

**McKean County Collaborative Board
March 4, 2009 Minutes**

Attendance:

Michele Kern, Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research Center
Mikele Bay, Children and Youth Services
Andy Penird, Big Brothers Big Sisters
Nancy Chesnut, YWCA Victims' Resource Center
Casey Schillinger, McKean County Family Centers
Betty Jo Wilcox, McKean County Family Centers
Tina Martin, CARE for Children
Joe DeMott; McKean County Commissioner
Amy Mickle; Kane Area Middle School
Heidi Aikens, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services
Lynne Grim, Child Care Information Services
Mimi Smith, Northern Tier Community Action Corp.
Debbie Olson, PA Department of Health
Vickie Skvarka, PA Department of Health
Kelly Okerlund, Intermediate Unit 9 Family Literacy Program
Duane Wolfe, McKean County Department of Human Services
Teresa Wilcox, Juvenile Probation Office
Lee Sizemore, The Guidance Center
Darlene Nortum, Life and Independence for Today
Marg Kroh, Adagio Health
Stephanie Eckstrom, University of Pittsburgh Bradford
Larry Donahue, Bradford Ministerium
Fran DeLancey, Bradford Era
Randall Durante, Northwest Savings Bank.

Discussion:

PROJECT UPDATES

Child Abuse Prevention Month: Tina Martin, Lee Sizemore and Stephanie Eckstrom updated the group on activities in April that the Ad Hoc committee is planning:

- WESB noon radio shows. April 1—How the community can support families and prevent child abuse, April 6—How to report suspected child abuse and neglect, April 13—How to volunteer for the benefit of children, April 20—How foster parenting can make a difference, and April 27—How to support programs that help children and youth.
- Newspaper Ads—a series of three ad will run in the Bradford Era and one each in the Kane Republican and Reporter Argus featuring our theme of "Parenting is one tough job and it just got tougher" and publishing our website, schedule of April activities, and resources to help in tough economic times.
- Press Conference—The Bradford Era has again been approached to run a feature article or series. Suggested press conference attendees include parents who have been through a foreclosure, utility termination or job loss and agencies that have responded with help.

- Public Service Announcements—agencies will receive an email with suggested PSAs to run during April. All will have similar themes but can be adapted to fit the agency. Agencies will then be responsible for arranging the airing of the PSA.
- “Helping Families in Tough Economic Times” Workshop—April 24. The Pitt-Bradford Social Work Program, Stephanie Eckstrom, has contacted Pitt main campus for suggested speakers for the workshop. The public, agencies, and elected officials will be invited to a full morning of activities on campus that include 8-9:00 a continental breakfast for those with vendor displays, 9:00 resource fair, 9:30 workshop, 10:30 local response panel and public Q & A, 11:30 to noon resource fair. Thank you to Northern Tier Community Action Corporation for helping with costs of the day, and to Pitt-Bradford for arrangements. Members today mentioned that inviting CareerLink to be part of the response panel would be a good idea, and that other agencies should be ready to respond with audience questions and answers.
- County Proclamation—The County Commissioners proclaimed April Child Abuse Prevention Month at their last meeting.
- Resource Directory Dissemination—During the week of April 6-9 residents and agencies can pick up free copies of the McKean County Resource Directory at the McKean County State Health Center, 84 Boylston Street, Bradford, during the hours of 8:30-noon and 1:00-4:00. This is the 4th edition and has new resources and categories added. 5,000 copies will be available on first come first serve basis. The directory will also be posted to our website for downloading. Thank you to the McKean County Children and Youth Services for providing the funding for the directories.

Strengthening Families Program Updates: (middle school and parent substance prevention workshops) Betty Jo Wilcox, Mikele Bay and Teresa Wilcox gave updates on SFP.

- 259 students and 315 parents have completed the program since July 2006
- Enrollment this term—77 parents and 52 youth across the five school district sites, and 5 parents and 3 youth in Boosters Training in Smethport.
- The program was recently recognized at the 2/9/09 Pennsylvania Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention Committee as a program with strong results and good participation. View more about the McKean County SFP at www.sfpmckean.net

Collaborative Board Assessment results: The Steering Committee completed a survey rating the functioning of the Collaborative Board. Results are attached. Overall, our strong points were: mission, purposed, structure, governance, goals, objectives, system of community assessments, service capacity, gap identification, and professional development. Our weaker areas were parent involvement, businesses involvement, and a regular process for resident, parent and consumer feedback.

ACCESS Family Advocacy for Addiction Treatment: Lee Sizemore shared brochures about a new resource that provides advocacy services for individuals and family members experiencing financial difficulties accessing chemical dependency treatment. <http://www.access-treatment.org/>. Service includes:

- Educating those suffering from addiction about the resources available and their rights to treatment as legislated in Pennsylvania.
- Interpreting healthcare plans for clients and families.
- Assisting with the appeal process when funding for treatment is denied.
- Assisting in obtaining timely admissions to treatment by consulting with funding sources and appropriate treatment facilities.
- Assisting families in recognizing their own needs for supportive services.
- Call toll-free **1-866-709-0590** or email support@access-treatment.org for information.

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Early Childhood Mental Health Consultation: Mimi Smith passed out brochures about early childhood mental health consultation. She heard recently at a statewide meeting that the service was underutilized. Contact Jacqui Lanagan at 800-860-2281 or jacqueline@nwir.org for consultation services if you are concerned about the development of a young child in your facilities' care.

Advocacy, Housing and Financial Planning Resources: Darlene Nortum, Regional Housing Coordinator of Life and Independence for Today shared resources through her agency—Prepared Renter Program and other housing related projects. She also shared information about the Keystone Home Energy Loan Program, 888-232-3477, and an upcoming workshop sponsored by Penn State Extension called “Good Financial Decisions Learn at Home” held as a series in person or by phone in March. Call 776-5331 or email elkext@psu.edu for information.

Drug Diversion Day: Commissioner DeMott shared information about a community drug disposal day held on May 16 from 8 am to noon at the Bradford Regional Medical Center. Residents can dispose of prescription and over-the-counter medications. They will then be transported to an approved medical waste incinerator. Law enforcement will be on site during the event.

NEW OR OLD BUSINESS

Youth Risk Factors and Strategies:

- **Overview of Youth Risk Prioritization meeting on Feb 4**—Michele Kern, Regional Strategic Consultant for Communities That Care at the Center for Juvenile Justice Training and Research Center, Shippensburg University, gave an overview of the community meeting sponsored by the Collaborative Board on February 4. At the meeting participants reviewed data from the 2007 McKean County Pennsylvania Youth Survey, six focus group results and archival statistics to determine which of the 19 Communities That Care risk factors most negatively impact youth in McKean County. Extreme Economic Deprivation was not a risk factor prioritized, but instead the group thought that it should be the underlying focus of every strategy undertaken. Three top risks chosen by the group were:
 - *Community Laws and Norms Favorable to Drug Use*
 - *Family Management Problems*
 - *Family Conflict*
- **Review youth drug use patterns:** Lee Sizemore gave an overview of 2007 PAYS data about alcohol, tobacco, marijuana, inhalant, illicit drugs and prescription drug use among McKean County youth.
- **Prioritize two substances and several environmental strategies for Drug Free Communities Grant:** Michele Kern then walked the group through an understanding of the prevention plan that has been in place in McKean County for several years, mainly targeted at prevention programs. There is now a need to select two substances to target through environmental strategies and add it to the plan. The group unanimously decided to focus on alcohol and prescription medication as the two that could be most impacted. Since the McKean County Tobacco Coalition targets tobacco use, that substance was not prioritized. Michele then facilitated a discussion using the Strategic Prevention Framework—“But Why” discussion—looking at why the two substances were a problem in McKean County.

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Alcohol Availability

- Access through homes was twofold—through taking alcohol from refrigerators or liquor cabinets and through adults that host “parties”.
- Pennsylvania law allows 18 year olds to serve alcohol in bars and this contributes to availability. The group didn’t understand why this law exists when the legal drinking age is 21.
- Bradford is a college town and underage drinking is more of an issue in bars their.
- Community events are also an opportunity.

Alcohol Norms

- The low socioeconomic status of the county contributes to higher alcohol use and acceptance of the problem.
- Alcohol is expected at adult social functions.
- Enforcement of laws is a problem considering police force shortages and the heavily forested nature of the county; many go into the woods to drink.
- Our rural nature contributes to some problems—like more alcohol fatalities because of winding roads.

Prescription Drug Use Norms

- There are a lot of youth prescribed medication for mental health disorders whereas a decade ago it was unusual for someone to be on psychiatric medication.
- Prescription drug messages are prevalent in the media and this normalizes it.
- Many adults are legitimately prescribed medication, but adults share medication also.

Prescription Drug Use Ease and Availability

- Sharing and using prescription drugs is easy because they can be hidden in a pocket, easy to ingest, and there is no smell or residue like alcohol and smoking. Many are legitimately prescribed.
- Some adults are doctor and pharmacy shopping. The group shared situations where a prescription is initially purchased with a medical card, the person re-sells the drugs, then gets the prescription filled with cash, reselling and repeating this cycle over and over.
- More children are diagnosed with mental health disorders, and behavioral health services are more available.

- **Choosing environmental strategies:** The group discussed strategies that would work to combat underage drinking and youth prescription drug use, and then completed a short survey listing ideas. The top strategies identified by the board were:
 - Series of parent-focused community trainings on drug awareness, dangers and prevention tips.
 - Create a Youth Council in at least one school district to help promote anti-drug campaigns and other self-chosen and designed activities.
 - Host roundtable discussions or town hall meetings to discuss drug abuse.
 - Student trainings on the dangers of medication abuse.
 - A “Those Who Host Lose the Most” media campaign to communicate to parents the importance of keeping teens away from alcohol and other drugs.
 - Prescription abuse awareness activities with adults (parents and grandparents) so they can spread the word.

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MEMBER COMMENTS AND ANNOUNCEMENTS

- **Parent Power: Parent Empowerment and Advocacy Training**, March 12, 5:45 pm to 8:00 pm at CARE for Children, 20 Russell Boulevard, Bradford.
- **Incredible Years Workshop**: A class for parents of 2-8 year olds. Parents will learn effective use of play, praise and reward; how to set clear limits; and how to handle misbehavior. Bradford Family Center, every Wed., March 11 to April 22, 1:30-3:00 pm.
- **Bowl for Kids' Sake** starts April 2 with a pirate "Ahoy Matey" theme. Call Andy at 887-5591 to sign up your bowling crew and support this worthwhile cause.
- April 8, to coincide with **April's Sexual Assault Awareness Month**, the YWCA Victims' Resource Center will be sponsoring a Take Back The Night walk. More information will be forthcoming.

UPCOMING COLLABORATIVE BOARD MEETINGS

Steering Committee: Next meeting is April 1, 10:00 at the State Health Center, 84 Boylston Street, Bradford, PA

Child Abuse Prevention Month Ad Hoc Committee: Next meeting is March 24, 1:30 in the Children and Youth Services Conference Room, Smethport, PA.

McKean County Tobacco Coalition: Next meeting is Friday, March 27, 11:00 at the State Health Center, 84 Boylston Street, Bradford, PA

Prevention Team Meetings:

- Bradford PROSPER Team—March 18, 11:30, Fretz Middle School, and don't forget the Statewide meeting on April 28 in State College
- Kane Prevention Team—March 16 and May 18, 3:00 at the Kane Middle School
- Otto-Eldred Prevention Team—April 1, 3:00 at the Elementary School
- Port Allegany Prevention Team—April 3, 8:30 at the Elementary School
- Smethport Prevention Team—April 6, 3:30 at the Elementary School

Future Collaborative Board Meetings:

- May 6, 2009, 1:00-2:30 p.m., 911 Center, Smethport, PA
- July 8, 2009, 12:00-2:00, Hamlin Lake Pavilion, Smethport (summer picnic meeting)
- Sept 2, 2009, 1:00-2:30, 911 Center, Smethport
- Nov 4, 2009, 9:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m., Penn Hills Club, Bradford, Annual Meeting

Attachment to the Minutes

PROSPER Youth Group Feedback on CTC Assessment and Planning

Date: 3:30-4:30 on March 5, 2009

Location: Smethport Family Center Activity Room

Attendance: BA Sizemore, Smethport 7th grader; Brandon Wright, Smethport 7th grader, Josh Tanner, Smethport 7th grader; and Casey Schillinger.

Casey shared data from the 2007 Pennsylvania Youth Survey. The group looked at 8th grade lifetime use, seeing that, while it sometimes seems like a lot of student abuse drugs and alcohol, many students have not tried alcohol and other substances.

The group also discussed the formation of a youth team to help reduce substance abuse among peers. One suggestion to look at for members was SFP grads. Also, because SFP was not offered when those in 11th and 12th grade, it was suggested to also open it up to older students. They suggested activities to use in helping reduce substance abuse among peers.

Doing something similar to www.freevibe.com's campaign "What is your anti-drug?". They dedicate a section of their site to provide teens the opportunity to submit what helps them from using substance abuse. For example, one person wrote that biking is their anti-drug. They then go on to explain how drugs and alcohol would effect this activity. The students in the group will come up with anti-drug activities and then describe how drugs would effect this activity. These would then be:

- Used on posters placed around the school and on busses
- Recorded and played on the announcements
- Recorded and played on the radio
- Possibly talked about during homeroom (Every Thursday during homeroom, students have an anti-bullying session. Perhaps they could incorporate a session showing how drugs and alcohol impact bullying or pick a different day and present to a couple of homerooms a few times a year.)
- Hosting events with food and friends. One option discussed was during a football game, play one of the recordings before the game or during halftime. After the game, the group could host a party with food and students could come with their friends.

Parent Feedback on CTC Assessment and Planning

Date: 5:00-6:00 on March 5, 2009

Location: Smethport Elementary School

Attendance: Jodie Holmberg, parent of three, Strengthening Families Program (SFP) Facilitator, Collaborative Board member, and SFP Alumni; Jodie Groshek, parent of two, Strengthening Families Program Facilitator and SFP Alumni; Casey Schillinger, SFP Coordinator.

CTC Risk Assessment data was reviewed with the parents to gain their feedback. The parents were unaware of the concept of environmental strategies, so this was explained. Discussion that happened at the Collaborative Board was explained since the parents could not make it to the meeting. Both reinforced the decisions of the board to focus on alcohol and prescription drugs. They had read the full packet of assessment information and were somewhat shocked and unaware of the problem of prescription abuse. Both endorsed a youth group in Smethport

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and mentioned that the SADD Club is really all but inactive and the youth need something positive like this. There are really only sports and band, and activities for the gifted students.