



WEBER*RENEW

IMPACT REPORT

2020



Some of the PWR team before our annual needle clean-up in September 2020

A message from our Executive Director

COVID-19 has laid bare the systemic injustices that impact the people we serve. Our mission at Project Weber/RENEW is to work with people most affected by these barriers to help them live safer and healthier lives.



Throughout the challenges of 2020, I had the honor of working alongside the resilient and dedicated Project Weber/RENEW team. Providing our community support in light of the increased risks of the pandemic was a challenging, but obvious, decision.

Our staff, many of whom are immuno-compromised themselves, chose to remain out in the community, providing services. An outreach worker may drop off 10 Narcan kits at midnight and still transport someone to treatment immediately afterward. For the people we serve, our uninterrupted street outreach was one of the few supports available.

I am constantly inspired and awed by our dedicated team at Project Weber/RENEW, and yet we cannot do this alone. Support from our community shows that stigma does not determine who deserves dignity and care, and provides direct material and social support to those most impacted by the crises of the overdose epidemic, systemic racism, and COVID-19.

With gratitude,
Colleen Daley Ndoeye

WHAT WE DO

We provide a full range of **harm reduction services** through street outreach and at our two drop-in centers in Providence and Pawtucket.

Harm reduction is a collection of strategies and approaches to **alleviate the risks** associated with vulnerable circumstances. Harm reduction is both individual and systemic.

We meet people where they are, presenting the **people we serve** with opportunities to protect themselves and make healthier choices.

In addition to direct support, we **advocate for policy and social change** to reduce stigma and improve the lives of the people we serve.



POLICY & ADVOCACY

Staff represent PWR at the
BLM RI Protest
06/2020



HARM REDUCTION

Rich and Sid distribute
Naloxone
03/2020



PEER SUPPORT

Our "Beyond" Group
looking fabulous
08/2020



RESEARCH & SYSTEMS CHANGE

Dennis and Ashley at the Rally for
Recovery
09/2020



CASE MANAGEMENT & RESOURCES

Though we may encounter challenges,
we never give up on our clients
02/2020

2020 by the Numbers

We provide welcoming and quality **harm reduction outreach** and **linkage to health care** to people who experience numerous structural barriers to accessing these services.

In 2020, PWR staff continued to provide resources and support, plus additional services to help our clients protect themselves during the COVID-19 pandemic.



Sid preparing for outreach

2020 Funding Sources



- Government grants: 83%
- Corporate & foundation grants: 12%
- Individual contributions: 5%

2020 Program Expenses



- Outreach: 60%
- Case Management: 21%
- Health Screenings: 5%
- OD Data: 5%
- Housing: 5%
- Trainings: 4%



85% of staff who serve clients and half of management are peers to the people we serve

Over **4,600** interactions with people we serve.

Outreach Efforts



1,400+ people served



2,700+ naloxone units distributed



22,000+ condoms given



275+ HIV and Hepatitis C tests conducted



650+ fentanyl test strips provided

A 100% increase in funding

allowed us to hire **TWICE** as many people to engage in direct, peer-based outreach.

"COVID-19 doesn't stop overdoses."

—Rich Holcomb, Project Weber Manager

Throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, our outreach team did not stop: they continued to meet individuals where they are. Project Weber/RENEW (PWR) used outreach vans to meet people and provide vital services.

As a peer-led organization, staff have similar histories to the people they serve. Many have compromised immune systems, chronic conditions, and/or are in long-term recovery.

During these tough times, the PWR team offered intensive case management services, distributed PPE, and helped people navigate COVID-19 testing and emergency housing systems.

Becoming frontline workers during a pandemic requires courage, strength, and perseverance. Our PWR team stepped up to provide services when people had few places to turn.

384 Rhode Islanders died from drug overdose in 2020, making it the deadliest year on record.

Source: preventoverdoseri.org



Rich (left) and Ashley (right) in the PWR outreach van



Jesinya helps unload supplies for a client

Racism Is a Public Health Crisis

PWR has always been committed to dismantling systems that harm our communities.

In 2020, George Floyd's murder moved our staff to speak out against anti-Black racism in Rhode Island.

#BlackLivesMatter #AmplifyMelanatedVoices

"I dream of a society for future generations where Black families have safe and affordable housing, where Black children are given quality education, where we have seen an end to the 'War on Drugs' in our communities, where Black trans folks are celebrated, and Black Americans can live without fear of violent police in our neighborhoods."

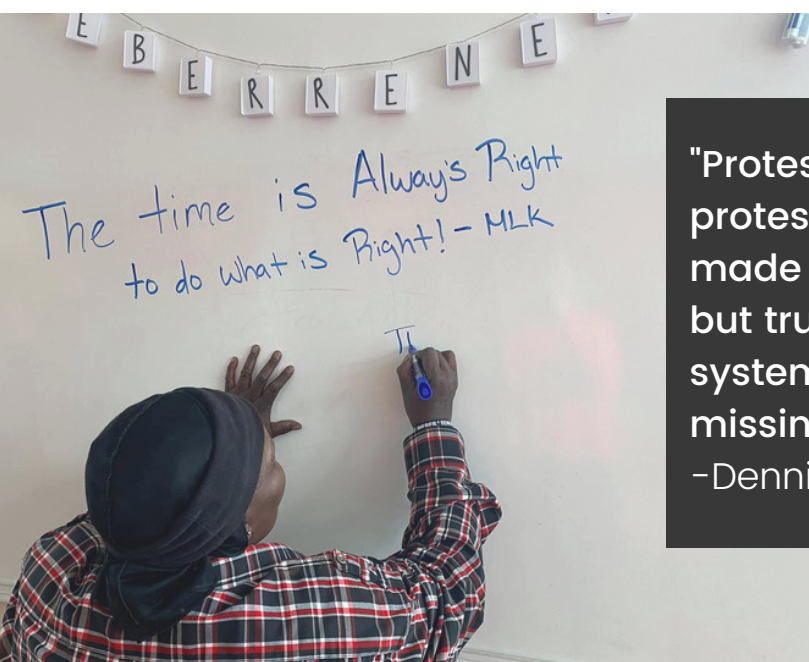
-Sid, Trans Program Coordinator



Lily and Dennis at our annual needle clean-up

"I feel that fear and ignorance are at the heart of this, and until we let go of the fear of people that don't look like us and the ignorance that has been ingrained in people, I fear this hateful behavior will continue."

-Lily, Assistant Director



"Protest after protest after protest is fantastic and we've made a great deal of progress, but true top-to-bottom systemic CHANGE is what is missing!"

-Dennis, Outreach Director

Partnerships

We know the importance of collaboration in meeting the needs of the people we serve.



PWR staff on International Overdose Awareness Day, 08/2020

GOVERNOR'S OVERDOSE TASK FORCE RACIAL EQUITY WORK GROUP

This group was formed in **to address the lack of representation of People of Color** in the Governor's Overdose Task Force, as well as to highlight the need to have racial equity at the forefront of Rhode Island's overdose response.

HARM REDUCTION RI WORKING GROUP FIGHTS COVID

In response to the pandemic, we organized the this group to share resources with other outreach, harm reduction, and recovery organizations. We created COVID-specific resource sheets and a set of **COVID-related precautions for people who use drugs**.

WORKING TO ADDRESS CRIMINALIZATION

The people we serve are unjustly criminalized in many ways. We created a document for various agencies highlighting our **concerns about law enforcement's treatment of our communities**, including their failure to uphold the Good Samaritan Law and to administer naloxone.

INTERNATIONAL OVERDOSE AWARENESS DAY

August 31, 2020, **was the largest day of naloxone distribution in Rhode Island's history!** We worked with over 60 organizations to distribute over 1,400 doses of naloxone across the state in under 24 hours.

PROJECT BREAK

In partnership with Miriam Hospital, Project BREAK offers peer support and case management, psychological services, and rental assistance **to Black and Latinx men, as well as nonbinary and transgender people who use stimulants**.

“

“Working during COVID presented a whole new host of challenges with trying to provide basic needs, support, and empowering services for the folks in our community. With so many services closed or limited, trying to keep folks connected to food stamps, emergency housing, health care, and recovery support was so difficult and **required us to build closer relationships with providers and other community organizations.**” —Nya Reichley and Kamila Garay



Lily hosting an HIV and Hepatitis C testing event

We believe in providing peer-based harm reduction and recovery services so the people we serve can live better lives...but we need your help!

**Click the link below to support
Project Weber/RENEW**

DONATE NOW

<https://bit.ly/389sWzj>

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Colleen Daley Ndoeye, Executive Director

Lily Rivera, Assistant Director

Dennis Bailer

Luke Brookner

Rich Holcomb

Cheryl Robinson

Lisa Daluz

Tyrone McKinney

Jesinya Sousa

Ashley Perry

Sidney Lane Smith

Denniss Berganza

Annajane Yolken

Nya Reichley

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Project Weber/RENEW is a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization made up of a committed and diverse group of individuals.