



Peer Assistance Services

Senate Health and Human Services Committee

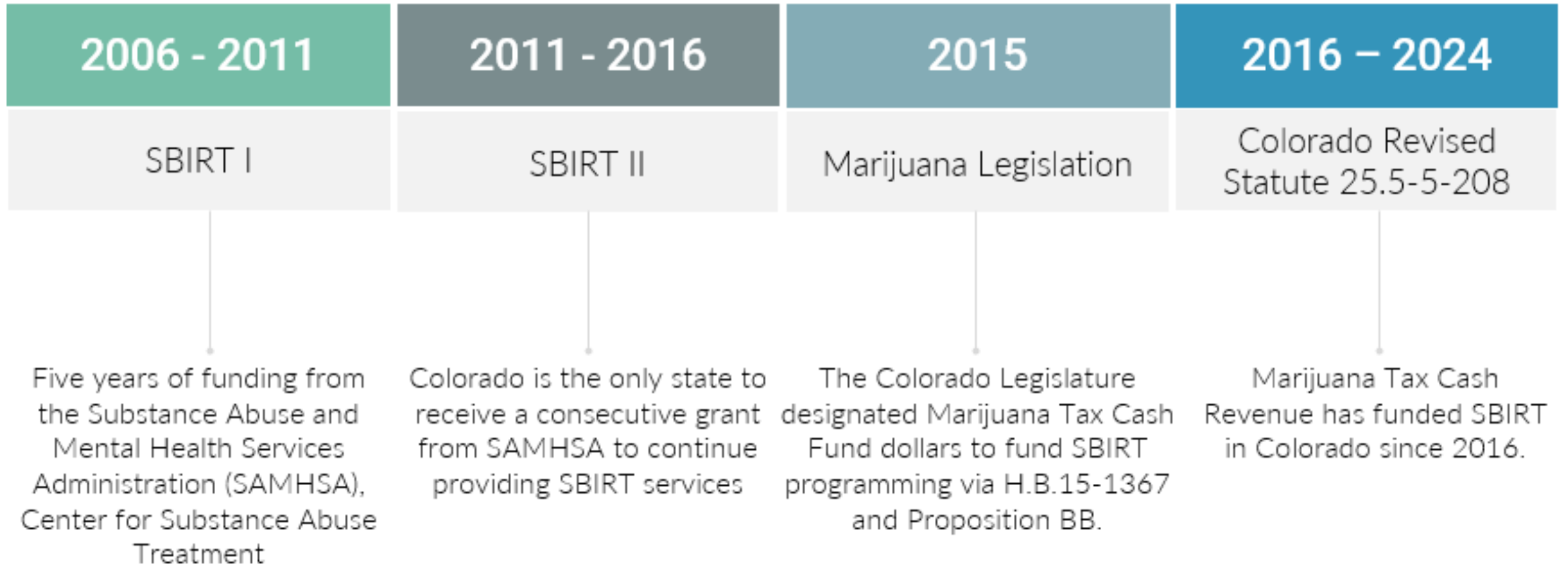
SB 24-047

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Peer Assistance Services, Inc.

February 8, 2024

History of SBIRT in Colorado



A DENVER POST SPECIAL REPORT

State alcohol taxes low, deaths high

Researchers say higher prices can be effective in reducing consumption

By Meg Wingarter
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Colorado's taxes on alcohol are among the lowest in the country, and even though the state consistently ranks as one of the worst for drinking deaths, lawmakers have shown little interest in making beer,

wine and spirits more expensive.

The state also taxes alcohol at a significantly lower rate than other "sin" products, with customers paying almost \$2 in taxes on a pack of cigarettes — more than 20% of the cost, on average — compared to about 18 cents in taxes on a case

of beer, or less than 1% of its cost. Taxes clearly aren't the only important factor, because some higher-tax states, like Alaska and New Mexico, still have elevated death rates. But experts say raising the cost of drinks is one way to curb consumption, along with reducing the number of locations selling alcohol and changing social norms around drinking.

Increasing the price of alcohol is particularly effective in deterring young drinkers, in the same way higher cigarette prices disproportionately turn youth away from smoking, with smaller effects on older users, said Dr. Bill Burman, former director of the Public Health Institute at Denver Health. But so-called sin taxes also send a message about risk, he said, and some studies found people

cut their consumption after a state announced a tax hike but before it even took effect.

"We have evidence that we can have an impact," Burman said. This is the second story in The Denver Post's four-part series examining why so many Coloradans die from drinking and the state's failure to take action. This story will look at

COLORADO'S QUIET KILLER

A four-part series examining Colorado's high rate of alcohol-related deaths

Sunday: A surge in drinking deaths

Today: Impact of low alcohol taxes

Tuesday: Wider access to alcohol

Wednesday: Struggling to find treatment

ALCOHOL » PAGE 6

A Denver Post Special Report

ALCOHOL DEATHS SOAR 60% IN JUST 4 YEARS



HYOUNG CHANG — THE DENVER POST

Andrea Carter, left, and her daughter Ashley, 14, comfort each other at Golden Gate Canyon State Park, northwest of Golden, on Sept. 30. The family spread the ashes of Matt Carter — Andrea's husband and Ashley's father — at the site. He died of liver failure at age 39 after battling alcohol addiction.

But there's been no public outcry or push in state to save lives

A Denver Post Special Report



WARREN MUSSelman — THE DENVER POST
Warren Musselman at his home workshop, where he produces custom carpentry and cabinets, on Oct. 31 in Lyons. Musselman went through seven 27 times before quitting alcohol long term.

People struggle to get the help they need for alcohol addiction

Hurdles to treatment include insurance, lack of awareness of options beyond AA or rehab

Learned how to cope when he went home. Before that, he had only encountered 12-step programs, which he found painful.

COLORADO'S QUIET KILLER

A four-part series examining Colorado's high rate of alcohol-

A Denver Post Special Report

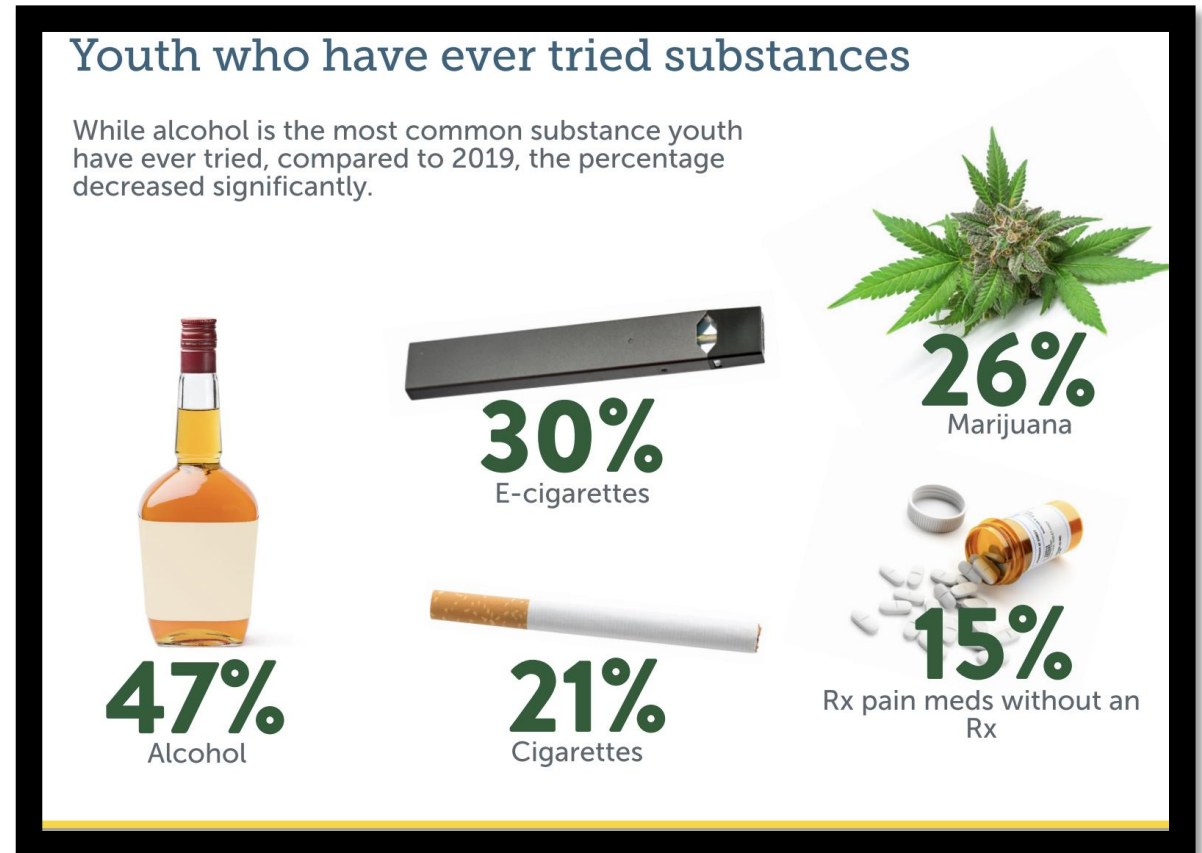
ALCOHOL ACCESS GROWS



SAFeway — THE DENVER POST
Distributors and suppliers stock wine at a Safeway store in Aurora on March 1. Colorado voters approved Proposition 125 in 2022, expanding wine sales to grocery stores across the state.

Schools and Pediatric Settings: Where the kids are

- Addiction and mental illness are largely pediatric onset conditions
- The brain is a moving target. It's undergoing rapid brain development from about age 10 into your mid 20s. The adolescent brain is under construction. Drugs and alcohol interfere with this process.
- Most childhood onset psychiatric disorders or mental health problems increase the risk of developing an adolescent onset substance use disorder.
- Alcohol use is associated with the three leading causes of death in adolescents: unintentional injury, suicide, and homicide.



2021 Healthy Kids Colorado Survey Results

What is SBIRT?

It's an Evidence-Based Practice

Screening: Ask validated questions to identify any nicotine/tobacco, alcohol, cannabis or other substance use.

Brief **I**ntervention: A supportive conversation to help an adolescent identify their own best reasons and approaches to avoid substance use, change use and negotiate next steps.

Referral to **T**reatment: Includes further evaluation of mental and physical health, substance use, and social needs; monitoring for escalating substance use; identifying services to address concerns.

NOTE: most youth who report alcohol or drug use do *not* need treatment.

SBIRT is recommended by the American Academy of Pediatrics starting by age 12

Since 2016...

500 trainings statewide → 25% Adolescent SBIRT

40 of 64 Colorado Counties → 65% of the counties designated rural or frontier

Professionals Trained:

- Nurses
- Social Workers
- School administration
- Police Departments
- School Counselors
- Dental Hygienists
- Mentors
- Peer Support Specialists
- Teachers
- Healthcare/Mental Health Students
- Emergency Medical Service providers
- Hospital Administration
- Coaches
- Primary Care Physicians
- Emergency Room Staff
- Dentists
- Health Educators
- Medical Assistants
- Pharmacists
- PTSAs

SBIRT in Colorado Survey: Adolescent SBIRT

- Survey and key informant interviews (2022-2023)
- NORC at the University of Chicago and Peer Assistance Services, Inc.
- Assessed SBIRT implementation; training and technical assistance needs
- Survey responses (N=260) and key informant interviews (N=11)
 - Health professionals who work in healthcare settings and schools

Key findings:

- **58%** currently screen youth for substance use
- **45%** have not received training on SBIRT
- **65%** interested in training; **22%** interested in technical assistance

The Bottom Line

- Pediatricians, healthcare providers, school staff are on the front line of being able to early screen and identify substance use disorders and cooccurring psychiatric conditions.
 - They are in the position of identifying early risk factors, those who are experimenting and may be at risk for progressing to more serious substance involvement, and those who have substance use disorders.
- Prevention efforts are hard to measure
- Universal Screening and Brief Conversations in schools and pediatric settings demonstrate a commitment to our young people. Addiction and mental illness are largely pediatric onset conditions & we wait too long to intervene.

The logo for Peer Assistance Services (PAS) features the letters 'PAS' in a large, blue, serif font. A horizontal line is positioned directly beneath the letters. The letters are set against a white background with a blue curved shape in the top-left corner.

Peer Assistance Services

Thank you

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