



# Hopkinton Youth & Family Services

## May 2025 - Parent/Caregiver Newsletter

### Clinical Staff

**Dawn Alcott-Miller, LICSW, Director 508 497-9700 x1449**

Dawn oversees all operations of the HYFS department, including staff and intern supervision, contracts, grants, budget management, and strategic planning. She is deeply invested in all HYFS services and provides support through information and referrals, short-term counseling, parent consultation/coaching, case management, grant management, and educational and supportive programming.



**Colleen Souza, LICSW, Social Worker/Case Manager 508 497-9700 x1450**

Colleen provides information and referrals, case management services for residents having difficulty navigating resources, and short-term counseling. She also co-leads the Hopkinton Organizing for Prevention Youth Coalition.

**Holly Morand, MSW, DBH Resource Counselor/Case Manager 508 497-9700 x1451**

Holly provides outreach and case management services to enhance equity for residents, particularly those for whom traditional services have yet to be a good fit. She also provides outreach to special populations and those furthest from opportunity.



### Prevention Staff



**Lauren Mayer, MACP Regional Prevention Coordinator - MassCALL3B Grant 508 497-9700 x1456**

Lauren leads a regional cluster of towns working through a strategic model to identify risk and protective factors for youth substance use reduction. Through member engagement, she provides coordination support to the HOP coalition.

**Erin Bartolini, MSCHPM Program Coordinator, Drug-Free Communities Grant 508 497-9700 x1456**

Erin is the Drug-Free Communities grant coordinator and supports the Hopkinton Organizing for Prevention (HOP) coalition in reducing youth substance use in the community. And oversees the HOP Youth Interns and HOP Youth Coalition.



**Neha Ninan (HHS Junior), Anna Noroian (HHS Junior), Emily Evans (HHS Sophomore), HOP Interns**

Three youth interns support the Drug-Free Communities grant program's efforts to reduce youth substance use and promote mental health in the Hopkinton community.

***We are hiring!***

- **A Full-time Social Worker/Program Coordinator**
- **Contact the director to learn more.**

[ [contacthyfs@hopkintonma.gov](mailto:contacthyfs@hopkintonma.gov) ] [ 508-497-9781 ]

## May is Asian American and Pacific Islander Heritage Month

Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) communities face significant mental health challenges, yet are among the least likely to seek help. Stigma around mental illness, cultural expectations to remain silent about emotional struggles, and a shortage of culturally competent mental health professionals contribute to this gap in care. In 2021, only about 23% of AAPI adults with a mental illness received treatment, compared to nearly 50% of white adults.

Certain groups, including Southeast Asian refugees and Pacific Islanders, face even more urgent needs due to experiences of war, displacement, and systemic poverty, which increase their risk for trauma-related conditions like PTSD and depression. Pacific Islander communities often have high unmet mental health needs, but are frequently excluded from data collection.

To achieve equity in mental health care for AAPI communities, it's essential to expand culturally informed services, improve access to interpreters and insurance, and address stigma through community education and support. Healing begins when every voice is acknowledged and included.

### Some Resources for AAPI communities:

- [The MGH Center for Cross-Cultural Student Emotional Wellness](#) has an outstanding resource center that creates high-quality, evidence-based resources and services focused on mental health education and prevention for parents, students, educators, and clinicians. They also conduct pioneering research on the populations they serve and facilitate access to culturally sensitive care for those in need.
- ['Death by a Thousand Cuts': The Impact of Microaggressions on the AAPI Community](#)—New York Presbyterian Hospital has an eye-opening article on the impact of microaggressions on the AAPI community.
- [Guide for Parents of Asian/Asian American Adolescents](#) - William James College Center of Excellence for Multicultural and Global Mental Health (CMGMH) has developed a Guide to provide parents with the knowledge and skills to support their children effectively.

## Resources of the Month

### May is National Mental Health Awareness Month

*This Mental Health Awareness Month, it's crucial to understand that language matters when discussing mental health. How we communicate influences perceptions and can either perpetuate stigma or promote empathy and inclusion.*

- 1. Language Influences Stigma: Stigmatizing language, such as calling someone “crazy,” can lead to shame and social exclusion. Using person-first language, like “a person with schizophrenia,” acknowledges individuals as whole people, not just their diagnoses. The American Psychological Association supports person-first language to reduce stigma.
- 2. Accuracy Promotes Understanding: Misusing mental health terms, such as saying “I am so OCD” or “She is totally bipolar,” trivializes real disorders and hinders understanding. Accurate language fosters education and empathy.
- 3. Language Shapes Policy and Treatment: The terms used in clinical and policy settings affect service delivery. For example, describing someone as “not currently engaging in treatment” is more respectful and supportive than labeling them “non-compliant.”
- 4. **\*\*Respectful Language Builds Trust\*\***: In community and clinical contexts, affirming language helps build trust. This is especially vital for marginalized groups who may have historical mistrust of systems due to discrimination.

In Summary, words matter. Using accurate and respectful language can combat stigma, enhance understanding, and create supportive communities around mental health.

 <b>Let's Say ...</b>	 <b>Instead of ...</b>
✔ She/he/they has/have _____ (e.g. bipolar disorder, dementia, anorexia nervosa)	✘ She/he/they is/are _____ (e.g. bipolar, demented, anorexic)
✔ Person living with a mental illness or mental health condition	✘ Crazy, insane, nuts, lunatic, mentally ill/handicapped/disabled, has a loose screw, lost his/her/their marbles
✔ Experiencing mental illness	✘ Suffering from/victim of mental illness
✔ Died by suicide	✘ Committed suicide
✔ Attempted suicide	✘ Unsuccessful suicide
✔ Usual/typical behavior	✘ Normal behavior
✔ Person receiving mental health services	✘ Mental health patient/case
✔ Psychiatric hospital	✘ Mental institution, looney bin
✔ Has a substance use disorder/an addiction	✘ Is an addict, junkie, druggie, drunk, alcoholic
✔ Experiences symptoms of psychosis	✘ Is psychotic
✔ Has an intellectual or developmental disability	✘ Is retarded/mentally retarded, slow
✔ Student receiving special education services	✘ Special education student
✔ Has a brain injury	✘ Is brain-damaged
✔ It annoys/irritates me	✘ It drives me crazy
✔ I like order and organization	✘ I'm so OCD
✔ I'm feeling really sad/down about this situation	✘ I'm so depressed
✔ I'm having trouble focusing	✘ I'm so ADHD
✔ I've noticed you are exhibiting a frequent change of moods lately	✘ You're so bipolar

- [NAMI California](#) has some additional information about how we speak about mental health.
- [National Prevention Week is May 11-17](#), and SAMHSA has a great toolkit for both providers and community members to find something actionable to do to help support our neighbors who may be navigating substance use disorders.
- SAMHSA has an online center for [Resources for Families Coping with Mental and Substance Use Disorders](#). When a loved one is experiencing a mental health and/or substance use disorder, it can be difficult to know what to do and how to help. This resource provides a lot of information to help families take care of themselves and their loved ones.

## QPR Gatekeeper Training: Empowering Everyday Heroes to Prevent Suicide

### What is QPR?

**QPR** stands for **Question, Persuade, Refer**—three simple steps anyone can learn to help save a life from suicide. Just as CPR is a life-saving technique for physical health emergencies, QPR is an emergency mental health intervention designed to identify and interrupt a suicide crisis and direct the person to appropriate care.


### Why It Matters

**Recognize:** Identify warning signs like expressions of hopelessness, depression, or giving away prized possessions.

**Respond:** Learn how to approach someone in crisis with empathy and concern.

**Refer:** Understand how to guide the individual to professional help.

By equipping more people with QPR skills, communities can create a safety net that catches individuals before they reach a crisis point.

 **If you're interested in becoming trained in QPR, Hopkinton Youth and Family Services' clinicians are certified trainers and will provide this training. Contact information is at the bottom of every page of this newsletter.**



# Updates from Hopkinton Organizing for Prevention (HOP)

## HOP Youth Lead Middle School Day - An Outdoor Day of Leadership & Connection

In partnership with the MetroWest YMCA, HOP Youth hosted an inspiring outdoor experience for 25 Hopkinton middle school students. The day was packed with opportunities to explore the outdoors, build leadership skills, grow confidence, and connect with new friends, all while learning about the mission of Hopkinton Organizing for Prevention (HOP).

Students participated in a variety of activities, including team-building challenges, orienteering, rock climbing, and archery. They also engaged in thoughtful conversations about leadership, peer relationships, and navigating risky behaviors. It was a day full of learning and adventure. Every middle-schooler left with substance use prevention resources, new skills, new connections, and big smiles.



Middle School students could try archery, orienteering, rock climbing, and other group sports.

HOP wants to ensure that everyone has a copy of the Social Host Law as we near Prom and Graduation season!

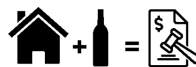
If you are interested in learning more about Hopkinton Organizing for Prevention (HOP), Please contact:

Erin Bartolini  
([ebartolini@hopkintonma.gov](mailto:ebartolini@hopkintonma.gov)) or  
Lauren Mayer

[ [contactyfs@hopkinton](mailto:contactyfs@hopkinton)

### Social Host liability could cost you...

- Fine up to \$2,000
- Imprisonment for up to a year
- Both a fine and imprisonment



Damages from a civil lawsuit could cost you so much more...

As a parent, the things you say and do have a tremendous influence on the decisions youth make regarding substance use.



### Be In the Know

#### Good Samaritan Law

A person under 21 years of age who experiences substance-related incapacitation and is in need of medical assistance and, in good faith, seeks such medical assistance or is the subject of such a good faith request for medical assistance shall not be charged or prosecuted under sections 34, 34A or 34C.

### Social Host Ordinance

#### What Parents need to Know

Be Involved. Talk with your child(ren) about alcohol, discuss a plan with your child(ren) about what to do in a risky situation.

#### What Does Furnish Mean?

to knowingly or intentionally supply, give, or provide to or allow a person under 21 years of age to possess alcoholic beverages on premises or property owned or controlled by the person charged.

## Coming Programs

For more opportunities, including support group information, behavioral health screens, how to support local nonprofits, and more, check out our coming events by

[Bookmarking this page](#) or visiting our [website](#).

***HYFS & local partners' upcoming events are updated & change frequently. Please check back often!***

## Check out our Community Partners

### Families for Depression Awareness

Did you know that you have access to a host of webinars that help those with depression manage their illness and caregivers supporting those they love (adults of all ages and teens)?

[Check out their offerings!](#)

### Project ABC

A grant-funded program managed by YMCA-Metrowest offers local playgroups and caregiver consultation for preschool-age children and their caregivers. Read about the Project and its many [FREE activities here!](#)

### Hopkinton Senior Center

The Hopkinton Council on Aging seeks to enhance and enrich the quality of life for adults aged 60 and older in the Town of Hopkinton by providing activities and services that encourage independence, healthy living, and continued participation in the community. Learn more [here](#).

### Hopkinton Public Library

The library hosts educational, therapeutic, and skill-building programs exploring current issues for all ages. Check out its [offerings!](#)

### Hopkinton Park & Recreation

Hopkinton Parks and Recreation provides recreational opportunities for you and your family. Learn [more](#).

### Hopkinton Public Health

Hopkinton Health Department & Nursing Services ensures that healthy outcomes & lifestyles are accessible & achievable for all who live, work, & visit the town. Our mission is to promote public health through education, advocacy, & provision of high-quality healthcare services. Learn more [here](#).



## Some Important Numbers to Know:

Department	Contact	Location
<a href="#">Hopkinton Department of Public Works</a>	(508) 497-9740 <a href="mailto:kreed@hopkintonma.gov">kreed@hopkintonma.gov</a>	83 Wood St.
<a href="#">Hopkinton Fire Department</a>	Non-emergency: (508) 497-2323	73 Main St.
<a href="#">Hopkinton Health Department</a>	(508) 497-9725 <a href="mailto:SMcAuliffe@hopkintonma.gov">SMcAuliffe@hopkintonma.gov</a>	Town Hall - Third Floor
<a href="#">Hopkinton Organizing for Prevention</a>	(508) 497-9781 <a href="mailto:ebartolini@hopkintonma.gov">ebartolini@hopkintonma.gov</a> <a href="mailto:lmayer@hopkintonma.gov">lmayer@hopkintonma.gov</a>	Town Hall - Basement
<a href="#">Hopkinton Parks &amp; Recreation</a>	(508) 497-9750 <a href="mailto:parksandrec@hopkintonma.gov">parksandrec@hopkintonma.gov</a>	6 Walcott St.
<a href="#">Hopkinton Police Department</a>	Non-emergency: (508) 497-3401	74 Main St.
<a href="#">Hopkinton Public Library</a>	(508) 497-9777 <a href="mailto:hopkintonlibrary@hopkintonma.gov">hopkintonlibrary@hopkintonma.gov</a>	13 Main St.
<a href="#">Hopkinton Public Schools</a>	(508) 417-9360	89 Hayden Rowe St.
<a href="#">Hopkinton Senior Center</a>	508-497-9730 <a href="mailto:abeck@hopkintonma.gov">abeck@hopkintonma.gov</a>	28 Mayhew St.

## HYFS provides programs & services that promote behavioral health

Call us to learn more at 508-497-9781

### INTERFACE Referral Service

All Hopkinton residents can access free and confidential help finding an outpatient mental health provider in as little as two weeks that best matches their needs in terms of location, the specialty of the provider, insurance or fee requirement, and availability. 1-888-244-6843

### Mindwise Behavioral Health Screening

Twelve free, anonymous, scientifically validated screenings are available to assess topics ranging from general well-being to mood, anxiety, and substance use. Take one today to gain insight and access resources.

### Hopkinton Organizing for Prevention

The mission of Hopkinton Organizing for Prevention (HOP) is to prevent youth substance use by providing resources, education, and support to promote well-being and resilience for all Hopkinton residents. Adults and youth can always get involved. Contact us to find out how, and visit us on [Instagram](#) and [Facebook!](#)

### Additional resources

HYFS has a user-friendly landing page for many resource needs! Check it out for yourself or someone else.

## About Us

### Mission

To provide access to comprehensive social services for youth and families and to enhance behavioral health for the entire Hopkinton community.

### Vision

Hopkinton will be a town in which all people are valued, where behavioral health is a high priority, and residents have a place to turn when they need help.

For any questions, comments, or concerns, please reach out to Dawn Alcott-Miller, Director, at [dalcott@hopkintonma.gov](mailto:dalcott@hopkintonma.gov) or 508-497-9781

Visit us on our [Website](#), [HOP's Website](#) & [Facebook](#) & [Instagram!](#)