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Greater Falls
CONNECTIONS
A Monthly Community Newsletter

Volume 1 | January 2023



Laura Schairbaum, left, helping with the cooking at the Community BBQ and Annual Meeting held in June 2022 along with community member Laurel Green, center, and former Advisory Board chair Alex Stradling (right).

So long, farewell ... **Saying good-bye to Laura**

It is with a mixture of sadness and joy that we are saying good-bye to GFC's director, Laura Schairbaum. Her last day is Jan. 27. She is going to be missed by the staff, advisory board, coalition partners, and the community. Laura is returning to the Indiana/Michigan area to be close to her family there and new adventures along the way. We wish her the best of luck!

Stepping into Laura's shoes will be Neil Allen, who will be the interim director until a permanent one has been chosen. Neil (they/them) has been with GFC for eight months and grown with leaps and bounds within their role as communications coordinator then as the operations coordinator.

There's still time to donate for our annual appeal

There's still time to support GFC's annual appeal! It's community members like YOU who have helped guide us as we continue to bring a collaborative and holistic approach to our work with youth and families impacted by substance use disorder and trauma. THANK YOU to those who have supported us with their generous donations over the past year! Click [here](#) to donate.

Introducing Frankie Larson

In late December, Frankie Larson joined GFC as a part-time project specialist and will be focusing on tobacco-related work. Frankie (they/them) has worked in peer support and advocacy through direct support, systems advocacy, and supervisory roles in community mental health. Their previous work included supporting folks in the community struggling with substance use and abuse in Windham and Windsor County, primarily through the principles and practices of harm reduction. They are passionate about learning more skills around supporting youth and grassroots organizing in the community.

Keep your kids and pets safe with lock boxes



GFC has lock boxes that can be used to prevent your kids and pets from getting to your cannabis products. There has been an increase in the number of kids and pets who have needed emergency medical care because they ate cannabis food and other products. One way to prevent them from having access to them, is to store them in a lock box. This is also a great way to keep your kids and pets from getting into your prescription medications too. Give us a call or send an email to info@greaterfallsconnections.org.

Need help talking to your kids about cannabis? Check out our video with tips for parents to talk to their teens about cannabis and marijuana. Watch [here](#).

Insight from young adults sought

GFC is seeking up to fifteen (15) young adults (age 18-25) in the Bellows Falls or Springfield area for short interviews over Zoom about reaching young adults with substance misuse prevention messages. Members of the BIPOC, LGBTQ+, and recovery communities are highly encouraged to participate. A small stipend will be given to participants. Contact Neil at info@greaterfallsconnections.org by Feb. 17 to sign up.

Ready to give up smoking?

If your New Year's resolution to give up smoking or vaping is not going as well as you hoped, cessation classes can help get you going or stay on the path and provide support with patches, gum, and a teacher who understands the struggle. You can register for classes at myhealthyvt.org. While you're there, check out the other healthy lifestyle programs available.

