



Healthy Acadia

Building vibrant communities for over 20 years

Energizing Youth Connections

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A Brief History

- A 1 year Pilot Initiative - May 2024 - Currently funded through June 30th, 2026.
- First fully funded Youth Recovery Program in the State of Maine
- Funded by the Office of Child and Family Services and the Office of Behavioral Health
- Serves Washington and Hancock Counties

What is a Recovery Coach?

“A Recovery Coach is anyone interested in promoting Recovery by removing barriers and obstacles to Recovery, and by serving as a personal guide and mentor for people seeking or in Recovery.”

- CCAR

Connecticut Community for Addiction
Recovery



Broad impact & Growing every month.

- 19 recoverees so far and growing every month.
- 5 Schools in total
 - Washington County - 2
 - Hancock County - 3
- All of our staff are trained through Connecticut Community for Addiction Recovery (CCAR).

How we got into schools?

- **Community Partnerships**
 - BARR - Building Assets, Reducing Risks.
 - Schools.
 - Non-Profits.
- **Responding to School Based Needs**
 - Few SUD resources.
 - Counseling services.
- **Low-Barrier Approaches**
 - Meeting students where they are.
 - Not just SUD.
- **Proving Value**
 - Schools reaching out.
 - Non-Profits reaching out.

How We Connect with Youth.

- Meeting youth where they are.
- Part of their school rhythm.
- Visible & Approachable.
- Connecting through everyday interactions.
- Support beyond the one-on-one environment.

Question: “My living space has helped to drive my recovery journey?”

Youth Response : “I’ve got a lot of shit going on, and my house really isn’t a place for recovery.”

Question: “I regard my life as challenging and fulfilling without the need for using drugs and alcohol?”

**Youth Response: ... *laughs*...
“Oh, hell no... not at all!”**



Question: *“I am proud of the community I live in and feel part of it”*

Youth Response: *“Definitely not; not at all.”*



WAIT?!

WHAT?!

These answers came from who?

What it looks like in the Session

“You always listen first and hear my side of the story without judging me”

- Engagement isn't always about *doing more*, sometimes it's about *doing less*
- They didn't talk about techniques, Listening without judgment is the *foundation* of connection
- They talked about how their Coach made them feel

Outside the Sessions – It's the little things

- I make myself visible — not just available
- I'm in the hallways, at lunch, between classes
- Even on the grill at school events occasionally
- I stay open, consistent, and approachable
- A “Yo, what's up” and a fist bump today could turn into a deep convo next week

Hancock County

- Trained coach by the end of last school year
- Positive planning with schools that got paused during graduation season and over the summer
- Summer
 - Outreach and spreading the word
 - Drop-in hours
 - Connections with local organizations
 - INSPIRE Recovery Center, Opioid Free Island Partnership, Heart of Ellsworth, 207 Community Closet, and more

Growth in Hancock County

This school year:

- 3 Active Schools
 - Deer Isle - Stonington High School
 - REACH School
 - Ellsworth High School
 - Presence at each school once a week
 - Visibility and engagement
 - Building trust and connections
 - With students and staff
- ★ **Shop Class** (metals and wood)
 - ★ **Resource Room**
 - ★ **Art Class**
 - ★ **Connecting** with staff and school resources (collaboration)
 - ★ **Clubs**
 - ★ **Library**
 - ★ **Hallway**
 - ★ **Community Events**
 - ★ **Lunch**
 - ★ **Gym**

Growth in Hancock County

- Other positive partnerships
 - Sumner Memorial High School, Mount Desert Island High School
 - INSPIRE - Open Coaching Hours, Collaboration
- Partnerships in planning, potential connections to come
 - Juvenile Community Corrections
 - Healthy Acadia's prevention team
 - Heart of Ellsworth




**“I was scared this was gonna be like therapy.
But you don’t just tell me what to do.
You actually get it.”**

At the heart of **Youth Recovery Coaching** is a simple but powerful truth: **young people don't engage in service, they engage in relationships.**

How do we build those relationships?

- **Trust** - Consistency, Presence, Willingness
- **Accountability** - Relational and Non-Punitive
- **Connection** - Community, Future, Identity



Good afternoon my name is Ben Collins

Training Opportunities Through CCAR

- **Recovery Coach Academy for Young People**
- Recovery Coach Academy
- Ethical Considerations for Recovery Coaches
- Recovery Coaching in Justice Settings
- Spirituality and Recovery Coaches
- Recovery Coaching Basics
- Recovery Coaching and Professionalism
- CoacherVision
- Recovery Coaching in the ED