

## EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Funded by Maine Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services (SAMHS), the Student Intervention and Reintegration Program (SIRP) is a substance use intervention program that targets an *indicated population* of youth ages 13 through 18 with either verified or suspected use of alcohol or drugs, as identified through a violation of school substance abuse policy, arrest or citation involving alcohol or drugs, violation of probation, or physical impairment as reported by self or others. These are youth who *do not* diagnostically qualify for substance abuse treatment services. Youth may be referred to the program from anywhere in the community—via schools, healthcare providers, the criminal justice system, a parent/guardian, or self-referral.

Youth participate in a 12-hour educational program with the goal of reducing their alcohol and/or other drug use. The program content and process are designed to increase awareness of the risks to self and others involved in using alcohol and other drugs, identify personal values around use, and reduce attitudes favorable to use. Youth learn and practice decision-making and coping skills, exploring alternative options to high-risk behaviors.

This report examines evaluation data received during a one-year implementation of the program completed by eight SIRP sites across the state from August 2013 through August 2014. The purpose of the evaluation was to collect and analyze data to determine progress made toward achieving participant outcomes. Data was collected using questionnaires completed by participants at four junctures throughout their involvement in the program and included before- and after-program questionnaires, as well as 90-day and 180-day follow-up questionnaires. Participants also completed program satisfaction questionnaires to gather feedback about the quality of the program and areas needing improvement. A review of participant referral data was also included.

A total of 194 participant before- and after-surveys and 186 satisfaction surveys were analyzed. Participant demographic information (gender, race, age, school attended, town of residence) and a profile of substance use is presented, including the types of substance(s) used (e.g., tobacco, alcohol, marijuana, other illicit drugs, non-prescribed prescription drugs, inhalants), and the number, quantity, and frequency of use of each substance.

An overview of participants:

- 70% were male
- 85% were ages 15–18
- 91% indicated their race as Caucasian
- 34% indicated they were referred to the program to reduce legal sanctions, and 30% were referred to avoid school sanctions
- 40% completed the program because the information was interesting and helpful

The most commonly used substances were marijuana (61%) and alcohol (46%) with 27% of participants indicating they used at least two substances. Additional analysis showed no significant differences in the types and amounts of substances used by gender or age categories.

Findings indicate that participants showed statistically significant changes in the desired direction in the following outcome measures:

- Increased understanding of the damaging effects alcohol and other drugs have on the body
- Increased awareness of personal risk related to alcohol and drug use
- Increased awareness of how personal values are negatively affected by use
- Reduced motivation and intent to use

Follow-up questionnaire data is reported in a separate supplementary report and examines the changes in substance use over time after participants completed the program.

Although many participants were reluctant to participate in the program at the beginning, by program end most were glad they did—and expressed moderate to high satisfaction with the content of the program and instructor.

SIRP evaluation data shows that participants acquire valuable information and skills to help them learn more about high- and low-risk choices and to gauge the impact of their own behavior in relationship to the things they value, as well as understand concrete ways to lower individual risk to be more in alignment with personal values.