



NEWS RELEASE

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Early Intervention Program Reduces Youth Substance Abuse in WV

A pilot program in Logan and Mercer counties is cutting down on youth substance abuse in the Mountain State. WV's Substance Abuse Early Intervention Program (EIP) targets youth ages 12-18 who have just begun to use alcohol, tobacco, or other substances and/or are engaging in delinquent behavior often associated with substance use. Since its inception in 2010, 65 youth have completed the program, which enhances accurate understanding of the risks of alcohol, tobacco, & other drug (ATOD) use and develops ATOD refusal skills. The program also provides an alternative option for youth who may be on their way into the juvenile justice system.

"WV's Early Intervention Program is appropriate for youth who fall BETWEEN the stages of needing primary prevention services and those who need actual substance abuse treatment," says Jamie Albert, WV EIP Statewide Coordinator. "Youth in need of counseling, therapy or other treatment services are NOT appropriate candidates for the EIP."

Youth are referred to the local programs by the WV Department of Health & Human Resources (WV DHHR), school personnel, the court system, and parents. EIP Specialists conduct a screening assessment with referred youth to confirm eligibility to participate. Youth who opt to participate and their parents attend separate two-hour orientation sessions. Youth then experience a 12 hour evidence-based prevention education course. Classes are usually six two-hour sessions over a two week period. The curriculum addresses the consequences of substance use and decision making skills. A parenting and wellness workshop is also available to parents.

WV's EIP is based on a similar statewide initiative in Kentucky, which has proven to prevent teen substance use. A recent evaluation report on the pilot programs in Logan and Mercer counties confirms increased risk perceptions of substance abuse, increased disapproval substance abuse, and decreased intentions to further use drugs. The report is available at <http://www.prevnet.org/earlyintervention/default.aspx>.

WV's EIP is funded by *Drug Free WV grants (Purdue Pharma Asset Forfeiture Funds)* and a *federal Projects of Regional and National Significance grant*. The program is administered by the WV Prevention Resource Center, an affiliate of Marshall University. Local contractors facilitate the EIP at the county level.

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General Inquires
LOGAN COUNTY EIP
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