

# RCORP-ETC



## COMMUNITY SPOTLIGHT



Youth HOPE (Healing Opioid Use Disorder through Prevention and Expertise) is a participatory-action program designed to promote healthy youth and community outcomes related to opioid use disorder (OUD). Within this program, youth practice new skills, learn basics about research and advocacy, and are supported to create and carry out strategies of change. The Youth HOPE curriculum introduces young people a public health perspective of substance use disorders and culminates in a youth-chosen and youth-led community advocacy project.

In the spring and summer of 2021, the Youth HOPE program was hosted at the Boys & Girls Club of Dumplin Valley in Newport, Tennessee. During this time, several elementary and middle school-aged young people met weekly with Youth HOPE facilitators from The University of Tennessee-Knoxville to learn extensively about opioid use disorder and how it specifically affects their

community. The Youth HOPE participants studied the brain disease model of substance use disorders, social determinants of substance use disorders, and how stigma affects recovery and intervention efforts.

As a result of this, the participants of Youth HOPE decided to embark on an advocacy project to reduce stigma surrounding OUD in Cocke County, Tennessee. The young people co-drafted a letter about the impacts of stigma on health outcomes of people with OUD, which they sent to local healthcare providers and community leaders who they felt were important local change agents. In addition to their letter, the young people sent the healthcare providers and community leaders a flier that they had created about the importance of language for reducing stigma. Finally, the young people hosted a Zoom presentation for the healthcare providers and community leaders. They talked about the impact of stigma in Cocke County, as well as actionable steps to reduce stigma.

Karon, a 7th grade student who participated in Youth HOPE, said that her favorite part about the program was "making new

friends" and that she learned "if you see someone struggling, help them." When asked about the advocacy project that she helped lead, Karon said, "I think we got the word out about OUD to the community."

## UPCOMING EVENTS

*RCORP-ETC Policy Forum, Substance Use Disorders: Charting a Path to Health Equity.* Friday, October 22, 2021 1:00-3:30 p.m. EDT on Zoom

[REGISTER HERE](#)

*Stayin' Alive Fridays.* Virtual Narcan Training and free Narcan distribution is held the second Friday of each month from noon- 1pm EDT. Join via Zoom:

<https://tennesseehipaa.zoom.us/j/93033943183>  
Password: 44513

[MORE INFORMATION ON LOCAL HEALTH PROMOTION EVENTS AND OPPORTUNITIES HERE](#)

SOCIAL MEDIA: @TNOPIOID



# DIGITAL STORIES

## ALESHA GRAVES

Alesha's story follows the journey of a young woman whose substance use led her to flee from arrest for nearly two years. One morning in 2005, Alesha was awakened by a SWAT team outside of her home for selling drugs to an FBI informant. Eventually, Alesha was offered to participate in recovery court, which offered her structure and support to live a new life of recovery. Motivated by her children, Alesha graduated the program and began helping others in their journey towards recovery at a medication assisted treatment center. Alesha received her certification as a peer recovery specialist and now works with a local substance abuse coalition. Additionally, Alesha is currently studying for her Bachelor's degree in Human Services. Alesha says that most importantly, she now lives with the trust and respect of her children. Check out Alesha's story [HERE](#).



## DRUG TAKEBACK DAY

RCORP-ETC and Live Free will host a DEA National Drug Take Back Event on **October 23rd from 10 am to 2 pm** at the **Walmart Parking Lot, 432 S. Broad St., New Tazewell**. Please join us to safely dispose of most types of unused or expired drugs.

No registration needed.



# MOUD EXPANSION INTERNSHIP

To eradicate opioid use disorder, RCORP-ETC strives to create healthy communities by enhancing health promotion and prevention, collaboration, and access to health services and care. Project HOPE (Healing Opioid Use Disorder through Prevention and Expertise), guided by the RCORP-ETC, seeks to eradicate opioid use disorder by expansion of medication assisted treatment services through onsite training and mentoring of both future and current practitioners.

Project HOPE is currently offering an internship for any current or future medical doctor, physician assistant, or nurse practitioner willing to prescribe medication for opioid use disorder (MOUD) and treat patients suffering from opioid use disorder (OUD) in rural East TN. Mentored by Dr. Stephen Loyd and Zachary Talbott, interns will participate in trainings and hands-on activities to enhance MOUD knowledge and experience. Upon completion of the program, interns will receive a \$500 stipend. Click [HERE](#) to apply.

## MOUD EXPANSION: MENTEE SPOTLIGHTS

### APRIL SNELL

April Snell has over 20 years of experience assisting children and adults in achieving their therapeutic goals leading to a more satisfying life. Ms. Snell graduated from Carson Newman University with a master's degree in Marriage and Family Therapy in 2003. She is a Licensed Professional Counselor, Mental Health Service Provider and Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist. She is an approved State of Tennessee supervisor for Professional Counselor trainee's working toward licensure and in the process of completing her Approved Supervisor status requirements for the American Association of Marriage and Family Therapists to supervise Marriage and Family Therapy trainee's. In 2016, Ms. Snell received the North American Council on Adoptable Children Activist Award for her passion in promoting child welfare. In addition to being a therapist she is also a Registered Nurse. Ms. Snell is currently working on her Doctoral Degree at the University of Tennessee in the Psychiatric Mental Health Nurse Practitioner concentration.



### CINDI ADAMS

Cindi Adams is from Knoxville, Tennessee and has been a nurse for 30 years. Cindi earned her Bachelor of Science in Nursing (BSN) at the University of Tennessee and her Master of Science in Nursing with an Emphasis in Nursing Education (MSN-Ed) at King University. Cindi's nursing background is rural home health and psychiatric nursing. Currently, she is a nursing instructor with the BSN program at UTK, and the course coordinator for Population Health clinicals. After teaching for five years, Cindi wanted to return to practice and recently completed the PMHNP post-master's program at UT in May. Cindi is thankful to be chosen to participate in the RCORP- ETC mentorship program to gain experience in the treatment of opioid use disorder. After completing this program, she hopes to practice in a rural area and be able to meet the needs of underserved populations as she enters this new phase of her nursing career.

