

conversation starters

WINTER 2025

The newsletter of PreventEd

Honoring Our Past, Embracing Our Future

By Jenny Armbruster



Jenny Armbruster
Executive Director

Reaching 60 years is a remarkable milestone for any effort. PreventEd shares our 1965 start with many other noteworthy events. A few are:

- Release of the color television set
- Opening of the St. Louis Gateway Arch
- Passage of the Voting Rights Act
- Invention of soft contact lenses

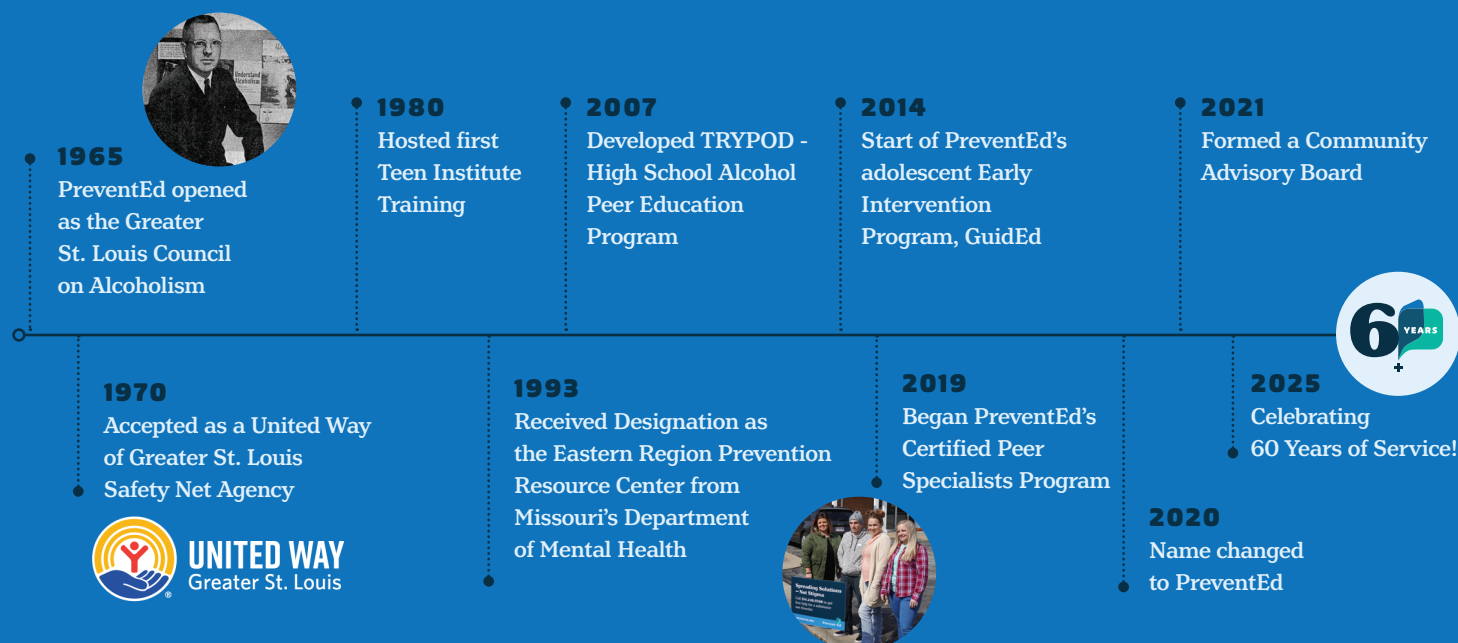
We know the world has changed tremendously since 1965 with growth in technology, medicine and science. Today, we know more about the brain science of substance use disorder than we did at our founding, and we have research that supports theories of substance use prevention approaches that are backed by evidence. As we celebrate the 60th Anniversary of PreventEd, it is an opportunity to look back

and reflect on the incredible work we continue to provide in our community. 2025 starts off strong for us in a year of celebration! We have received opportunities to expand our work by supporting people in recovery (see full article inside) and continue to have our school-based prevention services in high demand, making more connections in our communities than ever before.

Just as the world has evolved over the last 60 years, so has PreventEd. While our mission to prevent and reduce the harms of substance use continues, we now identify trends or challenges for young people and communities and share strategies to support people impacted by substance use. We hope you will be able to connect with us in celebration throughout the year to honor the work of addressing substance use. Happy 60th Anniversary! 🎉

1965-2025

A Walk Through Our History and Notable Milestones



Old Man Ranting

By Ed Tasch



Ed Tasch
PreventEd Former
Executive Director

Hey folks, it's me, Ed Tasch. You may remember I was the Executive Director here a few years back. Anyway, as the Agency is celebrating its 60th, Jenny Armbruster asked if I would share a few words about the early days. Seriously, a few words? Considering I started here in 1977 and left in 2013, that will be tough, but I'll try. Let me begin by sharing a few things about our workplace in the 70's and early 80's. Although it wasn't exactly

the Dark Ages, it was quite different than today. We had no cell phones or computers, and later when we did, we had no internet. We were lucky to have old electric typewriters. We used a mimeograph machine (look it up) to make copies of printed materials. At some point we did get a computer, cell phone, copier and fax machine, which now are considered antiques. Oh, and my first office was about 6 x 8 feet. Those were the days.

“The one positive constant is this Agency, which has uniquely and continually offered the finest services and most qualified staff to the St. Louis region for the past 60 years.”

Back in '77, there also wasn't much of a field of addictions other than the recovery community and a few state and private treatment programs. The then-struggling Council on Alcoholism, with a staff of four, offered short-term counseling (Sue Lord), information (a small library with books, literature, and some films), and education services provided by yours truly along with a group of incredible volunteers. Our first bit of expansion came with ventures into DWI programming and an Employee Assistance Program (EAP). Around 1980, we received a federal

grant which started what would become the Agency's largest and longest surviving enterprise, Prevention Services (enter Harriet Kopolow). We were then, and still are, the national leader in this area. For you younger folks, please understand that EAPs and prevention were new concepts at the time, and in fact, kind of started what became



2006 NCADA Golf Tournament

a more formal professional side to our field. And when addiction was finally covered by insurance, professional counseling and for-profit treatment exploded, giving us new and better resources to refer people to for help.

We've come a long way, with better understanding and treatment for addiction, but unfortunately, stigma still hinders progress. And just as we seem to get a handle on one drug, another worse one comes along—like fentanyl, wreaking havoc on our communities, particularly our kids. The one positive constant is this Agency, which has uniquely and continually offered the finest services and most qualified staff to the St. Louis region for the past 60 years. It was an honor to work here, and I will forever be grateful to everyone I served with: the staff, board, volunteers, funders and the many community professionals. Oh, and by the way,



L-R: John King, Ed Tasch, Robert Harmon and J. Fred Tolley of the McDonnell Douglas Employees Charity Community Services Program (January 1987)

I now live in sunny San Diego where I'm enjoying every minute of retirement. Congratulations and best wishes.



SHARE YOUR STORY

Would you like to share your favorite PreventEd memory from the past 60 years? We'd love to hear it! Send an email to info@prevented.org

Growing Support: PreventEd's CPS Program Expands Services in 2025

By Jaidan Adams



Jaidan Adams
Director of
Behavioral Health

PreventEd's Certified Peer Specialist (CPS) program supporting people in recovery continues to expand! The power of CPS exists in peers' own lived experience and their ability to walk alongside individuals through their recovery journey. When we started PreventEd's CPS services in 2019, we embraced the saying of "meeting people where they are." To us, this means CPS staff will embody PreventEd's philosophy of there being multiple paths to

recovery and be flexible in supporting people in whatever way they need. This approach has continued to show positive outcomes as our CPS team works in Franklin, Lincoln, Jefferson Counties and St. Louis City.

In 2025, we will be expanding with two incredible opportunities for more engagement with CPS services. First, we have been provided support through St. Louis County and the Overdose to Action program to hire additional CPS staff who will work to serve people in St. Louis County. Peers will assist individuals in identifying and accessing resources to meet a wide variety of needs. Additionally, this project includes funding for PreventEd to assemble and distribute 500 Harm Reduction Kits throughout St. Louis County. These kits will include various items, such as hygiene care products, first aid materials, cold weather gear, and other basic needs. We also will be increasing our efforts for public awareness and information about substance use.

The second opportunity for expansion comes from the support of the Jefferson Foundation for PreventEd to open a Recovery Community Center in Jefferson County! This will provide an on-site location where individuals in Jefferson County can connect with CPS staff and receive recovery resources. The Center will also be a place where people can gather for recreational activities, recovery support, and other meetings and events. The location of the facility and the grand opening are still being finalized but will be an incredible asset for the people of Jefferson County. Stay tuned for more information.

We are extremely grateful for the ability to serve more people in unique ways throughout the community and know that we cannot do this work alone. Our community partners, funders and the communities we serve are an instrumental part of PreventEd's success in the Eastern Missouri region. We look forward to finding more ways to connect and expand access to resources in the years to come. 🌱





6 YEARS

SIXTY YEARS + PREVENT+ED

Celebrating 60 Years

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Mark your calendars! We're celebrating our anniversary all year long with a series of exciting annual events.



51st Annual Spring Awards Luncheon

FRIDAY, APRIL 25, 2025

On April 25th, we will recognize many dedicated and accomplished substance use professionals for all their hard work. Registration is now open, and you can submit your nominations for the Helen B. Madden award highlighting a hero in the field of alcohol and drug misuse on our website.



YPPE Comedy Night

SEPTEMBER 2025

Join us this September for the third annual YPPE Comedy Night! Get ready for an unforgettable evening filled with laughter, refreshing non-alcoholic drinks from Sans Bar STL, and the chance to support PreventEd's mission. Stay tuned for more details—we can't wait to see you there!



Trivia Night and Silent Auction

OCTOBER 2025

PreventEd will be hosting our Annual Trivia Night and Silent Auction this October! Join us for a fun, lighthearted game with the opportunity to bid on auction items and support PreventEd's education, intervention, and advocacy efforts in the community.

UPCOMING EVENTS

Please visit our website for the most up-to-date event information and registration: prevented.org/events



Prevention Partners

MONTHLY GIVING PROGRAM

Prevention Partners is a monthly giving program that offers various giving levels, each directly supporting a vital service at PreventEd. Every donation, regardless of amount, is deeply valued and put to meaningful use. Monthly donors receive a year-end summary of their contributions along with a tax receipt, acknowledging their ongoing support.

\$10 / month

Provides informational handouts

\$100 / month

Conducts one substance use assessment

\$50 / month

Supplies materials for 6 teen education workshops

\$200 / month

Funds 4 Overdose Rescue Kits



SIGN UP TODAY

To learn more about how to give, contact J.P. Johnson, Director of Development, at jjohnson@prevented.org

51st Annual Spring Awards Luncheon

PreventEd's 51st Annual Spring Awards Luncheon is scheduled to take place on Friday, April 25, 2025, at the LiUNA Event Center. This special event aligns with Alcohol and Drug Awareness month, serving as a testament to five decades of unwavering commitment in combating substance use disorder in the St. Louis Region. Our keynote speaker is Orvin T. Kimbrough, Author of "Twice Over a Man: A Fierce Memoir of an Orphan Boy Who Doggedly Determined a Finer Life".

WHY ATTEND?


This luncheon will honor individuals, organizations, and community partners who have played pivotal roles in shaping a substance-free community. It's a great way to recognize many dedicated and accomplished substance use professionals for all their hard work!

SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

We invite organizations and individuals to become sponsors, contributing to the success of this momentous event. Various sponsorship levels are available, each offering unique benefits, including VIP tables, prominent ad placements, and recognition

across all media platforms. Your support will not only highlight your commitment to a substance-free community but also position your brand prominently in front of a diverse and engaged audience.

HELEN B. MADDEN NOMINATIONS

The Helen B. Madden Award is given to individuals in the seven county region of Eastern Missouri (St. Louis City, St. Louis County, St. Charles, Jefferson, Franklin, Lincoln, and Warren counties) working professionally in the counseling, Certified Peer Specialist (CPS), Certified Alcohol and Drug Counseling (CADC) or related fields addressing and treating substance use disorders. Do you know someone who deserves recognition for exemplary work in the field of alcohol and drug misuse? If so, let us know! Nominations for the 2025 Helen B. Madden Award are due by March 14th. 



For sponsorship inquiries, ticket purchases, and nominations, scan the QR code!