



Guiding Principles for Policy Review

We believe that policies must adhere to the following guiding principles to effectively prevent substance abuse and promote health and safety in Vermont's communities:

- Be based on an **evidence-based model** that reflects current scientific concepts.
- Provide adequate opportunity for **collaboration and feedback** from individuals and organizations focused on positive outcomes that are aligned with an evidence-based perspective.
- Inform the public and legislators of the **potential risk or harm** including, but not limited to, impaired driving and youth use.
- Ensure that the potential **long-term consequences and future costs do not outweigh the short-term financial benefits**. For example: research shows that for every \$1 that federal and state governments receive from alcohol taxes, they spend between \$10-20 of taxpayers' money to fund the need for additional health care, law enforcement, treatment and incarceration.
- Provide **adequate funding and resources for evaluation and research** of the policy's effects. Potential areas to evaluate/research: Impact on the health, disease and child development; youth and adult use/abuse rates; children's ability to succeed in school, safe driving; and crime.
- Serve the **best interest of public health**. Especially for our most vulnerable populations – the elderly, children, young people, and those in recovery and treatment, and not expose them to additional and unnecessary risk.
- Include **prevention strategies at every turn**. This will make it less likely that individuals will inappropriately access and mis-use the substance. The allocation of adequate funding to implement prevention strategies is necessary.

If the above principles are followed and it is determined that access to a potentially mood altering substance should increase, the policy **MUST** include the following provisions:

- **Taxation** sufficient to compensate the state or other parties for at least the expected costs associated with the substance.
- **Regulations** to limit the density of outlets within towns/cities and to restrict the location of outlets near schools and other institutions that serve young people and families.
- **Advertising bans** that include, but may not be limited to: product placement, sponsorships, point-of-purchase marketing, or depictions in entertainment venues.
- **Automatic repeal** if it is determined that use of the substance increases among young people; increases health care costs, or has a negative impact on the health and safety of Vermonters before the harm to our state's residents, workforce and/or economy continues.
- **Funding provided by the industry** to fund evaluation, prevention, intervention and treatment needs. Vermont taxpayers should not be required to pick up the tab for the problems created by increased use. This funding should be provided by those who will financially benefit from increased access to use. (For example taxation, licensing fees, fines)
- **Sufficient resources and guidance** are provided to ensure that any change in laws can be adequately enforced and responded to by law enforcement and prevention services. Appropriate representatives need to be identified to monitor and evaluate the policy change and funding should be allocated to provide for any additional resources they need to respond to the law effectively.
- **Ensure drug free workplaces and schools**. Drugged employees can endanger the safety of others, slow productivity, and create workplace accidents and other issues. Likewise, our educational institutions should be free of drugs and alcohol to allow students to develop appropriately and achieve their full potential.