

# Welcome to Creating Connections NH: Promising Alternatives to Suspension for Youth Substance Use



5/24/2023

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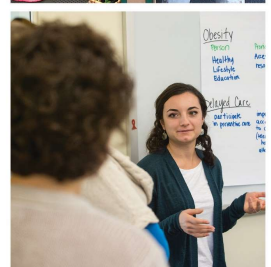
## Creating Connections NH: Promising Alternatives to Suspension for Youth Substance Use

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# Welcome

Raise your hand if  
you are a...



- Peer Support Provider/Recovery Coaches/ Family support providers
- School based counselor
- School Resource Office/ Juvenile Justice or Law Enforcement
- Educator or other school based staff or faculty
- Administrator
- 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 ...	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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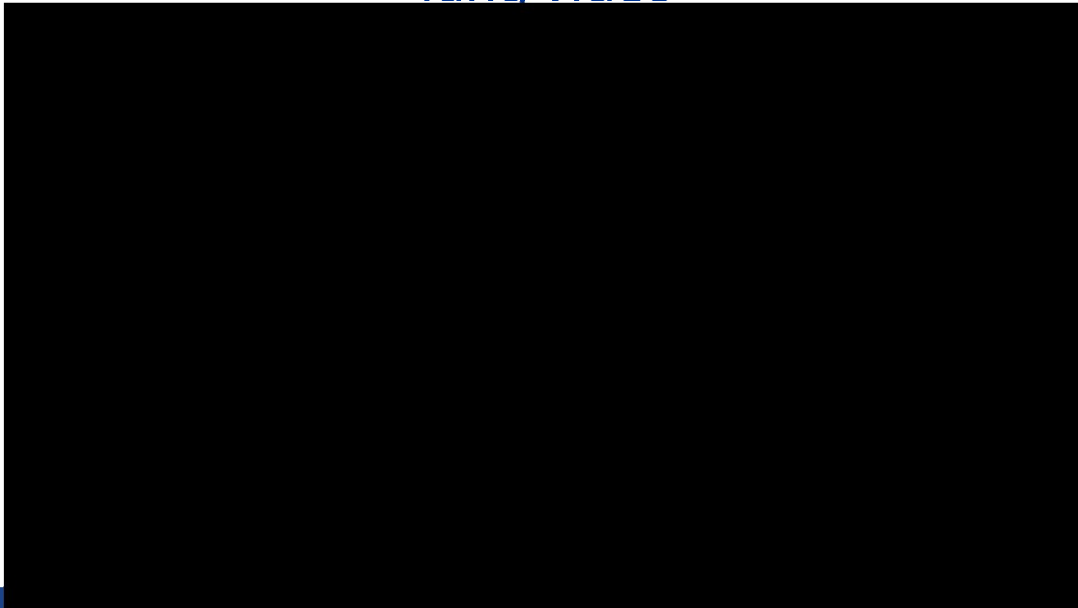
\*Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Survey Data

## As you watch the Tariq Video, reflect...

- What are some similarities & differences in your experience working with youth with SUD challenges compared to Tariq?
- What is needed to prevent / address substance use with youth?
- What Risk and Resilience factors does Tariq demonstrate & what might you have suggested to help him?
- What supports, if any are typically provided to youth with substance challenges in your community?

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## Tariq Video



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## Risk Factors for Substance Use Disorder



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## How Can we Strengthen Protective Factors

**Individual:** sense of control, supportive relationships with adults, Tolerance for delayed gratification, sense of humor, connection to prosocial organizations

**Family:** Parenting skills, trusting relationships, well defined family roles and responsibilities, opportunities to learn how to deal with silence, Rejection and criticism

**Community:** Participation in school, work, and community with a sense of belonging & contributing, opportunities to learn to handle challenges, social network of peers



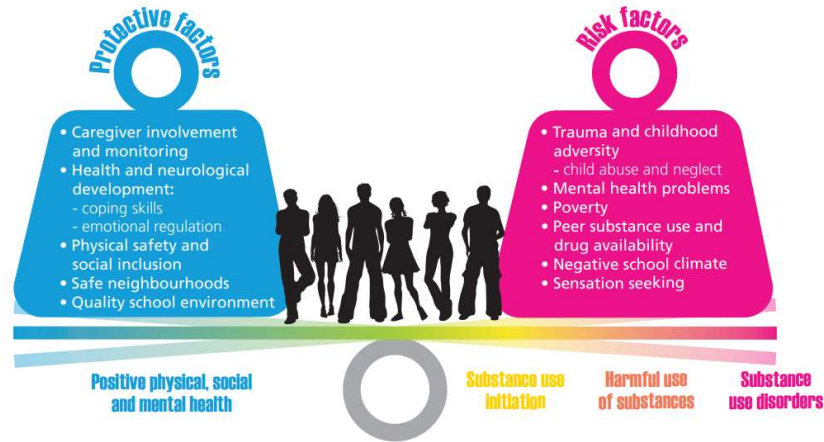
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# Protective Factors That can Outweigh Risk

## Protective factors and risk factors for substance use



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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.



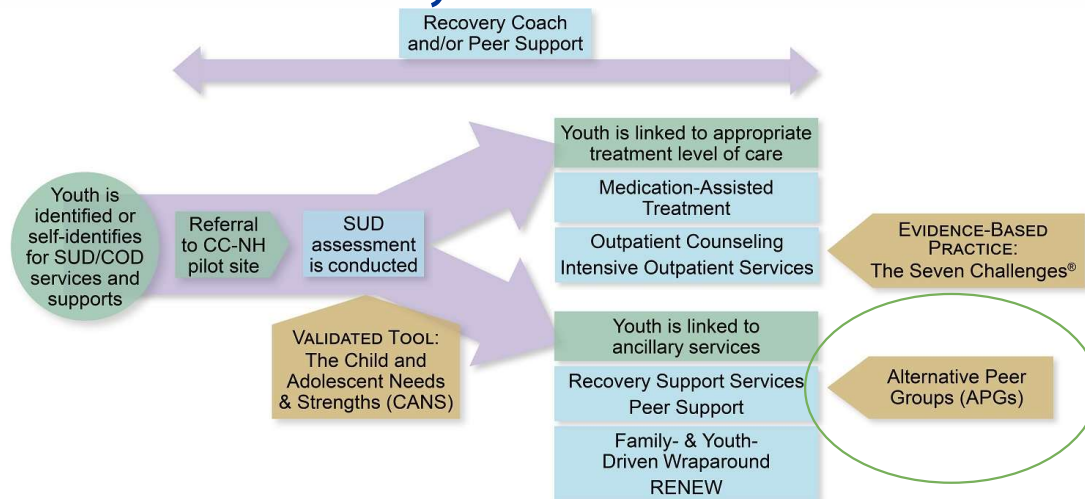
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# History of CCNH



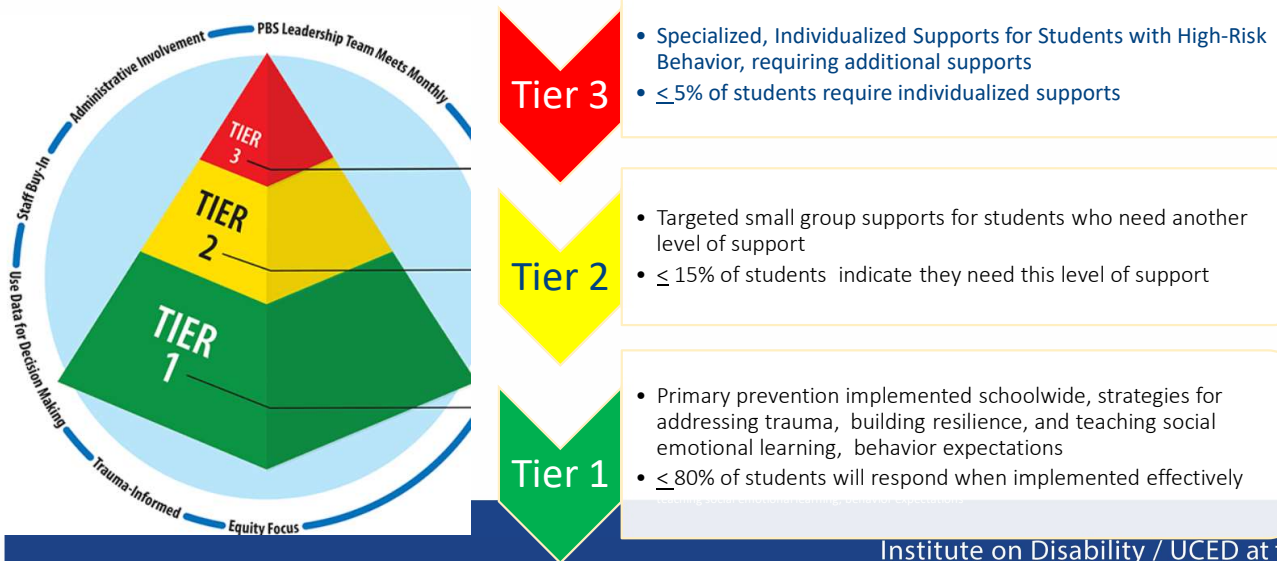
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## Creating Connections NH Youth Treatment & Recovery Continuum of Care



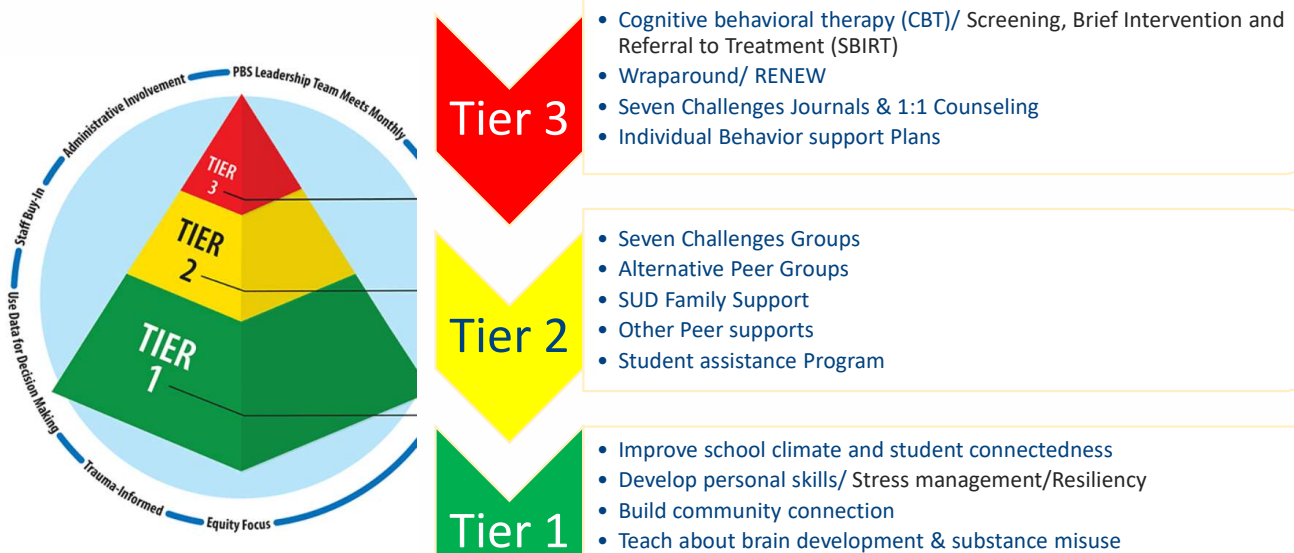
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## Continuum of School-Wide Multi-Tiered Systems of Supports



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## Tiered SUD/ Prevention & Supports



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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
- Other?

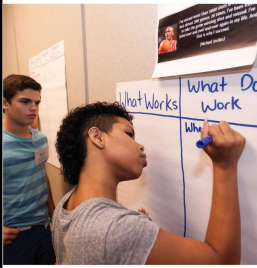
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## Creating Connections NH (CCNH)

- (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)

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# NH Alternative Peer Groups



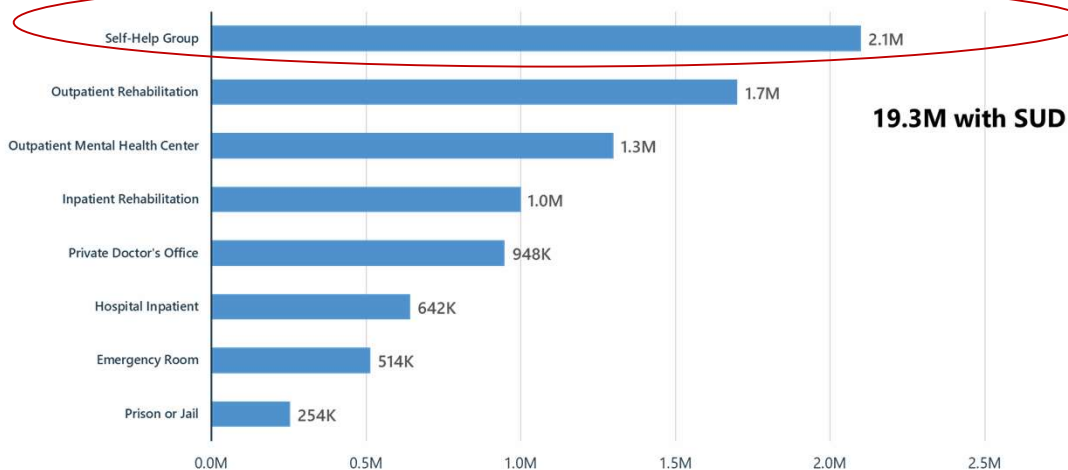
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## Locations Where Substance Use Treatment was Received

PAST YEAR, 2019 NSDUH, 12+



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.

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## 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



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## Process Used to Define the NH APG Model

### Convened Partners

- Reviewed existing literature about Alternative Peer Groups.
- Convened Contributors (youth, families, peer and recovery support providers, SUD treatment providers, state and University partners) to define critical components of the APG.
- Aligned the critical components to SAMSHA's Peer Recovery competencies



BRINGING RECOVERY SUPPORTS TO SCALE  
 Technical Assistance Center Strategy (BRSS TACS)

### CORE COMPETENCIES FOR PEER WORKERS IN BEHAVIORAL HEALTH SERVICES

- Created from SAMSHA's Core Competencies:
    - Recovery Oriented
    - Person Centered
    - Relationship Focused
    - Trauma Informed
    - \* Ethical Responsibility
- Domain added by Creating Connections NH

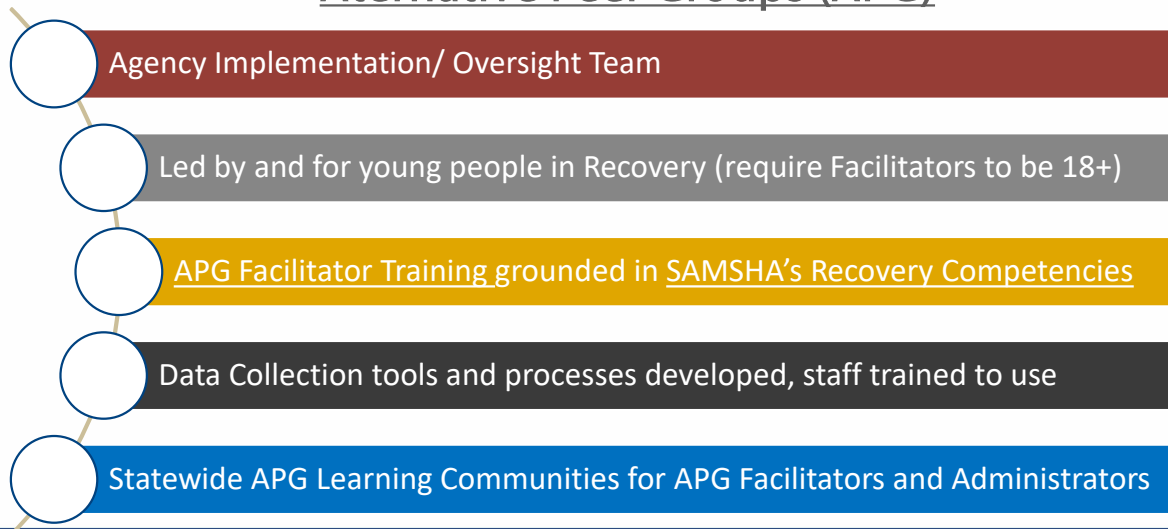
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## Common APG Topics

- Misconceptions around “natural drugs”
- Vaping vs Smoking – is one safer?
- Reverse Parentification
- Guilt & Shame – self and inherited
- Resource Identification – “what else can I do?”
- Stages of Change
- Boundaries
- Substance Use & Morality
- Careers in Substance Use Treatment & Mental Health

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## Essential Components for Successful Implementation of Alternative Peer Groups (APG)



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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

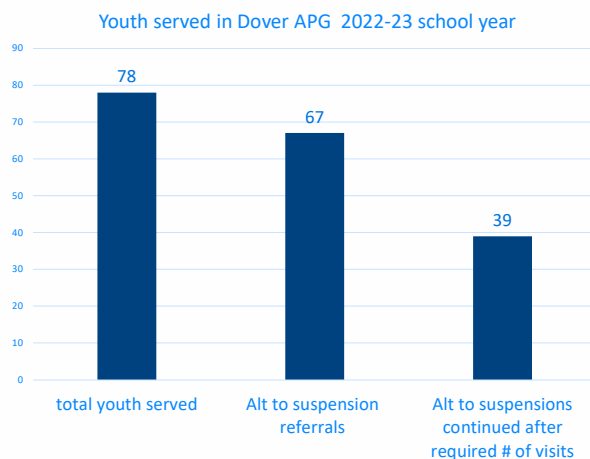


In accordance with HIPAA and 42 CFR Part 2, APG and youth information is treated the same as any other Protected Health Information (PHI). Please secure any identifying information in a locked cabinet or password-protected location.

- APG Coaches Resources
- APG Facilitator Resources
- Oversight Team

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## School Based Youth Engagement in APG 2022-3



- **Total of 78 students served in the 2022-23 school year in this 1 community (Dover, NH)**
- **67 students (86% of all referrals) came through Alternatives to suspensions.**
- **39 out of the 67 referred to APGs (39% of students) continued attending after the minimum # of sessions completed was up. Eventually another 12 students reconnected to the APG through self referral ( bringing the % of youth continuing up to 76%)**

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## Post High School Plans for High School Seniors Involved in the APG



- 100% of High School Seniors in the APG will be Graduating in June 2023 (and 2022), compared with 86% of all High school Seniors at Dover High
- 75% of these students will be attending college in the fall

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## Topics & Activities in the Alternative Peer Group

- Weaving a Web- a game to help the youth see the things they have in common
- Pictionary- Trust and team building
- One truth- everyone writes an interesting fact about themselves and puts in into the hat where then we draw them out, one at a time to guess who it belongs to.
- Risk vs protective factors,
- Decision making,
- Harm reduction
- Planning for Summer programming

## Strafford County APGs

### Live Free Recovery Consultants:

- Newton, NH
- Dover High School
- Dover Middle School
- Bellamy Academy, Dover
- Somersworth, NH

### Safe Harbor, Granite Pathways,

- Lister Academy, Portsmouth
- Location to be determined Summer 2023!

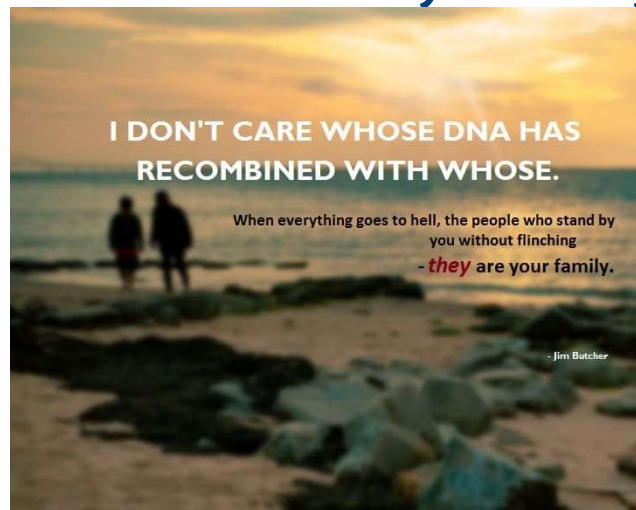
NH APG Information Sheet for Youth and Families with all NH APGs included

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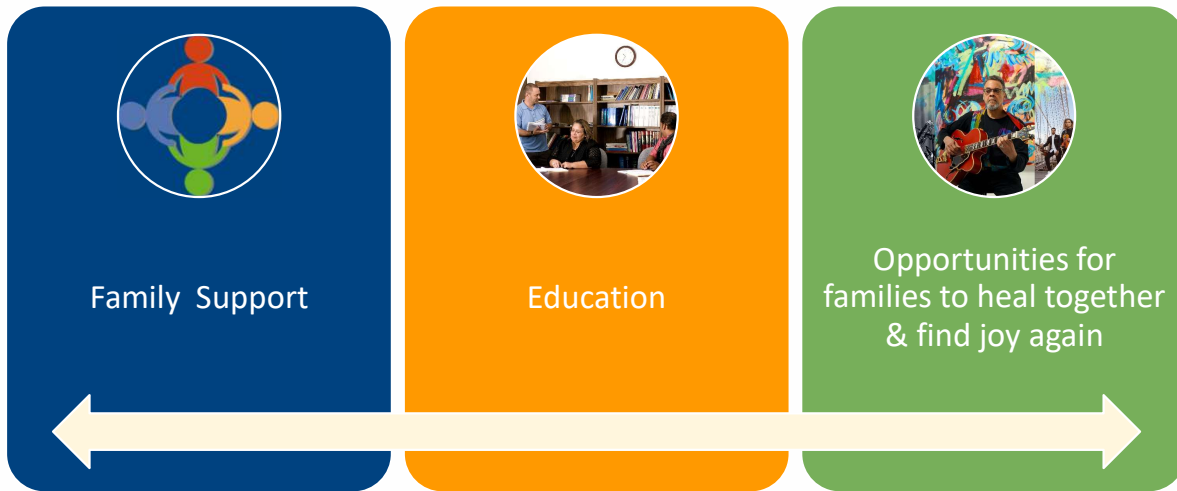
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## What We Mean by “Family” Support



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## Family Peer Supports



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## Recovery Capital



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## Greatest Areas of Needs Indicated by the Youth



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## Benefits of School & SUD Provider Partnerships



Increases Access to SUD supports & Decreases Harsh Exclusionary Discipline

- Schools lack resources to address substance use – interconnected systems help build capacity to meet complex needs
- 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

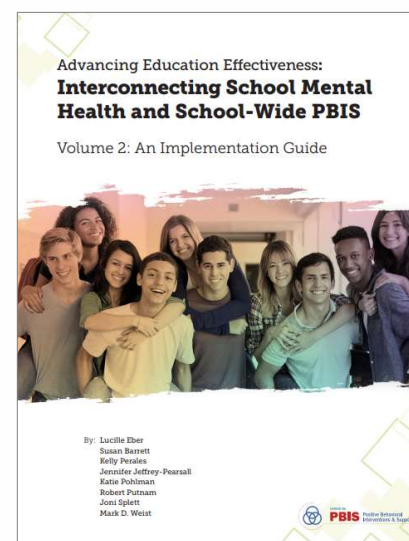
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## APG Representative on School Mental Health Committee/ Tier II/ III Teams

- APG has administrator as a member of the school based mental health team, to problem solve supports for students;
- Team facilitates referrals for individual, group or family support;
- Administer 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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## Advancing Education Effectiveness: Interconnecting School Mental Health and School-Wide PBIS, Volume 2: An Implementation Guide



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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!

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## 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 & establishing Interconnected systems

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## We create more culturally responsive communities when....



- We partner with youth & families to understand what is leading to substance use,
- Reflect and address our own bias', and systems of oppression, &
- Increase the entire skills of everyone in our communities.

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## Questions?



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## 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](#)
- [Resource: Fact Sheet—Interconnected Systems Framework 101: An Introduction](#)

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## 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](#)

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