



**Newport County
Prevention Coalition**
Member of Rhode Island Regional Coalitions

Reach

Moving Prevention Forward

April 2023

Prevention & Early Intervention: Addressing Underage Drinking

Alcohol is the drug of choice among America's teens. The tendency to experiment with alcohol is due largely to easy access and distorted perceptions of its negative effects. Adolescents may choose to experiment with alcohol to feel more independent or to alleviate peer pressure. Regardless of their reasoning, often young people participate in underage drinking without recognizing the consequences or health risks linked to underage alcohol use.

According to 2020 data released by the Rhode Island Department of Behavioral Healthcare, 69% of young adults, ages 18-20, drink and 10% of those surveyed had their first drink before the age of 13.

Many adults are asking what they can do. The good news is there are conversational skills parents and guardians can utilize that will help clarify misleading assumptions adolescents may have regarding alcohol use, provide them with accurate perceptions of possible effects, and allow them to make informed choices in the future.

Encourage Productive Communication By Asking Open-Ended Questions.

These are questions that require more than just a 'yes' or 'no' response. You can ask your child general questions regarding their thoughts about the effects of alcohol use without making them feel like they're in trouble. This strategy encourages young people to think about their future choices around drinking and allows adults to bring awareness to the possible negative consequences. Using open ended questions with your child will give you insight into what they already know about drinking and to clarify distorted perceptions they may have.

Practice Non-Judgmental Listening

Listening non-judgmentally is important as it helps youth feel heard, understood, and acknowledged. Do your best to keep



an open mind and hear their point of view without interrupting. Let your child know you understand. The teen years can be difficult and letting your child know they're being heard may be what they need to work through challenges and helps to cultivate honest communication in the moment and in the future. Reflect back what you are hearing. For example, you can say, 'I'm hearing that you feel stressed out, and that you think drinking helps people relax. Is that right?'

As adults, we expect young people to reach out to us when they're confused or curious about something so prominent in our culture. But many young people may not have the language or skills to tell the adults in their lives that they're experiencing internal conflict regarding substance use. It is our responsibility as parents and role models to foster and guide these conversations for our young people.

No Wrong Door Behavioral Health:

Meet Mental Health Promotion Coordinator Bridget Manning

Bridget Manning is a mental health promotion coordinator for Newport County Prevention Coalition's *No Wrong Door* behavioral health initiative. Bridget's professional goal is to educate others regarding mental health and substance-use disorders in an effort to decrease stigma and increase public awareness regarding recovery.

To accomplish these endeavors, Bridget has obtained her Mental Health First Aid instructor certification, with a focus on youth-based skills and will be teaching the course content for a variety of audiences. Additionally, she is utilizing the *Campaign to Change Direction* to increase public perception concerning the importance of prioritizing mental health — especially for young people.

Before joining Newport County Prevention Coalition in September of 2022, Bridget taught eighth grade English in Massachusetts for seventeen years. Her time in the classroom emphasized an increased need for prevention education tailored to adolescents, and Bridget decided to refocus her efforts back home here in Newport County.

A product of Tiverton Public Schools, Bridget earned her bachelor's degree in English Literature with a concentration in Secondary Education from Boston College and went on to complete a Master's Degree in English Literature from Bridgewater State University. She is currently working on a substance-use counseling certification and is eager to show others that recovery is possible for them.



Bridget Manning

Bridget lives in Portsmouth and loves the beach-life but appreciates international travel and experiencing new cultures when she can. If she isn't working or traveling, Bridget can be found in the gym where she enjoys weightlifting and yoga.

Tiverton & Little Compton Coalition Welcomes New Coordinator

The Towns of Tiverton and Little Compton are welcoming a new Prevention Coalition resource this month. Brian Gough comes to the Newport County Prevention Coalition organization with an extensive background in higher education administration and industry.

Originally from Indiana, Brian has been in New England for over 35 years. Previously at Keene State College, and Roger Williams University in residential community development, new student orientation, and volunteer programming. From his time working with students, Brian understands the importance for us all to find a connection within the work we do, the places we live, and friends and family with whom we spend our time. The ability to "affiliate" gives us purpose and meaning.



Brian Gough

After leaving higher education, Brian worked at American Power Conversion (APC) in West Kingston, RI as a human resource business partner and leader. There, he worked with a wide range of employees across the globe and traveled extensively with APC and later Schneider Electric who acquired the company at a critical point in its growth. He managed teams and supported employees in over 20 countries.

We welcome Brian to the Newport County Prevention Coalition family and look forward to his work within the communities of Little Compton and Tiverton to help support families and promote the health and wellbeing of our youth.

Dispose of unwanted Rx Meds safely to prevent them from getting into the wrong hands.

Prescription Drug Take Back Day
April 22, 2023 • 10AM – 2PM

Drop off expired/unused medications at your local Police Department.
No questions asked!

DEA NATIONAL Rx TAKEBACK





Hosts Greg and Polly talk this time with Brad Shear, CEO of Potter League for Animals on how you can get involved with your local animal shelter.

Hosts: What is the vision of the Potter League?

Brad: To the core we are about building and maintaining the human animal bond we feel like our sweet spot. It's where people connect with animals and we want those animals to be safe and healthy wherever they are in our community. So whether it's in an animal shelter where we are caring directly for them, or in a home where we help people and make sure that they can get what they need to take care of their own animals.



Brad Shear, CEO, Potter League for Animals

We just want all animals to be safe and healthy and everyone in our community that wants to have a pet, has the ability to have one. So we want to break down the barriers for people to be able to obtain a pet, but also to have the means to keep them in their home. We feel that the human animal bond is important; we evolved to be humans in part because our interactions with animals.

Our connection to pets is ingrained in us, and we are who we are because, in part, we have this connection to animals in the world. We feel if you want to have that connection, you should be able to, no matter who you are or what your living or your financial situation may be. A person should be able to have access to a pet, which is why we have programs like our food pantry and low cost veterinary care and spay and neuter services. We want to keep animals in homes and also keep them healthy when they are there.

Hear the full *Totally Preventable* podcast "How you can get involved with your local animal shelter" on all of your favorite podcast platforms.

What Every Parent Should Know About Youth Vaping



Newport County Prevention Coalition members have been meeting regularly to curate a meaningful and informative presentation for parents on youth vaping. Many local organizations have agreed to partner with the Coalition and present on the subject.

- Tobacco Free Rhode Island Youth Ambassadors will speak about the anatomy of an e-cigarette, why flavors appeal to youth, and how young people are getting access to vapes.
- Local pediatricians will be presenting on the effects of nicotine and vaping on the adolescent brain and body.
- There will be local data for each district on youth vaping rates, along with district policies associated with vaping, nicotine use, and THC use on campus.
- Local Student Assistance Councilors will be reporting as to what they are seeing and the in school resources available to students who are ready to quit or may be thinking about it.
- Take home resources will be available from the Lung Association and the Department of Health on cessation programs and other programs to help youth quit vaping.
- NCPC will have a table with the more popular vaping and nicotine products for parents to become familiar with and be able to see what available to our youth.

Presentations begin at 6:30. All are welcome at any location. Each location will be presenting on that district's data.

Wednesday, May 3rd — Portsmouth Public Library

Thursday, May 11th — Newport Public Library

Tuesday, May 16th — Middletown Town Hall

Thursday, May 18th — Tiverton Public Library

Thursday, May 25th — Little Compton Community Center

Getting Physically & Mentally Stronger Takes Time



Exercising has become a favorite pastime of mine, from running, playing tennis, and going to the gym. My reasons are similar to millions of others — to be healthy, both physically and mentally, to feel and look strong, and to be happy with how I look, and more importantly, how I feel about myself.

I was at the YMCA after a tough arm workout and was looking at myself in the mirror yesterday, only to be disappointed. I saw no huge change in my body or my strength definition, and this was incredibly disheartening. Before I could spiral down into “why am I doing this” and “I’ll never see the changes I want to see,” I took a step back. I reminded myself that I see myself in the mirror every single day. It’s impossible to see change when I’m constantly measuring it. Growth takes time.

This isn’t just about the gym. The saying “all good things take time” isn’t always true, but it certainly isn’t always wrong. To achieve the wonderful, there is struggle and there is time that goes into it. Patience and the confidence that things will change for the better is what gets me through tough spells.

So here’s a reminder — the blah feelings, hopelessness, sadness, guilt, anxiety, and so many more are not permanent. They will not last forever. They say that it’s about the journey, not the destination, but quite honestly, the journey can stink. If it does, let the destination be what keeps you going, what keeps you hopeful when life hits you hard.



Coalition Meetings

The Newport County Prevention Coalition is comprised of the Little Compton, Middletown, Newport, Portsmouth & Tiverton Coalitions.

Newport County Coalition Meetings

3rd Tuesday of every month
**10am – Portsmouth Office Park,
300 High Point Ave.**

Director: Rebecca Elwell
elwell@riprevention.org

Little Compton Coalition Meetings

2nd Tuesday of every month
1pm – Little Compton Town Hall

Coordinator: Brian Gough
littlecompton@riprevention.org

Middletown Coalition Meetings

Fourth Thursday of every month
**6pm – Middletown Town Hall,
Second floor conference room**

Director: Lori Verderosa
mpc@middletownri.com

Newport Coalition Meetings

3rd Monday of every month
1pm – Newport Police Station

Coordinator: Dawn Keys
newport@riprevention.org

Portsmouth Coalition Meetings

2nd Wednesday of every month
**8:30am – Portsmouth Office Park,
300 High Point Ave.**

portsmouth@riprevention.org

Tiverton Coalition Meetings

2nd Tuesday of every month
**10am – Holy Trinity Parish Hall,
1956 Main Road, Tiverton**

Coordinator: Brian Gough
tiverton@riprevention.org

