

"When the Game Slows Down" - Enhanced Education for Athlete Opioid Misuse Prevention

2023 Montana Opioid Abatement Trust Grants

South Central Regional Mental Health Center

Rod Ostermiller
1245 N.29th St.
Billings, MT 59101

karensylvester831@gmail.com
O: 307-272-8503
M: 406-606-0642

Karen Sylvester

1245 N.29th St.
Billings, MT 59101

ksylvest@scmrmhc.org
O: 307-272-8503
M: 307-272-8503

Application Form

Region Selection

To collaborate with someone else on this request, click the blue "Collaborate" button in the top-right corner.

Project Name*

"When the Game Slows Down" - Enhanced Education for Athlete Opioid Misuse Prevention

Select Abatement Region and/or Metro Region*

Select the Multi-County Abatement Region **and/or** the Metro Region you are requesting grant funds from. Select all regions that apply, for example if you are collaborating with multiple Counties **and/or** Abatement Regions select each region the program/project will serve. Click [HERE](#) for a detailed map of Multi-County Abatement Regions and Metro Abatement Regions

Yellowstone County

Application Overview

About the Organization/Program*

Give a brief description of the Organization/Program/Project. Include the mission statement and the services provided.

The Mental Health Center introduces "When the Game Slows Down," a pivotal initiative designed to confront the growing issue of opioid misuse among athletes. This project emerges from our commitment to substance abuse prevention, focusing on the unique vulnerabilities faced by athletes exposed to opioids post-injury. With a budget of \$25,000, our objective is to enhance educational outreach, integrating innovative methods to inform and protect people from the dangers of opioid dependency.

MHC is a leader in community-based substance abuse prevention, leverages its expertise and robust partnerships to address this critical issue. Recognizing that education is a key deterrent against opioid misuse, we target athletes, particularly those recovering from sports-related injuries—a group at heightened risk for opioid exposure. Through "When the Game Slows Down," we aim to fill existing educational voids, offering resources and advocating for non-opioid pain management alternatives.

This initiative seeks to expand our reach to all school sports programs and youth clubs in the county, providing accessible, comprehensive opioid misuse prevention resources. By 2025, our goal is to achieve a 30% reduction in opioid prescriptions for sports-related injuries, as verified by healthcare providers. To realize these ambitions, we plan to update and distribute educational materials, extend our workshop series, enhance our social media presence, share testimonies, and meticulously monitor and evaluate our progress.

Key components include collaborating with medical experts, trainers and physical therapists, to update educational content, organizing interactive workshops, and launching a comprehensive social media campaign aimed at increasing engagement and awareness. Personal testimonies from athletes and interactive

online tools will further personalize the learning experience, promoting a community-wide understanding of injury recovery without opioids.

What category does the program fit into*

Check the category/categories the program fits into. You may select more than one option.

Click [HERE](#) for a list of approved opioid remediation uses

Prevention

How does the program meet the Opioid Remediation Guidelines*

In detail, describe how the program fits into the approved Opioid Remediation Guidelines selected in the above question.

Please be specific

"The When the Game Slows Down initiative aligns with Opioid Remediation Guidelines, focusing on prevention for athletes. It uses educational interventions and alternative pain management to curb opioid misuse.

Prevention through Education: Targeting athletes, their networks, and healthcare providers, the program disseminates educational materials on non-opioid pain management, adhering to guidelines that emphasize preventive education to mitigate opioid misuse risks.

Community Engagement and Awareness: Engaging the community through workshops and social media, the initiative raises awareness about opioid misuse dangers. It uses interactive content and testimonials to foster dialogue on prevention, aligning with guidelines advocating for community-focused strategies.

Promotion of Non-Opioid Pain Management: The program collaborates with medical professionals, trainers and physical therapists, to promote non-opioid alternatives, in line with guidelines encouraging education on alternative pain relief methods. This reduces reliance on opioids, providing practical solutions for pain management.

Monitoring and Evaluation: Incorporating a robust evaluation framework, "When the Game Slows Down" collects feedback and analyzes trends in opioid prescriptions among athletes. This ensures the initiative adheres to evidence-based practices and improves continuously, as emphasized in the guidelines.

Stakeholder Collaboration: The initiative partners with schools, sports organizations, colleges, healthcare providers, trainers, physical therapists and media. This collaborative approach enhances reach and impact, ensuring broad community involvement in opioid misuse prevention, consistent with guidelines recommending multi-sectoral collaboration.

New Program or Existing*

Is the funding intended for a new program or to expand an existing program?

A proposed supplement or expansion to a program.

Fiscal Information

Requested Amount*

\$25,000.00

Program Budget*

How will the funds be allocated? Attach a detailed line item budget breakdown for the program. If the funds are intended for a multi-year program please specify the amount budgeted for each year.

When The Game Slows Down - Breakdown.pdf

Source of Funding*

Does the program currently receive funding from another source? If yes, please explain in detail. (i.e. amount, funding source, etc.)

Grant funding is intended for the creation or expansion of opioid prevention, treatment, and recovery projects. The money is **NOT** meant to replace or supplant existing funding.

The program does not currently receive any funding. The initial campaign was developed utilizing OD2A grants to prove the concept and engage the initial target audience.

Do you have a Fiscal Agent*

Yes

Fiscal Agent Contact Info

Fiscal Agent Name*

South Central Regional Mental Health Center

Fiscal Agent Email Address*

abenjiman@scrmhmc.org

Program Abstract

Program Description*

Describe the objectives of this project. Provide a detailed overview of the program, including its purpose, priorities & objectives, and intended results.

"The 'When the Game Slows Down' initiative is a comprehensive program designed to address the critical issue of opioid misuse among athletes in Yellowstone County and beyond, focusing on the vulnerable period of injury recovery. The alarming statistics from the National Athletic Trainers' Association (NATA) reveal that 90% of athletes experience sports-related injuries, with 54% playing while injured, increasing their risk of exposure to opioid-based pain medication during the recovery process. Our program aims to mitigate this risk through education, awareness, and the promotion of non-opioid pain management methods.

Objectives:

Educate athletes, student athletes, coaches, trainers, physical therapists and healthcare providers on the risks associated with opioid use and the benefits of alternative pain management strategies.

Reduce the prescription of opioids for sports-related injuries by encouraging the adoption of non-opioid pain relief methods.

Increase awareness and understanding of sports injury prevention, recognizing early signs of injury, and safe recovery practices among athletes and their support networks.

Program Overview:

The program is structured around several key components, each designed to address the multifaceted nature of opioid misuse prevention in the context of sports-related injuries:

Educational Workshops and Materials: Develop and distribute resources, including brochures, videos, and online content, highlighting the risks of opioid misuse and showcasing alternative pain management techniques.

Training for Coaches and Healthcare Providers: Offer specialized training sessions to ensure they are equipped to support athletes in making informed decisions about pain management.

Awareness Campaigns: Launch targeted social media campaigns and community events to raise awareness about the dangers of opioid misuse and the importance of injury prevention and safe recovery practices.

Monitoring and Feedback: Implement a system for tracking the program's effectiveness, including reductions in opioid prescriptions and improvements in community awareness and education.

Intended Results:

A measurable decrease in the prescription of opioids to athletes for sports-related injuries.

Enhanced knowledge and awareness among athletes, their families, coaches, trainers, physical therapists and healthcare providers about the dangers of opioid misuse and the availability of safer, effective pain management alternatives.

A cultural shift within sports programs towards prioritizing injury prevention, early detection, and non-opioid recovery methods.

By addressing the issue from multiple angles—education, prevention, and community engagement—'When the Game Slows Down' aims to protect athletes from the dual threats of sports-related injuries and opioid misuse, ensuring a safer, healthier future for athletes in Yellowstone County and beyond.

Program Reach

If you are requesting funds from multiple Abatement Regions please specify how your program serves each region.

Be specific.

Tailored Approach:

Our program's strategy includes customized educational content and localized community engagement efforts, ensuring relevance and effectiveness across diverse communities. By adjusting our materials and outreach efforts to align with regional demographics, cultural nuances, and specific opioid misuse challenges faced by the area, we enhance our program's accessibility and impact.

Engagement Strategy:

Customized Educational Content: Content tailored to reflect the demographic and cultural makeup of each region, enhancing relatability and effectiveness.

Localized Workshops and Training: Conducting sessions that address the unique sports injury profiles and healthcare landscapes of each region, facilitated by local professionals.

Community Engagement: Utilizing region-specific media consumption habits and platforms for awareness campaigns, and partnering with local influencers and organizations for broader reach.

Stakeholder Collaboration: Working closely with schools, healthcare providers, trainers, physical therapists and community organizations in each region to ensure the program's integration into local ecosystems.

Feedback and Evaluation: Implementing region-specific evaluation tools to gather feedback and measure impact, guiding continuous program refinement.

Estimated Reach:

With the program's comprehensive approach and based on census data, the targeted engagement of 23,230 youth and an equal number of guardians/parents across the abatement regions underscores our commitment to widespread educational outreach. This dual focus on youth and adults ensures that the message of opioid misuse prevention not only reaches those directly at risk but also embeds within the community through informed guardians and influencers, creating a more substantial preventive impact.

This calculated approach, supported by demographic data and tailored strategies, ensures "When the Game Slows Down" effectively addresses the opioid crisis by educating and engaging a significant portion of the population across multiple regions, fostering safer communities with informed choices about pain management and opioid use.

Specific Goals*

What are the specific goals of the program? List several goals the program hopes to accomplish and how the program intends to meet these goals.

Goal 1: Educate Athletes and Their Support Networks on Opioid Misuse Prevention

How to Achieve: Develop and disseminate engaging, age-appropriate educational materials that highlight the risks associated with opioid misuse and the benefits of non-opioid pain management strategies. Host interactive workshops and training sessions for athletes, coaches, trainers and parents, led by healthcare professionals and recovered athletes.

Goal 2: Increase Community Awareness and Understanding of Opioid Misuse Risks

How to Achieve: Launch a comprehensive social media campaign targeting both youth and adults, utilizing platforms popular among these demographics to share informative content, testimonials, and interactive online tools. Collaborate with local media to extend the reach of the campaign.

Goal 3: Foster a Culture of Injury Prevention and Safe Recovery Practices in Sports Programs

How to Achieve: Work closely with sports organizations and school programs to integrate injury prevention and safe recovery practices into their standard protocols. Offer training for coaches and athletic directors on recognizing early signs of injury and advocating for non-opioid recovery methods.

Goal 4: Equip Parents, Coaches, and Trainers with Tools to Facilitate Conversations About Safe Pain Management

How to Achieve: Create and distribute a toolkit for adults that includes conversation guides, FAQs about opioids, and information on alternative pain relief options. Host community forums and Q&A sessions to address concerns and promote open dialogue about opioid misuse prevention.

Goal 5: Achieve a Measurable Increase in Community Engagement and Program Participation

How to Achieve: Use digital and social media analytics to track engagement levels and adjust strategies accordingly. Implement feedback mechanisms through surveys and focus groups to understand community needs better and refine program offerings.

Goal 6: Establish and Strengthen Partnerships for a Unified Response to Opioid Misuse Prevention

How to Achieve: Engage in ongoing collaboration with schools, healthcare institutions, community organizations, and sports leagues to ensure a coordinated and sustained effort in opioid misuse prevention. Share resources and best practices to amplify impact.

Evaluation Method*

Describe how you plan to evaluate the effectiveness of the program and what the method for evaluation will be.

To evaluate the effectiveness of the "When the Game Slows Down" program, a comprehensive evaluation method will be employed, incorporating both quantitative and qualitative measures. This approach will ensure a thorough understanding of the program's impact on opioid misuse prevention among athletes and the broader community. The evaluation plan includes the following components:

Quantitative Measures:

Pre- and Post-Program Surveys: Conduct surveys among participants (student athletes, athletes, coaches, parents) before and after the program's implementation to measure changes in knowledge, attitudes, and behaviors related to opioid use and pain management.

Prescription Data Analysis: Collaborate with healthcare providers to track the number of opioid prescriptions issued for sports-related injuries before and after the program's intervention. This data will serve as a direct indicator of the program's impact on prescribing behaviors.

Engagement Metrics: Utilize digital analytics tools to assess the reach and engagement of online educational materials and social media campaigns. Key metrics include website visits, material downloads, social media interactions, and attendance at educational events.

Partnership and Outreach Metrics: Track the number of partnerships established with schools, sports organizations, and healthcare providers, as well as the frequency and scope of educational sessions conducted.

Qualitative Measures:

Interviews and Focus Groups: Conduct interviews and focus groups with program participants, including athletes, student athletes, their families, coaches, and healthcare providers, to gather detailed feedback on the program's effectiveness, relevance, and areas for improvement.

Case Studies: Develop case studies highlighting specific instances where the program influenced decision-making processes regarding pain management and opioid use among athletes.

Stakeholder Feedback: Collect and analyze feedback from key stakeholders involved in program delivery and partnership to evaluate the program's integration into sports and healthcare settings.

Data Sources:

Pre- and post-program surveys distributed electronically and in-person.

Prescription data provided by partnering healthcare institutions.

Digital analytics from Google Analytics, social media platforms, and online survey tools.

Qualitative data from recorded interviews, focus groups, and open-ended survey questions.

Awareness*

How do you plan to create awareness of this program? Briefly describe what action the program plans to take to create awareness in the community.

To create awareness of the "When the Game Slows Down" program within the community, a multifaceted approach will be utilized, leveraging both traditional and digital platforms to ensure wide-reaching impact. The strategy includes:

Social Media Campaigns: Launch targeted campaigns on platforms like Instagram, Facebook, Twitter, and TikTok, utilizing engaging content such as videos, infographics, and testimonials from athletes and medical professionals. These campaigns will be designed to highlight the risks of opioid misuse and promote the program's resources and events.

Collaborations with Local Media: Partner with local newspapers, radio stations, and TV networks to feature stories and advertisements about the program. This will include interviews with program leaders, success stories from participants, and expert advice on opioid misuse prevention.

Outreach to Healthcare Providers and Sports Organizations: Engage directly with healthcare professionals, physical therapists, trainers, coaches, and sports organizations to disseminate program information and materials. This will ensure that trusted figures in the community are informed and can recommend the program to athletes and their families.

Educational Materials Distribution: Produce and distribute flyers, posters, and brochures in strategic locations such as clinics, community centers, schools, and sports facilities. This material will contain key information about the program, including how to access resources and participate in upcoming events.

Website and Online Toolkit: Develop a comprehensive program website and online toolkit that serves as a hub for information, resources, and interactive learning tools. Promoting the website through SEO strategies and online ads will increase visibility and accessibility.

Engagement with Influencers and Ambassadors: Collaborate with local sports figures, influencers, and program alumni who can share their stories and promote the program through their networks. This peer-to-peer approach will help normalize conversations around injury recovery and opioid misuse prevention.

Additional Documents

Use this section to upload or explain any additional information regarding the program/organization. ie. a detailed budget projection, program/organization history, etc.

Upload #1

YC When the Game Slows Down_Flyer (4).pdf

Upload #2

4k Snowboarding_VHS (1) (1) (1).mp4

Upload #3

1080 Bull riding (1) (1) (1).mp4

Additional Information

Please note, video quality of two samples are reduced due to compression for submission.

File Attachment Summary

Applicant File Uploads

- When The Game Slows Down - Breakdown.pdf
- YC When the Game Slows Down_Flyer (4).pdf
- 4k Snowboarding_VHS (1) (1) (1).mp4
- 1080 Bull riding (1) (1) (1).mp4

Budget Breakdown:

1. Project Management: \$2,000

- **Project Coordinator:** Coordination and administrative oversight.
 - 50 hours at \$40/hour.

2. Educational Material Development: \$8,000

- **Content Creation:** Design, video production, research, content writing for educational materials.
 - 50 hours at \$100/hour = \$5,000.
- **Production and Distribution:** Printing and dissemination of materials.
 - \$3,000 for production costs.

3. Partner Engagement: \$1,000

- **Outreach and Workshops:** Engaging schools, sports organizations, physical therapist, trainers, and healthcare providers.

4. Monitoring and Evaluation: \$2,000

- **Data Collection and Analysis:** Tracking program effectiveness.
 - 20 hours at \$100/hour.

5. Marketing and Awareness Campaigns: \$10,000

- **Social Media Advertising:** Targeted campaigns on social platforms.
 - 20 hours at \$85/hour for manager time + ad spend = \$1,700.
- **Print and Digital Material Production:** Promotional content creation = \$8,300

6. Community Outreach Events: \$2,000

- **Public Awareness Events:** Planning and executing community awareness events.



WHEN THE GAME SLOWS DOWN... BE READY TO CHANGE PACES



The situation is all too familiar for student athletes in Yellowstone County and beyond, check in for the game... go up for a layup.... Feel a pop and searing pain. While the student athlete's season may be over the real danger may be lurking in the recovery.

According to the **National Athletic Training Association (NATA)**, 90% of student athletes report sustaining some sort of sports related injury. With an eye popping 54% reporting they play while injured. Sadly, for a host of reasons, sports related injuries are increasing leaving our youth at risk to exposure of Opioid based pain medication.

HOW TO HELP:

Helping an injured athlete includes supporting the mind, body, and soul. Some suggestions include:

- Seek professional medical evaluation and treatment for injury
- Monitor medication and substance use
- Communicate and discuss feelings such as abandonment, isolation, depression, and loss of identity
- Provide alternative outlets and activities
- Support proper rehabilitation efforts
- Ensure pain free use of injury to avoid misuse of medication

MEDICATION USE:

Always ensure that you consult a doctor prior to the use of medication, especially high powered Opioid based painkillers. The odds you'll still be on opioids a year after starting a short course increase after only five days on opioids. ²

If an athlete, or anyone else in your home, is prescribed and needs medication ensure:

- All medication is properly stored in a safe, secure, hidden location. Medicine cabinets in bathrooms are not a good storage location due to high visibility and frequent access.
- Monitor medication amounts and ensure it is being taken in accordance with the prescribed plan
- Safely dispose of all medication once no longer needed.

SOCIAL SUPPORT:

An athletic injury frequently has profound negative consequences on the physical health of a college athlete and can also cause a great deal of psychological distress, evoking anger, depression, anxiety, tension, fear, and lower self-esteem. Mood disturbances are especially apparent among competitive athletes who are seriously injured. Such functional loss or the inability to continue team participation can be devastating and cause difficulties in coping with the injury cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally. ¹

¹<https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/pmc/articles/PMC2902031/>

²<https://www.mayoclinic.org/diseases-conditions/prescription-drug-abuse/in-depth/how-opioid-addiction-occurs/art-20360372>