

Recovery Iowa 2021

Report provided to the Iowa Department of Public Health,

Substance Abuse Bureau

September, 2021



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Overview

At the request of the Iowa Department of Public Health, Bureau of Substance Abuse, the Public Science Collaborative (PSC) developed a number of recovery tools to be hosted on a recovery oriented website, as well as community-specific reports to support recovery efforts in Iowa.

This report documents the final deliverables for this contract, as well as additional work produced outside of the scope of the original contract, including an extension of the Recovery Iowa website to have the look and feel of an Recovery Community Organization (RCO) for the state of Iowa, the creation of a Recovery Iowa video for the website, additional content on recovery tips, stories of recovery from Iowans, and expanded data holdings and tools.

For additional questions or information about this report, the data tools described, or the Public Science Collaborative, please reach out to the principal investigators of this study, Dr. Shawn Dorius at sdorius@iastate.edu, or Dr. Cassandra Dorius at cdorius@iastate.edu.

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This project was supported by the Iowa Department of Public Health, Bureau of Substance Abuse (IDPH) via a subaward from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services (SAMHSA) of the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) as part of a financial assistance award totaling \$350,000 with 100 percent funded by SAMHSA/HHS. The contents are those of the author(s) and do not necessarily represent the official views of, nor an endorsement by, IDPH, SMHSA/HHS, or the U.S. Government



Deliverable 1: Recovery Website

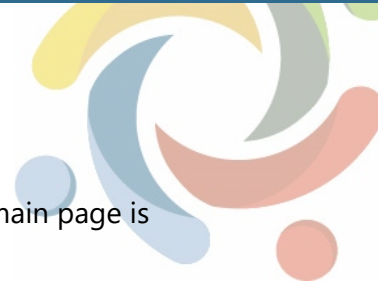
Website: <https://recovery-iowa.org/>

Prior to the technical development of the website, significant effort was dedicated to the intentional development of the website mission, values, and goals, with a focus on how to layer messages of hope, connection, acceptance, and meaning into the website format and tools. The mission statement for the Recovery Iowa website is to “**Connect Iowans to the resources they need to make a better life for themselves and the people they love.**”

The facilitated workshop series also identified typical website visitor, as well as their pain points and goals for accessing the website, so that PSC could enact a human-centered design approach that keeps end-users in mind throughout each stage of development. This led to insights and technical innovations such as the need to:

- **Promote privacy.** A quick-access button (the red X marking on the right side of every page) allows users to immediately leave the website and return to the prior page if they need privacy in an instant.
- **Support people in crisis.** A ‘crisis bar’ at the top of every webpage links visitors to resources to call or text with a live person or find a peer support meeting now. A welcome video on the main page provides hope and encouragement. The video voice actor was hired to reflect the tone of ‘real’ people with lived experience that PSC spoke with in developing these materials to better connect the message to the website visitor.
- **Support ‘all paths’ to recovery.** Three resource location tools (Meeting Finder, Community Resources, & Recovery Resources) help people find a wide-variety of community and recovery supports throughout the state. Further, extensive evidence-based resources are made available to support a wide variety of recovery practices.
- **Be simple to use.** Visitors can identify the type of information they need quickly, without sifting through the site’s extensive holdings through easy-to-use pulldowns at the top of the page, as well as strategically designed content within each page. For example, flip-cards on page one include short summaries when the cursor hovers over them, but link to more extensive information as wanted. The ability to switch between pages with ease and preview the pages through summaries before visiting them allows users to better guide themselves through the website and engage content at a comfortable pace.
- **Meet people where they are.** Dual development of desktop and mobile applications allows any visitor with an internet connection to access high-quality *Recovery Iowa* resources. Further, emphasis was placed on creating resources that were free to use, easy to understand, and could be utilized by a variety of recovery stakeholders.

PSC website workshop topics also included the development of the **logo** to reflect human-centered healing within a community context; **color** selection to promote a peaceful and encouraging online environment; and a user experience workshop that explored the **tone, language, personality, and**



purpose behind the content of each page developed. A pictorial overview of website main page is provided in Figures 1-3.

Figure 1 depicts the Recovery Iowa landing page. It introduces viewers to the resources available and invites them to learn more about the journey of recovery through a short and hope-filled video.

Figure 2 depicts '9 Evidence-Based Tips for Sustaining Recovery' as interactive flip cards that allow users to quickly assess the content that is most applicable to them. Each tip includes links to resources, activities, and opportunities to help viewers learn more about taking care of themselves while recovering. The evidence-backed tips correspond with the **Eight Dimensions of Wellness** that work together to promote holistic wellbeing, including physical, intellectual, emotional, social, spiritual, vocational, financial, and environmental. Each tip provides the reader with a brief scientific explanation of how the specific activity promotes recovery. The second section of text invites the reader to participate in a number of activities, such as to "**watch**," "**explore**," or "**practice**." Each tip has bullets that describe the activity, and links readers to educational videos, podcasts, TedTalks, articles, and other evidence-backed resources to learn more about the activity and how they could incorporate it into their own life. The evidence-backed tips also connect directly with our "Activities" page, which features **journaling prompts** that correspond to each of the evidence-backed tips. The reflective journaling exercises are designed to promote mindfulness (a positive behavior associated with long-term recovery) while being sensitive enough to not trigger people in recovery. Given that journaling is a relatively accessible activity that does not require significant time or resources, it provides website visitors with a simple way to reflect on their learnings, and begin the process of connecting their learnings with their personal experiences.

In Figure 3, Voices of Recovery are highlighted, which include stories from real Iowans with lived experiences. These excerpts on the main page connect to six longer stories from people at various stages of their recovery sharing what they have learned about the recovery process.



Figure 1. Screen Shot of the Recovery Iowa Landing Page

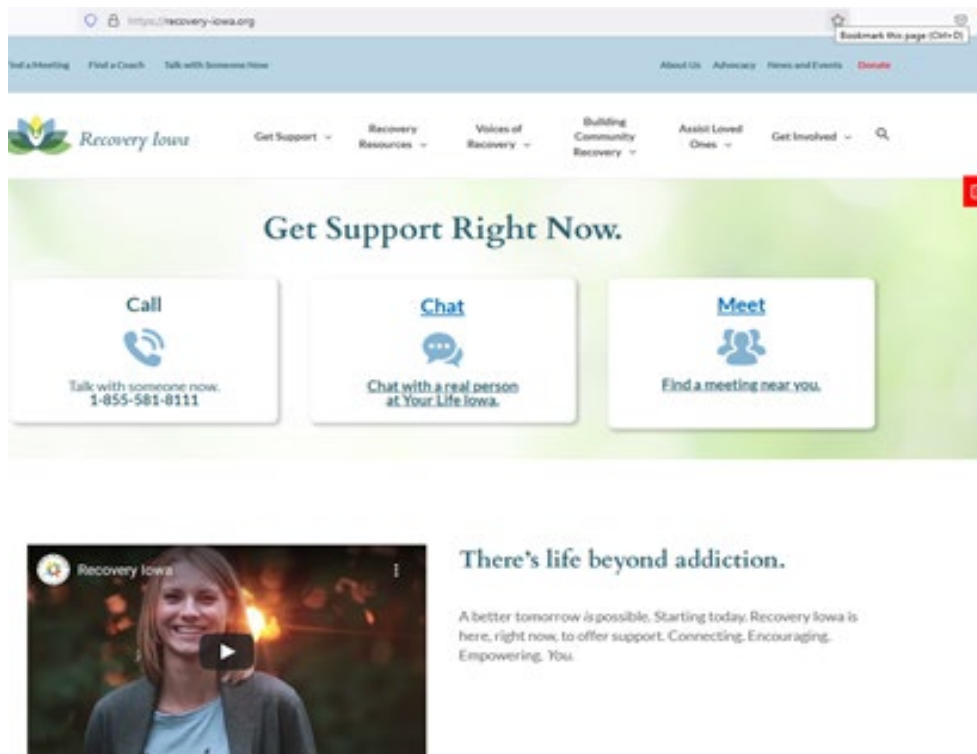


Figure 2. Screen Shot of 9 Evidence-Based Recovery Tips

9 Evidence-Based Tips for Sustaining Recovery

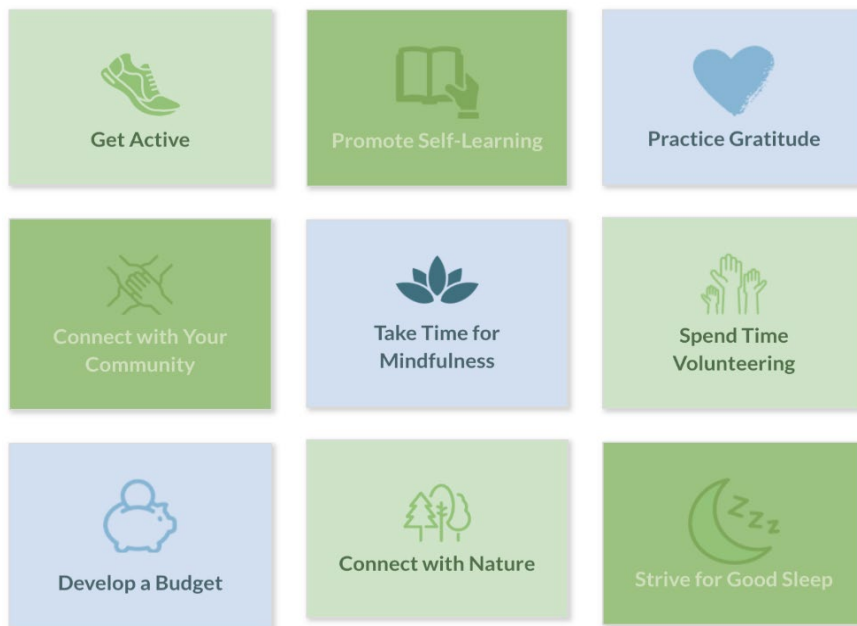
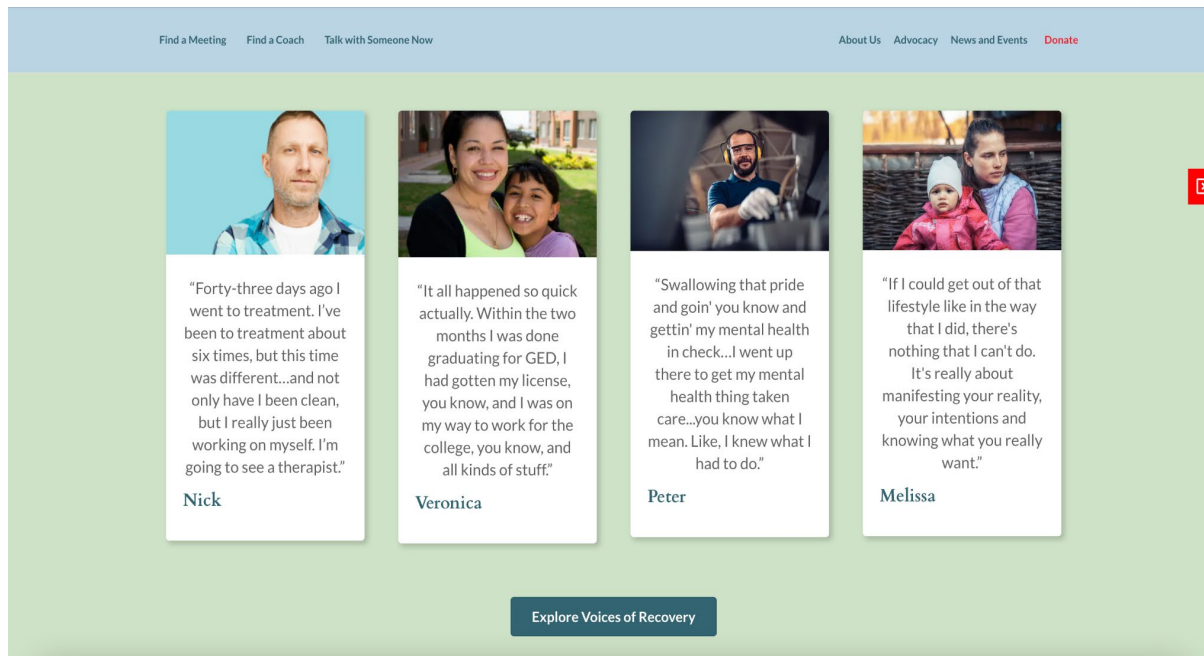




Figure 3. Screen shot of *Voices of Recovery*





Deliverable 2: PSC Meetings Finder Tool

Interactive tool: <http://public-science.org/meetingfinder/>

Data updated daily: *Adult Children of Alcoholics, Al-Anon/Alateen, Alcoholics Anonymous (AA), Buddhist recovery, Celebrate Recovery, CRUSH, Crystal Meth Anonymous, Dual Recovery Anonymous, Nar-Anon, Narcotics Anonymous (NA), Pill Anonymous, Refuge Recovery, and SMART Recovery*

The PSC Meeting Finder is a web application that allows viewers to find meetings tailored to their specific needs by letting them select their preferred type of meeting, their preferred location, and the times that work best for them. It has six major components, which are noted below and illustrated in Figure 4 as red bubbles:

1. Toolbar: which is composed of utility button (2) and filters (3). At the right corner of the toolbar, there is the icon of PSC that shows more information about this app when clicked. In addition, it provides the code for other developers to embed this tool in their own websites.
2. Utility button: runs a utility program that leads the user through a simple, step-by-step process to find the right meeting for them.
3. Filters: website visitors can choose the meeting type, formats, day and time range of the meetings and display them on a map.
4. Location button: lets users center the map on their current location, or search for a specific place, address, zip code, etc.
5. Meeting information panel: lists all of the possible meeting types. Each entry is clickable and contains more information including the full address, location notes, online meetings link, et cetera. Each entry is interconnected with one of the markers on the map. If you click on the entry (or the map) the information in the other field appears.
6. Google Map: the map of Iowa State and is generated by Google Maps API.

The interface of this application is responsive to the type of the device used by the website visitor. For visitors who are using mobile devices, there is a simpler version of the interface that still provides the same basic content. Figure 5 depicts the interface when different parts of the page are clicked. For the convenience of users, it mimics the design of common mobile applications.



Figure 4. Meeting Finder Application Environment (Desktop Version)

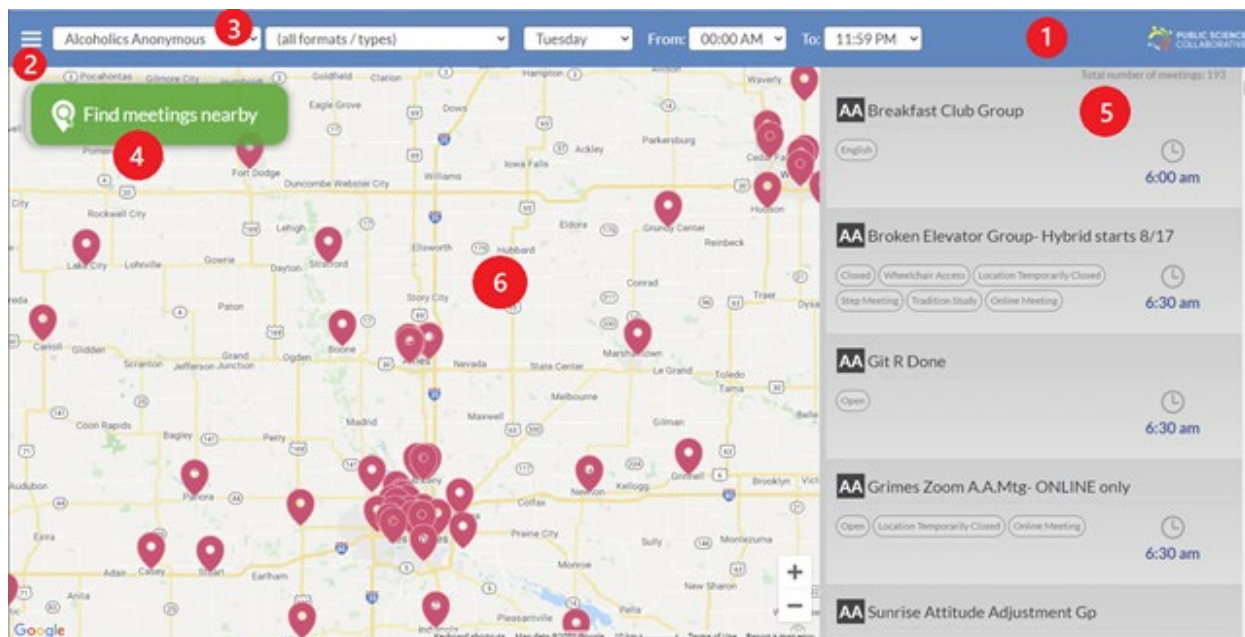
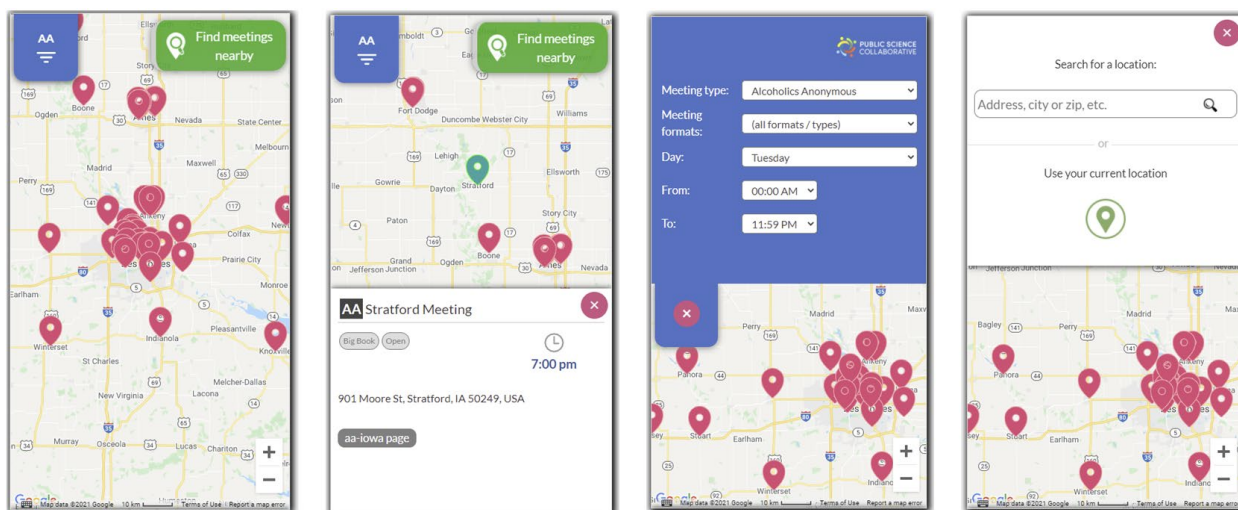


Figure 5. Meeting Finder Application Environment (Mobile Version)



A. Main page

B. Meeting marker is clicked

C. Filters button is clicked

4. Location button is clicked



The Meetings Finder is simple to use. As demonstrated in Figure 6, a program leads the website visitor through a step-by-step process to find the exact meeting that they need via four questions: (1) does the visitor need to find a meeting; (2) what type of meeting would they like to attend; (3) where would you like to meet; and (4) when would you like to meet. This application does not collect any information about the users and their activities to preserve the privacy of the users, due to the special characteristics of the recovery community.

Figure 6. Utility program: step by step search of the meetings

The figure consists of four sequential screenshots of a mobile application interface, each showing a different step in the search process. The background of each screen is a blurred map with red location pins.

- Screenshot A:** A white dialog box with the question "Do you need to find a meeting?". It has two buttons: a green "Yes" button with the text "Find some meetings" below it, and a grey "No" button with the text "Show the meetings on map" below it. At the bottom, there is a checkbox labeled "Never show me this window again".
- Screenshot B:** A white dialog box with tabs "WHAT", "WHERE", and "WHEN". The "WHAT" tab is selected. The question is "What type of meeting are you looking for?". It lists two categories: "Alcoholics Anonymous" and "Narcotics Anonymous", each with a blue circular icon. Below these, there is a list of meeting types: "Adult Children of Alcoholics", "Al-Anon/Alateen", "Buddhist Recovery", "Celebrate Recovery", "CRUSH", "Crystal Meth Anonymous", "Dual Recovery Anonymous", "Nar-Anon", "Pills Anonymous", "Refuge Recovery", and "SMART Recovery".
- Screenshot C:** A white dialog box with tabs "WHAT", "WHERE", and "WHEN". The "WHERE" tab is selected. The question is "Where do you want to meet?". It has a search bar labeled "Search for a location:" with the placeholder text "Address, city or zip," and a magnifying glass icon. Below the search bar, there is a link "or" and a button labeled "Use your current location" with a location pin icon.
- Screenshot D:** A white dialog box with tabs "WHAT", "WHERE", and "WHEN". The "WHEN" tab is selected. The question is "When do you want to meet?". It shows a calendar view with days of the week. "Tuesday" is highlighted in blue. Below the calendar, there are two dropdown menus: "From:" with "00:00 AM" and "To:" with "11:59 PM". At the bottom, there is a large green circular button with a white double arrow icon and the text "See meetings".

A. Initial message asking if user needs assistance

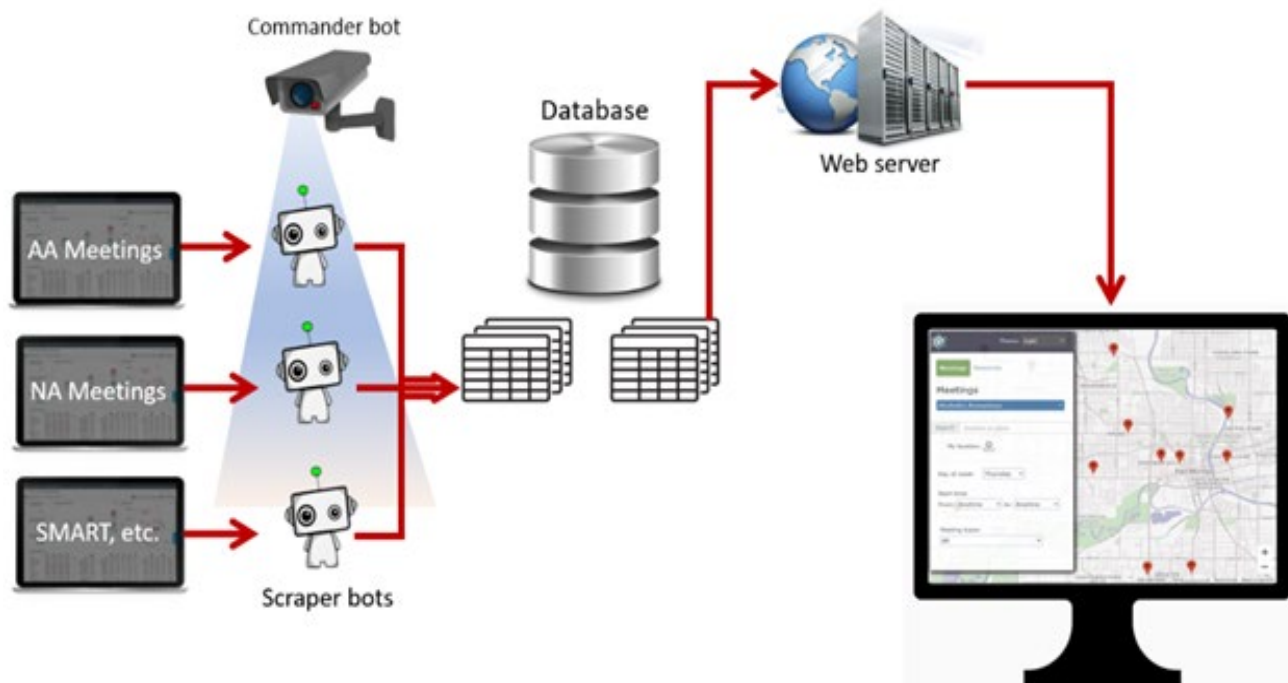
B. Selecting the type of meetings

C. Choosing where to meet

D. Filtering the day and time of meetings



Figure 7. *PSC Meeting Finder- Under the Hood*



Under the hood, the PSC Meetings Finder Tool is a data pipelining system that fetches the information of the 13 different types of recovery meetings from their original sources, and integrates them into a state map (see Figure 7). This system is composed of four major logical components: (1) automated robots that oversee and ‘scrape’ the peer-support websites for daily updates, (2) database infrastructure, (3) the web server infrastructure, and (4) PSC Meeting Finder web-based application.

There are two types of automated program robots, called ‘bots’, utilized in this system: commander bots and scraper bots. The commander bot is in charge of running and logging the scraper bots, and reports to the system administrator when a scraper bot is unsuccessful. A scraper bot is in charge of scrapping the original listing websites, and populating the database with the cleaned data. The original listings might be unstructured and contain dirty data. It is the scraper bot’s duty to make sure that the data that is inserted into the database is clean and structured. These data are then pulled into the users’ browser by the PSC meeting finder application.

Recovery meetings data are gathered and cleaned from thirteen web-based resources via our data pipeline system (see Table 1). Most of these resources utilize web scraping techniques (in Python by standard requests or packages such as Selenium and BeautifulSoup packages) as well as parsing PDF (Python: PyPDF2 package) files and XLS sheets (Python: csvkit). Table 1 identifies the name of the meeting, web resource, number of locations, and number of meetings per week.

**Table 1.** *Peer Support Meeting Information for Iowa*

No	Name of meeting	Web Resource	# of locations	# meetings per week
1	Adult Children of Alcoholics	https://adultchildren.org/	10	13
2	Al-Anon/Alateen	https://al-anon.org/	156	168
3	Alcoholics Anonymous	https://www.aa-iowa.org/	788	1299
4	Buddhist recovery	https://www.buddhistrecovery.org/	1	1
5	Celebrate Recovery	https://locator.crgroups.info/	24	24
6	CRUSH	https://www.crushofiowa.com/	1	1
7	Crystal Meth Anonymous	https://www.crystalmeth.org/	5	5
8	Dual Recovery Anonymous	http://draonline.qwknetllc.com/	3	3
9	Nar-Anon	https://www.nar-anon.org/	5	5
10	Narcotics Anonymous	https://www.na-iowa.org/	195	272
11	Pill Anonymous	https://www.pillsanonymous.org/	1	1
12	Refuge Recovery	https://refugerecovery.org/	1	1
13	SMART Recovery	https://www.smartrecoverytest.org/	4	4
	Total		1194	1797



Deliverable 3: Resource Locator Tools

PSC Recovery Resource Locator

Interactive tool: <http://public-science.org/recoveryresources/>

Data: *Iowa Office of Drug Control Policy; Wikipedia of Iowa hospitals; Iowa Department of Public Health; Recovery and Resilience Coordinator with AmeriCorpAllTreatment.com; TransitionalHousing.org; WomenSoberHousing.com; Addicted.org; Recovery.org; Drug-rehabs.org; Iowa Association of Rural Health Clinics; U.S. Dept of Veterans Affairs*

The state of Iowa has a wide range of governmental and private institutions and organizations dedicated to providing health and human services, support, and activities to improve the quality of life. Recovery resources include access centers, drug drop off locations, hospitals, medication assisted treatment locations, mental health centers, peer support providers, recovery housing, rural clinics, substance use disorder (SUD) and problem gambling treatment locations, and Veterans Affairs health centers.

The **PSC Recovery Resource Locator (RRL)** is a utility for discovering such resources as fast and easy as possible. The information of the community resources has been collected, verified, and categorized by PSC experts to provide an accessible and reliable resource through a map-based platform for users in need of recovery supports. In addition, RRL can easily provide a big picture of the distribution of the recovery resources to be used for supporting strategic decision-making in recovery related fields, such as healthcare. Figure 8 shows the environment of this application in a PC browser.

The recovery resource locator is composed of four components as follows:

1. Location search: website visitors can search and center the map on a specific location or simply use their own location as the central point.
2. RRL radio buttons: website visitors can select one of the resource types at a time to see the available resources on the map.
3. Information panel: all map markers have a corresponding entry in the information panel. They are all clickable and interconnected to the markers.
4. Google Map: map of Iowa State and is generated by Google Maps API.



Figure 8. Recovery Resource Locator Tool- Application Environment (Desktop Version)

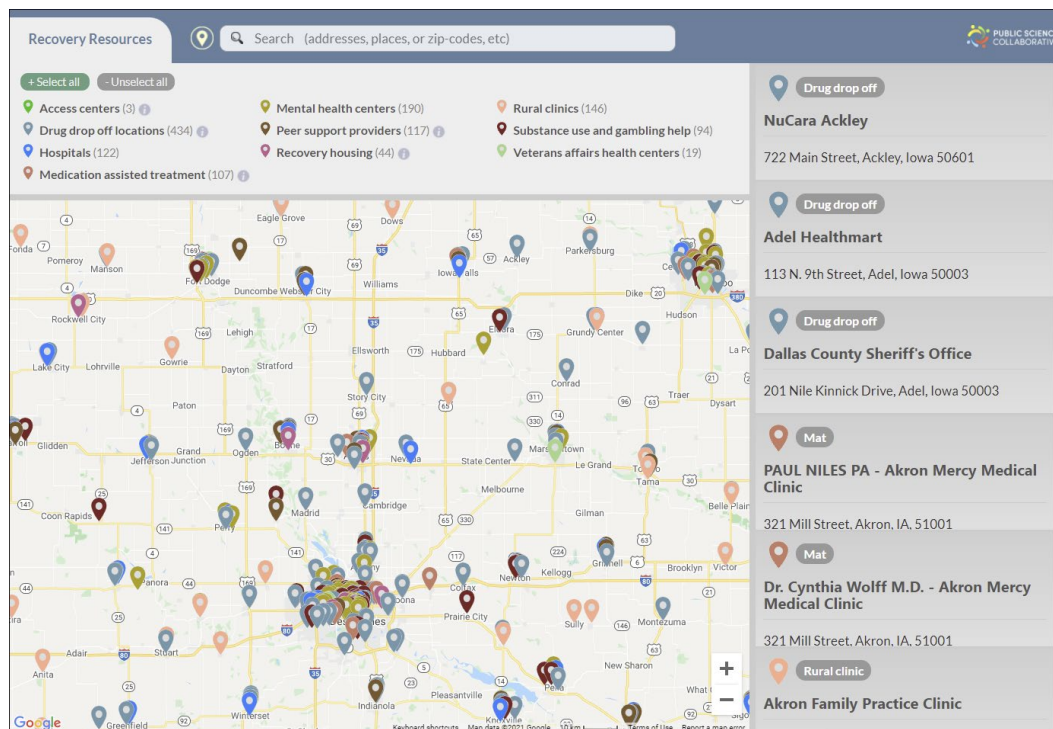
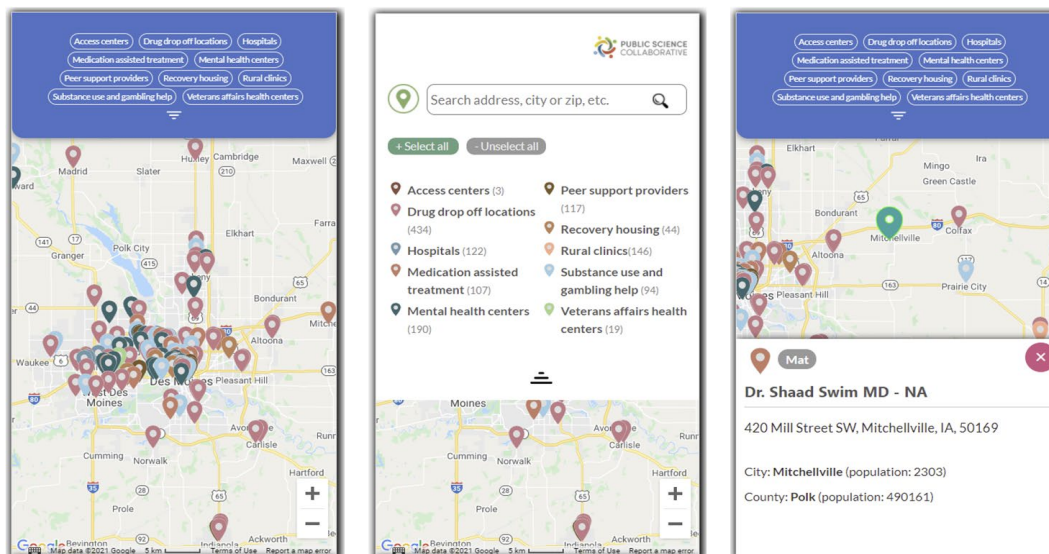


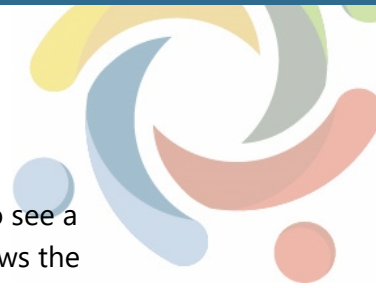
Figure 9. Recovery Resource Locator Tool- Application Environment (Mobile Version)



A. Main page

B. Filters bar (blue bar at the top of the page in figure A) is clicked

C. Marker is clicked

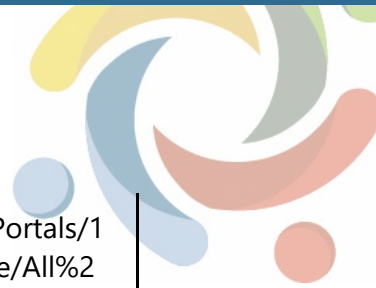


Just like our previous tool, the RRL leverages a responsive design, which allows users to see a mobile-friendly version of the tool when they are using phones or tablets. Figure 9 shows the appearance of this application on mobile phones.

This application in the data layer is composed of ten different types of recovery resources, noted in the first column of Table 2. The data source and website link of each type of are also listed in Table 2. For each record in the dataset, we have the following information: type of service, name of service provider, address, geolocation, city population, and county population.

Table 2. *Recovery Resource Locator Tool Data Sources (Downloaded Sept 2020-May 2021)*

Resource	Data Source	Website Link
Access Centers	Manual Addition	
Drug Drop Off Locations	Iowa Office of Drug Control Policy	https://geodata.iowa.gov/data-sets/rx-drop-off-locations-1?geometry=-101.674%2C40.504%2C-84.986%2C43.364
Hospitals	Wikipedia list of Iowa hospitals	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_hospitals_in_Iowa
Medication Assisted Treatment Locations	Iowa Department of Public Health	https://idph.iowa.gov/mat
Mental Health Centers	Iowa Department of Public Health	https://dhs.iowa.gov/sites/default/files/MHDDAccreditedProviders_32.pdf?082320201508
Peer Support Providers	Todd Lange, Recovery and Resilience Coordinator with AmeriCorp	email
Recovery Housing	AllTreatment.com; TransitionalHousing.org; WomenSoberHousing.com; Addicted.org; Recovery.org; Drug-rehabs.org	AllTreatment.com; TransitionalHousing.org; WomenSoberHousing.com; Addicted.org; Recovery.org; Drug-rehabs.org
Rural Clinics	Iowa Association of Rural Health Clinics	https://iarhc.org/find-a-rural-health-clinic?view=map



SUD and Problem Gambling Treatment Locations	Iowa Department of Public Health	https://idph.iowa.gov/Portals/1/userfiles/166/Licensure/All%20Licensed%20Substance%20Use%20Disorder%20-%20Problem%20Gambling%20Program%27s%20List.pdf
Veterans Affairs Health Centers	U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs	https://www.va.gov/directory/guide/state.asp?STATE=IA&dn=ALL



PSC Community Resource Locator

Interactive tool: <http://public-science.org/communityresources/>

Data updated yearly: *Iowa Department of Human Services; Wikipedia of Iowa colleges; Institute of Museum and Library Services, Public Libraries Survey; MyCountyParks.com; USGS Geographic Names Information System; Iowa Dept of Education; Iowa Workforce Development*

The state of Iowa has a wide range of governmental and private institutions and organizations dedicated to providing health and human services, support, and activities to improve the quality of life. These include resources such as include childcare providers, colleges, libraries, parks, places of worship, K-12 schools, and workforce development centers.

The **PSC Community Resource Locator (CRL)** is a utility for discovering community resources as fast and easy as possible. The information for this tool has been collected, verified, and categorized by PSC experts to provide an accessible and reliable resource through a map-based platform for web visitors in need of support. In addition, CRL can easily provide a big picture of the distribution of the community resources to be used for supporting strategic decision-making in recovery related fields such as education and workforce development. Figure 10 shows the environment of this application in a PC browser.

With similar structure to the previous tool, the PSC Community Resource Locator is composed of four components as follows:

1. Location search: website visitors can search and center the map on a specific location or simply use their own location as the central point.
2. RRL radio buttons: website visitors can select one of the resource types at a time to see the available resources on the map.
3. Information panel: all map markers have a corresponding entry in the information panel. They are all clickable and interconnected to the markers.
4. Google Map: map of Iowa State and is generated by Google Maps API.

The PSC Community Resource Locator leverages a responsive design, which allows users to see a mobile-friendly version of the tool when they are using phones or tablets. Figure 11 shows the appearance of this application on mobile phones.



Figure 10. Community Resource Locator Application Environment (Desktop Version)

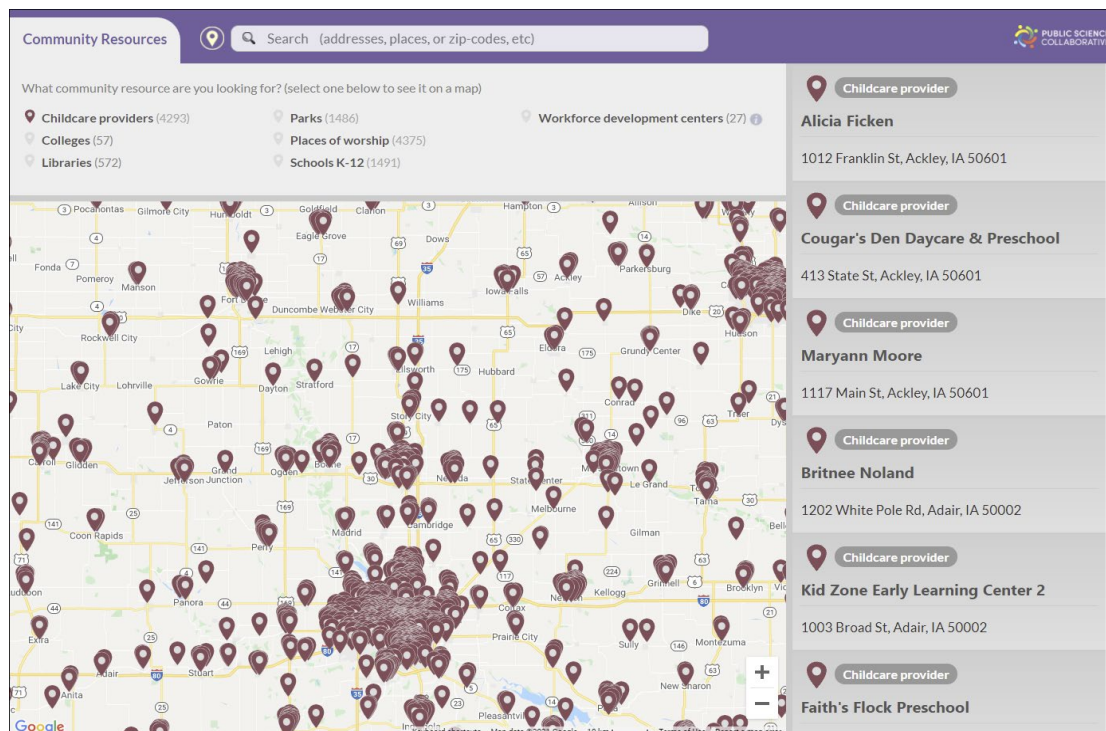
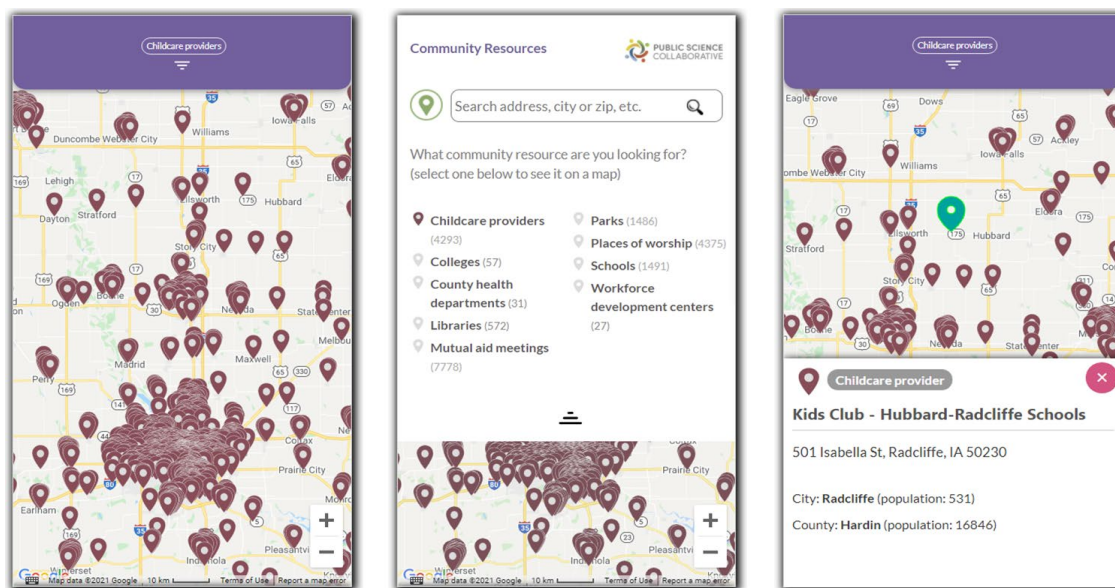


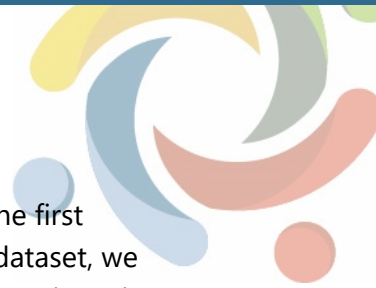
Figure 11. Community Resource Locator Application Environment (Mobile Version)



A. Main page

B. Filters bar (purple bar at the top of the page in figure A) is clicked

C. Marker is clicked



The data supporting this application is composed of 10 wellbeing resources, noted in the first column of Table 3, along with the data source and website link. For each record in the dataset, we have the following information: type of service, name of service provider, address, geolocation, city population, and county population.

Table 3. *Community Resource Locator Tool Data Sources (Downloaded Sept 2020-April 2021)*

Resource	Data Source	Website Link
Childcare Providers	Iowa Department of Human Services	http://ccmis.dhs.state.ia.us/ClientPortal/ProviderLocator.aspx
Colleges	Wikipedia list of Iowa colleges	https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_colleges_and_universities_in_Iowa
Public Libraries	Institute of Museum and Library Services	https://www.ims.gov/research-evaluation/data-collection/public-libraries-survey
Parks	MyCountyParks.com	https://www.mycountyparks.com/County/Default.aspx
Places of Worship	USGS Geographic Names Information System	https://data.iowa.gov/Physical-Geography/Iowa-Church-Buildings/juvk-dad9
K-12 Schools	Iowa Department of Education	Public Schools: https://educateiowa.gov/documents/directories/2020/09/2020-21-iowa-public-school-building-directory Private Schools: https://educateiowa.gov/documents/directories/2020/09/2020-21-iowa-non-public-school-building-directory
Workforce Development	Iowa Workforce Development Centers	https://www.iowaworkforcedevelopment.gov/contact



Deliverable 4: Recovery-Ready Community Selection & 360 Reports

Six communities of various sizes were selected as PSC's first cohort of 'Recovery Ready' places based on rankings in the Recovery Ready Community Index (RRCI)¹ and discussions with local community stakeholders. They include **Cedar Rapids, Decorah, Des Moines, Dubuque, Sioux City, and Spirit Lake**. Each of the six reports are provided to IDPH separately and will be used to support PSC's RCC Engagement Strategy on the following page.

For each community, an extensive 360-degree report was created that described what a Recovery Community Center (RCC) is, whether their community is 'Recovery Ready' based on RRCI rankings, and detailed reports of the availability, type, and location (including the name and address) of each peer support meeting, recovery resource, and community resource in their area.

Detailed maps are provided which explore which neighborhoods need additional help and resources based on a PSC-created index of overall vulnerability to substance use, as well as vulnerability to four individual drugs seen as particularly difficult to manage for those in recovery (methamphetamine, opioids, and heroin). Finally, detailed maps depict neighborhood-level health disparities in the community, with a goal of supporting targeted interventions to vulnerable residents. A screen shot of the Community 360 Report for Cedar Rapids is depicted to the right. The other five cities follow the same format.

Recovery Iowa- Cedar Rapids 360

Report provided to the Iowa Department of Public Health,
Substance Abuse Bureau
October, 2021

Report by Shawn Dorius, Cassandra Dorius, Matthew Voss, Masoud Nostari, Arielle True-Funk, and Timothy Potter

**PUBLIC SCIENCE
COLLABORATIVE**

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Overview

At the request of the Iowa Department of Public Health, Bureau of Substance Abuse, the Public Science Collaborative (PSC) developed community-specific reports to support recovery efforts in Iowa. Recognizing the need to strengthen substance use recovery efforts throughout the state, we identified a large number of existing recovery-oriented resources in Cedar Rapids, which we describe and map in the pages that follow. We developed additional maps to identify at-risk neighborhoods that will benefit from targeted health interventions and additional community resources.

For additional questions or information about this report, the data tools described, or the Public Science Collaborative, please reach out to the principal investigators of this study, Dr. Shawn Dorius at sdorius@iastate.edu, or Dr. Cassandra Dorius at cdorius@iastate.edu.

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¹ The Recovery Ready Community Index was designed to give a holistic view of a community's "recovery readiness" and their ability to support people in recovery. The RRCI is constructed with four sub-measures: Breadth of Recovery Resources, Depth of Recovery Resources, Size of Recovery Culture, and Strength of Recovery Culture. You can read more in the 2020 report provided by PSC to IDPH.



Deliverable 5: Engagement Strategies

Recovery Community Center (RCC) Engagement Strategy

To be provided in separate document. Main points follow:

1. PSC recommends that IDPH support an annual, statewide conference focused substance use recovery. Envisioning that a primary purpose of the conference is to facilitate collaborations among various service providers, community organizations, state agency partners, and people with lived experience
2. PSC will engage with IDPH in developing an RFP to provide one-time startup funds for the development of RCCs in Iowa
3. PSC will identify targeted recovery stakeholders to join the RCC movement
4. PSC will solicit stakeholder feedback and expand the Recovery Iowa website in support of RCC development
5. PSC will provide Technical Assistance to each community awarded an RFP that includes:
 - a. Further develop and share PSC's Recovery Ready 360 Reports
 - b. Further develop and share PSC's RCC Toolkit resources
 - c. *Start Up Strategy Alignment*- Develop content and conduct three workshops to be held with each new RCC to identify startup strategies that align with ARCO best practices
 - d. *Train the Trainer Events*- host events to train RCC leaders on how to use the website tools, 360 Report, and Toolkit resources to better align resources in their community and support their clientele on the pathway to recovery
 - e. Coordinate collaboration and communication among RCC groups via online platforms, outreach efforts, and joint media ventures
6. Design an ongoing RCC program evaluation on behalf of IDPH
7. Identify potential candidates to assume ongoing responsibility of RCO and website

Collegiate Recovery Program (CRP) Engagement Strategy

To be provided in separate document. Main points include:

1. PSC recommends that IDPH support an annual, statewide conference focused substance use recovery. Envisioning that a primary purpose of the conference is to facilitate collaborations among various service providers, community organizations, state agency partners, and people with lived experience. We encourage the conference to include a session aimed at recovery resources for special populations such as college students
2. Facilitate collaboration between existing Iowa CPRs
3. Outreach to targeted stakeholders at Iowa colleges and universities
4. Develop additional outreach materials
5. Propose additional recommendations to the Bureau of Substance Abuse to provide financial support in the form of one-time-start-up funds to establish (or further develop) CRPs in Iowa