This September marks the 20th anniversary of National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month (Recovery Month), sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration’s (SAMHSA’s) Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) within the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. For two decades Recovery Month has successfully educated communities nationwide about the urgent need to address addiction in the United States. This timeline showcases the many strides the treatment and recovery field have made and details the campaign’s success and evolution of Treatment Works! into Recovery Month.
Finding the Recovery Voice: Significant events for the recovery movement


1999 The Alliance Project was founded to organize a growing advocacy force among people in recovery from addiction, as well as their families, friends, and allies.

2000 The state of Connecticut started redesigning its behavioral health system to become a recovery-oriented system.

2001 A recovery summit was held in St. Paul, Minnesota (the St. Paul Summit), which garnered support from national organizations, including the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, SAMHSA/CSAT, and the Johnson Institute. More than 200 people representing the diverse recovery community attended. The summit had three goals: (1) To celebrate and honor recovery in all its diversity, (2) To foster advocacy skills in the tradition of American advocacy movements, and (3) To produce principals, language, strategy, and leadership to carry the movement forward.

2001 Faces & Voices of Recovery, previously the Alliance Project, was founded at the St. Paul Summit, charting the awakening, maturing, and mobilizing of the American recovery advocacy movement.

2001 HHS Secretary Tommy Thompson sponsored a Recovery Month breakfast for the Planning Partners, and SAMHSA/CSAT’s Residential Programs for Pregnant and Parenting Women Study was released at the Recovery Month kick-off event.

2003 President Bush addressed addiction treatment and recovery in his State of the Union address, setting the stage for the founding of Access to Recovery.

2005 SAMHSA hosted the Summit on Recovery, defining “recovery” for the first time. SAMHSA sponsored the “Under the Influence: The Film Series” as part of Recovery Month.

2005 As part of Recovery Month, Faces & Voices of Recovery held a Recovery in Action Summit in Washington, D.C., with recovery advocates attending from around the country.

2006 Faces & Voices of Recovery launched Rally for Recovery as part of Recovery Month, bringing together thousands of people at organized events across the country, with one event serving as the “hub.”

2008 Faces & Voices of Recovery launched a nonpartisan civic engagement campaign, Recovery Voices Count. More than 20 national organizations endorsed the organization’s Bill of Rights.

Launching of Federal and Other Initiatives to Improve Treatment and Recovery

1988 The Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP) was established.

1989 Warning labels were added on alcoholic beverages.

1989 The first drug court was established.

1990 The Americans with Disabilities Act was passed.

1990 The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation’s Fighting Back program funded 15 communities in 11 states to combat alcohol and illicit drug-related programs.

1990 Addiction medicine became a specialty, and a representative of the field was admitted to the AMA House of Delegates as a voting member.

1992 The Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) was established by Congress, which also created the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT), Center for Mental Health Services (CMHS), and Center for Substance Abuse Prevention (CSAP). The National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA) became part of the National Institutes of Health.

1994 The Violent Crime Control and Law Enforcement Act was signed by President Clinton and included the Drunk Driving Child Protection Act of 1994.

1994 The first Administrator of SAMHSA was appointed by President Clinton.

1996 In the political sphere, the Health Insurance Portability and Accountability Act (HIPAA) passed, which increased the confidentiality of patient records related to alcohol and drug abuse.

1996 The Federal Crime Bill provided start-up funding to drug courts.

1998 The United States Congress created the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign to prevent and reduce youth drug use. The Campaign is the nation’s largest anti-drug media campaign and is generally thought to be the single largest source of drug-prevention messaging directed to teens.
Expanding *Treatment Works! and National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month*

The Treatment Works! campaign was first envisioned in 1988 and launched in 1989, and sponsored by an alliance of government and private treatment organizations, led by the National Association for Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors (NAADAC). It also recognized individuals who work in the treatment and recovery field.

1989 *Treatment Works!* was launched and sponsored by an alliance of government and private treatment organizations, led by the National Association for Alcoholism and Drug Abuse Counselors (NAADAC).

1991 *Treatment Works!* sponsored an event featuring Suzanne Somers, who shared her family’s story of addiction and recovery.


1996 SAMHSA/CSAT took a leadership role in *Treatment Works!* and held a press event regarding the release of the National Treatment Improvement Evaluation Study (NTIES) by the National Opinion Research Center (NORC). The study was released by HHS Secretary Donna E. Shalala and White House Drug Policy Director Barry McCafferty and focused on the impact of drug and alcohol treatment.

1997 Working with CSAT, a group of national and community-based organizations, government entities, and the recovery community became the first Planning Partners.

1998 *Treatment Works!* was renamed the *National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month* (Recovery Month) and expanded its focus to include individuals in recovery, their friends, and families.

1998 Starting in 1998, the *Recovery Month* kick-off event panel started to include people in recovery, so the voice of recovery could be heard.
1998 *Recovery Month* toolkit distribution was expanded to 50,000 kits, and the first 8 SAMHSA-sponsored community events were held.

1999 Local *Recovery Month* events included the first *Recovery Walk* event in Connecticut (CCAR). Also taking place were the *Hands Across the Bridge* Labor Day walk, organized by the Recovery Association Project (RAP) in Portland, Oregon.

1999 Significant *Recovery Month* milestones included the development of the first *Recovery Month* television and radio PSAs, increased Web site traffic on [www.health.org](http://www.health.org) (nondesignated within SAMHSA site), and the first SAMHSA/CSAT infomercial appearing regarding *Recovery Month*, which led to the launch of the *Road to Recovery* television and radio series in 2000.

2001 *Recovery Month* toolkit distribution increased to 75,000 copies.

2002 All 50 states planned and held events to celebrate *Recovery Month*. There were 239 events held, including 31 SAMHSA-sponsored community events, and the first *Recovery Month* presidential proclamation was signed.


2003 There were 136 proclamations issued and 288 events held, including 33 SAMHSA-sponsored events.

2003 Personal “Voices for Recovery” were published in the *Recovery Month* toolkit, which allowed for personal stories and vignettes to be widely disseminated.

2004 *Road to Recovery* television programming began airing on public, educational, and government access cable television channels. The first year’s programming aired on 129 channels.

2004 The first *Recovery Month* SAMHSA-sponsored motorcycle ride was held in California, and seven initial Major League Baseball (MLB) events were sponsored.

2005 The *Recovery Month* “Treat Me” PSA aired throughout August in New York’s Times Square on the Panasonic Astrovision.

2005 The *Recovery Month* Planning Partners increased to more than 100 members.

2006 *Recovery Month* launched video and audio podcasting on its Web site.

2006 The 2005 *Recovery Month* PSAs, “Treat Me” and “Artist,” won a renowned FREDDIE award.

2007 There were 767 events posted on the *Recovery Month* Web site, including 108 SAMHSA-sponsored events.

2008 The estimated collective audience for all radio PSAs released from 2002 through 2008 totaled more than 1.3 billion. During that time, there was a collective viewership of more than 2.2 billion for all television PSAs.

2008 The *Recovery Month* Planning Partners and A&E launched the *Brooklyn Bridge Recovery Rally* in New York.

2008 *Recovery Month* received a total of 42 awards since 1999, representing both national and international attention, for the creation and production of the *Recovery Month* campaign and supporting materials.

2008 437 cable channels, available to an estimated 21.4 million households, and 600,000 listeners on 24 Native American stations, aired the *Road to Recovery* television series, representing an estimated $12.4 million in earned media value. Additionally, *Road to Recovery* radio programming was launched.

2009 *Recovery Month* celebrates 20 years! The campaign launches a new Web site, Facebook page, and YouTube channel.

2009 *Road to Recovery* airs on DishNetwork Satellite Channel 94.12.