



ASAM American Society of
Addiction Medicine

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ASAM Unveils National Public Policy Statement on Substance Use Prevention

*Addiction Medicine Leaders Recommend Evidence-Based Approaches to Substance Use
Prevention*

Rockville, MD (December 6, 2018) – Recognizing that research-backed prevention measures play a key role in reducing the health, social and economic costs of substance use, the American Society of Addiction Medicine (ASAM) has released a set of evidence-informed policy recommendations for preventing alcohol and drug-related problems in contemporary society. The policy recommendations were approved by the ASAM Board of Directors and have been endorsed by the American College of Preventive Medicine.

“This policy statement contains actionable information designed to help public health stakeholders – including policymakers, insurers, employers, schools, families and communities – implement substance use prevention policies and programs informed by the latest scientific evidence,” said Kelly J. Clark, MD, MBA, DFAPA, DFASAM, president of ASAM. “Given the sizable health, social and economic consequences of substance use and addiction in our country, it is critical that evidence-informed prevention programs and policies be more widely adopted and brought to scale as quickly as possible.”

According to reports from the [U.S. Surgeon General’s office](#) and the [United Nations](#), existing evidence-based substance use prevention programs are not widely used or well implemented. Furthermore, studies have shown that the prevention programs used in many schools and communities are not evidence-based and have not been shown to be effective in reducing or preventing substance misuse.

“These recommendations are an important step toward ensuring that all Americans have access to effective, evidence-based substance use disorder prevention measures,” said Robert W. Carr, MD, MPH, FACPM, president of the American College of Preventive Medicine. “We look forward to working with ASAM and other stakeholders in the public health community to implement these recommendations into public policy quickly and effectively.”

Key policy recommendations include:

- Urging legislators to fund prevention science research and work with stakeholders to develop national standards for substance use prevention. Lawmakers should also either increase or maintain significant taxes on legally available substances with addictive potential such as alcohol, cannabis, and nicotine and ensure that the revenue obtained from these sources is earmarked for public health prevention and treatment efforts.
- Recommending that schools, families, and communities use evidence-informed programs to identify youth at risk of using or misusing substances and use evidence-based interventions to encourage the nurturing of children's physical, cognitive and emotional development.
- Encouraging employers to develop workplace prevention and wellness programs and ensure that all employee health insurance includes coverage of substance use detection and intervention programs while protecting patient confidentiality.
- Recommending that insurers cover early detection of an intervention for substance use without burdensome utilization management techniques.

To view ASAM's Prevention Policy Statement, [click here](#).

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About ASAM

The American Society of Addiction Medicine, founded in 1954, is a professional society representing over 6,100 physicians, clinicians, and associated professionals in the field of addiction medicine. ASAM is dedicated to increasing access and improving the quality of addiction treatment, educating physicians and the public, supporting research and prevention, and promoting the appropriate role of physicians in the care of patients with addiction. For more information, visit www.ASAM.org.