



228 W. Town Street, Norwich, CT 06360, 860-848-2800, www.seracct.org

January 28, 2026

First Selectman Jack Joslyn

I hope this letter finds you well. I am writing on behalf of **Southeastern Regional Action Council (SERAC)** to request consideration for dedicated funding within the upcoming budget to support the prevention services we have been providing to your community.

As you know, our agency has worked closely with residents, schools, and local partners in Sterling to address issues related to **substance use, mental health, gambling, and suicide**. Over the past two years, our staff has provided the town:

- Suicide, substance misuse, & gambling prevention resources delivered to school and library
- Support of the Local Prevention Council
- Education and support of students in the Adolescent Learning & Leadership Initiative

While we have been grateful for the opportunity to serve Sterling, sustaining these services requires stable and reliable financial support. To sustain this work, we respectfully request that **\$1,100** be allocated in the town budget to help support our prevention programming.

Funding allocated through the town budget would ensure that we can continue providing high-quality prevention programming, expand our reach to underserved populations, and respond more effectively to the emerging needs we are seeing in the community.

We would welcome the opportunity to meet with you or members of your team to discuss our work, share recent outcomes, and explore how municipal support could strengthen these efforts.

Thank you for your time, your leadership, and your ongoing commitment to the well-being of Sterling.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Mark Irons'.

Mark Irons

Executive Director
SERAC

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Mental Health

BEHAVIORAL HEALTH 101

Behavioral health 101 is designed to train individuals in organizations, faith-communities and businesses to raise awareness of the real impact of substance use disorders, gambling, mental health/illness, and suicide prevention. Participants will learn the signs and symptoms of behavioral health issues and the local resources that are available to help. This training will help you recognize the possible warning signs of someone with a potential behavioral health issue and how to help.

Length: 3 hours

THE LONELINESS EPIDEMIC & THE IMPACT ON BEHAVIORAL HEALTH

This session will look at the causes of loneliness and the effects on our physical and mental well-being. This segment will discuss how we can improve the social health of our communities and individuals.

Length: 60 minutes

HEALTHY OUTCOMES FROM POSITIVE EXPERIENCES (HOPE)

HOPE aims to fundamentally transform how we advance health and well-being for our children, families, and communities. Understand the growing body of research showing how positive childhood experiences drive healthy development and mitigate the effects of adverse ones. Learn about the key positive childhood experiences that help children grow into healthy, resilient adults and how our communities and our systems of can provide access to them.

Length: 90 minutes

THE POWER OF POSITIVE PSYCHOLOGY

This session will discuss the benefits of positive psychology and the power of hope in prevention, treatment and recovery. Learn how to leverage your strengths, face obstacles with optimism and maintain a strong sense of self. Learn about the importance of setting goals, discovering pathways, and utilizing willpower to increase individual and collective hope.

Length: 1 hour

Suicide Prevention & Postvention Services

QPR: QUESTION, PERSUADE, REFER SUICIDE PREVENTION

QPR provides innovative, practical and proven suicide prevention training by implementing the 3 simple steps to help save a life from suicide. People trained in QPR learn how to recognize the warning signs of a suicide crisis and how to question, persuade, and refer someone to the help they need. Each year thousands of Americans, like you, are saying "Yes" to saving the life of a friend, colleague, sibling, or neighbor.

Length: 90 Minutes

CONNECT SUICIDE POSTVENTION TRAINING

The Connect program is a comprehensive public health program based on a social-ecological model to help communities, organizations and schools prepare to respond to a suicide or other sudden traumatic loss to reduce risk and promote healing. This application focuses on Connect Suicide Postvention program in community settings across sectors who may be involved in responding after a suicide death. Connect uses a public health approach and incorporates evidence based practices and key elements of the National Suicide Prevention Strategy.

Length: 4 - 6 hours

TALK SAVES LIVES

Talk Saves Lives: An Introduction to Suicide Prevention is a suicide prevention education program that covers the scope of this leading cause of death, what the research has found to be the warning signs and risk factors of suicide, and the strategies that prevent it.

Length: 1 hour

COUNSELING ON ACCESS TO LETHAL MEANS(CALM)

This 90-minute workshop is designed to provide friends, family, and others with information on how to recognize and respond to suicide risk. It also focuses on reducing access to lethal means, especially firearms. Participants learn how to talk with someone who may be having thoughts of suicide in a collaborative, nonjudgmental, and supportive manner.

Length: CALM Conversations 90 minutes
CALM Full training 3 hours

Substance Prevention

ALCOHOL & CO-OCCURRING CONDITIONS

Learn about current, local and state data for alcohol use rates and co-occurring disorders including input from Eastern CT residents. Participants will discuss how data leads to strategies to separately address co-occurring disorders, youth alcohol prevention, and safe alcohol

Length: 1 hour

NALOXONE TRAINING

This training provides information on opioids that include street drugs (like heroin) and prescription drugs (like Oxycontin) and how to reduce opioid overdose deaths. By the end of this training you will learn how to administer naloxone, also known as Narcan, which can reverse an opioid overdose in a few minutes.

Length: 45 minutes

CANNABIS, VAPING & YOU

Get the facts about youth vaping and cannabis consumption. Learn the short-term and long-term effects of cannabis. Learn the data about how many youth are using cannabis and vapes. Learn how vapes and cannabis products have evolved to hide in plain sight. Learn how to have the hard conversations about the impact of substance use.

Length: 1 hour

DRUG ENDANGERED CHILDREN/BUILDING COMMUNITY COLLABORATION

This training offers education surrounding commonly used substances, key risk factors, and their effects on children and families. Through collaboration and shared insights, participants will gain practical strategies to improve outcomes for drug-endangered children and how to change the status quo.

Length: 30 minutes, 60 minutes or 90 minutes

Additional Trainings

YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH FIRST AID

Mental Health First Aid is an 8-hour course that teaches you how to identify, understand and respond to signs of mental illnesses and substance use disorders. The training gives you the skills you need to reach out and provide initial help and support to someone who may be developing a mental health or substance use problem or experiencing a crisis. The 8-hour course is a certification for Mental Health First Aiders to learn a 5-step action plan encompassing the skills, resources and knowledge to help an individual in crisis connect with appropriate professional, peer, social, and self-help care.

Length: 8 hour certification (or 2 four hour sessions)

ADOLESCENT LEADERSHIP AND LEARNING INSTITUTE (ALLI)

ALLI runs throughout the school year, starting in September, with six meetings coordinated around school schedules and is funded by the SAMHSA STOP Act. ALLI is specifically designed for middle and high school students to develop their leadership skills in a large group environment. Participants will use these skills to create peer-to-peer alcohol and drug prevention campaigns within their communities. Our SAMHSA funding supports lessons centered around alcohol and drug prevention, as well as mental health promotion. We engage students through interactive lessons that focus on leadership skill development, guest speakers, and the design of peer-to-peer campaigns to be shared within their schools and across the region.

Length: Academic Calendar

Target Audience: Primarily middle school students, with opportunities for high school student volunteers to take on peer mentoring roles.

A-SBIRT

A-SBIRT is a comprehensive, integrated, public health approach to the delivery of early intervention and treatment services that adolescent primary care providers can utilize to efficiently incorporate screening, brief advice, brief motivational interventions, referrals for further evaluation and treatment for alcohol and other drug use into routine adolescent visits.*

Length: 1.5 hours

Gambling Prevention

COMMUNITY CONVERSATIONS ON GAMBLING

SERAC offers free in-person and virtual presentations and can tailor to specific populations. We cover the definition of gambling, the types of legal gambling in CT, the impact of problem gambling, the resources throughout the state that assist those affected by gambling harms.

Length: 30 to 90 minutes

GAMBLING: A LEADING RISK FOR SUICIDE

Approximately 1 in 5 people who have a gambling problem will make a suicide attempt in their lifetime, a rate higher than any other addictive disorder. This session will explore gambling disorder and its relationship with suicide risk. In raising awareness about problem gambling and timely intervention, we can help save lives.

Length: 1.5 hours

THE EVOLVING WORLD OF GAMING

This training explores the ever-growing convergence between gambling and gaming and provides attendees with the knowledge on how to appropriately address these topics with clients, youth and the populations they are supporting. We will also discuss how to best help parents, their children and the community develop healthy gaming habits and create a strong balance with their gaming.

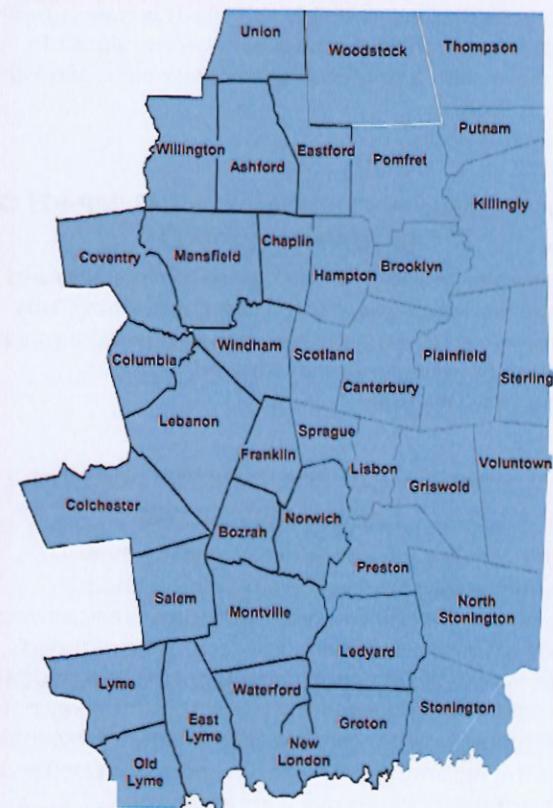
Length: 1 hour

STACKED DECK

Stacked Deck teaches young people to approach life as smart risk-takers, weighing the pros and cons of their actions to determine the odds of achieving positive results. In six interactive lessons, the program teaches about the history of gambling: the true odds and the "house edge"; gambling fallacies; the signs, risk factors, and causes of problem gambling; and skills for good decision-making and problem-solving.

Length: 6 lessons (1hr each) in classroom setting

Most trainings can be adapted to suit different age groups, audiences, or community needs. Please contact us to discuss customization options for your group.



To learn more or to schedule a training contact office@seracct.org



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