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THE ADVOCATE



The Newsletter of the Greater Taunton Health & Human Service Coalition (GTHHSC) and Community Health Network Area 24
 – www.geocities.com/gathercoalition

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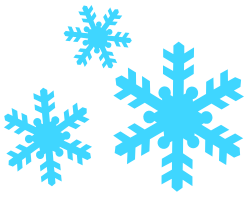


CHRISTMAS DINNERS, BASKETS, AND GIFTS AVAILABLE IN ATTLEBORO/TAUNTON AREA

(United Way of Greater Attleboro/Taunton)

Christmas dinner will be held on December 25, 2006. All phone numbers are in the 508 exchange. Some have deadlines.

City/Town:	Dinners:	Baskets:	Gift Programs:
Attleboro	No Information Available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Self Help, 508-226-4192 Deadline: 12/24/06 ➤ St. John's SVDP, 222-8400 Deadline: 12/18 ➤ St. Stephen SVDP, 572-5335 Deadline: 12/16 	St. Stephen's SVDP, 572-5335 . Deadline 12/16/06
Berkley	Corline Cronin Family, Inc. at Coyle & Cassidy H.S, Breakfast 8-11, Dinner 11-1. No tickets/restrictions.	St. Bernard's, Assonet 644-5585	Operation Christmas, Citizens for Citizens, ages 0-12, 823-6346
Dighton	Corline Cronin Family, Inc. at Coyle & Cassidy H.S, Breakfast 8-11, Dinner 11-1. No tickets/restrictions.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ N. Dighton: St. Joseph's, 822-1425 ➤ S. Dighton: St. Peter's, 669-6463 	Operation Christmas, Citizens for Citizens, ages 0-12, 823-6346
Mansfield	No information available	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ➤ Mansfield Social Services, 261-7464 ➤ Westside Benevolent, 339-3397 	Mansfield Social Services, 261-7464 Westside Benevolent, 339-3397
N. Attleboro	No information available	St. Mary's SVDP, 212-4755	
Norton	Corline Cronin Family, Inc. at Coyle & Cassidy H.S, Breakfast 8-11, Dinner 11-1. No tickets/restrictions.	St. Mary's Church, 285-4462	
Plainville	No information available	No information available	Salvation Army – Attleboro Corps Bridges of Hope, 222-2933
Raynham	Corline Cronin Family, Inc. at Coyle & Cassidy H.S, Breakfast 8-11, Dinner 11-1. No tickets/restrictions.	St. Ann's Church, 823-9833	Citizens for Citizens' Operation Christmas, (Ages 0-12) 823-6346 . St. Anne's Church Giving Tree, Ages 0-16, 823-9833
Seekonk	Corline Cronin Family, Inc. at Coyle & Cassidy H.S, Breakfast 8-11, Dinner 11-1. No tickets/restrictions.	No information available	
Taunton	Corline Cronin Family, Inc. at Coyle & Cassidy H.S, Breakfast 8-11, Dinner 11-1. No tickets/restrictions.	St. Vincent DePaul, 823-6676 The Lord Cares Food Pantry 823-8234 Or any Catholic Church	Citizens for Citizens' Operation Christmas, (Ages 0-12) 823-6346



Keeping Families Safe This Winter

(Information from MA Department of Public Health)



Wintertime in New England is right around the corner! Some of us dread the cold; others look forward to the new activities and events that can only be enjoyed this time of year. Regardless of how we feel, here it comes, ready or not! Below you will find a compilation of information that will help keep you and your family safe whether you're ready to enjoy the season, or just want to get through it comfortably while you daydream about spring. This is a partial list of safety measures. You may find more information from the Department of Public Health and the Office of the State Fire Marshal at www.mass.gov, and other reputable sources.



Space Heaters – In 2005, 71 space heater fires were reported to the MA Office of the State Fire Marshal, causing deaths, injuries and property loss. If you must use a space heater, use it as safely as possible.

- Look for one that is tested and labeled by a nationally recognized testing company
- Keep it away from flammable materials, on a level surface, away from where it might be bumped or knocked over
- If you must use an extension cord, make sure it's a heavy duty cord marked with a power rating at least as high as that on the label of the heater itself (**Usually Orange Colored**)

- Never leave it unattended or running while you sleep
- Keep it away from water, away from a sink, away from the bathroom
- Remember that the sale and use of unvented kerosene heaters is illegal in Massachusetts

Candle use has risen greatly in the past decade, but so have candle fires. They have more than tripled in the state in the past ten years, making candles one of the leading causes of fire deaths in the home in this state.

- Burn candles inside a one foot circle of safety, an area free of anything that could come in contact with the flame and burn.
- Never leave candles unattended, out of your sight, or when you fall asleep
- Keep them out of reach of children and pets
- Never use candles on trees, near live or other flammable decorations
- Keep matches and lighters out of reach of children
- Teach the whole family the rules of safe candle use

Decorating Safely: Below are a few of the many safety suggestions in keeping common decorations safe:

- ❖ **Cut Trees**
 - Keep away from heat
 - Water it daily
 - Use a non-tip style tree stand
 - Use only fire retardant decorations

- Never leave a lit tree unattended
- Dispose of the tree properly, and before the needles dry out
- Artificial trees should have a fire retardant label. Never hang lights on a metallic tree.

❖ Lights

- Unplug all lighting before retiring or leaving the house
- Purchase lights and electric decorations which are listed by an approved testing agency
- Check all lighting for frayed wires, broken plugs, sockets, etc.
- Never overload outlets
- Always use appropriate weatherproof lights outdoors

Selecting Gifts for Children – The U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission recommends the following keys for children's toy safety:



- Avoid toys with small parts which can cause choking for children under 3
- Select toys to suit the age, abilities, skills and interest level of the child
- Avoid toys with sharp edges and electric toys with heating parts for children under 8
- Look for labels with age and safety advice.

GTHHSC December Networking Meeting

12/19/06, 9:00, Associates for Human Services, 68 Allison Rd.



Did You Know That...?

Events

Massachusetts Fruit and Vegetable Nutrition Council (formerly “5-a-Day”) will meet **12/14/06,** and **1/11/07,** 9:30am, at the MA DPH Conference Room 5B, 250 Washington St., Boston. For information, call Cynthia Bayerl, **617-624-5439.**



MassHealth Training Forum will be held **1/10/07,** at the Taunton Holiday Inn. For information and time, please call **508-856-4306,** or email mtf@umassmed.edu

Morton Hospital and Medical Center workshops include **Diabetes Update, 1/5/07,** 8:00am, Free, Galleria Community Room. Discussion of diabetes, new findings and helpful tips to control the symptoms; **Eating For Energy, 1/18/07,** 6:30 p.m., FREE, Margaret Stone Conference Room. Discuss factors that decrease your sense of energy and ways to increase and maintain a healthy, energetic

lifestyle. Leave with valuable tips and easy- to-follow steps which will lead you to a vital, passionate life. Pre-registration is required. Call **508-828-7777.**

Resources

Vital Public Health Resources are now available at www.PIRE.org. It includes the Resource Finder, a repository of original PIRE research and program materials, the PIRE Spotlight and Newsroom interpret researcher work. The site also presents PIRE research guides and other related websites on public health problems and solutions.

Substance Abuse

TV, Movies Profound Effect on Youth Smoking – Children who view favorable images of smoking on TV or in movies have a 90% greater risk of becoming smokers according to research studies on the link between smoking and exposure to tobacco ads and on-screen imagery. Robert Wellman of UMass Medical School and



colleagues reviewed findings from 51 previously conducted studies and concluded that movie and TV images can be even more psychologically reinforcing for smoking than tobacco ads. A spokesperson for the Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids added that congress should give the FDA the power to regulate tobacco products and marketing. (See 12/06 [Archives of Pediatrics and Adolescent Medicine.](#))

Sober Truth on Preventing Underage Drinking Act (STOP) was initially approved in the House of Representatives passed the Senate by unanimous consent, and won final approval in a slightly amended form on December 7. The President is expected to sign the bill into law. The bill includes a \$1 million annual national media campaign on underage drinking, \$5 million for community coalitions to address underage drinking and \$5 million to prevent alcohol abuse at institutes of higher education and other provisions. (See www.jointogether.org)

COALITION/COMMITTEE MINUTES & REPORTS



GTHHSC Substance Abuse Committee (SAC). 11/15/06, 3:30, CCBC

Discussion Highlights:

Caritas in RI offers residential (for RI residents) and outpatient substance abuse treatment, including adolescent treatment for ages 13-17, covering several cites. Some are court ordered, some not. Referrals come from schools, hospitals and other

agencies. Parents are always involved in the 12 week program curriculum. The focus is mostly on adolescent substance abuse, and covers Massachusetts youth as well. Although basically a substance abuse facility, Caritas deals with other issues and diagnoses. They take private insurance. The CHNA24 area

lacks a residential program for adolescents. This need can be brought up at the United Way needs assessment focus groups. Committee members will attend the forums.

Project YELL:

➤ **More Peer Leaders** were hired with the Tobacco

grant. Planned trainings include tobacco and teen topics, Youth in Action compliance checks, shoulder taps and sticker shock. They will hand out goodies in the Christmas parade. Peers did a survey at the mall health fair. They also did Red Ribbon Week activities in the 4 T.P.S. middle schools.

- **The Youth Summit** is in June. THS kids came back from the recent summit with plans to increase compliance. Small grants may allow peer leaders to go to the MADD youth summit in June, where Project YELL can be showcased.
- **COMET** - The federally required April-September 2006 COMET report was completed before deadline, and includes project information for the entire fiscal year. The next report will begin shortly.

Substance Abuse Round Table (SART) XII

- **Donations** - A letter to solicit community financial

support with an introduction to the proven success record of social norms on substance abuse was discussed.

- **Format** of the social norms 101 focus day includes keynote speaker, adult group and youth working groups (HS and middle), that will leave the event with a mini plan for their school system. Last years Taunton High School mini tobacco campaign will be featured. Attendee packets will include articles about social norms, challenges and what attendees can do to take back to their community. A panel presentation / audience question portion of social norms is possible. SARTXII is scheduled for **4/12/07**.

Annual Meeting – The SAC will provide 50 copies of the committee’s information sheet according to the format, for distribution. Lorraine will prepare the document with committee input, and April will make and bring the copies.

Community Care Services received the Comprehensive Community Project \$5,000 DPH grant to design preventative tobacco control activities to reduce tobacco use. The proposal was supported by the Committee, the Mayor and the schools. The SAC will initially serve as the planning group for the 18 month planning period. Schools provide referrals and space for the free program, but can’t mandate attendance as could the courts and DYS if they made it a probation stipulation. Contact person is Brian Foss.

Next Steps:

- Prepare SAC information sheet for Annual Meeting
- Update letter to funders

Next Meeting: **12/20/06**, 3:30, CCBC

Contact Persons: Arlene Dickinson, **508-223-4691**, Lorraine Rosa, mcaprosa@hotmail.com

Southeastern Massachusetts Voices Against Violence. 11/16/06, 5:00, MassInfotech

Discussion Highlights:

Dress to Impress - SEMA-VAV received news that the Bristol County Savings Bank Charitable Fund has awarded Dress to Impress \$3,000 to offset first year start up expenses. Thanks go to Community Counseling of Bristol County and Phil Shea, CEO, for serving as fiscal agent. Funding will cover 7 months rent, and \$900 for renovations. The incredible response to the program requires having a storage unit outside the room. The May Institute request for appropriate attire continues. A



volunteer orientation day will be held in next 2 weeks to coordinate opening the room and assisting in outfit selection. Jen, Tracy and the Girl Scouts have volunteered. Local cleaners donated men’s suits, and most donors want to remain anonymous. More funding is needed for after June 2007. The response has been that such a program is long overdue. Possibly there can be a partnership with the Americorp Attire for Hire program.

Verizon Wireless Hopeline Cell Phones Project continues.

2006 Through My Eyes: Voices Against Violence, Voices of Hope has received manuscripts and poetry.

Garden of Hope – The Triumph Head Start National Make a Difference Day gardening project has been put off until spring. The 10/28/06 Make a Difference Day event brought in 337 outfits. Press coverage included articles in the Taunton Daily Gazette and

the Enterprise. A report was also sent to the National Make a Difference Day Foundation with press clippings and photos.

Bristol County Domestic Violence Roundtable is scheduled for 12/5/06, 2:30, Fall River location TBA

Budget – The Committee paid New Hope \$250 to defray Clothesline Project expenses at the National Day of Unity. The CHNA Steering Committee will revisit funding requests and distribution.

Goal setting

- Obtain local statistics and police data
- Representation from the Police and District Attorney’s Office
- Assault data
- Involvement of Dr. Elizabeth Englander
- HOPE grant funding for a DV newsletter.

Focus Group Meetings – SEMA-VAV issues will be represented at the 12/7/06 United Way Children, Youth and Family Focus group.

CHNA Kick-Off Meeting will be held 11/21/06. An information sheet about SEMA-VAV will be distributed to the membership. Accomplishments include our new name, Make a Difference Day, grant receipt, Dress to Impress, Candle Light Vigil, Crime Victims Rights Week, Clothesline Project, The Yellow Dress presentation, etc.

2007 Observances:

- **National Crime Victims Awareness Week** is observed April 22-28. Thoughts include a silent vigil on the green and working closely with New Hope on Attleboro and Taunton events. A calendar of events was recommended.

➤ **Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week** will be held February 5-9. The Committee may expand activities into other schools besides T.H.S. Planning starts in December.

Location Change is required for the January and February meetings. Deb will chair the January meeting.

Next Steps:

- Prepare an information sheet for distribution at the annual meeting
- Keep the National Teen Dating Violence Awareness and Prevention Week (2/5-2/9/07), and National Crime Victims Rights Week (4/22-4/28/07) on the agenda
- Find a location for the January and February meetings.

Contact Person: Annemarie Matulis, **508-922-7278**; matulisannie@msn.com

Substance Abuse Round Table Planning Meeting. 12/6/06, 3:30, CCBC

Discussion Highlights:

Save the Date Postcards were finalized and will be sent out in January.

Speaker/Panel – Suggestions include Lauri Turkovsky from the Medical Foundation, Tracy Desovich of SCHC and Karen Cardeira and students from the Falmouth school system social norms project. Tracy and Lauri could do the adults breakout, and Karen, Peer Leaders and a college student familiar with social norms could facilitate the high school group. A panel presentation would be educational and informational for adults. Deb can facilitate panel. Suggested topic is an

introduction to Social Norms 101 as a substance abuse prevention strategy, and where to take it from there. Tracy could share her expertise and discuss the Montana connection. Karen can talk about her success in the Falmouth Schools social norms project. Deb, Lorraine, April and Carol can share written information from the Denver conference. Adult involvement is essential to the social norms expansion and continued success.

Funding – Additional funding has been sought from the Bristol County Savings Bank Charitable Foundation. There may be more

from the Executive Office of Public Safety.

Outcomes and Evaluation – Project YELL’s social norms campaign hopes to show an alcohol abuse decrease from the initiative.

Donation Letter has been composed to solicit raffle prizes. Smaller businesses might wish to donate and get their name mentioned. Larger companies may wish to donate money for prizes. Letters will be sent out in January, and follow up phone calls will be shared by committee. Peer Leaders can talk to small businesses. Corporate businesses need to receive

letters. Suggestions include industrial park, the auto mile, insurance companies, Chambers of Commerce, Rotary and Benjamins, covering the greater Attleboro/Taunton area. About 150-180 attendees are expected. \$2,000 would give lots of prizes. Suggestions include an Ipod, camera, day at the spa, dinner

and a movie, Macys, a gift basket, roller skating rink passes.

Next Steps:

- Finalize the donation letter.
- Look into an appropriate survey and evaluation from SCHC

Bring past invitation lists to compare with the CADCA coalition segments.

Next Meeting: 1/10/07, 3:30, CCBC Project Empower Office.

Contact Person: Kathy Lalor, 508-823-9416

Taunton Emergency Task Force. 11/14/06, 9:30, GATRA

Obituary Notices:

- Vincent Eagles, Director of the United way passed away. Flowers were sent
- Dick Silvia's sister passed away, a card was sent on behalf of the committee.

\$2500 Grant Received from Bristol County Savings Bank will help clients who are in need of car repairs and furnace repairs. Eligible clients will be able to receive a maximum of \$200.00. The task force is waiting for the November check from the United Way. A motion was made, seconded and voted to approve that money from the emergency fund be used to assist with electric shut-offs to be replaced with the UW check.

Homelessness: GATCH meeting will be held on 11/14/06 at the United Way. Catherine McHugh will now be developing the 10-year strategic plan. Milly will follow-up with the Samaritan House in regards to attending monthly meetings.

Fuel Fund / Emergency Services: ETF fuel fund is closed until December 1, 2006. Citizens For Citizens is not open on Saturdays. Appointments can be set up with Bonnie for working families.

The Executive Board - A motion was made to finalize a membership dues donation letter to be sent in January.

“Warm Homes for the Holidays” - Senator Marc Pacheco, Representative Jim Fagan, Bella Roma Restaurant, and the Mayor's Office fundraiser will be held at the VFW on 11/27/06, 6:00-9:00pm. Tickets are \$15.00 for adults and \$5.00 for children 12 and under, available at Bella Roma Restaurant, Marc Pacheco's Office, Jim Fagan's Office, and the Mayor's Office.

Donations - Charlene is setting up an account with Town-Line Redemption Center on Somerset Avenue for the Emergency Task Force, to begin in December.

Community Care Services, Housing Assistance Program, (HAP), has moved to 275 North Street New Bedford, MA, 508-990-0972.

Agency Highlights:

TEMA is involved with the Homeland Security Council and the comprehensive emergency plan. TEMA brings in lighting, pumps, and generators for emergency situations if needed. Pumping basements can be done in emergencies for the elderly

and handicapped. Taunton High School and many of the other schools in Taunton are evacuation sites if anything was to go wrong at the Plymouth Power Plant.

Bristol County Sheriff's Office-Project Life Saver helps people who are suffering from Alzheimer's Disease and related disorders such as Downs Syndrome and Autism. Clients who tend to wander away from their homes can wear a bracelet with a transmitter to track their location. Thirteen families are involved with the program so far. Taunton police officers will receive training for the program.

Mayor's Office-Lights on Friday 12/1/06. Christmas parade is 12/3/06.

Family Self-Sufficiency, South Shore Housing is a volunteer Program serving 70 families. Goal is home ownership.

St. Vincent DePaul - Food and electric demands are very high. Helping Hands has success stories for the holiday season.

Our Daily Bread - Thanksgiving meal will be held 11/22/06. Danny Laffan of the Boys Scouts did an excellent job with the canned good drive.

American Red Cross Boston office has moved. New contact information is Nick Hambridge-American Red Cross, 139 Main Street, Cambridge, MA 02142. Phone **617-274-5273**, fax 617-274-5254, Cell-617-908-2367

Board of Health Employee Flu Clinic is 11/30/06 and 12/1/06 10:00am-4:00pm@DPW. Public Flu Clinic is November 28,29, 10:00am-3:00pm@DPW

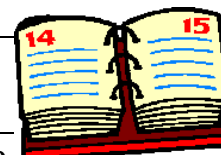
Transitional Housing Program - Eight families are in the transitional housing program. One moved in this month and one signed a lease. Three will be signing leases with the Taunton Housing Authority in December.

Associates for Human Services - Early Head Start continues to accept referrals for expectant families and families with children under 3 years of age. The focus is on parent support and child development.

Next Meeting: 1/2/06, 9:30, GATRA Conference Room, Bloom Bus Terminal, Oak St.

Contact Person: Milly Burrows, 508-880-0202

UPCOMING AREA MEETINGS/EVENTS



Dec. 19, 9:00	GTHHSC Networking Meeting. A.H.S., 68 Allison Ave.
Dec. 19, 10:15	Child & Family Focus Committee Meeting. A.H.S., 68 Allison Ave.
Dec. 20, 8:00	Safe Neighborhood Initiative. Fairfax Gardens Community Room.
Dec. 20, 3:30	GTHHSC Substance Abuse Committee. CCBC, Mill River Place
Dec. 21, 5:00	SEMA-VAV (Domestic Violence Committee). Mass InfoTech, 9 (rear) Taunton Green
Jan 2, 9:30	Taunton Emergency Task Force. GATRA Administrative Bldg, Conference Room, 10 Oak St.
Jan. 10, 3:30	SART XII Planning Committee. CCBC.
Jan. 16, 9:00	GTHHSC Networking Meeting. A.H.S., 68 Allison Ave.
Jan. 16, 10:15	CHNA#24 Steering Committee Meeting. A.H.S., 68 Allison Ave.

This month's Advocate was published by Lorraine Rosa, Coordinator, with funds from Drug Free Communities Grant Funding, GATHER MRI and GTHHSC dues. To submit an article, announcement or other information, email by **1/27/07**. You may also access copies of The Advocate at www.geocities.com/gathercoalition



GTHHSC
P.O. Box 2894
Taunton, MA 02780