Community-Level Change in Substance Use-Related Outcomes in Washington State Communities Implementing the Community Prevention & Wellness Initiative

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Community Prevention & Wellness Initiative (CPWI)

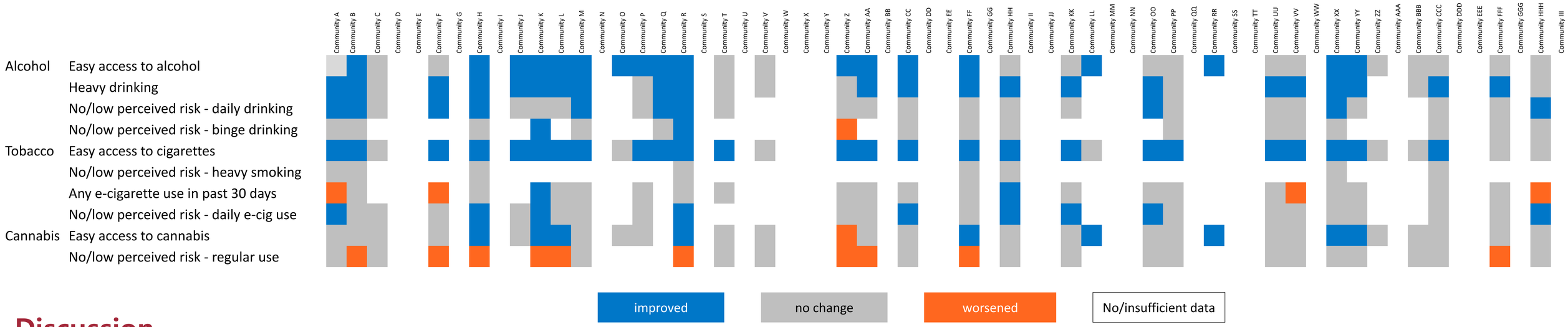
- CPWI is a strategic, data-informed, community coalition-based initiative implemented in 99 Washington State communities across seven cohorts (i.e., groups of communities that implemented CPWI in the same year).
- The goal of CPWI is to reduce adolescent substance use and associated risk factors in the highest need communities in the state.
- The purpose of this evaluation is to examine whether substance use-related outcomes have changed significantly from baseline to 2018 for 10th grade students in CPWI communities.

Methods

- This evaluation included data from 63 CPWI communities (five cohorts).
- Cohort 1 = 19 communities (started in 2011), Cohort 2 = 13 (2012), Cohort 3 = 19 (2013), Cohort 4 = 6 (2015), Cohort 5 = 6 (2017).
- We used 10th grade data from the Washington State Healthy Youth Survey (HYS).
- We used chi-square analysis to evaluate whether change from baseline to 2018 was statistically significant at p=<.10. We suppressed results if the sample size was smaller than 20. The sample size is based on the number of respondents who endorsed a response category (e.g., yes, I have smoked in my lifetime).

Results

- The graph below gives a bird's eye view of the color-coded results. The predominant colors are blue (significant improvement in outcomes) or grey (no significant change in outcomes) implying that most communities with adequate sample size either improved or stayed the same.
- 76% of communities with adequate data showed significant reductions in access to cigarettes, while the results for the remaining communities were neutral.
- 73% communities showed significant reductions in heavy drinking (i.e., 3+ days drinking in past 30 days and/or binge drinking in past 2 weeks), while the results for the remaining communities were neutral.
- 37% of communities showed significant decrease in adolescents' perception of harm from regular cannabis use, while the results for the remaining communities were neutral.



Discussion

- Most of the substance use-related outcomes either decreased significantly or remained neutral (no significant change) in CPWI communities. The results are especially noteworthy for alcohol- and tobacco-related outcomes with significant decreases across communities in heavy drinking, access to alcohol and cigarettes, and increases in perception of risk from drinking. Given that CPWI communities are the highest need communities in the state, even neutral results are promising.
- One-third of the communities had a decrease in adolescents' perception of harm from regular cannabis use. This decrease in perceived risk of cannabis use mirrors statewide trends in Washington State as well as national data. Low perceived risk of cannabis is historically associated with cannabis use; so, CPWI communities may benefit from implementing prevention programs that address perceived risk of harm from cannabis use.

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