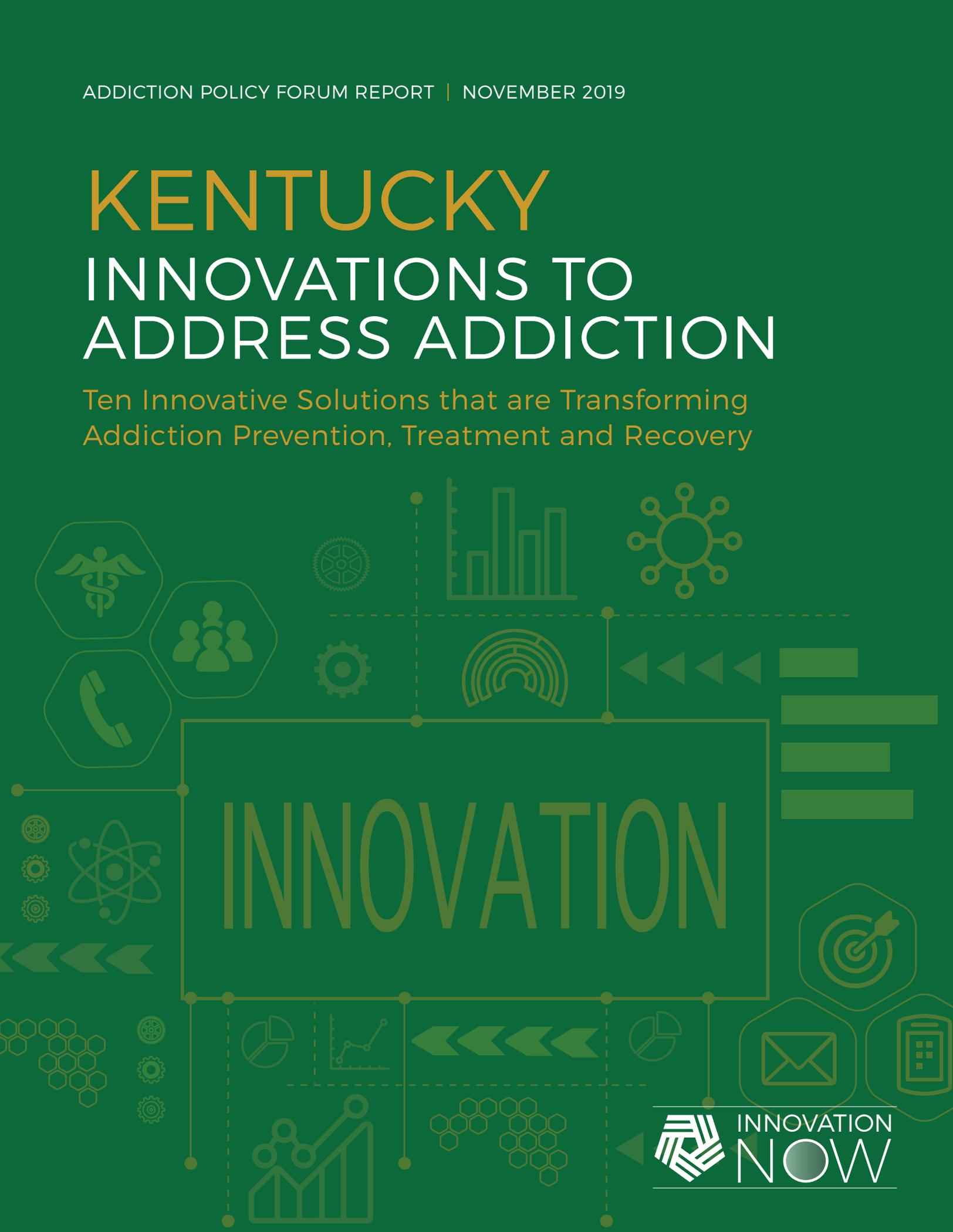


# KENTUCKY INNOVATIONS TO ADDRESS ADDICTION

Ten Innovative Solutions that are Transforming  
Addiction Prevention, Treatment and Recovery



INNOVATION



# INNOVATION NOW

Innovation Now re-imagines how we can address addiction as a nation. A project of Addiction Policy Forum, the initiative showcases innovative programs and interventions from every sector that are actively transforming the field of addiction across the country.

Many thanks to our partners for their support.

- Pharmaceutical Research and Manufacturers of America (PhRMA)
- Faces & Voice of Recovery (FAVOR)
- The National District Attorneys Association (NDAA)
- The National Association for Children of Addiction (NACoA)
- Young People in Recovery (YPR)
- The Police, Treatment, and Community Collaborative (PTACC)
- Casey Family Programs
- Treatment Alternatives for Safe Communities (TASC)

By engaging entrepreneurs, leaders, healthcare providers, and experts across the U.S., the Innovation Now initiative aims to increase transformative ideas to prevent and treat substance use disorders and support recovery.





Dear Reader,

Kentucky is famous for much more than fast horses and feisty bourbon. Its agricultural products, services industry and manufacturing activity are known across the country. Yet whether it's the white fence splendor of the bluegrass, the hustle and bustle of Louisville, or the dozens of small towns stretching from the mountains to the Mississippi River, it faces the same challenge confronting the rest of the country.

It's also home to serious addiction issues.

But there's a reason for hope. Because folks in the Bluegrass State are summoning its innovative spirit and devising new ways to help people seeking to overcome addiction. Innovators across Kentucky are tackling it with compassion, creativity, and a can-do attitude. And that's producing inspiring results.

The Innovation Now initiative recognizes innovators and leaders across the multiple sectors needed at the table to address addiction—prevention, treatment, recovery, child welfare, criminal justice, law enforcement and health care—leaders who are creating solutions and driving change. As the founder of Addiction Policy Forum, it's my pleasure to work with patients, families, community members, and state and local leaders who are passionate about solving addiction. As a person whose family has been devastated by this disease, I share the Addiction Policy Forum's mission to eliminate addiction as a major health problem.

It's an honor to recognize these innovators in Kentucky who are leading the way. In the following pages, you'll learn about their outstanding work that's improving our response to addiction and saving lives.



*Jessica Nickel*

Jessica Hulseley Nickel

Founder,  
Addiction Policy Forum



# OPERATION UNITE (UNLAWFUL NARCOTICS INVESTIGATIONS, TREATMENT AND EDUCATION)

LONDON, KY

It started with a newspaper's investigation into drug misuse and abuse in Southern and Eastern Kentucky. The series of reports found that many areas with the highest per capita prescribing of prescription pills in the country were located within Kentucky's 5th Congressional District, which includes the poorest parts of the Commonwealth.

"We were losing hundreds and hundreds of people," says Nancy Hale, Operation UNITE's president and CEO. "We have really lost two generations to this problem."

In response, Congressman Hal Rogers (who represents the 5th District) assembled a wide array of people – including elected officials, the faith-based community, school officials, families, law enforcement personnel, and treatment providers – to brainstorm a coordinated response. They launched Operation UNITE in April 2003. It was the nation's first three-pronged, grassroots, holistic approach to combating the issue of drug addiction by bringing together law enforcement, treatment, and prevention.

That was nearly 17 years ago. UNITE has grown a lot, and adjusted its focus as needed over time to respond to the epidemic. Yet, the group remains at the forefront of assisting people who need help.

Youth prevention is UNITE's primary focus. Age-appropriate initiatives target youth throughout their school years. These include: Internet safety, drug awareness and prevention instruction, and health decision-making programs for elementary students; a one-of-a-kind mobile prevention unit emphasizing the impact of impaired and distracted driving for middle and high school students; and has just initiated a program about vaping.

UNITE also offers school-based anti-drug clubs and special sports-related programs – archery,



## INNOVATIONS TO PREVENT SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER

Effective prevention contributes to significant societal cost-savings and dramatically reduces the prevalence of both substance use and mental illness.

The best way to prevent the development of substance use disorders is to delay the age of drug and alcohol use initiation while the adolescent brain is still developing. It is also critical to intervene early when a person is misusing substances so that risky use does not progress into an addiction.

Evidence-based prevention programs prevent or delay the onset of substance use as well as other behavioral health problems. Prevention should also address individual and environmental factors that contribute to substance use disorders.



Folks have heard the prevention message from Operation UNITE for more than 16 years now. The first young people who participated are now young adults in their communities. They are raising families, they are moms and dads and teachers now. And, they are making a difference.

– Nancy Hale

basketball, fishing, and golf – to emphasize fun, drug-free alternatives. Its signature initiative, Camp UNITE, brings hundreds of middle school-aged youth together on a college campus for a week each summer. Camp UNITE is comprised of a variety of action-packed activities designed to develop leadership and communication skills, promote teamwork and problem solving, instill confidence and trust, and – perhaps most important – let youth know they do not have to face difficult situations alone.

In addition, UNITE provides high school seniors with “I Am UNITE” scholarships for post-secondary education. A total of 157 scholarships have been presented in the past seven years. Recipients serve as “UNITE Ambassadors” on their college campuses. “We once had an intern who was an honor student at Eastern Kentucky University,” Hale remembers. “He said there was a lot of drinking and drug use on campus. Then he noticed there was also a group that didn’t participate; all of them were from Eastern Kentucky and had been exposed to UNITE programs.”

More than 267,000 youth have participated in UNITE-sponsored youth prevention/education activities since UNITE’s inception. This number does not include participants in UNITE Coalition-sponsored youth programs. Coalitions, one in each of its 32-county service region, are the heartbeat of UNITE, working to implement education and treatment initiatives while supporting the organization’s investigative component.

Operation UNITE’s law enforcement component focuses on investigations. Detectives conduct criminal drug investigations, many of which originate from out-of-state drug trafficking rings, assist in the prosecution of drug traffickers, and supports local departments with drug investigations. But their scope is much broader. Officers manage a medication dropbox program, respond to a drug tip line, are engaged with helping individuals receive treatment, support recovery through drug courts, promote the UNITE Treatment Voucher Program, educate youth and adults about the dangers of drugs, assist with youth prevention initiatives, and support families who have been impacted because of a loved one’s substance use. UNITE partners with the Kentucky State Police to support the Angel Initiative – which has enabled more than 150 people to obtain long-term treatment by walking into one of the 16 posts across Kentucky.

UNITE’s treatment initiatives include providing more than 4,500 individuals with vouchers so they could enter a long-term, residential treatment program. Staff responds to more than 1,000 inquiries each month connecting those with a substance use disorder and their families to treatment and support options. UNITE also staffs Kentucky’s statewide call center to connect individuals to resources for substance use disorders.



Operation UNITE created the annual Rx Drug Abuse and Heroin Summit, the largest annual gathering of professionals from “federal to family” working to find solutions that address the prescription and illicit drug misuse epidemic. More than 3,500 individuals attended the event in 2019, including the President and First Lady, as well as directors of most federal agencies focused on the drug epidemic, leading professionals and advocates, and Congress.

There’s not enough space to list all of Operation UNITE’s many activities and programs – its compassion and passion know no bounds. But what’s most exciting is the impact the organization is making on communities across Eastern Kentucky and the Appalachian region.

“Folks have heard the prevention message from Operation UNITE for more than 16 years now,” Hale concludes. “The first young people who participated are now young adults in their communities. They are raising families, they are moms and dads and teachers now. And, they are making a difference.”

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## NUMBERS:

- Launched in April 2003.
  - 267,000 youth have been involved in UNITE-sponsored programs.
  - 4,500 vouchers worth \$17.6 million provided for long-term, residential treatment.
  - 31,443 pounds (15.72 tons) of medications collected through take-back initiatives.
  - 23,000 calls received on anonymous Drug Tip Line
- 

## SUMMARY:

- Operation UNITE brings a unique three-pronged approach to combating drug misuse, abuse and diversion across southern and eastern Kentucky by uniting law enforcement, treatment, and prevention efforts.
  - Prevention initiatives seek to empower youth to remain free from all addictive substances – including drugs, alcohol, tobacco, and marijuana – and to become leaders within their schools and communities. This is achieved by developing consistent drug prevention, intervention, and leadership programs from kindergarten through adult, and by providing drug-free, youth-targeted activities.
  - Operation UNITE’s law enforcement efforts include partnerships with local, state and federal agencies for drug investigations, as well as being active participants in prevention and treatment initiatives.
  - Treatment initiatives include providing financial assistance for those who can’t afford long-term, residential treatment, operating a state-wide treatment help line, partnering with Drug Court and the Angel Initiative, and supporting programs that help ensure successful transition from treatment to long-term recovery.
  - Operation UNITE created the annual Rx Drug Abuse & Heroin Summit, and now serves as its Educational Advisor.
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1856  
D.D. 1888



# COURTROOMS TO CLASSROOMS MOREHEAD, KY

COUNTY NAMED 1856

For Judge John Rowan, 1775-1843.  
Born Penn., came in 1783 to Ky.  
Admitted bar, 1795. Member second  
Ky. Constitutional Convention in  
1799. Sec. of State, 1803-08. State  
Legislature, 10 years. Court of  
Appeals, 1809-21. U.S. Senate from  
1824 to 30. First Movement of  
Ky. Historical Society, 1850-51.  
Buried at his home, Federal Hill.  
"My Old Kentucky Home," Bardstov.

788

It's one of the more memorable sports movie quotes. Borne out of frustration, Jerry Maguire pours his heart into his unreasonable client, Rod Tidwell, and begs, "Help me, help you." Tidwell responds hysterically, but he gets it, and the partnership blossoms from there.

Five times every school year, all 8th graders in Rowan County hear an important message from a guest speaker that echoes the plea, "Help me, help you."

That's when Courtrooms to Classrooms is in session. It teaches students how to stay on the right path and the consequences of both bad and good choices.

Between 80 and 100 students at a time are instructed during social studies class. "We bring in a wide variety of speakers," says Cecil Watkins, Rowan County Attorney. "They include elected officials, people in recovery, and law enforcement. We once heard from a retired law officer who was affected by a drunk driver. We brought in a woman who's been in recovery for eight years. She told the students, 'I was a monster, but I turned my life around.' The students often tell us about people they'd like to hear from, too."

Repercussions resulting from poor decisions are discussed. Because of that, students also learn the who, what, when, and where of how the judicial system works.

"When we began Courtrooms to Classrooms here in Rowan County 2003, it was believed we were the first middle school in the country to implement it," Watkins notes. "Now, 16 years later, the high school asked us to bring it there."

You might be surprised to learn that the curriculum was started by the Coors Brewing Company. Promoters of responsible drinking among adults only, company executives were impacted by the Columbine shooting in 1999, and they wanted to be part of a movement to encourage young people to make good decisions. The former County Attorney William Roberts, who launched the program, won the Kentucky Juvenile Justice Attorney of the Year for this work. Instructors often hear kids say they've been impacted negatively by addiction; some come up after class to share how addiction has affected their young lives. A social worker is brought in to explain the resources that are available.

Other topics are addressed as well, including cybersecurity, taking and sharing explicit photos, and vaping. "We just encourage good decision-making," Watkins says. "The program teaches youth not to be afraid of the law. We tell them, 'We're here to help you help yourself.'"





The program teaches youth not to be afraid of the law. We tell them, 'We're here to help you help yourself.'

– Cecil Watkins

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## NUMBERS:

- Program began in 2003.
  - 80-100 8th graders are instructed annually.
- 

## SUMMARY:

- Courtrooms to Classrooms teaches students how to go on the right path and the consequences of bad and good choices.
  - Speakers include elected officials, people in recovery, and law enforcement. Social workers also explain available resources.
  - Students learn how the judicial system works.
-





KENTUCKY START (SOBRIETY  
TREATMENT AND RECOVERY TEAM)  
FRANKFORT, KY

This Kentucky program actually has its roots in neighboring Ohio, where the Sobriety Treatment and Recovery Team (START) began in Cleveland during the depths of the 1990s cocaine epidemic.

“We eventually began seeing the opioid epidemic’s effects here,” says Erin Smead, program director. “So in 2006, people banded together and formed Kentucky START.”

Currently operating in seven counties around the Commonwealth, START is a child welfare-based model for families with young children, co-occurring substance misuse, and child maltreatment. It partners with child welfare and behavioral health workers to pair a social worker with a family member.

“START gets involved quickly when we are notified of a problem,” Smead says. “From the time a case is assigned, it moves on a rapid timeline.”

The team meets the family and shares in decision-making. The first priority is making sure the child is safe. Services are coordinated with a local behavioral health agency. A full holistic assessment of the parents (substance misuse, mental health, and trauma) is conducted within 48 hours, to get them treatment services quickly.

Family mentors play a significant role in early engagement. “We also utilize peer support, where an individual in long-term recovery, who’s had their own experiences, can walk them through the process,” Smead adds. “We pick up the parents and drive them to the facility for their treatment session. So much positive engagement happens during that car ride.”

START assists in making safety plans to keep the child in the home while the parents are moving through the recovery process. “We want to build on protective factors for the family, such as having a sober caregiver as part of the plan. We want to provide services to the entire family.”

Cases are open for 14 months on average. Sometimes courts are involved.



## SOLUTIONS TO HELP CHILDREN IMPACTED BY SUBSTANCE USE DISORDER

According to the National Alliance for Drug Endangered Children, over nine million children in the U.S. live in a home with at least one parent who uses illicit drugs. These children are at an increased risk for depression, suicide, poverty, delinquency, anxiety, homelessness, and substance misuse. Many children who have a family in active addiction live in kinship or foster care.



When you look at the number of families coming into child welfare with a risk factor of substance misuse, speed matters. The younger the child, the higher the risk factor. There are clocks that are ticking. It's essential to capture the family during the crisis period in order to get the best possible outcome.

– Erin Smead

The program has proven to be very effective at improving outcomes for mothers. “Sobriety” in the START context is defined as abstinence from alcohol and other drugs as indicated by staff observation and drug test results, as well as advancement in substance use treatment; engaging in community-based recovery supports; and improving parental capacity to care for children. Mothers who participated in START achieved sobriety at nearly twice the rate of mothers treated without START (66 percent and 37 percent, respectively). The program has also proven to be effective at keeping children at home. Children in families served by START were half as likely to be placed in state custody as compared with children in a matched control group (21 percent and 42 percent, respectively). This outcome also results in cost effectiveness—for every \$1.00 spent on START, Kentucky avoided spending \$2.22 on foster care.

Time is of the essence in handling each case. “When you look at the number of families coming into child welfare with a risk factor of substance misuse, speed matters,” Smead says in conclusion. “The younger the child, the higher the risk factor. There are clocks that are ticking. It’s essential to capture the family during the crisis period in order to get the best possible outcome.”

Which is exactly the quick and effective re-START a family struggling with addiction needs.

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## NUMBERS:

- KY START began in 2007.
- Children in families served by START were half as likely to be placed in state custody as compared with children in a matched control group.
- For every \$1.00 spent on START, Kentucky avoided spending \$2.22 on foster care.

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## SUMMARY:

- Kentucky Sobriety Treatment and Recovery Teams (START) is a Child Protective Services program for families with parental substance use and child abuse/neglect that helps parents achieve sobriety and keeps children with their parents when it is possible and safe.
  - START is an integrated intervention that pairs a social worker with a family mentor to work collaboratively with a small number of families, providing peer support, intensive treatment and child welfare services.
  - The program’s goal is to keep children safe and reduce placement of these children in state custody, keeping children with their families when appropriate.
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DV8 KITCHEN  
LEXINGTON, KY

Mark Twain said, "An antidote to prejudice is travel." If you go to a foreign country, you eat their food, talk with their people, and immerse yourself in a new culture. You start to have a better understanding of their way of life. Twain's wisdom works as an antidote to the stigma surrounding addiction, too.

So says Rob Perez. He has been in the food service business his entire adult life. He currently owns three restaurants in Lexington, Kentucky. As the addiction crisis swept the country, it impacted restaurants like Rob's as well. He would catch people doing heroin in the bathroom. He lost 16 employees to accidental overdoses. Sixteen.

Rob and his wife, Diane, talked about the vicious cycle of addiction. People in recovery can't get a job or can't keep a job, and oftentimes they can't secure a home. So Diane asked her husband an important question, "Why shouldn't we help?"

Despite being in recovery himself, at the time Rob didn't understand addiction as the chronic, relapsing brain disease that it is. He did not want people in recovery working in his kitchen. He worried that it would be bad for business... "I'm the poster child for stigma," said Rob. "I didn't want to do it. I was the problem that I speak of."

But Diane was persistent. She had traveled to that difficult world called addiction, seen it first hand, and also witnessed recovery - her husband's recovery. "I have the business brains; my wife has the heart of gold."

They created DV8 Kitchen. A restaurant on a mission for good, and one that would hire people directly from recovery centers. DV8 Kitchen has three conditions for work. One, employees have to stay in a recovery house. Two, they have to show up to work. And three, they have to provide DV8 with drug screen results. They also need to be



## INNOVATIONS IN THE WORKFORCE

Employers can play a major role in addressing addiction. Of the 21 million Americans with an untreated substance use disorder, 75% are in the workforce.

More than half of employers say they have been negatively affected by substance use disorder, costing the American economy over \$1 trillion.

Substance use disorders cost employers over \$80 billion a year in lost productivity, healthcare, and job turnover.



When you're average and you hire someone who is trying to

recreate how they live, if you show them average you're asking them to be average. If you show them 20 percent better than average they're going to learn how to work 20 percent better.

– Rob Perez





ST BRUNCH EVERYDAY LUNCH

D&R KITCHEN

BRIOCHE  
BUNS

CARAMEL  
CARAMEL  
+ PECANS

CLASSIC  
CREAM  
CHEESE

SOURDOUGH  
BREAD

open about their journeys, consider allowing contact with their social worker or case manager, and share their plans for long-term recovery.

DV8 is now thriving. Out of their 24 employees, 23 are in recovery. The average tenure rate and turnover rate are both a third better than the national average. DV8 Kitchen is now the 40th highest rated restaurant in the country, according to Yelp. The DV8 model is living proof of the statistic that a person is 75 percent more likely to get help if it comes from a boss than if it comes from family. The job helps validate the recovery. "When you're average and you hire someone who is trying to recreate how they live, if you show them average you're asking them to be average. If you show them 20 percent better than average they're going to learn how to work 20 percent better." It doesn't hurt that DV8 also pays 20 percent more than the local competition.

To deviate is to stray from the standard course, and Rob and Diane wanted to convey that idea with addiction. "You can deviate from going down to going up. We want to show that folks here at DV8 have an unlimited capacity for success," said Rob. DV8 employees not only cook and serve food, but they interact with guests, and share their stories, allowing the community to see what recovery truly looks like, to see their world in a new way.

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## NUMBERS:

- 23 out of 24 employees are in recovery.
- After 2 years, the average tenure rate and turnover rate are better than the national average.
- According to Yelp, DV8 Kitchen is now the 40th highest rated restaurant in the country.

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## SUMMARY:

- DV8 partners with five different treatment providers, and employs people in recovery to validate their journey, give them a purpose, and the ability to succeed.
  - The restaurant holds employees to a standard 20% higher than the average, and pays them 20% more, to create quality work and quality people.
  - DV8 Kitchen employees have authentic and meaningful working relations with one another and build rapport with guests to break the stigma surrounding addiction.
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FREEDOM HOUSE  
LOUISVILLE, KY

Back in 1993, a serious situation existed. The unique needs of moms with children were preventing many from seeking treatment. The recovery community realized it was too great a barrier to expect a woman to choose between caring for her children and undergoing treatment. She should have the freedom to have both.

So Freedom House was born. "It was the first in the region to recognize the problems parenting women faced and to allow them to bring their kids to treatment," says Jennifer Hancock, president and CEO of Volunteers of America Mid-States, which operates the facility. "That also promotes attachment and bonding between child and mother."

Freedom House quietly began providing services to eight to ten women at a time. In 2014, as the opioid crisis worsened, there was a dramatic spike in moms in addiction needing help. Demand for services skyrocketed. Freedom House tripled its capacity by opening three locations.

Women come in while pregnant, as early as possible to keep them through pregnancy. Transitional housing is also provided to help them land softly after treatment is completed. There's no age limit or restriction on the number of children each mother can bring. They can stay for an additional two years, provided they're working or in school, and they have access to therapists and mentorship.

"We aren't just treating addiction's symptoms," Hancock explains. "We take a trauma-informed approach to get to the root cause of their addiction. Parenting classes, psychosocial care, linkage to high risk prenatal care, and MAT are provided. We also feature a highly clinical, interdisciplinary medical team and peer support specialists for onsite support."

## INNOVATIONS IN HEALTHCARE

It is crucial for people to have access to a system of care that has adequate capacity to provide all levels of treatment and address all levels of severity for substance use disorders.

In 2016, according to the National Survey on Drug Use and Health, 284,000 Kentucky residents had a substance use disorder. Of those, 246,000 did not receive treatment from a specialty substance use disorder treatment provider.\* Delays in treatment access can mean an increased risk for death and other harms associated with substance misuse.

Substance use disorders (SUDs) remain one of the only illnesses that is treated outside of general health care systems. Because of this, there is very little, if any, communication between specialty SUD treatment providers and primary care doctors. This affects the overall quality of care and health outcomes of the patient.

Evidence-based SUD treatment integrated into healthcare systems helps to close the gap between the number of people who need treatment for an SUD and the number of people who actually receive it.

\* Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, 2016 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, Tables 22 and 25, available at <https://www.samhsa.gov/data/sites/default/files/NSDUHsaeTotal2016/NSDUHsaeTotals2016.pdf>.



For every one woman we treat, we save two lives.

We empower women to bring other children. This

enhances treatment because they don't have to worry and stress about who is caring for their kids. It's a multiplier effect. It's a treatment program for our youngest clients as well. We provide primary prevention for them. So everyone is learning and healing together.

– Jennifer Hancock







“For every one woman we treat, we save two lives,” Hancock points out. “We empower women to bring other children. This enhances treatment because they don’t have to worry and stress about who is caring for their kids. It’s a multiplier effect. It’s a treatment program for our youngest clients as well. We provide primary prevention for them. So everyone is learning and healing together.”

This is what Freedom House means to Megan, who went through the program. “I came and I was scared to death. No one wanted to take me because of my pregnancy, and if it weren’t for Volunteers of America, I would have been out on the street. I needed a facility like this to tell me to get up and take a shower, wash my clothes, make my bed. I’d been living on the streets for so long, I need someone to tell me how to live. For the first time, I found it more rewarding to be present for my child than to chase that next drink. There are many other people out there with stories like mine who deserve to be heard and loved.” Who deserve to know what freedom from addiction feels like.

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## NUMBERS:

- Started in 1993.
- Originally provided services to 8-10 women at a time.
- Freedom House now has three locations.

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## SUMMARY:

- Freedom House is a residential treatment program for pregnant women and women with young children.
  - There’s no age limit or limit to number of children mothers bring. They can stay for an additional two years, provided they’re working or in school, and they have access to therapists and mentorship.
  - A trauma-informed approach is taken to get the root cause of addiction. Parenting classes, psychosocial care, linkage to high risk prenatal care, and MAT are provided. A highly clinical, interdisciplinary medical team and peer support specialists provide onsite support.
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KENTON COUNTY DETENTION CENTER  
COR-12 JAIL SUBSTANCE ABUSE PROGRAM  
FRANKFORT, KY



Terry Carl didn't like what he saw. Addiction was spreading rampantly through his native Northern Kentucky, bringing death and destruction with it. As the Kenton County jailer, he teamed up with Addiction Services Director Jason Merrick to do something about it.

Instead of sending people off to treatment, they brought treatment to the jail. The Kenton County Detention Center's Comprehensive Opioid Response with 12 Steps Jail Substance Abuse Program (COR-12 JSAP) promised to keep addiction from sapping the lives of inmates.

"It had the clients and it had the beds, so it just made good treatment sense to implement programs at the jail," Merrick says. "A brick and mortar inpatient treatment facility costs millions, maybe even tens of millions of dollars to build, and we already have that. We have the beds, we have the food—it's a state-of-the-art facility and everyone is here being taken care of. All we had to do was plug in these social services. It was a no-brainer and an easy fit. The entire jail staff is determined to change the way we view and respond to addiction."

COR-12 JSAP works closely with circuit and district court judges to determine eligibility. A typical participant is in custody for at least 90 days (for stabilization, to get used to medication); gets out of jail (instead of going on to serve a prison sentence); and their probation is contingent on aftercare and remaining committed when the going gets tough.

Initially, 70 of the center's 600 beds were allocated for the program. The program continued to grow and now, 150 beds are dedicated to substance use disorder treatment.

COR-12 JSAP includes a diverse array of therapies as well as educational, life skills training, and 12 step programs. MAT is used in conjunction with cognitive and behavioral

## INNOVATIONS IN CRIMINAL JUSTICE RESPONSES TO ADDICTION

First responders, law enforcement and criminal justice personnel are increasingly at the center of the addiction issue—from being first at the scene of an overdose to responding to the lack of resources and limited treatment options for individuals with substance use disorders who are in our jails and criminal justice systems.

About 63 percent of people in jail, 58 percent of people in state prison, and 45 percent of people in federal prison have substance use disorders, compared to just 5 percent of the U.S. adult population.\* Data indicates that law enforcement and probation see an increasing number of individuals struggling with addiction. Criminal justice systems equipped with training, services and early detection tools create opportunities to stop the progression of the disease.

\* Jennifer Bronson, Jessica Stroop, Stephanie Zimmer & Marcus Berzofsky, Drug Use, Dependence, And Abuse Among State Prisoners And Jail Inmates, 2007-2009, Bureau of Justice Statistics, Office of Justice Programs, U.S. Department of Justice (2017), <http://www.bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=5966>.



A brick and mortar inpatient treatment facility costs millions, maybe even tens of millions of dollars

to build, and we already have that. We have the beds, we have the food—it's a state-of-the-art facility and everyone is here being taken care of. All we had to do was plug in these social services. It was a no-brainer and an easy fit. The entire jail staff is determined to change the way we view and respond to addiction.

– Jason Merrick



therapy for detoxification, stabilization, and maintenance. Services are also specialized for pregnant women. In 2018, they partnered with the Hazelden Betty Ford Foundation to expand services.

When participants with opioid use disorder have completed 30 days of therapeutic programming, they can volunteer to receive injectable naltrexone or buprenorphine. Participants are connected with a clinician pre-release who helps them with Medicaid enrollment and connects them with an appropriate community provider to ensure continuity of treatment.

COR-12 JSAP has funding for 200 clients per year. So far, some 260 have gone into aftercare.

“We forget what the meaning of corrections is,” Merrick says. “We want to take this time to help our clients while incarcerated. Each of our clients wouldn’t have had this opportunity if it weren’t for incarceration. There’s life, there’s bills, there’s kids. When you walk into the treatment dorm, you feel an immense sense of gratitude.”

He tells the story of a young man who came through with a long history of substance misuse. “You could see the progression in his mug shots; his cheeks grew sunken, there was weight loss, blemishes, and sores. The third time he went through the program, it stuck. He became a different person, someone I’d never met before. He got out and is working out and put the weight back on. Now he’s working part-time and going to school. He comes back to the jail to share his experience of strength and hope with other clients. Human life is delicate. We need to use all the resources available to protect it.”

“We hope this kind of program can be a catalyst,” Sanders concludes. “With the right partners, this can be implemented anywhere regardless of size and funding.” With SAP, they have witnessed hundreds of lives repaired, strengthened, and renewed.



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## NUMBERS:

- Initially, 70 of the jail's 600 beds were allocated for SAP.
  - It's now grown to 150.
  - SCOR-12 JSAP currently has funding for 200 graduates per year.
  - 260 have gone on to receive aftercare.
- 

## SUMMARY:

- The Kenton County Detention Center's COR-12 Jail Substance Abuse Program provides in-jail treatment to clients.
  - COR-12 JSAP works closely with circuit and district court judges to determine eligibility. A typical participant is in custody for at least 90 days; probation is contingent on aftercare and remaining committed.
  - It includes a diverse array of therapies as well as educational, life skills training, and 12 step programs.
  - MAT is used in conjunction with cognitive and behavioral therapy for detoxification, stabilization, and maintenance. Services are also specialized for pregnant women.
  - When participants with opioid use disorder have completed 30 days of therapeutic programming, they can volunteer to receive injectable naltrexone or buprenorphine.
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HEART (HEROIN EXPEDITED  
ADDICTION RECOVERY TREATMENT)  
COVINGTON, KY

As the opioid crisis worsened, many judges in Kentucky began noticing a disturbing pattern. A growing number of criminal defendants were overdosing and dying before their cases could be concluded. The judges figured keeping them behind bars and alive was better than the alternative. So, they increased cash bonds. That sent the jail population soaring. Clearly, another approach was needed.

“It was a waste of money and time,” says Commonwealth Attorney Rob Sanders. “Instead of warehousing people in jail, we needed to get them out of cells and into treatment on the front end, not on the back end.”

Defense attorney Burr Travis made a unique suggestion to Sanders. Why not get defendants evaluated and into drug treatment as soon as their case begins instead of when its over?! That way they spend the months it takes a case to get through the legal system in treatment instead of in jail. With that, the HEART (Heroin Expedited Addiction Recovery Treatment) program had its first pulse.

HEART quickly gets defendants facing low-level, non-violent offenses (mostly Possession of a Controlled Substance cases) into intensive drug treatment. The program is open to people with drug possession charges and is strictly voluntary. Counselors conduct evaluations at the jail between the arrest and preliminary hearing. They look at history, background, resources, family, insurance, and housing status to determine the best fit for treatment. A recommendation is made to the judge.



Defendants are released without having to post a cash bond.

“We’re not just turning them loose,” Sanders points out. “On Thursdays, they put everyone on a bus to provide door to door service to treatment.”

Over time, the program has expanded to let other people in on a discretionary basis if it’s clear their crime was due to an addiction.

The outcome of every case is individually tailored to each defendant but those who are compliant with treatment receive improved plea offers which usually include shorter sentences and shorter periods of supervision. Sometimes charges are reduced or dismissed altogether.

“When we first started, 90 percent would agree to the program,” Sanders says. “Today, it’s practically 100% because the defendants and their attorneys know the benefits. Hundreds, if not thousands, of people have participated in it.”

What’s next for HEART? The program also wants to remove barriers to employment, job training, housing,



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– Rob Sanders









and childcare. It recently partnered with Life Learning Center to help with that ongoing goal of putting the heart in rehabilitation and recovery.

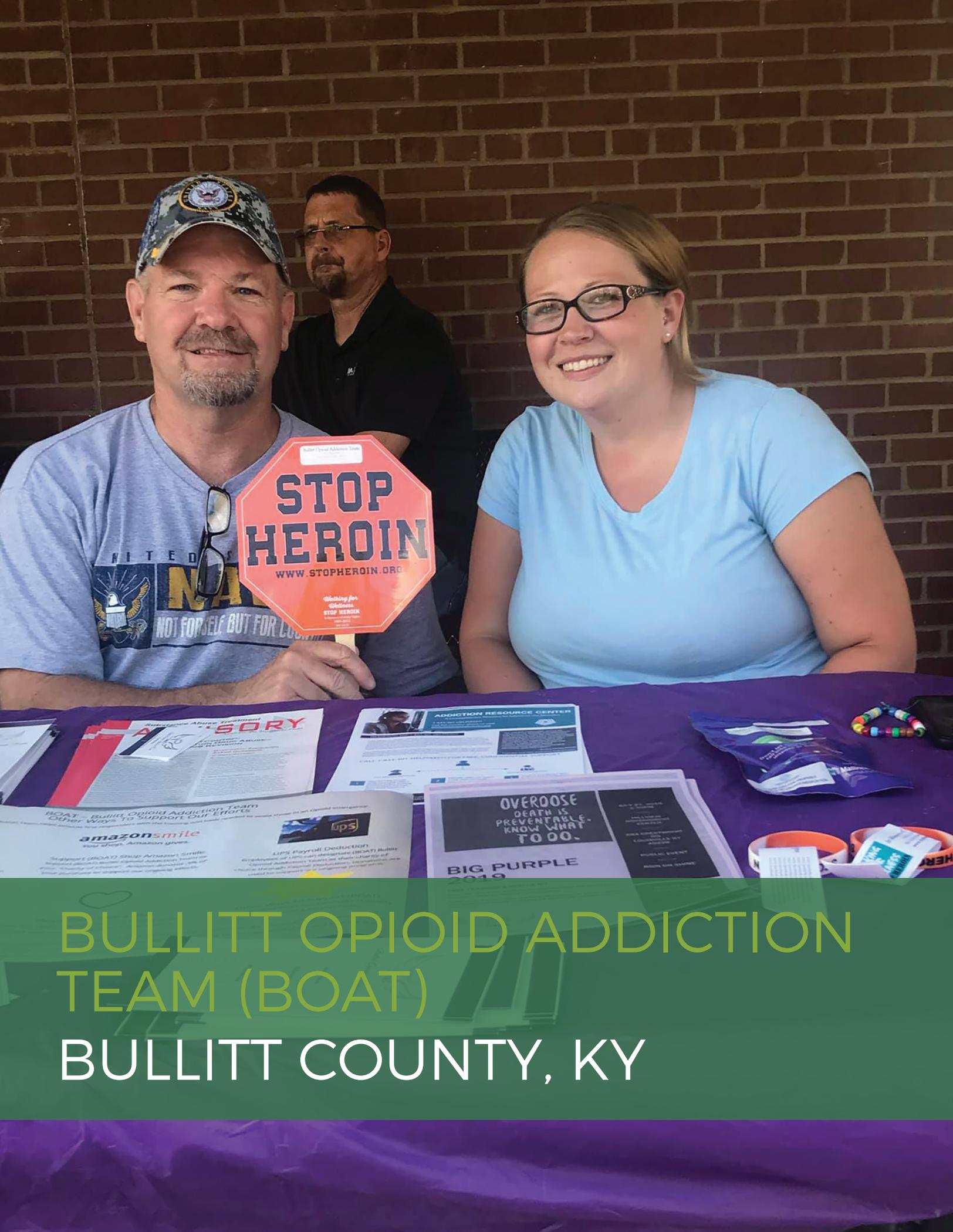
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## NUMBERS:

- Program started in 2015.
  - When first started, 90% agreed to the program. Now it's nearly 100%.
  - Hundreds, if not thousands, of people have participated.
- 

## SUMMARY:

- HEART's goal is getting people who face low-level, non-violent offenses out of jail and into meaningful, intensive drug treatment as soon as possible.
  - It's open to people with drug possession charges only and is strictly voluntary.
  - Counselors conduct in-jail evaluations that look at history, background, resources, family, insurance, and housing status to determine the best fit for treatment. A recommendation is made to the judge, and defendants are released without having to post a cash bond.
  - Those who comply with treatment often receive improved plea offers which usually include shorter sentences and periods of supervision, and sometimes reduced charges.
-



# BULLITT OPIOID ADDICTION TEAM (BOAT) BULLITT COUNTY, KY

“Thank God my story doesn’t start with ‘I lost my son to addiction,’” says Jennifer “Punkin” Stepp. While her story ends with her son in recovery, it doesn’t mean the road was easy. Stepp’s son, Sammy, was introduced to drugs at an early age. As his addiction deepened, Stepp began to look for help in her community. However, resources in Bullitt County were few. “After a while, you start getting tired of people saying you are a bad parent or your child is defective. Eventually, you start to get angry,” says Stepp. She started to travel to other parts of Kentucky, and eventually to other parts of the country, to find out about what other people were doing.

Naloxone was what others were doing. Stepp decided she wanted to bring naloxone to Bullitt County. She was among those that worked to ensure the successful passage of Senate Bill 192, expanding naloxone access to the public, paving the way for a mission. However, educating the community was an uphill battle as many still viewed naloxone as “enabling.” Stepp remembers her first public event vividly. “The event was on March 11, 2015. It wasn’t very crowded but we were able to give out naloxone. Key people in the community, including a state representative and the local jailer, showed up. The event was the first step to breaking the silence.” This was also the beginning of the Bullitt Opioid Addiction Team (BOAT). The team consists of impacted family members, people in recovery, and local community members.

After that first naloxone training, BOAT continues to offer it. Then, Stepp’s 8-year-old daughter, Audrey, came to her with an interesting request. She wanted to learn how to use naloxone. “She said, ‘If something happened to my brother, I would want to save him,’” remembers Stepp. “Why not?,” she thought. “This can be a conversation starter for kids and also help to reduce the stigma of addiction.” So, she taught Audrey how to use naloxone. She snapped a picture of Audrey measuring naloxone into a syringe and put it on her Facebook. A reporter picked up on it. The response was immediate. Some people called it child abuse and criticized Stepp. Others praised her for teaching a child how to save a life. The attention just made her want to train more kids. Now, when she sees



## INNOVATIVE APPROACHES TO RECOVERY SUPPORT

A community that is recovery ready provides the entire continuum of support for people in or seeking recovery and their families. A community focused on recovery also promotes prevention by having a variety of substance-free community events and activities to promote health and well-being for all ages. Twenty-three million Americans are in recovery from a substance use disorder today.



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– Jennifer "Punkin" Stepp



naloxone training happening in middle and high schools, she thinks, “See? The idea wasn’t so crazy after all.”

BOAT also educates the community about addiction and available resources. For instance, at BOAT events you may learn about a law that is unique to KY and OH, Casey’s Law. This law was passed in 2004 and allows parents, relatives, or friends to submit a petition requesting a lawful intervention, or court-ordered treatment, for someone battling with substance use disorder. Even more unique, you may hear Punkin or Sammy speaking about their experience with this law. Punkin understands the anguish of being a petitioner and filing Casey’s Law, while Sammy understands the anger of being a respondent in Casey’s Law.

Audrey is no longer that little 8 yr old girl, so controversial because she is giving a shot of naloxone to her stuffed animal on the nightly news. She is now an accomplished middle school student and still volunteers with BOAT. And what about Punkin’s son Sammy? Well, she is no longer petitioning him in court, instead she counts her blessings everyday because she still has him. He volunteers with BOAT paying it forward whenever he can.

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## NUMBERS:

- BOAT was established in 2015.
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## SUMMARY:

- The Bullitt Opioid Addiction Team (BOAT) advocates for awareness, education and prevention regarding substance use disorders, poisonings and overdose.
  - BOAT partners with local first responders, government, schools, correctional facilities, and community organizations to raise awareness and educate Bullitt County, as well as other communities, about this health emergency.
  - BOAT received international attention for training kids how to administer naloxone.
-



# YOUNG PEOPLE IN RECOVERY LOUISVILLE, KY

**YPR**  
Young People in Recovery

Tara Moseley Hyde made an interesting discovery when she underwent treatment for her addiction at age 23. "Being in recovery at such a young age was not the social norm," she recalls. "I felt like the odd man out being young and in recovery. I knew I needed resources and I knew there were other people out there who needed them, too."



An online search led her to a newly-formed organization called Young People in Recovery (YPR). It seemed like a perfect fit. So in 2012, Moseley Hyde became a founding member. Jenni Kelley is now the chapter's lead. The visibility of the organization drew her in. "I thought it was cool that people were so open about their recovery. I knew that putting a face and voice to recovery was important. When I moved back to the Louisville area, I was a 30-year-old single mother in recovery and I wanted to be involved in something new."

Though it took some time to get the chapter up and running, it now boasts over 100 supporters and members. It's been so successful in such a short time, the chapter even has grant funding to replicate its work in seven other areas of Kentucky.

YPR- Louisville, KY is a volunteer initiative. It's organized through a committee of young people in recovery, counselors, self-help members, community leaders and other volunteers who regularly gather to collaborate, plan and host community events celebrating recovery. It's open to anyone interested in improving the recovery community while also helping to inspire those trying to better their lives. The group hosts events, attends fairs and community gatherings to promote and nurture recovery from addiction around Kentucky.

YPR-Louisville, KY looks at where recovery support is lacking in the community and starts working with small businesses to provide employment opportunities to those with criminal justice involvement (by helping them get jobs, produce resumes, land interviews, etc.). "YPR provides the aftercare of treatment. Our message is that everyone deserves a chance at recovery and we want to be an advocate for those who don't have access to resources," Kelley says.

One of its biggest draws is Ultimate Frisbee. The group found a place near Louisville's Waterfront Park and began hosting biweekly competitions. "We started out with 20 people," Moseley Hyde recalls. "Then we had 30, then 50 and so on. Magazines started publishing our schedule. It's too cold to play outside in winter, so we offer indoor dodgeball instead. We just created the opportunity for people to come together."

They then took it a step further and began working in advocacy. YPR-Louisville, KY helped push for a heroin law change in 2015 that expanded access to



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– Tara Moseley Hyde









naloxone, established a Good Samaritan law, and syringe exchange law.

YPR-Louisville, KY recently partnered with a local mental health agency to open the Louisville Recovery Community Connection Center. The space is a hub for all things recovery—a safe and fun environment for both individuals already in recovery and those who are seeking recovery and fellowship with the recovery community.

In 2016, YPR-Louisville, KY began working outside of Louisville, creating recovery resources in other parts of the Commonwealth. “Basically, we’re giving people an opportunity to find their tribe,” Moseley Hyde says.

And in YPR-Louisville, KY, she has found her own.

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## NUMBERS:

- Founded in 2012.
- Now boasts over 100 members and supporters.
- In 2016, began expanding to 7 other parts of the Commonwealth.

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## SUMMARY:

- Provides an opportunity for young people who are in recovery to meet and socialize in a supportive environment.
  - YPR- Louisville, KY is a volunteer initiative organized by a committee of young people in recovery, counselors, self-help members, community leaders and other volunteers.
  - The group hosts events, attends fairs and community gatherings to promote and nurture recovery from addiction around Kentucky.
  - YPR-Louisville, KY works with small businesses to provide employment opportunities to those with criminal justice involvement.
-



VOICES OF HOPE LEXINGTON  
LEXINGTON, KY

It was a quick spiral down. Alex Elswick's addiction began with a prescription to opioids following surgery at age 18. Over the next five years, his addiction took him to jail, to numerous treatment centers, to being homeless in four different cities, and eventually, to sleeping under a bridge in Dayton, Ohio and heroin use.

Shelley Elswick couldn't find useful information to help her son. She tried to get naloxone, but, at the time, was unable to buy individual doses. She was told could only buy it by the case. She encountered barriers each time she tried to access treatment for her son's addiction. Frustrated by the lack of resources, Shelley decided to act. In partnership with a professor in the University of Kentucky College of Nursing, Amanda Fallin-Bennett, she began writing grants to purchase naloxone in bulk and to distribute the lifesaving drug in her local community.

They started giving talks around Kentucky to raise awareness and combat stigma. They held a recovery rally to garner support and provide resources. They even partnered with the City of Lexington to create a treatment locator service. "We were all over the place and needed to organize and focus our efforts," Elswick says.

About that time the law changed, making it easier to access naloxone. Elswick travelled to Rhode Island and Connecticut where she saw a model that was working. "They had the same core values and it was the same conclusions, so we thought, 'This is us!'"



Voices of Hope was started in 2015 with a focus on the peer-delivered recovery support services. Elswick initially set up telephone recovery support in her kitchen. In just over two years, the telephone recovery support program has grown to service more than 1,300 Kentuckians in recovery by partnering with treatment centers, drug courts, and detention centers to provide meaningful, long term recovery support.

After securing funding and a dedicated space, Voices of Hope began a recovery coaching program. Currently, it provides recovery coaches to area hospitals, jails, and the public at-large, and will soon offer them remotely using video conferences. It also serves women in prison and has an internship program to provide people in early recovery with job experience. Two of those interns are now full-time employees with the organization.

Additionally, it hosts Overdose Awareness Day to honor those lost and give parents and friends a place to grieve. This year, over 1,000 people participated along with 135 volunteers who made the event happen.



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in a dark corner.

– Shelley Elswick



VOICES of HOPE  
VOICESOFHOPE.ORG

A HOPE DEALER

*Still my*

I

*"I'm  
So Fabulous"*

*Accepting  
rejection*

*Whatever  
I want to  
be today*

A M

*free!*

@ 6:30 PM

free yoga

every Tuesday

and how

Thursday

Join our team

Smart Recovery  
Join us on  
fridays @ 6:30 PM

we are turning  
apply online  
voicesofhope.texas.org

RECOVERY COACHES

Make Recovery!

Free yoga every Tuesday

JEFF GRIFFITH





The center itself offers social activities, provides quarterly naloxone trainings, and hosts expungement fairs. To date, 1,400 individuals have visited the center. It's located inside a professional office building. They offer free yoga classes, which are a huge hit. "We wanted to create a warm and friendly environment that was elevated and respectful and not hidden away in a dark corner," Elswick explains. It also features meetings that embrace all pathways of recovery, including traditional and secular 12 step meetings and SMART recovery meetings.

Voices of Hope now serves as the hub for recovery support within the Bluegrass recovery community. And what about Alex, the young man whose addiction set it all in motion? His mom can't help hiding her pride when she says, "He completed his master's degree in family science and is now working on his PhD." Talk about a voice of hope.

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## NUMBERS:

- Started in 2015.
- Telephone support program has served more than 1,300 Kentuckians.
- To date, 1,400 individuals have visited the center.

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## SUMMARY:

- Voices of Hope is an organization that helps people in recovery stay in recovery by providing no-cost recovery support services.
  - Their goal is to enhance the quantity and quality of support available to people seeking and experiencing long-term recovery from alcohol and drug addiction.
  - Voices of Hope offers a recovery support center, recovery meetings, telephone recovery support, recovery coaching and overdose response training.
-

# INNOVATIO



## DRIVING CHANGE

Imagine a world where these promising innovations are accelerated, scaled up, and accessible to the communities most in need. How many more lives could we save if we took the best, brightest and most innovative ideas to scale nationwide? Together we can solve this by shining a light on high-impact innovative solutions and helping to make sure they're adopted across the country.



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## INNOVATION NOW

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### INNOVATION NOW PROJECT TEAM

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# INNOVATION