

START Programs and Prevention

The federal Enforcing Underage Drinking Laws (EUDL) Program promotes prevention efforts and improves public safety by reducing youth access to alcohol. The purpose of the program is to encourage communities to enforce laws, policies and sanctions. One component of this strategy is Stop Teen Alcohol Risk Teams (START).

Part of a Community Effort

START works closely with local coalitions of schools, community organizations, youth, and parents as part of a comprehensive prevention strategy to prevent and reduce substance abuse. START programs are encouraged to increase enforcement of the underage drinking laws by addressing locally identified unmet needs.



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Pro-active and Re-active Enforcement

Regional START programs supplement local education and enforcement efforts by delivering a mix of pro-active and re-active enforcement to address underage drinking parties and youth drinking events.

Pro-active patrols are typically planned to coincide with youth events where drinking is likely to occur (e.g., homecoming, prom, graduation, etc.). High visibility of officers attempts to deter a youth drinking event from happening.

The START program emphasizes pro-active interventions, whenever possible. Upon hearing of a potential party, an officer may contact parents, land owners, etc., as appropriate, to alert them of the possible party, provide them with an understanding of the laws and their potential liability, and to enlist their support in preventing the party from occurring.

Each START also organizes a call-out list of officers who agree to respond to an underage drinking event. Officers who participate in these re-active patrols have all been trained to disperse an underage drinking party properly.

Evidence-Based Techniques

Vermont has been able to initiate and maintain specially trained enforcement teams in all areas of the state. START officers are trained in evidence-based Controlled Party Dispersal techniques that enable teams to effectively deal with a drinking party while maintaining order and assuring maximum safety for youth and officers alike.

Funding

The Vermont Department of Health, Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs (ADAP) receive EUDL funds from the federal Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention (OJJDP) to support this program.

Vermont START Contacts:

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Information for START programs is available on the Vermont Department of Health website at:

<http://healthvermont.gov/adap/start/notminor.aspx>

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