

Submitter: Ashlie Kangas
On Behalf Of: 4D recovery
Committee: Joint Committee On Addiction and Community Safety
Response
Measure, Appointment or Topic: HB3197

Hello everyone, my name is Ashlie Kangas, and I stand before you today to share my personal journey with addiction and to express my strong support for the bill aimed at providing funding for alcohol and drug abuse programs for youth under 21. My experiences have shaped my understanding of the urgent need for resources and support for young people who find themselves in the grips of addiction.

Growing up, I was constantly moving in and out of homes, often living in sober houses and shelters. I was searching for a sense of belonging, but it felt like I was navigating a storm. My parents struggled with their own addictions, and I witnessed the chaos that followed. As a child, I thought that if my parents were using drugs, there must be something good about it. But that belief shattered the day my stepdad tried to take his own life. It was a devastating moment that pushed me into a dark place.

In my desperation to escape the pain, I turned to drugs. What started as a way to numb my feelings quickly spiraled into a suffocating addiction. I remember going to school, clutching my stash, convinced I wouldn't survive the day without it. I was lost, drowning in despair, and I know there are countless teenagers out there who feel the same way.

Then I found 4D, a lifeline that offered me hope and a chance to reclaim my life. Through their support, I learned that recovery is possible, and I want to ensure that other young people have access to the same resources that helped me. That's why I wholeheartedly support this bill. With proper funding, we can provide essential programs that offer education, support, and a path to recovery for youth struggling with addiction.

I believe that no one should have to face this battle alone. By investing in these programs, we can help countless young people avoid the pain I experienced and give them the chance to thrive. Together, we can create a brighter future for our youth, and I am committed to advocating for those who feel lost and without hope. Thank you for considering this vital bill that could change lives.