



## **Henrico Too Smart 2 Start Coalition (HTS2S)**

**Vision:** To create a community where all individuals and families are healthy and safe.

**Mission:** Henrico Too Smart 2 Start Coalition is a 501 (C) 3 Non-Profit Organization that promotes health and wellness in Henrico County with a primary focus on reducing youth substance abuse through education, advocacy and capacity building.

**Chair:** Terrell Pollard, Department of Homeland Security

**Secretary:** Kathy Johnson, Henrico County Public Schools

**Treasurer:** Serina Gaines, Henrico Mental Health Facilities Management

**Public Relations Specialist:** Tianna Mosby, Astyra

**Prevention Specialist Ex-Officio:** Steve Hixon, Henrico Mental Health Prevention Services

**History and Background:** In 2014, Henrico Too Smart 2 Start Coalition became a 501©3 organization. It was originally an initiative of Henrico Mental Health Prevention Services. In 2016, Henrico Too Smart 2 Start partnered with area agencies to conduct a study on the views and behaviors towards substances by Henrico youth. The study was conducted again in 2018. HTS2S learned that alcohol, e-cigarettes/vaping/juuling, and marijuana are the most misused substances by Henrico's youth.

**Approach:** HTS2S will serve its mission by reducing the use of alcohol, nicotine, and marijuana as well as continue to further the increasingly healthier trend developing around opioid use by 12 to 17-year-old Henrico residents. HTS2S is employing the Strategic Prevention Framework and seven key environmental strategies to affect change in Henrico. These objectives can be more generally described by HTS2S's four key goals: develop effective community collaborations, raise community awareness, advocate for policies that promote healthy decisions toward substance use, and ensure the coalition's sustainability.

**Accomplishments:** HTS2S has successfully established active partnerships with the Henrico Board of Supervisors, Henrico Police Department, Henrico Sherriff's Office, Henrico County Public Schools, Henrico Mental Health, Virginia Department of Health, various substance misuse prevention and recovery organizations, area churches, and other various area nonprofits.

Annually, HTS2S hosts the 'It Takes a Village' Community Conversation to report our findings from studies of Henrico youth, share protective factors, report our successes, and learn more about the community we serve.

In 2019, HTS2S created table tents to be displayed at Henrico restaurants to discourage underage drinking; presented the truth about today's nicotine use at schools throughout the county to dispel myths about perceived risks associated with e-cigarettes/vaping/juuling; hosted interactive marijuana stations at community events and driver education events to dispel myths about perceived risks associated with functioning while using marijuana; and participated in drug take back events and other various community events to provide information and supplies to encourage safe use and disposal of prescribed medications.

## **Key Plans**

For 2020, HTS2S will continue activities implemented during 2019. HTS2S will also add the creation of a video to promote the protective factor of parents speaking to children about substance use with a focus on healthy opioid use. By 2021, HTS2S plans to be operating with the support of a Drug Free Communities Grant.