant (CDC)	Other \$
Norwalk	X	X	X	ARPA funds from City for specific work
Westport	X	X		\$15K ARPA funds from Town for general support
Wilton	X	X		
Weston	X			

LPC & SOR grants come from DMHAS and are administered by the RBHAOs to the LPCs. An agency that is part of the LPC applies for & manages the grant funding with approval from the chief elected official.

Critical Gap to be Filled

- Dedicated professional staff position with mental health & prevention expertise, which allows for:
 - outreach to build networks and community readiness
 - capacity building for the coalition and youth
 - coordination & follow-up for initiatives and committees
 - data collection & reporting
 - provision of trainings, resource development, website, social media
 - grant writing
- **THE ASK:** \$100K per year per LPC specifically for an FTE to provide subject matter expertise and to lead and coordinate mental health promotion & substance misuse and suicide prevention in each community
- **HOW:**
 - Allocate funds from the opioid & vape settlement funds & the cannabis Prevention & Recovery Services Fund
 - Build funds into DMHAS's existing LPC grant program, administered by RBHAOs to each community via an application process
 - Avoid substance- or age-specific deliverables, providing the FTE and the coalition flexibility to address local needs

Retailer Compliance & Enforcement

Policy Issues

1. Ensure all retailers are licensed by the state.
2. Revisit and streamline the roles of DCP, DMHAS, etc. so that all substance-related compliance checks are handled through one department.
3. Create meaningful consequences to retailers for underage sales or illicit sales:
 - Require and track merchant education through online, multilingual trainings
 - Meaningful fines to clerks and owners. Use fines to help cover policing costs.
 - Provide local law enforcement with the ability to suspend licenses or close down a business.
4. Develop and fund regional teams of youth to support compliance checks in all towns
5. Provide funding to law enforcement to cover costs of compliance checks and storage/disposal of products. Consider providing funding based on the number of retailers in each town.
6. Identify responsibility at the local level for monitoring and enforcing state and local advertising laws.
7. Locally, look at Planning & Zoning to limit the proliferation and density of retail outlets, as Westport and Stamford have done.