

HOPE COALITION

#WEAREHOPE WEEK

Toolkit and Resources



#WEAREHOPE WEEK TOOLKIT

Developed by Hope Coalition, this toolkit offers a step-by-step guide and easy access to our wide range of free materials, activities, and resources to support youth prevention.

It is designed to help implement your own #WeAreHope campaign for youth empowerment and leadership in your community.

This toolkit can be adapted to support any community. Your implementation will help start and continue vital conversations among students and caretakers about how to remain substance-free.

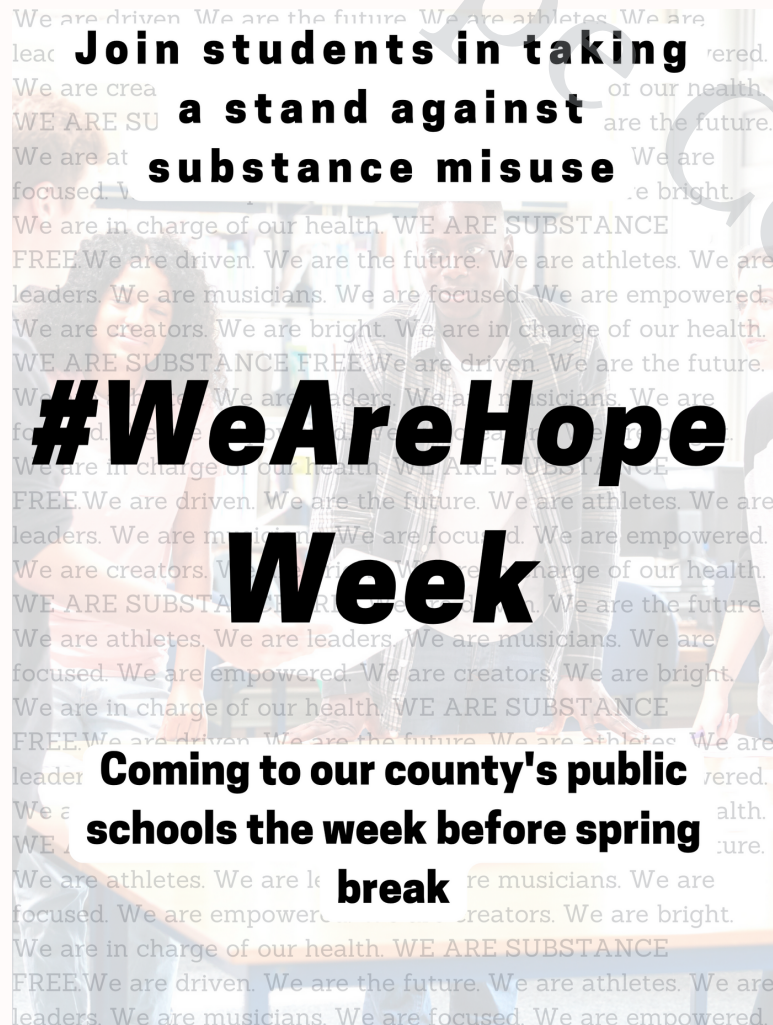
#WEAREHOPE TOOLKIT CONTENTS:

1. Poster
2. Factsheet
3. Pledge
4. Social Media
Frames
5. Proclamation
6. Press Release
7. Activities
8. Video



POSTER

Click on either image to get an editable version in Canva or feel free to make your own poster design. To edit, select 'File' and 'Make a copy' to ensure multiple organizations aren't editing the same file.



Poster 1: https://www.canva.com/design/DAE0mRH-q4s/share/preview?token=qnEjQLZhTflitPlv22hPYA&role=EDITOR&utm_content=DAE0mRH-q4s&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=sharebutton

Poster 2: https://www.canva.com/design/DAE0mT-M2kk/share/preview?token=YTtXXXNysrM50y9EL4oOYA&role=EDITOR&utm_content=DAE0mT-M2kk&utm_campaign=designshare&utm_medium=link&utm_source=sharebutton



FACTSHEET

What:

#WeAreHope Week is a campaign that empowers youth to take a public stand against substance misuse. Students lead activities promoting awareness of substance misuse and its dangers.

Why:

Substance misuse and overdose rates have climbed significantly in recent history, and students are susceptible to engage in risky behaviors, including experimenting with substances. Given a positive and educational experience in learning about the pitfalls of substance use, they are motivated to make the choice to be substance-free.

Who:

[YOUR ORGANIZATION] and student government leaders in [YOUR COUNTY] public schools along with the support of [YOUR CHAMPIONS (SPONSORS, COUNTY GOVERNMENT, ETC.)]

When:

The week before Spring Break [DATE RANGE]

Where:

Within [YOUR COUNTY'S] middle and high schools. ***If you are doing a display, art installment, vigil, or any other events outside of the schools, list other locations here or consider separate factsheets for those events.***



PLEDGE

The pledge to be substance free is an engaging way to get students involved in #WeAreHope Week. Students sign banners making the pledge, which can be displayed on school grounds or in a public space with permission. Hope Coalition has previously displayed them at the Henderson County courthouse along with a candlelight vigil. Reaching out to media contacts about any such events for added coverage is highly encouraged.

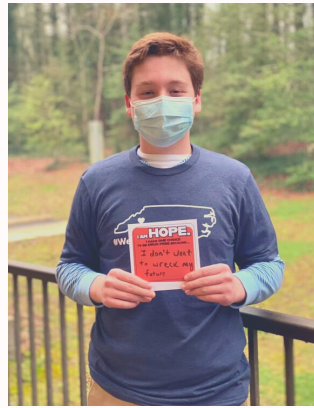
Suggested Format:

We
 Are
 HOPE
 [SCHOOL NAME]
 [SCHOOL MASCOT IMAGE]
 pledges to be
 Substance Free
 [PUBLIC SCHOOL SYSTEM LOGO] [YOUR LOGO]
 #WeAreHope



Suggested specifications:

Size: 3' x 6'
 Minimum resolution for artwork: 300 dpi
 Material: vinyl
 One sided, printed vertically
 Grommets on the top and bottom
 Provider: banners.com



SOCIAL MEDIA FRAMES

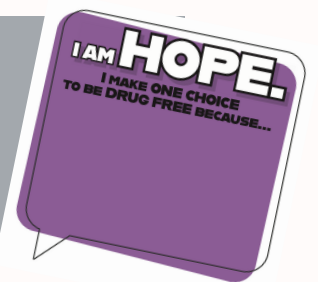
Social media is a powerful tool and gives your organization lots of opportunities to spread the word about your work and #WeAreHope Week.

Young people love a social media challenge and a chance to post a selfie, and your organization can easily leverage that to increase the impact of this campaign.

Use [these](#) social media frames as inspiration or simply adapt them to your county's school colors. Have students share their reason for choosing to be substance free and use the hashtag #WeAreHope.



Harness the power of social media



SHARE, SHARE, SHARE

The most effective campaigns are those that grow organically. A great way to foster that growth is to get students involved and sharing prevention messaging and their "why".

Host a social media contest asking students to post a selfie on social media inside of a "Hope" frame explaining what motivates them to stay away from substances and use the unifying hashtag #WeAreHope.

Offer a prize (bonus points for getting a donation or sponsor for this) for various categories. Some ideas:

- Most creative post (TikTok dance, Instagram reel, etc.)
- Most engagement (likes, views, comments, shares)
- Most #WeAreHope posts
- Largest group in a post

Given the opportunity, students will be excited to create engaging content for this campaign. Re-post their content on your social media and website often and watch it grow.



PROCLAMATION TO GIVE YOUR COUNTY COMMISSIONERS

Resolution Honoring the Observance of “We Are Hope” Week in [YOUR COUNTY] Public Schools’ Middle & High Schools

[DATE RANGE AND YEAR]

WHEREAS, Substance and alcohol abuse negatively affects many areas of the brain, the liver, the heart, and other body parts and can cause adverse behavioral, psychological, and social consequences; and

WHEREAS, there were more than 70,630 drug overdose deaths in the United States in 2019, and the drug overdose death rate has increased by over 250% from 1999 to 2019; and

WHEREAS, substance and alcohol misuse continues to occur among children and youth in our society: in 2019, [12.1 percent] of high school students in [YOUR STATE] smoked cigarettes, [44.1] percent used an electronic vape product, [26.5] percent drank alcohol, [36.5] percent used marijuana, [5.3] percent used cocaine, and [15] percent took prescription drugs without a doctor’s prescription, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention’s 2019 Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance *Update the statistics in brackets using data for your state from this link: <https://www.cdc.gov/healthyyouth/data/yrbs/results.htm>*; and

WHEREAS, student leaders in [YOUR COUNTY] Public Schools’ [NUMBER OF] high schools and [YOUR ORGANIZATION] middle schools have joined with local [YOUR COUNTY] organization [YOUR ORGANIZATION’S NAME] in educating their peers on alcohol, tobacco, marijuana and prescription drug use and abuse; and

WHEREAS, students at [LIST SCHOOL NAMES] are pledging to be and remain substance-free;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, by the [YOUR COUNTY] Board of Commissioners, that [DATE RANGE AND YEAR], be observed in [YOUR COUNTY] Public Schools’ middle and high schools as “We Are Hope” substance misuse awareness week.

Adopted this [NUMBER] day of [MONTH AND YEAR].





PRESS RELEASE TEMPLATE

Date: [MONTH, DAY YEAR]

Media Contact: [JOHN DOE]

Telephone: [xxx-xxx-xxxx]

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

[TITLE]

#WeAreHope Week is a week-long campaign that empowers middle and high school students to take a public stand against substance misuse. [YOUR ORGANIZATION] and [YOUR COUNTY] Public Schools are teaming up to increase substance use awareness and prevention efforts. Events are student-led and will take place [DATES]. #WeAreHope Week, which originated in Henderson County, NC as a partnership between public schools and Hope Coalition (formerly HopeRx) paves the way for youth to take charge of their own health and future.

Reports show that youth engage in risky behaviors such as underage drinking and substance use, but many are choosing to forge their own path and remain substance-free. #WeAreHope Week amplifies their voices and provides engaging prevention education as well as awareness about the dangers of misuse.

[INSERT QUOTE FROM LOCAL SPOKESPERSON]

[ADD 3-4 SHORT PARAGRAPHS DESCRIBING THE ACTIVITIES THAT WILL TAKE PLACE]

Students are looking forward to the activities and learning opportunities that #WeAreHope Week will provide.

About [YOUR ORGANIZATION]:

[ADD A BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF YOUR ORGANIZATION HERE]

For more information visit: [YOUR WEBSITE]



PRESS RELEASE EXAMPLE

Students Take a Stand Against Substance Abuse Through “We Are Hope” Week

HENDERSONVILLE, N.C. (March 21, 2019) – In partnership with HopeRx, students in Henderson County Public Schools’ four middle and six high schools are taking a public stand against substance abuse during the week-long “We Are Hope” campaign April 8-12, just before Spring Break. The campaign – and the students leading the substance abuse awareness events in their schools – were formally recognized Wednesday, March 20, by Henderson County Commissioners.

It’s the fifth year the schools’ student government organizations and leaders have organized the campaign with HopeRx, and community agencies are showing increasing support for the initiative. Since the first “We Are Hope” Week in 2015, the Henderson County Sheriff’s Office, Henderson County EMS, The Free Clinics, Blue Ridge Health, AdventHealth, and Champion Comfort Experts have increased their active participation in the annual campaigns.

As in years past, “We Are Hope” Week will include assemblies at each school featuring HopeRx-sponsored speakers who have either personally overcome substance abuse or seen firsthand the devastating effects of addiction. Daily awareness activities will stress the importance of remaining substance free, and high school leaders are collaborating with their feeder middle schools’ student leaders to lead activities for the younger students.

Throughout the campaign, students at each school will sign pledge banners and flags bearing the school’s mascot and a pledge to be substance free, sponsored by AdventHealth and Champion Comfort Experts.

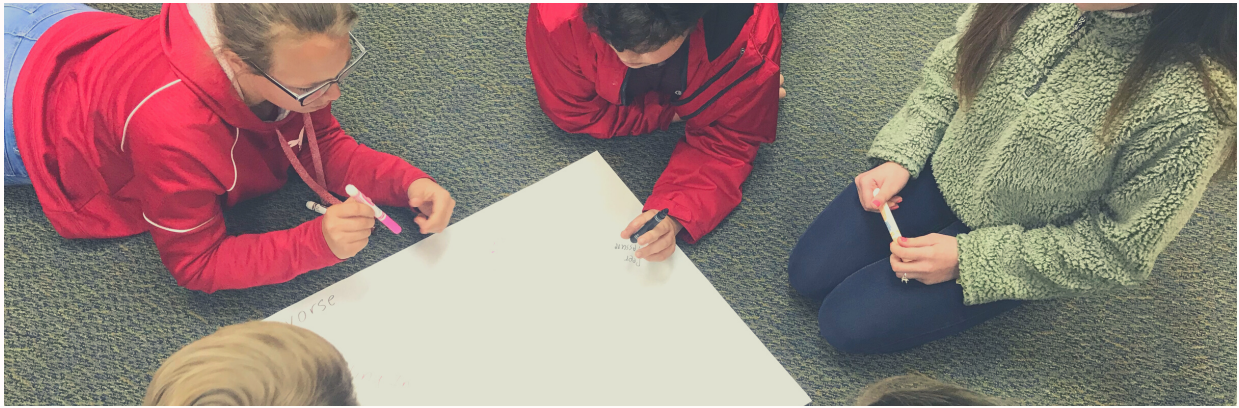
Julie Huneycutt, director of HopeRx, said 2019 “We Are Hope” T-shirts will be printed for student leaders planning the campaigns at their schools, and #WeAreHope stickers will be provided for all students who sign a banner or flag to remain substance free. Annually requested by student leaders, white ribbons will be provided for students to tie around trees, bannisters, and throughout school campuses to represent the purity of the pledge.

Students will sign the banners and flags throughout the week of April 8-12, and “We Are Hope” Week will culminate at 12 p.m. Friday, April 12, when the six high school banners will be hung from the Henderson County Historic Courthouse pillars, and the four middle school flags will be planted in the ground around the Courthouse.

About HopeRx

HopeRx is a coalition designed to unite community leaders, parents, educators, students, healthcare providers, EMS workers and volunteers, law enforcement, the judicial system, civic organizations and faith groups throughout Henderson County to work collaboratively to address the issues of prescription drug abuse, one of the top three health problems in the county.





ACTIVITIES

Engaging activities are a great way to ensure that your implementation of #WeAreHope Week is memorable for students and the community. While the subject matter can be difficult, there are plenty of ways to make the activities around it fun so that students look forward to the week year after year.

Utilize the brainstorming power of student government and leadership committees. Find out what activities are feasible based on your budget and sponsorships and ensure you have any supplies ready at least 2 weeks in advance. Many organizations are happy to provide in-kind donations for supplies like posters, markers, print materials, and more.

IDEAS

Young people are endlessly creative and will have plenty of ideas for your #WeAreHope Week. Here are some to get you started:

- Assemblies where vetted speakers in long-term recovery from substance use disorder share their stories
- Therapy animals to support students with challenging emotions throughout the week
- Social media challenges using the #WeAreHope hashtag
- Banner signing events pledging to be substance-free
- Classroom door decorating contests
- White ribbon tying around trees, bannisters, etc.
- Spirit week
- Candlelight vigil
- Student showcase of art, poetry, and other media created around the topic of substance misuse



VIDEOS

We are visual creatures, and that's particularly true for younger generations. While nothing quite compares to the in-person impact of people who have lived experience with substance misuse sharing their stories, videos are a great way to increase your reach. In 2021, Hope Coalition partnered with Advent Health to create videos to ensure we were still reaching students during the Covid-19 pandemic. Since then, we have been able to share them through our YouTube channel to be more widely accessible and recommend implementing your own videos as a resource.

STEPS

1. Identify potential speakers who have lived experience with or being impacted by substance misuse
2. Vet them to ensure they are in long-term recovery and open to sharing their story
3. Get written consent to film and share them and their story
4. Ask them to write out the experience they want to share
5. Review and edit for time constraints, age-appropriateness, grammar, etc.
6. Connect with a local partner that has strong film capabilities
7. Plan logistics in terms of script, location, clothing, lighting, etc.
8. Film video(s)
9. Connect with your speaker(s) about mental health after sharing
10. Once edited, use your video(s) in the following ways:
 - a. Share during your #WeAreHope Week
 - b. Display on your website
 - c. Share on your YouTube and social media pages using the hashtag #WeAreHope

Example Video

Hope Coalition #WeAreHope Week 2021



Click [here](#) for
Anna's Story