



Youth Cannabis Prevention – Cannabis Coalition Grant 2027-2028

Table of Contents

Grant Announcement..... 2

Required Grant Activities 3

Application..... 6

Work Plan 7

Budget 8

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)..... 10

Grant Announcement

Dear Applicant,

Thank you for your interest in the Youth Cannabis Prevention – Cannabis Coalition Grant. Western CT Coalition is pleased to announce this new funding opportunity for communities across the 43 municipalities of the Connecticut Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services (DMHAS) Region 5, made possible through grant funds from DMHAS. Funding will be administered by the RBHAO based on the availability of DMHAS-awarded resources.

This initiative invites community partners to implement innovative, evidence-based, and community-driven prevention strategies focused on cannabis education and prevention for youth and emerging adults under the age of 21. The goals of the grant are clear:

- 1) prevent and/or reduce cannabis use among youth, and
- 2) strengthen local capacity to address cannabis-related issues impacting individuals ages 12–20.

To effectively reach this priority population, applicants may also engage parents, caregivers, school personnel, healthcare providers, and other trusted adults who influence youth health and well-being.

At least two coalitions per region will be awarded \$50,000 each (distributed over a 18-month period: January 1, 2027–June 30, 2028) to develop or enhance local cannabis prevention efforts. Local Prevention Councils (LPCs) and Community Prevention Coalitions are eligible to apply. Only one application per community is permitted, and LPCs will receive funding priority. **Applications are due by Friday, October 16, 2026.**

Awarded coalitions will be responsible for implementing a comprehensive set of activities, including:

- using local/state data to identify priority youth subpopulations and cannabis-related needs,
- addressing gaps in prevention and intervention across demographic groups,
- developing an annual cannabis prevention workplan aligned with at least two CSAP strategies,
- collaborating with community partners addressing social determinants across the lifespan,
- conducting environmental scans on cannabis product availability and risk factors,
- participating in the Regional Cannabis Workgroup, and
- supporting required Be in The Know (BITK) awareness and media efforts.

Grantees will also submit quarterly data and expense reports and develop at least one annual success story highlighting program impact. Additional reporting instructions will be provided upon award.

Applicants should carefully review the included budget guidelines, allowable costs, indirect cost limits, and expectations for BITK campaign integration. These requirements ensure transparent, effective, and community-aligned prevention programming.

If you have any questions during the application process, please contact Chelsea Kapitancek, Program Manager, Cannabis Education and Awareness, at ckapitancek@wctcoalition.org or (203) 741-7741. We value your commitment to Connecticut's youth, and we look forward to receiving proposals from organizations dedicated to

strengthening healthy, informed, and resilient communities. Thank you for your dedication to prevention and for considering this important opportunity.

Required Grant Activities

Awarded coalitions will be responsible for implementing a comprehensive set of activities, including:

Using local and state data to identify priority youth subpopulations and cannabis-related needs.

Coalitions must conduct a thorough review of both quantitative and qualitative data sources to understand patterns, trends, and drivers of cannabis use in their communities. This review can include youth survey results, school climate data, law enforcement reports, health, hospital and/or emergency department data, regional priority reports, SEOW portal, and community assessments.

As part of this required step, coalitions must identify which youth groups are most at risk, determine community-specific drivers of use, and select strategies that are directly informed by the data reviewed.

Addressing gaps in prevention and intervention across demographic groups.

Coalitions will assess how prevention services vary across race, ethnicity, age, gender identity, sexual orientation, geographic area, and other factors. They must identify inequities or service gaps and propose targeted strategies to ensure prevention efforts are inclusive, culturally responsive, and accessible to all youth.

Developing an annual cannabis prevention workplan aligned with at least two CSAP prevention strategies.

Each coalition will produce an annual workplan outlining goals, measurable objectives, activities, timelines, and responsible partners. The workplan must incorporate a minimum of two CSAP strategies — such as environmental strategies, prevention education, community-based processes, information dissemination, or alternative activities — and explain how each strategy supports youth cannabis prevention.

CSAP Strategy	Definition	Examples
Alternatives	Provide opportunities for target populations to participate in activities that exclude alcohol and other drugs. The purpose is to discourage use of alcohol and other drugs by providing alternative, healthy activities.	Healthy and safe social and recreational events for youth, young adults, and adults that are substance free
		Cultural-specific activities for youth
		Community service activities
		Youth leadership activities
Community Based Process	Provides ongoing networking activities and technical assistance to community groups or agencies. It encompasses neighborhood-based, grassroots empowerment models using action planning and collaborative systems planning	Assessing community needs
		Multi-agency collaboration
		Coalition development
		Strategic planning
Education	Build skills through structured learning processes. Critical life and social skills include decision making, peer resistance, coping with stress, problem solving, interpersonal	Family and parent services
		Ongoing small group training sessions in a school, college, or community setting
		Peer leader/helper programs
		Staff Professional Development

	communication, and systematic and judgmental capabilities	
Environmental	Establish or changes written and unwritten community standards, codes, and attitudes. Its intent is to influence the general population's use of alcohol and other drugs.	Restrictions and Ordinances
		Policy review
		Public policy efforts
		Environmental Scan/ Landscape Analysis
Information Dissemination	Provides knowledge and increases awareness of the nature and extent of alcohol and other drug use, use, and addiction, as well as their effects on individuals, families, and communities. It is characterized by one-way communication from the information source to the audience, with limited contact between the two.	Be In the Know CT campaign dissemination
		Speaking engagements
		Websites
		Social media messaging
Problem Identification and Referral	Aims to identify individuals who have indulged in illegal or age-inappropriate use of alcohol, cannabis, or tobacco and individuals who have indulged in the first use of illicit drugs. The goal is to assess if their behavior can be reversed through education.	Student leaders raising awareness
		ASBIRT screening and outbound referrals

Collaborating with community partners addressing social determinants across the lifespan.

Coalitions are expected to work with schools, youth-serving organizations, health providers, faith-based groups, municipal departments, and other community sectors. Collaboration should address broader social determinants — such as academic support, mental health, housing stability, and community safety — that influence youth substance use and protective factors.

Conducting environmental scans on cannabis product availability and local risk factors.

Coalitions must regularly observe and document local retail environments, cannabis advertising, product placement, online access, and community norms. These scans should identify emerging risks (e.g., high-potency products, youth-appealing packaging, proximity of outlets to schools) and inform prevention planning. Each grantee is required to conduct at least (1) annual environmental scan annually.

Participating in the Regional Cannabis Workgroup.

At least one coalition representative must actively participate in Regional Cannabis Workgroup meetings. Participation includes sharing updates, aligning strategies across the region, learning about emerging trends, and collaborating on statewide and regional prevention initiatives.

Implementing Required Be in The Know (BITK) awareness and media efforts.

Coalitions will integrate BITK CT media materials into their community outreach, including distributing fact sheets, social media content, talking tips, and other campaign tools. Grantees must allocate required 10% of annual funding toward BITK promotion and ensure consistent use of approved messaging. ***Independent or alternative cannabis prevention media campaigns are not permitted under this grant.***

Include a funding statement in all materials, communications, and activities associated with this project.

This opportunity is funded by the Department of Mental Health and Addiction Services through resources provided by the Cannabis Prevention and Recovery Fund. Awardees must acknowledge the State of Connecticut as the funding source in all materials, communications, and activities related to this project.

Print Materials: All materials developed or printed with funding from this Contract will include DMHAS require prior approval by the DMHAS Program Manager and the RHBAO Cannabis Coordinator.

Reports: Grantees must submit the following reports to the Cannabis Program Coordinator in a format pre-approved by DMHAS:

1. *Quarterly Program Report:* Status of the contract deliverables and previous month's completed activities, reported on a template provided by DMHAS.
2. *Quarterly Expense Report:* An Expense Report outlining expenditures to contracted deliverables. Expense reports shall be submitted quarterly as outlined in the deliverable table. Expense report format will be provided to you.
3. *Annual Success Story:* Success story narratives highlight how individuals, communities, and partner organizations have benefited from evidence-based prevention, community engagement, and youth-focused interventions.
4. *Final Report:* A Final Report shall be submitted by July 30, 2028. This document will summarize all activities, performance outcomes, and program impact. Annual report format shall be provided by DMHAS Program Manager.

Deliverable Table	
Year 1: January 1, 2027-June 30, 2027	
Grantee Virtual Orientation	January 2027
Approved 6-month workplan	February 28, 2027
Quarterly Program and Expense Reports	April 15, 2027
Year 2: July 1, 2027-June 30, 2028	
Quarterly Program and Expense Reports	July 15, 2027
Approved 12-month workplan	July 30, 2027
Annual Success Story	July 30, 2027
Grantee Virtual Meeting	September 2027
Quarterly Program and Expense Reports	October 15, 2027
Quarterly Program and Expense Reports	January 15, 2028
Quarterly Program and Expense Reports	April 15, 2028
Quarterly Program and Expense Reports	June 1, 2028
Final Report (including Annual Success Story)	June 30, 2028

Application

Name of Coalition	Click or tap here to enter text.
Communities Covered by Coalition	Click or tap here to enter text.
Point of Contact (Name, Role)	Click or tap here to enter text.
Email Address	Click or tap here to enter text.
Local/ Regional/State Cannabis Data Reviewed (Add additional lines if necessary)	

Instructions: Please respond to the following questions 1-7. There is a total page limit of 5 pages (excluding 6 month workplan and budget). There is no limit to the workplan and budget.

Coalition History and how it currently operates to prevent youth substance use in the community (20 Points)

1. Describe the coalition's development over time, the strengths it has built while navigating challenges, and the positive impact and/or collaboration that has enhanced coalition effectiveness in addressing youth substance use.
2. Please describe how this funding will enhance creative outreach and programming especially to and for youth and other specific populations.

Community Profile/ Community Conditions (20 Points)

3. What strengths and protective factors exist within your community that support youth resilience, connection, and overall well-being? Please share any positive partnerships and strategies that help youth and families thrive.
4. What are the primary obstacles in addressing cannabis use (i.e. engagement of community partners, density of retailers which sell tobacco/nicotine products) among youth in your community?

Current Cannabis Assessment and Data Collection (20 Points)

5. What current data are you collecting to inform planning and decision-making?

If your data gathering capacity is limited, what data would you wish to collect? How does data currently inform your decision-making process? If data is limited or unavailable, please provide qualitative data.

6. Using needs assessment data, provide current quantitative (statistical survey data) and qualitative data (focus groups, town hall meetings, informal surveys) on youth cannabis use for the following measures:
 - i. Past 30-day use
 - ii. Perception of risk/harm of use
 - iii. Perception of parental disapproval of use
 - iv. Perception of peer disapproval of use

Work Plan (6-Month Action Plan- January-June 2027) (40 points):

7. Using the format below, please provide a 6-Month Action Plan (January-June 2027) for addressing youth cannabis use in the community by implementing required activities and (2) SMART Objective (Specific, measurable, achievable, realistic, and time-bound) and including activities, timeline, and person responsible. Provide a brief but detailed narrative for each SMART goal. Your narrative should clearly correspond to the goal as listed in the workplan table and explain how the activities, timeline, and outcomes align with that goal. Applicants must use SPF and CSAP Prevention Strategies.

WORK PLAN TEMPLATE:

Required Activities	Timeline (Start-End)	Target Population (Indicate Audience; estimate # served)	Person Responsible
1. Conduct a thorough review of both quantitative and qualitative data sources to understand patterns, trends, and drivers of cannabis use in their communities			
2. Conduct at least (1) annual environmental scan on cannabis product availability and local risk factors			
3. Actively participate in Regional Cannabis Workgroup meetings			
4. Integrate BITK CT media materials into community outreach, including distributing fact sheets, social media content, talking tips, and other campaign tools			

Goal 1: Prevent/Decrease youth cannabis use

Goal 1 Narrative:

SMART Objective (short-term goal):

CSAP Strategy	Activities (add rows as needed)	Timeline (Start-End)	Target Population (Indicate Audience; estimate # served)	Person Responsible

Goal 2: Increase community capacity to address cannabis among young people under the age of 21.

Goal 2 Narrative:

SMART Objective (short-term goal):

CSAP Strategy	Activities (add rows as needed)	Timeline (Start-End)	Target Population (Indicate Audience; estimate # served)	Person Responsible

Budget (30 points)

Please use or replicate the format below to complete your Budget and Budget Justification below for each line item.

- The awards for the 2027-2028 Youth Cannabis Prevention- Cannabis Coalition Grant will total \$25,000 per year, and not to exceed a total 2-year award of \$50,000.
- Allowable indirect costs may not exceed 15% of annual funding.
- Funding can support direct costs up to .5FTE of salary if necessary.
- Per person speaker honorariums are not to exceed \$500.00.
- Funding cannot be utilized for the development and implementation of other cannabis social marketing/ advertising prevention campaigns other than *Be in the Know CT*.** A minimum of 10% of annual budget needs to be allocated to support *Be in The Know* campaign placements and materials. Allowable program expenses may include materials/ supplies, equipment rentals, and programmatic food expenses; however, food expenses may not exceed more than 5% of the total budget for the entire 2-year funding period.
- Receipts must be maintained as you may need to submit them upon request.

Budget (30 points)

Item(s)	Definitions	Budget Narrative	YEAR 1: 1/1/27- 6/30/27	YEAR 2: 7/1/27- 6/30/28
Personnel	Regular compensation for those directly working on grant activities. Calculate based on actual hours or percentage of effort dedicated to grant activities.			
Fringe	Employer-paid benefits for employees whose salaries are charged to the program.			
Supplies, printing, postage	Allowable expenses include general materials and other supplies, curricula, prevention resources, promotional items, and limited programmatic food costs; however, food expenses cannot exceed 5% of the total budget across the full 2-year funding period. All items must be directly connected to the workplan. In the budget narrative, provide an estimated cost and quantity.			
Travel	Registration fees, transportation, conference costs, and professional development for program staff. <u>Must be</u>			



Budget (30 points)				
Item(s)	Definitions	Budget Narrative	YEAR 1: 1/1/27- 6/30/27	YEAR 2: 7/1/27- 6/30/28
	<i>directly related to workplan or required competencies.</i> List event name, cost per person, and number of attendees in the narrative.			
BITK Campaign placement /materials	Allowable expenses include dissemination of campaign materials such as ad placements, billboards, social media advertising, and lock bag procurement. (Required 10% annually)			
Total Direct Charges				
Indirect Charges*				
*Allowable indirect costs may <u>not</u> exceed 15% of annual funding.				
Total				

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)

Cannabis Coalition Grant Process Timeline (Grantee Funding Period: January 1, 2027-June 30, 2028)	
Grant Open for Applying	September 1, 2026
Grant Deadline	October 16, 2026
Coalition Grant Notification	December 4, 2026
RBHAO Contracting Process	December 2026
Grantee Start Date	January 1, 2027

Is this opportunity limited to Local Prevention Councils (LPC)?

Local Prevention Councils (LPCs), community prevention coalitions, and/or youth-serving organizations are eligible to apply. We welcome new organizations to apply! Only one application per community will be awarded.

What are the goals of this grant?

There are 2 goals for this grant, Goal One: Decrease youth cannabis use and Goal Two: Increase community capacity to address cannabis among young people under the age of 21.

What is the intended audience for this grant?

This grant is focused on preventing cannabis use for those under the age of 21.

If we received this funding in the pilot program, can we apply again?

Yes. Organizations that received funding during the pilot phase are eligible to apply again, as long as they meet the current program requirements.

I'm interested in impacting an adult audience. Can I do that with this grant?

For those who are interested in the adult audience, consider being a part of your regional cannabis & nicotine workgroup which focuses on not only youth cannabis prevention and responsible adult use. This funding is limited to addressing youth cannabis prevention.

If my coalition receives other prevention funding, can we apply?

You can apply for this funding opportunity if you receive LPC, SOR, and/or UNPP grants. BRYCWP grantees, current CT Partnership for Success Connecticut grantees, and current Federal: Drug-Free Communities (DFC), Partnerships for Success, and STOP grants are excluded from this grant opportunity.

Could this grant be shared amongst LPCs?

Yes. Applicants may apply for this grant either as:

- a single Local Prevention Council (LPC) that already serves more than one town; or
- A collaborative group of up to three LPCs that receive less than \$4,000 annually in LPC funding

Collaborative applications are eligible only when the participating municipalities share geographic borders and can demonstrate an established history of working together on prevention initiatives or related community efforts.

When applying as a collaborative group, the narrative must explain why the partnership is necessary and how it will strengthen prevention work in each community involved. Applicants should also describe any previous collaboration among the coalitions, highlighting shared initiatives or coordinated efforts that demonstrate the value of working together.

For budgeting and oversight purposes, one LPC must be designated as the lead agency. This lead LPC will be responsible for programmatic reporting, fiscal management, and ensuring that all deliverables are met. Although one LPC serves in this leadership role, all participating towns are expected to be actively engaged. Each town should have consistent representation, attend meetings, and take part in planning and activities.

The application must clearly describe how each participating community will benefit from the grant. The majority of grant-funded activities should be implemented across all participating communities to ensure equitable benefit, coordinated implementation, and regional impact.

Collaborative applications should demonstrate that the proposed partnership will achieve outcomes that would not be feasible for the participating LPCs if applying independently.

How much funding would we receive and when would funding begin?

The funding period would run from January 1, 2027, to June 30, 2028. The full award would be \$50,000 and would span (2) funding years with \$25,000 designated for each funding year.

Can this grant support staffing?

Yes! This grant supports up to a .5FTE if necessary. Stipends can also be provided for young people or community members who have defined roles and responsibilities within your proposed cannabis prevention workplan.

What if my coalition has limited data? Can we still apply?

Yes, we encourage all interested coalitions to apply. If you currently have limited data, please review existing local and regional data available. Also, the grant window allows for additional data gathering for key informant interviews, community feedback, and focus groups. Your RHBAO Coordinator can offer technical assistance and access to data that may benefit your application.

If your coalition has limited data due to a lack of student survey, a student survey is an allowable expense that can be utilized to build coalition capacity.

Can we use these dollars to develop a cannabis social norms campaign?

Funding cannot be utilized for the development and implementation of other cannabis social marketing/ advertising prevention campaigns. Grantees must integrate the promotion and dissemination of Be In The Know (BITK) materials. If there is a need that exists that isn't currently covered by existing campaign materials, please contact your RBHAO Cannabis Coordinator. **Failure to meet this requirement will result in the grant being canceled, and all funds will be returned to your RHBAO.**