



**Chronic Disease Prevention & Wellness Workgroup**  
**HCC Chesapeake Center**  
**May 2, 2023 | 8:00-9:30 a.m.**

**Welcome**

- Ronya Nassar welcomed the group and reminded everyone that we will take a break during the summer and return in September.

**Video: Tobacco Prevention**

- Video Link: <https://youtu.be/Eeg5BNx--uQ>
- Topics Discussed in this video
  - Explains how menthol works to increase the amount of nicotine used
  - Teaches about the history of how tobacco companies have targeted the African American community
  - Discusses the political and social factors of the African-Americanization of menthol cigarette use
  - Highlights how menthol is a social justice issue
- Vickie Bands discussed that we should focus more on the menthol component. There is a great opportunity for us to come up with education and we are all on the same page promoting the same message. Should we have a subgroup that comes up with this message? Create our own tagline.
  - Have a unified elevator speech to make this a real priority so that it is not general tobacco use education. We need to address it at a higher level.
- Felicia Hopkins stated that the video reminded her of high school times when she experienced the targeted information. Suggested that we should share the video and bring the message out here to see how they can relate.
- Vickie Bands mentioned that this is something that needs to be in the school and this is where it needs to start, however, it is hard to get into the schools. Showing kids this video would help open their eyes.
- Robin Stokes discussed how she was a previous smoker and one of the things that she found when she presented was that when she presented to summer camps and youth ministries it had a lasting effect.
- Marcy Austin mentioned that she had a successful meeting in the schools and they would welcome us back in.
- Michelle Peterson mentioned that the youth today are not smoking cigarettes they are vaping and rolling cigarettos.
- Robin Stokes mentioned that we need to focus on how youth are being targeted.
- Wendy Kanely mentioned there is a child version of the video "Take Down Tobacco 101" and Selma Carvalho presented this out in the community. They address vaping and targeted marketing.
- Robin Stokes asked what we have to do to save our children in the community and get into the schools. Unfortunately, this is tied to funding and what they need to accomplish.

- Michelle Peterson mentioned that we do not necessarily have to go into the school, but there are other things we can do to bring students in.
- Wendy Kanely mentioned that the schools should be getting money from the JUUL settlement.
- Come up with a plan that we can work on in the summer.
- How do we address the mental health component of smoking?
- We need to make sure to give people alternatives to smoking.

### YRBS Data Presentation

- Zill Raval and Zach Macas presented the new 2021-2022 YRBS data.
- YRBS/YTS Link: <https://health.maryland.gov/phpa/ccdpc/Reports/Pages/State-Level-Data%2c-2021-2022.aspx>
- Mental health in Harford County high school and middle school students has seen a negative trend since the 2018-2019 YRBS survey. Students feeling sad/hopeless has increased overall, students considering suicide has increased, and students who have actually attempted suicide is at 16.5% for high school students (this was not asked in the previous survey.)
- Tobacco and Other Drug Use: Mostly positive trends from the previous survey. Students currently using Electronic Smoking Devices, current alcohol use, and current marijuana use are all trending positively. However, students who have ever taken prescription pain medication without a prescription is up slightly by 2.1% in high school and 4.7% in middle school.
- White students are the largest racial group currently using alcohol and electronic vapor products.
- Violence: White students report being bullied the most in high school and Hispanics in middle school. Female students overall are being bullied online more than males.
- 39.3% of middle school students said they have been in a fight, while 6.8% of high schoolers said they have been in a fight (on school property.)
- Lack of unintentional injury prevention, such as wearing a helmet or seatbelt, was reported highest among the Black and Hispanic/Latino population, followed by biracial
- Weight Management and Dietary Behaviors: Black and Hispanic students report higher rates of being overweight and obese than the Harford County average. 28.8% of high schoolers and 25.8% of middle schoolers overall have described themselves as slightly or very overweight.
- Screen time increases as grade level increases. A majority of students spend 5 or more hours in front of a screen not doing homework.
- Most students did not report having food security problems but from those who did, the Hispanic/Latino population and Black population were seen to have the highest need.

### Discussion

- Dr. Sparandaro discussed that he did an interview with Voices of Hope and they talked about xylazine but there is not much literature about this (a substance used in veterinary anesthesia). Their wound care nurses have seen bad effects. He also mentioned the MDH new program about Veteran Mental Health.
  - Xylazine — Medical and Public Health Imperatives: <https://www.nejm.org/doi/full/10.1056/NEJMp2303120#:~:text=Xylazine%20was%20found%20in%20more,were%20tested%20in%20June%202021.&text=As%20of%20March%202023%2C%20fentanyl,drug%20seizures%20in%2048%20states.>
  - Veteran Health Info: <https://health.maryland.gov/bha/veterans/Pages/Home.aspx> and <https://veterans.maryland.gov/wellness-and-behavioral-health-services/>

**Next Meeting: Tuesday, September 12<sup>th</sup> 8:00-9:30 a.m. Harford Community College Chesapeake Center**