

Location

Morgantown, West Virginia

Populations of Focus

adolescents and rural
populations

Topic Areas

adolescent substance
abuse prevention



WVPRC conducts applied prevention research and supports a variety of public health efforts across the state, including programs focused on adolescents.

“Critically, WVPRC has encouraged and supported our West Virginia community partners to serve as community leaders for the national PRC network for many years. This ongoing national leadership has facilitated the network’s recognition of the value of community in its success and provided a continuity in national-level leadership that has brought the value of community partnerships to the forefront of the PRC research agenda.”

Geri Dino, PhD

Center Director
WV Prevention Research Center

The [West Virginia Prevention Research Center \(WVPRC\)](#) is one of 26 Prevention Research Centers (PRCs) supported by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) for the 2019–2024 funding cycle. Each PRC is funded to establish and maintain their center and to conduct a core research project. PRCs may receive supplemental funding to conduct additional research projects and activities.

WVPRC is committed to reducing barriers to high-quality, health-promoting resources and services for rural populations in West Virginia and other Central Appalachian states. These barriers are often associated with geography and socioeconomic status, including a person’s income, living environment, and occupation.

WVPRC partners with communities and state and national organizations to provide:

- Feedback on health programs.
- Input on how to develop new intervention strategies.
- Programmatic support to promote initiatives designed to improve community health and youth resilience.

“Since 1995, the WVPRC has developed and sustained authentic and engaged community, state, and national partnerships to ensure that our work promotes environmental, policy, and practice changes that result in practical, relevant solutions to improve community and population health,” said Geri Dino, PhD, center director.

CONTACT INFORMATION

Principal Investigator



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For more information on WVPRC and ways to get involved, visit [West Virginia Prevention Research Center](#).

CORE RESEARCH

Each PRC uses a community-engaged approach to conduct one primary applied public health prevention research project called a core research project. Project activities include design, development, implementation, evaluation, and dissemination. PRCs use at least 50% of their CDC funding to conduct the project in partnership with communities.

Integrated Community Engagement (ICE) Collaborative

WVPRC's core research project for the 2019–2024 funding cycle focuses on middle and high school students from two rural West Virginia counties (Wyoming and Fayette) and their families. Researchers take into account social factors, such as support systems and community resources, as well as economic factors such as employment and income.

In each county, the [ICE Collaborative](#) applies intervention strategies in local community hubs—such as schools and other child development centers and programs—to prevent adolescent substance abuse. It focuses on key environmental factors that contribute to adolescent substance abuse in rural communities.

During the intervention, WVPRC will continue to collect data from each participating school to identify any differences in health risks between the two counties. The primary goal for ongoing data collection is for WVPRC researchers to better highlight how many adolescents are engaging in substance abuse, along with the risk factors that contribute to substance abuse, in that specific school community.

ADDITIONAL RESEARCH

PRCs may receive supplemental funding to work on additional research projects each funding cycle. These Special Interest Projects (SIPs) focus on a variety of health topics or gaps in scientific evidence. PRCs can also conduct additional research as part of SIP [Thematic Research Networks](#), which are groups of PRCs working together on related health topics.

2021

PRC Vaccine Confidence Network (PRC VCN)

In April 2021, CDC funded a 12-month award to all 26 PRCs to form the PRC VCN in support of the agency's [Vaccinate with Confidence](#) strategy for COVID-19. As part of this network, WVPRC examines vaccine hesitancy to find ways to promote vaccine confidence, increase vaccine uptake, and reduce disparities in rural communities. The goal is to reduce the incidence of COVID-19 in the United States.

WVPRC's strategy includes working with community partners to identify local champions, conduct community surveys, and create a video library with personal stories about vaccination decisions that can be used in social media campaigns.

CDC Prevention Research Centers (PRCs) conduct innovative public health research at the community level. The PRC Program is a network of academic research centers in the United States that work with their communities to identify public health problems and develop, test, and evaluate solutions that can be widely shared and applied within the public health system. PRCs research a wide range of health topics and focus on populations experiencing health disparities.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THE PRC PROGRAM

Visit www.cdc.gov/prc or contact prcprogram@cdc.gov.



U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Centers for Disease Control and Prevention