Communities embrace alcohol, tobacco and drug screening tool

**Description:** The project Connecting Regionally to Prevent Youth Abuse of Alcohol, Tobacco and Other Drugs educated members of the Alliance for Wisconsin Youth-Southeast (AWY-SE) about Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT) – an evidence-based alcohol, tobacco and drug screening tool. It also laid the groundwork for implementation of SBIRT in community-based settings throughout the region.

**Relevance:** In its 2007 Youth Risk Behavior Survey, the Centers for Disease Control ranked Wisconsin first in the rate of current alcohol use among youths; third in the rate of binge drinking among youths; fourth in the rate of youths who rode with a driver who had been drinking; and fifth in the rate of youths who drove after drinking. The state also has some of the highest adult drinking rates in the nation.

**Results:** This project provided AWY-SE members with a half-day training on SBIRT’s process, utility and benefits. In addition, AWY-SE members developed informal plans for recruiting interested community partners and identified possible settings and tools that best suited local needs.

After the training, 86 percent of AWY-SE members were confident their group could successfully develop a strategy to implement SBIRT locally for high school students. That compared with 73 percent of members who agreed before the training that they could develop a strategy.

Presentations about SBIRT were given to community partners in Milwaukee, Ozaukee, Racine, Washington and Waukesha counties. After the presentation, 92 percent of community partners agreed they had a clear understanding of SBIRT and its benefits – up from 11 percent before the information was shared.

The AWY-SE members and community partners then determined the most appropriate setting for local SBIRT implementation. For instance, one county decided to work with the county human services department rather than with a school district. Two communities wanted to move forward immediately.

Community partners representing rural, suburban and urban communities decided to implement SBIRT, with letters of commitment secured from the following six AWY-SE members and seven community partners:

- Jefferson County Delinquency Prevention Council and Jefferson County Human Services Department (Rural)
- Prevention Network of Washington County and Hartford Union High School (Suburban)
- Prevention Network of Washington County and Kewaskum Community Schools (Rural)
- Racine County Youth Coalition and Racine Unified School District (Urban)
- Waukesha County Drug Free Community Coalition and School District of Waukesha (Urban)
- Waukesha County Prevention Network and Community Health Improvement Planning Process (Suburban)
- West Allis/West Milwaukee Community Coalition and West Allis/West Milwaukee School District (Suburban/Urban)