

NORTHWEST + CENTRAL VT PREVENTION NETWORK

MEETING NOTES

March 12th, 2026

10:00 – 11:30am

Meeting Goal

Providing an opportunity for people and organizations across Northwest and Central Vermont to come together to share information, make connections, and explore opportunities related to prevention of substance misuse and promoting wellbeing in our communities.

Welcome & Agenda Overview

Agenda:

Prevention Partner Updates

Backbone Updates

Training: Intro to HOPE

Prevention Partner Updates

Eva Zaret (CVPC): I am giving a talk tomorrow on [Social Norms Messaging Campaign](#), part of a PW!VT training

Matt Wolf (VT Afterschool): VT Junior Iron Chef this Saturday March 14th. This is an all-day event held at the Champlain Valley Exposition Blue Pavilion. There is a suggested admission fee of \$3 per person and \$5 per family to attend the event. More info [here](#)

Nick Tatakis (PC, Burlington): [Substance Use Workforce is Essential | VDH](#)

- The vacancy rate for direct service is greater than for non-direct service.
- Organizations anticipate a decrease in their substance use workforce.
- Management and non-management staff report similar reasons for vacancies and turnover.

[Annual Report on the Vermont Tobacco Control Program Impact | VDH](#)

- Tobacco control is essential for a healthy Vermont. Tobacco use is the leading cause of preventable death.
- Vermont spends \$404 million annually in health care costs directly related to tobacco use.
- E-cigarette and cigarette waste pollutes water, air and land with toxic chemicals, heavy metals and residual nicotine.

[2024 VT BRFSS Data Summary | VDH](#)

- More than six in 10 Vermont adults had any alcohol in the past month (62%). This is statistically higher than the 51% of U.S. adults.



NORTHWEST + CENTRAL VT PREVENTION NETWORK

- Nearly seven in 10 adults in Washington (67%) and Chittenden (66%) counties consumed alcohol in the past month. These rates are statistically higher than Vermont overall.

The [average alcohol poisoning rate](#) on the day after St. Patrick's Day is statistically higher than on other holidays and days following holidays, as well as the overall rate of alcohol poisonings.

Catherine Johnston (FHK): new Flavors Hook Kids field director! (Welcome!!)

Stefani Hartsfield (Project All Together Now VT): If anyone hasn't seen Gone Guys yet, we are hosting a screening at the Jericho Library tonight at 6:30 p.m. with a panel following including youth and this group's very own, Nick Tatakis, rock star!!!

Megan Bridges (UWNWVT): The UVM Health Network is accepting proposals for the [2026 Health Equity Summit!](#) Proposal submissions are open through April 10. Visit the website to review proposal guidance! **Interested in attending?** The event will be held on 9/24 and 9/25/26. Everyone is welcome. Registration is required to participate, and there is no charge to attendees. Also: Larner School of Medicine Public Health Projects - please email me if you would like to learn more about this opportunity to mentor medical students in a public health research project. megan@unitedwaynwvt.org

Sultana (YWCA):

1. I'm continuing to host monthly conversations with my talented friend Olivia Harris about the future of mission driven work. We meet on the last Friday of every month from 11-12:30 and it's a very informal space where we show up as real people, not representatives of our jobs in order to network or perform non-profit theater. [Read more/sign up here.](#)

2. Workforce instability is one of the most expensive challenges organizations face today. Recruiting, onboarding, lost productivity, and burnout all carry real financial costs – and many of these pressures fall directly on HR leaders responsible for keeping teams functioning and thriving. At the same time, many HR professionals – particularly women – are navigating a growing gap between what employees need to succeed and what organizations have historically offered. **The New Rules of Work** is a training designed for leaders who are expected to protect both people and performance.

This training series explores how workplace structures affect productivity, retention, and team stability, and provides practical strategies to reduce turnover costs, support employee performance, and strengthen organizational outcomes. You can [sign up for more information here.](#)



NORTHWEST + CENTRAL VT PREVENTION NETWORK

Amy Brewer (FGITPC): Welcome to Sierra Cramer, the new primary prevention specialist at NMC focused on alcohol and other drugs!

Paul McNeil (NEHIDTA): Developing and sharing our Health-Promoting Relationships paradigm training for School Resource Officers in New England 😊

NEHIDTA has a one-day regional training taking place on **April 9, 2026 (8:30 AM–5:00 PM)** at the York County Regional Training Center in Alfred, Maine. **Building Health-Promoting Relationships with Youth** is designed to equip School Resource Officers with practical skills to strengthen relationships with students in ways that prevent mental and behavioral health risks and promote youth flourishing. Registration info [HERE](#).

Backbone Updates

Prevention Works!VT Prevention Conference: Prevention Works!VT invites you to the 2nd Bi-annual Substance Misuse Prevention Conference on **May 5th** at the Lake Morey Resort in Fairlee. The theme is *Bridging the Gaps: Prevention Through Connection*. [Learn more and register here](#). Use code **PL1** so that UWNWVT can cover the cost of your registration. If you run into any problems with using the code, please email mahat@unitedwaynwvt.org.

ANNOUNCEMENT: Request for Proposal Opportunity: Substance Use Disorder Recovery Residences

Vermont has received a Rural Health Transformation (RHT) grant of \$195 million in Year One of a five-year opportunity. The purpose of the grant is to build stronger rural health networks, improve technology and shared operations, strengthen the rural health workforce and ultimately ensure that Vermonters receive the right care at the right time for an affordable cost.

The Vermont Department of Health is seeking proposal(s) pursuant to this Request for Proposal for Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Recovery Residences. The State seeks to establish grants with one (1) or more bidders to operate recovery residences that provide safe, home-like residential environments that promote individual recovery from substance use disorder.

The RFP outlines the project scope, eligibility requirements, timeline, and submission instructions. We welcome proposals from organizations with experience in operating SUD recovery residences.

Key details:

- **MANDATORY VIRTUAL BIDDERS CONFERENCE: Friday, March 13, 2026, 2:30PM – 4:00PM EST**



NORTHWEST + CENTRAL VT PREVENTION NETWORK

- **PROPOSAL DEADLINE:**
EST

April 23, 2026, 4:00PM

You can view the full RFP and submission instructions

here: <https://www.vermontbusinessregistry.com/BidPreview.aspx?BidID=73451>

The April Network Meeting is canceled due to Prevention Day in Montpelier at the State House. Vermont Prevention Day 2026: Join Prevention Works!VT on April 9th for [Vermont Prevention Day](#) in Montpelier. This annual statewide event is an opportunity for prevention professionals, community partners, legislators, and advocates to connect, learn, and celebrate our shared commitment to building healthier communities. [Register here](#).

The VPLOs will be hosting an ice cream social after the PW!VT Prevention Day:

Get the Scoop on Prevention

When: Thursday, April 9th 3:00 PM – 6:00 PM

Where: Statehouse Cafeteria

Join your VPLOs for a legislative social featuring ice cream and snacks. This is a vital opportunity to showcase your community impact directly to legislators and advocate for current prevention bills.

- 3:00 – 4pm: Kick things off with a briefing and elevator speech workshop to sharpen your message.
- 4:00 – 6pm: Put those skills to use during the networking session with lawmakers.

Register [here](#)

Training: Intro to HOPE with Rosemary Rosa

Presentation slides have been sent out; these are things that were shared, or answers to a question in the presentation.

Eva Zaret: Laurie Metcalfe is certified in Vermont to do project management for organizations and “Train the Facilitator” for HOPE trainings

Central Vermont: if you do prevention work with kids 12-18 and want to take your organization to the next level with integration of the HOPE framework, CVPC has the funding for that

Evan Litwin: in case anyone is interested Dr. Nadine Burke Harris who wrote The Deepest Well has a 1.5 hour talk that’s great but there is also a 16 minute ted talk that does a brief summary



NORTHWEST + CENTRAL VT PREVENTION NETWORK

into it and its really great if you're interested in this area:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=95ovlJ3dsNk>

Eva Zaret: <https://positiveexperience.org>, their website is full of practical ways that various roles can implement the framework in a variety of settings!

Marielle Matthews: someone in the group also mentioned having a "mentoring mindset" in the past... has been an incredibly helpful reframe for me! I'm not a formal mentor, with a formal mentoring role, but I can approach with a mentoring mindset and that can help facilitate some PCEs, at least by way of being one more caring adult

Ali Dieng: I think what is missing in the Presentation is the following:

"Conduct an equity impact review of mandatory reporting statutes with a focus on reducing unnecessary child welfare involvement rooted in poverty or Substance misuse. Partner with families who are directly impacted to reduce harm, build trust, and support prevention."

At times we focus so much on families, but forget that the system of care will need to be periodically reviewed and realigned with reality of life...

How do you promote equitable access to one or more of the building blocks (relationships, environment, engagement, emotional growth) in your work?

Sally Russell: 1:1 mentoring (relationships), group activities and service events (social engagement), and emotional regulation and emotional growth. All through a community based mentor program.

Paul McNeil: Relationships! Developing and sharing our Health-Promoting Relationships paradigm training for School Resource Officers in New England :)

Amy Brewer: advocating for walkable/bikeable communities, supporting 3rd space development, advocating for safe routes to schools - youth learning independence to move to and from school...

What resources do we have in our communities that promote access to the building blocks?

Paul McNeil: Safe/healthy environment in in our schools systems!

Amy Brewer: youth centers, drop in center ...

Jay McCormick: DREAM (mentorship) where applicable



NORTHWEST + CENTRAL VT PREVENTION NETWORK

Sally Russell: Just this morning I recommended Rosies Girls to some of my families

Barriers:

Sally Russell: It's hard to access the building blocks if basic needs aren't being met--such as food insecurity, transportation, money for heat...

Christine Hughes: The Richard Kemp Center and the VT Racial Justice Alliance are resources for Black and Brown youth & families and the broader community. Cultural Empowerment & Celebrations, History, understanding the details and impact of systemic racism. VRJA has a data dashboard that tracks outcomes in systems and provides trend analysis so we can see if our systems are improving or not. VRJA also offers ways that community members can get involved in policy that aims to uplift marginalized communities

[Vermont Senate gives final approval to ERA, Prop 4 on the ballot for November | Vermont Business Magazine](#)

Looking Ahead

No meeting April 9th, please come to Prevention Day instead!

