Washington County Coalition for Children

the region's child advocacy organization, working to assure <u>all</u> children thriveserving as <u>catalyst</u> and <u>facilitator</u> for community change via 3 primary roles:

Advocacy

Amplify Voices
To facilitate policy & systems change

Collaboration

Facilitate & Foster Partnerships
To develop workable strategies
& solutions

Innovation

Spark Creative Solutions & Action
To achieve tangible change

2024 Annual Report

Given the youth mental health crisis, our sole priority is promoting child & adolescent mental wellness. In 2024, we



- ► Convened a 13-member Youth Advisory Council to develop the region's first youth-driven ACTION PLAN for mental wellness
- ▶ Organized a Youth Mental Health Summit with 80+ participants (including local legislators, town council members, school administrators, health/mental health providers and health insurer, social service agencies, youth program leaders, child advocates, and parents) in May 2024 to showcase Youth Advisory Council members unveiling their ACTION PLAN
- ▶ Worked with Rep. Teresa Tanzi & Sen. Alana DiMario to propose state legislation requiring private insurance coverage of Community Health Worker (H7875/S2606) and youth mobile crisis services (H7874/S2607) the bills passed the Senate, but failed in the House
- ▶ Recruited Coalition's first *Health Policy Scholar* to support our legislative advocacy at the State House
- ▶ Partnered with Thundermist Health Center & Narragansett School System to provide **tele-behavioral health services** to middle & high school students during the school day with the support of a Community Health Worker
- ▶ Organized a 2-part training for local early childhood educators on creating trauma sensitive/ 'Compassionate Classrooms' in partnership with URI's Early Childhood Institute
- ► Teamed up with Narragansett High School to teach teen Mental Health First Aid to the entire sophomore class
- ► Collaborated with the Chris Collins Foundation and URI Human Development & Family Science Dept. to foster authentic youth engagement and county-wide action planning in the region
- ► Leveraged support from the RI Dept. of Health-Center for Data & Analysis, Brown Univ. School of Public Health and Swearer Center-Data & Evaluation Partnerships to document the magnitude of youth mental health concerns in Washington County—Published results with Action Plan/Focus Group findings





- ▶ Conducted 10 Focus Groups documenting the reflections of 40 local youth about the factors impacting their mental wellness—sparking action planning with youth, not for youth
- ► Launched The Greatest 8TM Text Messaging Service (TMS) in Spanish
- ▶ Worked with LeadershipRI to increase awareness of The Greatest 8TM: impacting social media engagement from April to Oct 2024 significantly—
 - Facebook ↑3,558%, LinkedIn ↑1,664%, and Instagram ↑347%
- ▶ Increased The Greatest 8TM TMS subscriptions 50% in 2024 (totaling over 1,300 subscribers)



Why Do We Do This Work?

2023 RIDE SurveyWorks! Results - Washington County 6th-12th graders



32.4% admitted that in the last year they felt sad or hopeless almost every day for two weeks or more in a row that they stopped doing some usual activities



56% reported that in the last 30 days stress interfered with their ability to participate in school



33% reported that they worry about school violence



2023 EMS Response Calls - Washington County Youth < Age 21 ~500 (496) reguests for help involved youth experiencing a behavioral health crisis — 23% related to substance use

Emergency Dept. Visits (2018-2022)-Washington County Youth < Age 24



3,748 ED visits occurred with primary diagnoses of mental & behavioral health disorders (MBD), including substance use

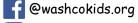
982 (26%) for substance use disorders only 1,603 (43%) of youth were between ages 15-19 128 (3%) of youth were under age 10

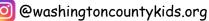
Youth Mental Health Matters!

All evaluated and discharged home

Coalition Contact Information

Website: www.washcokids.org Email: wccc@washcokids.org

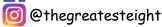






TM Website: www.thegreatest8.org

@greatesteight



in linkedin.com/company/the-greatest-8

Organizational Growth & Development

- ► Secured organizational development consultation & adopted a **Board Action Plan**
- ► Conducted community outreach & appointed 2 new Members to the Board of Directors
- ▶ Strengthened partnerships with URI and Brown University School of Public Health to secure more student intern support
- ► Secured \$80,250 in foundation grants to support continued growth of *The Greatest 8*TM Text Messaging Service
- ▶ Negotiated with funders to acquire 2 years of funding to continue our collaborative School-Based Tele-Behavioral Health Project
- Renewed Mental Health First Aid (MHFA) contract with URI to continue offering free Youth & teen MHFA classes in the region



Board of Directors

Lori Ann Hiener, President Andréa Martin, Secretary Nicole Faison, LICSW, Treasurer Rebecca Allen, BCBA, LBA, Member Lori Duffy, LICSW, Member Lorna Clause, Member Colleen Powers, MD, FAAP, Member Mary Sullivan, PhD, RN, FAAN. Member

Coalition Director

Susan A Orban, LICSW