

## 9/5/23 Opioid Abatement Committee

Present:

Amy Malone - Rochester City Councilor

Nicole Rodler - Rochester PD Juvenile Diversion Coordinator

Nicole Dale-Hogan - Spaulding HS LADAC

Ashley Wright - Strafford County Public Health Network

Michelle Halligan Foley - Rochester Career & Technology Education Director

4:48 pm Meeting started

Malone stated at the last meeting they talked about how there was an incredible need for SOS to expand their services. Right now, SOS can't help people with recovery because people are still using. Additionally, a conversation about Substance Use Disorders and the need for peer support workers.

Wright suggested the Alternative Peer Groups with Heidi Cloutier and Bob Faghan. Dale-Hogan stated that there were issues scheduling with them in the past and not sure if they would go back with them. Wright asked if there was a train the trainer that could be done.

Wright stated that Seacoast Youth Services in Seabrook, NH was another option, and they could use money to establish transportation for them. If they could provide money to the school and the school could then use the money for a bus service. This would be a direct service to help to support their acquisition of acquiring transportation.

Malone asked what individuals were being transported to Seabrook for because Waypoint has conference rooms that can be used. Halligan-Foley stated that they would prefer that, so they didn't have to go back and forth to Seabrook.

Wright stated Strafford County Public Health Network held a youth listening service with students from Dover, Somersworth, and Rochester. A copy of the report is attached. Wright stated she would like to see what this group can support and what aligns with the student requests.

Dale-Hogan stated the middle school doesn't have a social worker and could use the support.

Wright stated that the problem is they have things they want to do and can do but they have nobody to carry it out. Their first step should be figuring out how to contract with someone that could do the job. Rodler asked if the issue was that the job would be grant funded. Wright asked if they could contract with UNH and go to job fairs or get

internships. They could make it project based and have an intern for three or four semesters.

Wright stated if the group wants to move forward with projects, they need to figure out what can stick and what the money can be used for.

Rodler stated she would like to move forward with dental help. Wright asked if they could set up a scholarship for those needs. Outreach and Enrollment at Goodwin would be a good resource.

Wright stated it would be helpful to have more strategic talks with the high school kids and see what their needs are. And then the group can talk about 'adults' and what SOS needs.

Wright stated if they could find a way to do some of the lower hanging fruit like someone that has nowhere to fill up a water bottle and come back and work on those needs.

Going back to helping with dental, Dale-Hogan stated if they created a fund, but had that the recipient had to give back also. Malone stated they could have money earmarked for health and dental and given to welfare. Rodler stated it could be set up where the City pays the dentist. Wright stated people could use it to access other health care needs when they don't qualify for help. Dale-Hogan stated she would like it to be called Sponsor A Smile like the prior program was supposed to be called and they could get community members to sponsor too.

Wright stated that they can take this discussion and move forward. Then take more conversations with students and see what stands out and turn those into projects. For the larger community based discussions, they can take a look at their big strategic plan.

Dale-Hogan asked about the diversion curriculum for restorative justice they previously talked about. Malone stated it is a low hanging fruit and they can go forward with it and bring to council for them to approve.

Wright stated for their next steps: Dale-Hogan will send a proposal for the restorative justice program to Malone. Malone will reach out to Rodler and Wright to review and plan the strategic plan. Dale-Hogan and Wright will talk about meeting with the students for more listening sessions.

Rodler stated feedback on the syringe drop boxes is that they have been being utilized. Some is for diabetes, and not intended use, but they are being utilized.

Halligan-Foley stated their goal was to push something out by December. They've had a lot of conversations and reflections and now they can move forward. Wright stated they have good ideas and now just need to run them by the appropriate groups.

5:38 adjourned

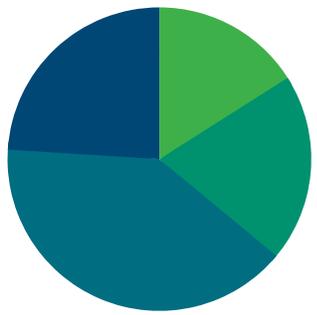
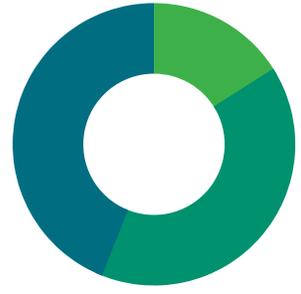
# In May of 2022, as part of SCPHN's work related to mental health and suicide prevention, SCPHN talked to:

25

Students from three Strafford County high schools\*



- Somersworth:** 4 Students
- Dover:** 10 Students
- Rochester:** 11 Students



- Freshmen:** 4 Students
- Sophomores:** 5 Students
- Juniors:** 10 Students
- Seniors:** 6 Students

*\*Demographic information collected from participants was limited to school and grade level only*

## We asked students the following questions:

1. What challenges are you facing at-school, at home or in general?
2. In what ways do you think your community values and supports?
3. What resources exist for you when you're having trouble?
4. What aren't you getting or what doesn't exist that would help you and/or your peers feel more supported?
5. What can those in your community do to make you feel like you matter?



## Our goals for talking with the students were to:

1. Gain a better understanding of the challenges students experience, resources they have and support they need related to their mental health
2. Learn how the school and community can better support the mental health and wellbeing of youth in Strafford County.



## With this information, SCPHN aims to:

1. Increase adult stakeholder understanding of youth needs, specific to mental health
2. Promote implementation of evidence-based programming and practices that build resiliency among our youth population and develop protective factors in the schools and communities



# When we asked students what resources exist that help them manage and overcome mental health challenges:



Students talked about resources such as crisis lines, counseling and in-school supports



They also mentioned their support networks of friends, parents, their friend's parents, and teachers that can provide support and help connect them

*Having a trusted adult outside of the home to offer support can help students work through challenges, build resilience, and is an important protective factor in our communities.*

*Students we spoke with described what characteristics they look for in the parents, teachers, coaches and friends that they turn to:*

## People who listen

Honest

Accommodating

Supportive

flexible

Non-judgmental

Confidential

Don't make it a big deal

Ask how you are

Validate your feelings



# Students also described some positive ways in which they cope with stress and deal with mental health challenges:



Throughout our conversations, students shared some changes they'd like to see in their schools and communities to help them feel more supported:

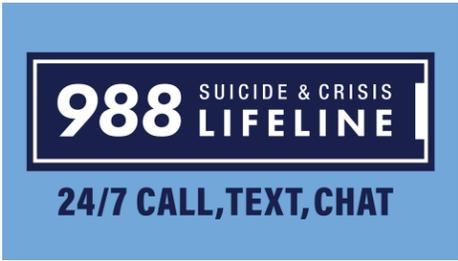
Access to Resources	Outreach & Support	Other Suggestions
Create ways for students to access resources anonymously like pinning them in Google Classroom	Develop a streamlined system for connection to supports, especially during crisis	More collaboration between in-school programs and outside groups
Use orientation to share resources; have counselors and other resource people do introductions in classrooms at the beginning of the year or semester	Build capacity for teachers, parents and guardians, and other adults to support mental health	Create more affirming spaces in and out of school, and spaces where students feel connected and supported
Encourage the sharing of resources and information in classrooms and during extracurricular activities	Advocate for students experiencing mental health challenges	Provide flexible learning options and offer wellness activities during class time
Provide funding for students who don't have insurance or enough money for treatment	Social marketing campaigns that promote mental health and available resources	Create swear and/or smash rooms that students can access to help get their frustrations out

Based on what we learned from students, other strategies to help students feel more supported and address mental health challenges might be:

- Offer flexibility, support and understanding with students in the classroom, at home, in extra-curriculars or sports, while maintaining clear expectations
- Include mental health when talking about overall wellness to normalize the conversation and remove stigma
- Strengthen and encourage trusted adult relationships
- Provide parents and guardians with information and resources to support mental health for themselves and their children
- Build conflict resolution skills
- Address bullying, racism and social issues through policy, education and outreach
- Improve communication channels through which you share resources with youth, families and the community
- Help students develop coping skills and build resiliency through evidence-based curriculums and programs
- Support youth-led efforts and engage youth in more meaningful ways
- Develop systems of peer-support for youth and young adults



Hotlines, Helplines & Resources



**New Hampshire**  
Rapid Response Access Point

— Free and available 24/7/365 —

📞 **833-710-6477**

🌐 **NH988.com**




**Trevor Lifeline:** *Support for LGBTQ+ young people under 25*  
Call 1-866-488-7386 or Text "START" to 678678

**HAVEN:** 603-994-SAFE (7233)

**American Foundation for Suicide Prevention:** AFSP.org

**National Alliance for Mental Illness (NAMI) NH:** NAMINH.ORG

**The Partnership @DrugFreeNH:** DrugFreeNH.org

**Find SCPHN's Substance Use & Mental Health Resource Guide here:**

