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Minutes 03_10_11

AYHSC Minutes - March 10, 2011
5:30 – 7:00

I. Welcome – Meeting began at 5:40. Cindy Sheridan Curran, Carlene Newell, Jaime Collins, Ethel Doyle, Cindy Bouvier, Christine Schultz, Marci Cemenska, Natasha Waden, Mary Villano, Jack Flood, Bryan Gallagher, Lynn Horgan, Rebecca Wolfe, Christine Connolly, Ryan Fox, Colleen Leger in attendance.

II. Upcoming Trainings and Events

DFC Peer Reviewers: Webinar; Tuesday March 15th from 2:00-3:00pm

This Webinar is required of all potential reviewers of DFC grants during the FY11 funding cycle.

Interested candidates must apply and share grant experience. If selected, you must attend training and \$140 payment is provided per grant.

Statewide Conference Call on Data Collection: March 22nd at 11am

This will be hosted by the Western Massachusetts Center for Healthy Communities. This will be a great opportunity to learn about strategies, ask questions, and hear what other Coalitions are doing around data collection.

Beyond BillBoards and Brochures: Free Webinar; Tuesday, March 29th from 2:00 – 3:30 p.m.

Focus will be on raising awareness of social host liability, relationship building with police departments and how several communities have successfully incorporated environmental prevention strategies into their "Parents Who Host Lose the Most" initiatives.

III. Coalition Updates

Summary of Recent Trainings: Carlene, Lynn and Cindy completed the FCD's webinar on "A Social Norms Approach to Parent Education". This approach focuses on shifting responsibility from schools and engaging parents in prevention efforts using a social norms approach. This approach is a powerful and effective parent education tool for protecting and strengthening the health of students. Parent coordinators work with school personnel to promote positive messages around drug and alcohol abuse using grade specific curriculum that is data driven. The social norms data provides parents with accurate information they can use in communicating with children/teens.

Guiding Good Choices (GGC)

The third workshop series will begin on 3/16/11 and run until 4/13/11. Cindy Sheridan Curran and Lynn Horgan will facilitate the series at the Ottoson Middle School. Colleen asked for feedback regarding the scheduling of a 4th workshop series, which is included in the budget of the current grant cycle. Carlene mentioned that historically spring parent forums have lower attendance and it was felt that the fall would be the best time to offer this.

Youth Initiatives

*Robbins Library: Public Service Announcement (PSA) and Social Norms Media Contest.

Colleen spoke to Rebecca M. (Teen Librarian) about the development of a video PSA contest. This would be initiated by teens from the library who would make a 90 sec. (or less) PSA about "what they'd rather be doing instead of drinking". Rebecca also suggested extending the 90 theme to include a product deadline of 90 days and a \$90 gift card for winning PSA.

*Robbins Library Teen Advisory Group will be meeting on 3/14/11 and is looking for new members. Jaimie mentioned she used to be part of this group and it was a great way to provide the library feedback on ways to make the library more appealing to teens. Colleen passed out flyers for members to post on this and also flyers featuring Gaming Night at the Robbins on 4/1/11.~

*Arlington High School (AHS): Colleen directed Coalition members to review information on the backside of the agenda that outlines the proposal AYHSC developed for AHS students to create social norms campaign materials. Recently, Colleen addressed ~30 AHS CADD students in two separate classes, and asked for their support to create messages and images that are appealing and relatable to other students regarding misperceptions around peer alcohol use. Colleen described the problem that exists in town, which is supported by YRBS data, and educated students on how social norms campaigns are effective at changing behavior. Students were well prepared with questions and eager to provide their expertise and ideas to address the needs of the AYHSC as a client. Ideas included: YouTube video/ACMI, design of screen savers, posters and t-shirts that could serve as a fundraiser, as well as bathroom stall advertising and Facebook to promote the messages. Students learned that prizes would be awarded for their contributions. Jaime offered her perspective, as a student at the AHS, that it might be helpful for students to learn how national statistics compare to the local conditions. The deadline for this campaign is sometime this spring.

Race to Nowhere : Officer James Smith mentioned that the Arlington Police Department would partner with the Coalition to sponsor the documentary "Race To Nowhere" in Arlington. This screening will be at the Regent Theater on Thursday, April 7th at 7:00pm. Tickets can be purchased online at the Race to Nowhere website. Colleen and James requested input from the group on this proposal. Members suggested offering a post-screening follow-up with representation from different professions (health, guidance, teaching, students) and resources available.

Colleen mentioned a \$500 deposit is required and for every 100 people attending, a certain percentage is earned. Proceeds would go toward future Parent Forums, coordinated by Arlington Public Schools. A few Coalition members mentioned their friends and family have seen the film in their respective towns and have heard mixed reviews. Cindy B. offered to compile questions and requested members obtain feedback from individuals who have seen the film and the community responses. A follow-up meeting will take place on Wednesday to share feedback and prepare for promoting the film. Locations suggested for getting the word out: ACMI, email to all schools, Town lists, word of mouth by Coalition members and booths at upcoming events like plays, elections, OPAC. Event details and ticket purchase at the following link: <http://www.racetonowhere.com/epostcard/4637>

"Mindfulness" in Prevention (Marci Cemenska)

Colleen welcomed new member Marci who shared her knowledge of mindfulness and the idea of incorporating mindfulness exercises in youth programming. Marci mentioned we all need tools. Mindfulness is a tool that has been used for thousands of years and can be very effective in reducing stress. Marci stated there are three points she would like to offer and began with a quote from John Kabat Zinn.

What is mindfulness? A way of living with a calmer mind and less agitation.

2. Its use and benefits? Better focus, concentration, calm, decreased anxiety, increased impulse control.

3. How do you do it? Watching your breath, walking slowly and watching where your feet are.

Marci tied this information to the Coalition's goals by stating that often drug and alcohol use have a correlation to stress. Resources were provided which included MINDUP: Goldie Hawn and MINDFUL SCHOOLS. Many trainings avail to teach children tools. Discussion ensued with Mary and Colleen adding connections to this topic. Cindy B. inquired about offering this to the schools. Lynn added that Stratton has recently incorporated programming around this subject and ideas were generated around this subject, including incorporating it into the Health, Recreation and Cops (HRC) summer program. Resources: Mindful schools- www.mindfulschools.org; Mindup program: www.goldiehawnfoundation.org/mindup; Full Catastrophe Living by John Kabat-Zinn.

AYCC

Hired Laura O'Neil as the new Substance Abuse Counselor. Laura's role will be to provide support to Diversion cases, school needs, and youth and family counseling. Laura will provide substance use evaluations by utilizing insurance coverage and will charge \$50 for administrative costs. Christine mentioned that grant money is available for those unable to pay. Cindy provided a brief overview of the purpose of the Diversion Program stating that successful completion of a Diversion contract means no record for the youth involved.

Twitter Town Hall Meeting (Cambridge, Somerville, Watertown, Arlington)

Colleen provided a summary of regional plans to host a Twitter Town Hall meeting that would involve utilizing Twitter to communicate Coalition messages. Colleen explained how it works, benefits of the proposed strategy, and asked for Coalition members' feedback. Colleen mentioned that this forum could potentially reach a wide audience,

and reach an audience with diverse schedules who may not otherwise attend or get involved with coalition work. Also, there would be minimal costs associated with the program. Discussions ensued with Jaime describing how Twitter works (140 character message) and suggesting options to consider like online chat rooms. A decision was made to continue pursuing this option of social media marketing.

Calendar:

Upcoming events:

As a coalition concerned with prescription drug abuse, we know that medications of abuse can be easily obtained from home medicine cabinets, and other unsecured sources. Here is a reminder of upcoming events that aim to educate the community and provide a location to dispose of medicines:

- 1) National Drug Collection Day, organized by the Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA). Event will be held on Saturday, 4/30/11 at the Community Safety Building. Accepted items: liquids, pills, and controlled substances. No needles will be accepted on this date.
- 2) Community Collection Day on Saturday, 5/7/11 from 9:00-1:00 at the Town Yard. Accepted items: unwanted medications and sharps.

BULLYING IN CHILDHOOD AND ADOLESCENCE: EMPOWERING CHILDREN, TEENS AND FAMILIES- April 13th 7:00-8:30 Hardy School. Douglas Katz, Ph.D., Clinical Coordinator, Arlington Youth Counseling Center (AYCC) will offer a town-wide elementary school presentation.

THINK.KIDS Program. April 26th, 6:30-9:00, Ottoson Middle School. The Special Education Parent Advisory Council (SEPAC) and Arlington Youth Counseling Center (AYCC) are teaming up to sponsor this free training put on by MGH for the parent community. This program teaches strategies for families to manage children with behavior problems.

IV Ongoing Data Collection: reporting on indicators

As a DFC Grantee, our **Long Term Goal** is to reduce underage drinking, marijuana use, and prescription drug misuse among Arlington youth. We collect data on these issues using the Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS). Our **Mid-Term Goals** include increasing youths' perception of parental disapproval and increasing youth's perception of risk of drug and alcohol use. We use our biennial YRBS to assess these attitudes as well. Additional objectives include addressing "risk factors", such as reducing access to alcohol and prescription drugs, changing permissive attitudes among adults in the community and increasing consistent enforcement. In order to achieve mid- and long term objectives, AYHSC has set **Short Term Objectives** to change local conditions that increase the risk of Arlington youth engaging in alcohol or drug abuse. These local conditions tend to manifest as behaviors, which we target in our Coalition work. The AYHSC Evaluation Committee is working with our Coalition evaluator to ensure that we are regularly and systematically collecting data to see if, and to what extent Coalition initiatives are affecting targeted behaviors. Some of the indicators we will be looking at include: episodes of underage public drunkenness; house parties where underage drinking occurs; episodes of alcohol use or drunkenness at school functions; and citations for marijuana use/possession.