



Fairfield CARES Community Coalition
Leadership Special Meeting Minutes – November 9, 2020
Zoom Meeting:

The Fairfield CARES Community Coalition held a Zoom Meeting, https://youtu.be/K_oqSm1zqKM

Call the Meeting to Order: Present included Mike Cummings, Cristin McCarthy Vahey, Reini Knorr, Wendy Bentivegna, Margaret Watt, Bernadette Coppola, Emily Melnick, and Cathy Hazlett

Approval of October Minutes: Wendy moved to accept the October Leadership minutes and Margaret seconded. The minutes were unanimously approved.

Focus Groups: Cathy & Emily shared the focus group questions and explained that these focus groups would address Fairfield CARES need to collect additional data on youth substance use for its DFC grant application as well as fulfill the request by the CT Department of Mental Health & Addiction Services (DMHAS) and UConn to inquire of how young people and their parents are handling Covid and if Covid has influenced substance use. Emily stated that DMHAS and UConn are wanting the focus groups completed by the end of the year, while the coalition could continue into the new year if necessary.

Chair Update: We are keeping the committee updates brief so there is more time to focus on tasks that need to be accomplished.

Mission Statements: The Leadership team appreciates Tom Hennessey's effort to compose a mission statement for the coalition. Tom drafted three possibilities that were reviewed by Leadership. Overall, Leadership felt that a mission statement should be short and succinct and provide a clear description of the coalition's purpose. The Resource Committee will take on the project of drafting a mission statement during the November coalition meeting.

Coalition Welcome Packet Review: Cathy stated that the Welcome Packet would be used to welcome and orient new Coalition members to the work of Fairfield CARES. Cathy directed the Leadership to review the main section of the Welcome packet which includes the history of the coalition and the coalition's current goals for the year. Wendy suggested, and all agreed, that including Positive Directions' relationship with the coalition, as the fiscal agent for the six-year CT Strategic Coalition grant, should be present in the history section. In addition, there was some question whether we want to list goals for a calendar year period or a fiscal year. The goals are currently listed for fiscal year 21. While we have specific goals and objectives for our underage drinking grant, the very limited resources of our vaping grant does not permit the creation of measurable goals beyond increasing awareness of the health risks associated with underage vaping.

ATOD School Policy: Mike stated that he has reviewed what other school districts have done to incorporate restorative justice into their schools' ATOD policies. He is particularly interested in the Stamford School District's model. The School Board Policy Committee will discuss the need to revise the Fairfield ATOD policy then.

DFC Grant Update: Cathy provided an update on the status of the grant.

Committee Updates: CSC Grant - Cathy described the Mention Prevention initiative focused on underage drinking by working with Fairfield's 19 package stores to display posters that reminds employees and alerts customers of ID checks, and the distribution of cards in consumers' bags that reminds them not to provide alcohol to minors and the risks involved if they do. Information on #Mention Prevention can be found at: <https://www.fairfieldct.org/fairfieldcaresnews/?FeedID=3717>. Cathy went over the revised budget narrative based on activities that will be implemented given the Covid environment.

Resources Committee – Phil Dwyer mentioned that the Fairfield School District's Finance Department has not had a chance to review the Drug Free Communities Grant, but will soon.

Youth Committee – Cathy reported, on behalf of Katy Rosenfeld, that Olivia Shah, an 11th grader at Ludlowe High School, has accepted the position of Prevention Intern/Peer Youth Advocate. Livy will work five hours a week and is busy recruiting teens to the group and is finding out a convenient time for the group to meet.

Program Committee – Reini Knorr attended a workshop on social marketing <https://www.cbsm.com/training/workshops> where it was reinforced that prevention messaging that encourages positive behavior change cannot rely solely on social media posts. Messages need to come from a variety of sources, and in combination with activities. Oct 23rd – 31st is the Annual Red Ribbon Week. This year a FREE webinar, "Peer Pressure and Living Drug-Free - A Talk for Teens" will be Co-Presented by the Red Ribbon Campaign and The Herren Project. Research shows that when making decisions, teens think about both the risks and rewards of their actions and behaviors. Unfortunately, unlike adults, teens are more likely to ignore the risk in favor of the reward. Join us as we discuss strategies to help teens overcome some of the challenges related to peer pressure and making difficult decisions: https://zoom.us/webinar/register/WN_dhto8G-eT7yh2Injs0Y0RA. Saturday, October 24th is Drug Take back Day and the coalition will be tabling with the Fairfield Police outside the police department. An interesting article regarding misuse of prescription drugs is "Nonmedical Use of Prescription Stimulants: A Clinical Unmet Need" found at <https://www.psychcongress.com/multimedia/nonmedical-use-prescription-stimulants-clinical-unmet-need>. Oct 25th is the "Walk Out of Darkness" suicide prevention walk; and she attend a workshop on social marketing and stated that in order for prevention messages to be heard, the coalition cannot rely only on social media, but couple social media with other activities. The link to her workshop:

Meeting Adjourned at 10:39