COMBATING SUBSTANCE ABUSE IN THE NORTHWEST CORNER

A reception to share our progress

Saturday, September 14, 2019
Fairfield Farm, Lakeville, CT, 5 to 7 p.m.
FCH Mission:

To improve the health and well-being of the residents of the FCH service area, especially those most vulnerable.
Access
Collaboration
Prevention
Northwest Corner Prevention Network

The Northwest Corner Prevention Network is a local prevention council in Connecticut with the goal of delaying the age of first use, increasing perception, and increasing parental disapproval of substance use.
Beneath the Surface

The Opioid Epidemic in Northwest Connecticut

“It has not been in the pursuit of pleasure that I have peril'd life and reputation and reason. It has been the desperate attempt to escape from torturing memories, from a sense of insupportable loneliness and a dread of some strange impending doom.

—Edgar Allan Poe

“Loving an addicted child is like grieving his death and fighting for his life at the same time....”

—Randy Sweeney

CULTIVATING SOLUTIONS

ADDRESSING NORTHWEST CONNECTICUT’S ADDICTION CRISIS

NOVEMBER 2017 ISSUE BRIEF

WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT NORTHWEST CONNECTICUT’S ADDICTION CRISIS & WHY IT MATTERS

Despite Northwest Connecticut's bucolic landscape, substance abuse is a growing problem with devastating impacts on those struggling with addiction, their families and the wider community.

The misuse of illicit and prescription drugs, and alcohol is not limited to urban areas. Addiction, a chronic illness that changes brain chemistry, disproportionately impacts rural communities, in part, due to insufficient prevention outreach; addiction treatment and other health care resources; and law enforcement presence, according to *Beneath the Surface: The Opioid Epidemic in Northwest Connecticut.* This comprehensive report was funded by the Foundation for Community Health (FCH), the Berkshire Taconic Community Foundation (BTCF), the McCall Center for Behavioral Health and the Northwest Connecticut Community Foundation.

Like the rest of the nation, Connecticut's substance abuse epidemic primarily revolves around the misuse of prescription “painkillers” and heroin. The explosive growth of opioid prescriptions over the past decade, coupled with easy access to cheap heroin, has led to a dramatic upsurge in drug-related treatment program admissions, criminal offenses and overdose death rates in northwestern Connecticut.
PREVENTION WORKS!
Strategic Prevention Framework

Drug-Free Communities
Local Problems Require Local Solutions

Botvin LifeSkills® Training
Evidence-Based Prevention Programs for Schools, Families, and Communities
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Executive Director
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(860) 496-2100
Prevention in the Northwest Corner

Defining the Issue

Developing the Response
Drug overdoses now kill more people than gun homicides and car crashes combined.

Opioid overdoses are one reason U.S. life expectancy declined for the first time in decades.

In 2016 alone, more people died of overdoses than in the Vietnam War.

Figure 1. National Drug Overdose Deaths Number Among All Ages, by Gender, 1999-2017

Source: Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, National Center for Health Statistics. Multiple Cause of Death 1999-2017 on CDC WONDER Online Database, released December, 2018
Suicidal Thoughts in the Past Year among Adults Aged 18 or Older, by Age Group: Percentages, 2008-2017

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+ Difference between this estimate and the 2017 estimate is statistically significant at the .05 level.
How the ACES Work

**Adverse Childhood Experiences**
- Abuse and Neglect (e.g., psychological, physical, sexual)
- Household Dysfunction (e.g., domestic violence, substance abuse, mental illness)

**Impact on Child Development**
- Neurobiologic Effects (e.g., brain abnormalities, stress hormone dysregulation)
- Psychosocial Effects (e.g., poor attachment, poor socialization, poor self-efficacy)
- Health Risk Behaviors (e.g., smoking, obesity, substance abuse, promiscuity)

**Long-Term Consequences**

**Disease and Disability**
- Major Depression, Suicide, PTSD
- Drug and Alcohol Abuse
- Heart Disease
- Cancer
- Chronic Lung Disease
- Sexually Transmitted Diseases
- Intergenerational transmission of abuse

**Social Problems**
- Homelessness
- Prostitution
- Criminal Behavior
- Unemployment
- Parenting problems
- High utilization of health and social services
- Shortened Lifespan

CANarratives.org
ACE Score and Adult Alcoholism

- the more childhood trauma,
- the higher the risk for addiction

500% increase of alcoholism in graded manner to ACE
Value of Prevention and Treatment

The U.S. spends nearly $468 billion a year on addiction.

Only two cents of every dollar goes to prevention or treatment; the rest goes toward hospital care, jails, and courts.

$1 toward prevention and treatment = $4 - $32 savings in:
- reduced drug-related crime/thefts
- criminal justice court costs
Prevention

• The central thought process in prevention is “going upstream”
  • It’s asking “Sure, something is happening, but why is it happening, and why here?”

• Identifying the core influences of an issue and addressing those influences to impact the root of the issue

• Because of this, it is important to examine not just the individuals but also the environment and its impact on individuals
How Can We Apply an Environmental Approach to Substance Use?

• Focus on changing the environment that youth are living in, rather than changing the youth directly
  • Programs like D.A.R.E. and wellness fairs are popular, but have limited impacts on the community
• Look at interventions that address the “denominator”
  • The greater the number of people within the community are impacted by the intervention, the greater the effect will be
• Ensure that interventions are appropriate to the communities that you are addressing
  • Local solutions to local problems
Northwest Corner Prevention Network: Mission

Reduce
- Reduce Adolescent Alcohol & Substance Use

Promote
- Promote Community Education

Increase & support
- Increase & Support Developmental Assets

Logos:
- HYSB
- Housatonic Service Bureau
- McCall Center for Behavioral Health
NCPN is a group of volunteers dedicated to working with youth and families in Region One to promote healthy communities.
Strategic Prevention Framework

Prevention professionals use SAMHSA’s Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) as a comprehensive guide to plan, implement, and evaluate prevention practices and programs.

SAMHSA’s Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) is a planning process for preventing substance use and misuse. The five steps and two guiding principles of the SPF offer prevention professionals a comprehensive process for addressing the substance misuse and related behavioral health problems facing their communities. The effectiveness of the SPF begins with a clear understanding of community needs and involves community members in all stages of the planning process.
Botvin LifeSkills Training (LST) is a research-validated substance abuse prevention program proven to reduce the risks of alcohol, tobacco, drug abuse, and violence by targeting the major social and psychological factors that promote the initiation of substance use and other risky behaviors. This comprehensive and exciting program provides adolescents and young teens with the confidence and skills necessary to successfully handle challenging situations.

Developed by Dr. Gilbert J. Botvin, a leading prevention expert, Botvin LifeSkills Training is backed by over 30 scientific studies and is recognized as a Model or Exemplary program by an array of government agencies, including the U.S. Department of Education and the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention.
Age at First Use  →  Risk of Dependence

Salisbury Central School: Middle School

Goals
• Refusal Skills
• Relaxation Skills
• Assertiveness Skills
• Anxiety Management
• Self Esteem & Self Confidence

• Anti-drinking & Anti-smoking

Middle School Students Served:
• 2016 – 2017: 226
• 2017 – 2018: 253
• 2018 – 2019: 336
• 2019 – 2020: projected 340
Botvin Progress to Date

The data demonstrates that the average change in score (positive or negative) from the original 2016/2017 sixth-graders to the 2018/2019 eighth-graders (same cohort) increased in the following areas:

• **Antidrinking**
  Antidrinking attitudes and behaviors increased an average of 60% over three years for those Region 1 students who received Botvin Life skills between 6th and 8th grade

• **Drug refusal Skills**
  Drug refusal skills increased an average of 41% over three years for those Region 1 students who received Botvin Life skills between 6th and 8th grade

• **Assertive skills**
  Assertive skills increased an average of 21% over three years for those Region 1 students who received Botvin LifeSkills between 6th and 8th grade

• **Relaxation skills**
  Relaxation skills increased an average of 13% over three years for those Region 1 students who received Botvin LifeSkills between 6th and 8th grade
Student Protective Factors & Assets
(Information attained through the Search Institute’s Developmental Assets Survey years 2009 – 2019)

- 68% students report spending three or more hours/week in sports, clubs or organizations at school and/or in community organizations.
- 75% of students report being actively engaged in learning.
- 80% of students report being THC-free in the past month.
- The majority of students report being alcohol free in the past month.
- About 80% of students report being alcohol free in the last two weeks.
CT Network of Care: Suicide Prevention
Reduce Adolescent Substance Abuse:

Diversion accounts for 67% of opioids that are misused. An ongoing public health campaign led by the Network encourages people to lock up medications in their home, and safely dispose of them when done.

The Network has collected a total of 823 pounds of prescription medications from the years 2016 – 2019.

Drug Take Back Day
Community Engagement

- Utilizing evidence-based strategies, NCPN has engaged all 12 community sectors. The Network currently represents 26 local agencies.

- The Network has sponsored community events including:
  - Matt Bellace, PhD. Speaker, Psychologist and Comedian
  - Annual Housatonic Youth Service Bureau 5K
  - Community Forum on Resilience
  - John Morello Youth Motivational Speaker: Actor, Comedian, Writer