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From: Madison Black, Camille Bonar, Payton Colbert, Cesar Perez
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Regarding: Youth Drug Prevention

Executive Summary:

There is a growing concern across the United States about the rise of drug use among the young, who are particularly vulnerable to addiction. According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), nearly 31% of 10th graders have used alcohol in the past year (National Institute on Drug Abuse, 2022). Vaping has also become the most used tobacco product among youths, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Surgeon General..., 2019). Like many cities, Clinton, Iowa, is committed to reducing youth substance use. However, local data indicates that young people in Clinton are at higher risk of experimenting with substances, such as alcohol, vaping, and marijuana, which may lead to addiction and substance use disorders. To address this issue, we conducted a comparative analysis of state and local data, stakeholder interviews, a literature review, and case study research.

The findings identified four main focus areas to mitigate the negative effects of substance use among Clinton's youth. These are:

- GIS Map of Liquor and Vape Stores within a School's Buffer Zone
 - Potential legal ordinance to regulate future stores
- Strategies to Increase City Messaging.
 - Media Campaigns
 - Text Messaging Services
 - Student Advocacy
 - Update Social Media and Website
- Strategies for Increased Parent Involvement
 - Incentives
 - Send out invitations for training through the community
 - Personalizing Messaging
 - Incorporating families and advocates
 - Update CSAC Meeting/Trainings Page
- Best Practice Policies for Preventing Vaping in Schools
 - Implementing Botvin in Elementary schools
 - Suspension replacement

The problem:

Environmental factors, such as socioeconomic and relational characteristics, may impact a teen's potential to engage in substance abuse within Clinton County and the City of Clinton. Local youth in Clinton are at a higher risk than the state at large for experimenting with substances, specifically, alcohol, vaping, and marijuana, which may increase the risk for addiction and substance use disorders.

Solutions:

Part I: GIS Map to identify communities oversaturated with liquor and vape stores

Several stakeholders expressed concerns about the location and density of liquor and vape outlets within the city. Using 2021 American Community Survey data from NHGIS, our team created a map showing the location of liquor and vape outlets with a 1000-foot buffer zone around each school and in vulnerable neighborhoods, proxied by using their share of households receiving SNAP benefits. Studies show that youth proximity to alcohol outlets and liquor stores is associated with heavy drinking (Shih et al. 2015). Buffer zones of at least 1,000 feet have been shown to effectively create a barrier between youth and substances such as alcohol and nicotine (Chen et al, 2010). Additionally, the Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America recommends limiting alcohol outlet density through the use of regulatory authority such as licensing and zoning (CADCA). We recommend that the City consider prohibiting future liquor and nicotine outlets within 1000 feet of schools.

Part II: Strategies to increase city messaging on youth substance abuse prevention

We found from our research that the City is in need for an increase in messaging and making it more effective. The strategies we recommend the City to implement include 1/ effective media campaigns that involve youth and citywide collaborations with local churches, community leaders, and influential people; 2/ using text messaging services to share available resources for youth substance prevention; 3/ increase student advocacy, e.g., through the Mayor's Youth Commission; and 4/ increase the Camanche-DeWitt Coalition's social media presence and website.

Part III: Strategies to increase parent participation in prevention initiatives

A lack of parental involvement is a common problem for the City's youth prevention initiatives. Recommendations include 1/ offering food, refreshments or raffling prizes at trainings and parent nights; 2/ sending out invitations for trainings through churches, community centers, youth organizations, schools; 3/ personalizing messaging including invitations for, and thank yous following, trainings; 4/ incorporating families and advocates into planning and training initiatives; and 5/ updating the CSAC's website page monthly with training dates and restructuring the homepage to include a parent resource section.

Part IV: Best practice policies for preventing vaping in schools

Studies show that e-cigarette use increases with age and the use of suspension increased likelihood of using drugs and alcohol, experiencing mental health problems, and engaging in antisocial behaviors. We therefore recommend 1/ implementing Botvin life skills in elementary school before first use begins to maximize the effectiveness of Botvin life skills as a prevention mechanism; and 2/ replacing suspension with Life Skills Connection training or Positive Behavior Intervention and Support (PBIS) as these programs will more directly contributing towards changing student relationships and behaviors surrounding vaping than suspension.

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