



GATHER/GTHHSC Substance Abuse Committee 6/21/06, 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: Douglas Barbour (North Cottage), Deb Brown (TPS), Valerie Calais (Arbor-Fuller), Arlene Dickinson (South Bay Mental Health), Annie Gallagher (CPI), Anne Kotch (Katrina Survivor), Kathy Lalor (CPI), Jonathan Marcus (CCBC), Michael Meleedy (CCBC), Lorraine Rosa (Staff)

Discussion Highlights:

GTHHSC/GATHER Planning Committee Update – Several decisions were made at the most recent meeting, to include the wheel and spoke structure, eligibility of affiliates or spokes, quarterly meeting structure, autumn kick-off event, networking, data sharing and funding. DPH is supportive of the group as a grassroots up organization.

Substance Abuse Round Table XII – Social norms / environmental strategies was suggested as a topic, perhaps as “Scare Tactics to What Most of Us are Doing”, using school ADAS (American Drug and Alcohol Survey) results to celebrate local students’ healthy decision making. The test has validity and reliability built in, and is science based. An example of a tee-shirt slogan, “92.5% of T.H.S. students don’t smoke daily” was shared, based on a tobacco social norms pilot project. Social norms messages help protect youth by creating a positive, realistic view of peer behavior and risk reduction. Information such as the test, school, date and grade are included on posters and other products. Social norms campaigns were shown effective in reducing risk behaviors on college campuses, and have been

extended into the high schools. The social norms theme could be highlighted at the next SART by use of a speaker break out groups and posters, with active youth involvement through suggestion and selection of messages. The committee unanimously voted to use MRI funding in the SAC line to support the next SART. Other grants may also be sought.

Curriculum on Adolescent Brain Development has 16 prevention programs with the goal of delaying alcohol use for proper brain development. The new tools help adults break the “kids will be kids” attitude as respects underage drinking.

Project YELL (Youth Endorsing Legal Lifestyles):

- **Budgets** for the current fiscal year (10/05-9/06) and next (10/6-9/07) were shared with the committee. The following year (10/07-9/08) grants become competitive once more. The current year narrative and time line show that despite funding loss, we kept the ball rolling with the Safe Prom project and the \$1400 Get the Word Out tobacco grant. The grant will be sent to the committee for feedback by noon Monday. Grant deadline for 06-07 is June 30.

- **Program Director** – Carol Anarino was hired as a full-time program director for 30 hours per week. Among her strengths are networking. April Cabrera, former CCBC peer leader was hired as a part time Youth Coordinator, per diem for 18-20 hours weekly. She is a University of New Orleans graduate in Criminal Justice.
- **Safe Proms** – The THS senior and junior proms utilized breathalyzers for the first time this year. Everyone passed, contributing to events where students had fun and a sense of safety that comes from a substance free environment.

Next Steps:

- ☐ Contact the Attleboro Mayor for information on the Mayor’s Council on Substance Abuse Prevention (Anne)
- ☐ Complete the Project YELL grant, get committee input, and finalize the application process (Anne, Lorraine, Committee)

Next Meeting: 7/19/06, 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



VIII. Next Meeting: August 16, 2006

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