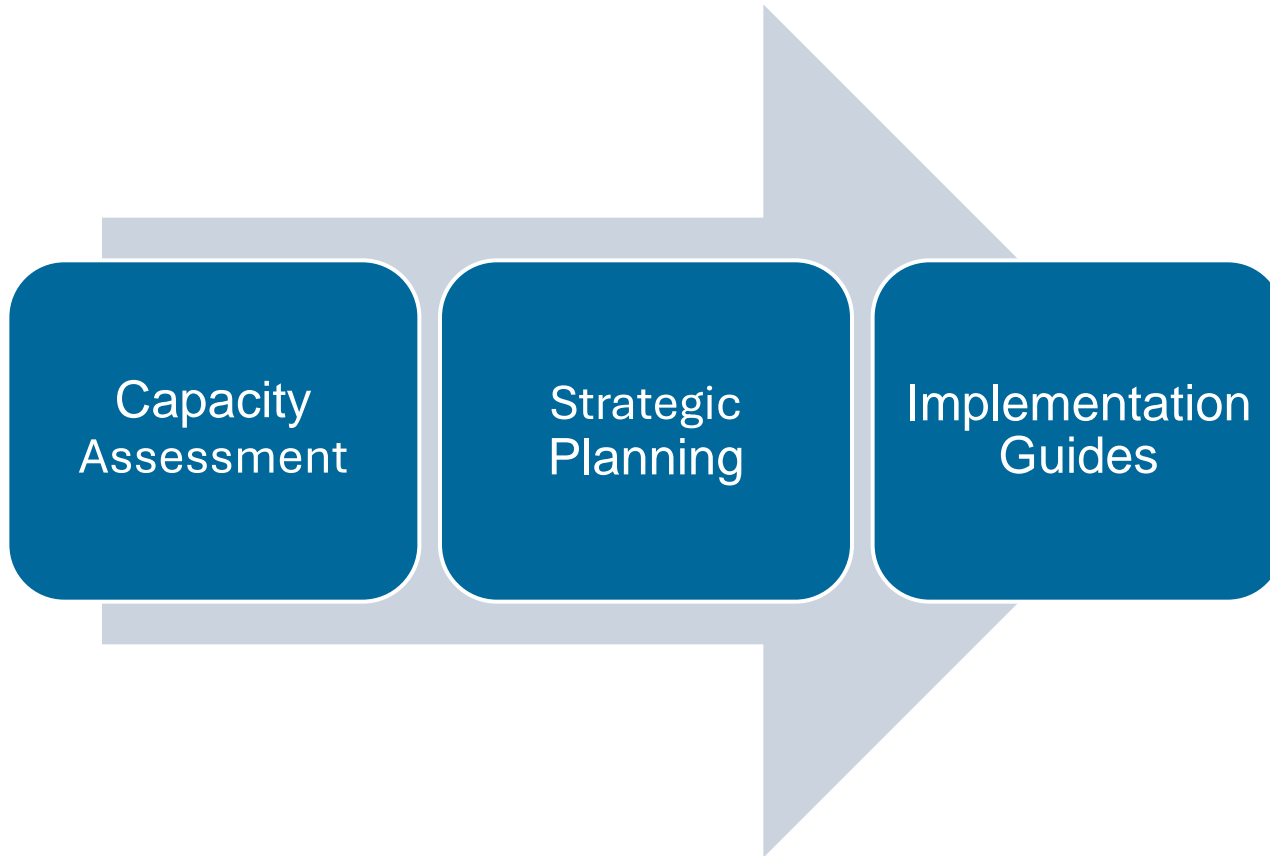




Adolescent Teen Substance Use Strategic Planning

Kari M. Savage, M.S.
Director, Office of Child and Family Services
Virginia Department of Behavioral Health
and Developmental Services





Key Needs Assessment Work Areas



Literature
Review



Secondary Data
Review



Provider
Survey



Provider
Focus Groups



Caregiver
Survey

Primary Data Collection





Capacity Assessment





Youth Substance Use Capacity Assessment Summary: Virginia Statewide

To aid in understanding the capacity for an increase in services for youth substance use across the state, OMNI consulted experts from each region of Virginia. These experts, representing various sectors of the adolescent substance use system of care, completed a survey asking about their perceptions of existing gaps within the youth substance use system of care and opportunities for growth. Further, these workgroup members participated in an in-person facilitated meeting where they were presented with current data and asked to reflect on their perceptions. Workgroup members who were unable to attend the meeting either participated in a follow-up Zoom meeting or provided written feedback. This document summarizes the information provided in each region's survey and workgroup discussions to provide an overview of the capacity of the Commonwealth of Virginia to increase services for youth substance use.

Gaps and Barriers

Lack of Detox, Inpatient, and Outpatient Treatment Services

Changes to Medicaid billing have reduced providers' willingness to provide services for youth.

No Regional or Centralized Support Hubs

Many families are often unaware of the treatment and recovery services that do exist in their region or the surrounding areas. This causes difficulties in identifying youth-centered services and is a barrier to seeking help.

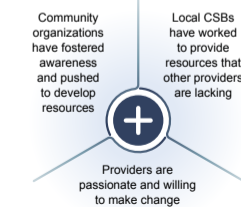
Stigma Related to Substance Use and Help-Seeking

Stigma, particularly in historically marginalized, rural, and low-income communities reduces willingness to seek help.

Resource-Related Barriers

Many families struggle with transportation, access to the internet, insurance, and other support services which reduces their ability to access available services.

Overall Strengths



Key Opportunities for Change







Strategic Planning



AUGUST 2024
**Youth Substance Use Strategic Plan:
 Statewide Plan**

Project Background

In 2022, The Virginia Department of Behavioral Health and Developmental Services (DBHDS) Office of Child and Family Services (OCFS) contracted with OMNI Institute (OMNI) to conduct a statewide capacity assessment and strategic planning process to transform the substance use system of care for adolescents. As a part of this process, OMNI convened meetings with experts representing various sectors of the adolescent substance use system of care across Virginia. These experts participated in a virtual strategic planning session to identify future strategies that could be implemented to reduce the gaps and barriers identified during the capacity assessment stage of the project (see below). OMNI further supplemented these planning sessions by assessing trends in adolescent substance use in Virginia and identifying evidence-based, best practice approaches related to the recommended interventions. This document provides a summary of the strategic planning discussions and outlines potential strategies raised through the statewide workgroup for implementation across the Commonwealth of Virginia.

Capacity Assessment Results



Strategic Planning Decisions

Recommended Area of Focus	Goal of Focus Area
1 Strengthen the Workforce Through Innovative Recruitment and Retention Strategies	→ Increase service availability across the state by recruiting and retaining service providers
2 Expand School-Based Comprehensive Health Clinics to All Regions	→ Increase access to physical and mental/behavioral care through embedded school health services
3 Implement an Evidence-Based Peer Recovery Support Model in Each Region	→ Develop adolescent peer recovery services across the Commonwealth

Recommendations

This section provides an overview of potential efforts to address the strategic planning initiatives and provides resources to aid in achieving these goals. Please note that the identified strategies do not cover all potential approaches to achieving these goals. The identified strategies were developed through background research into the landscape of adolescent substance use, an online strategic planning session with experts working at the state level in Virginia, and an assessment of best-practices related to the identified gaps and barriers.

1 Strengthen the Workforce Through Innovative Recruitment and Retention Strategies

STEP 1: Conduct a survey of providers to identify retention needs across the state

- Providers should be selected from CSBs, non-profits, and private practices.
 - Create a comprehensive survey that includes questions about job satisfaction, work environment, benefits, career development opportunities, and any other factors that might affect retention (data from RHRN to inform).
 - Focus on factors that influence provider retention, identify areas with high turnover, and gather suggestions for improvement.
- Key Deliverable: A data set that helps identify common themes, areas of concern, and retention issues to plan for a strategic approach to meeting needs across the Commonwealth.

STEP 2: Develop an incentive program to aid in recruitment and retention (RHRN initiatives underway)

- Recruitment: Develop a loan repayment program/contract with set years of employment for benefit.
 - Develop collaborative relationships with colleges and universities to reach soon-to-be and recent graduates.
 - Offer flexible work options such as remote or hybrid work, 4-day work schedules, and flexible start and end times.
 - Retention: Offer ongoing training and development to providers (with no additional cost).
 - Identify or develop career advancement options such as leadership training programs.
- Key Deliverable: A set of recommendations to help foster a positive and supportive workplace and improve career longevity for providers across the substance use system of care.

STEP 3: Develop a streamlined service delivery training system for providers

- Conduct surveys with current providers to identify knowledge, skill gaps, and areas of interest.
 - Identify champions for core topics identified in provider surveys.
 - Leverage lessons learned from VMAP, as well as connections and provider resource needs.
- Key Deliverable: List of core topics for training system (i.e. treatment modalities, client engagement, cultural competency).

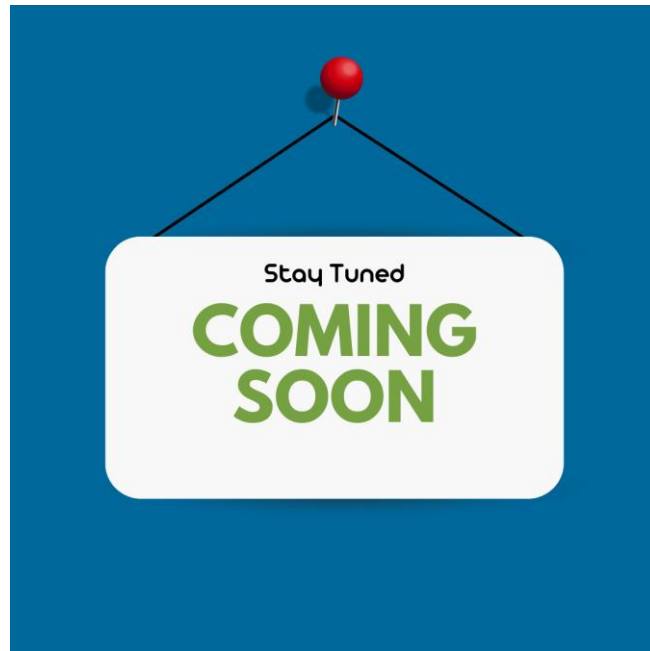
Step 4: Create a technical assistance (TA) support system to aid the adolescent substance use service provider workforce with their needs

- Leverage the DBHDS Office of Adult Community Behavioral Health's Block Grant Specialist roles (formally Behavioral Health Consultant roles), to establish regionally-based youth Behavioral Health Consultants to act as a liaison and representative for an assigned region to offer training.
- Key Deliverable: A group of dedicated staff for each region that will be well-versed in the current landscape and resources available.



Implementation Guides







Kari M. Savage, M.S.
Director, Office of Child and Family Services

Virginia Department of Behavioral Health
and Developmental Services

Email: Kari.Savage@dbhds.virginia.gov

