

Being a teenager is hard, and COVID-19 has made these difficult years even harder. Over the past decade, U.S. teens report feeling increased pressure and stress and those working with this population see the result -- young people with mental health conditions, lack of resiliency skills and many with substance use disorder. The healthy coping mechanisms that used to contribute to mental wellness, like community connection, physical activity and the pursuit of creative outlets has been declining. These trends were happening even before COVID!

Teens with mental health issues often develop substance use disorder. It has been said that the opposite of addiction is not sobriety, it is connection. As the COVID19 pandemic continues, so does the nation's opioid epidemic. The AMA has expressed concern over the increasing number of reports from national, state and local media suggesting increases in opioid-related overdose deaths. Young people, many of whom were already challenged with mental health conditions are seeking connection and are not finding it because of the social distancing and school closures necessary because of this contagious virus. Those who specialize in behavioral health are warning that a tsunami is about to hit our country in the form of mental health needs. This surge in mental health conditions is predicted to last for years.

Join us for a webinar that will shed some light on teen mental health and substance use disorders. Presenters Stephanie Briody, CEO of Behavioral Health Innovators and Michelle Muffet-Lipinski, Principal of Northshore Recovery High School will share their innovative initiatives and programs that are filling in the gaps in services for teens with mental health and substance use disorders. Learn how you can prepare for this surge in mental health challenges with examples of practices and programs that can be replicated in your community, and that provide the needed connection with teens who are hard to reach.

**Learning Objectives:**

- Learn about the PASS program and RecoveryBuild Alternative Peer Groups (APG's) and how these positive discipline interventions are working to address and treat substance use disorder and other mental health conditions.
- Learn about recent legislative initiatives that address mental health and substance use disorder.
- Learn about some virtual connection tools and games you can use to provide expressive therapy using the arts.

**Registration Link:** <https://bit.ly/2ZOd41N>