

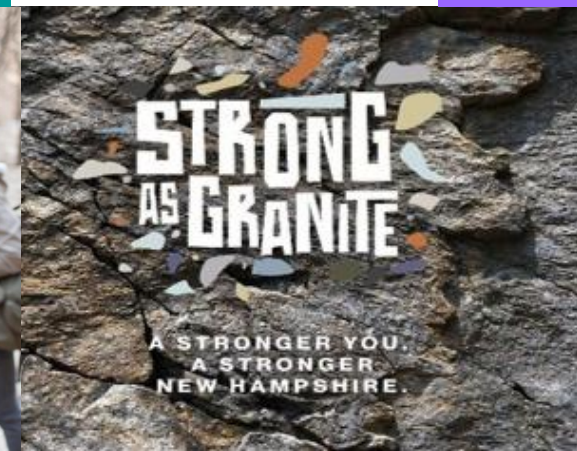
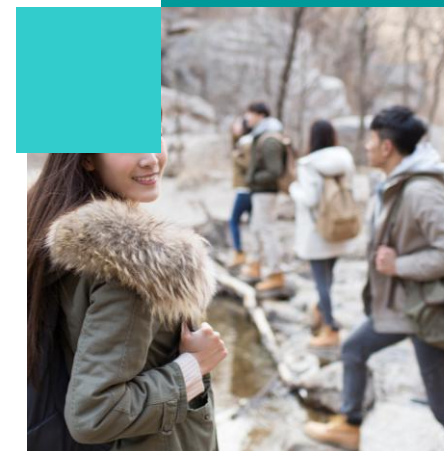
# Substance Misuse Prevention in the Digital Age: Using Nontraditional Communication Strategies to Educate on Substance Misuse Prevention

Elizabeth Duffy MPH, CHES, Laurie Barger Sutter, Kate Frey



Department of  
**HEALTH &  
HUMAN SERVICES**

Division for  
Behavioral  
Health



# Objectives

- Learn how to develop messaging using social marketing, interviews, and storytelling to bolster prevention communication.
- Learn about best practices for structuring and filming video interviews to communicate public health messages.
- Understand strategies of and channels for dissemination of prevention messaging.



# Crafting Your Message

09/29/2025



# Crafting Your Message

## First things first

You need to determine your target audience; this helps us make a message that lands for our audience

- Who: Age, demographic
- What: Behaviors do they have, what are they looking for?
- Where: Do they live? And the type of area
- How: Would they see this message? Do they receive their information?





# Crafting Your Message

**When it comes to crafting your message, it's best to:**

Keep it clear

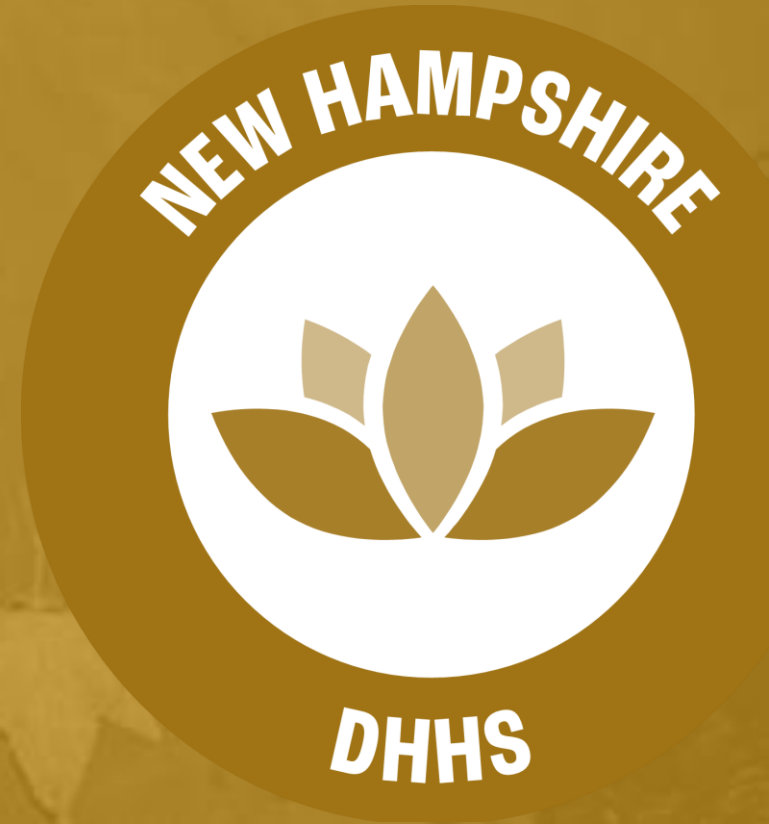
Remember the values of the target audience

Make it eye-catching



# Creating Your Campaign

09/29/2025



# Creating Your Campaign

## Evaluation Planning

Have a plan in place for how you are going to evaluate the effectiveness of the program. This means clear objectives and measures.

Yes, even before you create the campaign

- **Qualitative and quantitative:**
  - **Social Media Metrics**
  - **MailChimp/Constant Contact**
- **Estimations**



# Creating Your Campaign

You have your message and your target audience, so let's get to creating!

- Choose your **marketing methods** based on your target audience (social media only vs. print campaigns vs. PSAs).
- **Data and storytelling**
- **Evidence-based strategies**
- **Empowerment statements** (a message of hope or empowerment that inspires the viewer to act) and the call to action:

North Country Regional Public Health Network (RPHN) recently used YRBS data to educate school administrators about the past-30-day misuse of prescription medication among high school students. Doing so helped North Country RPHN get much needed harm reduction supplies into the school.

Students who reported it was easier to get prescription drugs had **6.8 times** greater odds of using prescription pain medicine without a prescription.





# Creating Your Campaign – Best Practices

## ADA/ 508 Compliance

YES

NO

## Acronyms and Jargon

Substance  
Use Disorder

SUD

## Text Positioning

Left-Aligned  
is your friend

Center  
aligned is not  
how your  
brain reads



## Creating Your Campaign – Best Practices, Reading Level

In an ideal world, we want to create our materials to reach a 6<sup>th</sup> grade reading level.

- It's easier to translate – translation isn't always a 1 to 1 thing. Some of our phrases and words don't match what
- It helps folks who English as a Second Language
- It helps those with learning differences



# Creating Your Campaign – Best Practices, Reading Level

## Example:

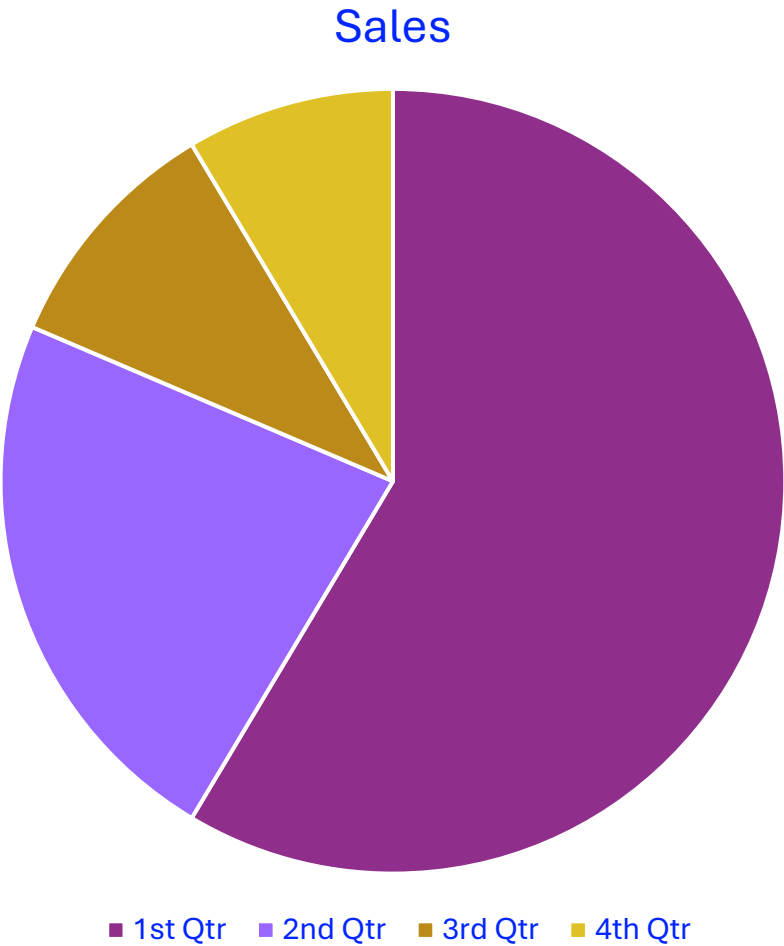
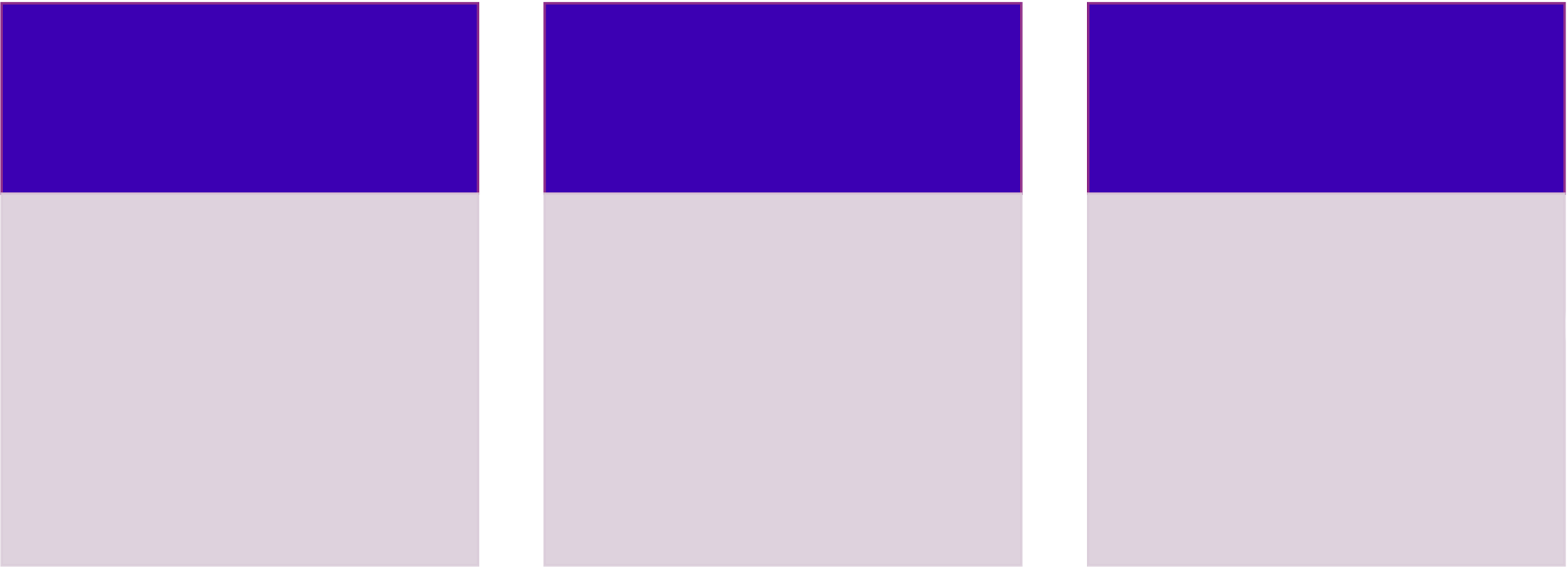
Advanced Reading Level: “Our community has strengthened its approach to substance use prevention by implementing evidence-based education, fostering cross-sector partnerships, and promoting harm reduction strategies to support long-term public health outcomes.”

6<sup>th</sup>/8<sup>th</sup> Grade Reading Level: “Our community is working hard to stop drug and alcohol problems by teaching people, helping each other, and making safer choices together.”



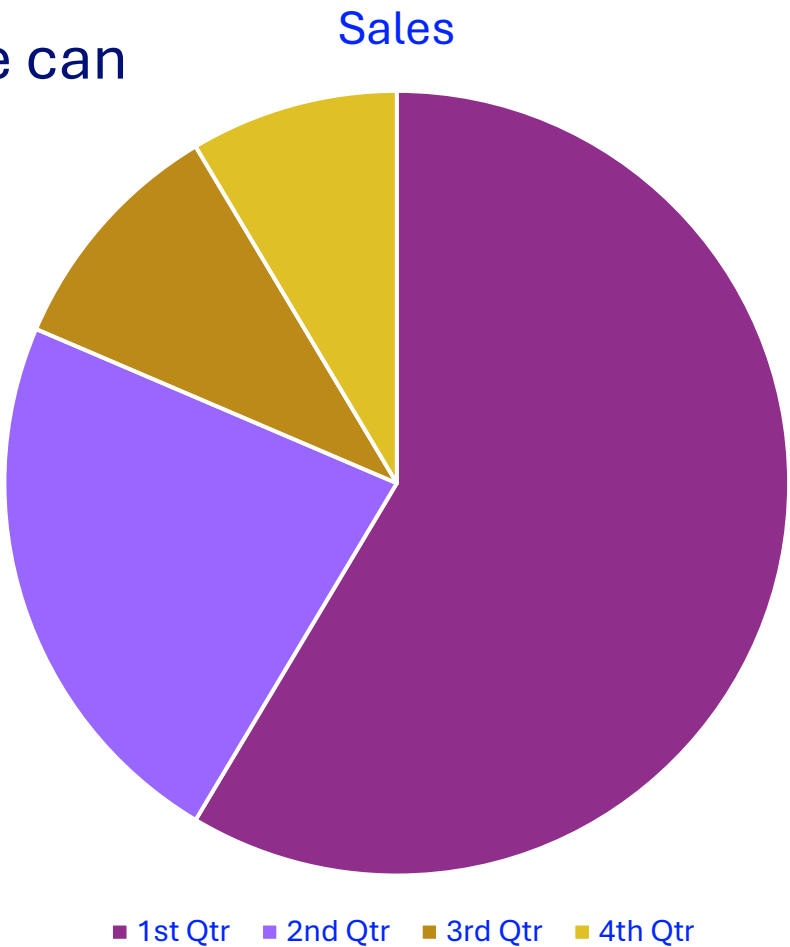
# Creating Your Campaign – Best Practices, White Space

This is a slide overwhelmed with information:



# Creating Your Campaign – Best Practices, White Space

This is a slide with plenty of white space, and we can understand the date being presented.





## Creating Your Campaign – Best Practices, Font and Font Size

This is more on ADA/508 Compliance. We want our materials to be easily read by people who are vision impaired.

- No lower than 12 point font
- Choose a font that clearly shows a difference between an uppercase I and a lowercase l

Aptos

I will always love  
Prevention!

Arial

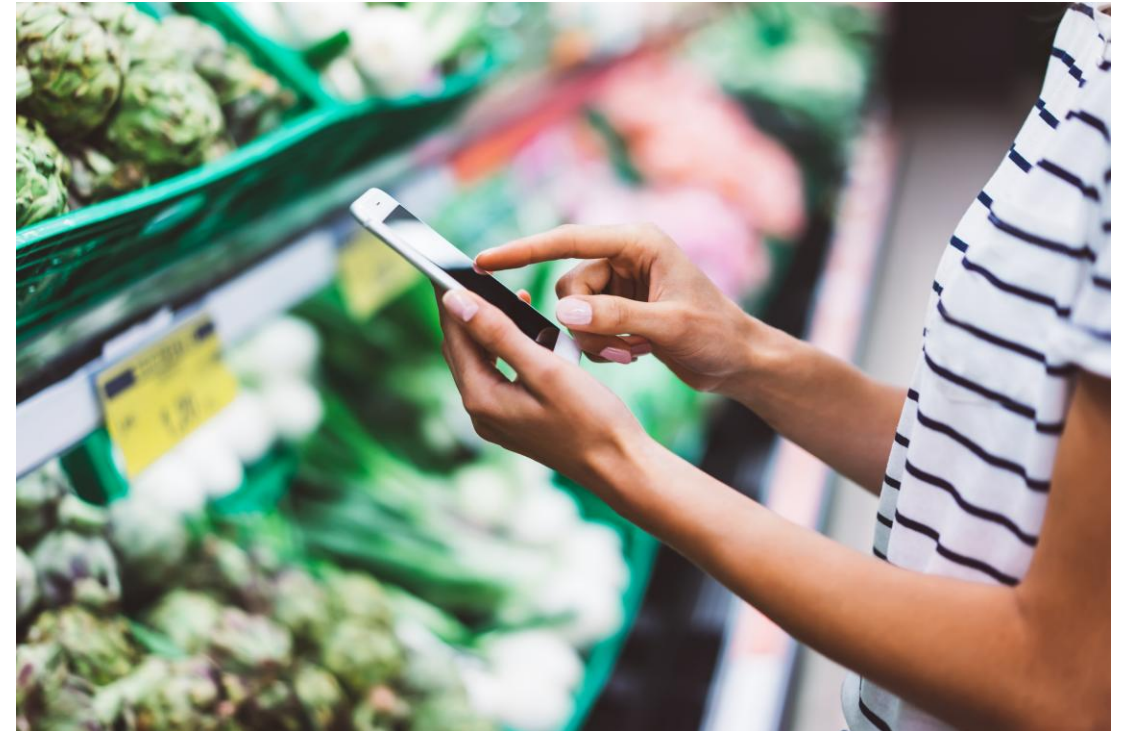
I will always love  
Prevention!



# Creating Your Campaign – Best Practices, Mobile View vs. Desktop View

There are many people that solely use their cell phones for looking at social media or looking at information. Will your font and spacing still look correct?

Be sure to test your campaign materials on both the desktop and cell phones before finalizing.



# Creating Your Campaign

## Let's talk about languages and translation

New Hampshire as a whole reaches the minimum required (1%) to need translation in Spanish

One of the reasons why we shoot for a 6<sup>th</sup> grade reading level in our campaigns is because it translates easier



# Creating Your Campaign

## Pictures matter

What I don't want to see in campaigns is pictures that could be seen as triggering. Instead, we want to fill our campaigns with messages of hope and belonging



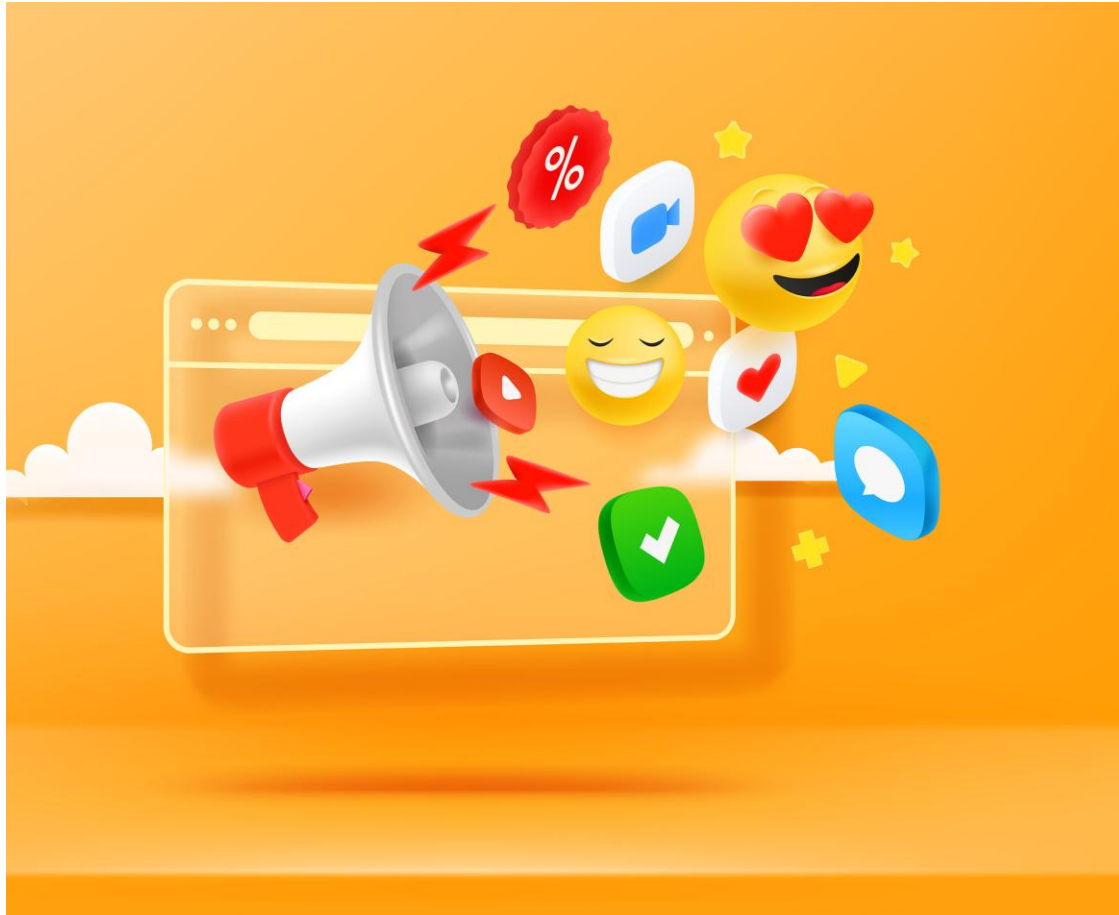
# Typical and non-typical message sharing

12/8/2025





# Getting the Message Out There



## Typical Channels

Facebook is 21 years old

Instagram is 15 years old

Snapchat is 14

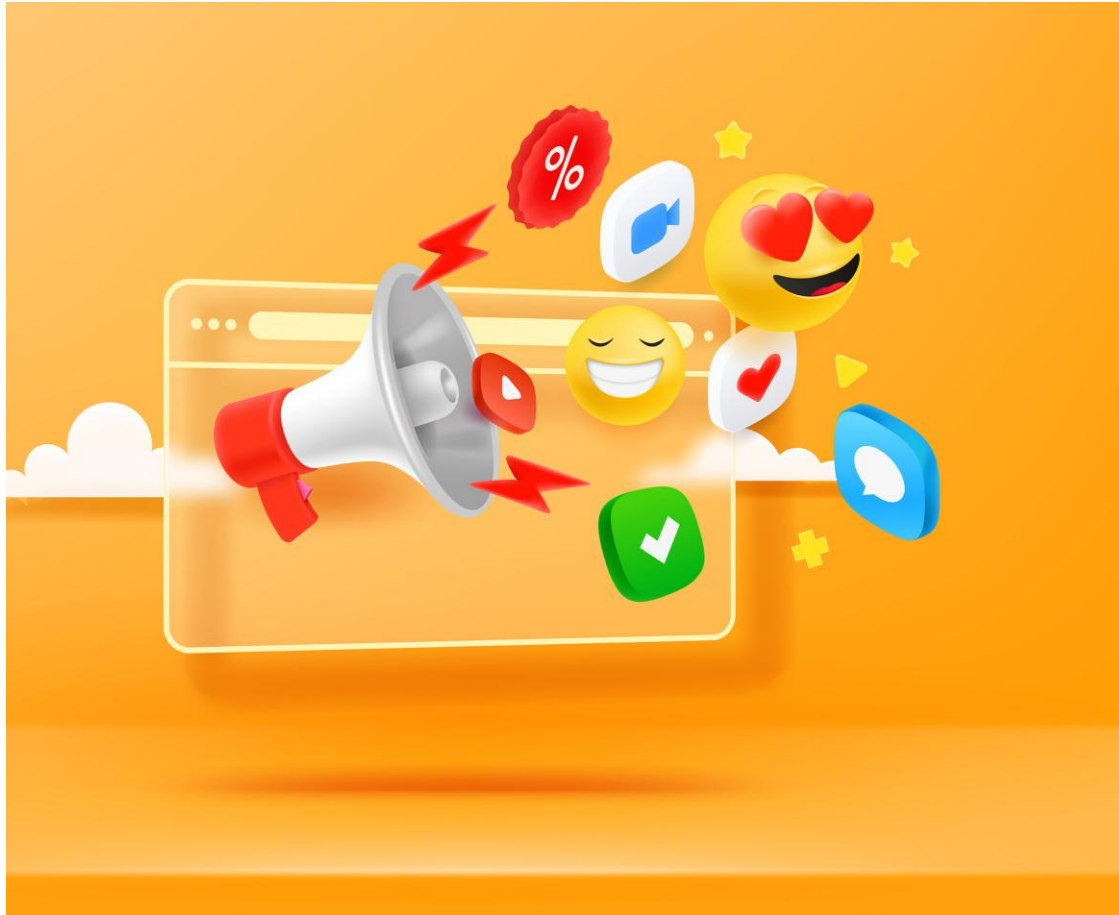
Spotify is 19

TikTok started 9 years ago as a Chinese app but has been TikTok as we know it for 5 years

And I've had a Pandora radio account since 2008



# Getting the Message Out There



## Demographics of the channels

Facebook: Millennials and Baby Boomers use most frequently

Instagram: Largest age group is 25- 34

Snapchat: mostly under 35 with 18-24 being the largest group

TikTok: Largest group is 18-24



## Getting the Message Out There- One message, multiple avenues

Having more than one message can get confusing, it's best to keep it to one clear message to be used over multiple channels

- Social media (Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, Threads, Snapchat, LinkedIn, YouTube)
- Print flyer for community outreach
- Email lists
- Local access TV
- Spotify/Pandora Ads



# Getting the Message Out There

## Multiple messages, multiple avenues

Let's say you are doing an underage drinking prevention campaign for the whole community before prom season. The goal is to raise awareness of social host liability laws and to prevent adults buying alcohol for teens.



# Getting the Message Out There

## Macro Messaging vs. Micro Messaging

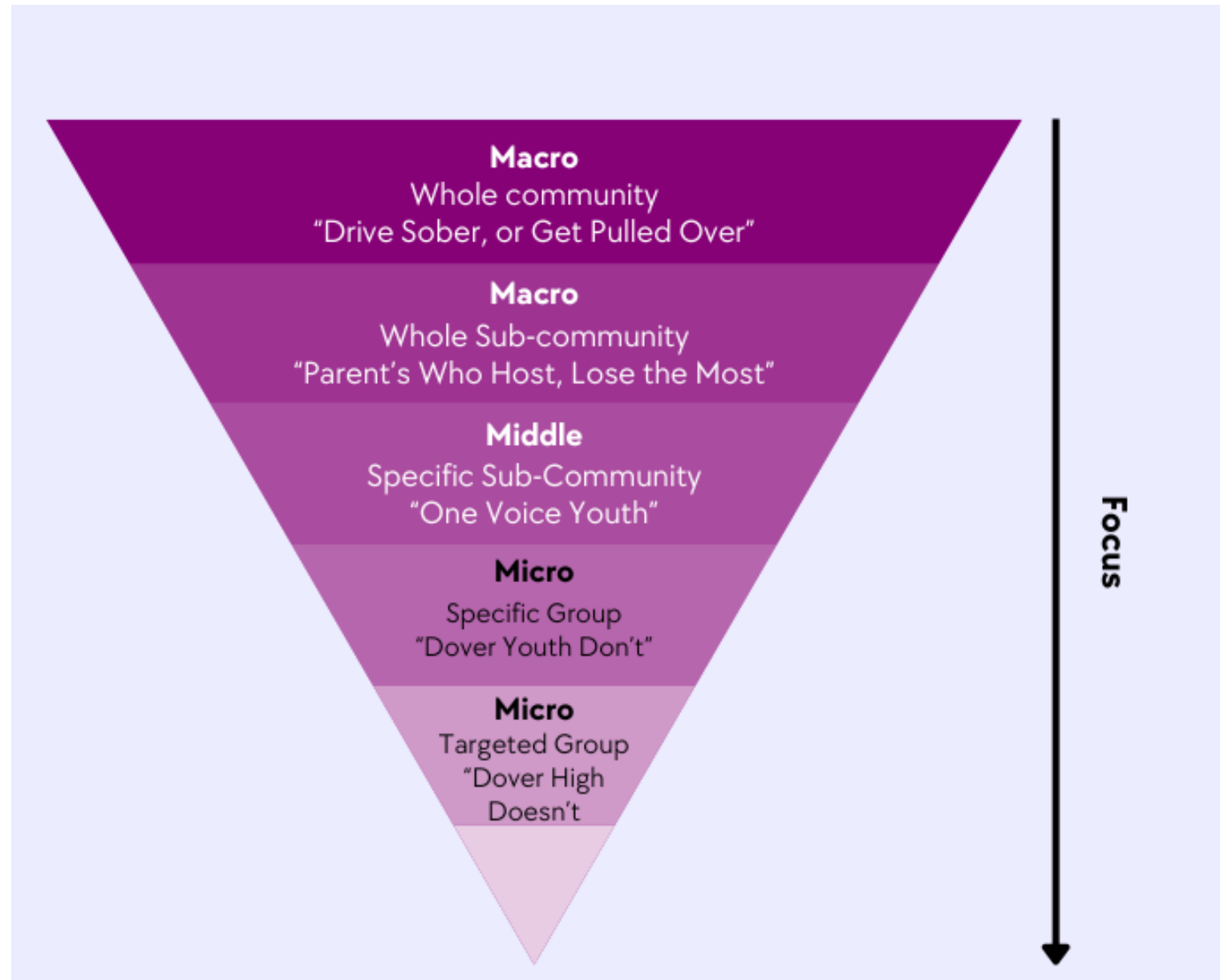
Macro messaging is a large audience. Think of some big brands, they use one familiar message designed to resonate with a large audience

Micro messaging gets specific for a smaller audience. This is for our more tailored, targeted message with a specific goal.





# Getting the Message Out There!



# Getting the Message Out There

## Key influencers

Some influencers:

- School personnel (principals, teachers, superintendents, SAPS, etc)
- Police, Fire, EMS
- Faith leaders
- Local coalitions
- Mayors and selectmen boards



# Getting the Message Out There

## Non-Traditional Channels

Enter in non-traditional formats that play off of the storyteller format:

- Video voice projects
- Podcasting



# Getting the Message Out There

- Other Long Form Content
  - Social media lives to give the opportunity for Q&A
  - Blog articles
  - How-to guides/eBooks



## Some Lessons Learned

### Combating misinformation and disinformation

Misinformation: The unintentional sharing of false information

Disinformation: The intentional sharing of false information. They want to push the false narrative

Combat it with:

- Stick to the facts
- Combat false with facts
- Include sources to back up the correction and promote critical thinking where possible and appropriate

Artificial Intelligence





# Some Lessons Learned

## Lessons Learned:

- Engage with key influencers before beginning the campaign
- Lived experiences not fear tactics
- Focus group your campaign prior to roll-out



# Scenario Groups

- We're going to break you up into groups
- There are 3 scenarios that we will pass out to you
- Follow the prompts on the scenarios



## Scenario 1 – Report out

- The School-board presentation



## Scenario 2 – Report out

- The Social Norming Campaign



## Scenario 3 – Report out

- The Legislation Presentation



## Bonus Activity:

We are creating a campaign highlighting youth voices for Cannabis prevention.

Key objectives:

- Increase perception of harm among youth
- Decrease rate of past 30-day use



# Q&A

12/8/2025



# Resources:

“10 Strategies for Effective Health Communication.” *Health Equity Resource Library*, 2024, [healthequityresources.nnphi.org/resource/10-strategies-for-effective-health-communication/](https://healthequityresources.nnphi.org/resource/10-strategies-for-effective-health-communication/)

CDC. “Health Communication.” *Gateway to Health Communication*, 7 Oct. 2024, [www.cdc.gov/health-communication/php/index.html](https://www.cdc.gov/health-communication/php/index.html).

“Communicating about Public Health.” *De Beaumont Foundation*, 30 Jan. 2025, [debeaumont.org/resources/communicating-about-public-health-toolkit/](https://debeaumont.org/resources/communicating-about-public-health-toolkit/).

“Communicating Effectively with People with Disabilities.” *ADA.gov*, 13 Feb. 2023, [www.ada.gov/topics/effective-communication/](https://www.ada.gov/topics/effective-communication/).

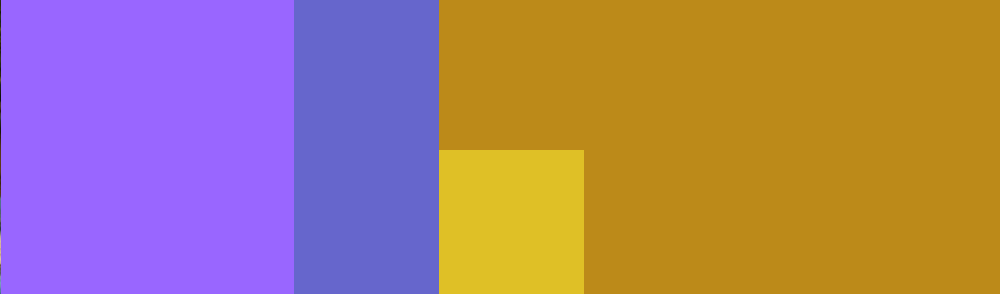
Dauchess, Alexandra. “Designing Effective Health Campaigns: Strategies for Public Health Professionals.” *Marymount University*, 23 May 2025, [marymount.edu/blog/designing-effective-health-campaigns-strategies-for-public-health-professionals/](https://marymount.edu/blog/designing-effective-health-campaigns-strategies-for-public-health-professionals/).

Room, Press. “Combating Misinformation and Disinformation: A Resource Guide.” *DISA*, 17 Jan. 2025, [disa.org/combating-misinformation-and-disinformation-a-resource-guide/](https://disa.org/combating-misinformation-and-disinformation-a-resource-guide/). Accessed 28 Aug. 2025.

WebAIM. “WebAIM: Contrast Checker.” *Webaim*, 2025, [webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/](https://webaim.org/resources/contrastchecker/).







# Thank you.

**Contact us:**

Elizabeth Duffy MPH, CHES

Health Promotion Advisor

[Elizabeth.B.Duffy@dhhs.nh.gov](mailto:Elizabeth.B.Duffy@dhhs.nh.gov)

09/29/2025



Department of  
**HEALTH &  
HUMAN SERVICES**

Division for  
Behavioral  
Health



# New Hampshire Technical Assistance Center

## The Power of Stories: The Youth Risk Behavior Survey in Action

December 8, 2025



**NHTAC** New Hampshire  
Technical Assistance Center



Department of  
**HEALTH &  
HUMAN SERVICES**

Division for  
Behavioral  
Health

# Why the YRBS Videos & Toolkit Are Needed

**The YRBS is like a mirror—it reflects what is happening in young people’s lives within their community. The YRBS Video Project:**


- Underscores that youth risk behaviors are community issues.
- Demonstrates that the YRBS can be a powerful tool in improving academic achievement and life outcomes.
- Showcases both youth and adult voices sharing how they have used the YRBS and why it is important.
- Is designed to increase support at all levels.

# YRBS Video Project Process

- Developed questions for youth and adults.
- Designed protocols for interviews (including parental consent for youth participation).
- Identified sites to assist with youth and adult recruitment:
  - ✓ Dover
  - ✓ Littleton
  - ✓ Manchester
- Recruited a wide range of interviewees.
- Conducted onsite interviews and videography Jan.–Feb. 2024.
- Developed youth and adult reels Aug. 2024.

The background is a teal gradient. In the center, there is a faint, stylized illustration of two hands cupping three interlocking gears. The text 'Videos and Reels' is overlaid on this graphic in a white, bold, sans-serif font.

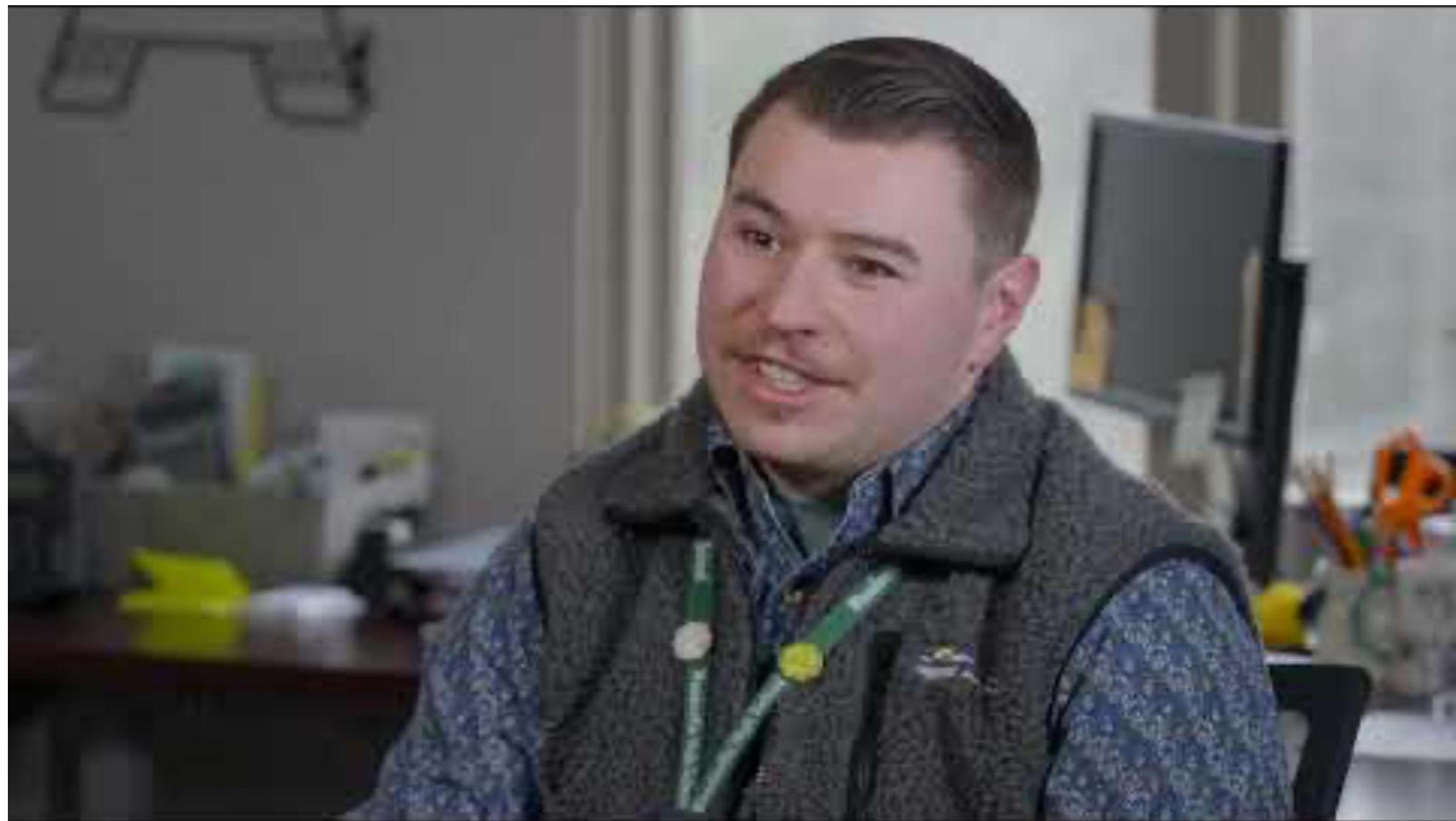
# Videos and Reels

A portrait of a young woman with dark hair styled in a braid, wearing a black top with lace sleeves. She is looking slightly to the right of the camera. The background is a dark, textured wall.

**Louisa**

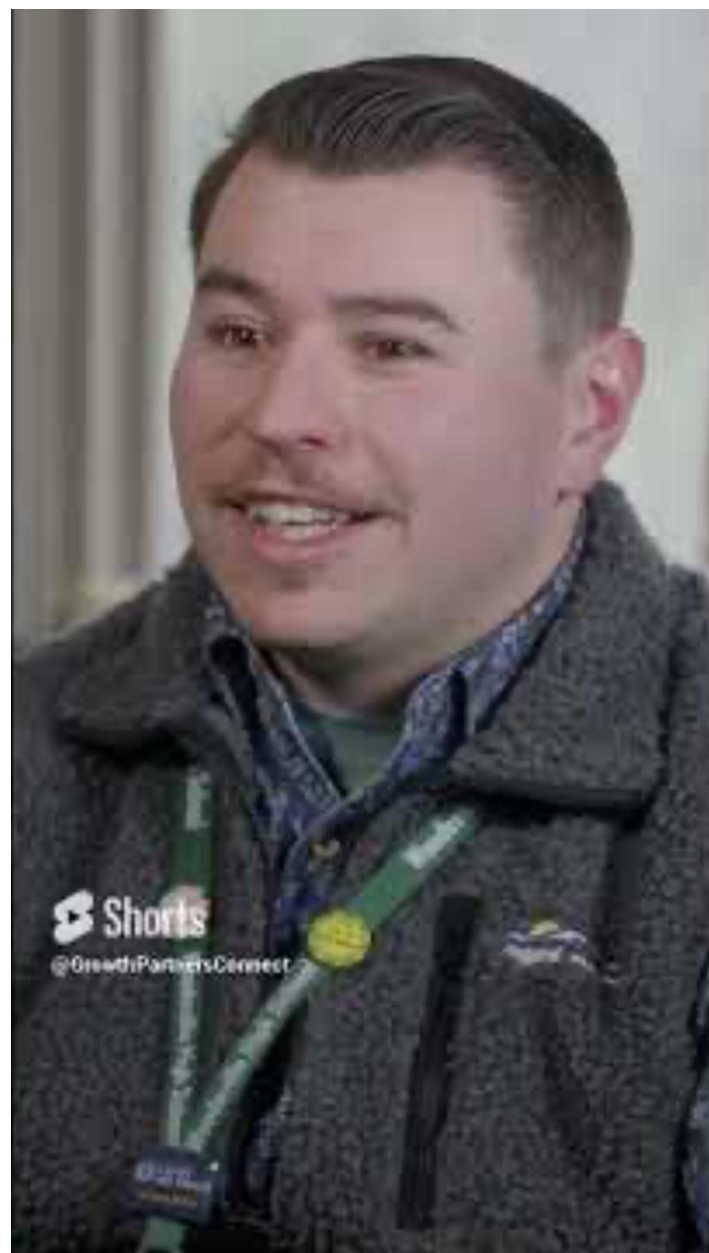
Student  
Dover High School











# Beautiful Templates! Inspired Stories!



To access online YRBS Toolkit:  
<https://nhtac.org/yrbs-in-action>



Or contact: Laurie Barger Sutter,  
[laurie@growthpartners.llc](mailto:laurie@growthpartners.llc)



# Effective Prevention Communication in Advocacy



newfutures



# who we are >>>

## Solving problems through policy change.

New Futures works to improve the health and well-being of all Granite Staters through public policy change and civic empowerment.

---



# how we do it >>>



## Promoting Civic Engagement

to empower Granite Staters to take action on issues they care about.



## Educating Communities

about the legislative process in NH.



## Building Partnerships

to work together to solve NH's health problems.



## Advancing Public Policy

to build a brighter, healthier NH.



# what we support >>>

Our policy priority areas span all stages of life.



## Early Childhood

Improving access to quality child care, strengthening families, and reducing adverse childhood experiences.



## Children's Behavioral Health

Supporting a comprehensive system of care for children's mental health.



## Health Care Access

Ensuring access to quality, affordable health care.



## Healthy Aging

Supporting choices and access to care for older adults.



## Substance Use Disorder

Addressing stigma and discrimination in care for those struggling with substance misuse.



## Public Health

Protecting New Hampshire's public health system.



## Regulation of Addictive Products

Preventing substance use through community education and regulatory strategies.

# our impact >>>

2023-24 legislative sessions



**400+**

**bills**  
tracked

**48**

**proactive**  
**policies** signed  
into law

**3,000+**

**advocates**  
trained

**3,700+**

**actions**  
taken

**More than \$1 Billion**

secured for programs supporting NH's most vulnerable children, families, and individuals

**\$324.68 Million**

in state funded dollars

**\$675.78 Million**

in federal dollars secured  
in the state budget



# Effective prevention advocacy messaging >>>



# New Futures makes it easy to Advocate !



Learn about the bills

Take action links + forms

Share your stories

Access resources

[www.new-futures.org/current-legislation](http://www.new-futures.org/current-legislation)

## TAKE ACTION

### Protect Teen Voices and the Youth Risk Behavior Survey



Every day, Granite State schools, parents, and communities work together to maximize student academic achievement and enhance life outcomes to keep our state prosperous, safe, and thriving.

But how do local communities know where to focus prevention resources? One way has been through the confidential **Youth Risk Behavior Survey**, also called the **YRBS**.

This **completely anonymous and voluntary** survey allows young people to share their real-life experiences while maintaining their privacy. The YRBS is **tailored to meet the specific needs of Granite State students and families** and requires only about 40 minutes every two years.



## About the Bill

The original language of [House Bill 446](#) would have merely added a requirement that **schools share a copy of the Youth Risk Behavior Survey questions with families via email** at least ten days before students take the survey.

However, a committee amendment to the bill altered the language and now the bill **would change the survey from an opt-out to an opt-in, which could significantly reduce participation and no longer show a clear picture of the behaviors of Granite State youth**. This could hamper the efforts of parents, schools, and communities to keep young people healthy.

## Take Action

Share Your Story



Spread the Word: Social Media





# examples of advocacy >>>

**Calling  
Elected  
Officials**

**Participating  
in a Public  
Hearing**

**Writing a  
Letter to  
the Editor**

**Social  
Media**

**Emailing  
Elected  
Officials**

**Coffee with  
an Elected  
Official**

**Legislative  
Events or  
Breakfasts**

**Participatin  
g in a Rally**

**and more!**

A woman with glasses and a black top is standing and speaking into a microphone. She is holding a baby in her arms. In the foreground, the back of a woman's head and shoulders are visible, looking towards the speaker. Other people are seated in the background, listening. The room has large windows and warm lighting.

stories  
humanize  
policy >>>

**Stories are  
proven to be  
more:**

- >>> **memorable**
- >>> **relatable**
- >>> **repeatable**
- >>> **effective at  
changing minds**

**than data alone**

what's in an  
effective  
advocacy  
message? >>>



**Stor  
y**



**Data**



**Ask**



# advocacy message template >>>



## Introduction

Include any relevant information about yourself and your connection to the issue.  
*(lived experience, work experience, educational background, etc).*





# advocacy message template >>>



## Introduction

Include any relevant information about yourself and your connection to the issue.  
*(lived experience, work experience, educational background, etc).*



## Challenge

What is the issue you are trying to address?  
Don't just stop there!



# advocacy message template >>>



## Introduction

Include any relevant information about yourself and your connection to the issue.  
*(lived experience, work experience, educational background, etc).*



## Challenge

What is the issue you are trying to address?  
Don't just stop there!



## Solution

What are ways to address the issue?  
Most likely the policy solution you are advocating for.



# advocacy message template >>>



## Introduction

Include any relevant information about yourself and your connection to the issue.  
*(lived experience, work experience, educational background, etc).*



## Challenge

What is the issue you are trying to address?  
Don't just stop there!



## Solution

What are ways to address the issue?  
Most likely the policy solution you are advocating for.



## Impact

How will this solution affect the community?  
Illustrate the goal to work towards.

# advocacy and social media>>>



## **Build awareness**

Spread information, resources, and educate others about your issue



## **Call to Action**

Encourage others to join you in taking action



## **Power in numbers**

Increase the number of people advocating for your cause



takeaction >>>

>>> Urge Governor Ayotte to  
**VETO HB 377 & HB 712!**

These bills would ban medically necessary care for trans teens.

>>> **CALL 603-271-2121**

>>> **EMAIL** template here:  
**[New-Futures.org/LGBTQ](https://New-Futures.org/LGBTQ)**

>>> **SHARE** this post!



newfutures >>>



New Futures  
[@NewFuturesNH](https://www.instagram.com/NewFuturesNH)

**UPDATE:** 👍 Gov. Ayotte **VETOED** House Bills 446 and 148!

**HB 446** would have required schools to collect permission slips for the anonymous, optional **Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)**, making it harder to keep NH youth healthy.

**HB 148** would have **rolled back bipartisan discrimination protections** in restrooms and locker rooms at hospitals, restaurants, shops, and more, making trans folks less safe.

takeaction >>>



# submit an opinion piece»»



If your piece isn't published, you can resubmit



Submit to *your* local paper

## Letter to the Editor (LTE)

## Opinion Editoria l (Op- ed)

Word Count

**250**

**800**

Submission

**on website**

**email Opinion  
or Editor**

Audience

**legislators & public**



take**action** >>>

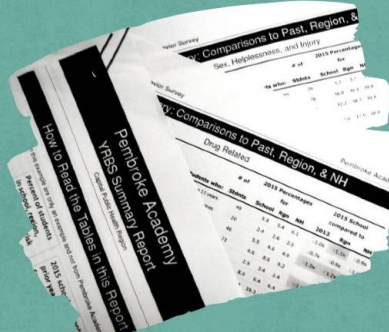
**House Bill 446** would make changes that could significantly reduce participation in the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, leading to the loss of the YRBS as a source of valuable insights that help us keep Granite State youth healthy. It will be voted on in the NH State Senate on **Thursday, May 22<sup>nd</sup>**.

>>> **Call your State Senator** to urge them to oppose HB 446. All you need is your address and a phone! We have a **script** and **lookup tool** on our webpage — **New-Futures.org/YRBS**

>>> Use our **easy template** to **email your State Senator**.

>>> **Share this post** to spread the word!

new**futures** >>>



take**action** >>>

## CONCORD MONITOR

Celeste Clark, Raymond Coalition for Youth

May 17, 2025

### Opinion: An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure.

...Let's talk about **HB446**, a bill that would make the Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which is administered to youth every two years and collects vitally important information, an opt-in survey. This means parents or guardians would have to **sign a permission form** for their child to participate in this survey. →



new**futures** >>>

take**action** >>>

## CONCORD MONITOR

May 17, 2025

... The loss of...tools [such as the Youth Risk Behavior Survey] could drastically change the landscape of prevention work in New Hampshire. [YRBS is a vital tool] in our prevention toolbox to help **keep our kids and communities safe** from the unknown harms that can come with substance misuse at a young age.

...If you care about our young people...please speak up.

The people who are invested in keeping kids, communities and roads safe in New Hampshire want to continue the great work they do to **save lives** and limit lifelong addiction. **Please reach out to your senator** and let them know these are important issues that you care about.

*Celeste Clark, Executive Director  
Raymond Coalition for Youth*

RAYMOND  
COALITION  
FOR YOUTH

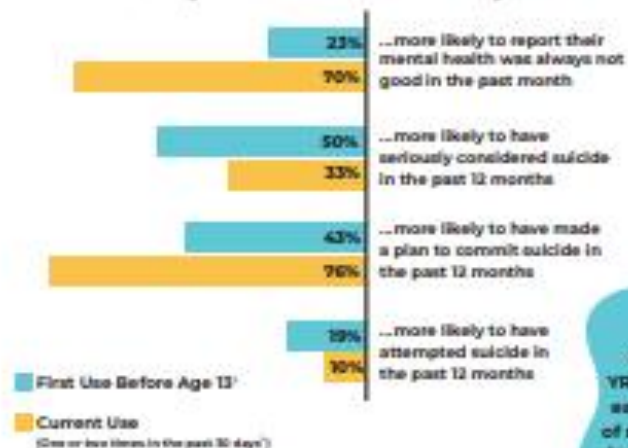


nf >>>



**KEY WAYS TO REDUCE THE NEGATIVE IMPACTS OF CANNABIS ON YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH ARE TO DELAY FIRST USE FOR AS LONG AS POSSIBLE AND REDUCE CURRENT USE.**

**In the 2023 YRBS, students who reported early or current use of marijuana were...**



New Hampshire's YRBS data shows that early and current use of marijuana are linked to poor mental health in youth.

**nearly 1 in 5 students** who first tried marijuana before age 13 had a suicide attempt that required medical attention in the past 12 months.



**Interested in learning more? Visit:**

[Youth Risk Behavior Survey \(YRBS\) | New Hampshire Technical Assistance Center](#)  
[Youth Risk Behavior Survey | New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services](#)  
[YRBS Past Surveys and Reports | New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services](#)

## Impact of Cannabis on Youth Mental Health in New Hampshire



### Ease of Access

Research into the effects of cannabis legalization on youth is mixed. However, one research finding is consistent across all states: when cannabis is legalized, youth perceive it is easier to get. Data from New Hampshire's Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS) underscores the linkages between youth access to marijuana and poor mental health.

**In the 2023 YRBS, students who reported it was very easy to get marijuana were...**



**2.3x**  
more likely to report feeling sad or hopeless almost every day for 2 or more weeks

**2.9x**  
more likely to have made one suicide attempt in the past year

**3x**  
more likely to have made a plan for suicide in the past 12 months

**3.2x**  
more likely to report 1) their mental health was always not good, and 2) they seriously considered suicide in the past 12 months

**6x more likely** to report requiring medical attention from a suicide attempt in the past year.



\*Compared to students who said it was very hard to get marijuana.





# get creative >>>







**is here to support you in your  
advocacy!**

sign up for action alerts >>>



[www.new-futures.org/training/sign-up](http://www.new-futures.org/training/sign-up)