

# 2019-2020 Year in Review

During fiscal year '20 (October 1, 2019-September 30, 2020), the Charlestown Coalition continued its work related to their five overarching goals of: **1. Promote social and emotional wellness** by fostering a resilient Charlestown and building equitable, accessible, and supportive systems of care; **2. Address and advocate for community issues** related to the redevelopment of the Charlestown Boston Housing Authority; **3. Improve and increase communication, collaboration, and partnerships** among the Coalition, residents, and community/city organizations and agencies; **4. Ensure Charlestown residents have access to coordinated and equitable health and family support services** and resources to support overall health; **5. Increase community dialogue on racial and socioeconomic inequities**, social issues, and race relations to change perceptions and reduce stigma in the community.

In mid-March, COVID-19 began to surge in Massachusetts, with the state and city creating protocols to slow the spread. In response to the needs of the community, along with following the local and state protocols, the coalition quickly shifted their services and programming. As the COVID cases begin to climb again, the coalition continues to respond to immediate needs while continuing to conduct their work, much in a virtual setting.

This report reflects the work of the coalition for FY20, including efforts done during the first COVID surge, which will be noted as needed. For the full COVID report, go to the [COVID resources page](#) on the coalition website.

## Navigation through Alcohol and Drug Recovery

Number of people in recovery or struggling with addiction that have been connected to needed services.

- **Ninety-two (92)** were **new clients** in FY20



### Services Included:

- **Education** on overdose, prevention basics, & Narcan
- Getting into **treatment**
- Connecting to **self-help groups**
- Assistance with **transportation**
- **Advocacy/support** for court-related issues
- Assistance with **job search/resume**
- Obtaining **insurance**
- Connecting to **GED/Education**

During the first COVID surge (March-June 2020)...

**52**

**Clients were actively supported;** 12 of whom were in drug court



### Including:

- **Preventing 10 clients from homelessness**
- **Connected 21 clients with detox and after care** (IOP, counseling, recovery coaches)
- **Connected 29 clients to essential services** (primary care, MassHealth, unemployment support, food pantries)

Additionally efforts during the first COVID surge

**100**

Care packages, including masks and sanitizer made/donated by recovery community members, handed out to those in active addiction.



- **Ongoing outside AA meetings occurring 2x/day with 98 members**
- **COVID Defiance Group has page in the AA meeting list book and online** through the AA Central Service Committee of Eastern Mass



**Provided 15 tablets to increase access to recovery supports**

**200**

Masks, sanitizer, and wipes given to recovery community.

**72 meditation coloring books and colored pencils** given to recovery community



**The Gratitude Effect Recovery Facebook Group: Over 292 members** have posted.



**Creating a recovery video with over 60 pictures of people in recovery** showing how they are staying sober/clean/active in their recovery during COVID. *Click on box to be directed to video.*

**32** Drug court members in FY20, with 21 being new clients.

**Women's group formed for women in recovery.** Meeting 1x/week with 22 women in attendance.



**GRASP**, the support group for those who have lost a loved one from drug use meets biweekly, with 12-16 participants at each group.

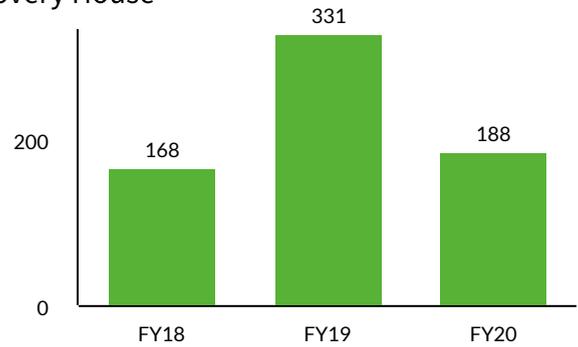


**Held Charlestown's 12th Annual Overdose Vigil** for all those who lost their battle to addiction and to give hope to those still suffering.



The chart below shows the number of people who were trained in Narcan, in collaboration with the BPHC.

In FY20, held 9 trainings with the three housing developments, the noon meeting, and the Charlestown Recovery House



## Trauma Response Group



**Weekly Trauma Response meetings;** 21 in total. A self-care component was added for participants

Trauma Team members **attended race dialogues and recovery month events** in the community



Continued creation of **grief/trauma education cards**



Provided gift cards

**Zoom balloon release** to honor a young man who lost his life to community violence



*During the first COVID surge (March-June 2020)...*

**36**

**Incidents were responded and/or supported by the group,** including overdoses fatal and nonfatal, community loss, high risk active addiction, community violence, car accident, report of child abuse



Team members:

- **Participated in drop-in hours** at AA meetings to support getting people in treatment
- **Volunteered at Harvest on Vine** for food distribution
- **Coordinated volunteers** to deliver food to 6 families and 3 elderly residents
- **Developed rapid access systems** for MGH behavioral health services

## Support Services for Youth & Family

The chart below shows the number of families and individuals that were provided case management services.

- Of the 41 clients served in FY20, there was a total of 451 contacts to support them.



Provided support to 5 Turn it Around youth and/or families

**Most of the support needed included:**

- Mental health (43%)
- Education (16%)
- Basic needs (15%)

*During the first COVID surge (March-June 2020)...*

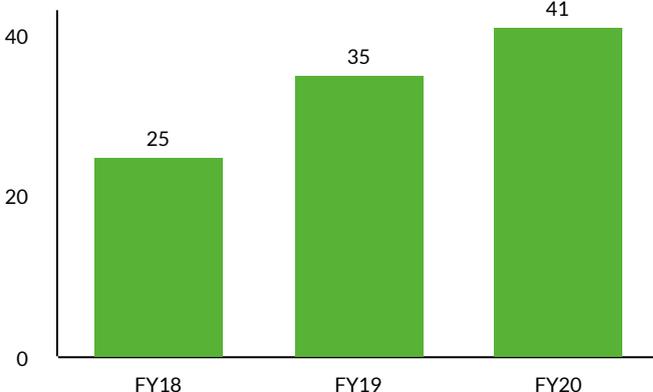
**20**

**Families were provided support**

Support included:

- Counseling
- Weekly check-ins by phone or Telehealth
- Provided family activity and stress kits
- Referred families to food resources
- Provided COVID resources list, family activity handout, and food resources list
- Delivered gift cards and food basket to families

*"I'm so happy you called and we can now connected over zoom! It's so nice to see someone I can connect with!"-FSC Parent*



The chart to the right shows the number of students who met with a clinician at the Adult Learning Center (ALC) to address stressors and/barriers to their education. *Please note that the ALC had shift to virtual programming in response to the first surge.*



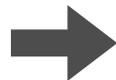
## Family Support Circle (FSC) Task Force



**Moved from monthly task force meetings to weekly during the first surge** (March-April). **Decreased to two meetings per month** from April-September. 14 meetings total.

**Average 20 providers in attendance** for each meeting.

**Increased number of providers on the distribution list** from 61 to 66



- 3 families referred to FSC program because of the task force meetings
- 9 families were connected to supports and services as a result of the meetings

Addressed issues around hygiene products in community and partnerships with Home and Comfort.

*During the first COVID surge (March-June 2020), met to coordinate the Covid-19 response, determine residents needs and collectively address the needs of the community through:*



**2 race dialogue discussions**



**Sharing resources** that focused on racism



**Tobacco and vaping training**



**Discussion on self-care and techniques** among providers a



**Collectively created and distributed the family activity handout** and shared virtual family activities with providers



**FSC Clinician shared weekly community updates, Covid-19 resources, Boston resources, & other financial resources**

## Prevention and Education

### Turn it Around (TIA)

**40**

**Youth participated in the Turn it Around (TIA) group** through weekly meetings and various community events.

#### Community events/meetings included:

- Digital project during Prevention Month to engage with youth in an "Advice to My Middle School Self," photo contest
- Hosted an event in honor of the Peace Park, HeART in the Park art exhibit
- First annual Charlestown Holiday Night Out;
- Annual Harvest on Vine Thanksgiving dinner distribution
- Photos with Santa during the Holiday Stroll at the Training Field
- Distributed nearly 75 "Care Kits" with hats, scarves, gloves, socks and hygiene products to those experiencing homelessness
- Candlelight Overdose Vigil

*"TIA has meant a lot to me during this Coronavirus because it gives me a place to escape my boredom and to communicate with others who are dealing with the same thing. TIA has also been very supportive for me mentally with great check ins and meetings"- TIA member age 18*

*During the first COVID surge (March-June 2020)...*



**Moved to weekly virtual meetings** with average of 20-30 youth per meeting. **Guest speakers:** DA Rachael Rollins, Carla Monteiro- President of Cape Verdean Social Work Association, and Kara Hayes- restorative justice leader

**Participated in the CopeCode Challenge**, an initiative by the BPHC. The challenge encouraged youth to **practice positive coping skills through weekly challenges.**



**Continuous check-ins with each of the ~40 TIA members** to provide support and resources

**Organized weekly contests to engage all members., such as** Tik Toks showing how to cope with COVID, masks decorating, poetry/music contest, and vision boards.



**Coordinated with the twelve 12th grade members, their teachers, and school support staff on what each needed for graduation.**



**PROUDLY, 11 of our 12 seniors graduated-**Mswati Hanks, Youth Prevention Coordinator

Additionally youth work during COVID



- **Fitness boot camp** for all CHS coping skills and TIA youth. Offered 3x/week to approx. 60 youth
- **Coordinated cable access and chrome book access for 15 students**
- **Held weekly coping skills group for CHS alternative to suspension program** (average 7 youth in group each week)

Summer Jobs

- 26** Youth (includes those from the CHS substance use group) **were connected to summer employment resources**, such as Boston PIC, Successlink, and ABCD
- 10** Youth participated in a **part-virtual, part-in-person summer curriculum** created by Mswati, Youth Prevention Coordinator. *They will be paid through MGH's summer employment program.*

Community Involvement

- Planted 100 flowers** with TIA and community members at the Peace Park
- Connected TIA members to a focus group** run by students from Emerson College interested in creating an app to connect youth to different programs around the city



**Connected several youth who wrote powerful poems following George Floyd's murder to a local organization**, Friends of the Charlestown Navy Yard, which featured the youth and their poetry on the website. *Click to view the poems*



**Served on the MGH CCHI graduation committee to plan the virtual graduation ceremony** for all the seniors from center's youth programs

**35** People attended **2 Hidden in Plain Sight workshops**-an interactive workshop that enables adult participants to explore and discover ways that their teen may be engaging in risky behaviors such as drug use.

Communication

**Bimonthly coalition meetings** with approximately 20 community members in attendance-virtual since March

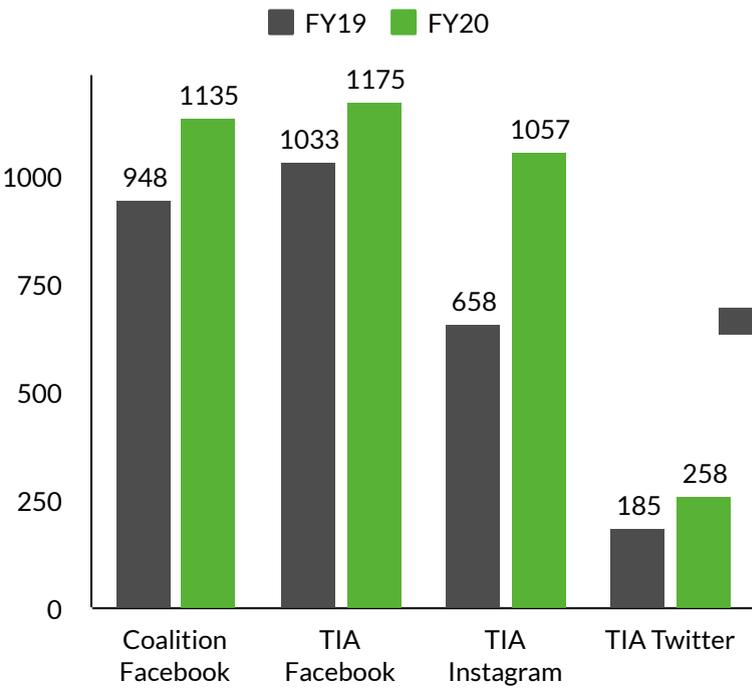


In the past 60 days, the **Coalition newsletter open rate was 32%** (industry avg. is 19%) for the 557 newsletter contacts.

The monthly newsletter features updates of the coalition's work, Voices of Recovery, Turn it Around youth of the month, and events and updates from coalition members/organizations. *Click the box to see past newsletters on the coalition website.*

**Monthly Turn it Around newsletter** sent by mail and email to parents/caregivers of members updating them on the work the youth are doing. *Click the box to see past newsletters on the coalition website.*

The chart shows the number of followers for each of the coalition's channels. The **number of followers increased** in FY20 across all social media.



*During the first COVID surge (March-June 2020)...*

All the **social media channels would post daily** COVID resources, services, and information to inform the community.

Additionally, the **TIA social media channel shared posts and stories on the healthy ways the youth were managing**, including being a part of the CopeCode challenge where they showed the different ways they are continually to be physical active.



### Coalition and TIA YouTube Channel:

- **17 videos** posted featuring the TIA youth participating in the CopeCode challenge, congratulations video to the class of 2020, and the Overdose Vigil.
- **21 subscribers**

# 4,390



The total users in FY20 increased from FY19 (2,197 users)

Users accessed the Coalition website in FY20, with a total of 20,736 page views.

*During the first COVID surge (March-June 2020)...*

- **A COVID Resource page was created** on the coalition's website
- **1,481 users** had accessed the website
- Over **17%** of the page views were for the **coalition resource page** and the **COVID-specific resource page**.

## Community Involvement & Advocacy



- **Worked with a pro-bono professional landscaping design team**, COGDesign, to **create a strategic plan for the park revision**. Surveys and virtual meetings were used to gather resident input on the park features. Residents were then asked to vote on 4 park design options.
- The coalition, TIA youth, and COGDesign have **partnered with the Charlestown Preservation Society (CPS) to create a Peace Park Renovation plan**. The CPS will guide the group through the process, in addition to being the Fiscal Sponsor.



- Testified in StateHouse first virtual hearing in support of: An Act to Provide Short Term Relief to Families in Poverty using examples from community work
- Advocating for Safe Communities Act
- Supporting Statewide re-entry supports and release of inmates initiatives in Suffolk County
- TIA youth testified and participated in BHA redevelopment hearings

# 16,866

## In local and state grant funding

- Boston Resiliency Fund (\$10,500)
- AGO: The Healthy Summer Youth Jobs Grant Program (\$3,366)
- Charlestown Community Fund Grant for TIA (\$1,500) and for Trauma Response Team (\$1,500)

