



The Wait is Over: Virtual Open Mic Nite Aims to Increase Community Connectedness during COVID-19 Shutdown
Partnership between Safe Harbor and Lenny's Hideaway gives young people a chance to showcase their talent and build community connectedness, while 'social distancing'

Cohasset, Mass., March 25, 2020 – It goes without saying that the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic and 'social distancing,' have completely changed life as we know it over the past several weeks. As a result, many of us are stuck wondering what we can do to fill the void of connectedness and in-person activities. That is where [Safe Harbor Cohasset Coalition \(SHCC\)](#) and [Lenny's Hideaway](#) come in!

After establishing a successful partnership back in February, and in an effort to prevent people from becoming too isolated, on Friday, April 3, 2020 Safe Harbor and Lenny's will be teaming-up for the first ever '18 & Under Virtual Open Mic Nite,' which will be presented live on Zoom. All ages are welcomed to view the event, but you must be 18 or under in order to perform. The goal is to prevent students from becoming isolated and to increase community connectedness, which has been shown to reduce risky behaviors, including underage substance use, as well as various mental health related issues, such as anxiety and depression.

"There's a lot of evidence, showing that young people who feel connected to their community are less likely to engage in risky behavior," said Nicole Balaschi, Program Director for Safe Harbor Cohasset Coalition. "That is especially important right now, while so many of us are stuck at home, and unable to interact with our friends and family in the way that we're used to. Partnering with Lenny's for a Virtual Open Mic Nite will not only give people something to look forward to, but will hopefully make people feel more connected. We've seen how much of a difference having a supportive community can make, and hope that this will help bring people together, despite the ongoing crisis."

A 2019 study by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) found that youth who feel connected to their community were up to 66% less likely to experience health risk behaviors including various mental health related issues, such as anxiety and depression. With 50% of all lifetime mental health illnesses beginning by age 14, virtual events such as this have the potential to help countless young people, by making them feel more connected to their peers and the community, even during times when in-person social interaction is limited.



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To learn more visit: <http://safeharborcohasset.org/event/18-under-virtual-open-mic-nite/>.

To register for your 15-minute time slot (must be 18 or under), visit:
<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/18-under-virtual-open-mic-nite-registration-100974702052>

To view the event, visit: <https://zoom.us/j/902034250>. (Note: link will only work starting at 4pm on April 3rd)

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About Safe Harbor Cohasset Coalition (SHCC)

Safe Harbor Cohasset Coalition is a community non-profit organization that focuses on preventing substance use, and various mental-health issues, in young people, by fostering a strong and inclusive community that allows young people to strive and encourages healthy, educated and responsible choices about substance use. The mission is supported by evidenced based, prevention focused, sustainable policies, and youth-focused programs, such as Ground Level Café and the Safe Harbor Youth Ambassador Program.

To learn more, visit www.safeharborcohasset.org. Keep up to date on the latest trends by following Safe Harbor on Facebook at www.facebook.com/safeharborcohasset, on Twitter [@cohsafeharbor](https://twitter.com/cohsafeharbor), & on Instagram [@safeharborcohassetcoalition](https://www.instagram.com/safeharborcohassetcoalition).