

# **Advocating, developing and implementing alcohol & other drug policies...**

## **WHAT HAVE WE LEARNED IN ONTARIO?**

**by**

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# KEY DRUG STRATEGY ELEMENTS

- Political leadership
- Comprehensive (four pillar\*) approach
- Includes alcohol and other drugs
- Uses a multi-sectoral approach
- Coordinated action
- Is evidence-based
- Has dedicated resources
- Builds on existing efforts
- Balances health and safety

\* Four pillar approach: prevention, treatment, harm reduction & enforcement



# TORONTO DRUG STRATEGY

- Council-approved municipal strategy for alcohol and other drugs
- Established:
  - an intersectoral leadership committee
  - working groups with broad community representation
  - a dedicated staff secretariat
- 17 priorities are first focus of implementation – program, policy and advocacy initiatives
- Issued Toronto Drug Strategy (TDS) Status Report in Spring 2008



# PROGRESS TOWARDS AN ONTARIO DRUG STRATEGY

- Ontario HEP\* Coordinator appointed
- Established:
  - a Planning & Advisory Committee
  - a Strategic Working Group
- Background document: “Alcohol, other drugs and related harms in Ontario”
- Identified priorities for a provincial strategy
- Developed a draft framework for consultation
- Advocacy to engage provincial leadership

\*HEP: Health, Education and Enforcement in Partnership



# CHALLENGES

- Lack of designated responsibility
- Low political priority
- Securing and sustaining political interest
- Balancing diverse interests
- Setting evidence-based priorities
- Sectors operating in silos
- Addressing root causes/systemic issues



# STEPS TO DEVELOPING A DRUG STRATEGY

- Capitalize on opportunities to set agenda
- Find a political champion
- Form a multi-sectoral planning/advisory committee
- Ensure broad community involvement, including drug users
- Be clear about any “non-negotiables”
- Build on what’s happening in your community
- Secure resources
- Link to local, provincial and national initiatives
- Network with other communities

# CONTACT INFORMATION

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