



North Carolina Training  
& Technical Assistance Center



# WELCOME

Hello! Spring has recently sprung, and we are slowly entering audit season. This issue of our newsletter will include details on what you should be looking out for so you are more than prepared!

## **Ask an Expert!**

We're excited to launch our *Ask an Expert* series, featuring insights from prevention professionals across North Carolina. For our first edition, we're spotlighting Jessica Garza, Prevention Program Manager with APNC. Jessica's background in social work, research, program development, policy analysis, and advocacy continues to shape her work in prevention. She is passionate about elevating youth voices, promoting compassionate care, and expanding equitable access to resources. When she's not advocating for change, Jessica enjoys chai lattes, spending time with her Chiweenie Sally, and her mom's famous Arroz con Gandules!



## **Q: How can we communicate with funders and stakeholders about the importance of prevention work?**

Communicating the value of prevention starts with understanding your audience. Pay close attention to the language funders and community partners already use—on their websites, social media, and in public statements. You'll often find overlap between their priorities and prevention outcomes, even if the words are different. That overlap is your bridge! Frame prevention in their language to show how it supports their goals.

Before reaching out, get clear on your core message: What do you want them to understand, and why should they care? Using a message box can help map out your key points and tailor them to different audiences. Having a few local data points or success stories ready can also make your message stick. Echoing their language shows you've done your homework—and builds trust.

Think of it like the "100 Cups of Coffee" approach: Every conversation is a chance to connect, not just pitch. Whether it's over coffee, on Zoom, or at a community event, building genuine relationships over time helps prevention resonate.

There's no one-size-fits-all. Every funder and partner brings different priorities and styles. That's why doing your research, being intentional, and listening deeply are key—not just to talking about prevention, but to making it matter.

## Helpful Resources:

- [The Message Box Tool - COMPASS Science Communication](#)
- [Community Tool Box - Communication Plan Tools](#)

Please submit questions you may have for our experts to Janine Brignola, our Prevention Training Specialist at [jbrignola@apnc.org](mailto:jbrignola@apnc.org).

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## Prevention Fellowship Placement Site Opportunity!

The NC TTA Center at APNC is excited to announce the second cohort of our Prevention Fellowship program! This program spans two semesters and is specifically tailored for students who are passionate about entering the substance use prevention field. Through this program, students get to attend engaging virtual workshops to develop essential general prevention skills and work hand-in-hand with communities to reduce substance use challenges. Fellows spend the second half of their time in the program placed with a community partner. Here, they work with their supervisor to create a project based on SAMHSA's Prevention Core Competencies.

***Our team is currently looking for FIVE new placement sites for this upcoming cohort. Students will begin in the Spring and be placed with agencies August - November.***

Interested in hosting a Fellow? Please fill out [this form](#).

Questions? Reach out to [eknowles@apnc.org](mailto:eknowles@apnc.org).

### **On the fence? Take a look at what sites from last year said about our Fellows.**

*"Thank you so much for the opportunity to participate in this program and for all of your hard work to make it a positive experience for everyone. I'm really looking forward to working with another fellow and applying what I learned in the future. It makes me so happy and excited to think of all of these students who will be entering the workforce with this type of professional experience!"*

*"I so enjoyed having [FELLOW] with us over these last few months, and as we reviewed everything I was blown away by how much we were able to accomplish. Thank you for the opportunity to host for this fellowship placement."*

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## Be Part of a Growing Network of Internship Opportunities!

We're building an ever-growing list of substance use prevention agencies interested in hosting student interns. This list will be shared with professors in public health, social work, and related disciplines, giving your agency visibility as a potential partner for internship placements.

By participating, your agency will:

- Gain exposure to professors seeking internship sites
- Welcome fresh perspectives from passionate students
- Boost your capacity for innovative prevention projects

### Ready to join?

Complete our [Interest Form](#) today! While professors and students determine final placements, this is your chance to showcase your agency and make valuable connections!

Have questions? Contact us at [jgarza@apnc.org](mailto:jgarza@apnc.org).



### From the Desk of DMH/DD/SUS

Please keep the following in mind as you prepare for the annual audit:

- Providers were notified for participation in the audit interviews on March 4, 2025
- All BG Providers must enter all data (for work from July 1, 2024 - March 31, 2025) into Ecco by April 15th.

**Note:** Data entered after April 15th will not be considered during the audit review nor included in audit meetings.

- DMH/DD/SUS team desk audits will be conducted through May
- Selected BG Providers and their LME will meet virtually with the Audit team to discuss findings on the following dates:
  - Alliance - June 9, 2025
  - Partners - June 11, 2025
  - Vaya - June 11, 2025
  - Trillium - June 18 & 19, 2025

*Please hold these dates!* When your time slot is determined soon, your meeting link will be emailed to you.

If you have any general questions about the audit, you can contact **Dr. Angela Maxwell** at [angela.maxwell@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:angela.maxwell@dhhs.nc.gov).

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# GENERAL UPDATES

## **Attention All Ecco Users!**

Keep the following in mind as you Plan, Implement, and Evaluate your SUPTRS services this year!

- As of January 15, 2025, Ecco will close each month on the 15th!
- If you experience any **issues with Ecco reporting in regards to your implementation plans (IPs)**, contact Robert Greer, the NC TTA Center Prevention Support Coordinator, at [rgreer@apnc.org](mailto:rgreer@apnc.org) or through the *Help* feature in Ecco.
- If you experience any **technical difficulties while using Ecco or account access issues**, please contact **Marcus Bouligny** by using the *Help* feature in Ecco.
- If you would like access to the most recent recording of the ECCO Updates or Training, contact [rgreer@apnc.org](mailto:rgreer@apnc.org).

## **Disaster Recovery Updates**

We hope your recovery efforts in the wake of last year's hurricanes have continued to improve. Please keep in mind the following resources. We will continue to provide up-to-date resources as we receive them.

- [List of resources for people in affected areas of Western Carolina](#)
- [APNC Hurricane Helene Information and Resource Hub](#)
- [FEMA Extends Deadline to March 8th for N.C. Disaster Assistance](#)



## UPCOMING SUPTRS MEETINGS, TRAININGS, & CONFERENCES

### **Live Virtual Trainings offered by the NC TTA Center**

#### **NC's Required Communication Campaign Training on May 15 at 1 - 5 pm**

Communication Campaigns are used to create environmental change by changing communities' norms, behaviors, and policies around multiple types of substances. Depending on the kind of campaign, the target audience may be youth, adults, and/or communities. During this training, you will learn what resources and best practice steps are critical for implementing your campaign. This interactive training will be a 4-hour session where participants will learn the foundational components of a communication campaign, consider the fidelity in implementing a communication campaign, and have time to brainstorm what implementation of a communication campaign could/should look like in their community.

*Note: Due to recent changes to the communication campaign guidance, DMH/DD/SUS requires any SUPTRS-funded organization implementing this strategy to have one person attend this training. Other grant-funded organizations are encouraged to attend (i.e., SPF-Rx, SPF-PFS, PDO, SOR). The ideal attendee is someone working directly on or overseeing the campaign.*

[Register Here!](#)

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**NC's Required Social Norms Marketing Webinar Series Prerequisite - Available via our LMS**

In this self-study course participants will learn how to use communication strategies to address social issues, including describing the social norms theory and how norms influence behavior and identifying core components of effective social norms campaigns using the Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF). Participants will also have the opportunity to examine examples of effective social norms campaigns.

Note: this is the prerequisite for the NC Required Social Norms Marketing Webinar Series listed below.

[Click here to access the self-study course!](#)

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**NC's Required Social Norms Marketing Webinar Series - Dates and registration information are coming soon!**

If you have plans to implement a Social Norms Marketing strategy, then this training is for you. Be sure to take the prerequisite to this three-part webinar series which includes individual and group TA opportunities. The live virtual webinars and TA sessions will begin in June and run through August 2025

**YPE Training on June 23-24 from 9am - 1pm**

North Carolina Foundations of Youth Prevention Education prepares direct service prevention providers to implement evidence-based and/or standards-based Youth Prevention Education (YPE) programs. North Carolina Foundations of Youth Prevention Education provides a basic understanding of the components and best practices for implementing any YPE program. This training will increase participants' knowledge and skills in planning, managing, facilitating, evaluating, and monitoring a Youth Prevention Education program. The training is divided into a self-paced pre-requisite and two days of content with engaging activities that allow participants to meet the previously stated objectives by directly applying the material. The training will be interactive, with breakout rooms and group discussions.

[Register Here!](#)

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**Synergy in Action: The Art of Campus-Community Collaboration on August 28 from 1 - 2pm**

The relationship between colleges or universities and their surrounding communities offers a unique and powerful opportunity to address substance misuse among young adults. This session will explore how prevention coalitions and campuses can collaborate effectively, leveraging each other's strengths to support young adults and create a positive ripple effect on the broader community. Attendees will gain insights into building and maintaining these partnerships and tangible resources, templates, and North Carolina-specific examples to inspire creative and impactful prevention initiatives. By the end of the session, participants will be equipped with strategies to foster collective impact and strengthen community-campus collaborations for substance use prevention.

[Register Here!](#)

## Courses Available in the NC TTA Center LMS!

### General Courses

- 2024 Audit Prep Webinar Recordings
- 2025 Audit Prep Webinar Recordings
- Bringing Prevention Models to Life: Practical Applications for Everyday Work
- Building Effective Partnerships for Substance Misuse Prevention
- ECCO Onboarding
- Engaging Young People in the Community: How Young People Can Impact Prevention Efforts
- Foundations of Youth Prevention Education (YPE) Prerequisite
- Innovative Strategies for Substance Use/Misuse Prevention: A Look Inside
- Introduction to Social and Emotional Learning: Promoting Wellbeing in School and Community Settings
- North Carolina Youth Engagement Training
- Overview of the North Carolina Approved Communication Campaigns and Awareness Initiatives Recordings
- Retail List Verification Training
- Social Norms in Substance Misuse Prevention: All the Essentials Prerequisite
- Substance Use Misuse Prevention Skills Training (SUMPST) Prerequisite
- The Importance of Readiness in Prevention Planning
- The Intersection of Social Determinants of Health and Substance Misuse

**Note:** Everyone will have access to these general courses upon creating an account. Other courses will be assigned to you upon registration. To access the general courses, log into your account by [clicking here!](#)

If you do not have access to our learning management system (LMS), contact Robert Greer at [rgreer@apnc.org](mailto:rgreer@apnc.org).

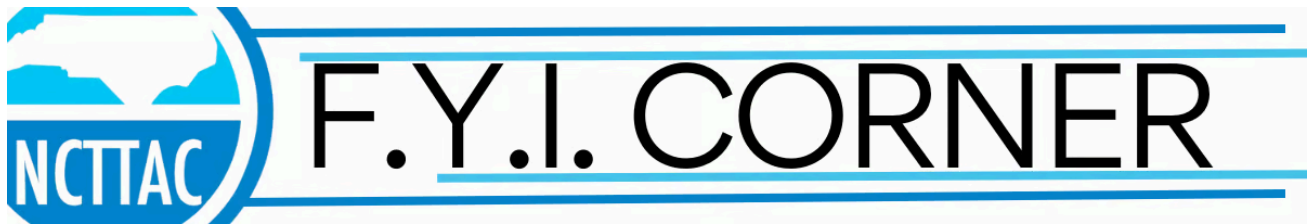
## Courses available soon via our NC TTA Center LMS

### Conducting Alcohol & Purchase Surveys in North Carolina Training

This recorded webinar was delivered in February 2023 and facilitated by Nancy McGee to provide the most current best practices and NC's current required policies when conducting Alcohol and Tobacco Purchase Surveys.

Keep an eye out for the training recording [by clicking here!](#)

For more information related to conducting Alcohol and Purchase Surveys, feel free to contact the DMH/DD/SUS Synar Team; David Haywood at [David.Haywood@dhhs.nc.gov](mailto:David.Haywood@dhhs.nc.gov), or Taofikat Oladipo at [taoladipo@uncg.edu](mailto:taoladipo@uncg.edu).



Information shared in the "FYI Corner" is not endorsed by the NCTTA Center or DMH/DD/SUS and may have costs associated with the event.

**Operation Parent** is a national nonprofit that exists to empower parents (and caregivers) to fully engage in ongoing conversations with their K-12 children about technology, substance use, and mental health issues for purposes of prevention. The evidence-based parent handbooks and free monthly webinars raise both the awareness and confidence needed to jumpstart these conversations. They've sold over 300,000 handbooks and have hosted thousands of webinars. For more information on their **FREE** materials and webinars, [click here!](#)

**Mental Health First Aid Training** For more information on how you can get trained in Adult or Youth Mental Health First Aid visit this [website and register today!](#)

**CADCA's 24th Mid-Year Training Institute at the Gaylord Opryland, in Nashville, TN, from July 20–24, 2025.** [Click here](#) for more information. Registration is now open!!

**National Prevention Network Conference in Washington, DC on August 11-13, 2025.** [Registration is Now Open!](#)

**Nonprofit Learning Lab** - The Nonprofit Learning Lab is a national nonprofit that trains leaders in the nonprofit sector. They offer daily online nonprofit training on training, facilitation, fundraising, strategic planning, communications, volunteer management, and [free resources to help you lead your organization!](#) Check out their website for more information!

**Calls to Reassess Cannabis Risks: New Research Reported** - to learn more about consensus data on the consequences of marijuana in young people, [click here!](#)

**Parental Alcohol Use Linked To Increased Cancer Risk In Children, Texas A&M Researchers Find** - [click here](#) to read the article!

**Johnny's Ambassadors Youth THC Prevention Resource** Check out the THC [resources and materials on this website](#) for middle school and high school teens and teachers.

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Interested in hearing more from the TTA Center? Stay totally up to date by joining our mailing list!!

To join, click here:



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Sent to: amcginty@apnc.org

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