



Community Assessment Report

The Prioritization of Youth Risk and Protective Factors

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Executive Summary

This report describes the results of the Data Assessment completed as part of the Routt County Communities That Care (CTC) effort. The CTC system is a way for members of a community to work together to prevent youth problem behaviors, including substance use, delinquency, teen pregnancy, dropping out of school and violence. This system was developed by Dr. David Hawkins and Dr. Richard Catalano. It is based on their research, which has identified risk factors that predict youth problem behaviors (outcomes) and protective factors that buffer children from risk and help them succeed in life.

A key goal of CTC is to identify which risk factors, protective factors and problem behaviors are prevalent in the communities of Routt County and implement evidence-based programs and strategies that address our unique profile. To that end, the Data Assessment Workgroup collected and analyzed data on Routt County youth. Then, with input from community stakeholders and a wide array of youth serving organizations, they identified priority risk factors to address, as well as community strengths to build on.

The assessment was completed using the 2017 Communities That Care (CTC) Youth Survey as well as the 2015 and 2017 Healthy Kids Colorado Youth Survey (HKCS) and other publically available data. The CTC Youth Survey was administered to 37 students in 7th grade at the Soroco Middle School, to 176 students in 7th grade at the Steamboat Springs Middle School and to 115 students in 11th grade at the Steamboat Springs High School in the spring of 2017. The HKCS was administered in the fall of 2017 to more than 80,000 students from more than 410 middle and high schools as a way to measure the health and well-being of Colorado's youth. Classrooms were randomly sampled and students in those classes were asked to complete the survey. In Routt County schools the participation was as follows:

Routt County Schools surveyed:	# of students
Soroco Middle School	73
Soroco High School	83
Hayden Middle School	98
Hayden High School	114
Steamboat Springs Middle School	88
Steamboat Springs High School	219
Yampa Valley High School	20

To get the most complete picture of all of our communities, the Data Assessment Workgroup also collected data from the Social Determinants of Health and other public records to measure risk factors and problem behaviors not covered by the survey. Based on the analysis of the data and input from community stakeholders, the following risk factors were identified as priorities for attention throughout Routt County:

- **Laws and norms favorable to substance use (Community/Society Domain)**
- **Parental attitudes favorable toward substance use (Family Domain)**
- **Youth attitudes favorable toward substance use (Peer/Individual Domain)**

Based on the analysis of the data and input from community stakeholders, the following protective factor was identified as a priority for community attention:

- **Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement (across all four domains)**

These risk factors were selected as priorities for prevention action primarily because data indicated that they are elevated for youth throughout Routt County. The data also revealed Routt County's strengths. For example, the 2017 HKCS revealed that students reported high levels of the protective factor "Opportunity and Rewards for Prosocial Involvement" and low levels of the risk factors "Gang Involvement" and "Rebelliousness". Public data also shows Routt County has a low teen dropout rate. These are important areas of strength on which to build to help promote well-being and protect our youth from the risk of health and behavior problems.

This report recommends that the communities in Routt county give particular attention to the risk factors noted above when developing a county-wide Action Plan to prevent youth health and behavior problems and promote child and youth well-being.



Introduction

The Routt County Communities That Care Effort

About the CTC System:

In the spring of 2017 Routt County began implementing the Communities That Care (CTC) prevention planning system. Developed by Dr. David Hawkins and Dr. Richard Catalano of the Social Development Research Group in Seattle, Washington, the CTC system is a way for members of a communities to work together to efficiently and effectively promote positive youth development and prevent youth problem behaviors such as substance use, delinquency, teen pregnancy, dropping out of school and violence.

Routt County implemented CTC to achieve the community's vision to empower Routt County youth through opportunity and collaboration.

Key accomplishments to date:

- In January 2017 Northwest Colorado Health received a grant from the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) for both Moffat and Routt counties to implement the CTC framework in northwest Colorado.
- In March 2017 a Facilitator was hired in Routt County to implement the project.
- In May 2017 the CTC Youth Survey was administered to 7th and 11th graders in the Soroco and Steamboat schools.
- In October 2017 a Community Coalition Board was formed after community stakeholders attended a two part orientation and established a structure for the Routt County CTC effort. This included forming workgroups to achieve the various steps in implementing the CTC system.
- In December 2017 a joint Key Leader Board meeting occurred between Routt and Moffat counties to provide an update on the status of each counties effort.
- In February 2018 the Data Assessment Workgroup attended a two-part Community Assessment Workshop and developed a plan and timeline for completing the community risk and protective factor assessment.
- In August 2018 the Data Assessment Workgroup re-convened to review newly released CTC Scaled Reports using the 2017 HKCS data in an effort to solidify their recommended priorities. This report is the result of that assessment.

The Community Assessment

How the Assessment Will Be Used:

Dr. Hawkins and Dr. Catalano have identified risk factors that predict problem behaviors in youth, and protective factors that help protect young people from those risks. By addressing risk and protective factors, communities can help prevent adolescent problem behaviors and promote positive youth development. A key goal of the CTC system is for communities to develop a profile of the risk factors, protective factors and problem behaviors in their communities, and to develop a plan, in collaboration with a broad array of stakeholders and organizations, for addressing the risk factors that are most elevated while enhancing protective factors.

This report represents the first step in that process. The Data Assessment Workgroup has collected data on risk factors, protective factors and problem behaviors in Routt County. With input from the community, the work group has identified our county's strengths and the priority risk factors to address in a comprehensive prevention plan.

Data Collection Methods:

As noted above, middle and high school students throughout Routt County were asked to participate in surveys. The complete results of these are provided in reports from both the CTC Youth Survey and HKCS. In addition, Dr. Hawkins and Dr. Catalano have identified public data indicators that have been shown to be valid and reliable measures of certain risk factors and problem behaviors that are not measured by the survey, namely Extreme Economic Deprivation, Availability of Drugs and Alcohol, Teen Pregnancy and School Drop-Out. The Data Assessment work group collected data from local and state agencies to supplement the youth survey.

Prioritization Methods:

The Data Assessment Workgroup analyzed data to identify which risk factors were most elevated in Routt County, Colorado. An initial short list of priorities was presented to the Community Coalition Board on May 10, 2018. The work group met again on August 29, 2018 to solidify their priorities based on updated survey analysis and have created this report to present to the Community Coalition Board for approval on September 13, 2018.

Report Overview:

The next sections of this report provide detailed information and analysis of the risk factors, protective factors and problem behaviors in Routt County. The conclusion presents the final list of priorities and recommendations for future action.

Community Assessment Data

How Risk & Protective Factors Predict Problem Behaviors in Domains

Prevention science research suggests that the most effective methods for preventing adolescent substance abuse involve addressing both risk and protective factors that exist in every domain of a person's life—identified in the social-ecological model as the domains of community/society, school, family, and individual/relationship.



Risk factors are predictors of problem behaviors in adolescence. They are those characteristics or situations that are known to increase the probability of negative health or behavioral outcomes.

Protective factors buffer against risk factors. Protective factors mitigate or protect against negative health or behavioral outcomes.

When prioritizing, the Data Workgroup looked at the risk and protective factors most prevalent and chose the ones that showed elevated percentages. The group also compared Routt County to the state and national average for the same questions for the corresponding ages/grades.

Risk Factors:

#1 Community laws and norms favorable to substance use:

Students' perceptions of the rules and regulations in their communities related to alcohol and other substance use are related to the extent of problem behaviors during adolescence.

Based on conversations with a variety of community stakeholders to gather anecdotal evidence, as well as information from the local Healthy Kids Colorado Survey (HKCS), local laws, norms and attitudes favorable towards substance use were identified as a significant local risk factor. Given the area's decades-long status as a world class ski resort and more recent recognition as a year round vacation destination for travelers, there is a perception that substance use, including alcohol and cannabis, is an activity in which individuals are more likely to participate. This stems at least in part from the fact that the use of these substances is closely tied to the recreation industry's positive promotion of the "party" culture. This perception is furthered by the media's support of activities that are either sponsored by or directly promote purveyors' of alcohol and cannabis.

Based on HKCS data, youth in Routt County believe that there is a lax enforcement of laws for both marijuana and alcohol. 60.8% of high school youth believed that if a kid was drinking alcohol in their neighborhood police would not catch them. Similarly, with marijuana, 66.3% of youth believed that if a kid was using marijuana in their neighborhood police would not catch them. This shows a youth perception that it is hard to get caught using substances in their neighborhoods by law enforcement. Also, almost half of youth report that both alcohol and marijuana are easy to access and readily available here in Routt County.

Colorado Health Indicators data showed that Routt County has a much higher rate of liquor stores per capita than the State of Colorado. Routt County has 4.6 liquor stores per 10,000 people, where Colorado as a whole has 2.4 liquor stores per 10,000 people. This shows a community norm of allowing many liquor stores per capita, and makes it easier for adults and youth to access alcohol.

Finally, when looking at adult data from the Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System, adults in Routt County have a much higher rate of reporting binge drinking on a regular basis at 25.6% reporting having 5 or more drinks in a hour if you are man and 3 or more drinks in an hour for a woman, compared to Colorado at 18.1%. The behavior of adults can have an impact on the behaviors of youth in the area.

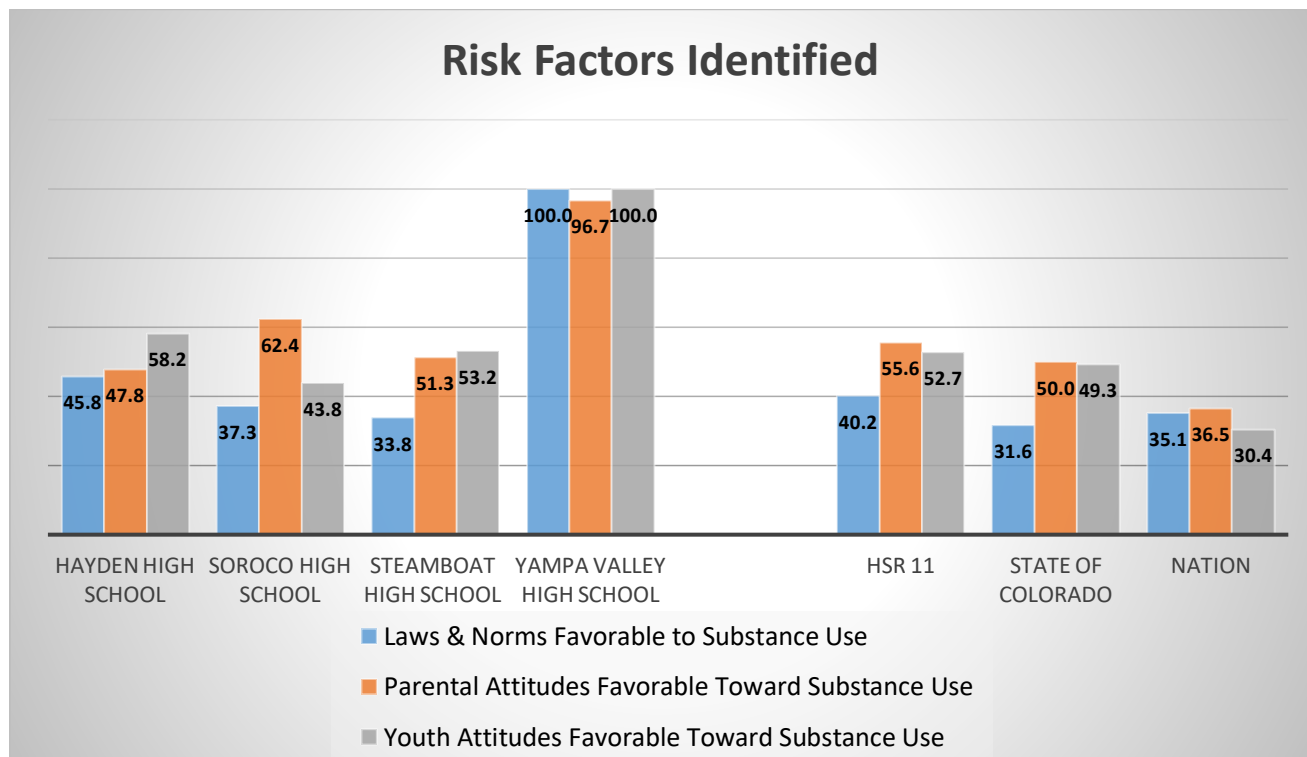
#2 Parental attitudes favorable toward substance use:

Youth in families where parents use illegal drugs, are heavy users of alcohol, or are tolerant of their children's use are at a higher risk for becoming substance users during adolescence. Youth were asked the question in the Healthy Kids Colorado Survey "How wrong do your parents feel it would be for you to: drink beer, wine, or hard liquor?" The risk factors that influence adolescents' use of alcohol or illegal drugs include individual-level characteristics, peer attitudes and behaviors, community norms, and family characteristics. When parents hold attitudes favorable to use then the outcome is proven to have an increased percentage of early onset of use by the youth in that family.

#3 Youth attitudes favorable toward substance use:

Favorable attitudes toward substance use are positively correlated with the level of reported ATOD (alcohol, tobacco and other drugs) use across a range of Communities That Care Youth Survey communities. The data from the Healthy Kids Colorado Survey has also shown that our youth are more likely to have a favorable attitude towards substance use. This risk factor is closely tied to the previous risk factors mentioned as well. If local enforcement of laws designed to prevent substance use by minors are not consistently enforced, and at the same time there is positive promotion of substance use by the media and community attitudes favorable, there is a greater likelihood youth will engage in substance use.

Here are just some of the results seen for area high school students' perceptions:



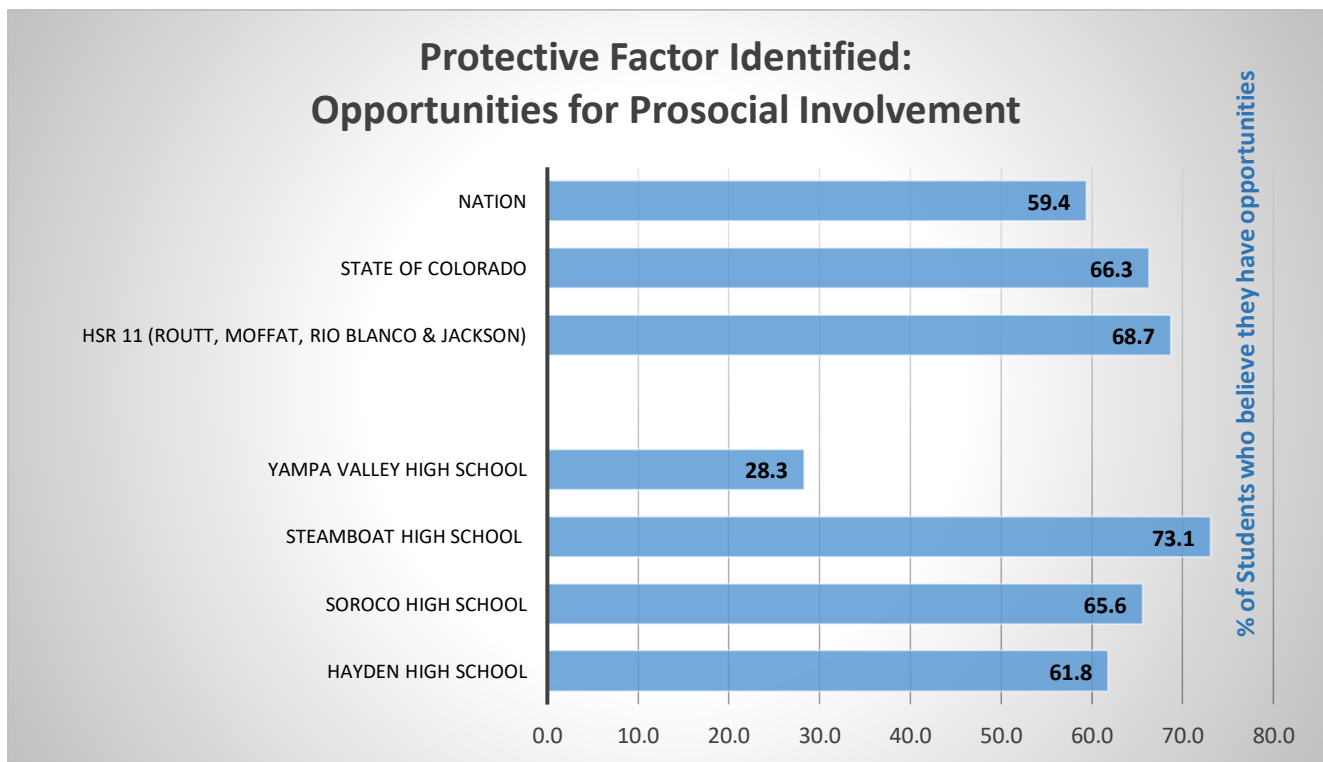
Protective Factor:

#1 Opportunities for prosocial involvement

Finding meaningful opportunities for youth to become involved in their communities greatly impacts their desire to engage in harmful behavior like substance use/abuse. Providing youth with opportunities to give back to the communities that they reside in also allows them to take pride in those communities, engages their free time with healthy and productive behavior, and provides them with a sense of accomplishment allowing them to bond to their communities and decreasing the likelihood that they will participate in destructive decision-making.

The 2017 *Healthy Kids Colorado Survey* revealed that more than half of our students surveyed reported that they had participated in community service within the last 30 days. The survey also showed that a majority of local high school students have a trusted adult that can help them with serious problems and could ask a parent/guardian for help if they had a serious problem.

For these reasons, *Opportunities for prosocial Involvement* has been chosen as a significant strength in reducing the likelihood that youth in Steamboat, Oak Creek, Yampa, Hayden and north Routt will engage in substance use or have mental health challenges.

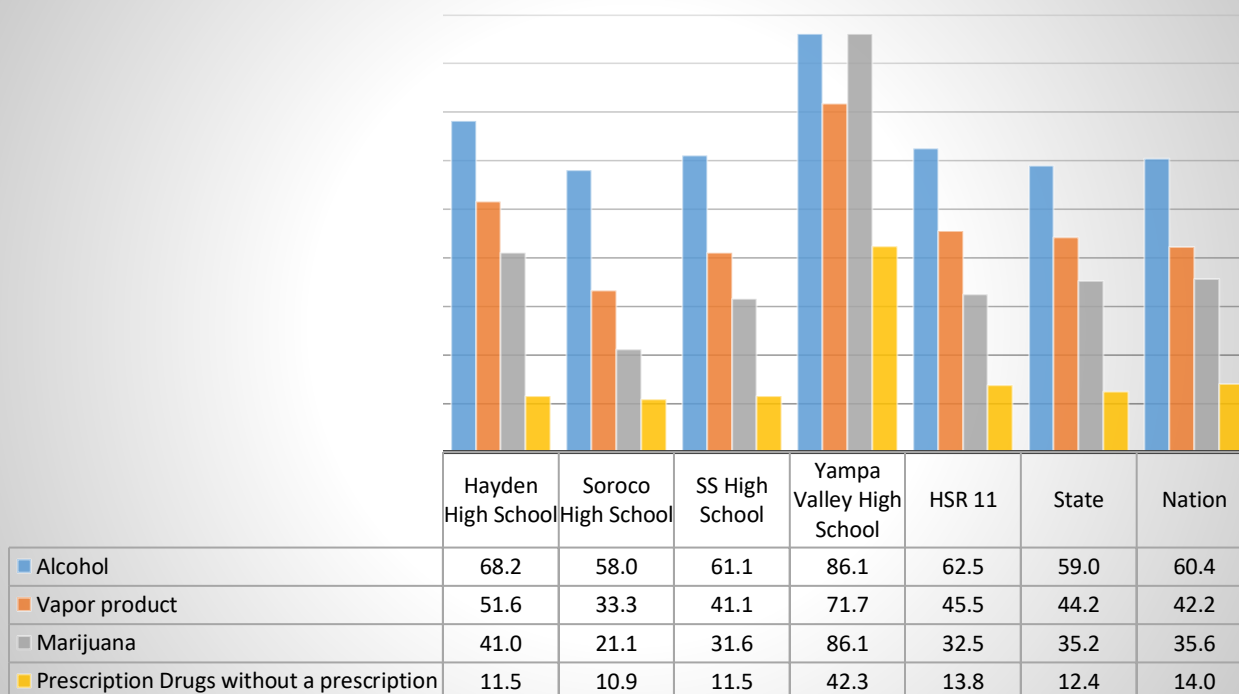


Community Challenges/Problem Behaviors/Outcomes:

The Data Assessment Workgroup examined local data in comparison to regional, state and national data to identify community strengths, community challenges, and priority health and behavior problems. The primary source of data is the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment's data profile for our region (HSR 11), which includes Routt, Moffat, Rio Blanco and Jackson counties. The report provides data for Routt County and comparative data at the various levels based on the 2017 Healthy Kids Colorado Survey (HKCS) administration.

In depth examination of these data identified a priority health and problem behavior as substance use, especially use of alcohol. The chart below highlights this trends and underscore the importance of minimizing substance use as a priority area for Routt County.

**Outcomes Based on Prevalence of Risk Factors -
Students who report EVER using**



Conclusion and Recommendations

Routt County's Strengths:

The data revealed that young people in all of our communities in Routt County have a lower than average high school dropout rate. In particular, young people across all grades reported high levels of the protective factor "Opportunities for prosocial Involvement". We should work to build on this strength in all of our prevention efforts while enhancing the many other protective factors that already exist, such as rewards for prosocial involvement as well as healthy beliefs and clear standards in a youth's life that promote positive youth development.

Community Priorities:

Based on the analysis of data and input from stakeholders, the following factors were prioritized from a longer list to give our communities in Routt County something tangible to focus on over the next several years:

- Laws and norms favorable to substance use (Community Domain)
- Parental attitudes favorable toward substance use (Family Domain)
- Youth attitudes favorable toward substance use (Peer/Individual Domain)
- Opportunities for prosocial involvement (across all Domains)

These were selected as priorities because the data indicate that they are among the most elevated for youth throughout Routt County. It is recommended that we give particular attention to implementing strategies and not necessarily programs to address these factors when developing a prevention plan. Research suggests a strong correlation between risk and protective factors and the problem behaviors of substance use. The selected risk and protective factors and problem behaviors will all be taken into account when implementing strategies and in developing a prevention action plan.

Next Steps:

The next step in the CTC process is to find out what resources are already in place in Routt County that address the priorities outlined above. The Community Resources Assessment Workgroup (CRAW) will attend the second part of the "Assessing Community Resources Workshop" in September. Their assessment, combined with this report, will make up the community profile of Routt County that will be used to identify programs and strategies to promote youth well-being and help to prevent health and behavior problems in Routt County in the future. Additionally, the Youth Involvement Workgroup consisting of a broad representation from all 3 school districts will be activated so that our youth have a voice and choice in all decisions moving forward.