



24/7 Newsletter

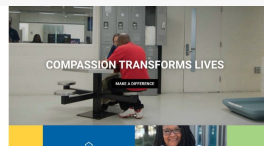
The number of hours we spend making Houston better

NOVEMBER 2024

HRC Wins Silver Anthem Award

HRC has won a Silver Anthem Award for **“Problematic Substance Use: Community Collaboration Impacts this Public Health Crisis”** in the nonprofit Health, Public Service category. The silver award in this category honors the best in class product, innovation or service created by federal, state, local government or council to act as a solution or have impact in the Health space.

Anthem Winners are selected by the International Academy of Digital Arts and Sciences. This year’s 4th Annual Anthem Awards was the most competitive season yet with more than 2,300 entries submitted from 34 countries worldwide. By amplifying the voices that spark global change, the Anthem Awards are defining a new benchmark for impactful work that inspires others to act in their communities.



**Problematic Substance Use:
Community Collaboration Impacts
this Public Health Crisis**
Houston Recovery Center

“The Houston Recovery Center began as a single-service focused organization receiving individuals brought in for public intoxication by law enforcement.” said Leonard Kincaid, HRC CEO. *“Today, we operate a comprehensive proactive service system targeting individuals that are chronic harmful substance users. Our positive outcomes are impressive and this Anthem Award is another testament to all of our dedicated staff who work tirelessly to help those in need.”*



2024 Thanksgiving Luncheon

HRC kicks off the 2024 Holiday Season with our Annual Thanksgiving Luncheon. This is the start of a wonderful time of year when everyone has a chance to come together and see friends and coworkers that they don't regularly see. The entire staff came to enjoy a delightful lunch provided by TJ's Catering with turkey, ham, green beans, dressing, mashed potatoes and way too many delicious deserts. Time to start the diet again, the Christmas Luncheon is only a month away. Happy Holidays!



4th Quarter Meeting

As the year is coming to an end, HRC held its 4th Quarter meeting on the 21st. Leonard welcomed everyone and thanked them for their hard work and dedication over the past year. He reminded everyone of HRC's vision and mission, and the meaning of our Heart logo – Love, and the coming together of two hearts with care and compassion for one another, our clients and community.

A final reminder was shared about HRC's participation in the 2025 Chevron Houston Marathon and the closing for runners & walkers' registration and Hoopla Station participation. Staff was also treated to a preview of the Empowered by Meg Ryan video being produced and generously supported by the Petersen Family Foundation, providing an inside look at HRC's operations and featuring Leonard with several HRC staff and guests. The final video will begin airing nationally on network and public TV in the first quarter of 2025.

Meet the HRC's Community Health Workers (CHW), Funded by ARPA

CHW assistance leads to an improved quality of life for those challenged by substance use disorder.

Each of our CHWs serve a dual role as Recovery Support Peer Specialist (RSPS), providing their professional skills to be a liaison to healthcare and offer peer-led support for those with substance use disorder. Our CHWs train and distribute Narcan, connect people to health insurance, medical care to improve

health equity, help provide a pathway to recovery, serve as an access point to housing, and provide behavioral health services.

The work our CHWs do is priceless, and seeing the lives they impact is rewarding and worthwhile. One recent client in particular was homeless and had been sleeping in her vehicle for several months. They helped her find a shelter and once her immediate needs for shelter had been met, assisted getting her into behavioral health services and finding her a job. This client has gone from being homeless, to employed, having her own home and engaged in medical and mental health treatment, all within five months after connecting with our CHW team.

NEW - HRC Monthly Sobering Center Activity Summary

HRC tracts weekly activities among all client interactions. Below is a summary of resulting activities from October 28, - November 24, 2024.

Sobering Center Admissions	New Sobering Center Admissions	Homeless	Clients Requesting Clinical Services	Clients Placed	Clients Waiting	Male Case Manager Clients	Female Case Manager Clients
249	168	109	90	53	28	229	94

NEDA WALK – “Hope Starts Here.”

The National Eating Disorders Association (NEDA) works to advance research, build community, and raise awareness to support the nearly 30 million Americans who will experience an eating disorder in their lifetimes. Whether you have been personally affected by an eating disorder or care about someone who has, NEDA can help!

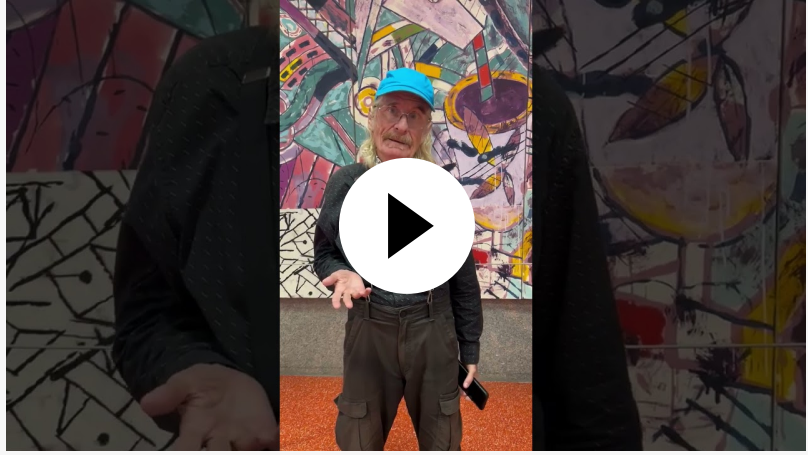
NEDA Walks serve as important social support opportunities for people in recovery and their families, and to raise awareness. They also support NEDA’s other programs which provide information and support, help people feel less alone, and develop more effective and equitable treatments for all eating disorders.

HRC was happy to attend this year’s walk and provide information to the hundreds of walkers about what HRC is all about, our services and programs, and the life changing impact HRC has on our friends, families and those in our community in need of care and assistance.



A Thank You from John Hayes

John Hayes thanks Lisa Riza and HRC for helping him turn his life around. John had been on the street and homeless trying to stay out of the rain and suffering with the mosquitoes. With Liza's help, John now has a dry and mosquito free place to live.



Recovery Story – Tony Goodman

“I’m truly moved by Tony’s progress.”

Before

When Lovinah first met Tony, he was struggling with severe schizophrenia. His mother had brought him to her, utterly distraught and exhausted, having been unable to maintain a proper sleep schedule due to his worsening condition. She shared that her 26-year-old son, once admitted to Yale University with a promising future, had been experiencing severe mental health challenges for over five years, which had obviously been declining. Prior to his diagnosis at 19, Tony had been on a promising path, but schizophrenia had disrupted his trajectory. Tony had begun wandering outside in his underwear, and even playing basketball at neighbors' homes in the middle of the night, all of which put him at serious risk. *“When I met, Tony was pacing non-stop, exhibiting signs of visual and auditory hallucinations, and frequently talking aloud to himself,”* said Lovinah. Based on her assessment and experience working with individuals with severe mental health conditions, she recommended that his mother obtain a mental health warrant.

After

Following inpatient treatment, Lovinah referred his mother to The Harris Center for IDD, where Tony could continue medication management and receive therapy for ongoing support. His mother recently called to share his incredible progress: *“Tony is now stable on his medications, has completed his third therapy session, and left it saying, Mom, I had a great session!”* He is no longer experiencing hallucinations, can engage in clear, lucid conversations, and has even created a daily schedule for himself that includes exercise. Most excitingly, he's expressed a desire to return to school.

“To see Tony thriving, and his mother now experiencing peace and renewed hope for his future, is my greatest reward.” Lovinah Igbani-Perkins.



Homeless Persons' Memorial Day

Homeless Persons' Memorial Day was first commemorated in 1990 and is observed annually on the longest night of the year, the winter solstice.

On December 21, 2024, we honor and remember those who have experienced homelessness and lost their lives while living unsheltered. It serves as a reminder that homelessness is a matter of life or death.

Join us in remembrance of the lives lost this year as we continue our work to promote SOAR as a tool to end homelessness.

National Homeless Persons' Memorial Day takes place each year on the longest night of the year, the winter solstice (usually December 21st). The first Annual Homeless Persons' Memorial Day was commemorated in 1990. While we remember those people we have lost this year, we cannot let this be the start of another year of growing homelessness. Every year, hundreds of communities hold Memorial Day events on or around December 21 to honor those who died while homeless. Anyone can coordinate an event, including advocates, service providers, organizations, homeless and formerly homeless individuals/families, religious leaders, city representatives, students, and concerned citizens. The National Coalition for the Homeless encourage those holding events this year. Download the official organizing manual, [NATIONAL HOMELESS PERSONS MEMORIAL MANUAL](#), to see how you can participate.

NEWS

U.S. Alcohol-Linked Deaths Doubled in 20 Years

By Carole Tanzer Miller, HealthDay Reporter

Alcohol-related deaths have surged in the United States, nearly doubling over 20 years, and a growing number of victims are women, a new study warns. "Our study found significant gender differences in alcohol-related [death rates]," said senior author Yiota Kitsantas, head of population health and social medicine at the Florida Atlantic University (FAU) College of Medicine.



"While men had higher overall death rates, women experienced a larger relative increase, which may reflect changing social norms and the alcohol industry's increased targeting of women through marketing campaigns."

In raw numbers, alcohol-related deaths spiked from 19,356 to 48,870. While numbers were up in every age group, there was a nearly fourfold spike among 25- to 34-year-olds. Researchers said their findings, published recently in the American Journal of Medicine, point to significant health challenges that may require targeted interventions.

"Both globally and in the U.S., high levels of alcohol consumption are closely linked to premature deaths and disability," said co-author Dr. Charles Hennekens, a professor at FAU College of Medicine. *"One immediate*

effect of alcohol is liver damage, and in the U.S., the rising rates of obesity and diabetes also contribute to early liver damage."

Read the entire story at: [alcohol linked deaths doubled in 20-years](#)

More teens than ever are overdosing. Psychologists are leading new approaches to combat youth substance misuse

By Zara Abrams

"Just Say No" didn't work, but experts are employing new holistic programs to help steer kids away—or at least keep them from dying—from illicit substances.

For years, students in middle and high schools across the country were urged to "just say no" to drugs and alcohol. But it's no secret that the Drug Abuse Resistance Education (D.A.R.E.) program, which was typically delivered by police officers who urged total abstinence, didn't work. A meta-analysis found the program largely ineffective and one study even showed that kids who completed D.A.R.E. were more likely than their peers to take drugs (Ennett, S. T., et al., American Journal of Public Health, Vol. 84, No. 9, 1994; Rosenbaum, D. P., & Hanson, G. S., Journal of Research in Crime and Delinquency, Vol. 35, No. 4, 1998).

"We know that the 'Just Say No' campaign doesn't work. It's based in pure risks, and that doesn't resonate with teens," said developmental psychologist Bonnie Halpern-Felsher, PhD, a professor of pediatrics and founder and executive director of several substance use prevention and intervention curriculums at Stanford University. *"There are real and perceived benefits to using drugs, as well as risks, such as coping with stress or liking the 'high.' If we only talk about the negatives, we lose our credibility."*

Partially because of the lessons learned from D.A.R.E., many communities are taking a different approach to addressing youth substance use. They're also responding to very real changes in the drug landscape. Aside from vaping, adolescent use of illicit substances has dropped substantially over the past few decades, but more teens are overdosing than ever—largely because of contamination of the drug supply with fentanyl, as well as the availability of stronger substances.



While that approach, which incorporates principles of harm reduction, is not universally accepted, evidence is growing for its ability to protect youth from accidental overdoses and other consequences of substance use, including addiction, justice involvement, and problems at school. Psychologists have been a key part of the effort to create, test, and administer developmentally appropriate, evidence-based programs that approach prevention in a holistic, non-stigmatizing way.

"Drugs cannot be this taboo thing that young people can't ask about anymore," said Nina Christie, PhD, a postdoctoral research fellow in the Center on Alcohol, Substance Use, and Addictions at the University of New Mexico. *"That's just a recipe for young people dying, and we can't continue to allow that."*

The drugs young people are using—and the way they're using them—have also changed, and psychologists say this needs to inform educational efforts around substance use. Alcohol and cocaine are less popular than they were in the 1990s; use of cannabis and hallucinogens, which are now more salient and easier to obtain, were higher than ever among young adults in 2021, marijuana and hallucinogen use among young adults reached all-time high in 2021. *"Gen Z is drinking less alcohol than previous generations, but they seem to be increasingly interested in psychedelics and cannabis,"* Christie said. *"Those substances have kind of replaced alcohol as the cool thing to be doing."*

Read the entire article at: [new approaches to youth substance misuse](#)

FORWARD TO A FRIEND

The mission of Houston Recovery Center is to provide compassionate care to underserved individuals affected by substance use through early intervention and community care coordination to help them achieve lifelong recovery.

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