



## Hudson Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition

### Meeting Minutes

Wednesday, February 4, 2015

3:00 – 4:30 PM

Hudson Town Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Auditorium

78 Main Street

Hudson, MA 01749

#### I. Call to Order

- a. **Meeting convened:** Wednesday, February 4<sup>th</sup>, 2015, at 3:00 PM
- b. **Coordinators present:** Katelyn Flaherty, Michael O'Brien
- c. **Coalition partners present:** Laurie Curley, Kathy Ekdahl, Jamie Gravelle, Linda Hardy, Jeffrey Hillis, Lynne Johnson, John Kovacs, Kelleen Loewen, Jessica Winders, Sam Wong

#### II. Community Engagement

##### a. River's Edge Arts Alliance [The Hungry Heart](#) Video & Discussion

- i. As part of a continued effort to engage and educate Hudson community members in youth substance abuse prevention efforts, Hudson Youth Substance Abuse Prevention (Hudson YSAP) purchased [The Hungry Heart](#), a 90-minute film that provides insight on prescription drug addiction as seen through the eyes of Vermont Pediatrician Fred Holmes who works with patients struggling with addiction.
- ii. On Friday, January 30<sup>th</sup>, River's Edge Arts Alliance hosted the first community forum showcasing [The Hungry Heart](#) at Hudson Town Hall. River's Edge Arts Alliance Executive Director, Lynne Johnson, reported that nearly 60 community members were in attendance.
- iii. After viewing the film, attendees and panel members engaged in discussions on reactions from the film, substance use in Hudson, the important role of Naloxone/Narcan® in overdose response, and ways to positively influence the healthy development of youth. Panelists included Melanie Amir (Director, Motivating Youth Recovery), Sarah Sapienza (Assistant Director, Highland Grace House), Sheryl Marazzo (Parent of young adult in recovery and founder of Hudson Nar-Anon meetings), Cletus Terwiske (young adult in recovery), Nicole Spinazola (adult in recovery), Lee Waingortin (Hudson Public Schools Regional Nursing Consultant), Detective Chad Crogan (Hudson Police Department), Cheryl Juare (parent of a young adult who died of an overdose and a son in recovery), Sean Merrill (adult in recovery), and Dr. Anne Lutz (Child and Adolescent Psychiatrist). The panel discussion was moderated by Tom Moses (Town of Hudson Executive Assistant).
- iv. Organizations also hosted information tables at the event to help direct attendees to resources available in the community. These partners included: Addiction Referral Center, [Celebrate Recovery](#), [Hudson Police Department](#), [Hudson YSAP](#), [Learn to Cope](#), [National Library of Medicine](#), and [Teen Challenge](#). In an effort to educate attendees on specifics related to substance use paraphernalia, Officer Downing of the Hudson PD showcased drug paraphernalia at the event to those interested in learning more.
- v. River's Edge Arts Alliance is currently planning a similar event in May 2015. Coalition partners agreed on the importance of building on the momentum created by this event and

continuing to support environments where youth make the healthy decision to not use substances. The Coordination Team will update the coalition partners once more information is available.

b. **Parent-Hosted [Out of Reach](#) Video & Discussion**

- i. On February 27<sup>th</sup>, 2015, Denise Reid, Hudson YSAP Coalition Partner, will be hosting the first 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.
- ii. Katelyn shared that Coalition partners, community members, and other groups/businesses are encouraged to host similar sessions to help continue these efforts around prevention. If interested in hosting an event, please contact Katelyn Flaherty ([kflaherty@jsi.com](mailto:kflaherty@jsi.com)), Michael O'Brien ([mobrien@jsi.com](mailto:mobrien@jsi.com)), or Sam Wong ([swong@townofhudson.org](mailto:swong@townofhudson.org)).

**III. Environmental Changes**

- a. The Coordination Team reported that Hudson PD continues to monitor the 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.

**IV. School-Based Programs & Activities**

a. **Chris Herren Assembly**

- i. Former-NBA player, Chris Herren, returned to Hudson High School (HHS) on December 8<sup>th</sup>, 2014, and spoke to eighth, ninth, and tenth grade students. Herren uses his own experience with addiction as a means to connect with students and raise awareness about substance use prevention.
- ii. The Coordination Team reported that students attending the assembly received a pre- and post-assembly assessment to evaluate the event. This feedback was shared with HHS administration to illustrate youth perceptions on substance use before and after attending the assembly.

b. **Middlesex Partnerships for Youth Peer Leadership Conference**

- i. Jessica Winders, Hudson Public Schools Athletic Director, reported that she and 10 HHS Student Athletes attended the YOU LEAD Middlesex Partnerships for Youth Peer Leadership Conference on December 19<sup>th</sup>, 2014.
- ii. The goal of the YOU LEAD Conference is to reverse the norm of substance use in youth by supporting those who engage in healthy decision making and choose a lifestyle free of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs.
- iii. Jessica shared that she was impressed with the students' ability to speak openly and confidently with other students from across the region on an issue as sensitive as substance use. Both staff and student attendees from Hudson collaborated during the conference to develop an action plan for substance abuse prevention awareness at HHS.
- iv. The Coordination Team will schedule a meeting for Jessica to meet with Coalition partner, Kathy Ekdahl, and HHS Guidance Counselor and Students Against Destructive Decisions (SADD) Advisor, Tammy Murphy, to further discuss and develop activities stated in the action plan.

c. **Peer Leadership at Quinn Middle School (QMS)**

- i. This past October, ten HHS 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 (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.

- ii. Eight of the ten trained HHS peer leaders implemented the first two rounds of lessons in 7th grade health class at QMS. They delivered 2-day peer leadership lessons to 61 7th grade students from October 28th-30th, 2014 and to 59 7th grade students from December 2nd-4th, 2015. HHS peer leaders will return to QMS to implement a third round of lessons on March 5<sup>th</sup>-6<sup>th</sup> and 9<sup>th</sup>, 2015.

**d. Visual Arts Class Social Norms Poster Assignment**

- i. Katelyn shared that the Coalition continues to work with HHS Visual Art Teachers, on the social norms art campaign. 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 MetroWest Adolescent Health Survey.

**V. Sustainability**

**a. MA Substance Abuse Prevention Collaborative**

- i. Sam shared that Hudson Board of Health recently submitted a regional collaborative application on substance abuse prevention efforts with Framingham, Northborough, and Southborough. If funded, the three year project will award the regional communities up to \$100,000 per year. 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. Drug-Free Communities Program (DFC)**

- i. Katelyn shared that the Town of Hudson will submit the DFC application to continue funding for the Hudson YSAP Coalition and community youth substance abuse prevention efforts. The purpose of the proposal is to:
  1. 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), and
  2. 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.

**VI. Guest Speakers | Tempo Young Adults Resource Center**

- a. Yolanda Ortiz, Program Director at Tempo, spoke to coalition partners about Tempo Young Adult Resource Center located in downtown Framingham, MA. Serving young adults ages 16 - 24, Tempo Young Adult Resource Center has the primary goal of addressing the urgent need for resources for youth and connecting them to resources in the community during their transition into adulthood. To help with this transition, Yolanda stated that her agency employs three full-time Transitional Counselors help connect youth with resources on-site and in the community by offering support, advice, encouragement, and accountability.

- i. On-site resources offered to nearly 350 youth per year include:
  - 1. Comprehensive employment and work-related services,
  - 2. Legal advocacy an access to mainstream benefit programs,
  - 3. Housing search and support,
  - 4. Community health educators and access to health care,
  - 5. Independent living skills workshops,
  - 6. Peer leadership and parent support groups,
  - 7. Social networking, community service, and healthy recreational events, and
  - 8. Practical assistance with transportation and other basic needs.
- ii. Collaborative partners with Tempo Young Adult Resource Center include: Advocates, Inc., Future Skills Institute (a program of Partnerships for a Skilled Workforce, INC.), South Middlesex Opportunity Council (SMOC), the Edward M. Kennedy Community Health Center, and Wayside Youth and Family Support Network.
- iii. To learn more about Tempo Young Adult Resource Center, see the contact information below:
 

Yolanda Ortiz  
68 Henry Street, Framingham, MA 01702  
(P): 508-879-1424 (F): 508-879-1460  
[www.waysideyouth.org](http://www.waysideyouth.org) | [www.tempoyoungadults.org](http://www.tempoyoungadults.org)
- b. Patty Gorman of Future Skills Institute (FSI) also presented to coalition partners on FSI's mission to provide young adults between the ages of 16 – 24 with education counseling, job-readiness, and career exploration services. These services, offered free of charge, are designed to help young adults develop the necessary skills to secure part-time or full-time employment.
  - i. Patty also discussed the YouthWorks program, which is a 6 – 8 week job placement program for young adults who meet income requirements (150% Federal Poverty Line) and experience barriers in securing part-time or full-time employment. The program includes individual and group instruction and even provides funding for interview attire and professional training.
  - ii. Other opportunities offered by FSI include:
    - 1. Career advice and assessment tools,
    - 2. Resume and cover letter assistance,
    - 3. Online application guidance,
    - 4. FAFSA and college application support, and
    - 5. Job readiness workshops.
  - iii. To learn more about FSI or to schedule an appointment, see the contact information below:
 

Patty Gorman, Career Specialist  
[pgorman@pswinc.org](mailto:pgorman@pswinc.org)  
68 Henry Street  
Framingham, MA 01702  
(P): 508-875-0223

## VII. Next Meeting

- a. The next meeting is scheduled for Wednesday, April 1<sup>st</sup> 7:00 – 8:30 pm at Hudson Town Hall, 2<sup>nd</sup> Floor Auditorium.
- b. The Coordination Team will send out a reminder e-mail with the meeting agenda as we move closer to the meeting date.

