

Maine Tobacco Prevention Success Story

LGBTQ+ Youth Tobacco Prevention Project Welcomes New Members to Advisory Council

Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender and Questioning Youth Tobacco Prevention Project (LGBTQ+ YTPP) seeks to reduce tobacco use disparities for LGBTQ+ Youth.

The Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey (MIYHS) Fact Sheet, *LGBT Student Health*, shows that 13.6% of Maine high school students identify as LGBT (about 7,500) and smoke at about twice the rate of non-LGBT students (13% vs 6%). 2019 MIYHS vaping data showed similar use rates, with non-LGBT at 29%, Gay/Lesbian at 25%, Bisexuals at 32% statewide.



“It is critical that we come together as a community to create inclusive spaces where LGBTQ youth feel welcome and can flourish” – April Fenton, Advisory Council Member

New Members of the Advisory Council

- Jennifer Gunderman King – Waldo County community member and public health consultant
- Lisa Larrabee – Kennebec County, Consultant with Drug Free Communities
- Russell Werkman – CEO, Waldo County YMCA

Sustainability

The new members provide a great deal of community knowledge, public health expertise and experience working with youth in all types of settings. The more LGBTQ+ YTPP can build on community knowledge and relevant experiences, the more effective the project will be.

Intervention/Program Description

The LGBTQ+ YTPP includes an Advisory Council made up of representatives from youth serving organizations, schools, tobacco prevention project, social service agencies, LGBTQ+ youth and adults, and others. Since this project serves three counties, Kennebec, Knox, and Waldo, the Advisory Council should have representation from all three counties. During the first 9 months of the project, recruitment from Waldo County and from northern Kennebec County was difficult.

The Advisory Council members will continue to help the project focus resources and policy changes where there is need, building on individual knowledge and relationships.

Through outreach and connections, the Advisory Council is starting to fill some of these gaps.

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