

Supporting Coös Youth on the Path to Adulthood

A Conference for North Country Professionals and Youth Advocates

A North Country Listens Summary Report
October 2018



ABOUT NORTH COUNTRY LISTENS



New Hampshire Listens is a civic engagement initiative of the Carsey School of Public Policy at the University of New Hampshire.

North Country Listens is a local partner of NH Listens committed to creating and sustaining a fair process for public engagement and action to build and support strong communities in the North Country.

Our mission:

To help New Hampshire residents talk and work together to create communities that work for everyone.

Our work:

- Create engaged community conversations on local and statewide issues
- Serve as a resource and support network for new local Listens groups
- Cultivate a network of facilitators for public engagement and action

Our principles:

- Bring people together from all walks of life
- Provide time for in-depth, informed conversations
- Respect differences as well as seek common ground
- Achieve outcomes that lead to informed community solutions

North Country Listens

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New Hampshire Listens

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Supporting Coös Youth on the Path to Adulthood

A conference for North Country Professionals and Youth Advocates

Conference Team

Presentations, Facilitation, and Organization:

- **Eleanor Jaffee**, Coös Youth Study (CYS) Project Manager; Research Assistant Professor, Program Evaluation Director, Carsey School of Public Policy
- **Cesar Rebellon**, CYS Research Team; Professor and Chair, Dept. of Sociology; Faculty Fellow, Carsey School of Public Policy
- **Erin Sharp**, CYS Research Team; Associate Professor of Human Development and Family Studies; Faculty Fellow, Carsey School of Public Policy
- **Corinna Tucker**, CYS Research Team; Professor of Human Development and Family Studies; Faculty Fellow, Carsey School of Public Policy
- **Karen Van Gundy**, CYS Team; Professor, Dept. of Sociology; Faculty Fellow, Carsey School of Public Policy
- **Amy Barry**, Program Evaluation Associate, Carsey School of Public Policy
- **Curt Grimm**, Deputy Director, Carsey School of Public Policy; Research Associate Professor, Dept. of Anthropology
- **Sonja Heels**, Research Assistant, Carsey School of Public Policy

Group Engagement Design:

- **Michele Holt-Shannon**, NH Listens Director, Carsey School of Public Policy
- **Carrie Portrie**, NH Listens Fellow, Carsey School of Public Policy; PhD Candidate, Dept. of Education
- **Courtney Wrigley**, North Country Listens; NH Listens Fellow, Carsey School for Public Policy

Thanks to our Volunteer Facilitator!

- **Tom Schram**, Associate Professor and Director of Teacher Preparation, Dept. of Education, Teacher Residency for Rural Education (TRRE), Director of Pedagogy and Instruction - <https://cola.unh.edu/trre>



University of New Hampshire
Carsey School of Public Policy



Background

Since 2008, The Coös Youth Study (CYS) research team has tracked youth in New Hampshire's (NH) North Country with the purpose of: (1) Understanding Coös County's unique assets and challenges; (2) Investigating the impact of social and economic trends on youth and young adults, including why they stay or leave the area; and (3) Informing efforts to build a vibrant future for the region. Financial support from the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation and additional funding from the National Science Foundation (Grant #1155797) has made this study possible.

The "Supporting Coös Youth on the Path to Adulthood" conference was held on October 26th, 2018 at the Mountain View Grand Resort and Spa in Whitefield, NH. The CYS team had two goals for this gathering: (1) Addressing gaps in knowledge concerning youth development and outmigration in NH's North Country; and (2) Identifying the relationships among factors perceived and experienced in youth and the associated outcomes in adulthood.

What follows is a description of themes and priorities heard during the conference's small and large group discussions. The findings are from an analysis of all the notes gathered at the meeting (see Appendix F for transcript). This summary helps decision makers identify areas for further consideration and action. It provides the CYS team an opportunity to critically reflect upon their work. The results of the conversation, as presented in this public report, are intended to be shared with all those who participated in the event as well as anyone interested. For more information about the study or the event, contact Eleanor Jaffee, CYS Project Manager at Eleanor.Jaffee@unh.edu.

Participant Description and Conference Format

Sixty people registered and 46 attended the conference. People warmly greeted each other, as many knew one another from shared work. They engaged in lively conversation throughout the day. Attendees could earn continuing education credits from the North Country Health Consortium. Participants came from throughout Coös County and NH, the list below summarizes participant affiliations:

- AHEAD Inc.
- Appalachian Mountain Club
- Becket Family Services
- Berlin Public Schools
- Court Appointed Special Advocate
- Apprenticeship NH of Comm. Coll. System of NH
- Private Practice Clinical Mental Health
- EasterSeals
- Mount Prospect Academy Becket House
- North Country Special Education Consulting, LLC
- NFI North
- NH Charitable Foundation
- NH Department of Education (ex. Student Support, Student Wellness)
- NH Department of Health and Human Services (ex. Division for Children, Youth, and Families; and Juvenile Justice)
- North Country Education Services
- North Country Health Consortium
- Northern Human Services
- Family Resource Center
- UNH Cooperative Extension
- UNH Institute On Disability
- UNH Teacher Residency for Rural Education (TRRE)
- White Mountain Exploration
- White Mountain Science, Inc. (WMSI)
- White Mountains Community College
- Whitefield Public Library

When signing into the conference, people answered two questions, ***"What drew you to this event?"*** and ***"What's one thing you hope we talk about today?"*** In general, participants came to network with one another; learn more about youth voice and community involvement, transitions to adulthood and post-secondary opportunities for youth, from the research; and to learn about resources, opportunities, and solutions to support the future of Coös youth and young adults (see Appendix F for transcript)

CYS Project Manager, Eleanor Jaffee began the conference by providing an overview of the CYS since 2008. Then, CYS researchers: Cesar Rebellon, Erin Sharp Hiley, Corinna Tucker, and Karen Van Gundy presented findings from their research (see Appendix C for a brief overview of each). Between each session, participants engaged in small group discussions followed by large group sharing (see Appendix E for guide).

Group Discussion Summary

The following section provides a summary of the small and large group discussions, organized by theme to aide further conversation (see Appendix F for transcript).

Schools and Families

Making connections is important, yet it can be challenging. Families and schools need to work together. Conference attendees expressed worry about: engaging unresponsive parents, providing more emotional and behavioral health supports, and reduced funding in small districts. Families have histories of continued: trauma, economic disadvantage, substance misuse, or struggles with mental health. Professionals see families who face stigma. They see youth who are at risk of repeating behaviors. People see more incidents of youth facing lower expectations (ex. young men) or stigma in the small close-knit communities of northern NH. Some marked concerns about: more youth in foster homes, interventions coming too late, and school counselors facing large workloads. Conference participants talked about the link between household chaos and school behavior. They acknowledged the value of creating routines and expectations that are consistent for students. For example, when faced with chaotic home life, families may struggle with managing stress or developing routines that contribute to a sense of normalcy – they “don’t have time to fix the problem on their own.” Coös County’s small schools create spaces for ensuring students have quality experiences. Solutions mentioned during the day included:

- Finding models or online portals for parents and students (ex. Power School).
- Building up multi-tiered systems of support and trauma-sensitive practices at schools that bring families, schools, and communities together.
- Developing wraparound services and organizational connections throughout the county.
- Thinking about gender and bias so youth are enabled to think about all sorts of experiences and futures.
- Finding students who have multiple Adverse Childhood Experiences (ACES) and connecting them with role models -- helping kids fulfill their expectations and “break the cycle.”
- Building a fostering system (ex. creating options beyond grandparents and institutionalizing youth).
- Developing/enhancing family engagement and education opportunities to strengthen families’ abilities and provide diverse perspectives – UNH Cooperative Extension willing to play a strong leadership role; also “We are good at it here, so many of us are doing that work.”
- Building youth self-esteem through enrichment activities like those focused on science and engineering— help give youth and parents “a light at the end of the tunnel.”
- Building awareness and language to talk about problems (kids and parents) -- How can youth and adults talk about chaos in their lives?

Supporting Wellness

Families in Coös County need support with acquiring and sustaining basic needs and overall household wellness. Conference attendees acknowledged that many people have extended family networks and supports, including grandparents and older generations to help raise children. They also mentioned the good work toward empowering families and youth that already exists. However, they see parents reluctant to access the programs being offered and household/parental chaos being a factor for continued struggle. They notice challenges from substance misuse and have concerns for emotional and behavioral health. During the conference, participants offered a list of solutions for addressing families’ wellbeing, including:

- Helping youth and families correct basic information or acquire identification (ex. birth certificates).
- Identifying or recognizing mental health challenges, trauma, and risk factors among families, including risks for suicide, and developing prevention strategies.
- Focusing on early development and home visiting for children birth to 3 years old.
- Making people aware of different supports and models of intervention or residential treatment for those facing addiction (ex. Manchester, Nashua, and Rochester opened adolescent recovery centers).
- Creating regional hubs (i.e., hub and spoke model) by accessing grant funds to support services for all ages.
- Designing intensive mental health services that do not require providers to spend half the day in the car.
- Reducing barriers created by insurance and high deductibles.

- Reducing the stigma associated with recovery - “your people vs. our people.”
- Supporting structured routines for youth (ex. southern NH’s system for checking on kids on every day).
- Developing supports for kids who are reunited with the community after residential treatment.
- Connecting with community colleges which are paying more attention to substance abuse (ex. North Country Health Consortium has a counselor on site at the community college).
- Looking toward initiatives like FAST Forward - <http://nh4youth.org/collaborative/grants-and-projects/fast-forward> and <https://www.nhstudentwellness.org/fastforward2020.html>.
- Providing role modeling for positive work and home environments, including empowering parents
- Supporting structured routines for youth (ex. southern NH’s system for checking on kids on everyday)

Youth Enrichment Activities

Conference attendees talked about how both youth and adults in Coös County enjoy the outdoors and the ample opportunities for recreation the natural landscape provides. Conference attendees mentioned that extracurriculars outside of school help build competency and empower youth. They are fun and help encourage youth to stay in the region. However, attendees also noted that some youth are not spending time outdoors; they may prefer indoor activities. Or they may lack access, for example: transportation may be unavailable, some communities have more resources than others, or families may not be able to afford the associated costs. How can people work together to reduce barriers in extracurricular access? A few solutions discussed during the conference were to:

- Strengthen youth community centers (ex. look to Pemi Youth Center in Plymouth)
- Generate experiential learning opportunities that promote physical activity, leadership, community and school partnerships (ex. cultural, outdoor, and engineering programs).
- Create opportunities for students in school by connecting with community organizations or volunteers that take the pressure off families and teachers (ex. outdoor recreation, garden programs, White Mountain Science, Inc., Appalachian Mountain Club, who else?).

Pathways for the Future

Emphasizing multiple pathways after youth leave the school system is also a key discussion. Viable work opportunities have shifted, and youth are moving away to find education and work elsewhere. Some points discussed by attendees included: the costs and debt accrued from higher education, remembering trade skills and jobs are respectful pathways, and special populations of youth need unique supports. For example, attendees mentioned students who are: aging out of alternative schools or residential facilities, in families struggling with basic needs, and home schooled and may not meet high school equivalency requirements. Overall, rural youth and families need support envisioning multiple pathways. Solutions mentioned during the conference included:

- Thinking about parent and family experiences and the impact on youth development and future decisions.
- Developing partnerships between public schools, businesses/organizations, and community colleges, like White Mountains Community College (WMCC), which can help promote skill-building and job success through community connections early on.
- Emphasizing the importance of transitional programs for both jobs and well-being after high school.
- Offering a variety of opportunities beyond college like internships, apprenticeships etc.
- Developing Career Technical Education (CTE) which blends academics and technical skills – connecting learning to future careers through apprenticeship and community connections.

Valuing Youth Voices

During the conference and throughout NH, emphasis has been placed on finding opportunities to hear what the younger people have to say about their communities and their future. Some feel when given the opportunity, too few participate. People wondered how to sustain engagement and participation as Coös youth grow into adulthood. Youth programming informed by younger people’s needs and wants can support emotional and behavioral well-being and confidence. This goes further when supported by peers and adults listening carefully and providing mentorship. Some solutions included:

- Creating youth voice matters campaigns.
- Including youth more often in community conversations.
- Holding focus groups with youth in schools (ex. Conversation like Re-imagining Education in the Androscoggin Valley in Berlin and Gorham during the school day for students).
- Determining what student voice “looks like” (ex. Pre-K, elementary, middle, high school, post-grad).
- Including all youth in concerted leadership and skill building - not just students who tend to excel in school but also youth who may be struggling or are quiet.
- Creating peer mentorship programs/networks (ex. for freshman in High School, “no one sits alone at lunch,” avoid stigmatized pairings – excelling student with a student experiencing trauma).
- Building strong adult-youth relationships through mentorship or creating a “safe haven” of teachers, recreation leaders, parents, etc.

Staying in Coös

Community attachment and population shifts in Coös County are key points of conversation not limited to this event. Financial struggles remain a key issue for families. Conference attendees wondered if youth are being told the way to be successful is to leave. They also mentioned there are limited resources for youth between 18 to 21 years old. They see individuals and small family groups moving into the area for the affordable housing (ex. from Methuen, Lowell, Manchester); however, they worry about the lack of extended networks that many residents value and perhaps rely on. What is community? What promotes community attachment among youth? How does technology and social media play a role? These among other questions remain, such as:

- What are the messages that kids are getting from adults? How do parent viewpoints/expectations influence youth’s perception of wanting to stay and feeling successful?
- Are people not returning to Coös county because things are getting worse? Are they really getting worse? Is leaving Coös a bad thing?
- Who’s going to come and live in Berlin? Who’s looking out for the North County?
- How do you connect youth who many not be engaged or feel connected?

Solutions shared focused on developing infrastructure that supports pathways for tourism that could lend to more people traveling north, past North Conway. Also, finding time to connect with youth and others who feel attached to their community and to understand shared values, perhaps talk more about what they think their communities need and can do.

Evaluation Summary

The North Country Health Consortium provided participants with an opportunity to earn continuing education credits for attending the conference. Seventeen of the 46 attendees completed evaluations (see Appendix G for full results and comments). Overall, respondents found the researchers’ sessions effective. They were satisfied with the teaching strategies, resources shared and the time frame. When asked what could have been better, respondents suggested an afternoon energizer, but felt overall the conference had a good balance. People wanted to hear more from small groups during report outs. Some wanted to learn about applications from the research, and see findings presented less academically, in some cases. Others wanted “more solutions or outcomes” or “comparisons from other regions with similar demographics.” A respondent wanted to see more youth involved in the conference. Respondents also listed two things they plan to change as a result of the sessions. Some of the plans included:

- Reinstating cross-agency round table service discussions
- Understanding household chaos and promoting structure and predictability
- Creating residential training for understanding the importance of structure
- Advocating for youth voices
- Looking at parent education more closely
- Opening communication with mental health services and family resource centers to promote collaboration
- Finding ways to improve attachment to community
- Building partnerships with youth and getting them more involved in the community

Conclusions

Connections to Research

Conference attendees said the findings from the CYS research helped to, “connect the dots,” and that the information makes sense based on their practical knowledge. Having the documentation and research can help create evidence-based solutions and action plans. They see the CYS as a huge step to help public offices (ex. Office of Student Wellness) or organizations (ex. Appalachian Mountain Club) with their work. Attendees had concerns about the self-reporting measures and findings; they wondered if household chaos is always negative or new to the region? Could the data be disaggregated by school or town?

Further Questions

The research presented by the CYS team generated much discussion about how the findings can impact practice and how to begin “making things happen.” Many essential questions remain, including:

- How do we build on community assets and what is going well? Why do people stay?
- How do we bring all the different parties/agencies involved in dealing with household chaos together so that there is a coherent response to needs?
- How do we identify what coalition building exists in Coös County and build a stronger and networked coalition that promotes efficiency and sustained ways to execute change?
- How do we access funding that makes a difference?
- How do we better build-in sustainable structures through grants?
- When/where will the state commit to sustainability?
- How do you reach isolated families?
- How do we get parents involved when school or services may be a source of stigma, trauma, or fear?
- How do we connect people to resources in rural areas?
- How do we mobilize people as resources who might not recognize they are resources?

Mobilizing for Action

There is a general need to broaden the perception of who and what can be resources. Professionals are looking toward collaborative mobilization to build funding and capacity for Coös County youth and families. The conference provided time for attendees to generate ideas, for example:

- Work with NH state departments to address local needs and bring people together (ex. Department of Student Wellness, National Guard Counter Drug Task Force, Project Aware).
- Create co-existing Head Start and nursing home facilities.
- Build or build up community centers.
- Develop a housing coalition to build up workforce housing.
- Build up workforce development strategies and resources.
- Help school staff provide limited resources (ex. mental and behavioral health, special education).
- Pay to access outdoor activities (ex. ATV).
- Look toward collaboration and collective impact model in hospitals downstate.
- Create targeted outreach strategies to bring professionals and liaisons into the North Country and schools.
- Write grant proposals (ex. to help school systems address changes, enhance family resource centers).
- See the Coös Youth Study done again now.

Overall, conference attendees wanted to know how the findings from the study will be distributed. As attendees mentioned, there is a need to “shake things up,” encourage state and local government collaborations, use the data to help with grant funding, and share resources with parents, schools, and communities – linking research to what people see on the ground and actionable solutions.

Appendices

A. Event Flyer



Supporting Coös Youth on the Path to Adulthood: A conference for North Country professionals and youth advocates

New and Updated Research From the Coös Youth Study

Researchers from the UNH Carsey School present their latest findings on the following topics:

- How expectations and aspirations for the future while in high school link to education and employment outcomes in early adulthood.
- The effects of exposure to household chaos on adolescents' future plans and well-being.
- The lasting benefits of community attachment for well-being among young adults, with a focus on co-occurring symptoms of depression and substance misuse.
- The influence of attachment to Coös County before high school graduation on outmigration and insights for retaining young adults.

Learn more at carsey.unh.edu/policy/coos-youth-study.

Register Now!

Friday, October 26

Mountain View Grand
Resort and Spa

Whitefield, NH

9:30 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

- No cost to attend
- Lunch & refreshments provided
- Open networking time

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(amy.barry
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University of New Hampshire
Carsey School of Public Policy

The Coös Youth Study



The Coös Youth Study, with financial support from the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation and additional funding from the National Science Foundation (Grant #1155797), has tracked youth in New Hampshire's North Country for *ten years*, starting in 2008 and ending in 2018.

PURPOSE The primary purposes of the study were:

- Understanding Coös County's unique assets and challenges
- Investigating the impact of social and economic trends on youth and young adults, including why they stay or leave the area
- Informing efforts to build a vibrant future for the region

YOUTH Coös County public school students from two age groups participated in the initial 2008 survey and then were tracked for ten years.

- Group 1: Seventh graders (graduating class of 2013)
- Group 2: Eleventh graders (graduating class of 2009)

A total of 831 youth participated in the study.

DATA In six surveys over ten years, participants were asked about their:

- Aspirations for the future
- Education and work
- Attachment to the region
- Family, school, and community relationships
- Health and social behavior

A small group of participants also took part in in-depth interviews.

The results of the study have been shared with community leaders and organizations serving youth in Coös County so that they may better understand the strengths and needs of Coös youth, and better respond to their concerns. They also have been published in Carsey research briefs and fact sheets and peer-reviewed journals.



University of New Hampshire
Carsey School of Public Policy

STUDY TEAM

Cesar Rebellon, PhD

Professor and Chair, Department of Sociology, University of New Hampshire

Dr. Cesar Rebellon is a Professor of Sociology and department Chair at the University of New Hampshire as well as a Carsey School of Public Policy Faculty Fellow. He has over fifteen years of experience in research and instruction at the University of New Hampshire, with an additional five years of experience in research and data analysis. As a co-investigator for the Coös Youth Study for the past ten years, Dr. Rebellon has explored youth's perceptions of and connections to Coös County and their impact on their plans for future residence. His research also includes positive youth development and factors associated with juvenile crime. Dr. Rebellon has published in peer-reviewed journals such as the *International Journal of Behavioral Development*, *Journal of Criminal Justice*, *Deviant Behavior*, and *Social Psychology Quarterly*.

Erin Hiley Sharp, PhD

Associate Professor of Human Development and Family Studies, University of New Hampshire

Dr. Erin Hiley Sharp is an Associate Professor of Human Development and Family Studies and Carsey School of Public Policy Faculty Fellow at the University of New Hampshire. Dr. Sharp has over thirteen years of experience in Human Development and Family studies education and ten years of experience as a co-investigator on the Coös County Youth Study in rural New Hampshire. Her work focuses on prevention research and factors that contribute to positive youth development, with an emphasis on youth involvement in out-of-school activities and identity development. Dr. Sharp's work has appeared in peer-reviewed journals such as *Developmental Psychology*, *Journal of Family Studies*, *Journal of Youth and Adolescence*, *Journal of Adolescence*, and *International Journal of Behavioral Development*.

Corinna Jenkins Tucker, PhD

Professor of Human Development and Family Studies, University of New Hampshire

Dr. Corinna Jenkins Tucker is a Professor of Human Development and Family Studies and Carsey School of Public Policy Faculty Fellow at the University of New Hampshire and a Certified Family Life Educator. Dr. Tucker has over twenty years of experience in research and instruction, with ten of those years spent as a co-investigator on the Coös County Youth Study. Her research focuses on parent-child and sibling relationships and their associations with mental and physical health. Her work has appeared in peer-reviewed journals, such as *Pediatrics*, *Journal of Family Issues*, *Journal of Interpersonal Violence*, *Journal of Family Psychology*, *Child Abuse and Neglect*, and *Journal of Adolescence*.

Karen T. Van Gundy, PhD

Professor, Department of Sociology, University of New Hampshire

Dr. Karen T. Van Gundy is a Professor of Sociology, core faculty in Justice Studies, and a Faculty Fellow at the Carsey School of Public Policy at the University of New Hampshire. Dr. Van Gundy has over twenty years of experience in research and ten years of experience as a co-investigator on the Coös County Youth Study. Funded by the National Science Foundation and the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation, her research examines how social contexts shape physical, emotional, and behavioral health among rural and urban youth and emerging adults. Her work appears in scholarly journals such as *Journal of Health and Social Behavior*, *Rural Sociology*, and *Substance Use and Misuse*, as well as her book, *Marijuana: Examining the Facts*.

Eleanor M. Jaffee, PhD

Research Assistant Professor, Carsey School of Public Policy, University of New Hampshire

Eleanor M. Jaffee is the Carsey School Evaluation Program Director and Project Manager of the Coös Youth Study. She has over fifteen years of experience in program evaluation serving nonprofits, government agencies, foundations, and UNH faculty researchers. As Project Manager, she supervises participant retention, data collection, community engagement, and stakeholder reporting for the Coös Youth Study.

carsey.unh.edu/policy/Coös-youth-study

C. Presentation Overviews

Coös Youth Study Team Conference Presentations	
Objectives	Content (Topics)
Youth perceptions of Coös and the consequences for personal outcomes and migration plans Cesar Rebellon	
Understand the ways in which youth connection to Coös was resilient in the face of economic challenges, and gain insight about how Coös might retain connection to youth who leave but might return.	Description of data from a study concerning youth attachment to and perceptions of Coös before high school graduation, and describe what factors predict out-migration following graduation and likelihood of return.
Coös youths' future aspirations, expectations, and attainment Erin Sharp	
Be able to describe how participants in the Coös Youth Study think and feel about their futures during high school;	Define the concept of future orientation and focus on future aspirations and expectations; Present figures that provide descriptive data on Coös Youth Study participants' future aspirations and expectations over time.
Discuss how things like student gender, parents' socioeconomic status, and the youths' high school experiences shape how Coös youth think and feel about their futures;	Provide figures that illustrate the significant differences in CYS participants' future aspirations and expectations by gender and socioeconomic status; Provide descriptive data that demonstrates how high school experiences in terms of grades, school belongingness, and extracurricular activity participation are associated with 12 th grade future aspirations and expectations.
Be able to describe how high school future aspirations and expectations link to actual education and work status in early adulthood for youth growing up in Coös;	Provide statistical data showing the differences in early adulthood school and work status (i.e., in school full-time, working full-time, in school or working part-time, neither in school or working full-time) by 12 th grade future aspirations and expectations;
Apply findings from the Coös Youth Study to consider needs and opportunities for youth in the County.	The application of the findings to practice will be presented through group discussion.
Household chaos and adolescents' future plans, parent-child relationships and well-being Corinna Tucker	
Apply information from the Coös Youth Study that advances understanding of household chaos' critical role in adolescents' future plans, family experiences, and well-being.	Define household chaos and describe the processes through which household chaos affects adolescent development. The importance of studying and reducing adolescents' exposure to household chaos will be demonstrated based on findings from the Coös Youth Study.
Emotional and behavioral health in Coös County: A 10-year study of youth and young adults Karen Van Gundy	
Participants will learn about early predictors of adult emotional and behavioral health in Coös County.	Dr. Van Gundy will present findings from her research on emotional and behavioral health using survey data from the Coös Youth Study between the years 2008 and 2018. With a focus on co-occurring symptoms of depression and substance misuse, she will highlight how social stressors undermine the health and well-being of young people in Coös County, and how youths' strong ties to their home communities continue to benefit them as young adults. In the context of the findings, recommendations for mental health and policy and practice will be considered.
Participants will learn how findings from survey research can inform their own work with vulnerable populations.	

D. Agenda

Supporting Coös youth on the path to adulthood: A conference for North Country professionals and youth advocates

October 26, 2018, Mountain View Grand Resort and Spa, Whitefield, NH

Carsey School for Public Policy, Coös Youth Study Team, and NH Listens

Agenda

9:30 a.m. to 9:45 a.m.	Registration and coffee
9:45 a.m. to 10:00 a.m.	Welcome and opening remarks
10:00 a.m. to 10:30 a.m.	Presentation by Dr. Corinna Jenkins Tucker <i>Household chaos and adolescents' future plans, parent-child relationships and well-being.</i>
10:30 a.m. to 11:00 a.m.	Presentation by Dr. Karen T. Van Gundy <i>Emotional and behavioral health in Coös County: A 10-year study of youth and young adults.</i>
11:00 a.m. to 12:15 p.m.	First small group discussions
12:15 p.m. to 1:00 p.m.	Break for on-site catered lunch and unstructured networking time
1:00 p.m. to 1:30 p.m.	Presentation by Dr. Erin Hiley Sharp <i>Coös youths' future aspirations, expectations, and attainment.</i>
1:30 p.m. to 2:00 p.m.	Presentation by Dr. Cesar Rebellon <i>Youth perceptions of Coös and the consequences for personal outcomes and migration plans.</i>
2:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.	Second small group discussions
3:00 p.m. to 3:40 p.m.	Large group discussion
3:40 p.m. to 4:00 p.m.	Closing remarks and evaluation

E. Facilitation Guide and Flow

Supporting Coös youth on the path to adulthood:

A conference for North Country professionals and youth advocates

October 26, 2018, Mountain View Grand Resort and Spa, Whitefield, NH

Carsey School for Public Policy, Coös Youth Study Team, North Country Listens and NH Listens

Event and Facilitation Flow

Gaps in Knowledge, Skills, and/or Practice Addressed: This program will address gaps in knowledge concerning youth development and outmigration in the North Country of New Hampshire. It will identify the relationships among factors perceived and experienced in youth and the associated outcomes in adulthood.

Purpose/Goal: The purpose of this activity is to understand and support positive outcomes in North Country youth and emerging adults in order to better serve these populations.

Facilitators: Eleanor, Michele, Curt, Tom, and Carrie

Researcher/Facilitators: Cesar, Erin, Karen, and Corinna

Attendees: Approx. 55

Overview of Study: The Coös Youth Study, with financial support from the Neil and Louise Tillotson Fund of the New Hampshire Charitable Foundation and additional funding from the National Science Foundation (Grant #1155797), has tracked youth in New Hampshire's North Country for *ten years*, starting in 2008 and ending in 2018. The primary purposes of the study were:

- Understanding Coös County's unique assets and challenges
- Investigating the impact of social and economic trends on youth and young adults, including why they stay or leave the area
- Informing efforts to build a vibrant future for the region

The results of the study have been shared with community leaders and organizations serving youth in Coös County to better understand the strengths and needs of Coös youth, and better respond to their concerns. They also have been published in Carsey research briefs and fact sheets and peer-reviewed journals.

About NH and North Country Listens: NH Listens is a civic engagement initiative of the Carsey School of Public Policy at the University of New Hampshire. North Country Listens is a local partner of NH Listens committed to creating and sustaining a fair process for public engagement and action to build and support strong communities in the North Country. We are committed to impartiality in our mission of creating and sustaining a fair process for public engagement. We partner with public officials, organizations, and leaders in all sectors to gather broad input that can lead to improved practice and policy.

Time	Tasks/Questions	Person/People
8:30-8:45am	Set Up	Eleanor, Sonja, Carrie and Michele
9:00am	Facilitator Round-Up <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make sure everyone has a chance to speak• Prompt for further discussion• Avoid engaging in <u>one-on-one</u> conversations clarifying research	Carrie, Cesar, Corinna, Curt, Erin, Eleanor, Karen, and Tom, Michele (Moderator) and Sonja (Support)

9:30-9:45am	Registration and Coffee <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Name tags with color dots for mixing up groups of people One-page overview of CYS Agenda Easel and post-its as folks enter the room <i>What brought you here today? Or what drew you to this event?</i>	Sonja and Carrie Michele and Carrie
9:45-10am	Welcome and Opening Remarks - Update on Coös Youth Study Who's in the room? <i>Stand if you're...Student/Youth, Educator, Parent, Municipal worker, non-profit, health, researcher, others?</i>	Michele and Eleanor
10-11am	Two Presentations and Questions 30 min each	Corinna and Karen
11-11:10am	NH Listens Overview, Discussion Format, Group Agreements NH Listens is a civic engagement initiative of the Carsey School of Public Policy at UNH. We are committed to impartiality in our mission of creating and sustaining a fair process for public engagement. We partner with public officials, organizations, and leaders in all sectors to gather broad input that can lead to improved practice and policy. Group Agreements <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Share air time so everyone gets a chance to be heard. If you disagree, consider asking a question rather than arguing to prove your point. It's okay to disagree, but don't personalize it. Focus on the idea not the person. Personal stories stay in the group unless we all agree we can share them. If you talk about people who are not here, don't use their names. It's okay to put issues like race and class on the table. Listen to each other. Transition to Small Group Discussion (2min)	Michele
11am-12pm	Small Group Discussion Introductions - Do a quick round of names and a hat you wear in the community Address each question, taking notes on the recording sheets – write legibly so we can transcribe and theme the notes for a summary. Focus on hearing from participants before it becomes a “back and forth” with the researcher. Try a couple round robins to get everyone engaged. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>What stands out to you about the presentations or what observations do you have about the topics?</i> <i>What are some connections to your work, self, or community?</i> <i>What insights or ideas were sparked by the key findings?</i> <i>What questions remain? What would you like to know more about?</i> 	Researchers/ Facilitators Carrie, Cesar, Corinna, Curt, Erin, Eleanor, Karen, and Tom

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Anything else? <p>Take time to pull out three key ideas (10 min) discussed or important points, record, then and choose a person to report out</p>	
12-12:15pm	Report out large group - 3 key ideas your group discussed	Michele
12:15-1pm	Break for Lunch and Networking	
1-2pm	Two Presentations and Questions (30 min each)	Erin and Cesar
2-2:45pm	<p>Small Group Discussion</p> <p>Address each question, taking notes on the recording sheets – please write legibly so we can transcribe and theme the notes for a summary.</p> <p>Focus on hearing from participants before it becomes a “back and forth” with the researcher. Try a couple round robins to get everyone engaged.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What stands out to you about the presentations or what observations do you have about the topics? What are some connections to your work, self, or community? What insights or ideas were sparked by the key findings? What questions remain? What would you like to know more about? Anything else? <p>Take time to pull out three key ideas (10 min) discussed or important points, record, then and choose a person to report out (not facilitator)</p>	<p>Researchers/ Facilitators Carrie, Cesar, Corinna, Curt, Erin, Eleanor, Karen, and Tom</p>
2:45-3pm	Report out large group - 3 key ideas your group discussed	Michele
3-3:40pm	<p>Large Group Discussion: Implications, Applications, Insights, Ideas, Questions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> How can we better serve North Country youth to support positive outcomes? What actions do you think can be taken so North Country youth feel positively supported? Who needs to know and connect about this research and findings? What resources might be useful for sharing these findings? What’s a concrete next step you can take after today’s conference? What’s on your “to do” list this week? 	<p>Michele Carrie records</p>
3:40-4pm	<p>Closing Remarks</p> <p>Evaluations for North Country Health Consortium</p> <p>Please place in the basket on the registration table as you leave</p> <p>Goodbyes and Informal Networking</p>	<p>Eleanor Sonja Attendance Certificates and Evaluations</p>

F. Conference Transcriptions

Welcome questions at sign-in

What drew you to this event?

- Concerns about finding best services for North County Youth—networking
- Gear Up NH. Working with Coös Cohorts.
- Carsey
- Time with my North County colleagues
- Apprenticeship as a pathway
- Understanding more about youth challenges in Coös
- How do my students find success up north
- Transition information
- I work with teens
- Know of the studies
- My optimism for the future of young adults in Coös
- I work with youth in the community
- Network; stay up to date on information related to youth in Coös
- Hopes to better support youth
- Learn about resources
- Learning research—based info on Coös County Youth
- Exploring what other counties do to help with community involvement and preparing transition into adulthood for youth
- Wanting to learn more about North Country Communities
- My boss
- Secondary transition services info
- Training opportunity on youth

What's one thing you hope we talk about today?

- Effective prevention ideas for Coös youth
- Resources for youth (x2)
- Addiction resources for youth
- How pathways can provide more opportunities for youth
- Things that foster youth attachment to their community
- Youth—higher ed
- Building strong community voices for our youth
- Opportunities for youth
- Better define problems facing youth communities
- Resources that have helped get youth involved with their community
- Transition support for after high school to post-secondary opportunities
- Cross-institution collaboration
- Find opportunities to bring together young voices, families, and leadership
- Way to inspire Coös youth
- The future!
- Strategies and solutions, not more research on the problems

Small and Large Group Discussions

Topics of Discussion

Value of Youth Voices and Power

- Sense of ownership for youth! If there is nothing to do here, I can create it!
- Need for adults to step up—champion, mentorship
 - Put back to youth voice—how to listen and implement ideas
- Emotional and Behavioral - Importance of youth voice- need to drive down to work on this
- Youth voice is important
- Being heard is something
- Importance of youth voice; empower youth.
- value youth.
- Why people stay.
- Value of mentors did not come out today.
- Youth Voice—how we can nurture it
- Confidence, leadership, and other such characteristics seem to be cultivated by programming that focuses on empowerment of youth...
- Focus groups—for young people
- If child feels good about school and wants to go then parents may follow in their child's belief
- Youth summits, youth leaders, student lead
- Youth leadership through adventure
- Give ownership
- youth partnerships—youth empowerment...
- understanding world of technology and how it gives youth power—need for adults to keep up
- Potential of peer support model
- Noticing the over looked child to the that mentor and give that child a voice
- Thinking about how to empower students (ex. In 8th or 9th grade) and inform them. So they advocate for themselves - Hard because engage student and disengage in some sense the parents
- Lack of youth voice-and not just complaints from the usual suspects, but from lots of kids
- Even when there are opportunity to give voice, too few kids show up
- Understanding youth's perspectives in community - Equipping youth to solve problems - Youth voice
- Younger generation seems as not stepping up

Youth after High School

- Surprising - 70% vs 50% rural youth have aspirations for college - Rural populations vulnerable
- College is not only definition of success trade work is respectful.
- The notion of debt very important
- Importance of easy job (confirming)
- Household Chaos-impact on transition to college

- Experiences as a parent, thinking about youth development
- Wants to “do more”—what are the applications? That was helpful.
- alt. school. Aging out youth staying in Coös
- 18-21 year old- transition out of residential
- Education built around 2 groups arguing; Most- mills; Minimum- higher education
- Culture of meaning of education: Parents- “I didn’t have to go to college”; Boys- “im not going into debt for education”
- Focus on Coös as a resident who came back- thinking about “brain drain”, loss of mills or work for people without higher education.
- Put strong community connection, hard to leave for college. Fortunately, WMCC becoming more accepted by community.
- Transition to college for rural kids.
- Issues with moving kids to home school and not getting/having what they need for graduation or GED etc. - Feels like parents are isolating kids

Challenges for Schools

- Household Chaos
 - In classroom, kids from chaotic environments need lots of stimulation
 - Best practices for non-chaotic classrooms
 - Sensory environment, routine, transition times
 - Students in unstable homes and trauma
 - Agreement that they all need to work together
- Household Chaos-someone who works with kids can tell who is from a chaotic environment, they expect it in other settings, not used to a calm, organized environment—important to note that parents suffer and don’t have control also—so how do you intervene? For the community to be intentional.
- Household Chaos and relationship trauma—falls in schools, and schools need help for the community—how need to come together, to assist kids, parents, and schools as a community
- TRRE the problems - She has two kids (in her classroom) with these problems. Signs are worse on Monday after a chaotic weekend
- IEPs and 504s don’t deal with the household chaos
- Emotional and Behavioral - IEP, educational surrogate parenting
- student wellness director access to mental supports school
- When parents don’t provide structure the school funds to have to fill in...
- Shift to homeschooling can also be barrier to community involvement with “chaotic” families - Lots of free staters move to this and there is a high variability in how much they do and do not do a “good” job of home schooling etc...
- Educational funding puts community at risk ex. Berlin, Groveland(?), Colebrook
- It’s difficult to reach many parents, parents not showing up to meetings or are not connected to school
- Communication with parent/home is difficult
- Worried that state funds are getting zeroed out- impact schools ability to act
 - What do we need to do to get increases in programs that are being zeroed out
 - Something has to happen- regionalization of schools?
 - What can we do that doesn’t cost money?

- Challenge of connecting with students and families who are non-responsive, especial parents. Difficult to provide opportunities and services when you can't connect with families.

Enrichment, Experiential Learning, Outdoors, and Recreation

- Bike-riding, trails in woods, outdoor camping, fat bikes (just this year)
- Outdoors and empowerment = good outcomes
- importance of fun outdoor activities
- Making experiences in Coös county (ex. Cultural programming – engineering)
- Outdoor activities are important for youth retention (and attraction)
- Excited that outdoor fun was a positive piece - Like to hike and get out
- Some people aren't hiking and camping or never have who have lived in Coös their whole lives ex./ urban in NYC never seen statue of liberty
- Boys and girls club—good but in decline
- Recreation opps. Vary by school—just skiing and stay in school in some cases
- Thinking about local interests—hunting
- Budget is such a big constraint, normally parents provide money and transportation. Laws about transportation
- Gender gap—want to build a team athletics but also provide other recreational opportunities
- Low grades prevent sports participation
- Transportation to after hour events can affect participation
- Safe passage vans- kids don't always want to take them
- Number of children participation in skiing declining in Berlin but skiing isn't always with a life
- Boys and video games
- In Gorham everyone goes skiing, snowshoeing, etc, Resources in Berlin are such that there are too many kids to support - Bussing can be an issue
- Shifts in what students find as entertainment or what they want to do with their free time.
- Parents hesitant to allow their children to go on field trips

Regional Migration and Community Attachment/Viability

- Definition of community is somewhat problematic
 - Need to know this to design solutions
- Community building not as much of a priority
- Demographic losses are causing many of the financial problems
- Out-migration
 - Thinking about personal experience when youth
 - Berlin: cheap rent—immigration for more opportunity
 - A rut on diversity
- Connection to community—world view. Relevant to suicide prevention, supports needed
- Community attachment - What is community?
- Emotional and Behavioral - Kids with cell phones can affect community attachment
- Emotional and Behavioral - Kids with attachment are increasingly wanting to stay particularly with an improved economy

- Emotional and Behavioral - Other forums are showing strong sense of community - 11% of Berlin students say they want to stay- 30% of Gorham students say this
- Emotional and Behavioral - Social media as the community an interesting point - It has changed how kids are growing up
- Failing to strongly plan and diversify pathways of tourism
- Support systems for tourists -- restaurants, shops, hotels→ go south to Conway
- People are coming into the communities ex. Berlin from outside Coös; more need as people come for or are sent for affordable housing. Small family groups arriving. The deeper extended family networks are not as visible for new families
- Coming to Berlin from: Methuen, Lowell, Manchester
- Community connectedness and disconnection of community information could be critical for kids from negatively chaotic families...
- Senses and attachment/detachment so...and makes that connection to get kids to college and help them see this will help the communities.
- Community attachment- the PYD- build on this. Activities in the community that create a connection
- Communities with the greatest need or demand have the least ability to pay

Risks for Youth and Stigma for Families and the Region

- Low expectations among males—what more can be done
- We are creating a generation of children more susceptible to substance abuse and depression (multigenerational)
- Opportunity gaps in Coös - Less access to club, centers, resource center
- Youth Risk Behavior Surveillance System (YRBSS)
- Few resources for 18-21-year olds
- Different kinds/intensity of residential treatment
- Taking kids away creates new chaos - Law breaking kids end [up] behavioral/emotional
- Sometimes kid's interventions come too late
- Increasing incidents of kids in foster homes
- Families sometimes judged if labeled as "bad" family
- Close-knit community is double-edged sword: if labeled or on outside, hard to integrate
- Everybody knows everybody's business (rubber-necking)
- Often a financial issue in these households
- Parents in community can [illegible] previous experience -often negative
- Messages from school counselors to kids- only way to be successful is to leave. Work load too much for counselors.
- Adults model negative thoughts about Coös and kids pickup on it.
- People are forced to talk about problems more because the issues are touching more people, more closely.

Wellness and Supporting Basic Needs in People's Homes

- Household chaos and home visiting agencies
- Reiterate issue of seasonal depression in the north
- Importance of early developmental time focus on B-3
- Fast forward- getting involved in the home - Learning more

- Parents recognizing trauma and risk factors - Protective factors → knowledge for parents
- Primary caring adults
- Maslow's hierarchy of needs—have to address before they can learn
- As a parent, the importance of modeling – this leads to how one works with employees- give leeway to encourage good role modeling.
- Need to also focus on family
- Parents in Coös reluctant to programs being offered.
- Good work on empowering parents in communities.
- “families that play together function well”
- working with parents—parent education, parental engagement
- Grandparents and great-grandparents and extended older generations raising kids and their kids' kids (grandchildren)
- Reliance on extended family networks and supports - Not necessarily SES related, Opioids seems to be an influence
- Infant, toddler, and children mental health
- Creates barriers and household chaos
- People making ends meet through subsidies
- People's insurance is high with high deductibles
- Substance misuse is a big issue
- Transportation can be barrier to others being able to fill in for “chaotic” parents.
- Household Chaos—home vs various other contexts
 - Many environments and navigate
 - Sense of normalcy
 - Routine important
- Controlled environment, learn to manage stress
- Adults also in chaotic world, don't have time to fix the problem in their own. Most other adults, teachers, professionals
- People serving and working with the families, youth, and children are seeing an increasing demand for mental/behavioral health services and have limited capacity
 - More providers needed up north

Research Study Specific

- Knew it has been happening but have the documentation/research to back it up. Can create solutions/action plan.
- CYS is a huge step to help public office, office of student
- Helps to connect the dots
- The info is accurate with what is happening in Coös.
- Use of research- important. Specific findings like grades linked with future aspirations and expectations... good concrete information.
- Research imp[lied] Tired of how bad Coös is. Let's work on solutions. Lots of this intuitive.
- AMC appreciates the studies to help them understand kids in the region and contributes to how they intervene
- Helps understand young adults in the region
- Household chaos

- “I was raised in a ‘high’ activity household and community and loved it” (there is good chaos and bad chaos) (though there’s measure of organization vs disorganization in the measure)
- Disappointing that there was no fix for household chaos - Maybe that it’s understudied
- Thinking more about chaos in households and what it means
- Liked focus on household chaos rather than socioeconomic status.
- Interesting to hear about characteristics of household chaos. Don’t hear about it at Pediatrician’s Office, puts up for patients
- Emotional and Behavioral Health
 - These findings ring very true
 - Emotional and Behavioral - Some skepticism about this study because it is all self-reporting
 - That there were no cohort differences
 - That the trends were so predictable
 - Self-report: sensitivity to differences in the ways that people report

Questions Raised

Staying in Coös

- Notions of aspirations and when you stay in Coös – What are the messages that kids are getting from adults? The message can be, “You gotta get out of here.” How to send a more positive message.
- Are people not wanting to come back to Coös because people are saying things or getting worse or are they really getting worse?
- How does parent perceptions or expectations influence youth’s perception of wanting to stay and feel successful?
- “low” in Erin’s study - how to engage. Interesting one of two groups to stay in the area. How to give them vision of the future?
- Who’s going to come and live in Berlin? Who’s looking out for the north county? Maybe communities don’t have the large pop., but they have the volume.
- Importance of being able to find a romantic partner in relation to staying in Coös.
- Is leaving Coös a bad thing?
- Why people stay/leave Coös. Seeing themselves as having a fulfilling life in Coös. Is out immigration a negative thing?

Making Connections, Finding Funding, and Mobilizing Together

- How do these findings impact our practices- how do we make things happen on the to do lists?
- Who should do this work? We should all do this work!
- How do we bring all the different parties/agencies involved in dealing with household chaos together so that there is a coherent response to needs?
- Does it take an event like this today to bring all these voices and perspectives together? Or does/can it happen on a more regular and ongoing basis?
- How do we build stronger and networked coalition?
 - Connecting providers (public and private)

- Connecting therapists
- Connecting schools and health resources
- How do we better build- in sustainable structures in grants?
- When/where will state commit to sustainability?
- How do we collaborate so parents and providers (educators-services/support) move forward together?
- How do you reach isolated families?
- How do you reach parents when parent engagement may be lacking?
- How do we get parents who suffer from trauma involved when school or services may be a source of stigma or fear?
- How do we collaborate more efficiently, in a sustained way to execute some kind of change (we recognize there is an issue, the data help clarify the issue, but
- How do we connect people to resources in a rural area?
- How do we mobilize people as resources who might not recognize they are resources?
- How do we access funding that makes a difference?
- Community building – asset based what is going well? Build on that.

Youth Voices, Engagement, Future-planning

- How to address the “voice” problem?
- How to empower youth voice?
- How to stop decline in youth voice as kids age?
- Household Chaos-impact on transition to college
 - Experiences as a parent, thinking about youth development
 - Wants to “do more”—what are the applications? That was helpful
- Extracurriculars give kids skills outside of school and sense of competency—how can we reduce barriers like transportation?

Connections with Schools

- What about kids who are home schooled? But they aren’t getting an adequate education? Ex. No evidence of meeting expectations for meet grades requirements
- what founding models can we model in communities to help?
- How do we get information to schools, so parents/caretakers know what supports are available medically and mental health?
- Household Chaos-someone who works with kids can tell who is from a chaotic environment, they expect it in other settings, not used to a calm, organized environment—important to note that parents suffer and don’t have control also—so how do you intervene? For the community to be intentional.
- What about kids from stable households who encounter chaotic environments at schools?
- Are there programs to bring social work and mental health services in school?
 - Personnel development and increase in schools and up north training
 - Stipends to support grades without service obligation for NH

Awareness about Health, Wellness and Safety

- Wondering “is anyone okay in Berlin?”
- When do you make the reports of neglect?

- Are people aware? (ex. Facility opened up in Manchester for adolescent recovery, Nashua, Rochester) What about north county? People are dying.
- Are people aware? → Hub and Spoke model → connection to 4-1-1 and safe situations
 - Regional hubs for mental health and drug and substance misuse all ages
 - Grant is time limited → so will it be implemented in time
 - How is the information being shared
- How to help adolescents fulfill their expectations to contribute/help?
- Realistically, can we change parental behaviors? How do we help the kids? Can't go back and undo what happened to the parents growing up - Breaking the cycle
- What are the differences between kids with services from DCYF and these without these services?

Questions about Current and/or Further Research

- What is the accessibility to outdoor recreation opportunities for kids from here—what are the barriers?
- Why people stay?
- Have people looked at whether youth are acting as caretakers? Dealing with drug and alcohol misuse/abuse?
- How is the HCC related to transition to college?
- What advantages do smaller schools have?
- Is there a socio-economic connection to recreating? How does it connect to family level of chaos? Or exposure to the outdoors when young?
- Question: has any research been done regarding brain development and poverty? Brain development and poverty?
- Household chaos: implications for what's going on in the classroom?
- Is "household chaos" a "new" problem for NH?
- When children are raised by grandparents is it often permanent or temporary?
- Is there a correlation between these problems (highlighted in AM session) and what supports exist northern vs southern NH?
- Is "chaos" always something negative? Is there some sense in which high levels of family negativity one positive but could be constructed as "chaos"?
- What is the difference between parent's and children's perception of household chaos? How is it recognized or how do parents recognize it?
- Reflection that the models to "fix" poverty are from a middle-class perspective and assumption - What role do relationships play? What role do wages above minimum mean?
- Where's the disconnect? Why are aspirations higher than expectations?
- Disaggregate data by school and/a town?
- How to build on predictors of wanting to stay in Coös?
- How are findings distributed? - We need to "shake things up" – state government needs to get behind change.
- How can this study help with grants or what people see on the ground as providers teacher?
- Where does this research take us? What resources are available to parents, schools, communities?

- How does the modern environment, social media, etc. trickle down to chaotic environment at school?

Solutions and Actions Suggested

Youth Engagement, Mentorship, Empowerment, and Voice

- Student voice: encourage in elementary, middle, high school and figuring out what voice looks like at each level.
- Talking about students' voices – we need to include them more in these conversations
- Concerns about connecting with youth and others who feel attached to the community and talk about shared values
- Student Voice and Opportunity - Be careful not just to focus on kids who are academically excelling when thinking about youth voice. People can't participate in sports because they don't have the grades.
- Engage students who are quiet or struggling – do some concerted leadership and skill building
- Programs for boys stands out
- What about Fearlessly girls
- Maybe need to do focus groups in schools
- Gorham-forum: do this during school day- youth at beginning planning is important
- Need to strengthen youth community centers - Plymouth (Pemi-Baker youth center is a good example [for strengthening youth community])
- Start opportunities for boys early that get them more comfortable with sections like social services later on
- Shatter stereotypes so they're open to all sorts of experiences
- Older kid mentoring - Need overachieving structure to facilitate
- Peer mentor model with freshmen
 - Seniors
 - Juniors
 - Big sister/brother?
 - Lunch program "no one sits alone"
- Peer support-based approaches: e.g. Helper Therapy Principle
- Need campaigns to get the kids to understand that their voice does matter
- Mentorship programs
 - Need to be careful in accessing and selecting good mentors
 - Pair juniors and seniors in high school with freshmen
- Peer programs pairing high schools and elementary schools
 - Don't necessarily target kids in chaos/trauma; make it available to all students so kids in trauma are not stigmatized
- All adults need to be mentors (group needs)
- Being a "safe haven" as a teacher, mentor, or recreational leader
 - Build strong relationships with adults
- Importance of mentorship
- Variety of opportunities, not just college—internships, apprenticeships in HS

- Academics and CTE
- These lead us back to connection to community
- Opportunities for kids to present outside
- Find more opportunities for youth to engage in leadership
 - Clubs, etc. (that are not academic)
- Physical activity—ideas that it's not just in the gym
- How to engage people from chaotic environments - Recreation (example of martial arts classes), Working back from that feeling of chaos
- Experiential learning like AMC programs to reduce stress
- Lack of youth voice
- Communities
 - Kids feeling attached to something
 - Especially important in Coös
 - Retaining youth
 - Schools making connections to community
 - Engagement, after school programs
 - Internships
- CTE/apprenticeships
- Importance of transitional programs (i.e. helping kids transition in terms of transitioning to jobs, well-being, etc.)
- Rethinking services in high schools- when is the right time to talk about future options? Create community connections between WMCC and community and at younger ages.

Focus on Family (Parent Supports and Outreach/Informational Materials)

- Parental involvement, engagement
- Also need to build foster parent/family system
 - There's a huge lack of foster homes in Coös
 - Don't want grandparents or institutionalizing to be the only options
- Work with youth and families to get correct basic information to get an ID- like birth certificate.
- Parental engagement
- Family Chaos - Need help for educating young parents - Incorporate this
- Family resource centers/family support—parent strengthening
 - Education (on household chaos), strengthening families can play strong leadership role, also UNH Cooperative Extension
 - Give them another perspective than what they're used to
- Building self-esteem and empowerment through science and engineering—gives children and parents “a light at the end of the tunnel”
- Building awareness of problems and language to talk about problems (kids and parents); How to talk about chaos.
- There is a lot of work on family engagement
- Enhancing parent education and connectivity – We are good at it here, so many of us are doing that work out here
- Can't just address kids issues, need to also address household issues

Health and Wellness (Prevention, Intervention, Ongoing Supports)

- Suicide prevention - Especially for kids who might struggle with academics, sports, etc.
- Insurance is barrier to access to help
- Identifying students with ACEs and then focus on finding an adult to connect them- protective factor in the school when parents can't
- Health conservation - Also taxed by the influx of needs
- Resources for reducing stigma- especially recovery - "your people vs. our people"
- Southern part of the state has "tracking" where someone checks on kids every day this helps with structure and routine
- Need a follow up when kids that have been removed are reunited to the community after a residential treatment facility.
- Community college is paying more attention to substance abuse - North country health consortium has a counselor on site at community college
- Lack of substance abuse facilities in area for adolescent (or adults)
 - This may have something to do with different numbers/percentages between northern and southern parts of state
- Intensive mental health services- these personnel may be driving 6 hours a day to get to people who need those services. (1/2 day is lost to travel alone)
- Adult mentorship
- The power of environment—they have control over it as teachers/professionals
 - Trauma-sensitive practice

Building Community, Systems, Capacity (Funding, Research, Collaboration/Coalitions, Networking)

- What coalition building has/or is happening in Coös? Dept. student wellness has some resources to help in these areas. National guard counter drug use task force. Dept. of student wellness has opportunities to help support
- Commitment of the state to support efforts of communities to address chaos and needs
- Co-Existing Head Start and nursery home
- Help low community attachment folks find way to embrace Coös.
- Collaboration and coordination across state and local funding
- Definition of community is somewhat problematic
 - Need to know this to design solutions
- More champions of programs in community
- Strong need for a "center" to build a sense of community
- Need more events like Berlin homecoming parade
- Would be great to see [CYS] done again now
- Co-mingle fed and state-local funds – barrier: focus on evidence-based "red tape"
- It would be great to create a networking time (ex. This event); Project aware is working and bringing folks together
- Issues with finding housing - Need coalition- what about building up workforce housing coalition
- We are building committees in schools (ex. Berlin) but we can do more
 - Capacity of school staff need help providing resources for students who need support - In mental and behavioral health, special education requirement

- Pay to access outdoor activities (ex. ATV)
- Collaboration and collective impact model in hospitals downstate, but would be good for it to come north
- Targeted outreach to bring professionals to north county and liaisons into school esp. north county schools.
- Lots of initiatives in the community but not sustained (often due to grant funding)
- Grants
 - School systems, address changes
 - Advocate for what's needed: funding, charge, [illegible]
 - Family resource center
- Workforce development, build capacity for supports
- We need to broaden our perception of who and what can be resources

Work with Schools

- At school, trauma-sensitive practice
 - Communication—wraparound services has stopped in some places in the county—less connection across the community and organization
- Power School—online portal for parents with Webinars, Access on their own time
- School role—how to take the pressure off of families to provide outdoor recreation
- School garden programs—outdoor activities, science, community—not just with school staff - Hard to get staff to do extra things
- Multi-Tiered Systems of Support
 - Consistent supports across the schools
 - Environments more
 - Tertiary supports
 - Evidence based programs
 - Bring together different supports (family, schools, etc) to come up with comprehensive plan
 - Make info available for parents in the community
 - Schools transition to “trauma” based concerns
 - Same for parents
- Strengths of Coös is the small schools (makes some things hard) but it creates spaces where everyone can be involved (ex. you are one in 20 in a class)

Research Specific

- See a correlation of parent and student expectations
- Need more data- don't know if residential systems work long term
- Comparison of Coös depression with other specific regions rather than just the overall US...
- Would like to see how this community compares to others
- Lots of interventions have occurred in Coös – what have been the effects on this data?
- Role of technology in HHC and community attachment.
- Having research on the impact of what happens in the household (HHC). Can there be a collective approach to addressing it- school, dtr, families. Occurs across SES levels.

Clarifying Questions for Researchers after Each Session

Household Chaos

- Is there a correlation between household chaos and economic status?
- Please explain the phrase “let them go”
- Was household chaos self-described? Self-indicated? What I think is chaotic may not be for a child...
- How is the household chaos related to transition to college?
- What is the difference between parent’s and children’s perception of household chaos? How is it recognized or how do parents recognize it? What implications does household chaos have for classrooms?
- How does the modern environment, social media, technology use etc. trickle down to chaotic school or home environments? How does it affect community attachment?
- *Note:* some slides needed larger font, missed one or two other questions in large group

Emotional and Behavioral Health

- A lot of documentation tells us to remove a child with a substance use disorder from their community and kids tend to connect in the community where they find their sobriety –
- Did you give them a definition for community? What would an emerging adult give us as a definition of community...
- Did I hear you that “being a parent” is a protective factor then they are a lower risk group? How old are they as parents?
- My question goes back to the definition of community, with the national trends re depression, have you explored the relationship of social media and the idea that their community is less in person and low on online.
- What of the things I noticed in the map was a lot more depression up north, did you consider seasonal impacts?
- Were southern NH areas considered rural, suburban or both? They were considered urban/metro. Were there comparisons to other norther states and county’s similar to Coös?
- Wondering if there has been documentation or studies correlating cooccurring disorders and the rate of suicide?
- *Note:* Need to explain x and y axis of graphs, lots of text way too small to see, need to explain what “controlling for...” means

Future Aspirations

- Question about Berlin
- Are there stories about new ways to provide incentives to join certain kinds of professions?
- I wonder if at any point during this data collection if the military played a role. Young men often assume that will be their landing point. The military is having the same problem as industry -- who meets the basic qualifications to enter basic training? Kids who are saying, for example, “I don’t have to worry about that, I am going into the army.”
- I know the study started before many of the workforce internship programs started but would love to know what patterns show up. But transportation is an issue. See more data about who are part of the workforce development programs and how they have worked. Many times, people who have cars are the ones able to participate. So, the question becomes, “Who has access?” to these opportunities.
- How much might this be affected by how high schoolers have much more information on the incredible debt that can be incurred in college – how does that impact rural youth going to college or having another career without owing all of that debt.

- What are the benefits of different types of career paths? How can we find out more about what youth think about finding other paths as their generation knows about the huge amount of debt associated with college now?
- One of your graphs showed parents aspirations, grades...Is there any sort of data that shows, “what came first?” What is the cause and effect of what perceptions of the future are affected by grades etc -- struggling and so have low expectations or lack of future investment leads to poor grades...
- Do you have data ready to share about where kids are going after high school? The cohorts are 4 and 8 years past high school. The cohorts have made diverse choices, most of the data is female, many males have dropped out of the study.
- Could incentives be different to stay? There were a few groups who talked about how they recruit to service industry (ex. mental health). In the CYS research, do you have a sense of that or people who have talked about that? Are boys being seen in those industries when recruiting people early. Student loan incentives or payments. A lot of jobs don’t offer a stable and secure income or career (ex. health insurance).

Outcomes and Migration Plans

- Cohort 1 and Cohort 2 where they both in 12th grade at the point of data collection?
- (short on time so no questions)
- Note: some slides, font too small

Other Questions Facilitators Noted:

- What is the accessibility to outdoor recreation opportunities for kids from here? What are the barriers?
- Is there a socio-economic connection to recreating? How does it connect to family level of chaos? Or exposure to the outdoors when young?
- When children are raised by grandparents is it often permanent or temporary?
- Have people looked at whether youth are acting as caretakers? Dealing with substance misuse/abuse?
- How do residential systems work in the long-term?
- Can comparisons of Coos depression be made with other specific regions aside from the US overall?
- Has any research been done regarding brain development and poverty?
- Where’s the disconnect? Why are aspirations higher than expectations?
- What advantages do smaller schools have?
- Lots of interventions have occurred in Coös. What have been the effects on this data?

G. Evaluation Summary



NORTH COUNTRY HEALTH CONSORTIUM

Northern New Hampshire Area Health Education Center

EVALUATION SUMMARY

Educational Activity Title:

Supporting Coös Youth on the Path to Adulthood:
A Conference for North Country Professionals and Youth Advocates

Activity Number: 407

Contact Hours Awarded: 3.5

Date: October 26, 2018

Location: Mountain View Grand Resort and Spa, Whitefield, NH

Time: 9:30 am to 4:00 pm

Presenters: Multiple – see below

Evaluation Respondents: 17 (Total attendance – 46)

1. To what extent do you agree with each of the following statements? (circle one number for each statement)

	1 - Not at all	2 - Slightly	3 - Moderately	4 - Very	5 - Extremely
The speakers' presentation of the training material was effective:					
Cesar Rebellon, PhD				7	9
Corrina Jenkins Tucker, PhD				9	7
The objectives of this session were achieved:					
a. Identify the ways in which youth connection to Coös was resilient in the face of economic challenges in order to understand about how Coös might retain connection to youth who leave but sometimes return.			1	9	7
b. Apply information from the Coös Youth Study to better understand the impact of household chaos' on adolescents' future plans, family experiences, and well-being.				9	8
The teaching strategies and resources were effective.			2	7	7
The time frame for completing the activity was appropriate.			1	6	9

The objectives were relevant to the activity goals/purposes.			1	6	9
The information presented in this training is important.			1	4	12
My knowledge has increased on the topic(s) presented.			3	8	6

	1 - Not at all	2 - Slightly	3 - Moderately	4 - Very	5 - Extremely
The speakers' presentation of the training material was effective:					
Karen T. Van Gundy, PhD		1	1	8	7
Erin Hiley Sharp, PhD				8	9
The objectives of this session were achieved:					
a. Recognize early predictors of social stressors and their impact on overall health for adults, particularly related to depression and substance misuse in Coös County.			3	6	7
b. Identify opportunities to apply the findings from the Coös Youth Study to inform one's work with vulnerable populations.			1	11	4
c. Describe how high school participants in the Coös Youth Study report about their future aspirations related to post-secondary education and work.				7	9
d. Recognize how factors such as student gender, parents' socioeconomic status, and the youths' high school experiences shape how Coös youth think and feel about their futures.				9	6
e. Describe how the longitudinal study participants' - former Coös youth- aspirations and expectations about the future while in high school link to their actual education and work status in early adulthood.			1	10	5
f. Use findings from the Coös Youth Study in considering needs and opportunities for youth in the County.			2	9	5

The teaching strategies and resources were effective.			1	7	7
The time frame for completing the activity was appropriate.			2	8	7
The objectives were relevant to the activity goals/purposes.			1	8	7
The information presented in this training is important.			1	6	9
My knowledge has increased on the topic(s) presented.			5	5	7

2. Do you agree with the following: The content was presented without bias toward any commercial product or drug (circle one):

Agree	15
Disagree	1
Skipped	1

3. What part of the trainings could have been better? Please explain.

- Good balance - need energizer in afternoon! (i.e. human knot)
- Excellent day loved the short presentations with time to discuss
- Comparing data from other regions with similar demographics
- More sharing out in small groups
- Great data - more solutions, more time for outcomes
- Movement - but afternoon much better
- Dr. Van Gundy needs to be less academic all others were top notch and helped us apply our work. Applications would be helpful!
- None- it was a good training
- Include youth in conversations

3. List up to two changes you plan to make as a result of these sessions.

- Focus on family units increasing
- Residential training for further in-house competencies around understanding the importance of structure
- Advocate for more partnerships to include youth voice
- Increasing kids/students voice
- Explore reinstating cross agency round table discussion of services
- Focus more on household chaos
- Find ways to improve attachment to community
- Promoting youth voice
- Advocating for youth services
- Coming up with a way to get children more involved in the community
- Improving youth voice being heard
- Open communication with mental health services, Family Resource Center, etc, to further communication, collaboration and connection
- Look at parental education more closely

- Implement strategies addressing preventing chaotic households
- More opportunities for youth
- Youth voices
- More collaboration in my community
- Look for grants that could create the resources for youth and parents
- involve youth more
- Spread information about importance of community
- Talk about chaos and ways to foster predictability with clients

5. Will these training sessions apply toward your state certification requirements?

Yes	8
No	7
Skipped	2

6. Please list additional topics you would like to have offered at future training sessions.

- Technology and its effect on the modern household
- More SA - resources, findings and research on dual diagnosis

7. Please indicate the location that best describes your current place of work.

School	5
Community-based organization	4
State Health Department	2
Other (please specify)	6
Answered	17
Skipped	0

8. Please indicate the occupational classification/discipline that best describes your position.*

Community Health Worker	1
EMS	1
Health Administrator	1
Health Promotion/Education	1
HIS/Biostatistician	1
Mental Health and Substance Abuse	4
Social Worker	5
Other (please specify)	
School Administrator	
Education Consultant	
CASA of NH	3
Answered	15
Skipped	2

9. Activity Attendance:

Category:	# Attended:
Education	2
Health Educator	1
CPS	3

LADC	0
Social Worker	3
LMHC	2
Other	35
Total:	46

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