



REINTEGRATION
SUPPORT
NETWORK

Strategic Plan 2020

May 2020

Reintegration Support Network

117 W. Main St. • Carrboro, NC 27510 • (984) 777-5282 • info@rsnnc.org

RSN Strategic Plan 2020

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OVERVIEW

I. MISSION, VISION & ASPIRATIONS

Mission

The Reintegration Support Network provides youth with a sense of belonging and the skills and capacities for self-advocacy, healthy relationships and positive engagement in the community. RSN serves youth 14 to 18+ who are in recovery from substance use disorder and/or are receiving services for mental health issues and/or court involvement. In doing so, RSN's work contributes to ending the school to prison pipeline.

Vision & Aspirations

Vision:

RSN envisions local communities supporting, inspiring, and empowering youth in all forms of recovery.

CORE VALUES & GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Youth First

RSN will keep the best interests of the youth first and avoid any strategy or practice that could make them feel more threatened or burdened or undermine their personal power and self-determination.

Authenticity of Voice

Authenticity of voice through its connections to and accurate representation of diverse voices of youth as part of communities of recovery. RSN seeks to have the majority of its directors, staff and volunteers be self-identified members of the local communities of recovery including their families, friends, allies and professionals. RSN seeks to give voice to personal stories as living proof of the transformative power of recovery.

Diversity and Inclusivity

RSN strives to include, hear and embrace people representing different styles and lengths of recovery as well as diversity by age, gender identity, ethnicity, sexual orientation, and political and religious affiliation. RSN seeks to give voice and support to this diversity in its outreach and education, advocacy and recovery support.

Independence, Partnership and Collaboration

RSN is not part of the legal system, the courts, a treatment program or a specific religious group or faith and does not endorse a particular path to recovery. This independence gives RSN the ability to freely partner on a variety of levels with other organizations and individuals that are able to contribute to the recovery of youth with a wide variety of circumstances, needs and styles of recovery. RSN is thus able to serve as a bridge between diverse communities of recovery, the addiction treatment community, governmental agencies, the criminal justice system, the larger network of health and human services providers and systems and the broader recovery support resources of the extended community.

II. SCOT: STRENGTHS, CHALLENGES, OPPORTUNITIES & THREATS

RSN is currently partnered with RCNC in a potentially 3-year federally funded Building Communities of Recovery project. RSN is continuing to strengthen its organizational capacity in order to meet the grant goals and objectives and the organization is almost entirely dependent upon these federal funds to maintain its operations.

Strengths

RSN's primary strengths are the foundation it has established over the last four years. This foundation is enhanced by the management skills, clinical experience, administrative skills, and a staff that represents the community we want to serve. In addition, RSN's current BOD are aligned with the mission of the organization, are well connected in the communities RSN seeks to serve, and bring a wealth of diverse and pertinent experience.

Challenges

RSN's primary challenge is expanding and diversifying its funding and community resources to enable the health and wellbeing of the organization. RSN needs to focus on grant prospects, both private and public, that would allow the organization to be more flexible in its programming as well as more responsive to community needs.

Opportunities

Identify additional resources, both internal and external, including a strong volunteer base, that will strengthen RSN's ability to grow and serve the needs of the community. For example, creating programming that enables RSN to provide its services virtually; establishing remote capabilities for mentoring, support groups, and community outreach.

Explore community partnerships that would allow for greater responsiveness to stakeholders needs. For example, Juvenile Crime Prevention Council in both Orange and Durham counties.

Expand community partnerships with other youth-serving organizations that provide evidence-based programming focused on goal setting and self-determination. In addition, explore partnerships like Orange Partnership for Drug Free Youth that support prevention initiatives.

Threats

RSN's greatest threat is continued dependence upon one primary source of funding, hampering RSN's ability to be flexible in light of changing circumstances and stakeholder needs.

In light of the current COVID-19 pandemic, RSN must also address the impact that stay-at-home orders and social distancing will inevitably have on our youth referrals, our ability to develop new community partnerships, service provision and changes in priorities of funders.

Additional threats are that traditional funding sources for small nonprofits tend to be short-term and funders' priorities are subject to changing circumstances.

Also, there's still limited awareness of RSN's programming within the community, highlighting a need to renew and expand community partnerships to gain recognition.

III. OBJECTIVES, STRATEGIES & OPERATIONAL TACTICS

Our long-range objectives represent what we need to concentrate on in order to make our vision a reality. These objectives typically have time horizons of several years or more.

Under “general strategies,” we will group the overall means we will employ in order to achieve our objectives, and thus, our vision. With these in place, we can then organize the shorter-term priorities and performance initiatives that detail the “who, what, and when” resources we will leverage to accomplish them. And to get even more specific with operational matters, we will need to drill down and answer the question of how we intend to accomplish our objectives.

Long Term Objectives

To create a healthy, financially sustainable organization that can enable local communities to support, inspire, and empower youth in all forms of recovery.

To develop a model for a youth-focused recovery community organization that can be exported to other communities.

General Strategies

1. Providing peer-based recovery support services through our mentor program and youth peers support groups,
2. Carrying out recovery-focused community education and outreach programs, and
3. Organizing recovery-focused policy advocacy activities in partnership with other area recovery community organizations and youth-serving organizations in the community (primarily Orange and Durham counties).

Shorter Term Priorities & Initiatives

Year One (2020 -2021)

Goal:

1. Ensure RSN's Financial Sustainability:
 - a. Diversify and expand funding opportunities; government grants, private foundations, community fundraising, etc.
 - b. Identify and research potential funding sources, including other SAMHSA funding, in anticipation of BCOR funding ending in July, 2022 to.
 - c. Develop and implement a comprehensive and sustainable 3 year strategic plan, including financial and fund-raising goals

2. Strengthen Community Impact:
 - a. Implement a community needs assessment for both Orange and Durham counties.
 - b. Recruit an additional 2-4 Community Advisory Board members representative of the youth being served (ages 13-20)
 - c. Identify and develop strategic community partnerships, focusing primarily on youth-focused and youth-led organizations.
 - d. Solidify RSN's presence in the community as a youth-focused recovery community organization by conducting outreach and education events.

3. Strengthen Organizational Governance:
 - a. Expand total membership of the Board of Directors from 4 to 9 members by January 2021.
 - b. Recruit Board members from Orange and Durham counties - no more than 5 from Orange and the remainder from Durham counties.
 - c. Create a balanced and representative Board composition (age, race, ethnicity)
 - d. Implement a Board Team-Building workshop.

4. Improve Program Operations and Implementation:
 - a. Hire a Mentor Program Coordinator to support a youth-focused mentoring program.

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- b. Expand RSN's mentor program from 2 to at 10 active mentors providing 1-1 mentoring to youth in Orange and/or Durham counties.
 - c. Pilot and evaluate use of accredited CPSS to serve as mentors in Orange and/or Durham Counties.
 - d. Expand the current youth peer support group program within Orange and Durham counties.
 - e. Create and implement internal program metrics and methods for evaluation.
 - f. Develop contingency plans in case stay-at-home orders and social distancing continue into the near future. In particular, explore and implement ways to leverage technology in program delivery.
5. Improve Organizational Capacity and Infrastructure:
 - a. Continue simplifying and streamlining all aspects of organizational operations.
 - b. Define and implement expectations, policies and procedures for BOD, staff, mentors, youth participants, and community partners.
 - c. Develop and implement Organizational Bylaws and Employee Policies and Procedures.
 - d. Determine optimal staff capacity, including experience, skill-set, roles and responsibilities and to insure quality programming.
 - e. Continue streamlining internal financial management processes; primarily expense tracking and budgeting.

Year Two (2021-2022)

Goal:

1. Ensure RSN's Financial Sustainability:
 - a. Secure additional funding to support the organization at its current level of operations post SAMHSA BCOR grant

2. Strengthen and expand Community Impact, including youth-focused RCO network:
 - a. Develop and Implement a comprehensive marketing and communications strategy to solidify RSN's unique status as a youth-focused recovery community organization

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- b. Explore additional programming, e.g., family support opportunities, and other forms of resourcing for expanded programming.
3. Strengthen Organizational Governance:
- a. Expand BOD membership from 9 to 11 members
 - b. Create Board member position description, agreement, expectations, and requirement of service.
 - c. Design and Implement a BOD Retreat.
4. Improve Program Operations:
- a. Involve youth participants in the process of program design.
 - b. Implement organization-wide anti-racism and anti-oppression education and tools.
 - c. Design and implement evaluation tools and metrics that capture formal and informal feedback from:
 - i. Participants
 - ii. Mentors
 - iii. Parents and Guardians
 - iv. Community Partners (incl. Treatment Centers and other referring agencies).
 - d. Improve alignment of staff skills and experience in relation to overall program operations beginning with a Staff Team Building workshop.
 - e. Implementing ongoing goal-setting and annual performance evaluations for staff.
5. Improve Organizational Capacity and Infrastructure
- a. Simplify internal operations while continuing to meet organizational (and SAMHSA grant) goals.
6. Create a Comprehensive Marketing and Communications strategy.
- a. Locate and employ a Development Consultant to review RSN Branding and synthesize the RSN message.

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7. Develop a Youth Peer Support Specialist certification training for accreditation by the UNC NC Certified peer Support Specialist program.

Year Three (2022-2023)

Goals:

1. Create an exportable program model for other organizations serving the needs of adolescents age 13-20 with substance use, mental health and/or issues with justice involvement
2. Serve as Organizational Advisor to other organizations implementing the BCOR program model.
3. Conduct Comprehensive BCOR Program Review.
4. Conduct an Organization-wide Strategic Planning session.

SAMHSA Grant Goals

RSN, with its partner RCNC, has five programmatic goals for the next three years (August 2019 - JULY 31, 2022). These goals were enunciated in RCNC/RSN's successful joint proposal to the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). The goals are presented here and the goals and corresponding objectives are presented in Attachment A.

Goal 1: To provide youth age 13-20 in Durham and Orange Counties, NC support to enhance their capacities for long-term recovery, wellbeing and desistance and therefore, to reduce their return-to-use (i.e., relapse), recidivism and further penetration into the court system.

Goal 2: To strengthen RCNC-RSN's community support network, outreach and education; to build knowledge, awareness, and support of youth in recovery and for the emerging RCNC-RSN youth-focused Recovery Community Organization (YRCO) in Orange and Durham Counties, NC.

Goal 3: To create and maintain representative ownership of the RCNC-RSN YRCO through a Youth Recovery Community Organization Advisory Board.

Goal 4: To develop an exportable Youth Recovery Community Organization program model for diffusion to other communities.

Goal 5. To develop a youth-focused Peer Support Specialist Training Curricula.

OAK Grant Goals

To provide supplemental, discretionary funding for direct costs associated with all aspects of RSN's operations currently not covered in the SAMHSA grant budget, including personnel and contractors as well as other program expenses.

Implementation Details

See Addendum A: RSN Year One Goals and Planning Template (Provided Separately)

IV. MEASUREMENTS AND FUNDING STREAMS

We will need to incorporate a means of tracking RSN's output and performance against regularly scheduled targets. We will also need financial analysis that takes into account past and projected performance. The numbers in our strategic plan don't need to be elaborate, but they do need to help us – and potential funding sources – get an overview of our financial resources.

RSN Current Funding (8.1.2019-7.31.2021)

RCNC / SAMHSA Grant

RCNC, with RSN as its partner, has been awarded a grant of \$200,000 per year (total three-year award was \$600,000 for three years) by the Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA). Through RCNC, RSN will receive up to \$150,000/year or \$450,000 over three years. These funds are subject to quarterly and annual review by the grantor and continued funding is dependent upon meeting the grant goals and deliverables.

Oak Foundation Grant

RSN received an additional \$50,000 in discretionary funding from the Oak Foundation for FY 2020 (January 1 - December 31, 2020) and will be requesting the same level of funding for FY 2021.

Targets & Milestones

Measurement Criteria

Measurement criteria would include things like: Outcomes from referral sources, outcomes from the peer support group and mentor program sessions, internal organization measurements and organizational capacity goals like staff hires, fund raising, board membership, training attended, etc.

See Addendum B: RCNC/RSN SAMHSA Evaluation Program (Provided Separately)

Financial Analysis - Past & Projected

See Addendum C: Comprehensive 3 Year Budget (Provided Separately)

Attachment A

RSN and RCNC Programmatic Goals and Objectives

For

Building Communities of Recovery

Funded by

Substance Abuse Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)

August 2019 - JULY 31, 2022

Goal 1:

To provide youth age 14-18 in Durham and Orange Counties, NC support to enhance their capacities for long-term recovery, wellbeing and desistance and therefore, to reduce their return-to-use (i.e., relapse), recidivism and further penetration into the court system.

Objectives. By July 30, 2022, RCNC-RSN will have:

1. a. Populated Orange/Durham counties with 36 Certified Peer Support Specialists (12/year) for whom RCNC-RSN will have paid training and certification fees and enlisted them into a Youth Recovery Community Organization (YRCO) Corps. We will target those 18-24 for at least 50% of these positions and will team them with older CPSSs. In addition to certification, all CPSSs will receive special training related to the unique needs of adolescents.

1. b. Advanced the peer support competencies of 36 YRCO Corps members (12 per year) with on-the-job experience facilitating peer support in leading Youth Peer Support Groups, providing one-on-one peer support mentoring and providing opportunities to participate in community outreach, education, networking and other forms of community engagement.

1. c. Engaged 168 youth in Youth Peer Support Groups (8 groups/year (2/quarter); 12 session/group; 1-hour/session; and 6-8 youth/group. In three years: 24 groups, 288 sessions, and 6,048 contact-hours).

1. d. Engaged 34 youth who are currently in, or have completed a program of recovery and/or confinement in one-on-one peer support (mentoring) (10 youth Year 1 and 12 youth/year thereafter; 26 weeks/youth; 2 hours/week. In three years: 1,820 peer support contact-hours).

By July 2021 and 2022:

1. e. RCNC-RSN staff will have developed (in Yr. 2) and piloted (in Yr. 3) a Youth Peer Support Specialist (YPSS) curriculum and submitted it to the NC governing body for accreditation.

Goal 2:

To strengthen RCNC-RSN's community support network, outreach and education to build knowledge, awareness, and support of youth in recovery and for the emerging RCNC-RSN Youth Recovery Community Organization (YRCO) in Orange and Durham Counties, NC.

Objectives. By July 30, 2022, RCNC-RSN staff and YRCO Corps members will have:

2. a. Delivered talks to 48 entities (2 per quarter, i.e., 1 each per county);
2. b. Expanded working relationships with 48 community resource organizations (2 per quarter per county) with which it connects youth to enhance their treatment, care and support.
2. c. By July 30, 2019, RCNC-RSN will have compiled and will maintain a comprehensive youth recovery Resource Guide for the target communities to be accessible on the web.

Goal 3:

To create and maintain representative ownership of the RCNC-RSN YRCO through a Youth Recovery Community Organization Advisory Board.

Objectives.

3. a. By July 30, 2020 RCNC-RSN will have convened two advisory (6 individuals—3 age 18-24 and 3 age 24+; one each in Orange and Durham Counties) to assist the YRCO in assessing ongoing community needs regarding youth in recovery.
3. b. By July 30, 2021 RCNC-RSN will have utilized Advisory Boards in each county in RCNC-RSN's development of a young adult-to-youth peer support specialist curriculum.

Goal 4:

To develop an exportable Youth Recovery Community Organization program model for diffusion to other communities.

Objectives. By July 2022:

4. a. RCNC-RSN will create a tool kit based on all aspects of implementation of the developed model.
4. b. RCNC-RSN will work with UNCG and current System of Care (SOC) Collaborative partners and Juvenile Justice Behavioral Health (JJBH) teams to identify at least six other SOC Collaboratives/JJBH teams with an interest in this model. There are at least 70 SOC Collaboratives and 21 JJBH teams.
4. c. A team of RCNC-RSN-UNCG leaders will present the model to the local System of Care Collaboratives/JJBH teams.
4. d. RCNC-RSN will obtain a written agreement and then work with at least three of the SOC Collaboratives/JJBH teams on their development of an implementation plan based on the toolkit.

Goal 5:

To develop a youth-focused Peer Support Specialist Training Curricula.

Objective. By July 30, 2020 RCNC-RSN will have adapted existing adult-focused Peer Support Specialist Training Curricula to develop a youth-focused curriculum and seek certification of same for use in NC by the state governing body, the University Of North Carolina School Of Social Work.

Section B.2 Implementation of Required Activities. Recovery Communities of North Carolina (RCNC) is a proven leader in helping emerging Recovery Community Centers (RCCs) across NC to build their capacities to provide recovery services and support for their communities. RCNC currently supports five RCCs across NC with funding, technical assistance, education and coaching and other forms of organizational assistance. The Reintegration Support Network (RSN), as an emergent RCO program, has invested enormous amounts of time and energy preparing to carry out the described program. RCNC-RSN creates a powerful, innovative partnership to bring a critically important, yet underrepresented population into the RCO movement, that is, youth 14-18 who experience SUDs, often with co-occurring conditions of mental health issues and justice system involvement.

Outreach, Education and Building Network and Community Support. RCNC-RSN will continuously engage the larger community by deploying RCNC-RSN staff and volunteers (who are Certified Peer Support Specialists (CPSSs)) to build knowledge, awareness, and support for its vision of a Youth Recovery Community Organization (YRCO). We will target youth serving and supporting organizations including, but not limited to, those providing: a) treatment/therapy; b) physical/mental health services; c) social services; d) education; e) employment; f) religious/spiritual support; g) recreation/play; and h) family support services. These sessions will in part lead to recruitment of volunteers, referrals of youth for treatment or related services and enlistment of youth serving organizations into our network of Youth Recovery Support Services.

RCNC-RSN will then make referrals to and/or partner with these entities based on enrolled youth needs, interests and goals. It will also maintain relationships through contacts at least annually. RCNC is compiling, and once completed and updated, will maintain a comprehensive Youth Recovery Resource Guide with sections related to each of the above listed categories. The Guide will be published on the RCNC and RSN websites as well as shared more broadly. (See Attachment 10 for prototype table of contents). These sessions will also promote recruitment of volunteers and referrals of youth.

Creation of a Youth Recovery Community Organization (YRCO) Corps. RCNC-RSN is creating an YRCO Corps by biannually recruiting, screening and training volunteers to engage in a “pay-it-forward” arrangement within which RCNC-RSN will pay fees to train volunteers in peer support specialist and racial equity curriculum to obtain NC PSS certification. In return, volunteers will become Corps members providing support for RCNC-RSN recovering youth. Corps member commitment is for six months (minimum of 52 hours) of service. For Corp members, this equates a minimum of 52 hours of supervised and coached youth-focused service experience in one or more of the following: Youth Peer Support Groups (YPSGs); one-on-one peer support (mentoring) and community outreach and education.

In Year 3 RCNC-RSN will create a Youth Peer Support Specialist (YPSS) training curriculum and materials addressing: a) existing requirements for PSS certification, and b) specific issues and approaches pertinent and unique to youth development, socialization and recovery. RCNC-RSN will submit the curriculum and training materials for accreditation by the NC governing body, the University of North Carolina, School of Social Work. We will draw from materials already available within the RCNC network, Youth Move, and the Association for Children’s Mental Health.

Engagement of Youth in RCNC-RSN programming. RCNC-RSN will use a Wellness Recovery Action Planning (Copeland Center, 2012) and/or Recovery Coach (White, 2016) approaches as frameworks for promoting youth recovery and self-care; self-advocacy; healthy relationships; positive engagement in the community, and in cultivating and maintaining their own support networks.

RCNC-RSN’s Youth Peer Support Groups will engage youth ranging from those experiencing the initial consequences of substance to those seeking to enrich their recovery following intensive treatment or probation. These groups will be led by staff CPSS’s with support from YRCO Corps members.

RCNC-RSN’s one-one-one peer support (mentoring) will engage youth who have completed a program of recovery and/or confinement and are committed to continuing recovery for a minimum of 2 hours/week for 26 weeks. Ideally, RCNC-RSN will work with youth in three phases: 1) Pre-engagement. During this phase, RCNC-RSN introduces our program, attends key meetings (e.g., Child Family Team), supports youth and guardians to engage and continue in treatment, and develops the beginnings of relationships; 2) Engagement. The youth and an YRCO Corps member are introduced, the program and its elements (e.g., Wellness Recovery Action Planning) are explained and issues such as goal setting are explored; 3) Advocacy and Empowerment. RCNC-RSN focuses weekly meetings on goal setting and introduction to enrichment programs to support overall

recovery. Corps members (mentors) continually model and promote youth to build and maintain their own support networks.

Youth Recovery Community Organization Advisory Board. The board will be constructed to embody the strengths of the Recovering Community Organizations in the targeted areas: Recovery Community of Durham, NC and Paths to Recovery at Freedom House in Chapel Hill, NC while ensuring the board is representative of the communities that we serve in terms of race, ethnicity, gender and gender identity, and sexual preference. At least half of the board will be youth (18-24) from the recovery community.

Exportable Model. Collectively, RCNC, RSN and UNCG are highly experienced in creating innovative models for diffusion statewide as well as nationally. There should be receptive communities connected to: a) RCNC incubated RCCs (mostly reaching adults) and NC Juvenile Justice Substance Abuse Mental Health Partnerships and (JJSAMHP)/Reclaiming Futures (focused on youth) throughout NC. The model program will include a toolkit with policies, procedures, training manuals, tracking and reporting materials and evaluation instruments and protocols.