



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Know the Truth Prepares for In-Person Learning

Prevention program ready to respond to in-person presentation requests

MINNEAPOLIS — Know the Truth™ (KTT), the substance use prevention program of Minnesota Adult and Teen Challenge, is finalizing preparations for a return to in-person learning. The 160 schools the KTT program works with every year will have the option to host in-person presentations, live virtual presentations, or virtual presentations that students can log on to at any time.

“Our primary focus is on making sure students can safely hear our prevention message, whether that’s in-person or online,” says Mika Nervick, the prevention program coordinator for Know the Truth. “We know substance use is on the rise due to the pandemic, and it’s critical that we reach students before experimentation becomes a potentially life-long habit.”

Recent surveys of Minnesota youth found that 34 percent of high school students reported using a substance in the past year, over half of youth reported using or considering using substances to cope with mental health struggles, and 47 percent have used or thought about using a new substance since the start of the pandemic. Additionally, 71 percent believe that youth substance use has increased during COVID-19.

“The vast majority of people who struggle with substance use as adults started smoking, drinking, or experimenting with illicit substances before the age of 18,” adds Nervick. “We’re concerned that youth have been using substances to cope with the social isolation of COVID-19, potentially setting themselves up for a lifelong struggle.”

Since the Know the Truth program began more than a decade ago, it has seen significant success in helping prevent substance use among Minnesota’s young people. The program utilizes a peer-to-peer format, where Know the Truth presenters – often just a few years older than the students – share their personal struggles with substance use. This format has proven to be effective, with 74 percent of students say they will quit using or use less after hearing a Know the Truth presentation.

So far in 2021, Know the Truth has already presented to five schools in-person and 27 schools online, reaching an estimated 6,390 students.

About Know the Truth

Know the Truth (KTT) is the substance-use prevention program of Minnesota Adult & Teen Challenge. KTT works within communities to help prevent teenage substance use by sharing personal stories about the struggles with addiction and by presenting students with information about the dangers of alcohol and drug use. Each year, KTT speaks in more than 160 high schools and middle schools and reaches more than 60,000 students.

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