



JOIN THE VOICES FOR RECOVERY

“Sometimes I feel like this fight is endless. And if we’re being totally blunt about it, it is...addiction is a disease that I’ve battled since I was 13 years old and will continue to battle for the rest of my life. The difference is that, today, I know I don’t have to suffer anymore.”

Maya Friedrich

TARGETED OUTREACH (YOUTH & EMERGING LEADERS)



YOUTH & EMERGING LEADERS (AGES 12 TO 25)

School, friends, family, sports, work, technology, peer pressure, social media, intimate relationships—at any given moment, this is just a fraction of what young people may have on their minds. Add to that list factors like alcohol, marijuana, opioids, depression, and anxiety, and it's clear that our nation's youth are facing one of the most challenging periods of their lives. An estimated 345,000 adolescents aged 12 to 17 had a substance use disorder and a major depressive episode (MDE) in the past year.ⁱ Additionally, in 2017, 13.3 percent of adolescents aged 12 to 17 (3.2 million adolescents) and 13.1 percent of young adults aged 18 to 25 (4.4 million) had a MDE during the past year.ⁱⁱ

While these statistics are eye-opening, youth (ages 12 to 25) and emerging leaders— young people who show passion, drive, innovative thinking, and a commitment to their communities—represent a key population that can promote fresh, creative ideas in the prevention, treatment, and recovery from mental and substance use disorders, including co-occurring disorders. Not only does this age group have the resilience to recover, but they are also building blocks for the future.

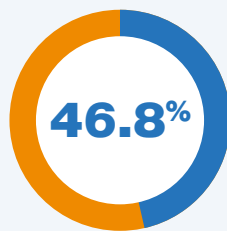
Each September, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) (<https://www.samhsa.gov>), within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) (<https://www.hhs.gov/>), sponsors **National Recovery Month (Recovery Month)** (<https://recoverymonth.gov>). This observance celebrates the millions of Americans who are in recovery from mental

and substance use disorders, reminding us that treatment is effective and that people can and do recover. It also serves to help reduce the stigma and misconceptions that cloud public understanding of mental and substance use disorders, potentially discouraging others from seeking help.

The 2019 **Recovery Month** theme, “*Join the Voices for Recovery: Together We Are Stronger,*” emphasizes the need to share resources and build networks across the country to support the many paths to recovery affirms the vital role that young people play in this effort. By providing a platform and voice for the nation's emerging leaders, we show that investing in the future is just as important as honoring the past for **Recovery Month's** 30th anniversary in 2019. Mental and substance use disorders have affected all Americans in one way or another—and we must stand together as a nation in support of this unifying call to action. The observance will highlight inspiring stories from all walks of life to help more Americans find the path to hope, health, and overall wellness.

The Issue

The period from middle school to early adulthood means change, growth, and uncertainty. Vulnerable to outside influences, many young people start to experiment with dangerous substances like alcohol or begin misusing prescription drugs. Factors like schoolwork, peer pressure, and bullying can also cause stress and negative feelings in young people's lives. This puts youth at risk for developing mental illness and substance use disorders. For example:



of the **5.1 million** young adults with a substance use disorder had any mental illness in the past year.

- In 2017, among the 5.1 million young adults aged 18 to 25 with a past year substance use disorder, 2.4 million (46.8 percent) had any mental illness in the past year.ⁱⁱⁱ
- According to a 2018 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) report, in 2017, almost 1 in 5 students were bullied in school, and the proportion of students who consistently felt sad or hopeless increased from 29 percent in 2007 to 32 percent in 2017.



1 in 5 students

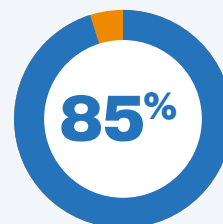
were bullied in school in 2017.⁸

- According to the [CDC's](#) 2018 National Youth Tobacco Survey, the number of U.S. high school students who reported being e-cigarette users increased 78 percent between 2017 and 2018, and numbers among middle school students rose 48 percent in the same time period.
- According to the National Institute on Drug Abuse's ([NIDA](#)) 2018 Monitoring the Future Survey, America's teens report a dramatic increase in their use of vaping devices in just a single year, with 37.3 percent of 12th graders reporting "any vaping" in the past 12 months, compared to just 27.8 percent in 2017.



adolescents aged 12 to 17 **used alcohol for the first time** in the past year.

- Many young people take their first sip of alcohol while underage. In 2017, an estimated 2.3 million adolescents aged 12 to 17 used alcohol for the first time in the past year.^{iv}
 - » Further, more than 85 percent of high school seniors say that it is easy or very easy to gain access to alcohol, according to [NIDA's](#) 2018 Monitoring the Future Survey.



of high-school seniors say that it is **fairly easy or very easy to gain access to alcohol.**

- According to the 2017 National Survey on Drug Use and Health ([NSDUH](#)), about 769,000 adolescents aged 12 to 17 and about 2.5 million young adults aged 18 to 25 misused opioids in the past year.
- The same report identifies this period of life as fraught with depression and that number of young people who take their lives continues to increase.
- According to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration ([NHTSA](#)), in 2016, there were 4,514 young drivers involved in fatal crashes. Over 20 percent of these drivers were alcohol-impaired.
- According to the 2017 [NSDUH](#) findings, about 1.6 million adolescents aged 12 to 17 currently used marijuana in the past year.



adolescents aged 12 to 17
misused opioids in the past year.⁴

Recovery Spotlight

Young people are constantly being shaped by the values, ideas, and themes presented in the media. Their favorite television shows, movies, music, news sources, blogs, apps, and podcasts can influence their actions and perceptions of addiction, mental illness, and recovery.

Consider the positive impact of television and film productions that portray recovery constructively and provide models for how to talk about recovery. Parents and members of the recovery community can use TV shows, movies, documentaries, and public service announcements to help educate young people about mental and substance use disorders. This could take many different forms—from a weekly family “TV night,” to a recovery organization sponsoring a film screening at a local school with a follow-up discussion.

Resources that can point you to these programs include the [National Alliance on Mental Illness’s](#) list of movies (for various ages) that accurately portray mental disorders. In addition, the Ad Council partnered with [Seize the Awkward](#), a campaign that aims to encourage young adults to reach out to a friend who may be experiencing mental or substance use disorders, to produce educational videos and web content. Further, SAMHSA’s Voice Awards Program recognized shows, movies, and documentaries that gave a positive and honest portrayal of mental and substance use disorders.

The 2018 Voice Award winners included:

Television Shows:

- “9-1-1” (FOX) for addressing addiction and serious mental illness
- “GIANTS” (YouTube) for addressing mental illness, resilience, and recovery
- “Hawaii Five-O” (CBS) for addressing suicide prevention and recovery
- “Mom” (CBS) for addressing suicide prevention, addiction, resilience, and recovery
- “One Day at a Time” (Netflix) for addressing mental illness, trauma, and recovery
- “This is Us” (NBC) for addressing addiction, resilience, and recovery

Movies and Documentaries:

- *Loving Vincent* for addressing depression and suicide
- *Battlefield: Home—Breaking the Silence* for addressing PTSD, addiction, and recovery support
- *Heaven is a Traffic Jam on the 405* for addressing mental illness, trauma, and recovery
- *Heroin(e)* for addressing addiction, resilience, and recovery

What You Can Do

To effectively engage youth and emerging leaders, the recovery community must understand the world in which this population is growing up—in 2019, this means a world saturated with media and technology, where life moves at an extremely fast pace. To reach youth and emerging leaders, the recovery community must:

- Reach out to youth and young adults with empathy and understanding. Make it clear

they are not alone, and that recovery is possible and *happens every day*.

- Let honesty and compassion drive conversations about recovery, not shame or fear. Reward and congratulate young people for being honest and encourage their peers to be supportive and helpful.
- Point them to resources that feel accessible and relatable to them. Someone in high school or college is likely going to be impacted positively by a digital tool, such as an inspirational YouTube video or social media campaign.
- Encourage college students to seek help through peer support groups or campus health services. [SAMHSA's 2016 Annual Mental Health Report](#) notes that 99 percent of individuals aged 17 and younger who received mental health services in 2016 received them in community-based programs.
- Help families bolster their children and adolescents' recovery efforts; make it clear that recovery is possible when families hold strong together and support one another.

Youth and emerging leaders also live in a world where opportunities for activism and advocacy are abundant. Young people are eager to get involved in causes they care about, and the recovery community can help them make it happen. To support and cultivate youth as potential leaders in the recovery effort, you can:

- Make recovery known throughout your community including on school and college campuses. Use the free [Recovery Month promotional materials](#) on the [Recovery Month](#) website to help spread the message and create recovery-related materials, send out emails to interested students, advocate for faculty and staff training, and arrange for speakers or presentations on campuses.

- Get in touch with student health organizations such as [Active Minds](#) to organize potential **Recovery Month** events and help spread the word.
- Connect with and create networks in positive environments outside of school that cater to young people such as youth groups, recreational centers, faith-based organizations, and extracurricular programs such as sports leagues or theater groups.
- Have resources and information about recovery readily available for parents and guardians to use in places like schools, doctors' offices, and faith-based organizations.

The world of social media is a primary source of information and connections for youth and emerging leaders. You can use the following sample social media posts to engage with this group and get them thinking about recovery:

- #College students: did you know that many campuses offer peer support groups and campus health services? If you're struggling with #recovery, ask student services what your school offers.
- Need inspiration for starting the journey to recovery? Check out the "Voices for Recovery" section of the **Recovery Month** website for stories of #recovery from people just like you.
- Know a young person who may be struggling on their path to #recovery? Reach out to remind them they are not alone and recovery is possible.
- Are you struggling with #MentalIllness, a #SubstanceUse disorder, or both? It's okay to reach out for help! Talk to a parent, a teacher, a friend or call [SAMHSA's](#) National Helpline, 1-800-662-HELP (4357).

Resources

There are many tools for youth and emerging leaders and those who want to involve them in the recovery movement. Help engage this audience with the following resources:

- **Active Minds** (<http://activeminds.org/>): Provides awareness campaigns, outreach, advocacy, and events catering to mental health needs of students on college campuses.
- **AdolescentHealth.org Mental Health Resources page** (<https://www.adolescenthealth.org/Resources/Clinical-Care-Resources/Mental-Health/Mental-Health-Resources-For-Adolesc.aspx>): Provides a list of resources, apps, and clinical information sources for preventing, treating, and recovering from mental and substance use disorders in youth and adolescents.
- **American Academy of Pediatrics' Clinical Report on Screening Youth for Mental and Substance Use Disorders** (<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/pediatrics/135/2/384.full.pdf>): Provides information and best practices on when and how to prevent and screen youth for mental and substance use disorders.
- **Association of Recovery in Higher Education** (<https://collegiaterecovery.org/>): Supports collegiate recovery programs and collegiate recovery communities, the faculty and staff who support them, and the students who represent them.
- **Department of Transportation's NHTSA** (<https://www.nhtsa.gov/>): Contains information on alcohol- and substance-impaired driving.

- **Mental Health First Aid – Youth**
(<https://www.mentalhealthfirstaid.org/take-a-course/course-types/youth/>): Teaches parents, family members, health workers, peers, school staff, and other community members how to help an adolescent who is experiencing a mental or substance use disorder.
- **National Association of Mental Illness' Teens and Young Adults page** (<https://www.nami.org/Find-Support/Teens-and-Young-Adults>): Provides information for teens, adolescents, and young adults experiencing mental and co-occurring disorders.
- **National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism's College AIM resource** (<https://www.collegedrinkingprevention.gov/collegeaim/>): Assists college and university administrators in identifying and choosing evidence-based, cost-effective prevention strategies to reduce drinking on campus.
- **NIDA's National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week web page**
(<https://teens.drugabuse.gov/national-drug-alcohol-facts-week>): Provides information about NIDA's annual campaign to promote the science behind alcohol and substance use disorder treatment and recovery.
- **NIDA's Teen web page**
(<https://teens.drugabuse.gov/>): Provides information on how substances affect the brain and body in adolescence.
- **OK2Talk**
(<http://ok2talk.org/about>): Offers youth and adolescents a safe space to discuss their experiences with mental and substance use disorders.
- **SAMSHA's Talk. They Hear You. App**
(<https://www.samhsa.gov/underage-drinking/mobile-application>): Prepares parents and guardians to talk to their kids about the dangers of alcohol and underage drinking.
- **SAMHSA's Underage Drinking Resource Page**
(<https://www.samhsa.gov/underage-drinking>): Helps parents and caregivers start talking to their children early about the dangers of alcohol.
- **StopBullying.gov**
(<https://www.stopbullying.gov/>): Federal government website managed by SAMHSA and HHS that aims to educate youth and their parents on the harms of bullying and how they can put an end to it.
- **TeenMentalHealth.org**
(<http://teenmentalhealth.org/>): Aims to improve mental health of youth by the effective translation and transfer of scientific knowledge into digestible information.
- **U.S. Department of Health and Human Services' Adolescent Mental Health Page**
(<https://www.hhs.gov/ash/oah/adolescent-development/mental-health/how-adults-can-support-adolescent-mental-health/resources/index.html>): Offers a detailed list of links and tools for addressing adolescent mental health.
- **ULifeline**
(<http://www.ulifeline.org/>): Provides databases, newsrooms, and a helpline for college students who are or have peers who are experiencing or curious about mental and substance use disorders.
- **Youth Move National**
(<https://www.youthmovenational.org/>): Provides resources and advocacy information for young people with mental health disorders.
- **Young People in Recovery**
(<http://youngpeopleinrecovery.org/>): Provides training and networks to individuals, families, and communities to help them promote recovery and reach their full potential.

This list is not exhaustive of all available resources. Inclusion of websites and resources in this document and on the *Recovery Month* website does not constitute official endorsement by the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services or the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration.

ⁱ Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2018). *Key substance use and mental health indicators in the United States: Results from the 2017 National Survey on Drug Use and Health*, NSDUH Series H-53, HHS Publication No. (SMA) 18- 5068, p. 40. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Web. 28 September 2018. Retrieved from <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/cbhsq-reports/NSDUHFFR2017/NSDUHFFR2017.pdf>

ⁱⁱ Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2018). *Key substance use and mental health indicators in the United States: Results from the 2017 National Survey on Drug Use and Health*, NSDUH Series H-53, HHS Publication No. (SMA) 18- 5068, p. 2. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Web. 28 September 2018. Retrieved from <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/cbhsq-reports/NSDUHFFR2017/NSDUHFFR2017.pdf>

ⁱⁱⁱ Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2018). *Key substance use and mental health indicators in the United States: Results from the 2017 National Survey on Drug Use and Health*, NSDUH Series H-53, HHS Publication No. (SMA) 18- 5068, p. 42. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Web. 28 September 2018. Retrieved from <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/cbhsq-reports/NSDUHFFR2017/NSDUHFFR2017.pdf>

^{iv} Center for Behavioral Health Statistics and Quality. (2018). *Key substance use and mental health indicators in the United States: Results from the 2017 National Survey on Drug Use and Health*, NSDUH Series H-53, HHS Publication No. (SMA) 18- 5068, p. 23. Rockville, MD: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. Web. 28 September 2018. Retrieved from <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/cbhsq-reports/NSDUHFFR2017/NSDUHFFR2017.pdf>