NH Alternatives to Suspension & "Creating a Village" to Address Youth Substance Use

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Welcome/ Introductions

• Peer Support Provider/Recovery Coach
• Administrator
• Family member
• School based counselor
• School Resource Office/ Juvenile Justice or Law Enforcement
• Educator or other school based staff or faculty
• Behavioral health provider
• Community provider
• Researcher
• Student
• Other

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The Problem:

- % of NH 12th graders reporting in the past 30 days having used:
  - Alcohol: 39.3%
  - Marijuana: 33.9%
  - Vaping Products: 42.7%

- % of NH 12th graders reporting that in the past year they were offered illegal drugs at school: 18%
- Thought that it was "very easy to access alcohol": 40%
- Thought that it was "very easy to access marijuana": 50.6%

High School Students in USA:
- Currently use marijuana: 21.7%
- Currently binge drink: 13.7%

Treatment & Recovery Support Services for Youth Are Limited:
Most NH SUD treatment providers identify adolescents as an underserved population.

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*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data
Risk Factors for Substance Use Disorder

- Access to drugs/alcohol
- Lack of supervision/structure
- Poverty
- School failure
- Family History

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Zero Tolerance & Disproportionality

School-to-Prison Pipeline

School disciplinary policies disproportionately affect Black students.

- Zero-tolerance discipline has resulted in Black students facing disproportionately harsher punishment than white students in public schools.
- Black students represent 31% of school-related arrests.
- Black students are suspended and expelled more than white students:
  - Students suspended or expelled for a discretionary violation are nearly three times more likely to be in contact with the juvenile justice system the following year.

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Protective Factors That can Outweigh Risk

Protective factors and risk factors for substance use

Protective factors:
- Caregiver involvement and monitoring
- Health and neurological development:
  - coping skills
  - emotional regulation
- Physical safety and social inclusion
- Safe neighbourhoods
- Quality school environment

Risk factors:
- Trauma and childhood adversity
  - child abuse and neglect
- Mental health problems
- Poverty
- Peer substance use and drug availability
- Negative school climate
- Sensation seeking

Positive physical, social and mental health
Substance use initiation
Harmful use of substances
Substance use disorders

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History of CCNH

2014-2016
• SAMSHA Substance Youth Treatment Planning Grant
• Environmental Scan, Gap analysis

2017-2021
• SAMSHA Substance Use Implementation Grant
• Brought Seven Challenges Training to NH & trained 4 organizations to pilot
• Developed Youth & Family support Models & piloted 4 Alternative Peer Groups

2022
• State Opioid Response Funds to scale up Supports
• Trained an additional 6 organizations in the Seven Challenges
• Provided 5 additional mini-grants to start up 5 new APGs

2023-2024
• Received continued funding to sustain existing Alternative Peer Groups, Seven Challenges Sites
• Provide ongoing coaching and facilitate Professional Learning Communities to support implementation with high fidelity
Creating Connections NH Youth Treatment & Recovery Continuum of Care

1. Youth is identified or self-identifies for SUD/COD services and supports
2. Referral to CC-NH pilot site
3. SUD assessment is conducted
5. Youth is linked to appropriate treatment level of care
6. Medication-Assisted Treatment
7. Outpatient Counseling
8. Intensive Outpatient Services
9. Youth is linked to ancillary services
10. Recovery Support Services Peer Support
11. Family- & Youth-Driven Wraparound RENEW
12. Evidence-Based Practice: The Seven Challenges®
13. Alternative Peer Groups (APGs)

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Children’s System Of Care (CSOC)

**CHILDREN’S SYSTEM OF CARE FRAMEWORK**

Framework is designed to ensure that children (birth to 21) and their families receive an array of services across a continuum of care.

All children and their families receive supports and services that adhere to the SOC Values.
Tier 3
- Specialized, Individualized Supports for Students with High-Risk Behavior, requiring additional supports
- <5% of students require individualized supports

Tier 2
- Targeted small group supports for students who need another level of support
- <15% of students indicate they need this level of support

Tier 1
- Primary prevention implemented schoolwide, strategies for addressing trauma, building resilience, and teaching social emotional learning, behavior expectations
- <80% of students will respond when implemented effectively

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Tier 1
- Improve school climate and student connectedness
- Develop personal skills/ Stress management/Resiliency
- Build community connection
- Teach about brain development & substance misuse

Tier 2
- Seven Challenges Groups
- Alternative Peer Groups
- SUD Family Support
- Other Peer supports
- Student assistance Program

Tier 3
- Cognitive behavioral therapy (CBT)/ Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)
- Wraparound/ RENEW
- Seven Challenges Journals
- Individual Behavior support Plans

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What Youth Substance Use Treatment & Supports are available in your community

- Education & Prevention Activities
- Student Assistance Programs in School
- Intensive Outpatient Treatment
- Residential Treatment
- Individual Counseling
- Youth Peer Support
- Family Peer Support
Creating Connections NH (CCNH)

• (12-25) with substance use disorders (SUD), or SUD with co-occurring mental health disorders (SUD/COD)

• Evidence Supported, Comprehensive Counseling model, The Seven Challenges (7Cs),

• Recovery Support Model is Alternative Peer Groups (APGs)
NH Alternative Peer Groups
Locations Where Substance Use Treatment was Received

PAST YEAR, 2019 NSDUH, 12+

19.3M with SUD

- Self-Help Group: 2.1M
- Outpatient Rehabilitation: 1.7M
- Outpatient Mental Health Center: 1.3M
- Inpatient Rehabilitation: 1.0M
- Private Doctor’s Office: 948K
- Hospital Inpatient: 642K
- Emergency Room: 514K
- Prison or Jail: 254K

Locations where people received substance use treatment are not mutually exclusive because respondents could report that they received treatment in more than one location in the past year.
Alternative Peer Groups (APG’s)

• Grow youth leadership with youth taking on mentor role as they progress in their recovery
• APG Facilitators are trained recovery support professionals
• Youth help choose fun group activities that match their interests
• Youths’ physical and emotional safety and privacy are a priority

How Do APGs Help?
Alternative Peer Groups provide...

- Safe, supportive peer environment
- Fun, substance free activities
- Family support
- Sense of belonging
- Reduce stigma of being in recovery

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Essential Components of Alternative Peer Groups (APG)

- Agency Implementation/Oversight Team
- Led by and for young people in Recovery (require Facilitators to be 18+)
- APG Facilitator Training grounded in SAMSHA’s Recovery Competencies
- Data Collection tools and processes developed, staff trained to use
- Statewide APG Learning Communities for APG Facilitators and Administrators

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Training and Resources for APG facilitators

- APG Canvas Learning Portal
- Training for APG Facilitators
- Creating Connections NH APG Website

APG Implementation Tools

Welcome to the Alternative Peer Group Facilitator's Training Portal! This learning portal is organized into modules that include the materials, tools, assignments, and timelines you need to complete the process as an APG Facilitator. The Canvas platform is easy to use, and there are multiple types of support available should you encounter problems.

We are very excited that you are taking this path to provide recovery supports to youth!

If you have any questions, please contact your APG Coach or Heidi Cloudier at heidi.cloudier@ unh.edu.

In accordance with HIPAA and 42 CFR Part 2, APG and youth information is treated the same as any other Protected Health Information (PHI). Please secure any identifying information in a locked cabinet or password-protected location.

- APG Coaches Resources
- APG Facilitator Resources
- Oversight Team

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Total of 93 students served in the 2021-22 school year in this 1 community (Dover, NH)

- 72 students engaged at the High school
- 19 students engaged through their Middle school APG
- 2 students engaged through an alternative school
100% of High School Seniors in the APG Graduated in June 2022, compared with 86% of all High school Seniors.
100% of Youth met 1:1 with a Peer Recovery Leader at least 1 X

1 Family engaged in weekly Family supports

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What We Mean by “Family” Support

I DON'T CARE WHOSE DNA HAS RECOMBINED WITH WHOSE.

When everything goes to hell, the people who stand by you without flinching
- they are your family.

- John Butcher

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Family Peer Supports

Family Support

Education

Opportunities for families to heal together & find joy again

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Recovery Capital

Human
- Mental health
- Physical health
- School engagement
- Confidence
- Skills/knowledge
- Sense of purpose

Financial
- Caregiver Income
- Transportation
- Stable housing
- Access to quality healthcare

Social
- Supportive, structured family
- Substance Free Home
- Supportive friends
- Recovery supports
- Participation in developmentally appropriate groups

Community
- Perceptions of peer/cultural substance use
- A full range of addiction treatment resources
- Diverse, visible recovery role models
- Access to cultural and faith-based

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Greatest Areas of Needs Indicated by the Youth Surveyed in the Cohort 1 APGs

- 18% I enjoy spending time with my family
- 45.5% I can manage my emotions well
- 45.5% I can recover from mistakes without feeling ashamed.
- 45.5% I find it easy to make new friends
Benefits of School & SUD Provider Partnerships

Increases Access to SUD supports & Decreases Harsh Exclusionary Discipline
- Schools lack resources to address substance use
- Convenience: Families have competing demands & can’t always get youth to the APG

Breaks Down Stigma of Getting Supports/ or of Not Using Drugs & Alcohol.
- Some families don’t want their kids to receive substance use supports (youth 12+ can consent for their own supports in NH).
- Normalizes the need for education and supports

Increases Social & Recovery Capital
- Grows youth leadership & connection to others who can support their recovery
- Facilitates a more trusting, supportive school environment

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APG Representative on School Mental Health Committee/ Tier II/ III Teams

• APG has administrator as a member of the school based mental health team, to problem solve supports for students;
• Facilitates referrals for family support;
• Administers assessments for students who are referred for problematic substance use (referrals come from various sources: self referral, parents, teachers, etc.) & works collaboratively with Student Assistance Program (SAP), school counselors, social workers;
• Push into health classes to provide universal education about substance use;
• Working to establish more proactive approaches and provide universal education about substance use for all students.

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Activity

• Take 2 minutes to reflect on 1 next steps you can take to enhance behavioral health supports in your school/ or foster better collaborations

• Then, Turn & talk to share what steps you will take and learn what action they will take to connect or strengthen their collaboration with schools.

• Be prepared to report out to the larger group!
Lessons Learned

- By partnering with schools the APGS were able to reach more youth and provide substance use treatment & recovery supports to youth & families in need
- Wonderful community support
- Hybrid (in person and remote) groups are challenging to coordinate but help increase access

- Restrictive NH School Survey legislation made it challenging to track progress with youth engaged in the APGs in schools
- Location of the APGs is extremely important (access, stigma, youth privacy, etc.)
- Coaching Supports are critical
- Allow 6+ months for planning/ start up
Implementing The Seven Challenges® as part of New Hampshire's Continuum of Support for Youth and Young Adults with Substance Use Disorder and or Co-Occurring Disorders
What is The Seven Challenges® Model?

- Evidence-Based, Therapeutic Model
- Culturally Sensitive
- Life Skills
- Focuses on youth making thoughtful decisions
- Focus on Harm Reduction rather than Abstinence

Basic premise of The Seven Challenges® is “To meet youth where they are at.”
Youth in the Early Stages of Change

- Don’t think they have a problem
- Don’t think their life would be better without drugs
- Don’t know what it takes to overcome a drug problem
- Don’t feel they could succeed
- Not prepared to succeed
The goal of the Seven Challenges® is honest and reflective exploration so youth can make thoughtful decisions about alcohol and drugs.

1. We decided to open up and talk honestly about ourselves and about alcohol and other drugs.
2. We looked at what we liked about alcohol and other drugs, and why we were using them.
3. We looked at our use of alcohol and other drugs to see if it had caused harm, or could cause harm.
4. We looked at our responsibility and the responsibility of others for our problems.
5. We thought about where we seemed to be headed, where we wanted to go, and what we wanted to accomplish.
6. We made thoughtful decisions about our lives and about our use of alcohol and other drugs.
7. We followed through on our decisions about our lives and drug use. If we saw problems, we went back to earlier challenges and mastered them.
Reflective Journaling

- “Silent Conversation” between youth and counselor
- Opportunity to explore various aspects of substance misuse, including connections to trauma, family issues (including generational alcoholism/addiction), etc.
- Safe place to speak freely and honestly about drinking and drug misuse without fear of judgment or criticism
Redefining the Counselor Role

- Not there to make clients quit or to take something away
- Is a problem-solving partner
- Helps clients think about their options to give them more options
- Redefines success in smaller increments
- Helps youth think through things for themselves and follow through on decisions

- Does not play “Try to make me quit” with youth
- Uses “care-frontation”
- Inspires hope and optimism and teaches skills for a better future
- Supports youth in making any behavior changes they have chosen to make, such as learning anger management or learning to cope with stress in positive ways
- Focuses less on drugs, and more on:
  - Addressing co-occurring problems
  - Teaching life skills

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DATA ANALYSIS COMPLETED BY:
HUMAN SERVICE RESEARCH INSTITUTE, CAMBRIDGE, MA

NILÜFER ISVAN, KRISTIN BATTIS, VIVIEN SOLOMON
CASE STUDY: PARTICIPANT CHARACTERISTICS AT INTAKE
Pilot sites treated a total of 64 youth.
LGBTQ* Youth Overrepresented

- Heterosexual: NH High Schools = 84.0%, CC-NH = 66.7%
- LGBQ*: NH High Schools = 16.0%, CC-NH = 33.3%

* LGBTQ = Lesbian, gay, bisexual, or questioning ("not sure")
2019-2021 Diagnosis at Intake
N= 64 youth

COD 63.9%
SUD only 21.3%
MH only 14.8%
PRE-POST COMPARISONS
Number of Days of Substance Use, Past 30 Days

- Alcohol Use (Valid N=12) Average Days at Intake: 3.3, Average Days at Post: 1.1
- Binge Drinking (Valid N=3) Average Days at Intake: 4.0, Average Days at Post: 1.3
- Illicit Drug Use (Valid N=12) Average Days at Intake: 13.6, Average Days at Post: 12.0
- Marijuana Use (Valid N=12) Average Days at Intake: 13.4, Average Days at Post: 12.0
Reported Impacts of Substance Use, Past 30 Days

- Things Have Been Stressful (Valid N=9): 22.2% (Intake) 0.0% (Post)
- Reduced or Gave Up Important Activities (Valid N=10): 20.0% (Intake) 10.0% (Post)
- Had Emotional Problems (Valid N=10): 40.0% (Intake) 10.0% (Post)
Self-Reported Health and Quality of Life

Overall Health is Excellent, Very Good, or Good (Valid N=10)
- Intake: 40.0%
- Post: 70.0%

Quality of Life is Good or Very Good (Valid N=11)
- Intake: 45.5%
- Post: 81.8%

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Overall, how satisfied are you with yourself?

- Satisfied or Very Satisfied (Valid N=11)
  - Percent at Intake: 36.4%
  - Percent at Post: 63.6%
Thank you!

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Resources to Help Jumpstart School/ Behavioral Health Collaborations

- APG Coaches Resources
- APG Facilitator Resources
- Oversight Team
- APG Activities on APG website
- You and Substance Use
- Creating Connections NH
- MOU School Template

- Effective School-Community Partnerships to Support School Mental Health
- Supporting Mental health in Schools (American Academy of Pediatrics)
- Center on PBIS | Opioid Crisis and Substance Misuse
Resources

- Opioid Crisis & Substance Misuse PBIS.org
- US Department of Education Guidance Around the Opioid Crisis
- Using the PBIS Framework to Address the Opioid Crisis in Schools
- CVS Health Pharmacists Teach online resources
- Treatment Considerations for Youth and Young Adults with Serious Emotional Disturbances and Serious Mental Illnesses and Co-occurring Substance Use
- Reducing Vaping Among Youth and Young Adults
- SAMSHA Treatment Considerations for Youth & Young Adults with Serious Emotional Disturbances and Co-Occurring Substance Use
- Drug Guide for Parents from Partnership for Drug Free Kids
- Drug Guide for Parents from Partnership for Drug Free Kids (Spanish version)
- Medicine Abuse Project’s Parent Talk Kit
References