

YOUTH SUMMIT 2019



FRIDAY

APRIL 5

FOR
STUDENTS

**KNOWLEDGE, EMPOWERMENT,
UNDERSTANDING**

SATURDAY

APRIL 6

FOR PARENTS, EDUCATORS
AND COMMUNITY

**THEY'RE TALKING,
ARE WE LISTENING?**

**Grappone Conference Center
Concord, NH**

www.dhyouthsummit.com

Day 1: For Youth, Led by Youth

“Knowledge, Empowerment, Understanding”

350 Students from 65 School Districts

- Morning: 9 topical discussions
 - Each student attended 3 discussion groups
 - Approximately 120 in each group, divided into sub-groups of 40
 - Each group had 3 student facilitators, 3 content experts (educator, psychology, health care), and 6 scribes per group
- Lunch: report outs and discussion
- Afternoon:
 - Life Balance Challenges: Hannah Kearney, Olympic Gold skier from the Upper Valley
 - Social Media for Good: Seattle Mama Doc, Wendy Sue Swanson, Pediatrician
 - Film & Writing Festival: 50 submissions: 5 top videos, 4 top stories highlighted
 - Will be posted on NH Children’s Behavioral Health Collaborative: <http://www.nh4youth.org/>

Day 2: For Educators, Parents, Community

“They’re Talking. Are We Listening?”

- Approximately 150 attendees
- Report-out and discussion panels (students, content experts, audience)
 - Mental Health
 - Diversity
 - Timely Topics
- Social Media
- Community engagement
 - Researcher-Community Collaboration: *Teen Speak Out*
 - Public Health Networks as rich resources
 - Health care community collaborations

What We Heard: Experiences & Opportunities

“Anyone who harbors doubts about the younger generation—or the future of civil discourse, for that matter—should have gone to the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Youth Summit last Friday.”

Shawne Wickham

Manchester Union Leader, April 8, 2019

At right: Quincy Roy from Manchester Memorial High School leads a discussion at the Dartmouth-Hitchcock Youth Summit.



Substance Use

- Experience
 - Wide spread use: cope and escape, peer pressure, parental use
 - Vaping use huge, also use of marijuana, pills, alcohol
 - Kids are using at school without detection
 - Sense that there is an emphasis on punishment rather than providing help
- Hopes
 - Need education on the science of substances and health
 - Treat like a health issue so kids can come forward
 - Peer educators and support balanced with expert information
 - Concern with out of school suspension for kids who need help
 - More access to counseling to get at the root of the problem

Suicide, Self Harm & Depression

- Experience
 - Many people hurting
 - Mental health stigma keeps people from speaking up
 - Many feel abnormal coping with the range of human feelings
 - Social media can isolate and distort perceptions of others
 - Feel school counselors not available, too busy, need to schedule
- Hopes
 - Opportunities to discuss feelings
 - Education on mental health issues and signs of suicide risk
 - Trained peer counselors (e.g. NAMI program)
 - Access to counseling in school on an as needed basis

Fact: 9 out of 10 people who survive a suicide attempt are glad they survived. 9 out of 10 people who attempt suicide with a gun die. Remove from homes when depression or instability present.

Eating Disorders

- Experience

- Pressure to look a certain way: bulk up or slim down for certain sports, be curvier or skinnier, taller or smaller, etc. all amplified by media
- Body image distortions are common
- Affects males as well as females
- Focus on spectrum of eating beliefs, dieting, and challenges not just specific eating disorders; there is a need for information
- Little understanding, hard to recognize in friends and respond

- Hopes

- Celebration of different body types; healthy comes in different shapes
- More education on healthy eating, on signs of a problem, intervention
- Self acceptance

Race & Ethnicity

- Experience
 - Limited diversity in NH, few teachers of color or diverse ethnicity
 - Awkward to discuss, want to better understand the issues
 - Racism and racist remarks prevalent, even among well-meaning
 - Hear “Micro-aggressions” several times a day followed by, “It’s just a joke...”
 - Hear N word daily
 - History taught as white person’s history
 - People feel at risk if they question teachers attitudes
- Hopes
 - Greater respect, understanding that language can hurt
 - Readings by diverse authors, more balanced history, more diverse role models in schools
 - Celebrations of diverse cultures: such as food, cultural days

Gender & Sexuality

- Experience
 - LGBTQIA students still experience stigma and discrimination
 - Language and jokes reflect homophobia and transgender fears
 - Increasingly understand gender and sexuality as a continuum
 - Harassment and assumptions are common
- Hopes
 - Need education at younger ages, supports for experience
 - Peer support: GSA, DSA, Prom Out
 - Safe spaces and people,
 - E.g. wristbands as sign of safety
 - Gender neutral bathrooms

Bullying

- Experience
 - Bullies as traumatized individuals in need of help
 - Target marginalized people: race, gender, ethnicity, disabled, etc.
 - Social media has extended reach, home no longer is a haven
 - Noted that schools with better support resources have less bullying
- Hopes
 - Need for upstanders not bystanders
 - Need for respect and recognize common humanity
 - Need for better psychosocial support services

Pressure for Success

- Experience

- Definition of success differs for everyone: money, career, healthy life, relationships; accepting others values and different goals reduces judgment
- Stress sources differ: siblings, friends, school expectations, parents, self
- Learn in different ways: hands on, lectures, interactive
- Can't do everything well

- Hopes

- Diverse learning options, schedules, methods
- Mental health services
- Learn coping skills
- Self acceptance

School Violence

- Experience
 - Many feel unsafe in school, impairs attention, heightens anxiety
 - Diverse types of violence: bullying, fights, gangs, threat of gun violence
 - People who are bullied end up threatening others
 - Mixed impact of social media: document violence, but may encourage
- Hopes
 - Realistic drills and training for crises
 - Treatment for people with anger, aggression, other mental health issues
 - More connections and respect for all students, buddy system
 - Greater responsibility to report concerns

Road Trip: Distracted Driving

- Experience
 - Diverse distractions: passengers, texting, calls, substance use
 - Parents not always best roles models
 - Kids think things won't happen to them, feel invulnerable
- Hopes
 - Emphasize responsibility and consequences of actions for others
 - Reduce social stigma of objecting to risky behavior
 - Speak up, exit car
 - Find new friends if they don't change their behaviors
 - Strategies for help
 - Text code a word to get away from a situation

Consistent Themes Heard Throughout

- Health education on diverse topics. Realistic, non-directive
 - Mental health, gender and sexuality, substances, interactions/bullying, nutrition, other
- Access to health information, assessment of care at school as needed: physical, mental, social
 - SAPs, co-located health clinics, other
- Opportunities for meaningful, authentic discussions with others
- Trained peer supports