



PRESENT: *Back row L to R:* Andrea Freeman (Public Health Institute of Western Mass), Kat Allen (Communities That Care Coalition), Marie Brody (Berkshire Regional Planning Commission), Ananda Lennox, Lisa Goldsmith (Strategic Prevention Initiative for Families and Youth), Heather Warner (Franklin Hampshire Tobacco Free Community Partnership), Phoebe Walker (Franklin Regional Council of Governments). *Front row L to R:* Nick Hathaway (Communities That Care Coalition), Paul McNeil (CLOSE Community Action/Longmeadow Public Schools), Dr. Julie Johnson (CCC Research Director), Malika Jeffries (Stop Access Springfield Coalition/Gandra Mental Health Center), Commissioner Kim Roy (CCC), Olivia Laramie (CCC Research Assistant), Commissioner Bruce Stebbins (CCC). **Not pictured:** Caroline Johnson (Strategic Prevention Initiative for Families and Youth).

A Summary of the Meeting Between the Western MA Regional Policy and Norms Workgroup and Staff and Commissioners of the MA Cannabis Control Commission

Greenfield, MA, March 2, 2023

Background: The Regional Policy and Norms Workgroup is co-convened by Western Massachusetts youth substance use prevention coalitions. It is *not* opposed to adult cannabis use, but focuses on protecting youth health. All four Western MA counties were represented in this two-hour meeting coordinated by the Public Health Institute of Western Mass, after hearing concerns throughout the region regarding youth cannabis use and perceptions.

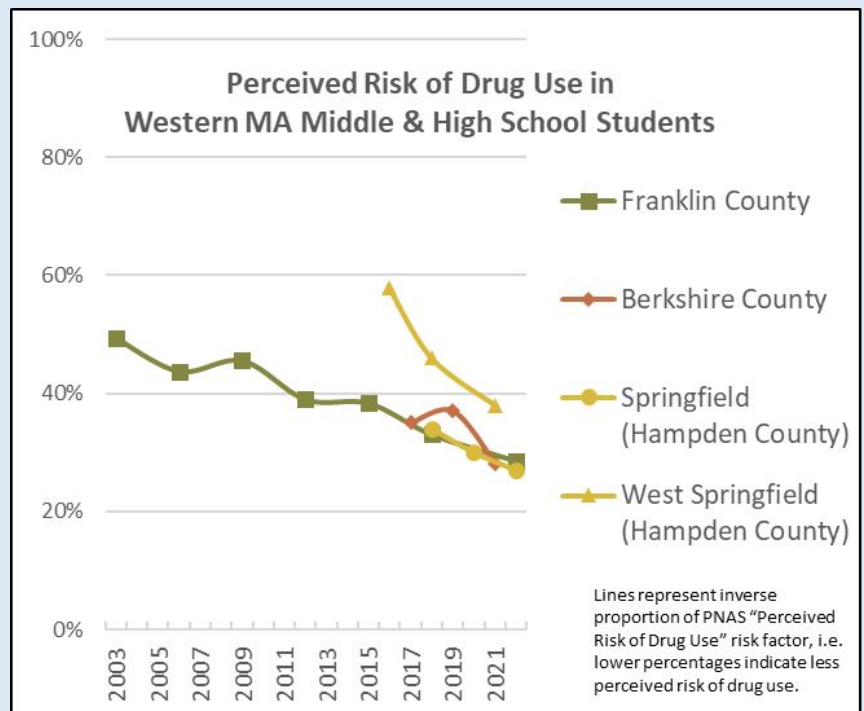
Contacts: Kat Allen (kallen@frcog.org);
Caroline Johnson (cajohnson@collaborative.org)

Western MA Youth Health Data:

- Data from student health surveys and focus groups with youth throughout western MA were shared, showing changes in the perception of the risk of harm from youth cannabis use, decreases in the perception of parental disapproval, and disparities.
- Coalitions explained the types of data that are available, the possibilities for additional analyses and data collection, and opportunities for partnership with the CCC.
- Youth Health Data slides can be found [here](#).

Follow-ups:

- A meeting is scheduled for April 2023 between Coalition Data specialists and the CCC Research team to discuss future collaboration on youth cannabis data.
- The Regional Policy and Norms workgroup will encourage and foster collaboration between counties/coalitions in design and consistency around cannabis survey questions.



A Summary of the Meeting Between the Western MA Regional Policy and Norms Workgroup and Staff and Commissioners of the MA Cannabis Control Commission

Greenfield, MA, March 2, 2023

Billboard Audience Composition:

Contact: Nick Hathaway
(nhathaway@frcog.org)

- Concerns around the current state requirements for cannabis billboard advertisements were shared, including:

- No current plan for enforcing or verifying compliance, and
- Audience composition data designed for marketing are not appropriate for regulation, e.g. often unreliable, adult-biased, and lack public transparency.

- Billboard slides can be found [here](#).



Location of a billboard in Greenfield, MA where Patriot Care (a local cannabis dispensary) has posted several recent advertisements.

Follow-ups:

- Data from apparent violations were sent to Comm. Stebbins and Roy for further investigation. Additional violations will continue to be shared with CCC.
- State Rep. Marcus Vaughn (9th Norfolk) has filed bills [HD.3121](#), [HD.3122](#), [HD.3123](#), and [HD.3124](#) to increase accountability by levying fines for violations, prohibit out-of-state advertisers, require CCC review of ads before posting, etc; all currently in review by House Counsel.
- State Rep. Patrick Kearney (4th Plymouth) has filed bill [H.113](#) to prohibit all cannabis billboard advertising in MA; referred to Joint Committee on Cannabis Policy.

Social Consumption Sites - Server, Safety, and Ventilation Concerns:

Contact: Heather Warner
(hwarnar@collaborative.org)

- We asked about CCC plans for server training, ventilation, food safety for edibles, and employee health.

Follow-ups:

- Comm. Stebbins in communications with members of local coalitions and the Social Consumption Working Group to identify and consider existing programs and models, e.g. [TIPS bartender training](#).

Enforcement: Compliance Checks, Local Options:

Contact: Malika Jeffries
(mjeffries@gandaracenter.org)

- We expressed concerns about enforcement, including compliance checks, local inspections, and the lack of an enforcement role for local health departments.
- We outlined the major expansions and improvements in the local public health infrastructure that have taken place since the legalization of cannabis.

Follow-ups:

- The CCC will work with Springfield Health Department's new Cannabis Enforcement Officer to pilot ways to work together.
- We will connect the CCC with information on food safety/inspections & expanded role of health departments under the DPH Public Health Excellence program.