

## **Priority Health Issue 3: Address Chemical Health in Youth & Reduce Overdose Deaths**

### **Assets / Resources:**

Goodhue County has many opportunities for youth to participate in healthy activities that support building strong connections and staying substance free. Programs like RiseUp Partnership, 4-H, athletics, faith-based groups, and more are already serving youth in our county and providing them with substance-free opportunities to engage with their peers and caring adults.

In 2025, the Goodhue County Opioid Settlement Advisory Council allocated settlement funds to support the expansion of a youth-led substance use prevention program, community education about opioids and fentanyl, and increased access to free harm reduction supplies like Naloxone, fentanyl test strips, and xylazine test strips.

### **Challenges / Barriers:**

The recent legalization of cannabis in Minnesota presents a challenge as there is limited information about how cannabis impacts fetal brain development, nursing, and adolescent mental health. Another challenge is that there is still a significant amount of stigma around drug use and recovery. Harm reduction methods are becoming more known and accepted within the community, but widespread education and training is still needed. There is also increased access to fentanyl and xylazine as they are often laced in other substances or made into fake prescription pills.

### **Collaborative Partnerships:**

The Mental and Chemical Health Coalition (which is convened by Goodhue County Health & Human Services, Mayo Clinic Health System, Goodhue County Child & Family Collaborative, Fernbrook Family Center, Hiawatha Valley Mental Health Center, University of Minnesota- Extension, C.A.R.E Clinic, Goodhue County SHIP, NAMI SE MN, and RIPple Drug Education & Awareness) will play a key role in community education and connecting partners and efforts.

Collaborating with youth-serving organizations will also be essential for impacting this priority issue. Youth prevention starts by building protective factors for youth, such as strong connections with caring adults, developing a sense of belonging, and providing opportunities for positive social involvement.

## Action Plan Overview:

**Result:** Youth stay substance free

**Indicator(s):**

- Percent of 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students who report drinking one or more alcoholic beverages in the last 30 days.
- Percent of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students who report using prescription drugs without a doctor's prescription or differently than prescribed

Strategies	Timeframe	Strategy lead	Performance measures (how much, how well, is anyone better off?)
Educate students, caregivers, and educators on substances, risk factors, and protective factors	2026-2028	Mental & Chemical Health Coalition of Goodhue County; GCHHS, Common Ground, Goodhue County Education District	<i># of people reached through education campaigns</i>  <i>% of students, caregivers, and educators who report an increase in knowledge about chemical health</i>
Expand access to youth mentoring programs	2026-2028	RiseUp Partnership	<i># of youth who have a mentor</i>  <i>% of youth in mentoring programs that report having a strong connection with their mentor</i>
Reduce barriers for youth to participate in healthy activities	2026-2028	Partnership for Children, Youth, & Families of Goodhue County	<i>\$ given to support youth participating in activities</i>  <i>% of youth who report participating in extracurricular activities</i>

**Result:** All community members know how to prevent fatal overdoses.

**Indicator(s):**

- Number of opioid overdose deaths in Goodhue County

Strategies	Timeframe	Strategy lead	Performance measures (how much, how well, is anyone better off?)
Expand knowledge about opioids and harm reduction through community education	2026-2028	Mental & Chemical Health Coalition of Goodhue County; RIPple Drug Education & Awareness	<i># of people reached through education campaigns</i>  <i>% of participants who report an increased knowledge about opioids and harm reduction</i>
Increase access to Naloxone and fentanyl test strips	2026-2028	RIPple Drug Education & Awareness	<i># of people trained in Naloxone usage</i>  <i># of Naloxone and fentanyl test strips access points in Goodhue County</i>  <i>% of people trained who report knowing where to find and how to use Naloxone.</i>

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**Result: Youth stay substance free**

**Indicator(s):**

- Percent of 9<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> grade students who report drinking one or more alcoholic beverages in the last 30 days
- Percent of 11<sup>th</sup> grade students who report using prescription drugs without a doctor’s prescription or differently than how a doctor told them to use it.

**Strategy: Educate students, caregivers, and educators on substances, risk factors, and protective factors**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Strategy Lead</b>	<b>Performance Measure(s)</b>	<b>Progress Notes</b>
Explore grants and other funding opportunities to sustain staff and contracts to focus on youth prevention work	2026-2028	Goodhue County Health & Human Services/ Mental & Chemical Health Coalition	<i># of grants applied for</i> <i># of funds secured</i>	
Recruit, train, and coordinate the paid youth substance use prevention team	2026-2028	GCHHS; Common Ground; Goodhue County Education District, Red Wing Public Schools	<i># of students on team</i>	
Implement substance use prevention activities and campaigns for youth ( <i>Positive Community Norms campaign</i> )	2026-2028	GCHHS; Common Ground; Goodhue County Education District, Red Wing Public Schools	<i>% of students who believe everyone uses substances</i> <i>% of students with accurate perception of risk</i>	

Conduct educational presentations/events for youth, educators, parents/caregivers, and community members on substances, risk factors, and protective factors	2026-2028	GCHHS; Common Ground; Goodhue County Education District, Red Wing Public Schools; SE MN Spark Coalition	<b><i># of attendees to educational events</i></b>	
Utilize screening tools (SBIRT) and early intervention to address substance use in youth	2026-2028	GCHHS; Common Ground; Goodhue County Education District, Red Wing Public Schools	<b><i>#/% of students who access treatment options</i></b>	
Host a youth-led health education podcast with local experts to provide youth with accurate medical information and build trust in healthcare and public health leaders	2026	Dr. Seth Gregory, MD; RiseUp Partnership	<b><i>% listeners reporting an increase in knowledge</i></b>	
Promote cessation and alternatives to suspension programs ( <i>The EX Program, My Life My Quit, etc.</i> )	2026-2028	Goodhue County SHIP	<b><i># of schools promoting programs</i></b>	
Launch a regional Speaking of Cannabis communications campaign	2026	GCHHS	<b><i># social media impressions/clicks</i></b>	
Educate parents, caregivers, and cannabis users about safe storage and the impact of cannabis on brain development and overall health	2026	GCHHS		

**Strategy: Expand access to youth mentoring**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Strategy Lead</b>	<b>Performance Measure(s)</b>	<b>Progress Notes</b>
Have meetings with communities outside of Red Wing on starting youth mentoring programs	2026-2028	RiseUp Partnership	<i>% of Goodhue County communities with a mentoring program</i>	
Support alternative mentoring models, such as peer-mentoring, group mentoring, Community Youth Council, Youth on Boards, etc.	2026-2028	RiseUp Partnership, Cannon Falls Treehouse, RecoveryCorps	<i># of youth involved in mentoring</i> <i>% of youth who report they have trusted adults in their life</i>	
Support the recruitment of mentors through paid advertising, employer recruitment, and special events	2026-2028	RiseUp Partnership, Cannon Falls Treehouse	<i># of mentors</i>	

**Strategy: Reduce barriers for youth to participate in healthy activities**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Strategy Lead</b>	<b>Performance Measure(s)</b>	<b>Progress Notes</b>
Provide free sober recreation activities for youth	2026-2028	GCHHS; Goodhue County Education District; Red Wing YMCA; Common Ground	<i># of youth attending</i>	
Host a Youth Activity & Resource Fair to showcase the out-of-school programs	TBD	Partnership for Children, Youth, & Families of		

available across Goodhue County		Goodhue County		
Work with partners to explore creating an activity fund to help pay for activity fees, camps, needed equipment, clothing, travel fees, etc.	2026-2028	Partnership for Children, Youth, & Families of Goodhue County	<b># of funds available</b>	
Work with Mayo Clinic Health System and other partners to secure adequate funding	2026-2028	Partnership for Children, Youth, & Families of Goodhue County	<b># of funds available</b>	
Develop a system for requesting and receiving funds from this account	TBD	Partnership for Children, Youth, & Families of Goodhue County		
Advertise the funds availability with school and county social workers, as well as youth activity organizations.	TBD	Partnership for Children, Youth, & Families of Goodhue County	<b>% of funds used</b>	

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**Result: All community members know how to prevent fatal overdoses**

**Indicator(s):**

- Number of opioid overdose deaths in Goodhue County

**Strategy: Expand knowledge about opioids and harm reduction through community education**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Strategy Lead</b>	<b>Performance Measure(s)</b>	<b>Progress Notes</b>
Hold community education and awareness sessions about opioids and harm reduction methods.	2026-2028	Mental & Chemical Health Coalition of Goodhue County; RIPple Drug Education & Awareness	<i># of people who attend</i> <i>% of people who report increased knowledge</i>	
Use social media and other advertising methods to distribute key messages	2026-2028	Varies	<i># of social media advertising messages</i> <i># of views</i>	
Conduct a public education campaign on opioids and harm reduction (billboards, public transit, social media, movie theaters, etc.)	2026-2028	RIPple Drug Education & Awareness		
Promote Take Back Day	2026-2028	Mayo Clinic Health System	<i># of messages</i>	

**Strategy: Increase access to harm reduction materials (Naloxone, fentanyl test strips, xylazine test strips)**

<b>Activities</b>	<b>Timeframe</b>	<b>Strategy Lead</b>	<b>Performance Measure(s)</b>	<b>Progress Notes</b>
Add Naloxone and fentanyl/xylazine test strip access points throughout the county	2026-2028	Mental & Chemical Health Coalition of Goodhue County; RIPple Drug Education & Awareness	<b><i># of access points added</i></b> <b><i># of Naloxone doses stocked</i></b>	
Provide community trainings on Naloxone usage	2026-2028	Mental & Chemical Health Coalition of Goodhue County	<b><i># of people trained</i></b> <b><i>% of people trained who feel comfortable using Naloxone if needed</i></b>	
Use ODMAP and other data sources to saturate hot spots with Naloxone and fentanyl test strips.	2026-2028	Mental & Chemical Health Coalition of Goodhue County; RIPple Drug Education & Awareness	<b><i>% of hotspots identified</i></b>	