

Maine Tobacco Prevention Success Story

Sidekicks at Rangeley Lakes Regional School

Summary

Healthy Community Coalition (HCC) successfully adapts the Sidekicks curriculum to meet the needs of students at Rangeley Lakes Regional School.

The need for youth tobacco prevention in Franklin County:

According to 2019 MIYHS data 19.6% of Franklin County middle schools students answered yes to having used electronic vapor products and 10.8% of Franklin County Middle School students reported smoking cigars; using electronic vapor products or used chewing tobacco, snuff, dip or dissolvable tobacco products one or more of the past 30 days.



The Sidekicks Intervention

To engage with youth and schools in Franklin County HCC staff use the Center for Tobacco Independence (CTI) Sidekicks program; a curriculum used to train youth to have respectful conversation about tobacco use and other risky behaviors, with their peers. The Sidekicks program includes education on the dangers of nicotine use and the effects of addiction and introduces motivational interviewing skills like active listening, that are adaptable to a number of issues youth face.

“One thing I learned is how to have a better conversation with people about serious topics. One Thing that surprised me was how an addiction can affect the people around you. One thing I’ll do now is have better conversations with people” -7th Grade Student at RLRs



Results

HCC staff members worked with the Rangeley Lakes Regional School (RLRS) health teacher to integrate CTI’s Sidekicks curriculum into the 7th grade health class. HCC staff conducted two virtual trainings with the twelve RLRs 7th graders and with feedback from the class HCC staff pivoted their delivery method to provide two in-person training days to increase engagement and meet the needs of the students. As a result the RLRs 7th graders increased their knowledge of the negative impacts of nicotine use and addiction and developed skills and confidence to talk to people in their lives about nicotine use. Following Sidekicks, HCC staff connected the Western District Youth Coordinator working with the Maine Youth Action Network (MYAN) to the class, empowering students to continue this work. HCC staff look forward to seeing what these students do with their new skills and support from HCC, CTI and MYAN.

For More Information Contact Us At:

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Maine Center for Disease Control & Prevention
Department of Health and Human Services