

Hampden-Wilbraham Partners for Youth – NOTES
Thursday, July 23rd, 2020
(1 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.) Zoom Video/Phone Meeting

ATTENDANCE

Kathy Fuss, Volunteer Sector Rep, Wilbraham Junior Women’s Club
Tyler Witkop, Rotary Club President (Fraternal Sector)
Brad Sperry, Rotary Club Member (Fraternal Sector)
Tom Mazza, HWRSD District Director of Curriculum, Instruction and Professional Learning (Schools Sector)
Gina Anselmo, Hampden County District Attorney Youth Advisory Board, (Local Government Sector)
Terrence Smith, United Way Pioneer Valley Americore Vista Volunteer, (Civic Organization)
Sherrill Caruana, HWRSD School Committee (Schools)
Gina Kahn, Director HWP4Y and HWRSD Safe Schools Healthy Student Program (Staff)
Ruth DiCristoforo, HWP4Y Coordinator (Staff)

I. Welcome -

Gina Kahn welcomed the group and began the meeting.

II. Coalition Discussion

A. [Search Institute](#) Training – Gina K gave an overview of the upcoming training.

1. Coalition-at-large Training: October 15th & 16th (11 a.m. – 1p.m.)

The original in-person trainings were postponed from last March due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Search was going to facilitate the first six-hour workshop for our 4th Annual Community Partners in Prevention Leadership training on October 15th, titled *Everyone is an Asset Builder*. The next day, a Youth Leadership training was to be held for youth, grades 8 – 11, with an outcome of a community project. Since that time, Search has transformed their in-person training to a virtual format, offering an expanded program that includes a training on developmental assets and developmental relationships, over a two day, two hour work shop. The Youth leadership workshop is on hold for now until either an in-person workshop can be offered or consideration for a virtual workshop, upon design by Search Institute.

The [Developmental Assets/Developmental Relationships](#) Workshop was outlined for members:

Trainer: Kelly Felton – experienced with the DFC framework, as well as Search DA/DR frameworks

Workshop Goal: Understand the strengths and supports (Developmental Assets) and Developmental Relationships that are essential for young people’s success in school, work and life.

Outcomes

- Explore and discover opportunities for Coalition members to build Developmental Assets within the community
- As a Coalition tool, review how Developmental Assets align with the Strategic Prevention Framework.
- What are the most essential messages round the Developmental Assets framework that support positive youth development?
- Examine what research says about building and investing in Developmental Assets and Developmental Relationships to increase protective factors.
- Identify qualities of individuals who play powerful roles in young people’s lives

There is a max registration of 50 people. The goal is to have all 12 Coalition sectors attend this dynamic and important training, offering relevance to members’ professional and personal interactions with youth.

Members discussed the advantages and disadvantages of a lunch time workshop.

- Ruth will verify if this format is more of a webinar format or live interactive format.

This workshop is a major activity to build Coalition capacity, including skills development for partners. Marketing for the program will begin with a Save the Date. A follow up discussion with trainer Kelly will be held soon. The workshop will be retitled, and expanded, to be inclusive of the additional Developmental Relationship training that will be offered.

- Sherrill offered the title, *I'm Okay. We're Terrific*.

2. Parent Webinar: Date TBD

Search Institute is rolling out a virtual Parent webinar, on the topic of DA/DR, as well. This topic may fit into our 2020-2021 Community Education Series, and will be explored with Search as a potential webinar, upon completion of their program roll out.

3. Budget

Funds for the Coalition-at-Large training were previously allocated in the year six budget and will be applied to this revamped workshop.

B. Follow up on June meeting, *Let's Talk About It: Race, Racism and Coalitions* discussion

Gina K. opened the discussion with a recap of the productive discussion at our June meeting that was begun on this topic, (reference June Meeting notes found [here](#) on the HWP4Y.ORG website) with the intention of having on-going discussion today, and at future meetings. Gina felt Ruth had captured the essence of the discussion in her note sent to members, with the meeting reminder:

While adjusting to the new local and global realities of COVID-19, our country witnessed a second assault, by several reprehensible acts of racism. The graphic images of the death of George Floyd and ensuing Black Lives Matter protests brought global attention about the impacts and suffering that are aligned with systemic racism, and what was needed to bring about authentic changes to a society in order to eliminate prejudice that is rooted in racial, health, structural, and societal inequities against Black people. As reflections and action continue, on the national, state, local, and personal level about racial justice and social equity for black lives, the Coalition stands in solidarity with the Black Lives Matter movement. We began this important dialogue together at our last meeting. As a community of collaborators, including youth, parents, schools, healthcare professionals, law enforcement, state and local government, youth-serving agencies, fraternal and faith organizations, civic and volunteer groups, businesses, media, and community-based substance use reduction and recovery we must continue to bring this awareness, and change into our daily lives. Facing the challenge of being composed as a predominantly white privileged Coalition, now more than ever, we pledge to support, through an on-going effort of open dialogue and practical action steps, the voice and actions of the Black Lives Matter movement, within our community.

In the course of our discussion, our participating Coalition members agreed that a deeper look at the Black Lives Matter movement and related topics are an important first step in raising more awareness about the challenges ahead for social justice and healing that are needed.

- Gina K asked for additional thoughts since last month's discussion.
- Sherrill reported the HWRSD School Committee is working on an anti-racist resolution for the district, that have a priority of equity, diversity, and inclusion for all students. They plan to host a community forum for parents on this topic. Their goal is for all parents to have input in matters concerning their children. Wilbraham Monson Academy and MRHS is working on similar action steps, also.
- Tom stated there is a district training to be held on August 4th and 6th, led by Phil Fogelman, from *A World of Difference*, formerly known as the *Anti-Defamation League*. The training goals are to enhance bias understanding,

develop a shared definition of bias, better understand societal bias in education, historical perspective of racism, and for the school community to gain a dimension of multiple perspectives about the impact of bias, prejudice, and racism in schools.

- Sherrill added how there needs to be a sensitivity right now about what youth are going through in our town regarding the protests, in town and around the country. Youth perspectives should be honored and empowered.
- Gina K added how some microaggressions may seem well-intentioned by the person, who lacks awareness about the impact of their behavior, due to racial/cultural insensitivity. This is a time of learning and sharing to identify and correct this behavior. We must ask – is anyone being left out because our job is to be inclusive, reach out to all students.
- Gina A added how the YAB (Youth Advisory Board) students have been talking about racism, well before the recent protests. They discuss racism in schools as a person of color, this is not a new issue. Their goal is to empower students with – what can you do to make a difference?

III. Coalition Updates

A. Community Updates/Collaborations – Members

- Gina A shared the 2019 – 2020 YAB still has 15 out of the 50 total students working on projects this summer, how the end of the year was anything but typical for the kids. They are working on a COVID Safety PSA, and an anti-racism project is being planned for educating students in the school setting, once safe to do so. The 2020-2021 YAB will follow the lead of the school districts. However, the YAB will proceed and had used the Zoom platform after area schools went virtual. There is an on-line registration for students to access. Core programs of internet safety and bullying will continue, and new topics will be chosen by the students for this year, once assembled. This is a youth-led, adult-guided program!
- Tom asked about the DA Adopt a Classroom project for HWRSD. Gina A said the program is still running and gives younger students (gr 6-8) a great opportunity to connect with the criminal justice system in meaningful ways, including to a visit from the DA, and a court tour. Gina A will follow up with Tom on this.
- Tom also announced his new creative initiative, supported by the coalition for a HWRSD Cable Show with WPA local access. This show will be hosted by Steve Hale, Principal of MRHS and Sharon Moberg, Principal of Green Meadow School, and offer on-going communication from the HWRSD school community, including a collaboration with the coalition to help get the word out about current events, programs, and resources available to parents/guardians. This project is getting underway now, led by Tom, with a hopeful date of August for the first show. Tom really hopes parents/guardians tune into this, and hopes to grow the program in the weeks to come with a wide variety of topics and guests.
- Gina K stated how there are a wide variety of talents and perspectives within the collaborations of the Coalitions that support positive youth development youth engagement, and substance use prevention that are connected to building community engagement, resilience, and overall health and well-being.
- Sherrill gave a special thanks to Brad and Tyler, from the Rotary, as well as Kathy Fuss, from Wilbraham Junior Women's Club for their heroic and on-going efforts supporting the neighborhood toiletries project talked about at the last meeting, where people drop off essential supplies that are collected and distributed to those in need. Also, Sherrill stated how the HWRSD Art teachers are going to hand out art supplies at an upcoming HWRSD weekly meals distribution date, and how many volunteers have donated time and supplies to making masks that are regularly given out.
- Brad reported how the Rotary will hear back from their district by September about the grant they applied for to support a Coalition parent/community program about anxiety/depression in youth, with a focus on the impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic on youth/families. Rotary continues to support the diaper and baby wipe drive at the Community Center, as well as volunteer with bringing donation to the Food Bank of Western MA, and helping with delivering Meals on Wheels, at the local Senior Centers.

Tom Mazza had to exit the meeting.

B. School Reopening Updates - Tom

Gina K reported HWRSD is working very hard on the back to school plan that is required to be submitted to the state by the end of July. This plan will have built-in flexibility due to the uncertain nature of what the virus will do in the coming months, and how that may or may not impact the plan. So, there will be the primary back to school plan, and other contingency plans, as well. What does all this mean to kids: How does this level of uncertainty (for the months to come) impact levels of anxiety, and decision making around coping (healthy and unhealthy) that kids are going through right now? Kids need a community of support.

C. 5 Members attending CADCA (July 27 – 30)

Ruth reported the following members will be attending CADCA virtual training next week: Terrence – UWPV, Sherrill Caruana – HWRSD School Committee; Tracey Plantier – Parent. /Civic Volunteer; Gina Kahn, and herself. After the forum, there will be a group pow-wow, (August 12th) to discuss this experience, take-aways, and what members learned that could be incorporated within their sector, and/or coalition work. CADCA will provide access to all live sessions during the forum, as well as access to all session downloads for attending members.

D. CES Longitudinal Analysis

Gina K reported the next update meeting will be held, Monday July 27th. As reported last meeting, this analysis will go back to 2014 and look at trend data for grades 7 – 12 (Core measures, onset of use, cohort data, areas of concern/positive trends, identifying protective/risk factors, etc.)

E. Youth Engagement Coordinator Job Posting

Gina K reported this position has been technically unfilled since the fall when Tracy B. resigned. Ruth has been acting in this role, since Tracy left, in addition to her primary role, as Coalition Coordinator. This position should be posted soon and members are asked to think about anyone they can recommend for the position. If interested, applicants can go to schoolsprings.com or the HWRSD website for more information, once posted.

IV. Summer Work – Continues

In the essence of efficiency, with six minutes left in the meeting – Ruth stated a brief overview update, and stated the minutes would reflect a full report for members to reference, on the Coalition website.

A. Fall Positive Community Norm Messaging campaign with updated Substance Use Prevention/Making Good Choices

Ruth reported work on the Coalition Messaging campaign will involve looking at our 2019 YRBS, and the new Longitudinal YRBS Survey Date, and being creative about our messaging: There is 6 YEARS of DFC prevention data to brag about – Prevention does work and we have the data to support our messaging around most kids in HWRSD are making good decisions! Some of the products will be POSTCARDS, Messaging for posters, Print ads, newsletters, social media, a brochure with the intended Audience: Youth, Parents, Involved Adults working with youth. The overarching message for the community: **Kids are Making Good Decision in H-W and Everyone has a role in positive youth development.** The Youth Coalition will be offered a piece of this campaign to develop for Instagram.

B. Website, Facebook, Coalition e-News – opportunities to connect with the community

Ruth explained the value of the Coalition website and Facebook page for member collaboration and capacity building. She strongly encouraged people to check out the revamped website and make suggestions for content, and list events on the Community Calendar. She also highly encouraged people to go to the Facebook page, like, follow, tag yourself in some of the photos, and share widely. There was a request, again, for building a Message of the month from the coalition. Also, what would a collective message look like – what would each sector like to say to the kids right now and how do we

get our message heard? What is your one or two sentences that when combined with all 12 sectors would create our coalition message? Ruth is going to be following up with key Sector leaders to discuss!

C. Communications: WORKING On these updates

Ruth briefly reported some on-going work: Revise Member & Outreach Contact Information, Update Marketing Materials/New Member packets, Create Youth Coalition brochure, & Instagram Project - Ruth + New person

D. 2020 – 2021 Youth/Parent /Community/School Program, Activity, and Resource Planning

Ruth gave an overview of the list of potential programs, all offered in a virtual format, that are under further consideration right now. She made initial contacts, and follow ups will happen with Gina and the program contact over a zoom video or telephone conference meeting.

- **Search**

Parenting Webinar- DA DR – under development for a virtual format.

Youth Leadership – future date when it can be in-person or developed for the virtual format.

- **Catch My Breath: Parent / Community Presentations - E-Cigarettes & JUUL: What Schools and Parents Should Know**

Ruth reported about this evidenced based new webinar, connected to the HWRSD grade 7 Catch My Breath Curriculum with the Health curriculum, described as: Help fellow parents or community members stay informed about the youth e-cigarette use epidemic and prevention efforts by hosting an educational presentation. This presentation provides basic information about the youth vaping epidemic, e-cigarettes and JUUL, and explains how CATCH My Breath can help schools. A [video and downloadable PowerPoint slides](#) as a self-serve option. If your school or community would like to have a live webinar or an in-person presentation delivered by a CATCH My Breath staff member, please email catchmybreath@catch.org. For a full list of presentation options, please click [here](#).

Cost is \$500 for a 1.5-hour session for up to 50 attendees.

Hosted through Go To Webinar, though if you have a preferred platform, we can host there as well with your organization as the facilitator. Ruth and Gina will talk with the director of this program tomorrow.

- **Jon Mattleman – Minding Your Mind Live Webinar**

Jon has presented local webinars in the area on: Teens, Tweens, and Quarantines and School's Out – Now What? Parenting through a Pandemic and Protests with SPIFFY and Partners.

Ruth contacted Jon about a program for something along the lines of an Innovative, informative parenting program, along the lines of: Schools Back - Now What? Parenting amidst Transitions and Uncertain Times. A program for parents to gain insight and resources about what to expect for this type of transition, how to support their teens and themselves, all amidst the chronic uncertainty.

Ruth and Gina will be talking to Jon next Tuesday.

There will be the POSSIBILITY to collaborate with local experts, as well

- **Steve Opalenik – Local therapist**

Eager to connect with a student/parent audience with mindfulness, communication, etc. Steve was part of the expert panel for the canceled Vaping Program, schedule in June, and remains a great Coalition resource!

- **Motivational Interviewing for Parents**

Looking into this with John Beldsford for virtual format. Others in the area, as well

- **Virtual YMHFA** – still in process of rolling out, will offer when feasible. Teri Brand, HWRSD Nurse leader and Health Professional Sector Rep to advise.
- **MIAA Speaker – Impact of Pandemic on Kids Who are Not playing Sports**
Potential for Collaboration with Athletic Director, Mike Roy
- **HWRSD – collaborations/support**
Back to school Newsletters – Will be participating
OPEN HOUSE – Standing by to support families with resources, coalition membership opportunities
- **FYI: West Springfield Cares promoting: Operation Parent – August 24th Webinar**
[Back to School – Helping Kids Overcome School Anxiety and Build Resiliency](#)

E. DFC Progress Report due by August 14, 2020 - Gina

Was not discussed

V. Closing

A. Additional Member Input – Members

Gina stated she would like more member input on the best way to share communications: meeting dates, community events, coalition news. This topic will be taken up at the August meeting.

B. Next meeting- Wednesday, August 19th, 1:00 p.m. – 2:30 p.m.



United for Safe, Healthy, and Drug-free Communities

We believe preventing and reducing youth substance use is a collective responsibility. We strive to implement a coordinated, comprehensive, and sustainable plan of evidenced based programs, activities and resources that positively impact a healthy childhood development of our youth.