

MAKIN' IT Happen



makinithappen.org



2022-23 Annual Report



FLUID > FLEXIBLE > FORWARD

mission

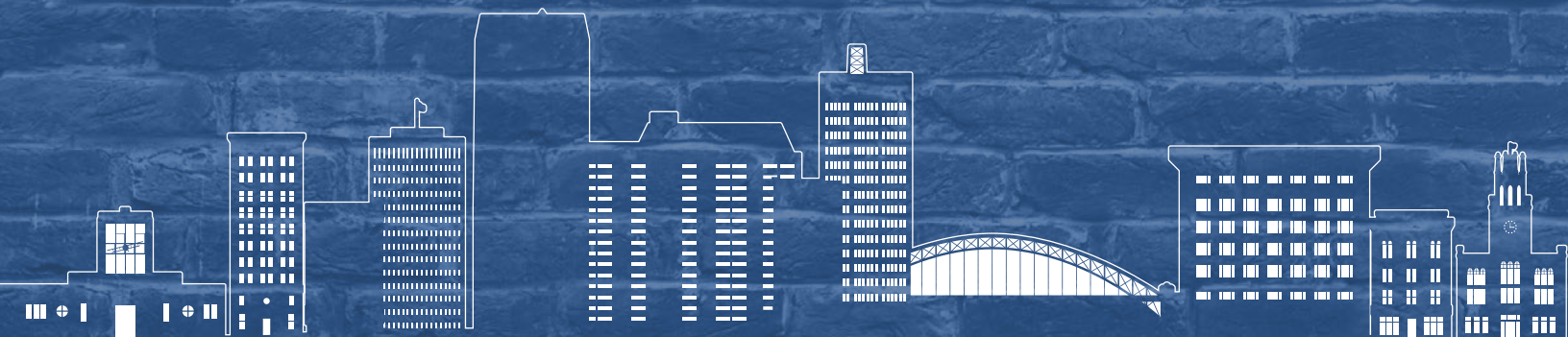
Makin' It Happen is on a mission...
to create a coordinated response among
individuals, organizations, businesses
and communities to promote behaviors
that measurably improve the overall health
and well-being of our youth, families and
communities with a focus on alcohol, tobacco
and other drug prevention and mental wellness.

vision

We envision a future where all of our youth
and families have appropriate support to live, learn,
work and play in healthy, thriving communities.

values

Our work is based on the belief that
Behavioral and Physical Health is
Essential, Prevention Works,
Treatment is Effective, and People Recover.



FLUID > FLEXIBLE > FORWARD!

— This was our preview statement for 2022–2023 —

Reflection from the Executive Director

What an amazing twenty-four months it has been!

This report encompasses the amazing effort the Makin' It Happen team made during this two-year period. Emerging out of the pandemic with a small team of four, we worked diligently to be **fluid** in our efforts to support our partners and communities.

During 2021, we redefined our work under a three focus areas framework: Recovery Ready Communities, Resiliency Essentials, and Makin' It Happen in the 603 (which recently evolved into Community Impact in the 603). Throughout 2022-2023, we were able to utilize this framework to define our efforts to ensure we stayed true to our mission, staying **flexible** as we made smart decisions regarding the development of workplans, data collection, and funding streams.

By the end of 2023, we had expanded our team from four to nine. We diversified our funding streams to include federal and state grants, which allowed us to strengthen our support to the communities we serve. In addition, we expanded our partnerships, leading us **forward** toward a new year of possibilities in 2024.

We have accomplished a lot, grown as a team, deepened our partnerships and collaboration, and still after 27 years, it feels like we are just getting started!

Onward,

Mary

MARY FORSYTHE-TABER



Mary Forsythe-Taber
Executive Director
Makin' It Happen

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Building Recovery Ready Communities continues to be a focus for Makin' It Happen as we strive to strengthen the communities in the Greater Manchester region. By collaborating with our partners, the Substance Use Disorder Collaborative progressed into the Community of Care Collaborative and the Harm Reduction Strategy evolved into Harm Reduction Prevention. We also partnered with the state on the launch and roll out of 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline and the New Hampshire Rapid Response Access Point, serving on the 988/Rapid Response implementation team and now on the 988 coalition to represent the Greater Manchester communities.

**ATTENDANCE OF
OVER 3,300**

AT THE SUBSTANCE USE
DISORDER/COMMUNITY
OF CARE COLLABORATIVE
DURING 8 YEARS
OF MEETINGS

Harm Reduction Strategy

During 2022 and 2023, Makin' It Happen provided coordination and leadership on the Harm Reduction Strategy, including creating year two goals and holding quarterly meetings of the Harm Reduction Steering Committee. We discovered that although all committee members supported Harm Reduction in the region, many had different ideas of what Harm Reduction was. This caused the committee to spend some time to form a common focus, which was Harm Reduction Prevention.

At the end of the two years, Harm Reduction Prevention efforts have advanced in all of the organizations and activities are ongoing. Like its partners, Makin' It Happen continues to work on Harm Reduction Prevention. Initiatives include listening and learning sessions, where we talk about New Hampshire's Strong as Granite awareness efforts on mental health symptoms, suicidal thoughts, substance use, or other behavioral health concerns; numerous community impact events and activities, where we distribute Deterra Bags and other resources; and various trainings where we give out Harm Reduction kits.

Substance Use Disorder Collaborative/ Community of Care Collaborative

For eight years, Makin' It Happen has led the Substance Use Disorder (SUD) Collaborative, bringing together agencies, organizations, and providers across the SUD continuum of care which includes prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery. In 2023, we sought input from our partners to ensure that we were continuing to meet the needs of the communities in our region. Feedback included continuing the hybrid meeting model, identifying one location for meetings, and adding mental health and housing stabilization to the meeting agendas.

In September of 2023, we launched the renamed Community of Care (COC) Collaborative, which continues to meet monthly in a hybrid model and provides opportunities for members to support each other and work together. Now, in addition to a featured presenting agency, the meetings also highlight representatives from our four pillars: housing stability, overdose prevention, mental health, and prevention/treatment/recovery. Beginning in late spring 2024, the location for the hybrid COC Collaborative meetings will be at Makin' It Happens' new office location, 77 Sundial Ave, Suite 102 W in Manchester.





988/New Hampshire Rapid Response Access Point/Strong as Granite

Providing our partners support in sharing information on mental health and substance use resources is important to Makin' It Happen. In summer 2022, New Hampshire joined states around the country in adopting 988, a 24/7/365 dial, text, and chat resource for people experiencing emotional distress or suicidal thoughts. Earlier in 2022, New Hampshire launched New Hampshire Rapid Response Access Point, which in addition to services provided in 988, also provides mobile crisis response teams. In 2023, New Hampshire Department of Health and Human Services launched Strong as Granite, a public awareness campaign promoting resources available for mental health and substance use support, including 988, New Hampshire Rapid Response Access Point, and 211 / The Doorway.

Makin' It Happen continues to be an advocate for our region by bringing the voices of our urban, suburban, and rural communities to the state, serving on the 988 coalition and the New Hampshire Suicide Prevention Council. Additionally, we distribute Strong as Granite information on resources at our listening and learning sessions, trainings, and community impact events.



Looking Forward in 2024

In 2024, Makin' It Happen will continue to build Recovery Ready Communities by the ongoing distribution of Detera bags, talking about the Strong as Granite initiative, and working with the COC Collaborative.





Resiliency is the ability to recover quickly during stressful times, and essentials are activities that are so important you need to do them on a regular basis. Makin' It Happen works with our partners in the greater Manchester region to promote resiliency essential initiatives and provide trainings focused on prevention and mental health wellness.

TRAINED
221 PEOPLE
IN 2023
IN MENTAL HEALTH
AND SUICIDE
PREVENTION
PROGRAMS

In 2022, Makin' It Happen continued to promote Resiliency Essential programs to our partners in the region. By collaborating with New Hampshire Alcohol & Drug Abuse Counselors Association (NHADACA), Makin' It Happen was able to provide evidence-based, nationally recognized trainings such as Mental Health First Aid to our community partners, and also offered suicide prevention trainings such as Question, Persuade and Refer (QPR), as well as substance misuse and vaping presentations.

Due to the success and need for these trainings, we applied for a Mental Health Awareness Training (MHAT) grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) which we received in January 2023.

Resiliency Essentials Programs

As part of the funding received from SAMHSA, Makin' It Happen was able to expand our team and offer trainings in Youth and Adult Mental Health First Aid; Question, Persuade, and Refer (QPR); and the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention's curriculum Talk Saves Lives. This funding allowed our Resiliency Essentials staff to train 221 people in 2023 in Youth Mental Health First Aid, Adult Mental Health First Aid, and Question, Persuade, and Refer. We teamed up with eight Greater Manchester organizations to host these trainings, including the Office of Youth Services, New Hampshire Job Corps, and PCI Pharma Services. During these efforts, we developed a relationship with the New Hampshire Coalition of Recovery Residences when they expressed a need for mental health awareness training for their staff. This resulted in Makin' It Happen training more than 30 Manchester sober living house leaders in Adult Mental Health First Aid. The training has proved to be invaluable for their staff and is currently being considered as a permanent fixture for on-the-job training in recovery residences. Additionally, we were able to host two training sessions at IMPACCT Academy, where students learned about substance use and mental health challenges among young people and became certified QPR Gatekeepers.



Looking Forward in 2024

During a December 2023 Community of Care Collaborative meeting, staff members from The Doorway in Manchester expressed a need for de-escalation training. The Resiliency Essentials team was able to secure instructor training for the Mandt System, a de-escalation and crisis prevention curriculum. Mandt System trainings and certifications will be available beginning in 2024.



Community Impact in the 603 consists of community outreach, youth development strategies, and young adult strategies. The goal of these initiatives is to provide prevention opportunities to communities, youth, and young adults by partnering with community organizations who support them.

Makin' It Happen participates in many events and activities throughout the region and strives to measurably improve the overall health and well-being of our youth, families, and communities.

Community Outreach: Manchester Wellness on Wheels

Throughout 2022 and 2023, we continued to expand the Manchester Wellness on Wheels (WOW) initiative and hosted four events each summer. Collaborating with our partners, WOW brought accessible health resources to our high-need neighborhoods at various locations throughout the city. This allowed residents to talk to representatives about needed services and resources in their own backyard, while their children participated in fun activities offered for them. Our youth volunteers conducted short surveys on top concerns and priorities to the participants, and their responses – which included housing, food security, safety, and education – were used to ensure the inclusion of related resources at upcoming WOW events.

As the lead partner with Amoskeag Health, Makin' It Happen managed all logistical efforts, and was able to increase partner participation from 28 in 2022 to 35 in 2023. Additionally, we had 30 volunteers, and sponsors including Elliot Hospital, AmeriHealth Caritas, WellSense, and NH Healthy Families. We also partnered with the Manchester Police Department on the National Night Out event, which promotes police and community partnerships. In addition to providing resources to participants, WOW also offered networking opportunities for partners and volunteers, making WOW a success for all!





Youth Development Strategies: Red Ribbon Breakfast

Working in partnership with Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) New England Field Division, Makin' It Happen hosted the Red Ribbon Breakfast in 2022 and 2023, bringing together youth from our local high schools and middle schools to raise the awareness of substance misuse in our communities and promote healthy lifestyles.

In 2022, youth from all our school districts highlighted prevention projects at their schools, and in 2023 we had two presentations. The first was by Dover Youth 2 Youth, a youth empowerment program centered around combatting alcohol and substance use. Their presentation highlighted the hazards of misleading branding on alcoholic products aimed to appeal to youth. The second presentation was from Makin' It Happen's team member and New England Patriots Cheerleader, Kay. She shared her story on how the things that once defined her and negatively impacted her have led her to where she is now. She hopes her story can inspire others to make the best decisions for themselves to achieve their dreams!

Additionally, in 2023 students from nine schools in the greater Manchester region took on our Zero Left Challenge to distribute Deterra bags, which are used as a safe way to dispose of medications that are no longer necessary. Over 750 Deterra bags were distributed, and three schools tied for first place, each distributing 100 Deterra bags or more: Manchester School of Technology, Bedford High School, and West High School. All three schools won a pizza party for 20, were featured on our social media channels, and will be recorded for our 2024 Life of A Teen (LOAT) podcast series.



STUDENTS DISTRIBUTED
750
DETERRA BAGS
TO THE COMMUNITY





Young Adult Strategies: Common Threads and Young Adult Advisory Council

In 2022, Makin' It Happen completed the Common Threads project, which is a video series sharing the stories of young adults who live and work in Greater Manchester. The stories tell of their struggles – and their inspiring coping and thriving skills – as they deal with issues impacting them, including mental health, substance misuse/substance use disorder, and suicide issues.

After completion of Common Threads, we had the opportunity to be a partner in a statewide Young Adult Advisory Council (YAAC) through a Young Adult Strategies grant held by Strafford County. YAAC focuses on prevention efforts related to mental health, substance misuse, and suicide. YAAC has 13 seats for each of the 13 public health regions across New Hampshire, with 10 currently filled. Members offer free trainings to young adults in life skills, create content for social media on self-advocacy, binge drinking, tobacco and vaping cessation, and other forms of prevention and mental health awareness, and is creating an online resource library. As a partner, Makin' It Happen serves on both the leadership team and the executive council, leads a training team, and oversees the subcommittee for the online resource library. Makin' It Happen recognizes the importance of bringing the voices of young adults to state-wide prevention initiatives and believe this strengthens our communities.

[View Our Common Threads Video >](#)



FOR MORE INFORMATION ON
HOW TO GET INVOLVED WITH
YAAC,
EMAIL BRITTANY POTVIN AT
BPOTVIN@GOODWINCH.ORG



Looking Ahead in 2024

Makin' It Happen will focus on expanding prevention efforts in our communities through listening and learning sessions and other community-based activities. We are also taking a lead role in establishing a Youth Wellness and Prevention Collaborative. Additionally, we will focus on creating podcasts and videos for youth, young adults, and our community members to bolster virtual access to topics related to mental health, suicide prevention, and substance use prevention.

Strengthening *Resiliency*

Makin' support happen...

Our team distributed event materials to all eight communities to unify support and participation in the DEA Rx Drug Take-Back events, sharing prevention materials, advancing knowledge, and getting thousands of pounds of unused, unwanted, and expired medications out of the reach of our most vulnerable community members.

Makin' learning happen...

We expanded our team and offered Resiliency Essential training programs focusing on prevention and mental health wellness to organizations and individuals throughout the Greater Manchester region. Trainings were offered both in-person and virtually, allowing for greater participation.

Makin' leadership happen...

Young people from the Greater Manchester region joined youth from all around New Hampshire to participate in a National Youth Leadership training, sponsored by our partner DEA Operation Engage.

Makin' connections happen...

We continued to maintain and improve our website, including updating our Community Compass resource guide and starting development on our three focus areas to engage, educate and empower individuals throughout the region.

Makin' advocacy happen...

In partnership with DHHS and our regional partners within the Greater Manchester region, we assisted in the rollout of the 988/New Hampshire Rapid Response Access Point through distributing materials and offering training sessions.



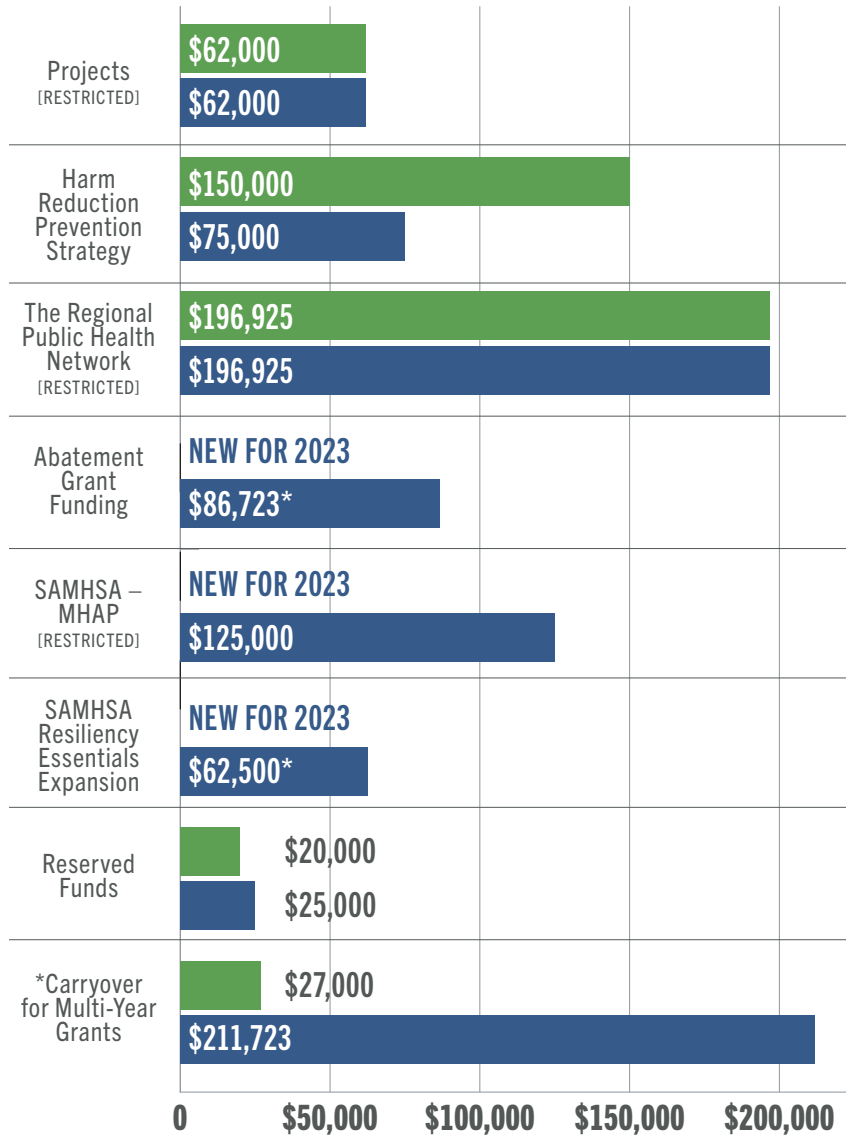
2022–23 Financials

2022 OPERATIONS BUDGET

\$435,925

2023 OPERATIONS BUDGET

\$633,148



For more detailed financials, email info@mih4you.org

Thank You

TO OUR FISCAL PARTNERS



AND OUR FREELANCE SUPPORT

Advertising/Design



Photography/Videography



Website Design/Management



Social Media Advancements



Social Media 2022

Reach on Facebook and Instagram = 17,743
Followers on Facebook and Instagram = 1,715

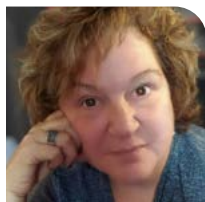


Social Media 2023

Reach on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn = 20,824
Followers on Facebook, Instagram, and LinkedIn = 1,872

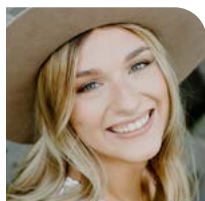


THE Makin' It Happen TEAM



TRACY BACHERT JOINED IN 2022

Tracy joined us as our community impact manager. She is a former small business owner, and her vast experience with volunteer management, event coordination, and community engagement and development make her a natural fit for this role. Tracy currently manages many of our community-based events and initiatives and works with our youth and young adults to empower them to become leaders in their communities.



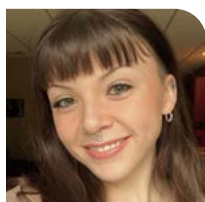
ASHLEY BACHERT JOINED IN 2023

Ashley Bachert, community impact project assistant, began volunteering with us when she was in middle school, and she brings her prior experience and fresh perspective as a recent graduate to our work. Currently, Ashley is taking the lead on our Youth Wellness and Prevention Collaborative, as well as assisting with the continued development of social media efforts.



KAYT GAGNEUX JOINED IN 2023

Our resiliency essentials program director is Kayt Gagneux. Kayt holds a Master of Education from the University of New Hampshire, as well as multiple certifications in behavioral health and trauma-informed care. Kayt worked in the field of education for the past decade as a special educator, teacher, and behavior specialist. In her current role, Kayt is enhancing our resiliency program by developing pertinent training modules for our partners.



JANELLE HAVENS JOINED IN 2023

Janelle Havens, resiliency essentials program manager, earned a Master of Science in Criminology and Criminal Justice from Merrimack College. Janelle's prior role was as an advocate for domestic and sexual violence survivors, focusing on cases where there was co-occurrence between domestic violence and child abuse/neglect as reported through New Hampshire Division for Children, Youth and Families. Currently, Janelle is expanding our network of community agencies interested in receiving mental health awareness and prevention training.



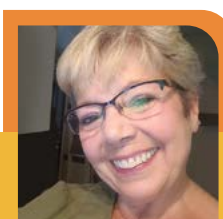
KAYSHAUNA MONTAÑO JOINED IN 2023

Kay Montaño, community impact communications manager, earned a Master of Science in Business and Analytics from the University of Massachusetts and is currently pursuing a Master of Public Health at Brown University, expected August 2024. In her most recent role, Kay served as a community health program associate, specializing in opioid prevention. She has already begun making significant strides in our organization by leading social media strategies aimed at expanding our community engagement.



MAUREEN O'LEARY JOINED IN 2023

Our project/grants manager is Maureen O'Leary. Maureen earned a Bachelor of Science in English with a concentration in communications from Salem State University. She has spent her career working in marketing communications and project management in higher education and nonprofit organizations. In her current role, Maureen manages various projects and grants for Makin' It Happen to help us achieve our goals.



We want to thank Deb Baird, Brian Mooney, and Jane Skantze for their dedicated service and commitment to Makin' It Happen and wish them well in their current endeavors.

— 2024 —

Makin' Prevention Happen in 2024



Follow Our Journey

makinithappen.org



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