Data to Action

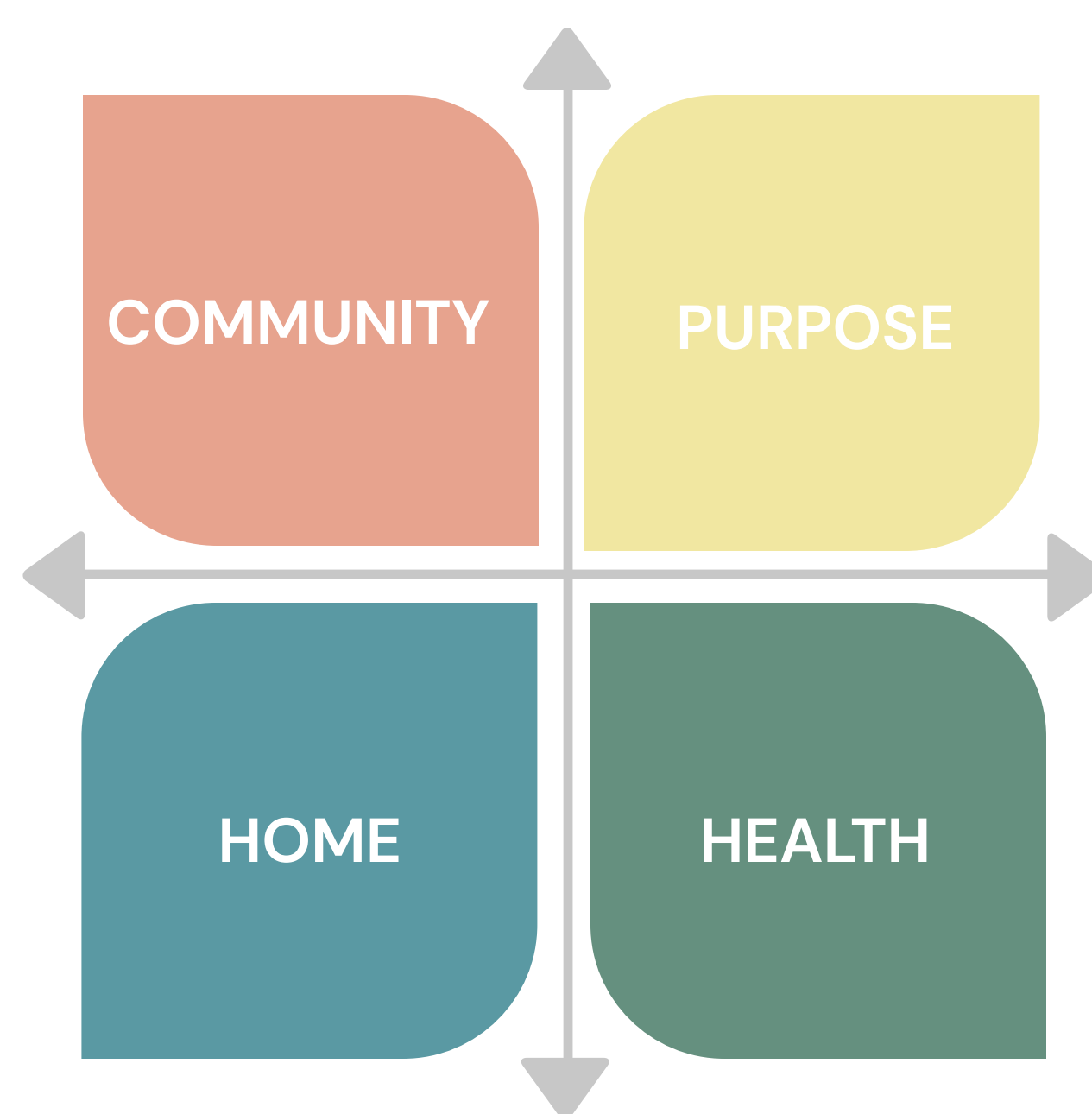## Oneida County Substance Use Assessment l 2021

To better understand this complex issue, public data on perceptions and attitudes towards substance use was collected. The results will help inform a strategic planning process for selecting targeted community prevention and response strategies. This report outlines the key findings from this assessment.

Social and Community Connectedness

Social and community connectedness was identified as an effective community strategy for supporting individuals who are experiencing substance use concerns. Connectedness is a social determinant of health.* In fact, a strong sense of belonging and social connection is associated with improved physical health and mental well-being. It can lower levels of anxiety and depression and helps people recover from disease faster. On the other hand, social exclusion is associated with declines in physical and psychological health.**

Four Dimensions of Recovery

High Social Connections Lower Rates of Anxiety and Depression

COMMUNITY PURPOSE

HOME HEALTH

The process of recovery is supported through relationships and social networks that provide support, friendship, love and hope. This often involves family and peer support.***

Benefits of Peer Recovery Support Services**

- Improve relationship with treatment provider
- Increased treatment retention
- Improved access to social supports
- Decreased emergency service utilization
- Reduce substance use
- Greater housing stability

Assessment Participants Reported

EVIDENCE

Addiction is isolating.

Individuals experiencing substance use concerns...

- Feel disconnected from or not accepted by the general community.
- Experience barriers to connecting with friends and family.
- Addiction within the family structure and lack of family supports impacts youth social connectedness.

Misunderstanding of substance use, addiction and recovery.

- Varying or limited engagement of the recovery community in decision making processes and response efforts.

Varying or limited recovery supports and groups.

- Limited community and criminal justice based recovery resources impacts reentry planning and support.
- Varying collaboration among service organizations in community intervention and response initiatives.

Harmful social norms around substance use are a risk factor associated with a higher likelihood of developing a substance use concern.

- Substance use, like alcohol and tobacco, are socially acceptable at community events.
- Social access to a variety of substances from family and/or peers increases availability, initiation and makes it difficult to abstain.
- Environmental factors, like family history of substance use and addiction, impacts cycles of addition.

Social and Community Connectedness

Assessment Participants Identified Next Steps

Establish a recovery oriented system of care.

- Increase engagement and collaboration among the populations impacted by substance use and mental health concerns and organizations and agencies that work with these populations.

- Grow capacity within the recovery community to participate on the treatment team through peer recovery support services.

- Improve collaboration among public health, public safety/first responders and behavioral health to assure continuity of care.

- Increase awareness and availability of individual and family focused recovery supports and groups.

- Expand peer recovery and other social supports to help cope with life stressors (financial, social, emotional, etc.).

- Establish community recovery organizations.

Employ early interventions for high-risk groups.

- Implement systems for identification and early interventions with high-risk groups, specifically among LGBTQ youth and those involved with the criminal justice system.

- Establish adult and peer mentor programs for youth.

- Implement jail-based recovery support re-entry programs.

- Employ peer recovery support services.

Establish community events that promote helpful social norms.
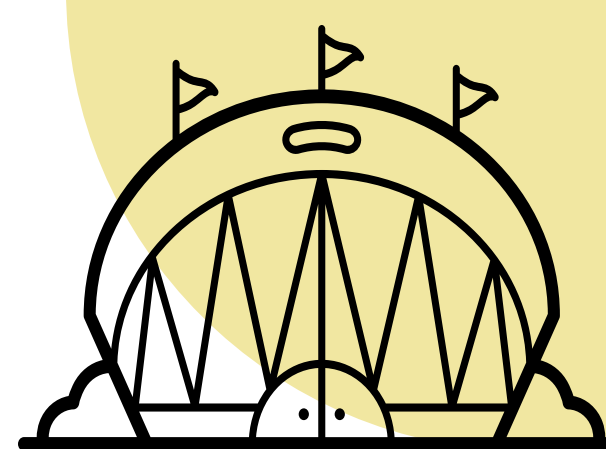
- Expand community events that focus on building relationships among neighbors.

- Implement sober community events.

- Expand family and youth focused activities.

- Expand community enrichment activities that build resiliency skills.

*CDC Social Determinants of Health: https://www.cdc.gov/socialdeterminants/index.htm
**Stanford Medicine - Connectedness & Health: http://ccare.stanford.edu/uncategorized/connectedness-health-the-science-of-social-connection-infographic/
***SAMSHA Recovery and Recovery Support. https://www.samhsa.gov/find-help/recovery

Extension
UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN–MADISON
ONEIDA COUNTY

COPE Coalition
Community, Outreach, Prevention and Education

NORTHWOODS
tobacco
FREE
COALITION

ONEIDA COUNTY
HEALTH DEPARTMENT