



2025 Annual Report



Gwendolyn A. Bork

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2025 ANNUAL REPORT

2025-2026 President's Letter

If you are reading this letter, it is because you care, and because you care, we celebrate your courage to stand up for those in need and do something about it in 2026. You, my friend, are a #changemaker.

At FOCUS, the WNY Youth Addiction Prevention Coalition, our mission is to prevent/reduce youth addiction through community collaboration. We empower our local community by educating them on current drug trends, resources available through our strategic partners, and hosting drug-free events.

We use data-driven, evidence-based strategies that's proven to be effective over time in changing a community. We collect and analyze our data every 2 years from our 8th, 10th, and 12 grade Lancaster/Depew students, share that data with our strategic partners, and create programming to provide support to our local youth to empower them. We have been incredibly successful in our goals to reduce youth substance use, year after year meeting and exceeding our numbers, reinforcing our work and its effectiveness.

Our goal remains the same over the next coming years, and that is to connect with more youth and their families, become sustainable through strategic partnerships that become Legacy Partners or Community Contributors, and continue to grow our network of support for the youth in need.

Our youth are screaming to be seen, clawing at the edges of the windows of their soul to escape into a world with compassion and empathy. Societal instability wreaks havoc on a heart meant for innocence and innovation, purging its innocence and forging an armored soldier to stand in its place, unbothered and unbroken. Yet the reality is, there are kids in this community right now, breaking as we speak. Faking a smile when they walk into class, and pretending the world they walked out of that day doesn't exist, until it does again once the final bell rings and they must go back into battle.

What is the answer? You are the answer. See them. Acknowledge them. Look into their eyes and embrace that which is hidden. Guide them. Mentor them. Support their dreams. Tell them you love them and most importantly that you believe in them.

May we walk into rooms once clouded by anonymity and spark a flame of unity, a community of connectedness and empowered by hope. May we see the youth in our community as the torch bearers of the next civilization who will stand by the weakest of theirs until they are strong enough to join the fight. As generational wise sages let us guide them from making our same mistakes in hopes they do it better, live better and love better.

You, you are the answer. You have always been the answer. You have known this your whole life. Your experience, circumstances, past and present, trials and tribulations have led to this place called "here", "right now", and the time is now. Don't hide from who you once were but expose it in the light to a lost generation seeking truth. They don't care what you were but what you are. You, yes you, are the answer. The question now is, what will you do?

-Gwendolyn A. Bork (President)



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Board of Directors 2023-2025



President
Gwendolyn A. Bork

I have a personal passion to empower our youth into becoming the leaders they were meant to be through community collaboration and support. I know where they are because I've been there and my legacy will be in pouring my life into them.



Vice President
George Brimmer
Lancaster Central Schools

Passionate about helping youth in our community and providing support to the families we serve.



Secretary
Gianna Ryniec
Depew HS Student

Leadership is something I've been recognized for and is a passion of mine to assist and give back to others.



Treasurer
Jessica Mead
FOCUS

I want to be able to make a difference in our local community.



Member
Debbie Glowny
Bank on Buffalo
I wanted to be a part of the organization because I love to make a difference and give back whenever possible. If I can help to deter one student from going down the wrong path and getting a bad start in life...then it's all worth it.



Member
Mindy Nowak
Hair Shop 777
Children are our future, and preserving their blossoming minds in an unaltered state is an honor that I am blessed to be a part of.



Member Business Leader, Major Accounts
Nicole Brennan
Ingram Micro



Honorary Lifetime Member
Audrey Hamernik
Village of Depew
Through her work, Audrey was instrumental in creating positive change for youth in the Depew community.

See more at <https://forourcommunitytoday.org/about-us>



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Mission, Vision, Goals, and Tactics



Date Established

January 2018



Mission

Prevent and reduce youth substance use in WNY through community collaboration.



Vision

Drug Free Community, Drug Free Youth



Tactics

Through evidence-based, data-driven environmental strategies, and federally approved strategic prevention framework, we create youth-centered, drug free communities.

How FOCUS Gets Things Done



12 COMMUNITY SECTORS
 FOCUS works with all members of the community to effect change

STRATEGIC PREVENTION FRAMEWORK

FOCUS uses a comprehensive planning and implementation framework to get things done



SEVEN STRATEGIES FOR COMMUNITY CHANGE

FOCUS uses evidence-based interventions to effect community change





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Youth Substance Use Trends

Once every two years, Lancaster and Depew students in grades 8, 10, and 12 are asked to complete an ANONYMOUS survey about their behaviors, beliefs, attitudes, and more.

About 1,300 students complete the survey each administration.

The below table shows trends and 2024 national comparisons for **past 30-day use** of key substances addressed by FOCUS' federal funding.

| Substance | 2019 FOCUS % | 2021 FOCUS % | 2023 FOCUS % | 2025 FOCUS % | 2024 National %* |
|----------------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|
| Alcohol | 33.2% | 14.0% | 11.7% | 8.7% | 12.5% |
| Cigarettes | 1.3% | 1.5% | 1.7% | 1.4% | 1.6% |
| Marijuana | 12.1% | 6.8% | 4.9% | 3.5% | 9.9% |
| Opioid Prescriptions | N/A | .6% | .6% | .6% | N/A |
| Vaping Nicotine | N/A | 9.3% | 7.3% | 5.6% | 10.1% |
| Vaping Marijuana | N/A | 4.9% | 4.3% | 3.1% | 7.8% |

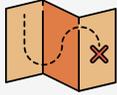
* Most recent comparison data available



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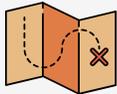
Goal 1 - Decrease past 30-day marijuana use in students grades 8-12 by 2% every two years.



Outcome 1 - From 2023 to 2025, past 30-day marijuana use decreased from 4.9% to 3.5%.



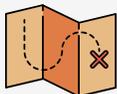
Goal 2 - Decrease past 30-day alcohol use in students grades 8-12 by 2% every two years.



Outcome 2 - From 2023 to 2025, past 30-day alcohol use decreased from 11.7% to 8.7%.



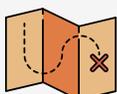
Goal 3 - Increase youth and parental sector stakeholders by eight total individuals.



Outcome 3 - From August 2024 to August 2025, the total number of youth and parent sector stakeholders decreased from 34 to 27.



Goal 4 - Raise private capital of \$20,000 by 12/31/2024.



Outcome 4 - The coalition raised \$13,289.97 in private capital by 12/31/2025, or 66% of goal.



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Annual Reach in 2025



66 Activities Offered - from providing information about substances and their effects to changing consequences for substance use



6,337 Adults Reached - through community events, direct outreach, educational sessions, and more



511 Youth Reached - through community events, direct outreach, educational sessions, and more



Facebook

926 followers (3% increase)
37,912 reached (73% increase)



YouTube

121,000 reached
(>1000% increase)



LinkedIn

121 followers (24% increase)
3,358 reached



FOCUS Website

4,412 reached (16% increase)



Instagram

174 followers (5% increase)
3,070 reached



Advertising Campaigns

Digital: 568,000 reached
TV: 86,412 reached
Movie Theaters: 347,000 reached



Television/Radio

Channel 7 News (ABC) - 105,000 reached
Channel 4 News (CBS) - 270,000 reached
Local Radio - 72,000 reached



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Community Outreach

FOCUS collaborated with community partners to help present the **Erie County Fall Fest**, a family-friendly community event featuring hay rides, food trucks, activities, and live music. The event provided an opportunity for FOCUS to connect directly with local families, share information about our mission and prevention services, and engage participants through a custom scavenger hunt. More than 30 families completed the activity, creating meaningful moments of connection while increasing awareness of available community resources.



Also in fall, FOCUS hosts an annual **Community Impact Awards Dinner** to honor individuals and organizations making a positive impact throughout the Western New York community. The event provides an opportunity for coalition members, partners, and community leaders to come together, recognize outstanding contributions, and celebrate shared efforts that support prevention and community well-being. By highlighting the work of local change makers, the awards reinforce the importance of collaboration, leadership, and sustained commitment to positive community impact.





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Community Outreach

In Spring 2025, **FOCUS** hosted a **Meat Raffle** Fundraiser in the Spring as a community-based fundraising event to support the coalition’s prevention efforts. The fundraiser brought together community members to raise financial support for youth-focused prevention programming while strengthening awareness of FOCUS’ mission and work.



Also in spring, **FOCUS** hosted the **Spring Community Impact Conference**, a regional event bringing together nonprofit leaders, business owners, and community stakeholders from across Western New York. The conference centered on how organizations and businesses are actively integrating community impact into their work. Nonprofit organizations participated as vendors, sharing resources and connecting attendees with local initiatives. The event fostered education, collaboration, and relationship-building in support of stronger, more connected communities.





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Youth Outreach Events

Climbing Up to High School

FOCUS hosted the Climbing Up to High School private rock-climbing event to celebrate 8th grade students transitioning into high school. The event included an all-level climbing session, creating a positive, substance-free space that encouraged confidence, connection, and healthy recreation.



Annual Mini-Golf Tournament

During the summer, FOCUS hosted our annual Mini-Golf Tournament at Broadway Driving Range & Miniature Golf that brought together youth, volunteers, and community partners for a fun, substance-free event. Thanks to donations from Tops Friendly Markets and support from coalition volunteers, youth enjoyed a positive recreational experience, with four participants receiving \$100 prizes.





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Youth Outreach Events

GLOFEST 2025

GLOFEST is FOCUS's signature annual community event, designed to provide youth and families with a fun, engaging, and drug-free experience. Held at Como Lake Park, the event features a live DJ, lawn games, community vendors, and resource tables focused on mental health and drug prevention, including Narcan training. With free food provided by Chick-fil-A, refreshments donated by Tops Friendly Markets, and hundreds of dollars in prizes, GLOFEST creates an inviting environment that encourages participation, learning, and connection.

Through the support of more than a dozen local business sponsors, the event reached over 100 youth and parents from the local community.





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Legacy Partner Program

As part of its strategy to become a sustainable coalition, FOCUS launched the Legacy Partner program. This program is aimed at launching and sustaining the FOCUS Foundation for Addiction Prevention.



Diamond Legacy Partners (\$5,000+ donation)



The Diamond Legacy Partner level includes recognition across all coalition events and materials, unique advertisement and outreach opportunities, a plaque commemorating your commitment to FOCUS, and **an appearance on Channel 4's Sweet Buffalo show!**

Platinum Legacy Partners (\$1,000+ donation)

Organizations



Prince of Peace Evangelical Lutheran Church
Robert E Shaff Ltd. Insurance and Real Estate

Individuals

Deb Glowny & Bank on Buffalo
Sally Stier of The Clarity Group
Mike Kelleher of Hogan Willig
John and Linda Bruso of Bruso Family
Glenn Jackson of Jackson Family
Joe and Nancy Weiss of Weiss Family
Deb LaBounty and Family

Gold Legacy Partners (\$500-\$999 donation)

Organizations



Amherst Lutheran Church
Prince of Peace Lutheran Church

Individuals

The Wood & LaBounty Family
MJ Zak Family
Laura Smith Family

Not interested in Legacy Partnerships? Try [becoming a community contributor](#) instead!



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Sustainability Funding and Opportunities

Funding Update



66% toward goal of raising \$20,000 in private funding per year

Other funding source updates:



Federal: \$130,668 per year - Drug Free Communities Grant
State: \$0 (-\$2,500 annually since 2025)
County: \$0 (-\$20,000 annually since 2021)
Private: \$13,289.97 (66% of \$20,000)

How You Can Help Us Sustain Our Work

Here are just a few ways you can help make FOCUS a sustainable part of our community:

- Become a Legacy Partner
- Become a Community Contributor
- Sponsor Events
- Support Impact Conferences
- Provide resources in partnerships for in-kind donations
- Like us, share us and follow us on our social media
- Volunteer!



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Dear Community Impact Leader,

Over the past decade, every community has been impacted by the opioid crisis. However, we understand that this crisis is a symptom of a much bigger epidemic within our country: addiction. In addiction science we know there is one answer to stopping addiction, and that's prevention. We know that every \$1 spent on prevention saves \$10 in Gov't Addiction costs.

FOCUS: For Our Community Unity & Support Inc., The WNY Youth Addiction Prevention Coalition, our mission is to prevent and reduce substance use among our youth through community collaboration. We do this through education, drug free events, and youth empowerment. As we strive to cultivate a healthier and safer community, no single entity bears the sole responsibility for empowering our youth, it takes a community. Our partners include Dept. of Health, Spectrum Health, Kids Escaping Drugs, The Prevention Council of Erie County, our NYS Senate, and Congress. Everything we do is data-driven and evidence based.

Your support and contribution, no matter the size, will play a crucial role in our efforts to reduce overdose deaths, minimize the risk of addiction among our youth, and improve public health in WNY. You will help us expand our reach and overall impact, enhance our programs and events, and empower our youth for their future as they, their parents and our community as a whole lead healthier, more fulfilling lives.

Join us in the fight against addiction in the next generation.

Legacy Partnership:

- Diamond Level Legacy Partners: \$5k+ donation
- Diamond Level Partners get a live interview on Channel 4 Sweet Buffalo Show
- Platinum Legacy Partners: \$1k-\$4,999 donation
- Gold Legacy Partners: \$500-\$999 donation
- All Legacy Partners are added to website, recognized with plaques and through media
- Average reach 40k through various media channels annually
- Legacy Partners include Bank on Buffalo, Tops Friendly Markets and Chick-fil-A
- [Click here to become a Legacy Partner today!](#)

Community Contributor Monthly Donor Program:

- Contribute \$10-Knight, \$20-Defender, \$30-Admiral, or \$40-Visionary, per month
- Automatic payments through PayPal, cancel at any time
- [Click here to become a Community Contributor today!](#)

Impact Sponsor Program, Sponsor one of our events in 2026 starting at \$100.

Contact us for more information
Gwendolyn A. Bork (President) and Cassandra Robledo (Program Director)
info@forourcommunitytoday.org



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2026 EVENT CALENDAR

January 14th, 2026 @ 4pm

Virtual Town Hall and Annual Report
Review 2025 Data Trends and Goal Outcomes

February 17th, 2026 @ 3pm

February Break Teen Trivia Party
Trivia Teams and Prizes for teens ages 13-18

March 21st, 2026 @ 5pm

Meat Raffle Spring Fundraiser
Help us raise money for youth programs

April 10th, 2026 @ 12pm

Spring Impact Conference
#wnychangemakers panel for community impact

June 6th, 2026

Color Run for Fundraising
Como Park - all ages

June 23rd, 2026 @ 6pm

Mini-Golf Tournament
Fun for the whole family and chances to win prizes.

August 22nd, 2026

GLOFEST YOUTH FESTIVAL
Vendor Resource Fair. Live Music. Games and Prizes.

September 26th, 2026

Erie County Fall Fest
Art & Crafts. Live Music. FOCUS Family Scavenger Hunt

December 14th, 2026

Community Impact Awards and Annual Fundraiser
#wnychangemaker awards and fundraiser for youth events

More Fundraiser Events to Be Announced.

Check website for updates and more information at forourcommunitytoday.org