

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



ALACHUA COUNTY

Health Promotion
& Wellness Coalition

*"To build a safe, healthy and drug-free
community for residents of Alachua County"*

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MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

In 2021 we, along with the rest of the world, continued to face the challenges of COVID-19 and variants such as Delta. It has impacted our daily work and community activities, but we are excited to see our in-person involvement with the community grow. We have been able to host DEA Drug Take Back Days, our 3rd Run for Your Life 5K and launch our Sticker Shock initiative. We have also been able to hold programs such as our virtual Town Hall, Know the Law classes, and Friday Night Done Right.

We look forward to what 2022 might bring, but we also know that none of these accomplishments would be possible without the contribution and assistance of community partners, volunteers and interns. HPW is a Coalition, without all of our partners, it simply would not get done.

From myself, our Coordinator, Amy Patrick, and HPW board members, we would like to thank all of our wonderful partners and agencies.

- LaShay Johnson, HPW Director



3RD ANNUAL RUN FOR YOUR LIFE 5K

The 3rd Annual Run for Your Life 5K took place on Sunday, September 26th at Depot Park in Gainesville, FL. Its purpose is to honor those affected by the ongoing opioid crisis while raising awareness and providing relevant information about substance use.

At the event, 99 participants joined the color run along with 35 volunteers from student groups such as the College of Pharmacy and Alpha Epsilon Delta. HPW had a number of community partners get involved in the community fair to provide resources such as the Hanley Foundation and EDGE Lab.



To open the event, there were presentations from the UF Florida Recovery Center and Narcotics Anonymous. These groups provided testimonials about opioid use and personal experiences as well as information about Narcan/Naloxone which can be used to reverse opioid overdoses. Additionally, Gainesville Anytime Fitness provided an exciting warm-up session.

During the 5K, there were several color stations. At each of the color stations and water stations, there were volunteers helping runners and throwing powder. This family-friendly event will take place again next year at Depot Park and HPW welcomes everyone to join!



DEA DRUG TAKE-BACK DAY



The National DEA Drug Take-Back Day took place twice in 2021, on April 24th and October 23rd.

Supported by the DEA, the coalition spreads awareness within the community to collect unused or expired medications and reduce access for these prescriptions to be misused. Additionally, by collecting them for the DEA to dispose of properly, it helps protect the environment and water supply by reducing medications flushed away.

In April, the DEA Take Back occurred at the Library Partnership in Gainesville and the Hitchcock's Market in Alachua. Law enforcement from Alachua Police Department and Gainesville Police Department were on-site. In October, three locations were held: UF Campus, Hitchcock's in Hawthorne, and the Senior Recreation Center. The Alachua County Sheriff and UF Police Department provided a law enforcement presence during the collection.

Without partners' contributions, time, and assistance in developing and promoting the event, it would not have been as successful. HPW would like to note the presence of volunteers from the UF College of Pharmacy that also made these collections possible.

The DEA Take Back Day in April collected a total of 56 lbs of unused or expired prescription and over-the-counter medications in Alachua County. In October, 57 lbs of medications were collected from the community.



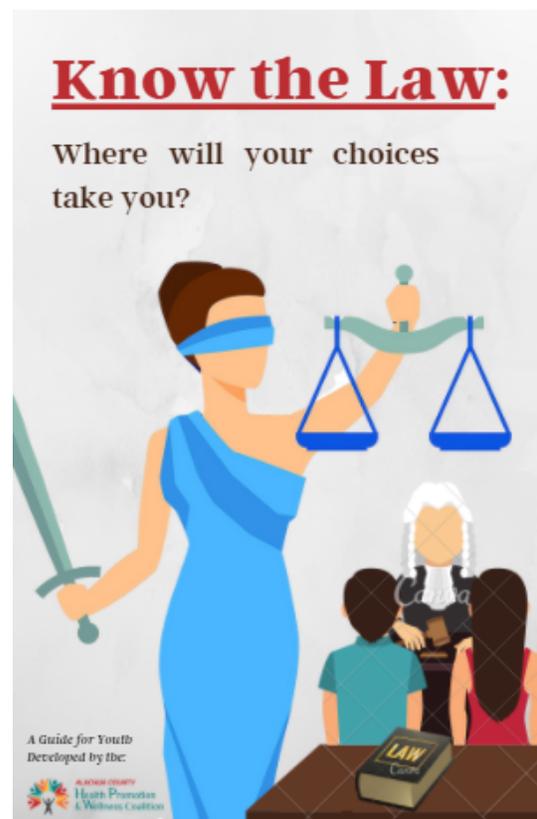
KNOW THE LAW

Know the Law offers a wide range of knowledge on illegal activities such as substance use, battery/assault, theft, sexual crimes, and bullying among other topics. In addition, it provides information about potential consequences individuals may face if caught and community resources that are available. The goal of the book is to offer basic education on crime as well as develop scenarios for youth to better understand what their choices may result in, especially for lesser-known crimes.

HPW provides a copy of the book to students and other resources to instructors such as PowerPoint presentations and Kahoot games. To measure the knowledge gained in this course, students take pre/post-tests which are scored. This course has been taught at schools in Alachua County such as Newberry High School.

The revised 2020 Know the Law course is currently offered to the following schools across Alachua County:

- A Quinn Jones School
- Gainesville High School
- Buchholz High School
- Loften High School
- Newberry High School
- Santa Fe High School
- Westwood Middle School
- Kanapaha Middle School
- Fort Clark Middle School
- A.L. Mebane Middle School
- Howard Bishop Middle School
- Lincoln Middle School



YOUTH SUBSTANCE USE TOWN HALL



Jermaine Galloway

On April 15th, HPW hosted a virtual Youth Substance Use Town Hall. To provide the best experience, the event included a Keynote Speaker, Stephen Hill, and speakers for Adult and Youth breakout sessions. The event hosted over 75 participants ranging from high school students to parents and other community members.

In the Youth breakout session, Megan Johnson from UF GatorWell spoke about the impact of alcohol use on the body, Blood Alcohol Content levels, and other related topics. Following Megan, were representatives from UF One Love who discussed signs of a healthy and unhealthy relationship to provide useful tips and information for youth.

For the Adult breakout session, Jermaine Galloway served as the main speaker by explaining to parents how they can notice signs of substance use, how youth access substances, and other insights into current drug use trends. HPW provided resources for parents such as SAMHSA's *Talk, They Hear You* program and other materials.

To wrap up the event, there were raffle drawings for various prizes for youth that included Apple AirPods and gift cards. Youth that attended also received community service hours.

SUBSTANCE USE TOWN HALL

THURSDAY, APRIL 15TH

6:00pm - 8:00pm by zoom



PARENT SESSION SPEAKER: OFFICER JERMAINE GALLOWAY

Officer Galloway will offer a discussion called "Hidden in Plain Sight" that will cover current drug trends, how youth access substances, and a review of the local drug culture in Alachua County.

ADDITIONAL SPEAKERS/TOPICS:



Stephen Hill, a Substance Abuse Motivational Speaker, will discuss his experiences with addiction.



For youth, **Megan Johnson** from UF GatorWell will focus on the health impacts of alcohol use and **UF OneLove** will discuss the importance of healthy relationships. Youth will earn community service hours and win raffle items for attending!



It can be difficult to talk to youth about substance use, but we have some great tools from SAMHSA's *Talk, They Hear You* program to help you get started!

We will also have some resources to share about mental health among teens and what you can do.



TO REGISTER:

Contact Amy at coordinator@hpwcoalition.org or scan the QR code



COMMUNITY OUTREACH & FNDR

At the HPW Coalition, a significant portion of its prevention efforts involves community outreach and education. One of the community outreach strategies includes Friday Night Done Right (FNDR). This program is built to provide alternative activities for youth on the weekends such as trivia, karaoke, movie nights, and more. By providing fun activities, HPW encourages youth to not use alcohol or drugs over the weekend but find healthier options. HPW also uses this time to provide education on bullying and peer pressure.

In 2021, HPW coordinated with community agencies such as the YMCA and the Library Partnership Resource Center to provide Friday Night Done Right events. In February, HPW partnered in a movie night at the Library Partnership location with other community agencies such as the Alachua County Sheriff's to provide resources to youth and parents.

In October, HPW joined with YMCA's Trunk or Treat to provide activities for youth such as coloring sheets or making "dirt cups," as well as sharing resources such as the Operation Parent Handbook with families. In this Halloween-themed event, HPW provided not only candy, music, and information, but also offered students the opportunity to join the youth coalition.



YOUTH COALITION

HPW's main mission is to prevent youth substance misuse and gaining input from youth on strategies and programs is vital to this objective. In 2019, HPW built a youth coalition at Buchholz High School through one of its community service clubs, Warm Hearts. Unfortunately, due to COVID, contact was lost with many students and there was a need to start from the beginning again. This year, the focus has been on efforts to expand reach to additional students at other schools such as Eastside High School and Santa Fe High School.

In the Spring, HPW worked towards expanding the Youth Coalition by planning and implementing the April Town Hall, participating in Hanley's Youth Leadership Summit, and other activities. An HPW youth coalition member, Kacie Singleton, spoke about underage drinking and alcohol on March 6th as a youth speaker in Hanley's Summit.



PREVENTION TRAILER

The HPW Prevention trailer was re-wrapped in 2021 with messages encouraging adults to lock up any medications, alcohol or guns and reminding people substance use does not discriminate. It is equipped with a TV, games, and activities, etc. HPW will bring it to community events as an educational tool.



EDUCATIONAL PRESENTATIONS

In October, HPW presented virtually at Gainesville High School. The presentation focused on substance use prevention and mental health education. Over 1,300 attended.

HPW Coalition

Substance Use and
Mental Health



HPW developed custom presentations for Alachua County Students that incorporated Know The Law with a Mental Health Education curriculum. Santa Fe High School was first, to take part in the presentation.

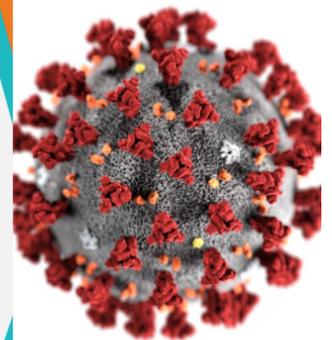
Mental Health



Alachua County Health
Promotion and Wellness Coalition

HPW accepted an invitation from APHA at the University of Florida to present to students on how COVID-19 has impacted substance use rates. Discussed were the mental and social health issues that have helped lead to large increases in alcohol and opioid use along with other substances in 2020 and 2021.

COVID-19 and
Substance Misuse:
An Ongoing Global Crisis



BILLBOARD PUBLIC CAMPAIGN

During the fall, HPW put up three billboards across Alachua County over a two-month period. These billboards discussed several topics such as underage drinking among students, SAMHSA's *Talk, They Hear You* app for parents, and securing prescription medications ahead of the DEA Drug Take-Back Day.

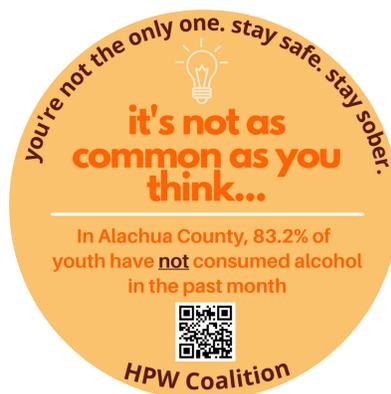
These billboards were located at various spots across Alachua County, primarily in Gainesville, and rotated so that the widest audience would be exposed to the substance use prevention message.



STICKER SHOCK

Over the summer, HPW created a new program with the purpose of spreading information and changing social norms around underage drinking. The content is designed to "shock" the reader and encourage a change in behavior. There are two themes: social hosting and the rate of underage drinking. For social hosting, the goal is to make parents and young adults aware that if they host parties, graduation celebrations, or tailgates with individuals under 21 who can access alcohol, they are liable to receive a 2nd-degree misdemeanor in Florida.

For frequency and rate of underage drinking, youth believe their peers are consuming alcohol at higher rates than they are actually drinking. Surveys show that the majority of high school students don't drink alcohol. HPW wants to make it more well known and hopefully lift some of the pressure off young people to engage in drinking and using substances. In November, HPW visited several liquor and convenience stores across Gainesville. Each store accepted versions of the Sticker Shock materials. At a minimum, posters were placed in each store, and some accepted cards to leave by the cash register. Lastly, a few allowed stickers on beer cases. It was an enthusiastic and successful launch of this initiative.



RESPONSIBLE VENDOR TRAINING

Responsible Vendor Training (RVT) is a program designed to educate employees such as cashiers and bartenders on how to avoid selling to underage individuals as well as how to handle customers who consume too much alcohol. To accommodate for COVID-19, HPW developed an online training on a virtual platform that would be accessible 24/7 on the HPW website and free to anyone in Alachua County.

Currently, there are two forms of training available: a version for those at bars and restaurants as well as one for those at liquor and convenience stores. These trainings cover a wide variety of topics such as how to recognize fake IDs, what steps to take to handle an intoxicated vendor, and how to prevent sexual assault or harassment.

At the completion of the training, a certificate is available and in some cases, may be used to encourage insurance companies to lower costs if the entire establishment is certified. At the moment, law enforcement agencies are not conducting compliance checks due to COVID-19 but once that program resumes, HPW's Responsible Vendor Training will be available to train businesses that fail compliance checks to help reduce the number of underage youth who purchase alcohol at stores, bars or restaurants as well as limit negative outcomes from underage alcohol use.

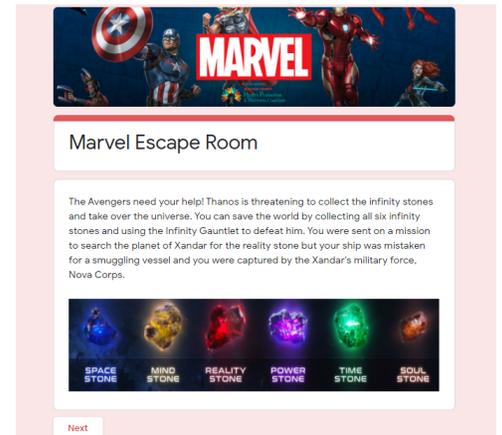


Scan the QR code to visit the
RVT Course Website

VIRTUAL ESCAPE ROOMS

The Escape Rooms cover four topics (marijuana, prescription drugs, mental health, and alcohol) with themes such as Marvel Comics, Harry Potter, Star Wars, and the Clue board game. This online activity provides a new method for youth to learn more about substances in a fun way.

This activity was designed through Google Forms and acts as an Escape Room by walking visitors through a series of challenges or questions they must answer to escape the scenario. If they answer questions wrong, the storyline continues but they are given another chance to answer the questions and "escape." If the questions are all answered correctly, they have escaped the room and completed the activity.



Scan the QR code to visit the Escape Rooms on our website

RED RIBBON WEEK/NIDA WEEK

October is National Substance Abuse Awareness Month and HPW visited Santa Fe High School during Red Ribbon Week to offer some substance use handouts and resources. During the tabling session, HPW asked students to take the Red Ribbon Week pledge and 27 students completed the online pledge.

For NIDA week, HPW held a brief social media competition. To enter, students had to complete the HPW youth survey as well as the NIDA IQ Challenge which consists of a series of substance use questions. By completing these, they were entered into a raffle with prizes such as gift cards to Nike.



ONE LOVE

At the CADCA National Forum in February, staff attended a seminar on an organization called OneLove. It had a great message of teaching youth how to recognize healthy and unhealthy relationships among many other important relationship skills. Staff felt this was important for mental health, preventing substance use, and overall wellness for youth. The next steps were to meet with representatives, get involved with our local UF Club, and include them in the April Town Hall. In August, staff completed the two-day Prevention and Non-Profit Staff Educator certification program. One Love is a great resource that HPW can provide to youth all over Alachua County.



QUARTERLY MEMBERSHIP MTG.

In 2021, HPW established its quarterly member meeting calendar. In the past, HPW has held monthly membership meetings but staff felt a quarterly meeting calendar might be a more efficient use of member time and resources. During these meetings, HPW provided updates on the most recent progress, upcoming projects, and how to get involved, as well as offered time for partners to share with other attendees updates on their own projects.

These meetings were held in January, April, August, and December. The next quarterly membership meeting will be held in March, 2022.

PARENT EDUCATION

One of HPW's biggest successes this year in regards to parent education was utilizing the Operation Parent Handbook for middle and high school students. This toolkit provides a range of information on topics such as bullying, sexting, substance use, peer pressure, etc. It is useful to prepare parents of young children as well as offer a guide for parents who have older children and are experiencing these difficulties. HPW has been able to distribute them at community events like the YMCA Trunk or Treat in October and HPW will look at other opportunities for sharing this resource in 2022, perhaps through Parent-Teacher Association groups.

HPW also took every opportunity to share information about *Talk, They Hear You* (SAMHSA's mobile app) to assist parents in discussing substance use with their youth. Some notable examples include the billboard display and the April Town Hall event.



BEST OF GAINESVILLE AWARD

The HPW Coalition was awarded the 2021 Best Wellness Center from the Best of Gainesville Awards. As the third year in a row winning this award, the Coalition is now also a member of the Business Hall of Fame. The coalition looks forward to continuing to offer excellent prevention programs and strategies to the community.



2021 INTERNSHIPS

Interns:

Spring (Ally, Kat, Jamilee)
Summer (Nikhita)
Fall (Jessica, Martha)

Special Thanks:

Dr. Laura Guyer,
Health Disparities
Practicum Advisor



**Kat
Garcia**



**Ally
Kelly**



**Jamilee
Yern**



**Nikhita
Nookala**



**Jessica
Galloway**



**Martha
Pastora**

As a small two-member staff team, none of HPW's projects would be as successful or even possible without the assistance of interns. This year HPW had seven interns across three semesters. Each of these students are from the University of Florida, the majority from academic programs such as the Health Disparities in Society minor or the Bachelor of Public Health major. They have worked primarily virtually over the year and have done excellent work to help HPW prepare for and host the Run for Your Life 5K, Youth Substance Use Town Hall, and DEA Drug Take-Back Days. Additionally, they have been instrumental in developing the Sticker Shock program, creating social media content, conducting research, and various other projects to improve the HPW coalition.

HPW is grateful not only for their consistent work and dedication but also for offering input on projects and providing suggestions on how to reach youth. HPW would also like to sincerely thank Dr. Laura Guyer. She has recently left the Health Disparities program but has been a vital partner and supporter of the HPW Coalition for years by consistently providing us with internship opportunities.

COMMUNITY PARTNER RECOGNITIONS

Chief Jones, Gainesville Police Department

Lt. Ed Bennett, Alachua County Sheriff's Office

Dr. Laura Guyer, UF Health Disparities Minor

Jennifer Gavrilko & Hanley Foundation

**Jim Pearce & Tracey Ousley,
CDS Behavioral Health & Services, Inc.**

HPW Interns:

**Ally Kelly, Jamilee Yern, Nikhita Nookala, Jessica
Galloway, Kat Garcia, Martha Pastora**

HPW Board Members:

**Rev. Greg Pelham Sr., Gwen Love, Joyce Wilson, Dr.
Virginia Dodd, Michelle Sherfield, Rachel Waters,
Dontonya Smith & Veita Jackson-Carter**

HPW would like to thank all of our valued community partners over the past year. Without your support and assistance, our programs, events, and initiatives simply wouldn't be possible!

COMMUNITY PARTNER AWARDS

Dante Williams, HPW Youth Coalition
"Youth Leader of the Year"

Hemita Bhagwatass, UF College of Pharmacy
"Volunteer of the Year"

Mary Benedict, ACCPTA Vice President
"Parent Representative of the Year"

Rachel Waters, Florida Recovery Center
"Health Professional Representative of the Year"

Lisa Becks, Anytime Fitness
"Business Representative of the Year"

*HPW is grateful for all of our community partners
who went above and beyond to help us achieve our
objectives this year!*

LOOKING AHEAD TO 2022

Upcoming Events & Projects:



As usual, HPW will have collection sites across Alachua County in April and October in coordination with law enforcement such as GPD and ASO



HPW will host its 4th Annual RFYL 5K in September at Depot Park. Staff will continue to educate the community and work towards an even larger turnout.

Compliance Checks:

In coordination with Florida Alcohol Beverage and Tobacco, as well as ASO, HPW will conduct compliance checks and encourage more alcohol retailer education.



The 2022 goal will be to host one FNDR event per quarter to educate youth on topics such as substance use but also bullying and peer pressure.

Youth Coalition:

Like 2021, HPW will steadily work to draw more interest in the youth coalition by recruiting within Alachua County schools. The goal is to recruit students from four different schools.

Parent Education:

Educating parents about how to discuss substances with youth as well as how to prevent access to alcohol or medications and recognizing warning signs are vital to keeping our youth safe.

A Special Thank You to Our

BOARD OF DIRECTORS



**Mr. Gregory Pelham Sr.,
Chair**



**Ms. Joyce Wilson,
Treasurer**



**Dr. Virginia Dodd,
Secretary**



**Cpl. Dontonya Smith,
Member**



**Ms. Gwen Love,
Member**



**Ms. Michelle Sherfield,
Member**



**Ms. Veita Jackson-Carter,
Member**



**Ms. Rachel Waters,
Member**