

AVENUE A COMMUNITY TEEN + COMMUNITY CENTER BELONGING PLACE

A Program of the Grapevine Family & Community Resource Center

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OUR TEEN CENTER

As the only Teen Center in the Monadnock Region, Avenue A is a program of The Grapevine Family & Community Resource Center.

We partner with rural teens age 11-19 to build resilience, navigate challenging circumstances, and develop young leaders.

With the support of over 60 volunteers, we run year-round afternoon and evening enrichment programs for teens.

300 teens from 18 towns participate in Avenue A—coming from across the ConVal School District and surrounding towns including New Ipswich, Wilton, Stoddard, Nelson, and Deering.

Our programs are offered at no cost, removing barriers to participation for teens we serve.

Our community enthusiastically embraces our unique model for supporting youth. We see this in our robust program participation, in the 22 organizations that partner with us, and in our incredible volunteers who are dedicated to supporting teens.

Avenue A welcomes youth of all abilities, including those with chronic illnesses, physical disabilities, neurodivergence, and mental health challenges. We celebrate the unique identity of every teen!

EVIDENCE-BASED SUPPORT

Avenue A programs follow the “HOPE: Health Outcomes from Positive Experiences” framework for building resiliency and healthy development; as developed by Robert Sege, MD, PhD and published in *The Journal of Academic Pediatrics*. We follow the framework’s four pillars by:

- developing supportive relationships between teens and local mentors
- providing a safe physical environment
- providing opportunities for connectedness and constructive social engagement
- teaching social emotional competencies

By weaving these pillars into our programs, we’re cultivating stronger youth and a stronger community.

WHAT TEENS SAY

“I was shy when I first started coming to Avenue A. Then I started doing art workshops there and I just kind of broke out of my shell. If it wasn’t for Ave A, I wouldn’t have met my best friend and wouldn’t have gotten to know my community better, not just teens, but the adult volunteers in the area.” ~ Bernadette

“Everything in Avenue A is donated or given in some way and it just adds this whole feeling of giving, of freedom...It just feels safe.” ~ Aiden

“Without Avenue A’s writing program, I would not have been able to push through many of the struggles that come with high school and life... had it not been for this program I might not be here today to tell you the importance.” ~ Brenna

“I love Avenue A because I can get out in the community, make friends, unwind, and just be myself. No one gets bullied at Avenue A. You can be yourself there—no one will judge you. A lot of teens go around with a mask on, but when they come to Avenue A they can be who they are. I can tell people at Avenue A that I have Autism, and they don’t look at me different. It’s a safe place for the special needs community, which is important because there aren’t a lot of places for us... I am best friends with so many people at Avenue A. They are all so happy to see me when I come in the door.” ~ RJ

AVENUE A'S HISTORY

November 2006 – The Idea is Born

The Grapevine's Brown Bag Coalition consisting of representatives from schools, library, police department, churches, rec dept, and civic groups determined the need for a teen center and identified 42 Main St as an available and appropriate site.

January 2007 – Committee of Teens

30 teens meet weekly with Grapevine Executive Director Kristin Vance and parents to develop their vision for the teen center and implement their first fundraiser. A Community Steering Group is formed at this time.

October 2007 – Grand Opening

Teen Center Coordinator, teens, and parents work with Antrim Mills Corp (landlord) to ready the 1,200 sf space for the center. The Teen Center has its grand opening on Halloween!

May 2008 - Named!

The Teen Center is named "Avenue A" after a naming contest. The name comes from the musical "Rent". In the musical, Avenue A was a place where people from all walks of life could come together.

FUNDING

Avenue A's portion of The Grapevine budget is about \$105,000 (FY 2022-2023). Avenue A receives grant funding from a mix of sources, including The Gilbert Verney Foundation, The Agnes Lindsay Trust, The Robin Colson Foundation, and The NH State Council on the Arts. Past funders include 100+ Women Who Care Monadnock, The Madeline Von Weber Trust, The Cogswell Benevolent Trust, and Monadnock Men on a Mission.

NH Gives, a statewide day of giving in June, is The Grapevine's biggest Avenue A fundraiser. The Grapevine's Annual Auction, Annual Appeal, and Spring Walk also support Avenue A. The Bantam Grill in Peterborough donates proceeds from its Beastmaster Dinner to our programs for youth. Avenue A receives town funding from Antrim, Bennington, Frankestown, and Hancock.

ORGANIZATIONS WE WORK WITH...

Antrim Bennington Lions Club – Volunteers, financial support

Antrim Presbyterian Church – Kitchen space for Dinner Club

All Saints Church – Volunteers, fundraising support

Harris Center for Conservation Education – special program partner

The Tuttle Library – special program partner

The Peterborough Town Library – special program partner

Music On Norway Pond – Lawn Chair Drill Team season partner

Connected Families NH – Pizza Talk program partner

Maps Counseling Services – Pizza Talk program partner

Hancock Woman's Club – Financial support, Write Out! supporter

Hancock Community Conversations on Race – Write Out! supporter

ConVal School District - Promotes our programs and refers youth to us!

The Grand Monadnock Rotary –FFI Youth Leadership Program sponsor

Friends Forever International – Youth Leadership Programming

Antrim Recreation Department –Gym space for basketball program

Town of Antrim – Theatre space for our Community Theatre

GBS VEX Robotics Team – Summer workshop partner

Bantam Grill – Fundraising partner

Hancock Library – Special program partner

The River Center – Provides Safe Sitter courses at our location

MaXT Makerspace – Special program partner

The Toadstool Bookshop – Write Out! Partner

PROGRAMS

Programs offered seasonally or on an ongoing basis include:

Career/Life Skills: Cooking - Woodworking/Carpentry - Gardening - Leadership Development - 3D Printing

Social Development: Middle School Afterschool Club - Baking Society - Pizza Talk - Open Hours - Clothing Day - Tabletop Games

Creative Expression: Write Out! - Art Workshops - Manga Art Group - Music Jams – Community Theatre

Wellness and Healthy Living: Yoga – Road Biking - Mtn. Biking - Outdoor Adventures Group - Lawn Chair Drill Team – Pick-Up Basketball