

Working Together to Support Healthy Communities



2024 YEAR IN REVIEW

Highlights



Who We Are

The Southern Rockingham Coalition for Healthy Youth (SoRock) is a community coalition designed to promote wellness and nurture resiliency for the children, youth, and families of Southern Rockingham County. The coalition operates by bringing together community stakeholders and leveraging resources from the local, state, and federal level to support the eight towns (Atkinson, Danville, Fremont, Hampstead, Kingston, Newton, Plaistow, and Sandown) we serve. The coalition believes in dynamic civic involvement and is comprised of several sectors of the community who work together to implement strategies for community change around substance misuse and mental health. Learn more at SoRockNH.org

Paid Staff

Program Director - Charlotte Scott

Steering Committee Leadership

Director - Tim Lena, LICSW, CPS - Student Assistance Counselor, Timberlane Regional High School. Governor's Commission on Alcohol and other Drugs. Advisor for The Governor's Youth Advisory Council on Substance Misuse and Prevention.

Acting Chair - Kelley Binette, LICSW, MLADC, SSW, Student Assistance Counselor, Timberlane Regional Middle School

Vice Chair - Jessica Beaudoin, MA, LMFT, MLADC, Children's Counselor, Center for Life Management

Steering Committee

Lynn Anderson, M.S., ACPS - Student Assistance Counselor, Sanborn Regional Middle and High Schools

Dakota Burrill, Assistant, South Central Public Health Network

Julie Barbick, MSW, LICSW, LSSW - School Social Worker, Hampstead School District

Barbara Gallagher, Director, North Shore YMCA

Jane Kowalski, Atkinson Community Member

Kate MacDonald, MPH, Public Health Specialist, South Central Public Health Network

Bob Mailloux, MA, CAGS, School Counselor, Hampstead Middle School

John Mascaro, Lieutenant Newton Police Department

Laurie Ota, Director, Marketing & Community Relations, Center for Life Management

Arianna Ravenelle, Middle School Guidance Counselor, Ellis School

Mira Siewert, Assistant Camp Director, YMCA Camp Lincoln

Ronni Shaw, Hampstead Community Member

Shamera Simpson, Executive Director, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention - NH & Maine

Melissa Simard, Elementary Guidance Counselor, Ellis School

Samantha Thamsen, Seacoast Public Health, SMPC / COC

Ben Williams, Lieutenant, NH Liquor Commission

Mike Wilson, Development Director, Seacoast Mental Health

Jim Zanfagna, Angels of Addictions, Plaistow Resident

2024 Funding Sources

- The taxpayers of Atkinson, Danville, Fremont, Hampstead, Kingston, Newton, Plaistow and Sandown
- NH Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Services
- Contracts with our Public Health Networks
- Project sponsorships from DHHS and Exeter Hospital
- Civic and Private Donations
- Fundraising

The Benefits of a Coalition

The SoRock coalition raises awareness and addresses issues related to mental health and substance misuse across all sectors of our 8 towns in southern Rockingham County. We bring community members and local professionals together around this common goal utilizing specific projects and creating solutions that serve the entire community. We are always actively seeking new partners to participate.

Because of their structure, coalitions are uniquely suited to:

- Address both broad and specific issues within our community
- Employ environmental strategies that create systemic change
- Maximize and mobilize community partners with differing skills, concerns, and strengths
- Serve as a central resource to gather & provide relevant community data
- Leverage new and additional resources by securing support, volunteers, and funding
- Build capacity to create community solutions to community problems



Community Need

Substance misuse is costly to people, families, and communities. But with the right investments in prevention, we can reduce these costs, improve our quality of life, make our communities healthier, and provide for the safety of our children.

Youth high school health and safety data is collected every other year nationally through the [Youth Risk Behavior Survey \(YRBS\)](#). The state of New Hampshire pays for this survey and there is no cost to our school districts. This data is released directly to the school district. Currently Sanborn Regional High School and Pinkerton Academy participate in the survey. Timberlane Regional High School also plans to participate in 2025, which will allow us to generate aggregate data for our region. There are also plans in place to collect data from Ellis and Timberlane Middle Schools in 2025.

Teen Mental Health in NH: The [most recent NH YRBS Data \(2023\)](#) indicated that nearly **40%** of NH youth felt sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 or more weeks in a row so that they stopped doing some usual activities, and **21%** reported that they had seriously considered attempting suicide. SoRock puts a heavy emphasis on early mental health support and programming. Mental wellness is also a protective factor against substance misuse.

Teen Substance Use in NH: At the time of the report, 23% of high school youth reported having drank alcohol during the past 30 days, nearly 20% reported having used marijuana, and 17% reported having used an electronic vapor product.

Overdose in NH: The New Hampshire Office of Chief Medical Examiner reports that there have been 238 confirmed overdose deaths in NH as of 12-13-24. This number is down from 431 in 2023, indicating that harm reduction efforts across the state are making a difference and providing more opportunity for recovery.

Investing in Prevention Makes Good Financial Sense. The most recently available data shows that substance misuse costs the state \$2.36 billion a year in health and criminal justice costs, lost labor force participation and lost worker productivity. That cost is equal to \$1,780 for every resident of New Hampshire. (Polecon Research, 2017)

Your Voice for Substance Misuse Prevention & Mental Health

SoRock is the prevention voice at the table for our communities at the local, state and federal level. Some examples of our local and state boards/committees involvement include:

- Governor's Task Force on Alcohol and Other Drugs
- Governor's Youth Advisory Council
- NH Suicide Prevention Council
- NH YRBS (Youth Risk Behavior Survey) Committee
- Sanborn HS Tier One (Universal Strategies) Committee
- Seacoast Public Health Advisory Council
- South Central Public Health Leadership Committee
- Timberlane HS Mental Health and Wellness Committee
- Various Town Human Services and Safety Committees

*Is there a town committee or meeting you think would benefit from our involvement?
Please reach out to us, we would love to be at the table!*

Legislative Advocacy & Education

Washington DC

During our annual National CADCA conference we visit Capitol Hill updating our NH legislators and advocating for the needs of our communities with other coalitions from around the state. We present current trends and data, sharing assets and gaps in addressing substance misuse and mental health in NH while advocating for federal and state funding to carry out our mission.



Local

Here in our community, we provide legislative breakfasts, lunch and learns and evening presentations for our local legislators to educate and advocate for policy that safeguards NH youth. Please reach out to us if you would like to learn more about and schedule a SoRock presentation.

Governor's Youth Advisory Council

The Governor's Youth Advisory Council on Substance Misuse and Prevention (GYAC) was established to gain the youth perspective on issues amidst the opioid crisis. The purpose of the Council is to advise the Governor, from a youth perspective, on legislation, events, and media pertaining to substance misuse for the people of New Hampshire. SoRock supports GYAC by providing a program advisor, leveraging funds for GYAC supplies, providing resources and sponsoring youth representatives from our towns.



Monthly Coalition Meetings

SoRock holds eleven Coalition meetings per year. Meetings take place on the second Tuesday of the month from 9:00-10:30 am via zoom. These meetings provide an opportunity for resource and information sharing between multiple community serving organizations. Our meeting attendees represent several sectors of the community. The steering committee is open to any community agency or private citizen. Are you interested in getting more involved? We want you! Send an email to sorocknhcc@gmail.com.



Recognition

SoRock was honored to receive the 2024 Luminary Partner Award from the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention - New Hampshire Chapter at their Night of Hope Gala this past May, for our partnership and expansive reach addressing elementary age mental health literacy in NH. SoRock has reached over 900 elementary school students and middle and high school mentors to date with the Gizmo's Pawesome Guide to Mental Health program.

There are nine elementary schools, four middle schools and three high schools in the SoRock coalition catchment area. SoRock provides support and resources to school administrators, staff and students. We advise youth groups and work closely with the Student Assistance & Guidance Counselors on prevention programming and initiatives.

School District Representation on SoRock Steering Committee

All districts in our catchment have representation on the SoRock steering committee.

Administrative Teams and Committees

SoRock has a seat at the table for several of our school health, safety, family engagement and universal strategies teams.

SoRock Regional Alternatives to Suspension/Vaping Summit

In September 2024 SoRock held a regional summit to discuss solutions and opportunities for meaningful intervention in vaping and substance related school offences. Administrators and counselors from 10 different school districts spent the morning learning the benefits of restorative practices over traditional suspension, hearing examples of community and in-house program models, and discovering NH resources.



Youth in Action Groups

SoRock sponsors and co-advises Youth in Action groups in many of our middle and high schools. Youth and young adults are powerful agents of change for substance use prevention. Youth in Action groups give youth and young adults a voice and platform to inform and influence the development of substance use prevention programs. Participants focus on using language they know their peers understand, are comfortable with, and promote confidence that empowers them to make good choices about alcohol and drugs, and their future. Our youth groups are the leaders of prevention activities in their schools and communities and are involved with mentoring younger students in their school districts whenever possible. SoRock provides several leadership and prevention training opportunities to Youth in Action groups.



Getting to “Y” Data Analysis Retreats

Pinkerton Academy and Sanborn Middle and High School participated in “Getting to Y” Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) data retreats in the winter and spring of 2024. During the retreat students analyzed their own YRBS survey data, identified the top three strengths and weaknesses and began planning ways to affect sustainable change in youth behavior, community, and school culture. These programs were funded by the South Central PHN and the Sanborn Seminary Grant.



Youth Leadership Summits

SoRock sponsored three student leadership summits this year with funding from the South Central Public Health Network and hosted by Timberlane High School.

These summits are an amazing and engaging opportunity for NH students to understand healthy decision making and its impact on physical and mental health as well as how their thoughts and actions impact their mindset and the world around them.

Schools in attendance included Sanborn High School, Londonderry High School, Pinkerton High School, Timberlane High School, Newmarket High School, John Stark, Coe Brown and Bishop Geurin. This workshop is facilitated by Deb and Trevor Hult of Core Trainings along with our student leaders from the Timberlane Life of an Owl program.



Shout it Loud - Granite Youth Empowerment Conference

This full day of interactive workshops, many led by youth, focuses on substance misuse prevention and effecting community change. SoRock sponsored the attendance of youth from two of our school youth groups to attend this statewide summit and attended and participated in the summit as a co-advisor.



Elementary Mental Health Literacy

SoRock delivered Gizmo's Pawesome Guide to Mental Health to 4 of our Elementary Schools/Programs in 2024. In partnership with AFSP, SoRock has delivered this program to over 900 1st – 4th grade students in our region. With the assistance of 8th-12th grade volunteers this book and program guide children through the importance of mental health and offers guidance on how to recognize and cope with sad, mad and worried feelings and related behaviors. This message makes managing their mental health – and knowing how and when to reach out to a trusted adult for further support – a simple, non-scary part of their everyday life.



Career Pathways to Prevention Trade Expo

SoRock and the Seacoast Public Health Network partnered with Sanborn Regional High School Career Pathways program for the third annual "Gearing up for Success" trade expo. The trade expo is part of our regional Young Adult Strategies initiative to expose and connect youth to future career options in addition to a traditional four year degree path.

A clear plan exiting high school can help to prevent an increase in mental health and substance misuse concerns during the transition to adulthood.

Approximately 700 students in grades 8-12 visit the expo with lots of incentives to stop and learn more from each of our vendors! **Would you like to be a vendor in 2025? Contact: kalleyvioletta@sau17.net or sorocknhcc@gmail.com**

Grad Tag Project

All 2024 graduating seniors from Pinkerton, Sanborn, Timberlane and Londonderry received a wallet/key-tag combo with a QR code leading them to dozens of adulting resources for this next Chapter in their journey. Resources included Housing, Legal, Finances, Taxes, Employment, Health, Safety and more! This project was created in collaboration with the South Central Public Health Network.



Red Ribbon Week

Celebrated Annually October 23-31. Red Ribbon Week highlights the importance of living a drug-free life. It presents an opportunity for parents, educators, and communities to reinforce the drug-free messages they share with their children throughout the year. During Red Ribbon Week, SoRock delivers campaign resources and supports activities in our schools and community to increase knowledge of the destructive effects of drug abuse, including prescription drug misuse, and renew their commitment to live a healthy, drug-free lifestyle.



Prevention Assemblies and Workshops

Fake Pills Assembly with the DEA – DEA New England's Operation Engage educates youth on the dangers of counterfeit pills disguised as common medications such as Adderall and Xanax containing a lethal dose of fentanyl.



Save A Life Impaired and Distracted Driving Education and Simulator

This program is provided by Matrix Entertainment and funded through the Dartmouth Hitchcock Medical Center Teen Driver Program.

Fatal Choices – NH Liquor Commission drunk driving education program. Licensed teen drivers are allowed to navigate a road (parking lot) course wearing Fatal Vision goggles while driving a special golf cart with a law enforcement "co-pilot". Both driver and non-driver students have the opportunity to learn about sobriety testing while using a pair of Fatal Vision Goggles.



Teen Institute's Drug and Alcohol Workshops

With supportive funding from the Seacoast Public Health Network, SoRock coordinated the creation of a custom middle school workshop for 7th and 8th grade students.

Fatal Reality - Safe Prom Assembly

Presentation by and for the senior class to urge safe and responsible decision making during prom and graduation season. Impairment continues to be a leading cause of motor vehicle crashes. In recent years, almost 40% of all crashes in New Hampshire involved driver impairment.



Project Stand by Me

The purpose of this program is to inspire and develop self-esteem, empathy, communication, respect, and teamwork in grade 5 students as they begin the process of transition to middle school and to guide parents in the awesome task of helping their child make healthy, responsible choices. This program includes a parent presentation, student team building activities at Camp Lincoln, lunch and family bonding through games and activities. Stand by Me has existed for nearly 3 decades and was originally a program of D.A.D Inc. SoRock was honored to take over the facilitation of the program 10 years ago. We are looking forward to seeing current 5th grade parents in May 2025! To learn more or bring this program to your school contact us at sorocknhcc@gmail.com



Project Sticker Shock

During Alcohol Awareness month in April SoRock visited local grocery stores with members from our high school youth groups for Project Sticker Shock. Youth put "Buyer Beware" stickers on cases of alcohol to remind shoppers of the consequences of purchasing alcohol for minors. SoRock partners with NH State Liquor Enforcement and the New Hampshire National Guard Counter-drug Program on this important project!



Tobacco / Vaping Business Compliance Awards (SYNAR NH)

Every year SoRock partners with the Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Services DHHS NH, our public health networks and local youth to present awards to local businesses who have passed the state SYNAR compliance checks for not selling tobacco/vaping products to anyone under 21. **Congratulations to the 2024 recipients; Prime Butcher and Circle K of Hampstead, Nouria / Shell of Kingston and Smokers Choice, Market Basket, Northern Vapors and Foods Plus of Plaistow. Thank you for doing your part to keep youth safe from nicotine addiction!**



Screenagers Films

Community Screenings

SoRock offered three free community screening and clinical panel discussions in 2024. These award-winning films address healthy elementary level development in a digital world, youth/teen substance misuse and screen addiction as well as youth mental health in the digital age. The films provide practical tips and strategies parents and educators can implement immediately to benefit youth.

1 Year School Subscriptions

SoRock has purchased or secured funding for single year film subscriptions to the Screenagers K-12 movies & curriculum for our districts (Value \$950 each).



Dear 8th grade, Me

SoRock's annual "Dear 8th Grade Me" project gives students the opportunity to reflect and write words of advice for the upcoming 4 years to their incoming freshman selves based on what they experienced in high school. They also write to their parents about needed most from them over that 4 years. We use this feedback to inform our work with both youth, and parents.



Parent Handbooks

Through a partnership with the public health network and donations from local civic groups, SoRock was able to provide 300 elementary and MS/HS handbooks (\$4,500 value) to. This 64-page resource raises awareness and educates caregivers on the latest trends, warning signs, and tips for effective parent/child communication so that "prevention" is truly possible.

NaloxBox Overdose Prevention Stations

In collaboration with community partners and local businesses, we have successfully distributed and installed 5 Naloxboxes in our towns. These boxes are strategically placed to provide life-saving access to Narcan. This year included boxes installed at the Plaistow Library, Colby Library in Danville and the Heaven's Kitchen food truck. We have developed and distributed overdose response rack cards and window clings to complement these efforts. The boxes for our region were provided by the South Central and Seacoast Public Health Networks.



DEA Take Back Days & Crush the Crisis

SoRock helps with registration and material distribution for police departments for the DEA's biannual Take Back Day Events. SoRock also provides technical support, event marketing and distribution of additional resources for these events when possible. There are permanent medication disposal boxes located at the following police departments; Atkinson, Hampstead, Kingston, Newton, Plaistow and Sandown. **SoRock towns prevented misuse and accidental poisonings by collecting a total of 1,129lbs of unused and expired prescription drugs in 2024! Way to go!**

Lock, Talk & Save a Life Campaign

SoRock Has Partnered with our Public Health Networks to Provide Free Firearm Trigger Locks, Locking Rx Boxes, Rx Disposal Bags, Naloxone Overdose Reversal Kits & Resources to the Community. Materials can be ordered on our website for pick up. The web page also offers resources on overdose prevention (including online narcan training), suicide prevention and safe medication storage and disposal. <https://www.sorocknh.org/locktalksavelife>



Free Public Screening and clinical panel discussion of "What I Wish My Parents Knew"

SoRock partnered with Atkinson Congregational Church to deliver this important film designed as a mental wellness program, to help parents better understand how to support the mental health of their children.

Distribution of “Lambi Learns About Addiction” to Libraries

SoRock provided a copy of this book to our local libraries. This book is a resource to help kids understand about the disease of addiction and how it is not their fault. It offers a variety of coping skills, such as the ability to identify and express feelings in healthy ways. We also have a limited number of books available to individual community members. Please reach out if you are interested in a copy.



Talk They Hear You Campaign - Preventing Underage Drinking

SAMHSA's national youth substance use prevention campaign helps parents and caregivers, educators, and community members get informed, be prepared, and take action to prevent underage drinking and other substance use. SoRock has used our campaign license and partnered with the South Central Public Health Network, Community Alliance for Teen Safety (CATS) and volunteers to create and distribute coasters and flyers with this messaging to local restaurants to reach families.

Community Events

We love to get out into the community and attend events whenever possible. Providing in person resources and having face to face conversations is the best way for us develop important relationships with our communities and get an accurate pulse on community needs. We attend town events, school events and events put on by other local organizations such as the YMCA. SoRock is also available to attend parent and civic group meetings to discuss our organization and get feedback on community needs from you!



Through our partnerships, SoRock is able to provide various Power Packs, locking medication boxes, firearm trigger locks, narcan overdose reversal kits and Detera safe medication disposal pouches free of charge to the community.



Community Power Packs

- **Parent Power Packs**
 - effective self care info, parenting and developmental assets, mental health resources, stress management, community resources, youth prevention resources..and more!
- **Relative Caregiver Power Packs**
 - Contents of the Parent Power Pack with additional relative caregiver resources such as our "Parenting a Second time around" resource handbook and Narcan overdose reversal kit.
- **Youth/Teen Power Packs**
 - Mental health and self care info, substance use and resource info, stress management tools, domestic violence resources, resources for children of addiction, stress balls, wristbands and other promotional materials to keep resources handy..
- **Overdose Prevention Power Packs**
 - Narcan overdose reversal kits, fentanyl test strips, recovery resources, family support resources, understanding addiction info, mental health resources, a safe medication disposal pouch, community resources and more.
- **Intervention Power Pack**
 - Saliva drug test kit, Community resource card including social determinants of health, adolescent outpatient treatment options, family support and crisis hotlines. Communicating with your child about their substance use handout, Teen-proofing Your Home handout, CDC Positive Parenting Tips for Healthy Development (15-17) and more.
- **Veteran Power Pack**
 - Veteran specific mental health and addiction resources. Safe medication disposal pouch. Firearm trigger lock. Optional Narcan overdose reversal kit.

Power Packs are distributed for free at local community and school events as well as SoRock events. SoRock also provides customized Powerpacks upon request when meeting with youth groups (schools, camps, community centers etc., parent groups (PTO/Boosters etc..), civic groups (Lions etc..) and faith based groups.

Intergenerational Bonding

Intergenerational relationships build empathy and act as a protective factor by providing a sense of belonging which can buffer against negative health outcomes, loneliness, and stress for all ages.

SoRock partners with the South Central Public Health Network annually on cross regional intergenerational connectedness initiatives.

This years projects include the Growing Connections Earth Day Challenge and our S.P.I.R.I.T of caring holiday cards for seniors initiative. We collected and distributed over 1,000 holiday cards throughout our combined catchment. Local recipients included the Vic Geary Center, All American Assisted Living and Heaven's Kitchen food truck.



Mental Health Awareness Week & Strides Against Stigma 5K

Timberlane Mental Health Awareness Week is an annual event run prior to the start of April Vacation to promote normalizing caring for your mental health. The week includes several events such as individual themed awareness days, student showcase events, parent and student presentations, a health and wellness fair and the Strides Against Stigma 5K. This amazing event is a collaboration between Timberlane High School, SoRock and Connor's Climb Foundation.



FAQ:

Is SoRock a religious organization?

No. SoRock has no religious or political affiliation. SoRock is short for "Southern Rockingham" Coalition for Healthy Youth.

SoRock has an office in Sanborn Regional High School, does that make you a Sanborn program?

No. SoRock occupies donated office space within Sanborn Regional High School, but our coalition steering committee members hold positions in several community agencies and schools in/serving each of our towns. SoRock has previously held office space in the Sad Café in Plaistow and the Sandown Police Department.

SoRock is not employed by, or a program of any School District.

How has SoRock historically been funded?

SoRock received a federal "[Drug Free Communities](#)" grant for 10 years. The purpose of this grant is to get the great work started and then turn funding over to the communities served. We are considered a "graduated program" along with 3 others in the state. DFC Graduates work collaboratively to advocate for state and federal funding for prevention. SoRock has been partially funded by the eight communities we serve in varying degrees since aging out of the DFC program in late 2019.

What is the tax impact of supporting SoRock?

The average tax impact of a SoRock warrant article or budget line item is around \$.01 per thousand or approximately \$5.00 per year for a \$500,000 property.

What do our tax dollars pay for?

The funds we receive from our towns helps support our mission. Your investment yields a return of at least double or triple its value through leveraged resources and funding. We appreciate your support and would also love to have your voice at our table! Join our Steering Committee today by emailing sorocknhcc@gmail.com

How does SoRock carry out its programming and activities?

SoRock carries out our mission through in-kind services, partnerships, and opportunities from a variety of sources. A few of our partnerships include:

- NH Department of Health and Human Services
- South Central and Seacoast Public Health Networks
- School Student Assistance Programs
- NAMI NH (National Alliance for Mental Illness)
- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
- NH Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Services
- DEA & National Guard Counter Drug Task Force
- Connor's Climb Foundation
- Fremont, Hampstead, Sanborn & Timberlane Schools
- NH Liquor Enforcement
- Local Police, Fire and EMT
- Local Mental Health Centers
- Local Youth Serving Organizations (YMCA, Austin 17 House etc)

Is SoRock a 501c3?

SoRock contracts with the [Southeastern Regional Education Service Center \(SERESC\)](#) for fiscal agency and our 501c3 status. This is a common practice also used by our state public health networks. This allows us to save money on additional staffing and indirect costs.

Have questions or want to get involved? We would love to talk to you!

Reach out today to sorocknhcc@gmail.com

Visit us at sorocknh.org or follow us on social media @[@sorocknh](https://twitter.com/sorocknh)