

Alcohol and Drug Use

Goal

Reduce alcohol and substance abuse among all Delawareans through prevention and treatment.

Objectives

1. By 2010, reduce the proportion of 8th and 11th graders using alcohol or illicit drugs during the past 30 days. [Relates to Healthy People 2010 objective 26-10a]
 - Reduce alcohol use from 26% to 23.4% among 8th graders and from 46% to 41.4% among 11th graders.
 - Reduce marijuana use from 16% to 12% among 8th graders and from 28% to 21% among 11th graders.
 - Reduce other drug use from 8% to 5.2% among 8th graders and from 7% to 6.8% among 11th graders.
2. (Developmental) By 2010, increase the number of large businesses that provide employee assistance programs. [Relates to Healthy People 2010 objective 7-5]
3. By 2010, reduce the incidence of binge drinking among adolescents from 27.1% to 11% and college students from 60% to 50%. [Relates to Healthy People 2010 objective 26-11]
4. (Developmental) By 2010, increase insurance coverage for addiction treatment.
5. (Developmental) By 2010, reduce the treatment gap for illicit drugs (the difference between those who need and receive treatment). [Relates to Healthy People 2010 objective 26-18]

Notes:

The numeral assignment of each objective does not indicate priority, simply enumeration.

“Developmental” objectives are those that currently do not have state baseline data and, therefore, have no operational definitions. The purpose of developmental objectives is to identify areas of emerging importance and to drive the development of data systems to measure them.

Important roles for each sector*

Business

- Develop and promote drug-free workplace strategies, pool resources to help small businesses, and negotiate adequate employee health insurance benefits for drug and alcohol treatment.

Community

- Develop marketing campaigns, sponsor parent and teen educational programs, and advocate for policy enforcement and zoning changes to restrict teen access.

Health Care

- Create resources and offer training to help health professionals counsel and assist patients and parents, support a continuum of services, and provide effective addiction treatment.

Education

- Provide alcohol and drug-free activities, implement effective prevention curricula in school health programs, and partner with communities to support early childhood development.

Government

- Establish and enforce laws to restrict alcohol access to minors, encourage the use of effective prevention and treatment programs, and assure adequate services in all counties.



Healthy Delaware Hero



Youth to Eliminate Loss of Life (YELL)

“YELL is a student run organization with a powerful main goal—to save lives,” said president Bruce Carroll, a senior at Sussex Technical High School and three-year member of the organization. Youth to Eliminate

Loss of Life (YELL) is a national organization of students working to eliminate injuries and deaths caused by alcohol and drug accidents involving teenagers. The Sussex Technical High School chapter in Georgetown is closely associated with the local chapter of MADD (Mothers Against Drunk Driving). YELL also sponsors Prom Promise, a program where teens sign a pledge promise not to use alcohol and other drugs—particularly, on prom night. Last year, the chapter held a dinner for survivors of people killed in automobile crashes. Students bought the supplies and served the meal. “They wanted the families to know that the loss wasn’t for naught and that their family members were remembered,” said J.D. Taylor, the faculty advisor to the group.

Resources (General)

- Department of Education, (302) 739-4661, fax (302) 739-4654, www.doe.state.de.us - information on prevention curricula
- Division of Family Services, Office of Prevention and Early Intervention, (302) 739-3809, fax (302) 739-6653, www.caramedia.com/fhs/fhs_school_based.html - adolescent treatment and prevention, referrals, information for providers
- Division of Alcoholism, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health, (302) 577-4461, fax (302) 577-4484, www.state.de.us/dhss/irm/dadamh/dmhhome.htm - prevention and treatment programs for adults, information and resources for communities
- Division of Public Health, (302) 739-4724, fax (302) 739-3839, www.state.de.us/dhss/dph/nutr1.htm - prevention programs
- Mental Health Association in Delaware, (302) 765-9740, fax (302) 765-9740, www.mhainde.org - information on treatment programs and general information

The mentioning of specific programs does not connote endorsement and was not meant to be exclusionary. We apologize for any unintentional omissions; please bring these to our attention.

Closing the Gap

Problems related to alcohol and substance abuse affect all racial, cultural and economic groups. In Delaware, the rate of drug use does not vary significantly by race or sex. However, there are significant variations by geographic region in the prevalence of substance use, abuse, and dependence and in the availability of prevention, treatment, and support services.

New Castle County residents are more likely to use illicit drugs than residents of Kent or Sussex Counties. The City of New Castle, Central, Southwest, and North Wilmington, Elsmere, and Dover are significantly higher in rates of alcohol and drug dependence than other areas of the state.

The greatest disparity in treatment services is in the City of Wilmington where an estimated one person receives treatment services for every 17.8 residents that need such services.

