

Fairfield Cares Community Coalition

May 20, 2015 Meeting Minutes

Attendees: Wendy Bentivegna, Karin Shaughnessy, Tim Morris, Anne Stewart, Philip Dwyer, Beth Kelly, Denique Weidema-Lewis, Patsy King, Alida Ward, Christine Vitale, Hudson Hector, Reini Knorr, Pam Paulmann, Catherine Giff, Terry Giegengack, Jennifer Jacobsen

Opened: The general meeting was opened at 8:40 am by co-chair Wendy Bentivegna

Minutes: By consent, the March 18, 2015 meeting minutes were approved.

Updates:

Schools:

- FWMS annual “Risky Business” forum presented by Health Dept on 5/19: 10 high school students share their thoughts on connecting to high school /Det. Irizarry and another officer present on internet safety/ young adult presented her personal story of suicide attempt and mental health issues; representatives from other 2 middle schools came to observe
- FLHS badminton event raised \$350 for Center for Family Justice
- Mock Crash presented at both high schools
- Pre-Prom speaker at FLHS 5/22 : “the Magic of Life” (Michael Gershe)
- 20+ students spoke to health classes on abuse awareness and drugs
- Car Wash to raise money for RAAFT to donate to Center for Family Justice-timing tbd
- Harlan Cohen will speak at FWHS June 2 (7-9pm) about transition to college. Juniors/Seniors and parents from all high schools in Fairfield are invited. This event made possible by collaboration from both PTAs at FLHS and FWHS.
- Prom Time email (replaced post cards) went out to junior and senior parents at FLHS, FWHS, and Fairfield Prep
- FWHS hosted “Life After Warde” (Pam Paulmann and Lenora Campbell spoke); approx.. 50 attendees; discussion about providing a little less formal information and leaving time for questions, possibly a Q& A panel after speakers

First Fairfield Mental Health Breakfast Planned for Tuesday, October 6, Senior Center 8:00-9:30am

(Terry Giegengack)

- -Invite local Fairfield professional providers for youth & social services
- -Cristin McCarthy Vahey as guest speaker; feature Fairfield Cares Community Coalition
- -Encouraging local social workers and guidance staffs from the area to attend
- -Great networking opportunity for all involved

“Teens in Transition” Wednesday, May 27, Christ and Holy Trinity Church, Westport, 7-8pm

- A program on college safety (on/off campus living, sexual assaults, campus resources etc...), open to all

Mindfulness and Education (Patsy King attended workshop hosted by CREC-Capital Region Education Council-Hartford area professional development for educators; our area is CES-Cooperative Education Services with office in Trumbull)

- Still a grassroots effort by community in Hartford area
- Discussed possibility of introducing it into a Fairfield professional development segment (describe access to mindfulness tools to cope with school, job etc.); recognize time constraints with current programs already planned
- Caution raised about full school system roll out being difficult ; might be more successful to find groups within separate schools to start slowly incorporating ideas (i.e. www.yoga4classrooms.com – color coded cards to purchase and share)
- Agreed to develop a work group of interested FCCC members to investigate what is currently in place in schools and start a dialogue with public school administrators about additional resources or options for bringing mindfulness into schools or as community offering. Interested members should e-mail Wendy. We were encouraged to reach out to Linda Love at FWHS as she is already very involved with Mindfulness and spoke on this topic at a PTA meeting.

RYASAP (Denique)

- State Budget not done; looking at 5% reduction
- Continue to support RAC/regional mental health
- **Prevention Meeting next Friday-Bridges in Milford 10am-12pm** (what each DRUGFREE grantee does and share good practices; where can we improve?)...all invited
- Looking for young people to volunteer to do undercover compliance checks at liquor stores (18-20 yr olds)
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Parent Connect Program

- 3 sessions scheduled for each of 3 age groups
- First session :6 elem parents, 2 MS parents, 10 HS parents. Great feedback
- Second session (8 additional sign-ups; breakdown not available)

- \$1500 allotted for Community Partnerships with \$1000 of that allocated to Parent Connect (\$500 remains unused and must be spent by June 30*)
- *discussed how high school PTAs could use it to offset cost of Harlan Cohen speaker 6/2/15; there was interest amongst group to support this pending confirmation of deadline on spending funds.

***200 FCCCC brochures will be printed (Recommended to contact Ward Graphics teacher about Printing...Catherine Giff will share the contact info)**

***June 2 @ 10:00am Dr. Douglas to speak on “Emerging drugs of Abuse in the Westport Town Hall Auditorium~ open to all.** Program presented previously in Wilton; given recent incident at Staples High School of student coming to school under the influence of a synthetic drug thought it important to offer this to parents in Westport and neighboring towns.

*Positive Directions applied for a grant to continue the work with Fairfield Cares. Should hear June 5th or soon after.

* BOE is about to approve a new District Improvement Plan – June 10th Town Hall meeting for discussion. Phil Dwyer encouraged people to go online and check it out, paying particular attention to the “post high school success survey” and offer suggestions for what might be included, as it is open for comments.

NEXT MEETING: Wendy will send out a doodle survey to members to coordinate best date for largest group ; as planned date of June 17th is not good.

Respectfully submitted Beth Kelly

