

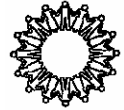
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# THE ADVOCATE



The Newsletter of the Greater Taunton Health & Human Service Coalition (GTHHSC) and the Greater Attleboro Taunton Health & Education Response (GATHER) – [www.geocities.com/gathercoalition](http://www.geocities.com/gathercoalition)

Volume XVI, No.4

April 2006



## Working Together To Ensure Safe, Healthy, Memorable Proms and Graduations



Most students and their parents make healthy decisions to ensure the enjoyment of proms and graduation. Principals and other school personnel have supported their end of year celebrations by encouraging students to avoid the use of alcohol, other drugs, or other risky or potentially destructive behaviors. Alcohol vendors take precautions so that persons under 21 do not make illegal purchases at their establishments. Police departments work hard to keep our road safe from alcohol-impaired drivers of all ages. Hotels want to ensure the safety of their guests, whether in a function room, overnight accommodations or other locations on their property.

### **Pulling Together**

In order to help ensure a safe prom and graduation season, the GATHER/GTHHSC Substance Abuse Committee has sent letters, along with the dates and cities of each prom and graduation to police departments, liquor store owners and hotel managers, to ask their help in working together to safeguarding these exciting and memorable times for our young people and all those whose lives

they touch. Additionally, High School principals in the GATHER area (Attleboro, Berkley, Dighton, Lakeville, Mansfield, Middleboro, North Attleboro, Norton, Raynham, Rehoboth, Seekonk, and Taunton) received safety awareness letters suitable for sharing with parents of juniors and seniors.

Prom and graduation season lasts from April 1 – June 11, 2006, and area high school students are already enjoying prom and graduation time. Most high school students will continue to make healthy decisions. Parents and community members wish to do everything possible to support students to enjoy and celebrate safely and responsibly, without the use of alcohol, other drugs, or other risky or potentially destructive behaviors.

### **Concerns**

Recent studies show that the major source of alcohol for youth is friends and families. The increasing popularity of house, “tail-gate” and hotel room parties where underage drinking and other risky behaviors occur raises increased concerns for liquor store owners, school

officials, law enforcement and hotel managers. Concerned parents know they cannot give alcohol to their children’s friends who are under the age of 21 under any circumstances, even in their own residence, even with permission of that child’s parent. Parents may be held responsible if underage drinking occurs at their house or if a motor vehicle crash resulting in serious injury or even death occurs, involving someone who drank alcohol while at their home.

### **A New Danger**

In an effort to provide a “safe” alternative to drinking and driving, some parents plan to reserve rooms for unsupervised after prom parties. GATHER area hotel managers were alerted to dates of area proms, and the following dangers and liabilities:

- Occupation by many more than the allowable 2-4 occupants per room
- Uncontrolled access due to unsecured doors
- Underage alcohol abuse or overdose
- Abuse of other drugs
- Physical and emotional violence
- Property damage

- Injury such as drownings and falls
- Sexual assault or rape
- Negative media attention following a tragedy

**Future Impacted**

Other dangers associated with risky behavior include these:

- Alcohol-related crashes remain a leading cause of death in this country, especially for teens.

- Long-term effects of alcohol-related damage incurred at a young age on a still developing brain
- Negative impact on educational success, social and family relationships, employment and legal issues

**A Parent's Love**

Teens need their parents to continue to set clear and realistic expectations regarding underage drinking. It is dangerous, it is

against the law, and it should not take place. The GATHER community wishes to support and encourage them to continue to make healthy choices.

For more information, please contact Substance Abuse Committee co-chairs Arlene Dickinson, **508-223-4691, x67** or Lorraine Rosa, **508-823-4822**.



**A FAREWELL LETTER**

"After 14 years at Morton Hospital, I have accepted a new position at Delta Dental of Massachusetts effective March 20. I will be working with a truly inspirational man, Dr. Mark J. Doherty, on a demonstration project to improve the oral health care operations of community health centers across the state. The hardest part of leaving the Taunton area after all this time is saying good-bye to the many wonderful people I have met over the past 14 years. At Morton, I wore a number of hats, but my favorite was coordinating the hospital's community health improvement initiatives. I have been privileged to work shoulder-to-shoulder with many of you in finding ways to improve the well-being of our communities. The greater Taunton area is extremely fortunate to have so many compassionate individuals working tirelessly on behalf of the citizenry. You are all to be commended for your dedication and hard work. I will miss you all but will be watching from a distance and applauding all the good work I know you will be doing in years to come. Thank you for making me feel such a welcome part of your work over the past 14 years. Best wishes for the future!" ♠

Dori Bingham

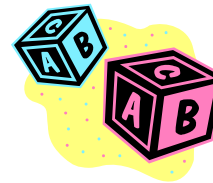
This month's Advocate was published by Lorraine Rosa, Coordinator, with funds from GATHER MRI and GTHHSC dues. To submit an article, announcement or other information, email [mcaprosa@hotmail.com](mailto:mcaprosa@hotmail.com), or call **508-823-4822** by April 30, 2006. You may also access copies of The Advocate at [www.geocities.com/gathercoalition](http://www.geocities.com/gathercoalition). 🎵

**No GTHHSC meeting on 4/18/06**  
 Next Networking Meeting:  
**5/16/06, 9:00, Associates for Human Services, 68 Allison Rd.**

# GLOSSARY OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES ACRONYMS

(GHSA)

- AG** – Attorney General  
**AHS** – Associates for Human Services  
**AIDS** – Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome  
**BP** – Bristol-Plymouth Technical High School  
**CAB** – Consumer Advisory Board. Associated with the Mayor’s AIDS Consortium  
**CCBC** – Community Counseling of Bristol County  
**CFC** – Citizens for Citizens  
**CFFC** – Child and Family Focus Committee meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month, immediately after the GTHHSC meeting, at approximately 10:00.  
**CHNA** – Community Health Network Area. GATHER is CHNA #24 of the 26 DPH areas in Massachusetts.  
**DON** – Determination of Need. DON funding supports CHNAs  
**DPH** – Department of Public Health  
**DSS** – Department of Social Services  
**DV** – Domestic Violence. A GATHER Committee addresses Domestic Violence/Violence Prevention. It meets on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month, 3:30, at the Taunton New Hope office  
**DYS** – Department of Youth Services  
**ETF** – Taunton Emergency Task Force meets on the first Tuesday of the month, 9:00, at GATRA, 10 Oak St.  
**FEMA** – Federal Emergency Management Agency  
**FSS** – Family Self Sufficiency Program. A home ownership program  
**GATCH** – Greater Attleboro/Taunton Coalition on Homelessness  
**GATHER** – Greater Attleboro/Taunton Health & Education Response is CHNA #24. Subcommittees  
**GATRA** – Greater Attleboro/Taunton Regional Transit Authority  
**GTHHSC** – Greater Taunton Health & Human Services Coalition. Monthly networking meetings usually take place on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Tuesday of the month at 9:00 am, at Associates for Human Services. Next meeting: May 16, 2006.  
**MTF** – MassHealth Training Forum  
**OECD** – Office for Economic and Community Development  
**SAMHSA** – Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration  
**SCHC** – Southeast Center for Healthy Communities. The Brockton center services Southeastern Massachusetts.  
**SEMA-VAV** – Southeastern Massachusetts Voices Against Violence  
**THS** – Taunton High School  
**TMLP** – Taunton Municipal Lighting Plant  
**TPD** – Taunton Police Department  
**TPS** – Taunton Public Schools  
**WHO** – World Health Organization  
**WIC** – Women, Infants and Children. Nutritional assistance to expectant or breastfeeding mothers and their young children.



## ? Did You Know That...?



### Events

**Mulligan Center** is offering the following trainings: *Making the Connections Between Crystal Meth, HIV and STD's*, **4/11/06**, 9:30-12:30, \$40; *Supporting Gay, Lesbian, Bisexual and Transgender Youth*, **May 2, 17 and 31**, all 3 sessions 2:30-4:30, Free. To register, contact Jane

Dickey at **508-583-2250, x211**, or register online at [www.hcsm.org](http://www.hcsm.org).

**Southeast Region MassHealth Training Forum meeting** will be **4/12/06**, 9:00am to 1:00pm at the Taunton Holiday Inn. For information, call Trish Petursson at **508-856-4306**.



**Morton Hospital and Medical Center** is offering the following in the Margaret Stone Conference Room, 6:30 pm, *Controlling Chronic Pain*, **4/13/06**, and *Vegetarianism – A Healthy Alternative*, **4/27/06**. Free, registration required. Please call **508-828-7777**. *Understanding Strokes*, will be held **5/5/06**, 8:00am, Silver City Galleria

Community Room, free, no registration required.

**MA Children's Trust Fund 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Family Support Institute** will be held **4/24 and 4/25/06**, at the Boxborough Woods Holiday Inn. For registration information, call **617-357-5772**.

**Center for NonProfit Management** 2006 BreakFACTS Series is offering *Planning Outcomes Measurements for High-Impact Volunteer Programs*", **4/25/06**, 8:30-11:00am. For information or to register, please call **508-565-1856**, or see [www.stonehill.edu/nonprofit/breakfacts.htm](http://www.stonehill.edu/nonprofit/breakfacts.htm)

**5<sup>th</sup> Annual MA Suicide Prevention Conference: Action for Life, Voices of Hope: Suicide Prevention Across the Lifespan**, **4/25/06** (2:00-6:30) and **4/26/06** 9:00-4:30pm), at the Sturbridge Host Hotel & Conference Center, 366 Main St., Sturbridge. For information, registration, CEUs and fee schedule, please contact

[Janice.ventre@state.ma.us](mailto:Janice.ventre@state.ma.us) or call AdCare at **508-752-7313**.

**The 2006 MA Conference on Gambling Problems: Community, Clinical and Personal Approaches** will be held **5/5/06**, University of MA Boston Campus. For information or to register, please call **617-426-4554**. [www.masscompulsivegambling.org](http://www.masscompulsivegambling.org)

**MA Immigrant and Refugee Advocacy Coalition (MIRA)** "Give Liberty a Hand" will honor those who fight for immigrant and refugee rights on **5/12/06**, 6:00pm, Cambridge Multicultural Arts Center. For tickets or sponsorship, please call **617-350-5480**, or visit [www.miracoalition.org](http://www.miracoalition.org)

**Massachusetts Community Health Worker Network Statewide Quarterly Training** will be held **5/17/06**, 10:00-Noon, Worcester Public Library, 3 Salem Square. Topic is "Improving Community Health Through Advocacy". For

information contact Lisa Renee Siciliano at **508-856-4852**.

**MADD Power Summit** will be held June 18-21, Clark U, Worcester, for youth delegates and adult advisors. Cost \$100 per participant, due by May 5. For information, please call MADD at **800-633-MADD**. Or email [info@maddmass.org](mailto:info@maddmass.org)

### Information/Resources

**Sex Offenders Registry** shows where the offenders live in relationship to your home and schools. See [www.familywatchdog.us](http://www.familywatchdog.us).

**Alcopops Perception** - According to a study by the American Medical Association, teenage girls mistakenly believe that alcopops contain less alcohol than beer and are drinking the fruity drinks twice as often as boys. The study found that a full one-third of all girls older than 12 have tried alcopops and that one out of five either threw up or passed out after drinking them.

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## COALITION/COMMITTEE MINUTES & REPORTS

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### **GATHER Domestic Violence, Violence Prevention.** 3/16/06, 3:30, New Hope



#### Discussion Highlights:

- **Suicide** is an act of violence and/or control. In 89% of cases worldwide, at least one mental disorder was present. Substance-related disorders accounted for 40% of the cases, and disruptive disorders in 20%. Mood disorder like depression accounted for most of the suicides, but the contribution of these disorders was lower than expected. (WHO).
- **Dress to Impress** – Domestic violence victims and all low income women and men who are returning to the workforce and don't

have the appropriate clothing for interviews would benefit by such a program. There would be no cost to the person in need. An authorized referral would be required on agency or organization letterhead. The start up program will cost about \$300 monthly for 15 months, for a renovated room at the 1<sup>st</sup> Parish Church. This includes heat and electric. The project will be volunteer run, by appointment.



- **Dancing for Our Stars** is a New Hope fundraiser on 3/31/06 at the Mansfield

Holiday Inn. Tickets are \$75.

- **Yellow Dress** play will be provided to Taunton High School juniors and seniors on 3/24/06 from 1:00-2:00. The one-woman play will be followed with a panel discussion. New Hope dating violence brochures will be available. The program helps students identify the warning signs of abusive behaviors, how to help friends and family members and develop school community awareness of the issue. The hope is to develop a school and community

culture that does not endorse, promote or accept violence in relationships. Area media were invited to cover the event.

- **Take Back the Night** will be held at Wheaton College on March 25, and at Stonehill on April 29.
- **Domestic Violence Media Manual** prepared by The Commission for Equality and The Rights of Women in Portugal was shared. It encourages media involvement in the worldwide solution to the problem.

#### **April Events: National Sexual Assault Awareness Month:**

- **Verizon Cell Phones Project** –SEMA-VAV is having a planning meeting this week. They are taking cell phones and pictures for a press release. The Verizon community has been supportive of victims of domestic violence with grants or boxes of refurbished cell phones.

- **Garden of Hope** work will continue by volunteers, one day on every weekend, weather permitting, from March to June. In the past, 1400 bulbs were planted. Mini-grants are being sought to support the effort.
- **Attleboro** - New Hope has outreached to 15 libraries, 15 police departments and 2 hospitals with packets containing brochures, hotline cards and a letter. 1,000 teal ribbons are being distributed. New Hope will hold a basic and open forum on sexual assault for community members on **4/19/06**, at the Attleboro Library from 10:00-Noon.
- **National Crime Victims Rights Week** “Victims’ Rights: Strength in Unity” Silent Vigil featuring campaign signs will be held **4/24/06**, 4:30-6:30, throughout Taunton in locations such as Taunton Green, Taunton High School area, and anywhere volunteers are willing to

participate in the awareness campaign. Taunton High School and Bristol-Plymouth students will participate. Ponchos are available in case of rain. The Norton Library will do a display on crime victims and sexual assault. Other GATHER libraries may also participate.

#### Next Steps:

- Compose parent letters and press releases for The Yellow Dress.
- Apply for “Dress for Success” funding.

#### Next Meeting:

GATHER DV/VP: **4/21/06**, 3:30, (3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the Month), New Hope, 39 Taunton Green

Contact Person: Annemarie Matulis, **508-922-7278** cell, [amatulis@tmlp.com](mailto:amatulis@tmlp.com) or [matulisannie@msn.com](mailto:matulisannie@msn.com)



## **GATHER/GTHHSC Substance Abuse Committee. 3/15/06, 3:30, CCBC**



#### Discussion Highlights:

**School Drug Policies** - Taunton’s district wide policy is drafted and includes use of a breathalyzer test. The final policy will be read at 3 school committee meetings, and parents will receive letters. Once it becomes policy, staff will be trained. The policy will state purpose, what the school is trying to prevent and procedures.

#### **After Prom Parties Awareness Campaign**

- **Prom/graduation safety awareness letters** were reviewed. Suggested

recipients include GATHER area parents of juniors and seniors, hotel managers, liquor store managers and police departments.

- **Press releases** highlighting prom safety and liability will be sent to local newspapers, television, cable and radio. It will also be the topic of a local cable police show, presented by concerned high school students.
- **Student volunteers** will make follow up phone calls in June to access effectiveness for continuation next year.

**Tobacco Mini-Grant Update** – Two THS students attended advocacy training. Students brainstormed what they want to change, then wrote a petition, letter, and set up a meeting. A college leader works with students. Peers will meet to select a poster slogan based on a perception survey of students. Later, focus groups will discuss the message, and then posters will be printed and distributed. A new survey will be done on 4/25/06.

**Area Practices** – New Bedford’s Students Assistance

Program is a voluntary random drug testing program. Parent orientations for understanding the benefits and limitations will be held this month. Participants will receive incentives and discounts from businesses, and parents and students will have a go to point for help with substance abuse issues. Parents will also receive information about how to talk to their kids about drugs. If the discrete saliva test is positive, parents are contacted and further follow up is provided. If negative, parents receive a congratulatory call. Students will receive a drug free employment card they can show employers. This first of its kind program in MA is open to the whole student body.

**Fact Sheet: From Policy Impact Communications**

- **Decriminalizing Marijuana** from \$500 fine and up to 6 months in jail to \$250 fine for possession (for less than 1 oz) was recommended by MA House Mental Health and Substance Abuse Committee
- **AdCare North Dartmouth Outpatient Clinic** at 88 Faunce Corner Road is offering a College Substance Abuse Education Group. Aimed at students who have reached an extreme of SA (alcohol and gambling included), with some students coming to the program through court referrals or at the request of parents. Meetings are weekly for 1 ½ hours as a group, and weekly individually with a counselor.
- **What's Wrong with Moderation** – Most international students are

taught to drink responsibly while still under the guidance of their parents, in social situations without getting drunk. It is different in the United States where students may see alcohol as a forbidden pleasure, and as much of it as possible should be consumed when given the opportunity.

- **More Female Nonsmokers Dying of Lung Cancer** – The same amount of tobacco exposure is more likely to lead to the changes that cause lung cancer in a woman than the male counterpart who gets the same secondhand exposure. About 15,000 nonsmoking women die of lung cancer annually. More women die annually from lung cancer than breast and ovarian cancer combined.
- **Taking It On Herself To Sound A Warning** – Losing her boyfriend made Haley Cyr speak up about teen drinking. Last November 4, 2005, her boyfriend, who had been drinking wanted her to come with him to Wendy's. This time, she offered to drive, but when he repeatedly refused the offer and accused her of not trusting him, she walked away. He died in a crash as well as did a friend who accompanied him. Police are pursuing charges against a 17 year old and his mother for allegedly hosting a house party that day. Haley now shares her boyfriend's story at school assembly programs with other teens in hopes they will make good decisions when it comes to alcohol. She feels personal stories carry more sway with

teens, especially girls, when they are told by other teens. She doesn't believe the story will stop teens from drinking, but hopes it will persuade some not to drive drunk or get into a car with a drunk driver.

**From Tobacco in the News: Campaign for Tobacco-Free kids:**

- **Global Tobacco Treaty** - Government officials gathered in Geneva at the WHO for the first meeting of the ratifying parties of the Framework Convention on Tobacco Control, the global tobacco treaty that became law last year. The United States did not participate in any of the proceedings – including those on key smuggling provisions important to the U.S. – because it has not yet ratified the treaty. Although the Administration signed it in May 2004, it failed to send it to the Senate for ratification.
- **Cancer deaths** decline, but 1/3 of all cancer deaths remain attributable to tobacco use
- **Internet Tobacco Sales** - More than 500 internet websites sell tobacco products at lower prices, because they do not include excise or sales tax.

Next Steps:

- Prom Letters: Get legal advice for prom safety awareness letters to parents, hotels, police, liquor stores and press, and then send. Include a "heads up" of dates and towns of events. Create mailing list with high school students.
- Press Releases: Create press releases for local newspapers,



television and radio and distribute to GATHER area media.

**Next Meeting:** 4/19/06, 3:30, CCBC Family Conference Room, Mill River Professional Center, 1 Washington St.

**Contact Persons:** Arlene Dickinson, 508-223-4691, Lorraine Rosa, 508-823-4822



**GTHHSC/GATHER Planning Meeting.** 3/21/06, 9:00, Associates for Human Services

**Discussion Highlights:**

**Purpose** – Today’s meeting is a continuation of the February meeting (See February 2006 Advocate, GTHHSC/GATHER Preplanning Meeting) discussion of how GATHER and GTHHSC operate both independently, and with the DPH as part of the CHNA system. Whether to combine, merge into one group, continue as is, remain separate and distinct, merge in a different fashion under an entity, or some other format, are all options.

**Announcements:**

**Emergency Task Force:**

- \$2500 donation was received from Bay State Gas for the fuel fund
- There are 300 homeless individuals in the CHNA area
- A United Way grant was submitted, to help with emergency needs
- ETF worked on bylaws
- Fire Chief Rose attended the recent meeting

**Domestic Violence** – The Committee has funded a presentation of the dating violence awareness play “The Yellow Dress” to be held this Friday at T.H.S. for juniors and seniors. Press releases were distributed.

**Substance Abuse Committee** continues work on the prom safety project. GATHER area police, liquor establishments, hotels and parents will receive information in helping them to

do their part in helping youth make healthy decisions, and have a successful prom season.

**Comparison of GTHHSC and GATHER** - Southeast Center for Healthy Communities facilitated the process considering structure and service to the 12 GATHER communities (Plainville is not part of GATHER).

- **GATHER:** Through the CHNA system, GATHER may access DPH representation and technical assistance from SCHC. The DPH also requires agencies receiving their funding to attend the local CHNA. GATHER addresses needs and trends, works in subcommittees, and is a state designated CHNA.
- **GTHHSC** was established to network and identify needs and trends, addressed by subcommittees who report back to the GTHHSC.

**Geography:** Both Attleboro and Taunton are separate cities, so a structure is needed to get programming in both, although many member agencies, as well as area committees, serve the entire GATHER area. Some of these include Community Care Services, WIC, DSS, New Hope, GATCH (Greater Attleboro/Taunton Committee on Homelessness), the new AIDS Consortium design, SEMA-VAV (Voices Against Violence) and Bristol Elder Services. Both cities have

committees focused on basic needs: Emergency Task Force in Taunton, and Attleboro Area Council.

- **GTHHSC** - Service areas reached through member agencies technically cover Attleboro, Berkley, Dighton, Lakeville, Middleboro, Raynham, Rehoboth, Seekonk and Taunton although representation is mostly Taunton.
- **GATHER** area additionally ideally includes Mansfield, N. Attleboro and Norton.

**Programming** - Most GTHHSC and GATHER programming is focused in Taunton. Awareness activities of the Substance Abuse committee covers all of GATHER.

**Committees:**

- **GATHER Service Area**  
The Substance Abuse Committee has a GATHER area programming focus.
- **Taunton Service Area** - Committees with mostly a Taunton focus include the Child and Family Focus (also addresses full GATHER area through Advocate Newsletter inserts and articles), Domestic Violence / Violence Prevention, and Community Health and Wellness.

**Structure** – Fiscal management is different for each coalition. Both coalitions share the same administrative support through the coordinator.

- **GATHER** uses New Hope for fiscal management. It has a steering committee which meets quarterly.
- **GTHHSC** uses CCBC for financial management. The coalition has worked with the United Way on needs assessments, and uses these to address needs and establish both ad hoc and long standing committees.

**Events** – Both Coalitions share the Substance Abuse Round Tables, an Annual Meeting and the Advocate Newsletter. The annual meeting highlights accomplishments, and does not include strategic planning.

**Funding:** GTHHSC dues and part of the GATHER DON funding supports coordination of both groups.

- **GTHHSC** funding comes from dues and grant application

- **GATHER** receives DON monies and applies for grants. Hospitals are supposed to pass DON monies to the local CHNA, which would be GATHER for both Sturdy and Morton. There is strong support from Morton Hospital, but none from Sturdy at this time.

**Membership** – The Coalitions wish to build active membership.

**Development** – A Coordination Committee with representatives from GTHHSC and the GATHER Steering Committee could engage both Attleboro and Taunton.

- To talk about next steps to develop CHNA #24 (GATHER) into a more accurate representation
- To work towards connecting Attleboro and Taunton groups
- To carry out yearly strategic planning

- To create an operation that links communities, pools resources, needs, representation and allocate funding.

**Next Steps:**

- Prepare for a larger Planning Meeting on 4/4/06, of GTHHSC and GATHER to include the GATHER Steering Committee, GTHHSC membership and all DPH mandated agencies from Attleboro and Taunton.
- Contact GATHER Steering Committee with updates and invitation to the 4/4/06 meeting
- Update website to reflect the 12 GATHER communities.
- Send email information in Acrobat reader.

**Next Meeting:**

**4/18/06, 9:00, A.H.S.**

**Contact Person:**

Richard McMahon, **508-979-7160, 3010.**

**Safe Neighborhood Initiative. 3/29/06, 8:00, Bristol-Plymouth Silver Platter.**

Discussion Highlights:

**Criminal Justice Committee:** Good attendance at the meeting; Superior, District and Juvenile Courts, Taunton Police Department (TPD), CCBC, DSS and DYS attended. 13 on high offender list. Discussion occurred regarding getting the average street cops on board with SNI goals.

**Crisis Intervention Team:** Team members will be presenting in Boston and at Bridgewater State College. Next full training in Taunton will be May 9, 10 and 11. DSS, CCBC and police departments from Westwood, Easton, Brockton and Attleboro have registered.

**Treatment and Prevention Committee:** Possibility of now receiving SAMSHA grant funding may occur. Working on After Prom Awareness Campaign, GATHER upcoming meeting, Taunton Public Schools drug policy and tobacco mini-grant.

**Education Committee:** Entire school system working on MCAS preparation and remediation. Working with Regal Cinemas on incentives for attendance. Sheriff's Office will be presenting to school staff on I Safe. Discussion occurred on gang recruitment activities in Taunton. BP is following up on issues surrounding bomb scare

that occurred. BP had staff training on Bullying and Cyber bullying. TPD is considering applying for a Gang Prevention grant.

**Neighborhoods:** TPD has been meeting with Galleria Mall administration and security regarding mall safety. A Juvenile Probation officer has been assigned to work with the mall to develop a positive relationship. TPD and THA working on security and summer programs for target neighborhood. Office for Economic and Community Development staff presented their programs to Whittenton Neighborhood Watch residents.



**Program Update:** Educational components will be provided at Neighborhood Watch meetings. Taunton Daily Gazette will run the list of upcoming Watch meetings. Working on graffiti removal. Surveying residents on

issues in their neighborhoods. Tip Line number and magnets are being distributed. AG's office is presenting Internet Safety program around the state.

**Next Meetings:**  
**4/26/06**, 8:00 a.m. at the Fairfax Gardens Community Center.

**Contact Person:** Robert Cammarata, **508-821-1420**

**Taunton Emergency Task Force. 3/7/06, 9:30, GATRA Conference Room, Oak St.**

**Discussion Highlights:**

**Fuel Fund/Emergency Services:** ETF received a \$2500.00 donation from Bay State Gas for the fuel fund only. According to TMLP, a total of 1987 families were assisted with their electric last year from Citizens for Citizens (CFC), St. Vincent dePaul and ETF for a total amount of \$50191.00. CFC has received FEMA funds for utility shut-offs and an increase in fuel assistance for eligible individuals

**Taunton Housing Authority's Family Self-Sufficiency (FSS) Program** has made the FSS program a requirement for the Section 8 to Homeownership

program for non-disabled / non-elderly individuals.

**The Executive Board** has reviewed and revised the Bylaws, which were distributed at the meeting. If no changes are made, the bylaws will be accepted at the April meeting. The committee has also voted to set up a PO Box for mail.

**The new Fundraising committee** will be meeting at the end of March. Anyone interested in attending should contact Erica Emond at **508-821-3104**.

**Taunton Fire Department** - After a discussion of ETF history and its relationship with

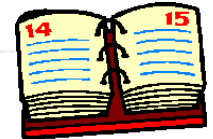
the Fire and Police departments, Chief Rose of the Taunton Fire Dept. stated that the collaboration of services is important and appreciated during a crisis situation such as the Seeley Building fire.

**Next Steps:**

- Vote on Bylaws. Report from Fundraising committee.
- Follow up on address change.
- Review changes to transportation program guidelines.

**Next Meeting:** **4/4/06**, 9:30, Bloom Bus Terminal, Oak St.

**Contact Person:** Milly Burrows, **508-880-0202**



## UPCOMING AREA MEETINGS

April 12, 9:00	<b>Greater Taunton Mayor's AIDS Consortium.</b> Morton Café Annex. CAB follows.
April 26, 8:00	<b>Safe Neighborhood Initiative Annual Meeting.</b> Fairfax Gardens Community Room.
April 19, 3:30	<b>GATHER/GTHHSC Substance Abuse Committee.</b> CCBC, Mill River Place
April 20, 3:30	<b>GATHER Domestic Violence Committee.</b> New Hope Taunton Office. 39 Taunton Green.
May 2, 9:30	<b>Taunton Emergency Task Force.</b> GATRA Administrative Bldg, Conference Room, 10 Oak St.
May 3, 3:30	<b>CHNA #24 Structure Planning Meeting.</b> Arbour-Fuller Hospital.
May 16, 9:00	<b>GTHHSC Networking Meeting.</b> Associates for Human Services, 68 Allison Rd.
May 16, 10:15	<b>GTHHSC Child &amp; Family Focus Committee.</b> A.H.S., 68 Allison Rd.



**GTHHSC/GATHER**  
**P.O. Box 2894**  
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