



# **Eagle County Communities that Care**

## **Community Resources Assessment Report**

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**Our Vision: 'Eagle County: Where Youth Thrive!'**

# Resources Assessment Report

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# Resources Assessment Report

Eagle County *Communities that Care* is a collaborative project of public and private health, education, human service, and civic organizations; local businesses; and citizens. Some of those who have been represented include:

Eagle County  
Vail Police Department  
Town of Eagle  
Eagle County Paramedics  
Vail Resorts  
Eagle County School District  
Mind Springs Health  
ERWSD  
SOS Outreach  
The Literacy Project  
Eagle River Youth Coalition

WECMRD  
Mentoring Partnership  
Mental Health Center  
Bright Future Foundation  
Vail Health  
Eagle River Fire District  
Eagle County Sheriff  
Alpine Bank  
Vail Valley Partnership  
Catholic Charities  
United Way

# Resources Assessment Report

## Table of Contents

### I. Executive Summary

### II. Introduction

#### A. Eagle County *Communities that Care* effort

1. About the *Communities that Care* system
2. Key accomplishments to date

#### B. The resources assessment

1. How the information was collected
2. How effective resources and gaps were identified
3. How to use this report

### III. The Resources Assessment Information

#### A. Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement in the Community

##### Strategy I.E.1: Recruit and Reward Youth Participation in Community Coalitions

1. Resources and strengths in community capacity
2. Gaps, issues and barriers in community capacity

#### B. Availability of drugs

##### Community laws and norms favorable towards drug use

##### Strategy I.A.2: Build Public Support for Conventional Enforcement of Existing Laws

1. Resources and strengths in community capacity
2. Gaps, issues and barriers in community capacity

#### C. Favorable attitudes towards substance use

##### Strategy IV.A.1: Leverage Statewide Mass Media Resources to Decrease Favorable Attitudes towards Substance Use

1. Resources and strengths in community capacity
2. Gaps, issues and barriers in community capacity

### IV. Conclusions

#### A. Community resources available to support community-level strategies

#### B. Gaps, issues and barriers related to community capacity to implement strategies

#### C. Recommendations and next steps

### V. Appendices

#### A. Resource Assessment Grid Analysis

#### B. Community Capacity Gap Grid

# Resources Assessment Report

## Executive Summary

This report describes the results of the resource assessment completed as part of the Eagle County *Communities That Care* effort. The *Communities That Care* system is a way for members of a community to work together to promote positive youth development. The system was developed by Dr. David Hawkins and Dr. Richard Catalano and is based on their research, which has identified risk factors that predict youth problem behaviors and protective factors that buffer children from risk and help them succeed in life.

A key goal of the *Communities That Care* effort is to identify which risk factors, protective factors, and problem behaviors are prevalent in our community, and implement evidence-based programs, policies, and strategies to address the community's unique profile. To that end, the Risk and Protective Factor Assessment workgroup collected and analyzed data on Eagle County and, with input from the community board, identified the following protective factors as priorities for community planning:

- Opportunities and recognition for prosocial involvement in the community, in local schools, and for families

The following risk factors were also identified as priorities in Eagle County.

- Community Laws and Norms Favorable Toward Drug Use
- Availability of Drugs
- Youth Attitudes Favorable Toward Substance Use

The resource assessment was the next step in the *Communities That Care* process. In October 2017, members of the Resource Assessment and Evaluation workgroup attended the Assessing Community Resources Workshop. Using data collection tools refined at the workshop, workgroup members collected survey information from identified Eagle County organizations, stakeholders, and youth. The assessment was completed in March 2018.

Based on the assessment information, the Resource Assessment and Evaluation workgroup suggest that:

- The prominent identified protective factor for Eagle County youth is: *Opportunities and Rewards for Prosocial Involvement*. Additional ways to augment this and other protective factors should be provided whenever possible (perhaps through other funding sources). Any policies, environmental strategies, or programs that are chosen to address prioritized risk factors should also include a focus on at least one identified protective factor present in our community.
- There are two anecdotally effective resources in Eagle County that address the risk factor *Community Laws and Norms Favorable Toward Drug Use and Availability of Drugs*. This report recommends the community board supplement existing resources with effective policies, environmental strategies, and

# Resources Assessment Report

programs, and that effective resources addressing *Community Laws and Norms Favorable Toward Drug Use and Availability of Drugs* be expanded to include the entire community.

- While there are several tested and effective programs implemented in schools in Eagle County that address the risk factor *Youth Attitudes Favorable Toward Substance Use*, there are also other policies, environmental strategies, and programs that impact this risk factor. This report recommends the community board expand effective programs, policies, and environmental strategies, and that effective resources addressing *Youth Attitudes Favorable Toward Substance Use* be expanded to include the entire community.

# Resources Assessment Report

## Introduction

### **The Eagle County *Communities That Care* Effort**

In the fall of 2016, Eagle County began the *Communities That Care* prevention planning process. Developed by Dr. David Hawkins and Dr. Richard Catalano of the Social Development Research Group in Seattle, Washington, the *Communities That Care* system is a way for members of a community 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.

Eagle County implemented the *Communities That Care (CTC)* process to achieve the community's vision that all young people in Eagle County grow up supported and nurtured by their families, schools and community, and become healthy adults who contribute positively to society. The Eagle County CTC process has been launched with support of Colorado State marijuana tax revenues, with leadership from the Colorado Department of Public Health & Environment (CDPHE). Eagle County Public Health is the grantee and has contracted the Eagle River Youth Coalition to coordinate the CTC Process.

# Resources Assessment Report

## Key Accomplishments in Eagle County

- In September of 2016, Molly Hadley, MPH, was hired as the full-time Eagle County Communities That Care Coordinator.
- In January through March 2017, 15 community leaders were recruited and attended a Key Leader Orientation and committed to the CTC effort.
- In March and April 2017, a diverse group of 30 Community Board members came together for 10 hours of training. Five workgroups were formed with a volunteer Chair for each, including:
  - Risk and Protective Factor Assessment Workgroup
  - Resources Assessment Workgroup
  - Community Board Maintenance Workgroup
  - Community Outreach and Public Relations Workgroup
  - Youth Involvement Workgroup
- In April 2017, Eagle County CTC co-hosted a Positive Youth Development (PYD) training with 45 local and regional participants.
- In June 2017, the Risk- and Protective-Factor Assessment workgroup attended the Community Assessment Workshop and developed a plan for completing the community risk- and protective factor assessment. At this workshop 3 risk factors and 3 protective factors were prioritized. The Eagle County Community Assessment report explains the findings of this workshop.
- In June 2017, the Community Board Maintenance workgroup convened to develop guidelines and expectations for governance and CTC participant motivation.
- In September 2017, Eagle County CTC co-hosted a community QPR (suicide prevention) training with 30 community members in attendance.
- Beginning in October 2017, members of the Resources Assessment and Evaluation workgroup attended the Assessing Community Resources Workshop. Using data collection tools refined at the training event, workgroup members collected information from Eagle County specific to youth. The assessment was completed in March, 2018. This report details the results of that assessment.
- Increased youth engagement and youth advising via the following:

# Resources Assessment Report

- A cohort of 10 trained youth advisors representing the whole valley and an age range of 13-25, engaged in each phase and workgroup of CTC, ensuring a strong youth voice throughout the process. (Per CDPHE's encouragement)
  - A part-time youth advisor on ERYC staff supporting CTC
  - Development of an Eagle County CTC website:  
<https://www.eaglecountyctc.org>
  - Planning an Eagle County CTC promotional video filmed by Eagle County TV
- 
- A gap in local data from the parent lens was identified. CTC played a significant role in developing the survey instrument and collecting vital information on parent behaviors, perceptions, and attitudes around substance use, safe driving, family support and other categories. Information was collected from 474 English and Spanish speakers. These findings will help steer local parent educational programming, campaigns, and priorities within agencies. The survey results are available for CTC partners and community agencies.
  - In March 2018, Eagle County CTC co-hosted a PYD training with 27 community members in attendance.

# Resources Assessment Report

## The Resource Assessment

The key goal of the *Communities That Care* system is for the community to develop a profile of the risk factors, protective factors and problem behaviors in their community, and to develop a plan for addressing the risk factors that are most elevated while enhancing protective factors.

This report supports the second step in that process. The Resource Assessment and Evaluation workgroup has collected information about the resources that address the Eagle County *Communities That Care* priority risk and protective factors and community-level strategies identified by the Colorado Department of Public Health and Environment (CDPHE) that are best practices in changing community-level norms, environments, and structures that would promote positive youth development. The workgroup collected information from the community to identify resources that promote or inhibit community capacity related to these community-level strategies. Coupled with the Community Assessment Report, the information contained in this report will serve as the foundation for the Eagle County *Communities That Care* Community Action Plan.

### How the Information Was Collected

During the Assessing Community Resources Workshop, workgroup members created a list of agencies, organizations, and groups in the area that would potentially be involved in advancing the community-level strategies related to Eagle County community's prioritized risk and protective factors. Next, workgroup members refined data collection tools to gather relevant information about the efforts occurring related to each potential community-level strategy. Then, the workgroup determined whether a deeper investigation of each strategy was necessary; the workgroup then collected more information regarding the possible resources and gaps in community capacity related to each potential community-level strategy. The data collection tools helped workgroup members identify resources related to the community's capacity to implement community-level strategies, and any potential gaps in capacity such as in implementation, effectiveness, enforcement or maintenance, population reach and equity of reach, administration or operations, expertise or skills, funding, shared understanding, leadership or champions, community support, or communication and outreach.

Members of the Resource Assessment and Evaluation Workgroup, the community coordinator, and other community members collected information from local agencies and organizations. As a result, workgroup members were able to identify what resources are available to youth in the Eagle County that fit the criteria of tested and effective prevention strategies. Next, members of the Resource Assessment and Evaluation workgroup analyzed the questionnaire information to identify gaps through the use of the Community Capacity Gaps Grid (See appendix B). During this process the workgroup analyzed effective youth-development and prevention strategies, as well

# Resources Assessment Report

as resource gaps and areas for improvement that exist in the Eagle County area. The following criteria were established for effective strategy implementation:

- Implementation
- Effectiveness
- Enforcement/Maintenance
- Population Reach (Equity)
- Administrations/Operations
- Expertise/Skills
- Funding
- Shared Understanding
- Leadership/Champions
- Community Support
- Communication/Outreach

Gaps were identified in several ways. Questionnaire items, interviews, and the Community Capacity Gaps Grids were used to identify resource-specific gaps within the strategies. Group discussion within the resource assessment workgroup regarding these categories was done to ensure all gap categories were addressed.

# Resources Assessment Report

## How to use this report

The Resource Assessment Report is intended to help participants at the Community Planning workshop develop the Eagle County *Communities That Care* Community Action Plan. Participants developing the Community Action Plan should use this report to:

- approve suggested tested and effective strategies to combat identified risk and protective factors;
- formulate systems-change strategies and outcome-focused planning to expand or enhance existing tested, effective resources within the community
- reduce overlap and duplication in existing tested, effective resources

Additionally, we encourage community members to review Appendix A, an inventory and analysis of Eagle County's youth-development and prevention resources related to each recommended environmental strategy. The grid lists the resources investigated during the assessment.

## Report overview

The next sections of the report provide detailed information about the community's resources and gaps, organized by priority protective and risk factor. The conclusion presents a summary of the resources and gaps, along with recommendations for future action.

## Protective Factor: Opportunities and Rewards for Prosocial Involvement in the Community

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

### **Relevant organizations and opportunities in Eagle County that address this protective factor & align with the following recommended environmental strategies:**

- I.E.1: Recruit and reward youth participation in community coalitions
- I.E.2: Build public support for creating community spaces for youth
- I.E.3: Promote social development strategy broadly in the community

1. Eagle River Youth Coalition
  - Youth as Board Members
  - Youth Leadership Council (YLC)
  - Full-time paid Youth Advisor on staff
2. Youth Power 365
3. WECMRD
4. Local Positive Youth Development (PYD) trainer and trainings

**After assessing local community capacity gaps regarding these three strategies, the CTC resource assessment workgroup has decided to recommend Strategy I.E.1.**

## Environmental Strategy I.E.1 Recruit and Reward Youth for Participation on Community Coalitions

### **Resources and strengths in community capacity related to Strategy I.E.1:**

# Resources Assessment Report

Currently in Eagle County, a resource and strength area that has been identified is alignment with this strategy and support from Eagle River Youth Coalition (ERYC) and Youth Power 365.

One area of strength from ERYC is that they have a youth leadership council (YLC) consisting of local high school students that meet once per month, as well as youth on their board and committees as they follow the Positive Youth Development model. ERYC has implemented pre, post, and alumni surveys to YLC students and alumni to assist with the statistical data for the effectiveness of youth involvement. Also, they have made it a financial priority that youth participation and recognition are allocated in the budget. It is grant mandated for them to include the youth sector on their board.

Additionally, Youth Power 365 hire youth that have been participants in their programs and have them involved in program development. These efforts have been proven effective in these organizations and have shown positive impact on the community and youth.

## **Gaps, issues and barriers in community capacity related to Strategy I.E.1:**

Despite the positive influences of ERYC and Youth Power 365, there is currently a lack of or non-existent youth participation or leadership in other organizations, community boards, or coalitions. This is due to many factors including a lack of awareness of the importance of this practice, which excludes the youth voice from organizations serving them, and a lack of capacity and staff time.

WECMRD reported that they have capacity difficulties. They have explored internships and volunteer opportunities for youth but would need more staff to manage the additional youth. Youth Power 365 also stated they might need more staff if they were to create more opportunities for youth involvement within their organization.

Often local organizations are weary of creating opportunities for youth to be involved with their organizations because of funding and sustainability issues, but see the importance in maintaining current programs and the spread of this strategy in Eagle County.

## **Risk Factor: Community Laws and Norms Favorable towards Drug Use and Availability of Drugs**

# Resources Assessment Report

**Community Laws and Norms Favorable towards Drug Use:** The attitudes and policies a community holds in relation to drug use are communicated in a variety of ways: through laws and written policies, through informal social practices, and through the expectations of parents and other members of the community. When laws, tax rates, and community standards are favorable toward alcohol and other drug use—or even when they are just unclear—young people are at higher risk.

Based on community conversations that include anecdotal evidence, as well as information from the local Healthy Kids Colorado Survey, 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 destination and more recent recognition as a year round vacation spot for travelers, there is a significant tourism and substance use, particularly alcohol and marijuana, culture that is embedded in Eagle County communities. 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 local media’s support of activities that are either sponsored by or directly promote purveyors of alcohol and marijuana.

**Availability of Drugs:** The more available alcohol and other drugs are in a community, the higher the risk for alcohol and other drug use and violence. Perceived availability of drugs is also associated with increased risk

The local results of the Healthy Kids Colorado Survey have shown, over multiple years, that there is a perception by local middle and high school age youth that there is easy access to substances, including both alcohol and other drugs such as marijuana and even hallucinogens. This perception has the possible negative consequence of supporting a misconception that drugs and alcohol are easily obtained and therefore more likely to be used in the community. Additionally, many studies have demonstrated that the availability of substances is associated with drug initiation and use.

**Relevant opportunities in Eagle County that address these risk factors & align with the following recommended environmental strategies:**

- I.A.1: Building Community Support for Ordinances, Regulations, Requirements for Establishments Selling Liquor, Marijuana, or Promoting Prescription Drug Use
- I.A.2: Build public support for conventional enforcement of existing laws

## 1. Camp 911

# Resources Assessment Report

2. EMS Community Program
3. Family-friendly community events (no alcohol served)
4. County Marijuana tax
5. Keg registration
6. Medication take back receptacles
7. School resource officers
8. Responsible Beverage Service trainings (up to local establishments to offer and maintain)

**After assessing local community capacity gaps regarding these two strategies, the CTC resource assessment workgroup has decided to recommend Strategy I.A.2.**

## **Environmental Strategy I.A.2: Build Public Support for Conventional Enforcement of Existing Laws**

### **Resources and strengths in community capacity related to Strategy I.A.2:**

Currently in Eagle County, a resource and strength area has been identified as positive support from the local law enforcement agencies, as well as, the 5th Judicial District Attorney's office.

One area of strength from the local law enforcement agencies is the presence of School Resource Officers in the local schools and community. Additionally, local law enforcement agencies participate in the Gore Range Narcotics Interdiction Team (GRANITE) which is comprised of officers and deputies from the Eagle County Sheriff's Office, Eagle Police Department, Avon Police Department and the Vail Police Department. This effort has been proven effective in reducing drug trafficking and availability of illegal drugs in the community.

The 5th Judicial District Attorney's Office has re-introduced the Diversion program for low-level risk juvenile drug and criminal offenses. This program follows State Statutes and is designed to be a community-based program that keeps youth out of the court system. This program has shown positive impact on the community and youth, although, to the best of our knowledge, there has been no formal evaluations completed.

# Resources Assessment Report

Another area of strength is that local alcohol establishments report offering responsible beverage serving trainings to most new hires, although this is not regulated or mandated in Eagle County. Ongoing support and motivation from law enforcement regarding this training could be an important opportunity, as well as motivating establishments to double check all current employees are trained, up to date, and that new hires receive the training with no exceptions.

## **Gaps, issues and barriers in community capacity related to Strategy I.A.2:**

Despite the positive influences of School Resource Officers (SRO) on the conventional enforcement of existing laws around schools, but there is currently a barrier in effectiveness due to each SRO being responsible for multiple schools and locations. This barrier decreases their presence and capacity for prevention education, which could create a gap in enforcement of existing laws and policies on school campuses, and increase favorable perception of drug use norms by youth.

Additionally, the Diversion Program is seen to be less impactful to youth based off qualitative analysis of local law enforcement agencies and the Diversion Program. Law enforcement reports that there are challenges and subsequent ineffectiveness with the lengthy period between the initial police contact and the enforcement of consequences.

Law enforcement partners have reported they have capacity difficulties, which lead to effectiveness concerns, and have noted needing additional funding in order to increase full time equivalent (FTE) within the diversion program and SROs to help these programs be more effective.

Local law enforcement partners also report a lack of enforcement or awareness regarding Colorado Graduated Driver's License (GDL) laws. These are laws designed to help new teen drivers develop important driving skills gradually while adhering to restrictions during their first years of driving and include the following restrictions:

- Curfew
- Talking or texting while driving
- Age of other passengers
- Zero policy for drivers under the influence, being a passenger of someone under the influence, or having substances in the car
- Seat belt restrictions

# Resources Assessment Report

This presents an opportunity to increase awareness, targeting youth, parents, and law enforcement personnel, regarding GDL laws, and increase the enforcement of these laws in Eagle County.

## **Risk Factor: Youth Attitudes Favorable Toward Substance Use**

During the elementary years, children usually express anti-drug, anti-crime and prosocial views. In middle & high school, their attitudes may shift toward greater acceptance, placing them at higher risk.

### **Relevant opportunities in Eagle County that address this risk factor & align with the following recommended environmental strategies:**

- IV.A.1: Leverage statewide mass media resources to decrease favorable attitudes towards substance use
- IV.A.2: Build public support for district wide implementation of evidence-based school substance abuse prevention programs

1. Botvin Life Skills Training in-school prevention program
2. Project Towards No Drug Abuse in-school prevention program
3. Project Alert in-school prevention program
4. Eagle School District's two full-time Prevention Specialists
5. Good to Know and Speak Now state-wide campaigns, resources are available locally from ERYC, but Eagle County has never been picked for a mass media campaign involving either of these.

**After assessing local community capacity gaps regarding these two strategies, the CTC resource assessment workgroup has decided to recommend Strategy IV.A.1.**

## **Environmental Strategy IV.A.1: Leverage Statewide Mass Media Resources to Decrease Favorable Attitudes towards Substance Use**

# Resources Assessment Report

## Resources and strengths in community capacity related to strategy IV.A.1

Eagle County organizations and families can directly impact and positively influence community standards. This may be accomplished by leveraging Statewide media efforts directed at changing the normative perceptions of the community while supporting and increasing awareness of targeted local prevention efforts.

At the statewide level, the Good to Know website ([goodtoknowcolorado.com](http://goodtoknowcolorado.com)) and speaknow! website ([speaknowcolorado.org](http://speaknowcolorado.org)) empower youth to learn about drug and alcohol use in Colorado freely and anonymously. These websites also incorporate valuable information and tools to encourage parents to talk to their children about the risks and dangers associated with substance use. Similarly, the Protect What's Next ([protectwhatsnext.com](http://protectwhatsnext.com)) youth campaign specifically targets the risks posed to youth by marijuana and the Take Meds Seriously ([takemedsseriously.org](http://takemedsseriously.org)) campaign targets the risks posed by prescription drug abuse.

Locally, well established non-profits such as the Eagle River Youth Coalition, as well as middle and high schools, the Western Eagle County Recreation District, and others such as medical providers and coaches could access this information and integrate some or all of it into their youth programming and education efforts. These organizations and stakeholders are well ingrained and widely spread throughout the community. Thus, they are well positioned to more narrowly identify and target specific local prevention needs through increased awareness and positively influence our community's standards and perceived attitudes toward substance use.

## Gaps, issues and barriers in community capacity related to strategy IV.A.1

Directly measuring the effectiveness of these efforts and methods may prove difficult for organizations to track. Furthermore, staffing, training, and maintaining a sustained outreach effort may be problematic for many potential strategy implementation champions. Additionally, to the extent local media support may be necessary, funding may prove to be an additional obstacle. Finally, there is little data to support that any local organization has attempted to leverage Colorado's broader media efforts directed at changing the normative perceptions of the community to date, so encouraging local buy-in to adopt this risk factor minimization strategy could in and of itself prove to be an issue.

# Resources Assessment Report

## Conclusion and Recommendations

### Eagle County CTC Community-Level Strategies

The Resources Assessment and Evaluation workgroup is pleased to recommend that:

- The Community Board adopt the strategy of *Recruit and Reward Youth Participation in Community Coalitions* to address the protective factor *Opportunities and Awards for Prosocial Involvement*. There are currently community organizations actively engaging and rewarding youth, and activities can be selected to further support and expand this practice.
- The Community Board adopt the strategy of *Leveraging Statewide Mass Media Campaigns to Decrease Favorable Attitudes Towards Substance Use* to address the risk factors: *Youth Attitudes Favorable Toward Substance Use*. There is a gap in unified messaging and consistent public education in our community, and activities can be selected to increase the message saturation point and audience reach.
- The Community Board adopt the strategy of *Build Public Support for Conventional Enforcement of Existing Laws* to address the risk factors: *Community Laws and Norms Favorable Toward Drug Use* and *Availability of Drugs*. Activities can be selected to implement evidence-based approaches and evaluate and strengthen existing approaches.

### **Gaps in Community Capacity**

The following gaps are present in Eagle County's current capacity related to the recommended community-level strategies, and should be addressed by the Community Action Plan:

### Opportunities and Rewards for Prosocial Involvement in the Community

- There is currently a lack of or non-existent youth participation or leadership in other organizations, community boards, or coalitions. This is due to many factors including a lack of awareness of the importance of this practice, and a lack of capacity and staff time.

# Resources Assessment Report

- WECMRD reported that they have capacity difficulties. They have explored internships and volunteer opportunities for youth but would need more staff to manage the additional youth. Youth Power 365 also stated they might need more staff if they were to create more opportunities for youth involvement within their organization.

## Community Laws and Norms Favorable Toward Drug Use and Availability of Drugs.

- Even if the *Diversion Program* is being implemented to focus on this risk factor, unreliable and limited funding means its existence is not guaranteed. Also, there has been no formal evaluation to date of its effectiveness as a strategy.
- Even if *School Resource Officers* are being leveraged as a resource to address this risk factor, there has been no formal evaluation of their effectiveness and capacity limitations impact their availability across schools in the community.
- Law enforcement agencies report a lack of enforcement or awareness regarding GDL laws in Eagle County.

## Youth Attitudes Favorable Toward Substance Use

- The resource assessment workgroup identified several tested, effective *prevention programs* implemented in several Eagle County schools working to reduce this risk factor. The two prevention specialists recently hired at the school district have been working together with prevention programming coordinators from other community organizations to improve consistency, effectiveness, and extent of offerings, however limited capacity and resources across all prevention providers impacts their ability to offer proven effective prevention programming that reaches all students at all schools.
- Even if a supporting community approach of *broad public education campaign* via an assortment of media outlets is implemented, there is no historical evidence of this strategy having an impact on behaviors in Eagle County. Additionally, while campaign materials are free to access, the cost of placing messaging through certain outlets could be prohibitive.
- Few local organizations are utilizing mass media campaign materials in their programs.

# Resources Assessment Report

## **Next Steps**

The next step in the *Communities That Care* process is to create a Community Action Plan. This report offers three environmental strategy recommendations for the Eagle County *Communities That Care* Community Action Plan.