



NKHS
Northeast Kingdom Human Services

We're
All About
**Being
Human!**

2023 ANNUAL REPORT



A Message from the Board Chair



We're all about being human.

The past fiscal year has been a year of growth and transformation for Northeast Kingdom Human Services. Our Mental Health Program was officially reinstated to full designation, our strategic plan went from the drawing board to implementation, and several new initiatives—CCBHC, The Front Porch, and 988—challenged us to move toward a future of new service delivery models. Previous changes in our information systems provided faster access to the data needed to allow us to benchmark our performance, identify service gaps, and render more informed decisions. Our strategic goals of recruitment and retention, collaborating with partners, and becoming a learning organization have become the framework for structuring our activity.

All of this is exciting but not without difficulties as we face continuing workforce shortages and budgets reliant on state funding. We survive and thrive in fulfilling our mission thanks to the dedicated and creative efforts of our frontline staff who serve our clients and the supervisors, administration, and facility staff who support their work.

NKHS is a complex human services organization with multiple programs that work together and with partner agencies to address community needs. This Annual Report will capture some of the work that has been done and plans for the future, looking at both services provided and the humans associated with them. It provides a snapshot of the greater story of NKHS and its role in the community.

As you read this document, please notice the new logo and colors of the report. It is part of an acknowledgment of the change and transformation that is happening. The Board welcomes this transformation and expresses gratitude to all those who supported NKHS through the process: employees, administration, partners, community members, and clients.

We are all part of the process, and “we’re all about being human”.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Denise A. Niemira, M.S." The signature is written in a cursive style.

Denise Niemira, Board Chair



A Message from the Executive Director



I have encountered the proverb below several times over the last few months, and it seems apt to describe what we are creating at NKHS. We've dedicated so much of the previous year to creating a supportive, understanding, person-centered culture oriented towards accomplishing things together. I believe in collaborative, person-centered work because if we create an organization with supportive systems oriented towards seeing the best in people, recognizing strengths, and providing thoughtful treatment, we can model what it truly means to be human. I am so

proud of NKHS's accomplishments and realize that the highlights in the following report took a lot of work. NKHS staff support our community 24/7, show up to do some of the most challenging (and most rewarding) work and provide hope to folks who may not have any of their own.

We must acknowledge the journey that led to the accomplishments to celebrate what follows. Hours of training, overnights of supporting crises, months of committed collaborations with partners, and years of building solid relationships are part of what the employees of NKHS strive to accomplish. Before you turn the page, I ask that you pause and reflect on the 500 NKHS employees who show up every day ready to meet what comes with compassion, empathy, and a commitment to be with someone in need. The day could bring developing job supports, providing personal care in a residential setting, or being present with someone actively considering ending their own life. Let us not forget that those who come to NKHS are our neighbors, friends, family, and people whom we owe the dignity of meeting where they are as they seek supports. Each number on the following pages represents individuals with goals, hopes, and dreams, just as we have our own. This report reminds me that our work will continuously improve when we work collaboratively – NKHS staff and the community we serve. As we celebrate last year's accomplishments, we honor the individual humans of the Northeast Kingdom and Vermont and remember that growth is a collective effort. To me, this journey will always be worthwhile, and given the dedication of our team, I do not doubt that we will go far together.

With deep gratitude and appreciation,

Kelsey Stavseth, Executive Director

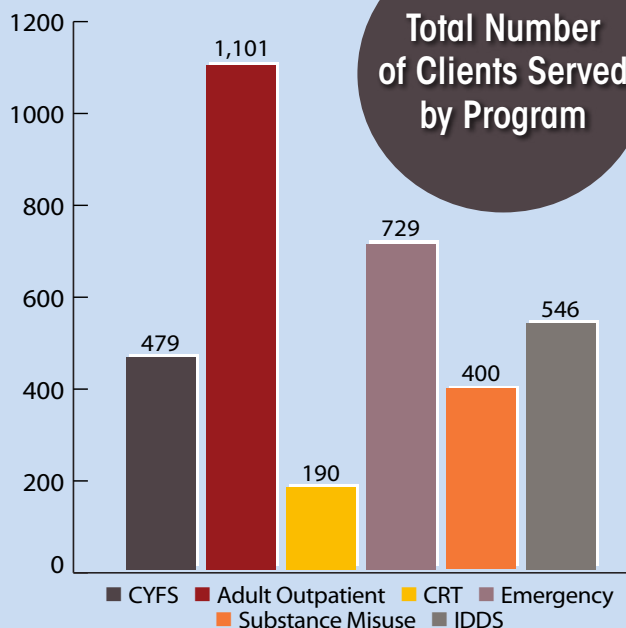
*If you want to go fast,
go alone.
If you want to go far,
go together*

(African Proverb)



Who We Serve

NKHS provided **288,578** direct services to **2,942** clients from July 1, 2022–June 30, 2023.



	SERVICES	HOURS
Child, Youth & Family Services	33,216	48,975
Adult Outpatient	11,006	15,107
CRT Treatment	26,534	22,186
Emergency Services	5,835	3,097
IDDS	209,173	843,734
Substance Misuse	2,814	2,800

NORTHEAST KINGDOM HUMAN SERVICES is a private nonprofit agency that provides case management, community and home supports, residential care, psychiatry, medication management, individual therapy, group therapy, vocational supports, school-based counseling, emergency care, and respite services for close to 3,000 clients annually who may be challenged by conditions affecting the mind, body, and spirit. In addition, we offer outreach, training, and consultation services to communities, schools, and businesses in our service area.

NKHS Client Feedback

"Excellent service & caring & committed staff. Thank you all."

"Friendly, respectful and the therapist listened to what I have to say. The best place I've been to."

"Keep up the amazing work. I wouldn't be here without your help." (Adult Outpatient Clients)

"It has been very helpful knowing I have support for things my child needs and with help navigating the school system for my child's advocacy and IEP."

"My life as well as my son's life has improved." (CYFS Clients)

"I don't know what I would do without the agency."

"They've looked at the whole picture and made his life much better." (IDDS Clients)

"Mental health has done a lot for me." (CRT Client)

"Everyone was so caring and respectful." (Emergency Services Client)

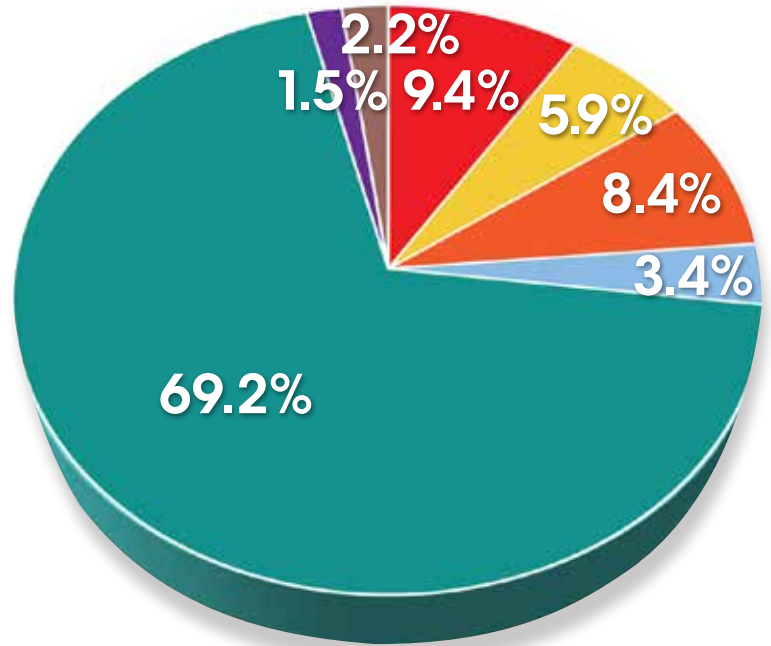
Financial Data 2023

We appreciate our staff's commitment to the work at NKHS. Their efforts enabled another solid financial year supporting our infrastructure, organization, and community needs.

Expenses by Program*

- Developmental services
- Substance abuse, prevention & treatment
- Administration
- Children services
- Adult outpatient services
- Community rehabilitation & treatment
- Emergency services

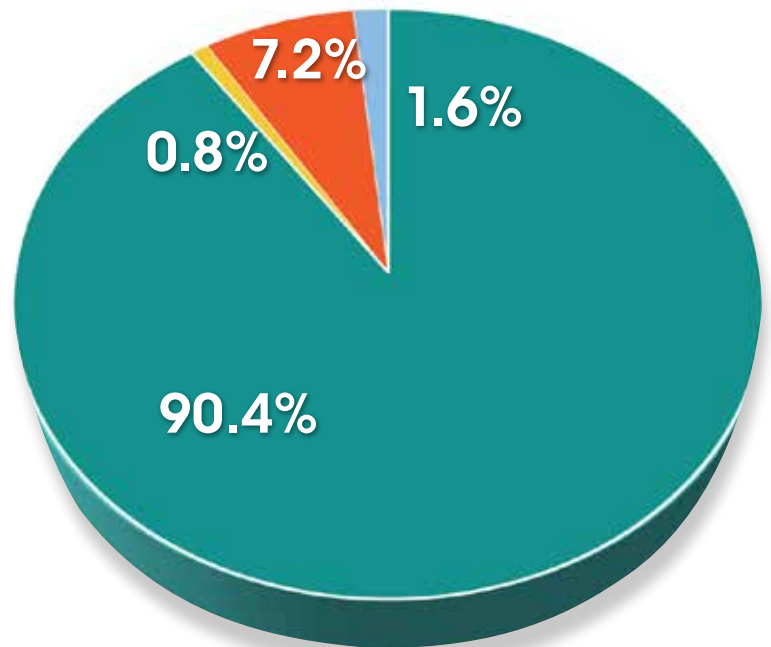
TOTAL EXPENSES \$51,039,659



Revenue by Source*

- Medicaid
- Other patient fees
- Grants & contracts
- Local & other

TOTAL REVENUES \$52,662,416



*Unaudited financials for fiscal year ending June 30, 2023



Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic

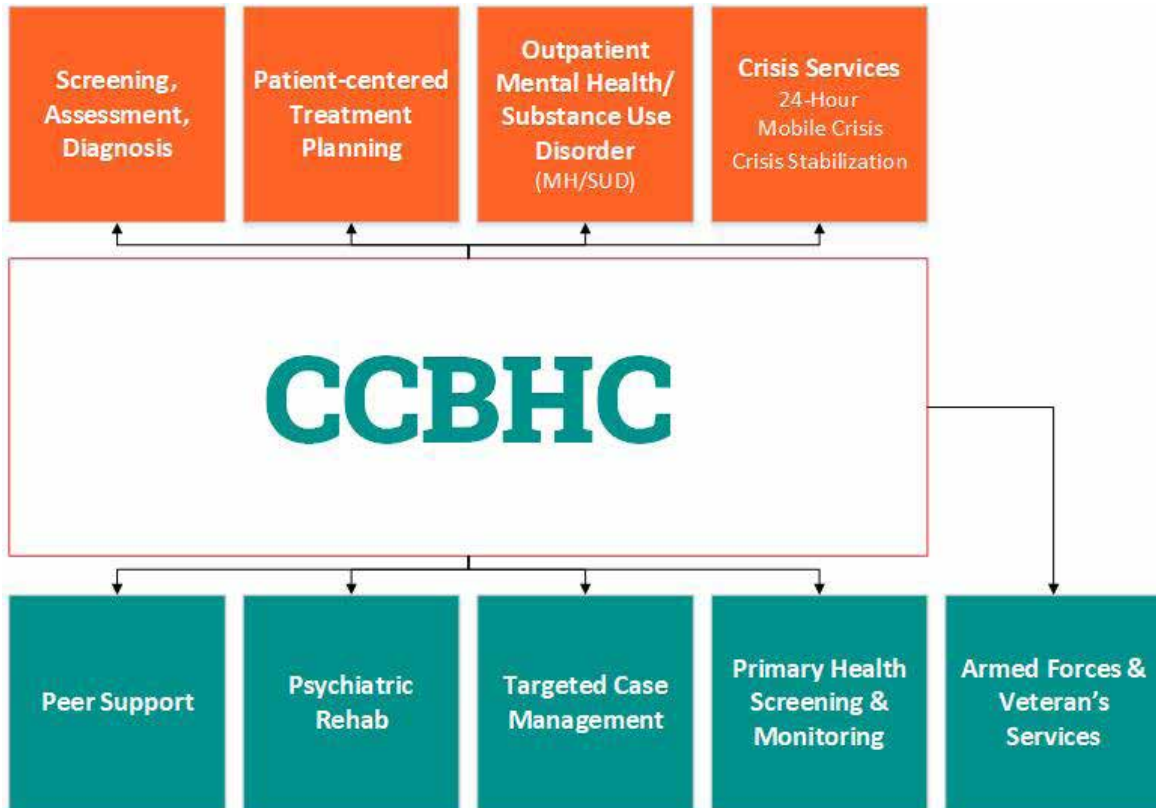
NKHS is one of four designated agencies in the State to receive the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's (SAMHSA) Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC) Planning, Development, and Implementation (PDI) grant. The funds, distributed annually for four years, will prepare NKHS to become a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic (CCBHC).

A CCBHC is a specially-designated clinic that provides a comprehensive range of mental health and substance use services. CCBHCs serve anyone who walks through the door, regardless of their diagnosis and insurance status.

CCBHCs have dramatically increased access to mental health and substance use disorder treatment, expanded states' capacity to address the overdose crisis, and established innovative partnerships with law enforcement, schools, and hospitals to improve care, reduce recidivism, and prevent hospital readmissions.

"It is incredibly exciting to have received this grant. This award will help enhance our services, with the ultimate purpose of being a better, more integrated, and person-centered organization for those who live in the NEK. It also acknowledges the exceptionally hard work the staff at NKHS has put into serving the community. We look forward to growing and learning through this grant, allowing us to provide a more comprehensive range of services."

- Kelsey Stavseth, NKHS Executive Director



NKHS Wellness Committee

The Wellness Committee is an active and important part of the NKHS culture. Their events, contests, and wellness support bring great fun to the workday!

SOME OF THE EVENTS HOSTED FOR FY '22-23

- Quarterly Grab-n-Go morning snacks - focusing on healthy choices
- Annual Physical incentive where employees who participated in a yearly physical received a cash reward for attending to their health.
- Pick your own Apples giveaway event for Burrft's Apples.
- Fall Photo Contest, where employees submitted pictures that their colleagues voted on. Three top winners won a cash prize, their winning photo framed, and added to our NKHS collection in the Derby & St. Johnsbury office.
- Annual Wellness Champion Award. Employees submitted nominations for review by the Wellness Committee. Wellness recipient received award and gift certificate at agency's Banquet.
- Plant Giveaway Event distributed 200 free houseplants, promoting healthy indoor air quality.
- Wellness committee members also help with planning the Employee Appreciation and Picnic events.



NKHS launches a new look!

As our tagline states, we know part of Being Human is recognizing when it's time for a change! Our visual rebranding process started in early 2023 with a deep dive into our values, the meaning of our current logo and tagline, and how we wanted to represent them to our community visually. The previous logo represents the "dawning of a new day," that meaning, along with our tag line, "We're All About Being Human," resonated with many. We felt it was important to stay true to that message while updating our look, and a new logo

emerged as a clear winner. Our new logo tells the story of a thriving collection of human beings shining bright. The warm color palette captures the diversity among individuals while showing commonality within the community.

We're thrilled to share our new look and invite you to visit our new website for information on all our programs, press releases, blogs, an event calendar, and more! We hope you find this site easy to navigate and helpful, and we welcome feedback on how we use this space to serve our community best. www.nkhs.org



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Intellectual and Developmental Disability Services

The Intellectual and Developmental Disability Services (IDDS) program supports individuals to lead whole and self-directed lives. Individuals are assisted with daily living activities and personal and health care tasks while their independence, choice, and right to make decisions are supported. Individuals are safely integrated into their community and encouraged to participate in meaningful activities and relationships of their choice. IDDS serves children and adults from birth to the end of life who are diagnosed with intellectual disabilities or autism.

Services include:

- Residential Care Homes/Therapeutic Community Residences
- Shared Living Home Providers
- Community and Employment Support
- Crisis Intervention
- Respite Care
- Therapeutic Services



Wanda Hazen, Cedar Lane Home staff member, contributes to the community refrigerator in St. Johnsbury.

COMMUNITY CONNECTIONS THROUGH ACTS OF GIVING

To further support our local neighborhoods, communities, and community partners, the Residential Services staff baked goodies, hosted themed events, volunteered, donated items, and found creative and engaging ways to connect to their communities.

- The Cedar Lane home made a homemade baked goods platter for the Danville Health Center to celebrate their re-opening and welcome them back to their renovated office and also for their National Nurse's Week Celebration. The Cedar Lane home donated homemade baked goods to the Community Refrigerator in St. Johnsbury and the Danville School for their Teacher/Staff Appreciation event.
- A staff member and resident of the Parkway House volunteers each week at the St. Johnsbury House during lunch.
- The Parkway House also has donated food to NEKCA, gift cards to local families, hats and gloves to the Santa Fund, and has made gifts for resident's families.
- The staff and residents of the South Bay home hold a weekly baking day and then deliver their homemade goodies to organizations in their community.
- Cedar Lane hosted an Easter Egg Hunt for the neighborhood and staff's children. The event also included cupcakes and was a fantastic way for the home's residents, staff, families, and neighbors to socialize and celebrate the holiday.
- The IDDS Residential team hosted a community bake/craft sale event to support Alzheimer's Awareness. The South Bay and Roy Mountain homes spearheaded the event in partnership with the Church of Faith Lighthouse-Assembly of God, who offered their property to host the event and donated to the cause. Staff and residents throughout the Residential Services program contributed baked goods, craft items, monetary donations, and their time to help support the event, including one resident who entertained attendees with a spirited music performance. The team raised \$674.84 for the Walk to End Alzheimer's event in September.

Andrew Grittner, a Success Story

At 27, Andrew has accomplished more than many his age, and his humility surrounding these accomplishments adds to his good-natured personality.

In 2012, Andrew started receiving services through our Bridge program as he needed transportation and employment support from Intellectual and Developmental Disabilities Services (IDDS) at NKHS. He was excited about working, and Employment Services helped him secure a job at Walmart in Derby in 2018 with full support on the job. The support staff worked with him on his independence, self-confidence, and self-advocacy, as Andrew was very quiet and shy. Due to Andrew's successes in learning how to be more self-assured with his requests and his gain in self-confidence, he can now work independently, and he recently accomplished a goal of becoming a cashier! Overall, Andrew's been able to reduce the services he receives from NKHS, and his supports are so proud of how far he's come. We still get to see him, just less frequently.

For Andrew, connection and being active are huge drivers, leading him to participate in College Steps (a nonprofit that provides customized college support for students with learning and social challenges) and compete with the Special Olympics. Through College Steps, Andrew took college classes in Exercise Science, Sport Management, and job shadowed the athletic director at Northern Vermont University - Lyndon. As a past Track and Field high school athlete, Andrew started competing in the Special Olympics in 2012 when he began with NKHS. This past September, he earned two silver medals, one in Relay and the other in the 800-meter event.

Andrew's work ethic has brought him more than silver metals. He's the proud owner of a bright red pickup truck he parks at his house, a home he purchased independently!

Andrew doesn't shy away from adventure, and when his dad invites him on trips, there is no hesitation. This past summer, he and his dad traveled extensively throughout the American West and Alberta, Canada. Previous trips include England, Norway, Iceland, France, Italy, Czech Republic, Croatia and more. He's debating on next summer's adventure with his dad, New Zealand, Europe, or Alaska. Andrew most enjoys exploring cities.



Seeing the different types of buildings and trying new food are his favorites.

As IDDS Service Co-ordinator Colleen Cole remarks, "I couldn't be more proud of Andrew. He is the definition of success. He's so brave in handling challenges and has a calm approach to adventures. He's even inspired me to be braver when seeking travel experiences."

Andrew is what's possible. He's a determined young man with an appetite to learn and explore and has worked hard to create the life he wants to live. After all these accomplishments, Andrew achieved something huge this past summer. He went before a judge and got his guardianship terminated, further proving that he has no limit and that a diagnosis does not define a person.



Emergency Services

NKHS has an array of services to aid a person experiencing a crisis. Each service works along a continuum of care, which allows the person in crisis to determine, when appropriate, how much intervention and support they need. The continuum allows the person in crisis to move freely between different levels of service they require, both during and pre/post-crisis.



Frontline staff provide emergency mental health services 24/7.

Mental Health Crisis Specialists are embedded mental health specialists in the Vermont State Police barracks, St. Johnsbury and Derby, who support the VSP and the community when dispatched to a mental health-related call.

Mobile crisis staff meet individuals where they are, assess needs, and coordinate services.

988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline provides free, confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24/7.



988 SUICIDE & CRISIS LIFELINE

In July 2022, the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline transitioned to 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline. The 988 Suicide & Crisis Lifeline is a network of local crisis centers that provides free and confidential emotional support to people in suicidal crisis or emotional distress 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. NKHS and NCSS contract with DMH and Vibrant to provide 24/7 state-wide coverage of Lifeline call/chat/text center supports for those in a mental health crisis.

- In the FY2023, NKHS 988 staff answered 3,392 calls.
- Average time to answer calls for NKHS: 12.8 seconds. The National average is 46 seconds.
- 2,030 where imminent risk was identified. With 1,973 of those calls, the risk was reduced, and emergency services were not needed.
- 57 active rescues, in-person responses
- 988 Staff moved into their new space in July 2023, allowing additional staff to support the increase in calls

FRONT PORCH CRISIS CARE+

In the fall of 2022, work began earnestly to bring a mental health treatment facility to the NEK through advocacy work within the community and local government. This facility will provide a community-based option for those in crisis and divert individuals experiencing a mental health crisis away from emergency departments. The term “Front Porch” comes from a model in which those in crisis enter a warm and welcoming facility, a space intentionally designed so individuals feel safe, heard, and not overwhelmed.

The State of Vermont, through DMH and the Administration of Human Services, notified NKHS that a mental health treatment facility in the NEK was elevated as a priority and advanced to the Governor’s budget. This news was exciting and is the payoff of over ten years of work from advocates in the Northeast Kingdom who have worked tirelessly to bring support to this area. Work to bring this program to fruition continues into FY’24. Follow the project’s progress on the agency’s website and social media accounts.

- The program aims to reduce the number of emergency department visits for people with mental health as their primary concern by providing a welcoming, less restrictive, and safe environment for assessing individuals in crisis and quickly relieving crisis symptoms.
- The program will provide voluntary open access and immediate response for adults and families experiencing mental health crises 24/7. Individuals supported by first responders in acute mental health crises can access the Front Porch as an alternative to hospital emergency departments, reducing the strain on hospital staff.

Embedded Mental Health Crisis Specialist



The Embedded Mental Health Crisis Specialist (MHCS) role continues to create significant positive impacts within our communities. At NKHS, MHCS's collaborate with the Vermont State Police at the St. Johnsbury and Derby barracks. This collaboration with the Vermont State Police can offer a more effective and appropriate approach to someone in a high-stress situation when responding to mental health-related calls or when the event calls for extra support.

"For some, calling 911 can be the scariest moment of their life," says Tiffany Garces, an NKHS Embedded Mental Health Crisis Specialist. "Having an MHCS response bridges the gap between an individual and the police. Together, we can address the whole person and not just the one thing the call was about. MHCSs make sure to get to know the individual, learn what's going on, and learn how we can help", shared Tiffany.

"Your role here at the Derby barracks has quickly become an essential, integral part of our daily operations. Since your arrival, VSP Derby has been able to provide a much better level of service to those suffering from mental health needs and has undoubtedly kept both the people we serve, as well as troopers, safer as a result."

- Vermont State Police Lieutenant

A Vermont State Trooper and MHCS co-response can divert individuals from the hospital and address the crisis in the community. Since implementing the role, both the St. Johnsbury and Derby barracks have expanded the concept of co-response, going beyond the mere act of responding together. This co-response model has been

MONTH	Number of Interventions
June 22	6
July 22	26
August 22	20
September 22	36
October 22	42
November 22	44
December 22	26
January 23	52
February 23	40
March 23	64
April 23	50
May 23	61
June 23	51
TOTAL	518

instrumental in addressing mental health crises more effectively and ensuring that individuals receive the appropriate care and support they require during crises. Tiffany comments that she and other MHCSs often follow up with individuals and their support systems, sharing resources, discussing plans for safety, and checking-in on how they're doing.

With the increasing demand for mental health resources nationwide, Vermont State Police Troopers have quick access to MHCS's expertise to support and assist individuals in need. Leveraging their respective strengths, troopers and MHCS are better equipped to provide holistic support to individuals experiencing mental health challenges, ultimately benefiting the communities they serve. The continued implementation and development of this role are vital in addressing the rising demand for mental health services and promoting the well-being of individuals struggling with their mental health.



Adult Outpatient & Substance Misuse

The Adult Mental Health (AOP) program serves adults experiencing mental health challenges through therapeutic services and person-centered planning. Substance misuse services provide health promotion, prevention, intervention, treatment, and recovery services to prevent, reduce, and eliminate the health impacts of alcohol, cannabis, opioid, and other substance misuse. NKHS assess an individual's goals, mental health concerns, the extent to which one's mental health condition has affected day-to-day life, and the strengths and barriers that will affect their success in meeting treatment goals.

The following services are offered:

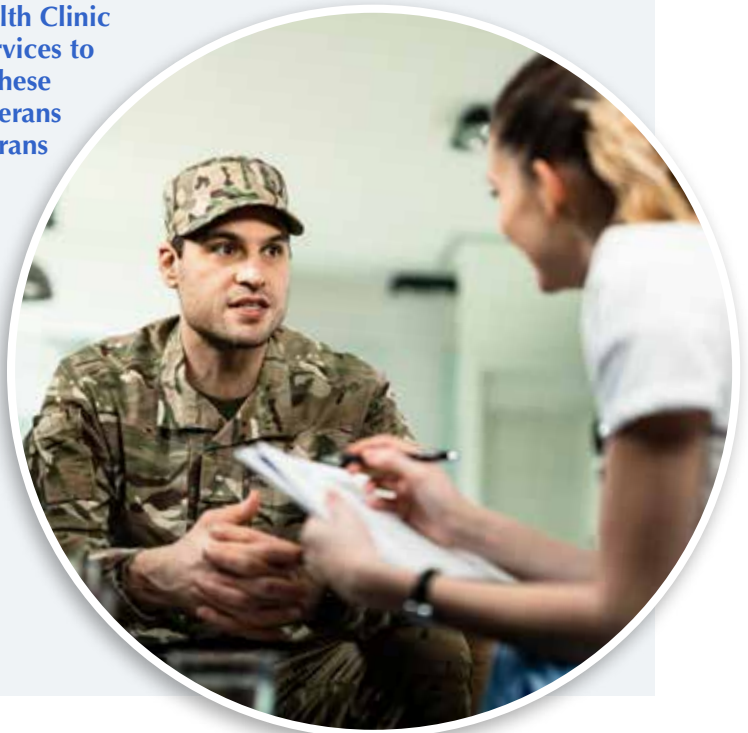
- Co-Occurring Recovery Navigators and Case Management
- Veterans Case Management
- Reach Up Case Management
- Collaboration with Outreach Enhanced Emergency Case Management
- Collaboration with DCF Family Service and Lunch Service
- Individual and Group Therapy
- Eldercare
- Psychiatric Medication Management
- Hospital Diversion

VETERANS CASE MANAGEMENT

In becoming a Certified Community Behavioral Health Clinic organization, NKHS is adding new programs and services to better serve the needs of our communities. One of these new services is Veterans Case Management. Our Veterans Coordinator is a combat vet who supports NEK Veterans and active service members and their needs around support services.

Support could include:

- Peer Support Groups
- Recovery Coaching
- Assistance with VA appointments, Travel, and Claims
- Peer Counseling Coordination
- Treatment Plan Support Coordination



Community Rehabilitation Treatment

The Community Rehabilitation Treatment (CRT) program provides comprehensive community-based support services and assists adults diagnosed with serious mental illness in voluntary and client-centered treatments. The CRT program helps individuals and their families develop the skills and supports essential to living the life they want. The following services are offered:

- *Case Management/Service Coordination*
- *Person Centered Planning*
- *Community Support and Integration (individual and groups)*
- *Referral and Linking*
- *Vocational Coordination (IPS)*
- *Representative Payees*
- *Housing Support and Coordination*
- *Psychiatric Assessment and Medication Management*
- *Wellness Recovery Action Plan (WRAP) services and additional peer supports*
- *Crisis Supports/Crisis Stabilization*
- *Care Coordination*
- *Family-based Intervention/Supports*
- *Physical Health Coordination/Care Coordination*
- *Wellness Activities*
- *Individual and Group Psychotherapy*
- *WRAP (Wellness Recovery Action Planning)*

Community Aid and Recovery Effort – CARE Bed

The CARE Bed is a two-bed crisis unit with 24-hour staffing, seven days a week. The CARE Bed provides an alternative to hospitalization or a step-down option for clients in a mental health crisis, and its overall mission is to serve clients within their community. During someone's stay at the CARE Bed, the staff help individuals regain hope, personal responsibility, self-esteem, and control. The staff supports individuals as they create personal goals, make healthy choices, and engage with their natural supports.



Children, Youth, and Family Services (CYFS)

CYFS provides comprehensive services based on assessment of the individualized and unique needs of children and families that are strength-based, family-driven, and trauma-informed.

Our **Home and Community Support and Stabilization Program** provides trauma-informed, strengths-based, consumer-driven care to youth and families, ages birth through 21, in the home, community, and office settings. These services include individualized and comprehensive assessment and evaluation, service planning and coordination, community supports, respite, crisis intervention, education, training, and consultation.

Our **Early Childhood Program** provides services and support in the child's natural settings and build on the natural routines that the child and family experience in their homes, at childcare or school, and with their healthcare providers and other community contacts. Services can include mental health and behavioral consultation with childcare centers and other professionals around specific children and general behavior management subjects and how to create a positive climate for social-emotional development. Services can help develop social and emotional skills to prepare for kindergarten.

CYFS provided financial support to 130 youth and their families, totaling just under \$26,000, so kids could participate in classes, camps, and various activities they might not have otherwise been able to.

- **50 youth** were able to take horseback riding lessons and swimming lessons.
- **26 families** were provided financial support to enjoy Jay Peak, Santa's Village, and Vermont State Parks and were given gas cards supporting traveling to these family activities.
- **23 youth** received financial support to attend summer camps such as Buck Lake, Coutts, River of Life, and others.
- Many other youths were supported in their desires to attend gymnastic classes, have gym memberships, swim at local pools, and receive supplies to enjoy their favorite activities.



A Visit from North Country Union High School

Twelve students from the Human Services class at North Country Union High School visited NKHS in Derby. They toured the building and then had an opportunity to learn about some of the careers at NKHS and ask questions. The students and staff enjoyed this positive and meaningful connection.

Here are some comments from the visiting students:

“I learned so much from visiting NKHS. It really opened my eyes to different career paths. I’m now interested in more career options and feel assured this is the right field for me.”



“Thank you for welcoming our class. It was amazing and inspiring to hear your stories and learn about the different positions and career paths.”

“Thank you, NKHS Staff, for showing us around. We really appreciate it!”

“I enjoyed the tour and listening to you talk about what you do.”

“Thank you so much for sharing information about your careers and telling us about the things that make your jobs unique.”

McGoff Hill

On Friday, April 28th, NKHS closed on a property on McGoff Hill in Lyndonville. Once renovated, the property will be the home of the CYFS South team and allow the department to expand services in a therapeutic setting that’s more suitable for children and families needing outpatient services.

“The children’s department is thrilled about the McGoff building purchase. We are so excited to have the space to create a youth and family clinic that will offer a wide variety of programming to meet the unique needs of the children and families we serve. McGoff will provide ample office space for clinical and therapeutic staff and room to host therapeutic/educational groups for children and caregivers. McGoff also has several acres of land for raised bed gardens, outdoor programming, and summertime activities. The children’s department staff is so appreciative and thankful to everyone who made our dream come true.”



Vicky Whitehill, Director
CYFS Support & Stabilization Department

NKHS Zero Suicide Initiative

The NKHS Zero Suicide Initiative Team partners with organizations and individuals to bring suicide prevention education, awareness, understanding, and support to all Northeast Kingdom communities. If you or your organization is interested in one of the following trainings, visit [NKHS.org](https://www.nkhs.org) and submit a contact us form requesting more information



GIZMO'S PAWSOME GUIDE TO MENTAL HEALTH

NKHS brings mental health educational programming to kids from Pre-K to 5th grade with Gizmo's Pawsome Guide to Mental Health. This program teaches what it means to be mentally healthy. An NKHS employee visits a classroom by invitation from the school and shares the story of Gizmo, a therapy dog, and how he helps kids recognize their feelings and how to manage them.

- 718 students in all 7 schools

IT'S REAL

It's Real, a program developed by the American Foundation for Suicide Prevention (AFSP), addresses middle school, high school, and college-age students. The program raises awareness about mental health issues, how to start a conversation about mental health, the importance of self-care, and how to reach out for help.

- 9 middle school classes in 5 schools

QPR (QUESTION, PERSUADE, AND REFER) GATEKEEPER TRAINING

For college-age students, teachers, faculty, parents, caregivers, and community members, NKHS offers QPR Gatekeeper Training and an introductory guide to raise awareness, dispel myths and misconceptions, and teach three key skills to help save a life. QPR trainees learn to recognize the warning signs of suicide, how to offer hope, and how to get help.

- Two NKHS employees facilitated 25 QPR trainings, teaching 463 individuals.
- Of the 25 trainings, 10 were for schools, four were for other organizations, and the remainder were for community members.

Miller's Run School is a Pre-K through 8th-grade school that enlisted the support of NKHS to engage the students and staff in Gizmos Pawesome Guide, It's Real, and QPR training.

"As we continue to see an increased need for mental health support within our schools, we have partnered with our local agencies to implement a collaborative approach for our students. Although we cover mental health awareness and social-emotional learning in various ways, we wanted to add additional resources.

Having everyone within our school [Miller's Run] community receive this information is critical in working together to help improve mental health awareness and support one another. We are incredibly thankful for the support of NKHS and look forward to more collaboration in the future!"

- Devin Daniell, Miller's Run Counselor/Clinician

CAMS-Care (COLLABORATIVE ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF SUICIDALITY)

CAMS-Care is a short-term therapeutic treatment that teaches individuals coping and resilience around their drivers for suicidality. In FY'23, eight people received CAMS-Care training.

ASIST - Applied Suicide Intervention Skills Training

NKHS sent two Emergency Service clinicians, Gillian Macdonald and Lindsey Muzzy, to a weeklong training to be ASIST trainers. NKHS now has three trained trainers and, as a result, can begin to offer more training per year and increase attendance capacity at each training. The previous limitation on class size was 16 attendees, but up to 45 individuals can attend with three trainers.

The Suicide Prevention Resource Center describes ASIST as a two-day, two-trainer workshop designed for family, friends, and any community member, as they may be the first to talk with a person at risk. The emphasis is on teaching suicide first-aid to help a person at risk stay safe and seek further help as needed. Participants learn to use a suicide intervention model to identify persons with thoughts of suicide, seek a shared understanding of reasons for dying and living, develop a safe plan based upon a review of risk, be prepared to do follow-up and become involved in suicide-safer community networks. The learning process is based on adult learning principles and is highly participatory.

- In FY2023, NKHS trained 48 individuals across four training events—two at local agencies, one at another Designated Agency, and one for 11 Veteran Peer specialists in Plymouth, NH.
- Veteran peer specialists are Veterans with mental health experience, actively engaged in their recovery, and have been trained and certified to help other Veterans.
- Participant feedback:
 - "The PAL [Pathways for Assisting Life] helped [me have] a better understanding [of] how to help in a larger framework than what I started [the] course having. Really helpful and worthwhile."*
 - "Josh and Tony are excellent facilitators, and ASIST is an amazing way to look at and engage in suicidal behavior. Thank you!!"*

Mental Health First Aid Training

MHFA training teaches individuals how to help someone struggling with their mental health or experiencing a mental health crisis. The course teaches how to identify, understand, and respond to signs of addictions and mental illnesses. Mental Health First Aid for Adults teaches people how to recognize signs of mental health or substance use challenges in adults ages 18 and older, offer and provide initial help, and guide a person toward appropriate care if necessary. Topics covered include anxiety, depression, psychosis, and addictions. Youth Mental Health First Aid teaches parents, family members, caregivers, teachers, school staff, peers, neighbors, health and human services workers, and other caring citizens how to help an adolescent (age 12-18) who is experiencing a mental health or addictions challenge or is in crisis. Youth Mental Health First Aid is primarily for adults who regularly interact with young people.



NKHS has two Adult Mental Health First Aid trainers and two Youth Mental Health First Aid Trainers. We will soon be adding Teen Mental Health First Aid (tMHFA) to support teens in grades 10-12 or ages 15-18 in identifying, understanding, and responding to signs of mental health and substance use challenges among their friends and peers.

- NKHS facilitated 3 Adult MHFA trainings for 36 community members and NKHS staff





Community Engagement

Our NKHS values are the core beliefs of our organization and we use them to guide the work we do and the commitments we make. One of those values is community and we strongly feel that being a part of our communities means participating, engaging, supporting, and working together to promote and build healthy and vibrant communities. We feel grateful for the connections and comradery.



Where you will find NKHS:

- American Foundation for Suicide Prevention
- American Red Cross Blood Drives
- ASIST Training
- Caledonia Child Advocacy Center
- Documentary Film Screenings
- Hosting a Family Community Event
- Job Fairs
- Legislative Breakfast
- Legislative Testimonies
- Mental Health First Aid Training
- National Rural Health Day
- NEK Rainbow Coalition Pride Parade and Festival
- NEK! Prosper
- North Country Hospital
- Northeast Kingdom Community Action
- Northeastern Vermont Regional Hospital
- Orleans Child Advocacy Center
- Out of the Darkness Walk
- Question, Persuade, Refer (QPR) Training
- St. Johnsbury Sparkles
- St. Johnsbury Town Band Ice Cream Social
- The St. Johnsbury Community Hub
- Town Meetings throughout the NEK
- Vermont Care Partners
- Vibrant ONE
- Walk for Recovery

Staff Recognition

NKHS celebrated its employees at the annual banquet in February 2023. Our Sail Away with NKHS, a cruise-themed awards night, was a welcome warm spot that just happened to be on the coldest night of the year. The awards are given to employees nominated by their peers and chosen by a committee of past award winners. *Congratulations to all!*

Patricia L. Rhodes Award

Lindsey Muzzy

Unsung Hero Award

Jenna Brown

Leadership Award

Mike Montgomery

Call to Action Service Award

Rena Skinner

The Rene Rose Award

Cori Coles Evelyn Koenig
Kallianne Fulford Gracelynn Thwaite

Residential Worker of the Year

Kelly Smith & Mila Pierce

Team Award

Emergency Services Department



Celebrating

5 Years of Service

Alexa Williams
Christine Schneider
Colleen Bosse
Inez Haynes
Jessica Bean
Riley Boivin

10 Years of Service

Cleo Dowse
Gladys Konstantin
Roy Kohnke

15 Years of Service

Danielle Hoyt
LeeAnn Davis

20 Years of Service

Carol Smith
Noreen Shapiro-Berry

25 Years of Service

Sharon Ryan





NKHS
Northeast Kingdom Human Services

We're
All About
**Being
Human!**

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Newport, VT 05855
(800) 696-4979

2225 Portland Street
St. Johnsbury, VT 05819
(800) 649-0118

NKHS.org

MISSION

We're all about being human. Our mission is to empower individuals, families and communities by promoting hope, healing, and support.

VISION To be leaders in rural health and human services by offering programs that are innovative, flexible, and comprehensive.