



Updates on Opioid Settlement & Fatal Overdose Response

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HHS Board

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Recommendations: A Dual Approach

Prioritize life-saving and harm-reducing measures today

Fatal
Overdose
Emergency
Response

- Collaborative goal setting, objective identification, & prioritization
- Real-time information sharing
- Streamlined & consistent messaging

MAT Expansion

- Expand access to MAT in high impact areas
- Streamline data across County MAT programs

Acute Response
Resources

- Fund **Recovery Support Services** to address Social Determinants of Health
- Fund **Naloxone Distribution & Community Education**

Invest in prevention and longer-term planning to address root causes of substance use

Early
Intervention

- Invest in youth voice and leadership
- Education & awareness-raising
- Community-based resources (e.g. youth peer support programs)

Employment
-Related
Services

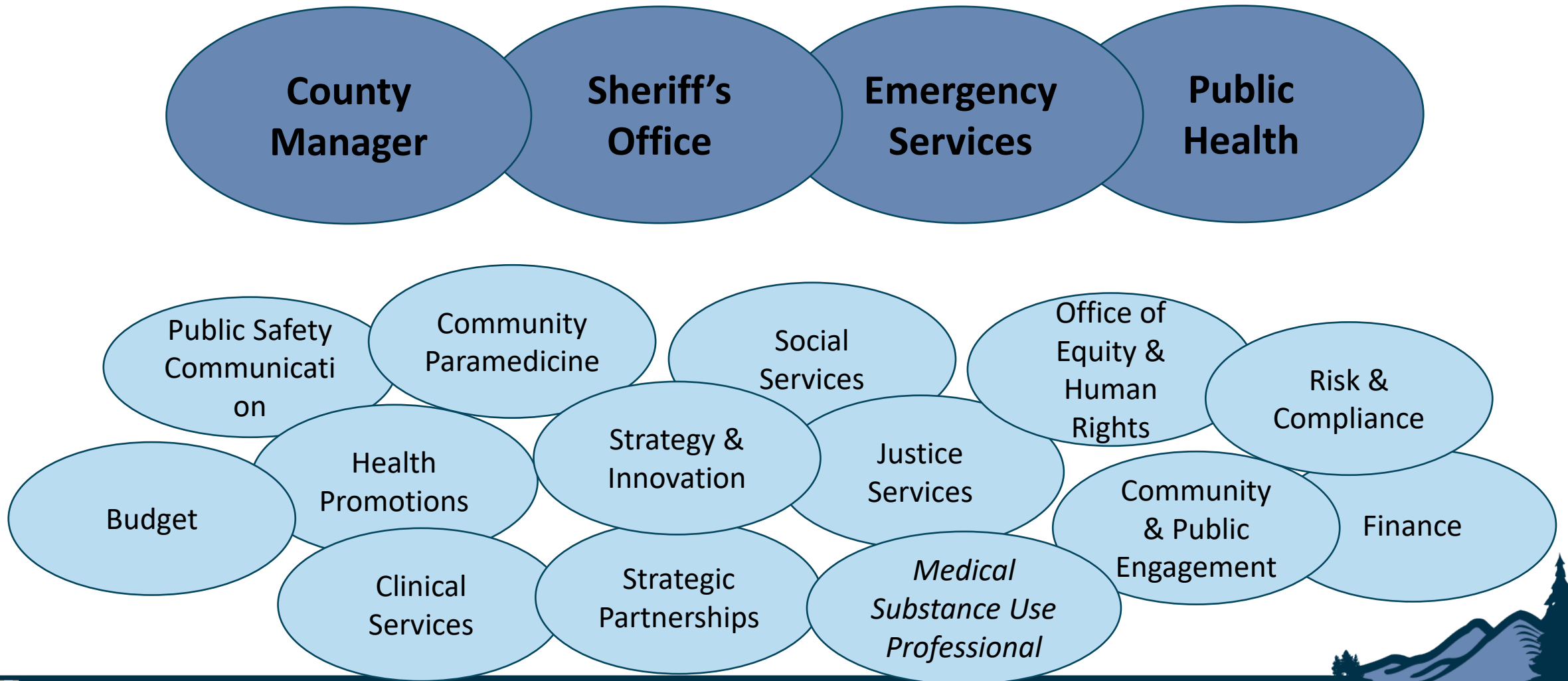
- Holistic care models support job readiness in treatment/shelter settings
- Employer collaboration to promote hiring & recovery-friendly workplaces

Recovery
Housing

- Support housing providers in meeting best-practice quality benchmarks
- Create opportunities to expand evidence-based housing options



Fatal Overdose Response Team



MAT Expansion

- **Expand Bridges to Care**
 - Increased Community Paramedics to 4 on shift 24/7 that can induct medications
 - Coordinate with high touch/high impact locations
 - Hospital/ED
 - Detention Facility
 - Housing Authority Communities
 - Child Protective Services
 - Harm Reduction Providers
- **Expand Culturally Responsive Treatment Options**
- **Enhance Emergency Response**



Acute Response Resources, Cont.

"...my Peer Support, she gave me hope that I could stop using and become a productive member of society."

"Thanks for believing in me when I just didn't."

"...helped plant the seed in my head that I could find recovery."

finding the "strength and hope" for recovery by "talking with people who have made it through addiction" and "continuing to show up" even after a relapse.

Recovery Support Services

Provide support in accessing addiction treatment, recovery support, harm reduction services, primary healthcare, or other services or supports needed to improve one's health or well-being.

- Evaluate the number & location of Peer Support Specialists and Community Health Workers
- Provide funds to address Social Determinants of Health Needs



Acute Response Resources

Naloxone Distribution & Community Education

- Intentional language to reduce stigma & promote connection across cultures and language
- Variety of campaigns through new and traditional media platforms such as, but not limited to iHeart media, YouTube, Spotify, WRES, Urban News, Hola Carolina
- Distribution of awareness material & Naloxone at Community Events and Community Markets
- Community Naloxone Training

Buncombe County Health & Human Services at 40 Coxe Ave., Asheville has free fentanyl and xylazine test strips and syringe exchange services Monday-Friday between 8 a.m. and 5 p.m., and also offers Narcan training with free test kits on the first Friday of each month from 12-1 p.m.

Learn more at [buncombecounty.org/safer](https://www.buncombecounty.org/safer)

Nearly 40% of overdose deaths occur while a bystander is present.

Hope & Healing
Closer Than You Think

Drugs and opioids impact us all.



NC Healthy Transitions

Photovoice Exhibition

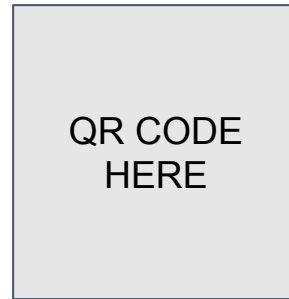
Welcome to our exhibit!

Step into the world of transition-aged youth (ages 16-25) in Buncombe and Henderson Counties as they share their mental health journeys through striking photographs and insightful quotes.

Our Photovoice project invited participants to take photos that answer the question: ***"What does mental health look like in your life?"***

Our participants shared photos and stories in an engaging Show & Tell. The result is a powerful collection that offers an intimate glimpse into their diverse experiences.

We appreciate you joining us to engage with these compelling narratives and be part of creating a brighter future for our community's youth. Together, let's foster a more compassionate and inclusive society.



Healthy Transitions

Youth and Young Adult Initiative



Family Preservation Services

People. Passion. Service.



UNC GREENSBORO

Find your way here

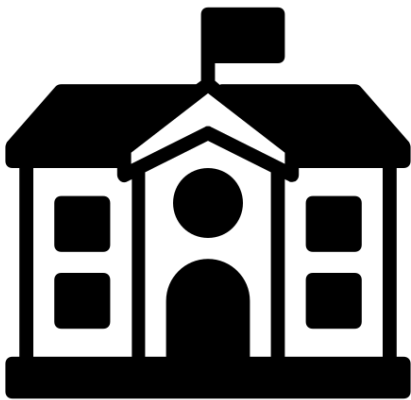


In this photo, participants and facilitators listen to a photographer share tips during our Photovoice Orientation in May.

Discovering Youth Voices

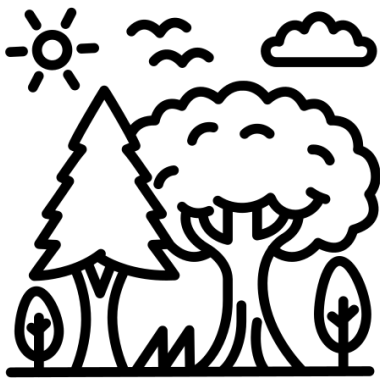
Unveiling Insights into Mental Health

The Photovoice project involved conversations with four youth, shedding light on their experiences and perceptions related to mental health. These insights can guide decision-makers, educators, and communities in creating more supportive environments for youth and young adults facing mental health challenges. The following pages summarize these insights to supplement the photos in this exhibit.



School: The Great Balancing Act

School emerged as a predominant source of pressure in the these youths' lives, playing a significant role in their daily routines, social interactions, and overall well-being. The youth shared that they want to enact mental health days in their school that can support their well-being without negatively impacting academic performance.



Nature as a Respite

Nature played a crucial role in the youths' mental well-being. They incorporated nature in their photos and used nature as a metaphor to express their stress and emotions. Being in nature was linked to mental relief.



Mindset and Coping Mechanisms

Youth discussed their mindset and coping strategies. Some focused on a growth mindset, aiming to overcome challenges, while others expressed the pressure of minimizing problems. One youth mentioned the phrase "smile now, cry later," to reflect a coping strategy for enduring difficulties.

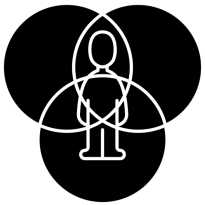
Discovering Youth Voices

Unveiling Insights into Mental Health



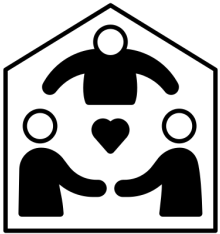
Societal Interactions

The participants highlighted various ways they interacted with society, mentioning feeling judged by society for mistakes, struggling to connect with social groups, and facing peer pressure. Some spoke about their experiences on native American reservations and the impact of government policies on their culture.



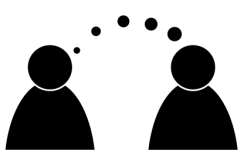
Cultural and Identity Struggles

Culture influenced the youths' mental health experiences. Children of immigrants felt caught between cultures, leading to feelings of not fitting in fully with either American or traditional values.



Safe Spaces and Support

The youth emphasized the importance of safe, inclusive spaces where they could be themselves and spaces where people could understand their cultural struggles. They shared that they sought relief from school-related stress through organizations like Youth Councils and initiatives that provided a supportive community.



Communication and Education

The youth shared wanting improved communication with adults, including parents and educators, including proactive communication about changes and challenges so they could make informed decisions. They also suggested the need for resources and education for parents on mental health topics.



Inclusive Resources

The youth noted that there is a lack of accessible resources tailored to their age group and cultural backgrounds, calling for more resources addressing substance abuse, mental health, and other challenges affecting young adults, especially those from diverse backgrounds.



The North Carolina Healthy Transitions Initiative

**Our mission is
to improve access to
mental health treatment and
support services
for transition-aged youth,
ages 16-25, living with a
mental health disorder.**

The transition into adulthood comes with great challenges, but it is also an opportunity for incredible growth and discovery. During this period of someone's life, they are experiencing a lot of change in a very short amount of time. It can also be a time of significant difficulties, such as:

- major changes in physical, mental, and emotional health
- developing substance use disorders
- involvement in justice system
- changes in natural supports
- questioning self and identity
- financial insecurity and debt
- transitioning to independent living
- deciding future plans

It can feel downright impossible to transition to independence when everything seems overwhelming and no one is around to help guide that process. **That's where the North Carolina Healthy Transitions Initiative comes in!**

The project focuses on individuals who:

- Are ages 16-25 years old
- Reside in participating communities
- Currently have, or are at risk of developing, a mental health disorder

Healthy Transitions advocates for youth to have flexible access to:



Comprehensive
Clinical Assessments
and Referrals

Care Coordination
and Transition
Facilitation



Youth/Young Adult
Focused Peer
Support

Education and
Employment Support



Life Skill and
Support Groups

Leadership Training
and Youth Advisory
Council



Contact Us!

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North Carolina Healthy Transitions



Youth Mental Health - Suicide Prevention: Current State Analysis

Buncombe County Youth Mental Health Statistics – Why is this project necessary?

- Suicide is the leading cause of death for 15-to-24-year-olds in Buncombe County, with an 11% increase in emergency room visits for suicidal thoughts for all people in 2022 from 2019.
- An estimated 56% of those detained in our detention center self-reported a mental health diagnosis, often with co-occurring substance use disorders.
- Suicide death rates are 2.7 time higher in male youth than female you.
- Suicide Rates are highest among non-Hispanic American Indian youth.
- Young males are more likely to use a firearm compared to females.
- Youth females are more likely than males to have previous suicide attempts.
- Gay, lesbian, and bisexual highschoolers are more likely to have suicidal behavior than heterosexual classmates.

Current Providers in Buncombe County

- NCDHSS Program:
 - **Safe Kids Western NC:** Safe Kids Western North Carolina is led by Mountain Area Health Education Center, which provides dedicated and caring staff, operation support and other resources to assist in achieving our common goal: keeping your kids safe.
 - **Resource Success or Availability:** There are no statistics or information readily available to the effectiveness or availability of this program.
- Asheville City Schools Foundation:
 - **In Real Life (IRL) After-School:** In Real Life After-School provides high-quality, hands-on, equitable, and accessible programming for all Asheville City Schools middle school students. IRL strives to provide programming that reflects the diverse and varied needs of Asheville's youth while encouraging them to live a curious life.
 - **Resource Success or Availability:** IRL has served 179 unique students, they have 36 different programs throughout the school year, transportation is offered to all students, and 76.67% of all registration fees were free or at a reduced rate.
 - **The Dream Team:** The DREAM (Dedicated. Responsible. Enthusiastic. After-School. Mentors) is a youth-centered, paid internship program for high school students to support the mission and programming of the Asheville City Schools Foundation including mentoring middle school students enrolled In Real Life (IRL) After-School program.
 - **Resource Success or Availability:** 18 students were provided leadership development and stipends to provide near peer mentorship to middle school students.
- Buncombe County Libraries: Buncombe County Libraries offer events every week focused on teens, while not distinctly mental health these resources give teens a space to socialize with likeminded peers.
 - **Resource Success or Availability:** This resource is not explicitly youth mental health and/or suicide prevention, thus there is not available data of how it has impacted this subject area. There is also no public information available for how many youths attend the events but there may be some information available internally.
- United Way in partnership with Buncombe County Schools and Asheville City Schools:
 - **Restorative Practices Training:** Restorative Practices is a system of principles and processes that build and sustain a culture of respect, responsibility, and accountability. This is achieved through emphasizing the importance of trusting relationships as central to building community and repairing relationships/restoring community when harm has occurred.

- **Circle Advisory Council:** youth group ranging from 6-8 graders in Owen middle school. Social emotional learning
 - **Resource Success or Availability:**
 - There are active restorative practices programs in four schools around the county which are Asheville Middle Advisory Time, Reynolds Middle Social Emotional Learning, Owen Middle Circle Keepers, and Enka Middle Community Building.
 - Homework Diners are being put on by United Way in partnership with 7 community schools.
 - No available data on how effective these programs have been.
- Seek Healing
 - **Listening Line:** 8am-11pm non-crisis community phone line serving communities in Western North Carolina. Call or text: 828-547-4547
 - **Listening Training:** This course provides experiential education in healthy ways of relating with other people and teaches participants how to create a new experience of community in their life.
 - **Resource Success or Availability:** Seek healing has Impact reports available on their website that provide a lot of transparency with their available services, but the data available is not Buncombe County specific.
 - Teenagers impacted through social Influencer Connection, Practice Meetings and a Youth, Listening Training (thanks to partnership with 4.0 Schools)
 - 345 meetings and events Hosted in Buncombe County
 - 3,700 calls were received on the Listening Line phone systems from 975 unique callers.
- Youth Mentoring offered by: Journey men, Big Brother / Big Sister, My Daddy Taught Me That, My Sistah Taught Me That, One Youth at A Time, Open Doors, Mother Love (YWCA), Word on the Street/ La Voz de les, Jóvenes5, Mentoring and Nurturing Our Students, (M.A.N.O.S), UNETE6, Umoja HOPE 4 the Future7
 - **Resource Success or Availability:** This information is up to date and available in the Continuum of Services PDF showing the DJJDP framework for JCPC fundable programs. The information can also be used beyond this specific framework. See QR code for PDF.
- JCPC Funded Programs: Interpersonal skills (PIVOTpoint WNC and ASPIRE Kids at work), Tutoring/Academic enhancement (Partners unlimited structured day program), Vocational Skills (ASPIRE, ELIADA Student Training Assessment – ESTA), Restorative Services (earn and learn, teen court), and Structured Day (partners unlimited structured day program).
 - **Resource Success or Availability:** This information is up to date and available in the Continuum of Services PDF showing the DJJDP framework for JCPC fundable programs. The information can also be used beyond this specific framework. See above QR code for PDF.
- Goodwill Youth Programing: Goodwill’s Youth Programs provide a variety of services that help people ages 14 to 24 uncover their passions and reach their goals. Offered in partnership with community organizations, these programs walk students through the steps of self-discovery and get them on the path to vocational and educational success.
 - **Resource Success or Availability:** No extensive information on the impact of these programs and the main contact source for information or to access these programs is careers@goodwillwnc.org.



- Mental Health First Aid
 - **Teen Mental Health First Aid (tMHFA):** tMHFA teaches teens in grades 10-12, or ages 15-18, how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among their friends and peers.
 - **Youth Mental Health First Aid:** YMHFA is designed to teach parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, school staff, peers, neighbors, health and human services workers, and other caring citizens how to help an adolescent (age 12-18) who is experiencing a mental health or addictions challenge or is in crisis. Youth Mental Health First Aid is primarily designed for adults who regularly interact with young people.
 - **Resource Success or Availability:** There are currently no in-person youth mental health classes available in-person in Buncombe County and no teen mental health first aid courses online or in-person.
 - But there are over 300 trained first aiders in Buncombe County.

Possible Program Models in North Carolina

- NCDHSS:
 - **Time Out Kids (Mecklenburg):** Time Out Youth Center offers support, advocacy, and opportunities for personal development and social interaction to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and questioning (LGBTQ) youth ages 13-24.
 - **NC Child Treatment Center (NC):** The North Carolina Child Treatment Program is a statewide effort to train mental health providers in evidence-based treatment models addressing childhood trauma, behavior, and attachment.
- TC Strong: Out of Transylvania County, TC Strong works to raise awareness of mental health-related topics, provide skills training to enhance mental and emotional wellbeing, and address mental health concerns, strengthen student connections with caring adults, and ease referrals for mental and behavioral health treatment.
- UNC Chapel Hill ncIMPACT Initiative
 - **“Ask” centers:** Active in Allegheny County, Ashe County, and Watauga County Schools.

Key Takeaways and Follow Up Questions:

- There is an abundance of resources available in Buncombe County.
- The major hurdle for many of these resources may be making the public aware this resource is available.
- Coordination of resources may be a section of service that Buncombe County Resources could be impactful.

Microsoft Forms Link & QR Code:
<https://forms.office.com/g/N5Fc6YP9z6>

