

Governor's Youth Advisory Council

Recommendation Of Groups And Organizations

To Receive Funds Via Mini-Grants

SUMMARY

Below is a list of organizations that the Council believes could benefit from grant money. As the Council said in the initial funding proposal, because youth are not in school due to COVID-19, these organizations need these funds now, more than ever. The organizations all support the purpose of empowering and providing resources to youth, and many support the use of peer-to-peer tactics. While this list has many notable and worthy organizations, there are dozens more that were not included here that could benefit from the support of a grant. Ideally, some money would be left open for applications from groups and organizations across the state to apply for, as we recognized that there are many groups without as much name-recognition as the ones below that are doing meaningful work. We hope you take our suggestions into account.

THE SERENITY CENTER

The Serenity Center (<https://northcountryserenitycenter.org/>) is an organization located in Littleton that provides peer-to-peer support services for individuals recovering from a substance misuse disorder. They provide a variety of daily support groups including, notably, a support group for youth. This is notable because support groups for youth in recovery are rare, especially in the North Country. They also offer a safe space for youth to go, telephone support, family support groups, training, overdose prevention/naloxone (Narcan) distribution, and peer navigation. Their vision of peer-to-peer tactics and community-based support aligns perfectly with the ideals GYAC outlined in their work this year.

CONTACT: Doris Enman, recovery@northcountryserenitycenter.org

YOUTH LEADERSHIP THROUGH ADVENTURE PROGRAM

The Youth Leadership Through Adventure Program (<http://www.adaptnh.org/youthleadershipthroughadventure>) is a leadership group based in the North Country that empowers youth and provides access to alternative activities, which are essential in preventing substance misuse. YLTA offers a variety of opportunities for youth: they host conferences and overnight trips, engage youth in outdoor activities such as hiking and canoeing, provide learning opportunities through community service, and they provide resources to educate youth about substance misuse and mental health. YLTA also puts a focus on

improving school and community climate to make them safer and more positive spaces for youth to learn and grow. YLTA focuses on peer-to-peer training and relationships, which further encourages leadership and empowerment in youth. They are a prominent group in the North Country and their work is essential. Their work has been brought up numerous times in Council meetings as a golden example of alternative activities and a great resource for youth.

CONTACT: Sean O'Brien, seanobrienadapt@gmail.com

See attachments at the end of the document for more information on the organization.

MAKIN' IT HAPPEN

Makin' It Happen is a nonprofit, youth, and community coalition with the contract for the Greater Manchester Region. The empowerYOUTH! initiative was designed to engage, educate, and empower youth throughout the Greater Manchester region. Programming highlights include leadership training, prevention training such as Suicide Prevention, over the counter medicine safety, and vaping awareness. Over the past few years, empowerYOUTH! has taken action through bringing presentations to peers and younger students (over 400 6th graders), testifying at the State House against the commercialization of marijuana, and speaking at national conferences about the importance of peer-to-peer programming. In the fall of 2020, members will be working with their schools to participate in the development of mental health and suicide prevention strategies for their peer groups as well as being trained and helping with present suicide prevention to both their peers and middle school level youth in collaboration with the SAP teams (www.makinithappen.org).

CONTACT: Mary Forsythe-Taber, mft@mih4u.org
(full disclosure, Mary Forsythe-Taber is a GYAC adult advisor)

BOYS AND GIRLS CLUB OF THE NORTH COUNTRY

The **Boys and Girls Club** (<http://bgcnorthcountry.org/>) is a vital organization in the North Country. They offer a drug-free environment and great alternative activities for kids. They help teach leadership skills, provide mentorships, and, most importantly, they instill a sense of community and belonging. It is also a great resource for working parents, who can be assured that their kids are safe and cared for. The Boys and Girls Club is a critical resource for substance misuse prevention.

CONTACT: Sara Shovlin, sara@bgcnorthcountry.org

NORTH COUNTRY POLICE ATHLETIC LEAGUE

The former White Mountain PAL was supported by law enforcement and the community alike. They have been inactive for a few years now, but recently the Chief of Police in Lancaster, Tim Charbonneau, and former Chief and lead organizer of WMPAL, John Gardiner, have been discussing the re-opening of WMPAL as a vehicle to provide youth with after-school activities such as boxing, martial arts, and archery. The grant would be integral in beginning this process of the **North Country Police Athletic League**. With the uncertainty of school schedules and increased time at home, the need for social interaction and guidance by trusted adults has never been more critical.

CONTACT: Greg Williams, gwilliams@nchcnh.org
(full disclosure, Greg Williams is a GYAC adult advisor)

UP CONFERENCE

The **UP Conference** is a yearly youth empowerment conference, usually held at the Mt. Washington Hotel. The conference gives youth the chance to learn about and discuss the most relevant issues they are facing, including mental illness and substance misuse disorder. It is youth-led and has, in recent years, been using youth speakers to elevate youth voices and ideas. It is the youth who choose the speakers, the topic, and who facilitate the event. They learn how to lift each other 'up' through hope, positivity, and a shared sense of community. The conference has always received positive reviews in the past and is always looked forward to by the youth of the North Country. The conference has struggled to get celebrities to show support and inspire youth to let them know that they matter and that their future success is not limited by geography, financial situation, or any of the factors they might believe hold them back. The last conference had over 1,100 viewers in 2 days and has been recorded for future viewing. It featured Kevin Hines, a noted mental health advocate. The grant money would be used to expand the conference to more students.

CONTACT: Greg Williams, gwilliams@nchcnh.org
(full disclosure, Greg Williams is a GYAC adult advisor)

EXPANSION OF STUDENT ASSISTANCE PROGRAMS

The Council is very aware of the need to expand and fund Student Assistance Programs in schools. They are a vital resource for many youths. In terms of expanding Student Assistance Programs across the state, there are a number of agencies that already have contracts with schools for Student Assistance Programs that have the ability to expand part-time staff hours in schools that need a full-time position, and would also have the experience necessary to support

additional Student Assistance Programs in schools that are not being serviced at all. Some examples of these agencies are:

- **Seacoast Youth Services** in Seabrook <https://www.seacoastyouthservices.org/>,
- **The Youth Council** in Nashua <https://tycnh.org/>,
- **The Upper Room** in Derry <https://www.urteachers.org/>
- **Second Start** in Concord
<https://www.second-start.org/alternative-high-school/student-assistance-program/>,
- **Second Growth** <http://www.secondgrowth.org/school-programs/> in the Lebanon /Hanover Region,
- **North Country Health Consortium** <https://www.nchcnh.org/>

It would also be beneficial for the funds to be used to employ the SAPs throughout the summer so they can help students using telehealth, which would ease the transition back into school and provide vital support to struggling students.

See attachments at the end of the document for more information on the organizations listed above, excluding The Upper Room and North Country Health Consortium.

SUPPORTING COALITIONS

There are a number of coalitions that have done tremendous work with schools and summer programming, which could be very beneficial to our students and educators in this time of transition and of bridging back to school in the fall. A few of the former Drug-Free Communities Coalitions have been struggling to find enough funds to sustain the great work they had started with 10 years of Federal funding. They include the **Southern Rockingham Coalition for Healthy Youth (SoRock)** which serves 3 school districts (8 towns) www.sorocknh.org, **Franklin Mayor's Drug Task Force** <https://www.franklinnh.org/mayors-drug-task-force/pages/goals>, and **Raymond Coalition for Youth** <http://www.rcfy.org/>. In addition, there are many other coalitions that are working closely with Public Health Network, such as **Makin' It Happen** <https://www.mih4u.org/> that could easily ramp up support over the summer and help with the bridging back to schools with increased resources. Many coalitions offer vital resources and practices to youth. One example of such a coalition is **Crispin's House Coalition** <http://crispinshouse.org/>, which works in collaboration with the Goffstown School District to host youth forums, give youth a platform, and a voice, bring prevention trainings and presentations, and build knowledge and resiliency through peer-to-peer support. Because there are so many coalitions across the state doing such incredible work, it would be beneficial to open up the opportunity to receive grant money for coalitions state-wide, not just the ones named here. Many of these coalitions could also help coordinate staff development offerings for educators on Trauma-Informed Schools and Social-Emotional Learning.

See attachments at the end of the document for more information on Raymond Coalition for Youth.

COMMUNITY ALLIANCE FOR TEEN SAFETY

The **Community Alliance For Teen Safety** (<http://www.catsnh.org/>) was founded in 1996 after 11 teens were killed in car crashes. It is a grassroots coalition that initially focused on driving safety and even spearheaded the effort to raise the mandatory age for seatbelt use to 18. It now also focuses on substance misuse prevention, the safe disposal of prescription drugs, and other community health and safety issues. They also focus on youth empowerment and leadership. Their community-based work and message aligns greatly with the ideals of GYAC. Their work has been vital and has created real change in their community and across the state.

CONTACT: Sue Center, director@catsnh.org

SOROCK COALITION FOR HEALTHY YOUTH, A PROGRAM OF SERESC

SoRock Coalition for Healthy Youth puts a focus on civic involvement as key to developing healthy communities. They work to bring awareness to and decrease the stigma around mental illness and substance misuse. In the past they have advocated on the local, state, and federal level for funding and resources, educated businesses on the importance of recovery-friendly workplaces, sponsored workshops and training, facilitated the installment of permanent prescription drop boxes in their communities, and so much more. Their work in their communities has been a gold-standard for everything coalitions and community-based initiatives can accomplish.

CONTACT: Charlotte Scott, coalition coordinator. sorocknhcc@gmail.com. www.sorocknh.org (full disclosure, Tim Lena is a GYAC adult advisor and directs this coalition, Timothy.lena@timberlane.net)

See attachment at the end of the document for more information.

EXPAND PEER-TO-PEER TRAINING AND SUPPORT

Many coalitions have “Youth in Action” groups that will also serve as peer-to-peer Mentoring/support. It would be wonderful to replicate the Youth to Youth model more across the State. **Dover Youth 2 Youth** <http://dover2y.org/> has already been reaching out to other communities with Zoom Trainings and they have another well-established program in Newmarket. Additionally, programs such as the **NH Teen Institute** <https://www.nhteeninstitute.org/> and **NAMI NH**

<https://www.naminh.org/education/suicide-prevention/> would be able to peer-to-peer training such as Peer Outreach in High Schools, which also could incorporate Suicide Prevention Training of students, which many high schools will be looking for as a result of the new Suicide Prevention Law. The grant money should be opened up for peer-to-peer groups to apply for, as there are many more than listed here.

NAMI NH

The Council is very concerned about the rising rates of mental illness among our peers, especially in such a stressful and isolating time, which is why we believe NAMI NH might be a vital recipient of funds. This is especially as it relates to training students and staff with suicide prevention, as per the new law that goes into effect July 1. NAMI offers many educational programs that teach a better understanding of mental illness. They also teach people how to cope and advocate for themselves. They are a critical resource that offers vital support to many across the state (<https://www.naminh.org/>).

CONTACT: Ann Duckless, aduckless@naminh.org

FUNDING FOR AFTER SCHOOL EXTRACURRICULAR PROGRAMS

After-school extracurriculars are often a very important part of a teen's life. There is such a large variety of these programs and it is important that there is some type of program for everyone. Many schools are able to have numerous clubs, sports, and after-school activities, but not all schools are due to financial and staff reasons. Youth who are on sports teams are able to enhance skills like teamwork and communication. Other clubs such as gay/straight alliances and culture related clubs can help kids create a community and get the support that they might not receive at home. All students like different things, some like theater, others like robotics. This is why it's important that schools have the funding they need to offer a variety of extracurriculars so all teens can find a place they belong to in their school community. It is also true that clubs offer drug-free spaces and are a key aspect of prevention. It would also be beneficial for some funds to be given for schools and programs to be able to purchase PPE, to ensure that students feel comfortable utilizing these programs to the fullest advantage.



June 27, 2020

To Whom it may concern,

My name is Sean O'Brien. I am the CEO for Adolescent Drug & Alcohol Prevention Tools (ADAPT), inc. Greg Williams and Kaycee Reagan reached out to me in regards to the most recent youth council meeting. Based on the information provided, ADAPT is requesting CARES Act funds in order to provide our cornerstone program, **Youth Leadership Through Adventure (YLTA)** during this pandemic. We have created a plan that will enable us to provide programming to each and every school in the North Country as well as additionally serve the School Administrative Unit 48 area which includes Plymouth Regional High School, Thornton Central School, Campton Elementary School, Waterville Valley Elementary School, Plymouth Elementary School, Holderness Central School, Russell Elementary School and Wentworth Elementary School.

The plan for YLTA is to offer a summer leadership academy/conference experience for every school even if we begin the school year with remote learning. I have briefly outlined each program as well as our plan for Covid-19 programming.



YLTA is a youth-led, adult-guided adventure-based approach to student wellness strategy. As part of your participation, you will be connected with other like-minded youth at your school and beyond. All of these individuals share the same goal of improving community climate and promoting the benefits of a healthy lifestyle. By participating in YLTA, you will gain valuable leadership and facilitation skills. All YLTA activities take place in a fun, positive, and accepting environment.

The Regional YLTA has met consistently throughout the entire school year. This group made up of North Country and Plymouth Regional High School students continued to meet consistently via Zoom during the COVID 19 pandemic. This was an easy transition for our group as we meet remotely during the winter months during inclement weather. I purchased the platform Mentimeter after seeing it used during a virtual workshop I attended in March. The program allows for more interaction and creates a fun experience for participants. The regional group has spearheaded daily youth-led, adult-guided Zoom meetings for middle school students from the beginning of this crisis. The meetings are similar to conference workshops, focusing on topics such as mindfulness, ATOD trivia, leadership, and more. They are led by Regional youth staff and monitored by Adapt staff. We have also hosted watch parties and provided technical assistance for school YLTA groups. A number of schools are doing daily Instagram posts, weekly Zoom meetings, and as well as other creative initiatives to keep youth engaged, productive, and in good spirits. We also put together a YLTA conference promotional video,

adult advisor manual, and YLTA participant journals during this crisis. With that said I have increased the number of hours that my staff focus on YLTA as many of them saw a reduction in their work performed in their other roles with Adapt.

planning and organizing events for their peers as well as younger students, including drive-in movies, remote workshops, and other creative initiatives.

Due to Covid-19, we will be unable to provide our Summer Leadership Academies as well as our Middle and High School Conferences. I am requesting funds that will enable us to bring these experiences to each and every school in the North Country as well as expanding to the SAU 48 area which includes; Plymouth Regional High School, Thornton Central School, Campton Elementary School, Waterville Valley Elementary School, Plymouth Elementary School, Holderness Central School, Russell Elementary School, and Wentworth Elementary School.

The plan is to offer a summer leadership academy/conference experience for every school. Each school would be responsible for selecting a YLTA advisor and 8 students to participate in a two-day, one-night adventure during which the participants would develop an action plan to bring back to their respective schools and communities. The trips would be facilitated by Adapt staff trained in the YLTA model and equipment, transportation and meals will be provided at no cost to the participants. The funding would also include a two-day, one-night training for advisors which includes an advisor manual, student journals, and technical assistance throughout the school year. To learn more about YLTA and the many other programs Adapt provides visit us online at www.adaptnh.org.

Mission:

The mission of Youth Leadership Through Adventure is to empower youth to lead and promote the benefits of a healthy lifestyle, reduce substance misuse, stress and anxiety, and improve overall school climate.

Vision:

- Offer each participant a sense of belonging through service-learning projects.
- Empower youth to generate leadership and self-governance,
- Promote the health benefits of a substance-free lifestyle in schools and communities
- Improve school climate in order to support positive, healthy, substance-free lifestyles choices through practices and policies
- Change the community norms and culture so that healthy substance-free lifestyles are promoted

Goals:

The goals of Youth Leadership Through Adventure (YLTA) are to reduce substance misuse and improve the school climate in each school this program supports. The program seeks to accomplish these goals using experiential education techniques based on the 15 constructs of positive youth development. Research has shown, programs that focus on Positive Youth Development Constructs are able to reduce substance misuse among participants, along with other pro-social outcomes.

Summer Leadership Academies:

Summer Leadership Academies are intensive, 4-day, 3-night adventure-based training experiences usually taking place in a wilderness setting. ADAPT staff members work with local school SAPs or guidance counselors to identify good candidates for the academies, with leadership potential being the main criteria considered. It is important to note that this does not necessarily mean students with clean disciplinary records or high academic performance. Indeed, often those selected are students who are currently using their leadership skills in less than ideal ways to influence their peer groups. By sending such students to Leadership

Academies, the goal is to get them to utilize their gifts in a prosocial manner which will benefit their entire school community.

Smaller group sizes than the conferences (usually between 10 and 30) allow for a better facilitator to student ratios and better group bonding. The focus at these academies is the development of the leadership, planning, and facilitation skills that students will use back at their schools and regionally through the rest of the year.

High School Conference

The Annual High School Conference is the second major regional event in the YLTA school year implementation. It involves schools sending small groups of current or prospective YLTA members (typically between 8-12 students) to a camp based conference for 3 days and 2 nights. The conference is staffed by a cadre of adult experiential-educators and the regional YLTA team members. The co-collaboration allows for the youth facilitators to observe, be observed, and be mentored by highly skilled educators. For the participants, the conference is an opportunity to build community and connect with students from their schools and around the region. Additionally, they can begin to develop leadership, planning, and public speaking skills. Schools groups can and begin drafting their own school group action plans to implement during the year.

Middle School Conference:

The Middle School Conference is very similar to the High School conference! The focus is community building and planning each school's yearly action plan. The only difference is that it is one day shorter than the high school conference, and more responsibility is placed upon our High School Regional YLTA team to plan and execute the event!

Sincerely,

Sean O'Brien CEO Adolescent Drug & Alcohol Prevention Tools, inc. & Creator of YLTA



June 29, 2020

"Whatever it Takes"

Good morning Tim,

As we discussed on Friday, Seacoast Youth Services would be very interested in additional funding to expand our Student Assistance Program. As the provider of perhaps the only Adolescent Intensive Outpatient Program in the region we are always hearing from schools requesting school-based support. We currently provide school-based student assistance in the Seabrook Middle School and have found many ways to effectively engage youth and their families. We would welcome the opportunity to work with additional districts and we are confident that with additional support we could do that starting this fall.

Through the Covid Pandemic our staff quickly jumped on the virtual platform and experienced an increase in adolescents requiring and receiving our services. We have a seasoned staff and look forward to hearing back from you and the Governor's Advisory Council.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Vic Maloney", is written over the word "Sincerely,".

Vic Maloney, Executive Director

6/27/2020

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

To Whom It May Concern:

PRESIDENT
Christine Stein,
MBA
BAE Systems

The need to add additional support for youth during the COVID-19 crisis is abundantly clear. As a provider of Student Assistance Programs at the Middle and High School levels, at The Youth Council we were understaffed and unable to adequately serve our student populations prior to the pandemic increasing challenges for our most vulnerable youth.

TREASURER
Larry Szetela
Laurence Szetela,
CPA

Considering the recommendations of at least 1 per Student Assistance Program Counselor 1000 students, below is our current staffing and unmet need:

School	Student Population	Current Staffing Level	Unmet Staffing Need
Nashua South HS	1809	1	1
Nashua North HS	1664	1	1
Elm St. MS	1039	0.5	0.5
Fairgrounds MS	702	0.5	0.5
Pennichuck MS	639	0	1

VICE PRESIDENT
Jennifer Linatsas,
MSW
Social Worker

SECRETARY
Karrie Benson
Morneau Law

With an unmet staffing need of 4 FTEs, we would be interested in sustainable funding to address the needs of students locally by increasing the number of Project SUCCESS Counselors.

DIRECTORS

Nicole Hannigan
Sgt. Nashua
Police

Susan Mathias
Boston Billiard &
Casino

John Phelan
The Provident
Bank

Christie Tourlitis
Main Street Gyro

Cynthia Turcotte
BHHS Verani
Realty

Line	Cost	Explanation
Salary	\$44,352	1FTE Counselor, .05FTE for Clinical Supervision, & payroll taxes (7.65%)
Benefits	\$11,000	Health, dental, short and long term disability insurance
Equipment	\$1,000	Computer and Monitor
Educational Supplies	\$2,000	Curriculum and program materials
Office Supplies	\$1,000	Paper, pens, staplers, tape, etc.
Marketing/Communications	\$1,000	Promotional Materials for positive choices
Staff Education & Training	\$1,500	Prevention certification and other continuing education courses
Indirect	\$6085	10% of direct costs
Total for 1 FTE	\$67,937	
Total for 4 FTEs	\$271,749	

With sufficient staffing we will be able to continue to reduce the development and impact of substance use disorder, ultimately reducing the tax burden of increased healthcare and law enforcement costs associated with substance use disorder.

Please feel free to contact me with any questions or to further discuss opportunities to serve youth and families. darias@tycnh.org (603)889-1090

Sincerely,



Donna Arias, Executive Director

Since 1985 Second Start has trained and supported SAP counselors in Greater Concord area school districts, and has consistently made increases in the number of students served by expanding into multiple schools, with multiple counselors in many districts. Through the years, the support for these positions has steadily increased as recognition for the necessity of the services has become more and more apparent. We have worked hard to increase most positions to full-time and to stabilize funding from the districts themselves for all or significant portions of the associated costs. Currently we do still employ SAP counselors in some part-time positions in districts where the school boards, staff and students all would prefer to have full-time counselors. Generally this is due to lack of funding for the positions which are currently supported through cost-sharing between the districts and the grants administered by the Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Services (BDAS).

As part of an immediate response to the increased need anticipated to be presented by NH students due to the sudden switch to remote learning, we would propose to make our SAP counselors available every school day in the schools it would be accepted in that we already have services built into.

An additional two days of SAP counselor services 2 days/ week @ \$384/ day for 36 weeks = \$27,648

Hello Tim,

Thanks for your message on Friday night. This fall we will be embedding SAP counselors in four school districts and covering 7 or 8 schools. We, too, have been anticipating an increased need for counseling - both clinical and SAP - even if only because children's behaviors have been more-closely observed during these last 3 months and parents have seen substance misuse or worrisome behaviors under their own roof. We have found that some children whose issues stemmed from anxiety from the pressures of school or bullying are actually faring very well during the time of stay-at-home orders. Some children are feeling worse because of parents' anxiety over the virus or job insecurity or other issues. Our counselors have seen a slight uptick in marriage discord - even in people who successfully completed marriage counseling and are now returning - with some severe distress possibly leading to divorce. This is also very stressful for children and teens.

All that said, what kind of proposal would do you need and when is the deadline? I can create something quickly because we regularly write grants for SAP work. In particular, we serve one school district for which we could really use funding. The funding for this is not consistent (private grants), so some years we are working for free to support their high-needs students.

For our clients who are uninsured or under insured, we offer sliding scale fees and scholarship (a euphemism for charitable care). We are in a constant state of fundraising - that's just the nature of the beast. Sometimes students receiving SAP supports in school - and their families - will become clinical clients and will be seen by licensed staff. Working with the entire family is very effective, and we are so proud to provide this service.

I am in the office all day and maybe a phone call would be quicker/easier/more helpful. I have a meeting between 10:30 and 11:30, but after that I will be available at (802) 295-9800.

Best regards,

Heidi

Heidi Postupack

Executive Director

Second Growth

(802) 295-9800

Raymond Coalition for Youth

Raymond Coalition for Youth brings community resources and partners together to help youth reach their potential. We work to empower youth and make our community a safer and healthier place. From community education to our diverse community partners, programs and family fun events, Raymond Coalition for Youth has something for everyone.

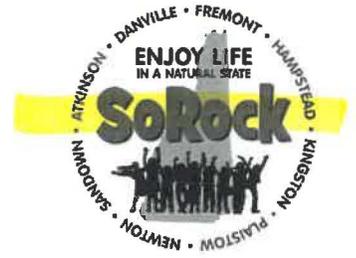
Raymond Coalition for Youth brings positive choices full circle and you can help us by becoming a donor, board member, volunteer or advocate – yes, you telling others about RCFY is our best way to advertise, your friends and coworkers value your opinion! Join us now.

The Raymond Coalition For Youth empowers the community to promote positive youth development and reduce youth substance use, and suicide risk. We have been doing this collaboratively since 2002 and the key to our success is involving our young people in the process and putting their voice into action. RCFY provides information, resources, and services far beyond the Raymond Town lines and our impact is reflected in our ongoing successful outcomes. All of these efforts are reflected on our website and social media accounts.

Prevention work is not one group, one event, one donation. Prevention is every day, working with the community, adults, and youths. Prevention is working with all different sectors of the community: Youth-Serving, Education, Healthcare, Faith-Based, Government, Businesses, Parents, and Volunteers. Prevention is working with other communities.

We currently employ two full-time staff members and two part-time staff members. We have a very involved Board of Directors, who are volunteers, as well as a great team of volunteers, community partners, and supporters, that continues to grow.

Contact: Celeste Clark. Phone: (603) 895-7061. cclark@rcfy.org



June 29, 2020

To Whom It May Concern:

Per the Governor's request, Southern Rockingham Coalition for Healthy Youth (SoRock), has created a proposal to address the needs of our youth in preparation for a return to school in response to the COVID-19 pandemic.

SoRock is well positioned to implement a multi-faceted approach to include communities, parents, students, and schools. This approach has the ability to be delivered via in-person, hybrid or remote models. As SoRock has been established in the community for over 25 years, we maintain the relationships and knowledge to successfully deliver these initiatives. Funding through the Governor's Youth Council will ensure there are no gaps in service in these areas.

Targeted Initiatives:

- **Social Emotional Learning (SEL)** - essential for all staff and students, regardless of the ability to return to school. This pandemic has touched every life in some way, and SEL training provides people with the knowledge to appropriately manage the emotional trauma/stress of what is happening
- **Suicide Prevention Training** - to be made available to districts, staff and students as well as a parent/community member component; peer-to-peer component available
- **Substance Misuse Prevention** - knowledgeable social media campaigns to address the continued need for positive messaging
- **Vaping Education** - identified by students as an area of need for continued education
- **Youth Peer Leadership** trainings to increase youth skill-set for recognizing/addressing warning signs amidst increased substance misuse, under reported self-harm, and physical abuse during a Covid-19 climate
- **Community Leadership Engagement** - advisory councils facilitated by a coalition representative to give town stakeholders a voice in informing SoRock of the needs and perspectives of their specific town/community
- **Parent Support** - to help improve family practices and strengthen the bonds between caregivers and children with the goals of substance misuse prevention, violence prevention, and positive character development

With a request of \$125,000 for funding, SoRock is able to implement these initiatives across our eight towns. We are honored to have been recognised by the Governor's Youth Council as a service considered essential for the health and wellbeing of the 45,000 people in the communities we serve.

Respectfully submitted,

Tim Lena, Sorock Director
Aurie Roy, Sorock Chair
Charlotte Scott, Coalition Coordinator

Governor's Youth Advisory Council

Proposal For The Allocation Of Funds Benefiting Youth Across New Hampshire

The Governor's Youth Advisory Council (GYAC) recognizes the importance of community in fighting the substance misuse crisis. Communities have the ability to influence and support youth, making them vital in fostering healthy, drug-free environments for children. The power they have to create change cannot be underestimated. Due to the diversity of the state and available resources, the substance misuse crisis varies widely wherever you go. Communities know their citizens' needs the best and must be well-equipped with the proper resources in order to help solve their problems. It is for this reason that we believe in supporting community-based organizations, so they can implement initiatives that are best suited for their communities.

The Governor's Youth Advisory Council recommends that **a portion of these funds be allocated into mini-grants for schools or community-based, youth-serving organizations to apply for.** The goal of these mini-grants is to promote youth to become empowered, while being engaged in positive and healthy community initiatives. Ideally, applications would be available for completion by any community-based, youth-serving organization or school within New Hampshire, with a focus on high-school-aged youth. At the end of the application process, the members of GYAC would like to be involved in choosing the recipients of the grant, so that they best reflect the youth's perspective. The Council created a list of examples that the grant money could be used for. The list is detailed at the bottom of this document. We have also attached a very specific example of how the grant could be used that was created by one of our members and was a major inspiration for this idea.

Acknowledging that every community is different, GYAC would like the grants to be flexible in their uses so that communities can be creative about how they use the money so it can be best

adapted to their needs. The purpose of the grants is to allow communities the opportunity to engage youth in healthy and safe alternative activities and to provide resources relevant to fighting and preventing the substance misuse and mental health crisis. Each community has unique needs and will have unique ideas and responses on how to achieve this goal. A community that sees a large substance misuse issue may choose to use these funds to develop a youth empowerment and prevention group, while another community may want to emphasize connectedness and engagement, and may use the funds to host a community event, such as a movie night or dinner. These are two very different examples of how the grant could be used, but they both achieve the ultimate goal. This kind of flexibility within the grant is crucial so that communities can best serve their unique needs.

The Council is increasingly concerned about the exacerbation of the mental health crisis by the COVID-19 epidemic and social distancing. Many youths have been left feeling increasingly isolated, anxious, and depressed. It is for this reason that we also believe that **a portion of the funds should be allocated to providing more mental health resources for students and to making resources more accessible, especially through means of social media and internet resources.** This is especially crucial if remote learning is to come back or to continue. During remote learning, many students felt as though their educational needs were not met and were left feeling unsupported. We feel it would be beneficial to both students and teachers to **allocate funds to training for teachers on effective remote learning strategies, including Trauma-Focused Social Emotional Learning lessons for dealing with the COVID crisis.** We also believe that **some of the funds could be directed to providing Students Assistant Professionals to schools,** as we feel that all schools within New Hampshire should have access to this crucial resource.

We were honored and thankful to be asked our opinions on how to allocate these funds. We strongly believe that the best approach is to support community-based initiatives and to put a focus on mental health resources. We hope that you take our ideas into consideration.

Ways Which The Grant Money Could Be Used

- Expanding resources and capacity for recreational and alternative activities, such as clubs in school
- Establishing peer-to-peer training focused on prevention, so youth can mentor others
- Offer skills classes to high schoolers like piano, cooking, sewing, resume writing, etc. for high school students, where the money would go toward compensating the instructor/fees
- Provide support for at-risk youth, such as through providing transportation or scholarships
- Provide PPE to help summer fitness programs because as programs try to open for coaches and kids, there is a gap in PPE available to them
- Overcome a transportation barrier for students who cannot afford driver's education programs, by creating funds to apply for, which would allow more students to drive to treatment or alternative activities
- Bring in guest speakers to the schools in each region
- Increase staff for existing programs
- Host community events such as dinners or movie nights
- Create youth groups within schools
- Design an app focused on NH youth connectivity
- Provide training for teachers on effective remote learning strategies, including Trauma-Focused Social Emotional Learning lessons for dealing with the COVID Crisis
- Provide mental health resources for schools, such as funding for Student Assistance Programs and the new Mental Health and Suicide Awareness trainings that are required.
- Provide scholarship fund for teens to attend remote programs/alternative activity options
- Provide stipends to schools or teachers who agree to host remote clubs during the summer that would normally function only during the academic year (like an art club where materials are dropped to participants doors, a cooking club where supplies are delivered, etc.)

Example:

Capacity Building for Youth Advocates

Amount: \$235,000

Explanation:

Put \$235,000 into a program that will distribute funds to help start youth advocacy programs in schools or communities where none exists, or help expand and develop existing youth advocacy programs. The funds would be used to give technical assistance to youth drug and alcohol prevention youth groups in NH with an emphasis on youth empowerment. This will create a network of youth advocates across the state that can take part in peer-to-peer education and other prevention efforts in their schools and communities.

The expanded or newly developed youth groups will receive training for student members and guidance for their adult advisers, so the groups have the capacity to create change in their own immediate environments. The funds invested this way would allow for a training conference, regular virtual training sessions, mentoring of adult advisers, and mini-grants to pay for adult advisers to as many as 20 programs around the state. Students involved in these new groups can use the skills and knowledge they have obtained to take action in their schools or communities through education, community awareness, and media.

The program would be administered by an experienced youth advocacy program, such as **Dover Youth 2 Youth**, which currently has a small grant to provide this type of assistance to 3 youth programs. Having more money toward this cause will allow bigger grants to be given to more communities, which in turn will result in more peer-to-peer education for kids and teens about the dangers of drugs and alcohol.

Advantages of this approach:

This approach will create long-running youth drug and alcohol prevention groups in a number of communities throughout the state. Once these groups are created they will get technical assistance, as well as training, so they can empower youth advocates. Once youth are empowered in their community and have an outlet to take action, they can teach younger students in their school and community who will do the same. As a result, the group can continue to affect the community for years to come.

Budget = \$235,000

Coordinating Staff member - \$90,000

Mini Grants for NH communities/Schools - \$110,000

Training/Conference Expenses - \$20,000

Other (Supplies, Marketing Materials, Resources) - \$15,000