

National
Recovery Month

Prevention Works · Treatment is Effective · People Recover

SEPTEMBER 2015



JOIN THE VOICES FOR RECOVERY

visible, vocal, valuable!

2015 Final Report: Executive Summary



Executive Summary

Each year, millions of Americans are affected by mental and/or substance use disorders. In 2015, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) sponsored the 26th **National Recovery Month (Recovery Month)**, which celebrated people in recovery, showcased the contributions of treatment and service providers, promoted prevention, treatment, and recovery, and spread the message that recovery in all its forms is possible. **Recovery Month** offers resources to people with behavioral health conditions, as well as their loved ones, and builds awareness of these conditions among their communities.

In 2015, **Recovery Month** continued to unite the recovery community and emphasized that millions of Americans have transformed their lives through recovery. The theme, “Join the Voices for Recovery: Visible, Vocal, Valuable!” encouraged people to speak openly about mental and/or substance use disorders and the reality of recovery, and promoted ways individuals can learn to identify behavioral health issues and reach out for help.

The events, online activities, and materials for **Recovery Month** continue to support public understanding and acceptance of the benefits of prevention, treatment, and recovery from behavioral health conditions.

Events and Media Coverage

Community events were again instrumental in delivering **Recovery Month’s** key messages to widespread audiences. In 2015, thousands of participants attended 998 **Recovery Month** events. A wide array of events—including community celebrations, dances, workshops and conferences, parades, rallies, walks, and runs—raised awareness about prevention, treatment, and recovery. Examples of some of these events include a viewing of the film, “The Anonymous People” and discussion in Rochester, NY and the Sober Tuscaloosa Tailgate in Tuscaloosa, AL.

On September 10, 2015, stakeholders and the recovery community convened at the National Press Club in Washington, DC, for the **Recovery Month** press conference. The annual observance recognized individuals throughout the country who achieved long-term recovery, acknowledged the contributions of the broader recovery community, and unveiled an overview of findings from the 2014 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (NSDUH).

Following the press conference, **Recovery Month** launched its 2015 activities with a luncheon sponsored by The National Council at the JW Marriott in Washington, DC, on September 10, 2015. The luncheon was streamed via webcast to Planning Partners across the country. The luncheon included a ceremony and presentation of the **Recovery Month** 2014 Community Event Awards.

Toolkit and Collateral Materials

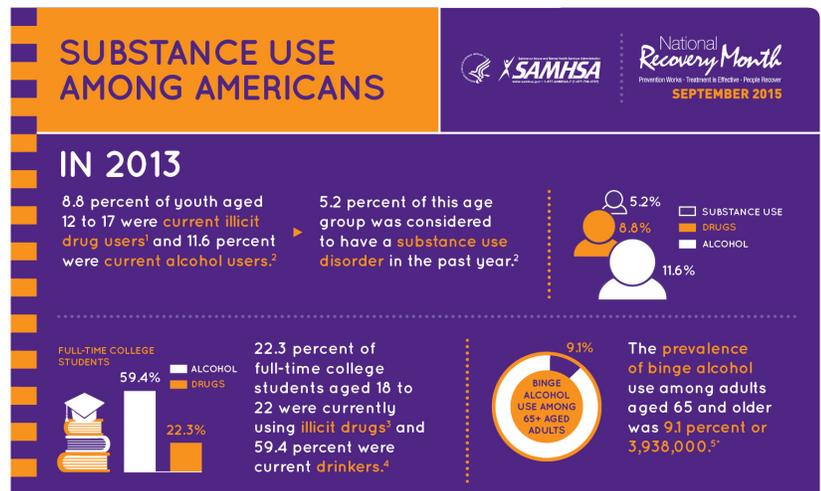
As in previous years, in 2015 SAMHSA developed a toolkit to educate people about mental and/or substance use disorders, facilitate individuals organizing **Recovery Month** events in their communities, and encourage use of the provided resources to help those affected by behavioral health conditions. The 2015 toolkit featured the **Recovery Month** theme, “Join the Voices for Recovery: Visible, Vocal, Valuable!” and was made available in both English and Spanish. The toolkit offered an overview of the landscape of behavioral health issues, provided information about common mental disorders and misused substances, highlighted treatment options, offered audience-specific outreach tips, and provided a wide variety of resources, including press materials and templates.

The toolkit also contained a “Voices for Recovery” section showcasing real-life examples of people in recovery.

SAMHSA also developed a series of banners, logos, and flyers that displayed the 2015 theme, logo, and branding. A set of data visualizations (please see next section) highlighted NSDUH data related to the target audiences. SAMHSA also developed Web banners and logos for Planning Partners and other **Recovery Month** supporters to post on their websites.

Executive Summary

Examples of data visualizations created for the toolkit, and also used on social media, are below.



Executive Summary

Television and Radio Public Service Announcements (PSAs)

In 2015, SAMHSA developed and produced two public service announcements (PSAs), which were titled “Drum Beats On” and “Garden.” The PSAs emphasized the support networks that give individuals hope and play an important role in the recovery process. Created to educate the public on how to seek help, the PSAs were developed for television in :15-, :20-, and :30-second spots, and were offered in both English and Spanish. The radio PSAs, produced in :20- and :30-second spots in English and Spanish, aired in top media markets like New York, Los Angeles, and Washington, DC, as well as Spanish-format radio stations.

To reach as many individuals as possible with the message that treatment is effective and recovery works, the 2015 television PSAs were made available on the **Recovery Month** website and the **Recovery Month** YouTube channel.

Television PSA Airtime, Ranking, and Markets

The 2015 **Recovery Month** television PSA campaign spots, “Drum Beats On,” and “Garden,” earned very strong metrics from initial distribution to stations beginning in June 2015. For example, in November 2015 the 2015 PSAs had almost 5,000 combined English and Spanish airings which placed the PSAs in the top 3-5% of all PSAs airing that month.

These metrics reflect the period from June 6, 2015, through December 31, 2015, and include:

- The English 2015 television PSAs aired a total 25,124 times.
- The Spanish versions of the PSAs aired 2,582 times on television.
- The English and Spanish PSAs combined garnered an estimated 227,300, 500 viewer impressions.

The 2015 English and Spanish television PSAs aired in several top-tier media markets, many of which included Spanish-speaking audiences, helping position SAMHSA as a trusted resource on behavioral health within the Hispanic community.

The Road to Recovery Television Series

The 2015 Road to Recovery television series aired eight television and radio episodes in a talk show, roundtable format that included panels of nationwide experts from the behavioral health field. The series was distributed to Public, Educational, and Government (PEG) channels in 50 states on 798 PEG access television channels in 742 unique cable markets. The program generated approximately \$22.9 million in free airtime (more than 114,912 hours), and was viewable in 35.2 million cable households in the United States and its territories, including American Samoa.

Interactive Recovery Month Web-Based Activities and Information

The **Recovery Month** website continued to serve as a portal to extensive resources and materials to meet the needs of diverse audiences, promoted the **Recovery Month** initiative, and expanded opportunities to communicate the **Recovery Month** messages of prevention, treatment, and recovery. The **Recovery Month** website is updated every year to reflect the theme, as well as a visual refresh of colors and homepage layout. New features designed to promote the “Join the Voices for Recovery: Visible, Vocal, Valuable!” theme were also added. These included animated graphics of the theme’s megaphone, thought bubbles, and interactive comment boxes.

The **Recovery Month** home page included a rotating features carousel section highlighting federal, Planning Partners, and other organizations’ resources and events; relevant news articles; and an interactive map to help visitors find events by state. Throughout the website, visitors had the opportunity to provide their feedback to

Recovery Month in comment boxes to answer queries such as “How do you speak up about recovery?” or post comments about recovery. The comments were used by SAMHSA on its social media pages.

Executive Summary

From January 1, 2015, to December 31, 2015, there were 121,885 views of the **Recovery Month** website with 357,078 generated page views.

In 2015, there were 26 user entries posted to the site's "Personal Stories" which provided individuals the opportunity to share their text stories about recovery.

The **Recovery Month** mobile site had 25,607 sessions between January 1, 2015 and December 31, 2015 and 55,570 page views, with 21,442 new users and 1,022 returning users. The Spanish-language website page had 521 page views.

Social Media

In 2015, SAMHSA continued regular engagement on social media platforms for its **Recovery Month** campaign. Fostering relationships through social media was crucial to connect with individuals throughout the nation and supporting those in recovery.

SAMHSA engaged with members of the recovery community through the **Recovery Month** Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube accounts. SAMHSA monitored metrics regularly on these platforms to optimize content for maximum audience engagement.

Facebook

Since the **Recovery Month** Facebook page was launched in July 2009, it has served as a forum for people to speak openly about recovery and interact with their peers. The Facebook page is a social hub of recovery information where SAMHSA can share news, resources, and inspirational encouragement, and can activate the recovery community to participate in offline recovery events.

The **Recovery Month** Facebook page had 37,688 as of December 31, 2015. In 2015, there were 13,422 new page likes, which represented a 34.8% increase from 2014 to 2015 and amounted to 1,583,624 total users reached. Engagement with posts on the page remained relatively steady throughout the year, with a noticeable increase in engagement in September when the **Recovery Month** observance began. There were 80,966 engagements in 2015; of this, 44,630 engagements happened during **Recovery Month**.

Twitter

SAMHSA takes advantage of Twitter's real-time, rapid response communication to discuss important topics affecting the online recovery community. The **Recovery Month** account posts updates to communicate with key audiences, including treatment providers, people in recovery, Planning Partners, and other government organizations focused on behavioral health issues. For example, in November 2015 the **Recovery Month** included a tweet sharing SAMHSA's feature in Mediaplanet U.S.A's "Medication Addiction" campaign to raise awareness of developments in combating opioid misuse.

The **Recovery Month** Twitter account helped position SAMHSA as an expert voice on the topic of recovery, and allowed SAMHSA to share inspirational quotes, events, resources, and words of encouragement. In 2015, the **Recovery Month** account gained 2,422 new Twitter followers for a total of 16,820 followers. Regular interaction with these users, through 613 tweets helped to raise awareness of **Recovery Month**, further promoted SAMHSA's messages, and highlighted that recovery is possible. There were 397,602 total organic impressions in 2015; during September a paid campaign garnered 207,015 paid impressions.

In 2015, SAMHSA posted tweets to raise awareness of events and programs that were relevant to the recovery community, such as the Unite to Face Addiction rally in Washington, DC, and the observance of Mental Illness Awareness Week in October.

Executive Summary

Proclamations

Federal, state, and local officials helped to raise awareness of mental and substance use disorders by declaring September as **National Recovery Month**. Officials across the country released **Recovery Month** proclamations, demonstrating their commitment to behavioral health treatment and services and to celebrating those in recovery.

Since 2002, Presidential Administrations have declared September as **Recovery Month**, amplifying the message that prevention works, treatment is effective, and people recover. SAMHSA encourages local government officials to sign an official proclamation that designates September as **Recovery Month**. When officials sign such a statement, public attention is drawn to **Recovery Month** events, and the community as a whole recognizes that local governments are committed to helping members of the community and their loved ones with mental health and/or substance use disorders. Proclamations are typically issued starting in early summer and are submitted through the end of the calendar year. In 2015, 82 proclamations were signed.

Looking Ahead

As **Recovery Month** enters its 27th year, SAMHSA remains committed to promoting resources, events, programs, and materials to help communities across the country elevate the benefits of treatment and recovery. **Recovery Month** looks forward to using digital platforms, compelling content, and relatable storytelling to promote the 2016 theme, “Join the Voices for Recovery: Our Families, Our Stories, Our Recovery!” Together, we can change lives and inspire hope throughout the recovery journey.