



Hudson Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition

Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, September 2, 2015

7:00 – 8:30 PM

Hudson Town Hall

78 Main Street

Hudson, MA 01749

I. Call to Order

- a. **Meeting convened:** Wednesday, June 3rd, 2015, at 7:00 PM
- b. **Coordinators present:** Katelyn Flaherty Doré, Michael O'Brien
- c. **Coalition partners present:** Ellen Capstick, Laurie Curley, Jodi Fortuna, Jamie Gravelle, Lynne Johnson, Ernie Kapopoulos, Sheryl Marrasso, Cindy Murphy, Denise Reid, Sophia Togneri, Amy Vessels, Lee Waingortin, Sam Wong

I. MetroWest Health Foundation (MWHF) Grant

- a. Sam provided an overview of the MWHF grant awarded in response to the 2010 MetroWest Adolescent Health (MWAH) Survey which identified concerning levels of substance use among Hudson youth. The Town of Hudson received a three year, \$180,000 grant from the MWHF for a community adolescent substance use invention initiative intended to support community efforts addressing youth substance abuse prevention, intervention, and increased access to treatment. Over the course of three years, the Hudson Youth Substance Abuse Prevention (Hudson YSAP) Coalition worked to achieve a twenty percent reduction in Hudson youth alcohol and marijuana use in the past 30 days and lifetime prescription drug misuse.
 - i. Within the grant proposal, Sam outlined a three pronged prevention strategy approach, including community engagement, environmental changes, and school-based programs.
- b. Similar grants had been previously awarded to communities such as Needham and Waveland.
- c. Katelyn led Coalition partners through a brief overview of the project Logic Model, which outlines outputs and outcomes achieved during the 3-year report period. Katelyn emphasized that much of the meeting's discussion would focus on the (actual) outcomes column.

II. Community Engagement

- a. Katelyn introduced the first strategy, community engagement, which illustrates the rich diversity present among Coalition partners. Some of these partners include parents and youth from the community, Hudson Board of Health, Hudson Police Department, Hudson Public Schools, the Addiction Referral Center (ARC), Community Advocate, Grace Baptist Church, CHAPS, Inc., and River's Edge Arts Alliance (REAA).
- b. Lynne Johnson, Executive Director of REAA and parent of a young adult in recovery, shared her experience and lessons learned while organizing community wide events, such *Choices* playwright project, *Hungry Heart* film viewing and panel discussion, as well as *The Anonymous People* film viewing and panel discussion. Lynne expressed that she was honored to help engage members of the community, youth and members of the community in both the arts and diverse prevention efforts.

- c. Sheryl Marrazzo, founder of Nar-Anon and parent of a young adult struggling with addiction, shared her experience participating as both a Coalition partner and a panelist during community-wide prevention events (i.e., *Community Conversations: Raising Healthy Teens* and *The Hungry Heart* film viewing and panel discussion). Sheryl emphasized the importance of ensuring that compassion is forefront when talking about individuals struggling with substance abuse. Sheryl noted that compassion helps reduce stigma when educating others about substance abuse prevention.
- d. As part of an ongoing effort to engage and educate Hudson community members around the issue of prescription drug misuse, Denise Reid hosted a viewing and discussion on *Out of Reach*. A 30-minute documentary produced by youth filmmaker Cyrus Stowe, *Out of Reach* illustrates prescription drug abuse among adolescents in his community.
 - i. Denise shared that it was refreshing to hear youth speak candidly about the issues they struggle with and face daily. The film viewing and discussion led to new conversations with her husband, children, and family pediatrician regarding the importance of raising awareness and discussing create ways to prevent youth substance use.

III. Environmental Changes

- a. Sam reported that Hudson Police Department continues to monitor the medication take-back kiosk, which offers community members the opportunity to drop off unused, unwanted, and/or expired prescription medications with no questions asked. The kiosk is open 24 hours, 7 days a week and emptied approximately once per month.
- b. Sam noted that Hudson Police Department continues to conduct compliance checks, party patrols, and establishment surveillance to ensure businesses and individuals comply with local laws regulating alcohol sales to minors and social host laws.
- c. The American Medicine Chest Challenge (AMCC) is an ongoing education awareness initiative, which engages diverse community members (i.e., local officials, law enforcement, senior center) to raise awareness about the dangers of prescription drug abuse and provide consistent messages of disposal at a collection site of unused, unwanted, and expired medicine.
 - i. Katelyn reported that, since the start of AMCC, the Hudson YSAP Coalition distributed over 200 AMCC t-shirts at *Hudson Fest* (June 2013) and nearly 1,500 AMCC flyers distributed in both English and Portuguese.
- d. Sam reported that Town of Hudson tobacco regulations banned both blunt wraps and the smoking/e-cigarette use in 23 parks/recreation facilities within town property. The regulations also increased the legal age to purchase tobacco products to 21 and defined e-cigarettes as a nicotine delivery device.
 - i. Katelyn noted that many of these regulations are also reflected in the updated policies stated in the Hudson High School (HHS) student handbook.

IV. School-Based Programs & Activities

- a. The Health & Wellness curriculum was revised in 2012-2013. The new curriculum strategically partners in-classroom learning with physical education to reinforce and strengthen the overall health and wellness messages. Wellness subjects offered in the classroom include stress reduction, healthy relationships, mental health, substance abuse prevention, conflict resolution, community and public health, and anti-bullying messages. Additional components include:

- i. Substance abuse prevention in grades 5-12, Break Free from Depression program in grade 9. Designed for 9th-12th grade students, Break Free from Depression is a multi-day program that provides students with data and statistics, true scenarios of teenage depression, and resources for accessing support.
 - ii. DARE Keepin' It REAL curriculum in grade 5 (delivered by Hudson Police Department Youth Resource Officer).
- b. Former-NBA player, Chris Herren spoke to HHS students and community members in spring and winter of 2014. Herren uses his own experience with addiction as a means to connect with students and raise awareness about substance use prevention. Coalition members reported high praise for the Chris Herren event and Denise stated that, "Parents were talking about Chris Herren for 6 weeks after the event!"
 - i. Katelyn noted the importance of support following school and community-wide events that focus on issues such as substance use. Chris and his team have a group of counselors and social workers who assess youth/adults that reach out to Chris once the event is over. These individuals are then connected to health professionals within the school to ensure that they receive the appropriate treatment.
 - ii. Coalition partners also supported the idea of inviting Hudson young adults in recovery to speak to students at both Quinn Middle School (QMS) and HHS.
- c. Katelyn shared that the Coalition continued to work with HHS Visual Art Teachers, on the social norms assignment. This art production allows students to use data to positively reinforce healthy decision-making and educate their student body on substance use statistics as reported by their peers on the MWAH Survey
- d. Michael guided Coalition partners through a summary of the Health & Wellness Newsletters that have been completed to date. Each year, the Hudson YSAP Coordination Team collaborated with members of the HPS School Health & Safety Advisory Council to provide four seasonal newsletters. In total, 27,830 newsletters (12 seasonal newsletters) were circulated to parents/guardians over the course of three years.
 - i. The Coordination Team will collaborate with members of HPS to produce a Fall Wellness Newsletter to be presented on October 2nd.
- e. In October 2014, ten HHS Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) participated in a peer leadership training led by Tammy Murphy (HHS Guidance Counselor and SADD Advisor), Courtney Cray (QMS Health Teacher), and Katelyn Flaherty Doré (Hudson YSAP Coordinator). The training included discussions on positive and negative peer pressure, resistance skills, importance of positive peer role models, presentation skills, and more. The students will be leading sessions at QMS to 7th grade students.
 - i. Sophia Togneri, Hudson YSAP New Media intern and HHS 9th grade student, shared her experiences serving as a peer leader during the 2014-2015 school year. Sophia expressed her interest in mentoring youth and shared her thoughts on improving the peer leadership process in the 2015-2016 school year (i.e., scheduling and recruitment of other HHS students).

- f. Screening, Brief Intervention, Referral to Treatment (SBIRT)
 - i. The SBIRT model is a comprehensive, integrated, public health approach to prevent and/or delay onset of substance use and to identify students who may be at risk for substance use or currently using.
 - 1. During the first two years of implementation, SBIRT was offered to 7th grade QMS students with an active consent process. In spring 2013, 97 of the 233 7th grade students were screened in the pilot phase. In spring 2014, 67 of the 229 7th grade students were screened.
 - 2. In spring 2015, SBIRT was implemented with a passive consent process. 89 out of 243 7th grade students were screened, while 41 of the 171 10th grade students were screened.
 - ii. Laurie Curley, QMS Guidance Counselor, noted that SBIRT provides an invaluable opportunity for staff to connect with students and reinforce their healthy decision-making.
 - iii. Jamie Gravelle, Adjustment Counselor at HHS, noted that the spring 2015 implementation of SBIRT to 10th grade students was a pilot phase and that she and her colleagues are looking forward to connect with students again in a new phase of SBIRT.
 - 1. Ellen Capstick, Resource Nurse at HHS, agreed with Jamie and noted how sincere and honest many of the 10th grade students were during the screening. Ellen believes SBIRT is an excellent way to start the conversation on substance use and reduce stigma.
 - iv. Sam voiced his support for new phases of SBIRT at both QMS and HHS. Staff members are asked to contact Sam if additional resources are needed (i.e., staffing, funds, etc.).

V. Key Outcomes

- a. Lee Waingortin, Director of Nursing for Hudson Public Schools, provided an update on the 2014 MWAH Survey results as compared to the data received from the 2010 MWAH Survey. The purpose of the MWAH Survey is to learn about youth attitudes and behaviors with regard to a variety of health issues in order to help schools and communities provide the best possible health education and related services to adolescents. Questions on the survey cover risk behaviors including: alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use; violence and safety; nutrition and physical activity; sexual behaviors; and mental health. The survey was administered to 92% of QMS students and 88% of HHS students, with generous funding from the MWHF
- b. Reported Alcohol Use:
 - i. 8% decrease in the percentage of HHS students (grades 9-12) who reported drinking alcohol in their lifetime (66.1% in 2010 vs. 60.8% in 2014)
 - ii. 0.5% increase in the percentage of HHS students (grades 9-12) who reported drinking alcohol during the past 30 days (36.4% in 2010 vs. 36.6% in 2014).

- c. Reported Marijuana Use
 - i. 25% reduction in the percentage of HHS students (grades 9-12) who reported lifetime marijuana use (46.7% in 2010 vs. 35.2% in 2014)
 - ii. 10% reduction in the percentage of HHS students (grades 9-12) who reported using marijuana within the past 30 days (30.3% in 2010 vs. 27.2% in 2014)
- d. Reported Prescription Drug Misuse
 - i. 49% reduction in the percentage of HHS students (grades 9-12) who reported misusing prescription drugs in their lifetime (16.9% in 2010 vs. 8.7% in 2014).

VI. Sustainability

- a. The Town of Hudson, along with Framingham, Northborough, and Southborough, were recently awarded the regional Substance Abuse Prevention Collaborative (SAPC) from the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH) Bureau of Substance Abuse Services (BSAS). The total awarded amount is \$100,000 per year for three years. The goal of this project is to build on the success of the Hudson YSAP Coalition by increasing the capacity of surrounding communities to support substance abuse prevention initiatives.
- b. In spring 2015, the Town of Hudson submitted the Drug Free Communities (DFC) application to continue funding for the Hudson YSAP Coalition and community youth substance abuse prevention efforts. The purpose of the grant funding is to:
 - i. Establish and strengthen collaboration among communities, public and private non-profit agencies, as well as federal, state, local, and tribal governments to support the efforts of community coalitions working to prevent and reduce substance use among youth (youth is defined as individuals 18 years of age and younger).
 - ii. Reduce substance use among youth and, over time, reduce substance abuse among adults by addressing the factors in a community that increase the risk of substance abuse and promoting the factors that minimize the risk of substance abuse.

VII. Discussion

- a. Both Sam and the Coordination Team thanked Coalition partners for their continued support of the Hudson YSAP Coalition and their passion towards youth substance abuse prevention efforts over the past 3 years.

VIII. Closing

- a. Sam will send out an update confirming the next meeting date and time.