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Northern Berkshire Community Coalition

# Coalition news

An update from



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## September is National Recovery Month Voices for Recovery Rally/Walk/Vigil: September 23

September is Recovery Month, a time to increase awareness and understanding of mental and substance use disorders, and celebrate the people in recovery. The Voices for Recovery Walk, Rally and Vigil will take place on September 23 from 1-3:30. This year's event is sponsored by the nbCC's Rx Heroin work group with support from many partners working to prevent and respond to addiction in our community.

The location for Voices for Recovery this year is Colegrove Park on Church Street in North Adams, a change from prior years at Noel Field. The Colegrove Park location, with Colegrove Elementary School as a backdrop, is an appropriate setting for this year's Recovery Month theme *Strengthen Families and Community*. We have seen that addiction affects everyone in our community, not only those with substance use disorders but also their loved ones, including the infants born addicted, and the grandparents raising grandchildren.

The event will begin with a vigil led by Pastor Dave Anderson from First Baptist Church. North Adams Pastor Dave will speak about the loss we have witnessed in

our community as a result of addiction, and how we can find hope, strength and comfort as we move forward.

Other speakers this year will include family members impacted by the addiction of loved ones, people in recovery and Mayor Alcombright.

The walk, led by Mayor Alcombright, will take place around 1:45 through downtown North Adams, with walkers pausing for a stand-out in front of City Hall. The route will be marked by signs with information about addiction and recovery in North Berkshire. T-shirts will be available for a suggested \$10 donation. You can order a t-shirt by visiting [www.nbccoalition.org](http://www.nbccoalition.org).

A highlight of the event will be the Wall of Recovery and Remembrance with visual images created to celebrate those in recovery, and remember those who lost their lives to addiction. This powerful exhibit is created by Kenna Waterman, founder of Josh Bressette Commit to Save a Life, a volunteer led organization that is dedicated to providing peer and financial support to people in our community working to recover from heroin addiction. If you have a story of loss or

recovery that you would like to share for the wall or at the event, please contact Kenna Waterman at [commit2save@gmail.com](mailto:commit2save@gmail.com).

Common Folk will host a display of art titled *Bless The Space Between Us*, a therapeutic exploration of local artists pertaining to addiction and recovery. The event will also include face painting and other activities for children.

There has perhaps never been a more important time to raise awareness about recovery in our region. The opioid epidemic continues to escalate nationally with increased availability of the potent drug fentanyl. This makes overdoses more dangerous and harder to reverse with naloxone. We know that through prevention, intervention, and treatment, recovery is possible.

Last year's Voices for Recovery program included the premier of a short film, *FACES*, about addiction and recovery in our region. This year nbCC has once again commissioned local filmmaker Joe Aidonidis to create a film, this time with a focus on recovery and recovery services in North Berkshire. The film *Voices of Recovery*, will premier in December, but a trailer will premier at the event and can be viewed at [www.nbccoalition.org](http://www.nbccoalition.org).

While the walk will be held rain or shine, in the event of rain, the rally and vigil will be moved indoors to First Baptist Church at 131 Main Street, North Adams.

-Wendy Penner

### VOICES FOR RECOVERY RALLY • WALK • VIGIL

**SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23**

**1:00 TO 3:30 PM**

**COLEGROVE PARK, NORTH ADAMS**



Northern Berkshire Community Coalition

**Help Raise Awareness of Recovery from Substance Abuse.**



Standout at City Hall, 2016.