

Goal 1: Increase Community Collaboration

Launch *Be Responsible Merrimack!* Campaign

For example, strategies include:

- Conduct Focus Groups for each of our 12 sectors to engage more deeply in our work.
- Organize outreach campaign to new partners including PTO groups, broader network of faith leaders and Neighborhood Watch Groups.
- Enhance our social media presence to encourage membership and community support.
- Increase leadership opportunities for members through providing trainings, adding workgroups.
- Explore added services available from NH National Guard Counter-Drug Task Force to enhance coalition capacity beyond Kaizen Survey.
- Work with evaluator to link with other DFCs on initiatives of interest to multiple communities.

*The strategies below follow the federal guidelines of using **7 steps to promote change**: provide information, build skills, provide support, increase access/reduce barriers, provide incentives, adapt physical design, modify policies.*

Goal 2: Reduce Youth Substance Abuse

Alcohol: Data shows that our youth are self-medicating with alcohol and taking unsafe risks.

For example, strategies include:

- Conduct a resource assessment of services available in the region for high risk youth.
- Develop tools to promote community resources, where to get help for students and parents struggling with mental health and/or substance abuse issues and disseminate to PTOs, faith leaders, healthcare professionals, neighborhood groups and others.
- Provide community and school training on mental health issues for parents and professionals.
- Expand array of consequences for youth caught with alcohol in the community.
- Promote Merrimack Police's party tip line to residents, homeowners associations and realtors.
- Help develop training for School District staff on handling students with suicidal ideation.
- Host parent forums in multiple locations throughout community to foster participation.
- Help develop interfaith association to coordinate outreach efforts among 12 churches.

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Goal 2 continued: Reduce Youth Substance Abuse

Alcohol: Increase parents' and peers' awareness of the risks of underage drinking and increase communication skills toward becoming more responsible.

For example, strategies include:

- Disseminate YRBS and other data to showcase positive gains and continuing concerns.
- Develop, access and promote community support groups to help connect parents.
- Reinforce consequences of Social Host Law.
- Continue to work with liquor licensees and Liquor Commission on securing and posting Buyer Beware campaign materials.
- Share responsibilities of “bystanders” to students at k-12 schools.
- Coach students on positive communication skills and how to access help when needed.
- Increase positive role models on playgrounds and other community spaces within schools.

Prescription Drug Misuse: Reduce easy access through safe storage and disposal methods while also helping teens realize the danger.

For example, strategies include:

- Include safe storage and disposal methods in Be Responsible Merrimack! campaign materials.
- Develop PSAs on safe disposal and storage (i.e. Merrimack Police Drop Box, Take Backs).
- Explore option to have insurance companies cover lock boxes as durable medical equipment.
- Promote availability of 24/7 Drop Box and safe storage methods to residents in new locations.
- Work with driver education programs to teach students about dangers of drugged driving.

Prescription Drug Misuse: Address communication disconnect between parents and youth and concern that parent communication around drug use relaxes as youth grow older.

For example, strategies include:

- Develop social media options aimed at parents to share information and emerging trends.
- Link parents with communication tools/skills that enable them to say “NO” to their children
- Host parent forums with police to share concerns and positive parenting tips targeting PTO groups and neighborhood associations.
- Present to residents during Merrimack Police’s Citizens Academy featuring coalition efforts and to engage new partners/members.
- Include parent/youth communication options in Be Responsible Merrimack! campaign materials.
- Develop training sessions to help reduce stress among parents around raising children/teens.