



GATHER/GTHHSC Substance Abuse Committee 8/16/06, 3:30, CCBC



The GATHER/GTHHSC Substance Abuse Committee addresses health and social issues in the Greater Attleboro/Taunton communities resulting from substance abuse. This is accomplished by coordinating with existing community resources to heighten public awareness and to develop programs to prevent, reduce and treat substance abuse.

Attendees: Carol Annarino (Project YELL), Doug Barbour (North Cottage), April Cabrera, Arlene Dickinson (South Bay Mental Health), Brian Foss (Community Care Services) Christopher I. Hoeth (Probation), Kathy Lalor (CPI), Jonathan Marcus (CCBC), Michael Meleedy (CCBC), Maggie Pike-Thomson (High Point), Lorraine Rosa (Staff)

Discussion Highlights:

Telephone Conferencing – Lorraine will be available to attend meetings or other contact through email at mcaprosa@hotmail.com, or Skype mrosanet. A backup minutes taker will be assigned at the beginning of each meeting.

Outpatient Addiction Program

– Community Care Services and Attleboro Public Schools are continuing an after school team program 5 days per week, for boys and girls. It includes psycho education counseling and group, life skills for people with addictions, and is open to teens 13-17. Enrollment in Attleboro schools is not a requirement. Transportation can be available by community caravans for low income Attleboro residents, or through a PT1 (non-emergency medical or counseling, paid through Medicaid through GATRA with a physician's signature. The after school day treatment begins in mid September.

Community Smoking Intervention Planning Project

– Community Care Services is submitting a \$15,000 grant proposal to the DPH for a Community Smoking Intervention Planning Project for Taunton. It will fund an 18 month community planning process. At the end of the

process, a written plan will be ready for implementation of an evidence-based intervention to reduce smoking prevalence in the community by changing community norms in order to influence behaviors, and, ultimately, reduce tobacco use prevalence in the state. Their plan includes strong integration with the SAC. This grant will provide an exciting opportunity to begin the process of reinstating preventative services to reduce the incidence of smoking in the City of Taunton, which as MassChip statistics show, is greatly needed.

Unanimous Approval – The SAC voted unanimously to make the tobacco control grant a part of the monthly agenda. Under the new CHNA structure, the SAC is not required to include all 12 CHNA communities in this initiative.

Medicaid and Tobacco – On July 1, 2006, community health centers may bill Medicaid for tobacco services. MassHealth recipients may get nicotine patches if they are prescribed.

CHNA Planning Update – The former GATHER coalition is being reorganized. The new organizational chart resembles a wheel with spokes (individual committees from the 12 communities that make up Greater Attleboro and Taunton)

connecting to a hub (the CHNA Steering Committee). New spokes may be added when a new committee meets the criteria. CHNA meetings will be held quarterly and be attended by 2 representatives from each spoke. An annual meeting will be open to the complete membership of all committees or “spokes”, the first of which will be held in October of 2006, at which time a new name will be chosen. The function of the steering committee is to provide feedback, data sharing and needs assessment information. The first meeting will focus on the roles of the steering committee. After quarterly meetings, representatives will take information back to their respective committees. The emphasis on this new structure is to work on what already exists and look at gaps. Local press will be invited to cover the annual meeting. See minutes, pages 5-6.

Project YELL (Youth Endorsing Legal Lifestyles, a Drug Free Communities Grant)

➔ **Program Director** - Carol Annarino (508-977-8165) is the new Program Director of this youth alcohol reduction program that uses a social norms approach through surveys, focus groups, promotion and marketing.

She will be meeting with MADD, Taunton schools, and other key individuals. She is setting up her office, going through the files, attended a social norms conference, and is getting organized for the project. Her background is in education, and she is on faculty of the Community College of Rhode Island.

➤ **Peer Leadership** – April Cabrera, former peer leader will be working with peer leadership. She is currently researching keeping youth engaged, working on the role of peer leaders, and revising the job description and job posting. The job description will be shared with the Committee, Taunton schools and Boys and Girls club members.

➤ **Surveys** to be administered to high school students must include the following four core measures: Past 30-Day use, average age of onset, perception of risk, perception of parental disapproval. Last years, Montana was hired as survey specialists. Their survey remains their property.

➤ **Letters to Senators** – Thank you letters will be sent to Senators Biden and Grassley for their assistance in spearheading efforts to refund Project YELL. These will be signed by Lorraine, SAC and Carol, Project YELL.

➤ **Senate Involvement** – Senate appropriators want to keep the Office of National Drug Control Policy out of Drug Free Communities decisions. The Senate committee's bill includes ONDCP and other White House agencies when it says that no (DFC) grantee shall be suspended or terminated unless they are afforded a fair, timely, independent appeal. This is a result of the 2006 defunding of coalition programs such as Project YELL, 63 of which had funding reinstated.

Substance Abuse Round Table XII – An environmental strategies approach to social norms was suggested as a topic. The environmental portion requires going beyond providers and students, and include parents, media, business and other community segments working together to get the word out about the true social norms, rather than skewed perceptions of teen alcohol use. When surveys reveal that students' actual use of alcohol is below individual perceptions of alcohol use, peer pressure works as a positive force in encouraging less risky behavior. The SARTXII can get the word out about youth drinking norms, and show how a social norms project is done. This is a new approach to youth alcohol issues. Project YELL has reserved \$2,000 towards the SART, but more

grant funding may be available. The first meeting will be held **9/13/06, 3:00**, at Community Partnerships, Inc., 90 New State Highway (Wynn and Wynn). Agenda will include the following:

- Building a subcommittee to take the lead, beginning with Maggie, Doug, Jon, Carol, April, Lorraine, Kathy
- What is the target audience?
- What do we hope to get out of this roundtable?
- What will it look like?
- Kick off for the T.H.S. social norms project
- Break out groups for possible social norms campaigns at various schools?
- Getting local media on board?
- Select theme/title, such as "Substance Abuse Prevention: Making a Difference"
- Keynote speaker such as Liz Walker

Next Meetings:

- **SAC - 9/20/06, 3:00**, CCBC Family Conference Room, Mill River Professional Center, 1 Washington St.
- **SARTXII Planning** – **9/13/06, 3:00**, CPI, 90 New State Highway (Rt.44)

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



VIII. Next Meeting: October 18, 2006

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