



Minutes
October 18, 2012
Arlington Senior Center

I. Welcome: Ned Walsh, Cindy Bouvier, Kathy Hirsch, Carlene Newell, Lynn Horgan, John Scheft, Ethel Doyle, Jack Flood, Judith Carroll, Laura Juitt, Maureen Murphy, Colleen Leger, Cindy Starks.

II. Coalition Updates

Medical Marijuana: Colleen presented information on the upcoming Community Forum entitled: *Marijuana & Your Teen – What’s the Big Deal?* This forum will be held at the Ottoson Middle School cafeteria, on Tuesday 10/23, from 7-8:30 pm. This past week Colleen participated in a call with the Massachusetts Prevention Alliance (MAPA), who shared feedback on forums from other communities. At some forums, audience members were encouraged to write questions down on note cards, to be verbalized by moderators. John felt that it would be best to open up the discussion to the participants and offer time for a fully transparent Q&A session. Colleen will work with John to prepare for this Community Forum, and will present local YRBS data at the start of the program. John informed the group about a recent poll showing a 12 point decrease (previous poll 69% - recent poll 57%) in voter support for Question 3. However, over the next couple weeks, we should expect a barrage of radio and TV advertisements supporting Question 3. Members further discussed marijuana as it pertains to Arlington youth, enforcement, the culture around use, the decrease in perception of harm from middle school to high school, and how, typically, a decrease in perception of harm predicts an increase in use. Coalition members also discussed the possibility of taking a position on Ballot Question #3. Colleen clarified that, legally, the Coalition can take a position publicly, and release it to the media. However we cannot disseminate our position statement to individuals in the community. The group did not think it was necessary to take a public stance. John thought the forum would be an opportunity to educate the community about marijuana use, risks of dependency, and treatment, as well as some of the features of the ballot question.

Cultural Competency Training: Colleen reviewed the Coalition’s prevention framework, connecting this process with the promotion of cultural competency. She described the continuum of understanding cultural competence, and referred to a four-stage process (borrowed from CADCA’s Cultural Competence Primer- http://www.cadca.org/files/cultural_competence_jan09.pdf). Colleen then informed the group that there would be a cultural competence training at the next Coalition meeting- 11/15/12. Emily Bhargava, former Director of the Regional Center for Healthy Communities, will run the training, and, at a later point, work with Coalition members to develop a Diversity plan. Colleen referred to an exercise she had intended to facilitate at the meeting- “Actions to Ensure Cultural Competence” (also from CADCA primer), and explained that she had forgotten to print out the materials. She asked the group to review the checklist, which would be attached with the minutes, and to complete it if possible. This exercise should help enrich the discussion at next month’s training. A discussion ensued about how to reach underrepresented members of the community. A suggestion was made to post signs at different events/locations as a means of outreach to community members.

Guiding Good Choices: Colleen informed the group that enrollment is lower this year than past years. So far, there are 9-10 people in Session 1 (scheduled to begin 10/29/12) and 5 people for Session 2 (scheduled to begin 11/13/12). Members were invited to share ideas for getting the word out to parents about the program. Suggestions included: Advocate, Religious organizations such as High Rock, Calvary Church, UU and St. Agnes, B&G Club bulletin board, pediatricians’ offices, Library, and elementary school social workers.

III. Coalition Engagement & Leadership-

Chair & Vice Chair positions: Reorganization efforts are underway to help strengthen the coalition base, as we seek continued funding. From these efforts, we hope to increase leadership opportunities for general membership. Colleen encouraged members to review the invitation sent out in our recent newsletter and expressed hope to have something in place in the next two months. It is important to note that there is flexibility with the positions, and options to tailor the roles and responsibilities as needed. If we do not receive continued funding, this leadership structure will be essential.

Annual Coalition Survey: Our Coalition evaluator is once again conducting a survey designed to obtain Coalition member feedback about the operations and functionality of AYHSC. This feedback will aid in future planning, and enable the Coalition to better serve the youth in Arlington. The annual survey can be found at this link <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ayhsc2012>. Please complete this survey by 10/31/12; it should only take 5-10 minutes. Thank you to those who have already completed the survey.

IV. STATS:

Review Short Term Action Teams- Any Questions? Lynn asked if members had any questions about the five Short Term Action Teams (STATs) that were introduced at the last meeting. Information about these STATs was passed out to new members in attendance, and used as a reference for the next activity. Discussion ensued about ways to increase membership (STAT #1). Ideas generated included; invite more parents and community members that are not Town employees, hold a monthly meeting at a different time and in a new location, consider transportation and childcare needs, and reach out to everybody who cares about youth health and safety with education on how being involved impacts their world. John suggested the Coalition increase capacity by utilizing strengths of individuals in the community and asking for their help. Possible avenues for outreach might include: the Arlington list, Principal newsletters at the Ottoson and AHS, politicians like Sean Garballey, graduate interns from local Universities, Craig's List (volunteer section) and retired seniors in the community.

Social Norms (STAT #4): Parent Attitudes & Behaviors – Review sample survey

Colleen passed out a parent survey sample that is geared to assess parental attitudes and behaviors. This is one of the five STAT projects that will need member support and involvement. The rest of the meeting was devoted to reviewing the parent survey and providing suggestions on how to revise it to address Arlington-specific concerns. Some of the recommendations are as follows:

- Include questions that will directly relate to the YRBS
ex. What % of AHS students (do you believe) used alcohol?
- Include the perception questions from the YRBS
ex. Do you think your child has used? Do you think your child's friends are using?
- Address social host education and parental beliefs
ex. "I'd rather have them drink at my house"
- Assess parents' knowledge of risks associated with alcohol and other substance use.
- Assess Diversion knowledge and level of support for this program
ex. "Do you support Police diverting underage youth found with..."
- Look at YRBS as a base, combine key concepts identified tonight to develop a shorter version.
- Include a statement that says, "Thank you for your response, if you would like to get involved with the Coalition..." then provide a link to AYHSC and a link to the AHS resource list.

John suggested the Coalition try to identify talented individuals in the community who have polling/survey development experience and who would be willing to teach us how to create this instrument. Colleen reported that the Coalition evaluator, Deacon would also work with us on the survey. She asked for Coalition volunteers who would be willing to help refine this survey further, and begin planning for administering the survey to parents. Interested members included, Jack, Ethel, Cindy S. and Judith.

Coalition Development (STAT#1): Increase Youth Involvement in AYHSC – AHS opportunities

Cindy B. discussed plans to work with the Coalition around the creation of a youth group called Club 84, which would be modeled after the statewide “84 campaign”. This social norms campaign refers to the 84% of teens in MA who choose not to smoke. At AHS, Club 84 would likely target other behaviors as well, including underage drinking and marijuana use. Students involved in Club 84 would have an opportunity to receive peer leadership training and bring attention to positive social norms. Participants would also have the opportunity to share the information with OMS students.

V. Upcoming Events and Volunteer Opportunities

Date	Event	Time	Description
Oct. 19	AYCC Fundraising Gala - “Out on the Town”	7:00-10:00pm	Annual event in support of the Arlington Youth Counseling Center (AYCC)
Oct. 19- Oct. 30	Coalition Member Survey <i>*online survey available until 10/30/12</i>		Please complete this annual coalition survey. It provides valuable feedback that will help us strengthen coalition processes and functioning. Link: http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ayhsc2012
Oct. 23	Marijuana Community Forum, OMS	7:00-8:30pm	Volunteer opportunity: event promotion & resource table support
Oct. 24	<u>Webinar</u> : Tackling substance abuse through a community-wide coalition	12:00-12:45	Training opportunity: http://content.govdelivery.com/bulletins/gd/USOPHS/ODPHPHF-56d054?reqfrom=share
Oct.29- Nov.26	Guiding Good Choices ACA	6:15-8:15pm	Volunteer opportunity: program promotion, soliciting food donations
Nov. 17	Community Collection Day at the DPW Town Yard	9:00-1:00pm	Volunteer opportunity: provide support at collection event

V. Meeting Adjournment: Reminders:

- 1) Please complete the checklist “Actions to Ensure Cultural Competence”, in preparation for next month’s training. Also, please feel free to invite a friend or two to the training.
- 2) When you have time, please complete the annual Coalition survey.
<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/ayhsc2012>
- 3) Our next meeting will be held on November 15, 2012 at the usual time 5:30pm-7:00pm at our new location, the Whittemore Robbins House.