

Gray & New Gloucester Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition
Thursday, December 16th, Fiddlehead Art and Science Center

Meeting Minutes

I. Welcome & introductions

a. In attendance:

Jeanne Adams, Parent/Business Owner
Kim Allen, Fiddlehead Art and Science Ctr.
Beth Blakeman-Pohl, Drug Free Communities Coordinator,
Casco Bay C.A.N.
Crystal Bugenske, Parent
Victoria Burns, Superintendent, MSAD #15
Kate Genovese, School Counselor, GNG High School
Deputy Joe Schnupp, Community Relations Specialist, Cumberland
County Sheriff's Office
Joan Tremberth, Adult Ed Director, MSAD 15
Carol Swicker, Project Manager, 21 Reasons, Medical Care Development
Sarah Kinsler, Project Assistant, 21 Reasons, Medical Care Development

II. Update and assignments for 1x1 meetings

- a. Because there were new members in attendance, Carol Swicker provided some background information. 21 Reasons is in year 6 of its Drug Free Communities (DFC) grant, and has served as mentor for the past two years to the Casco Bay Coalition, which recently received its own DFC grant. In serving as a mentor for the G-NG Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition, 21 Reasons provides support, guidance and staffing to assist G-NG in building its capacity to apply for its own DFC grant. The focus during the first year will be on completing a community needs assessment, expanding Coalition capacity (including increased membership and structure), and developing a strategic plan. Over the next few months, we will focus on collecting data for the community assessment process, and will write the assessment report in May and June.
- b. Carol provided an update on 1x1 meetings. Last meeting, attendees brainstormed potential candidates for 1x1s, and Carol and others conducting 1x1s have continued to add names to this list as they are suggested. Carol clarified that 1x1s are conversations, not interviews. The focus is on gaining a sense of the Gray and New Gloucester communities in terms of the culture around underage drinking and drug use; what preventative factors exist within these communities; and what barriers exist that might make our work more challenging. In addition, the meetings are an opportunity to share the work of the Coalition, find out if the person is interested in participating, and ask who else they think we should talk to. For more information about 1x1s, their purpose or how to conduct one, contact Carol.

- i. Common themes from complete 1x1s include: perception of an attitude of acceptance of substance use in general, including youth substance use; a need for increased law enforcement; and divisions within the communities, both between Gray and New Gloucester, and between new and longtime residents.
- c. Individuals (and teams) volunteered to conduct 1x1s until each contact on this list was assigned. Carol clarified that coalition members can talk with anyone they think might provide a helpful perspective, and asked that anyone conducting a 1x1 send her notes from the conversation. Deputy Joe Schnupp suggested contacting tow truck companies, since parents might call them after a crash caused by drunk driving, but not call the police; he also suggested speaking with Gray and New Gloucester Fire and Rescue departments. Crystal has contacts within some Gray churches, including youth ministers, and suggested them as candidates for 1x1s.

III. Community Assessment process

- a. Carol continued by describing the Community Assessment process. The community assessment will be based on both quantitative and qualitative data. Carol distributed a handout which briefly describes the sources of information used in 21 Reasons Portland assessment, many of which may be relevant in the GNG Coalition's assessment (attached).
 - i. Quantitative data sources include: 2008 MYDAUS (Maine Youth Drug and Alcohol Use Survey) data; 2009 MIYHS (Maine Integrated Youth Health Survey) data is not available at the high school level for Gray/New Gloucester; law enforcement statistics (including retail compliance checks, alcohol related calls, alcohol related citations); and a parent phone survey looking into parental attitudes and behaviors about youth alcohol and other substance use (21 Reasons had funding for this project as a part of their community assessment, but no identified funding exists for similar efforts in G-NG coalition).
 - ii. Qualitative data sources include: 1x1 meetings; community opinion surveys; young adult intercept interviews (stopping young adults on the street – 21 Reasons has done this with mixed success); town hall meeting or other public forum (used in the Casco Bay CAN community assessment process); information from an alcohol promotion assessment (analyzing alcohol promotion, such as advertising and pricing promotions, within the community).
 - iii. NOTE: Carol will draft a Community Opinion Survey for the next meeting.

IV. Community Building / Community Awareness Activities

- a. Carol emphasized the importance of doing things that will keep the community, and especially this group, interested in our activities. Though our major purpose

in the next two years is to build capacity, complete the community assessment and strategic planning process, and work towards a DFC grant for G-NG, we can start having a direct impact sooner, and create community awareness and involvement.

- b.* Carol led a brainstorm, out of which some great ideas came: having a pizza and basketball night at the school for kids and parents; advertising or having a table at school events; putting flyers on pizza boxes; or working local events (the PTO 5k in the spring, NG strawberry festival in early summer, NG Fair in October). Deputy Schnupp and others emphasized that we need to reach parents when and where it is convenient for them; suggestions included at/during sports practices or play rehearsals. Though DFC grants can't pay for food, we discussed the ability of food to draw and engage parents.

 - i.* Superintendent Vicky Burns emphasized that any involvement at school events, including distributing materials, would need to be approved by the School Board via a Memorandum of Understanding. School Board meetings are the 1st and 3rd Wednesdays of each month. Carol will attend an upcoming meeting; once the G-NG Coalition has a mission and guidelines, we can work towards an MOU with the School Board.
 - ii.* Carol, Deputy Schnupp, Jeanne Adams and Kim Allen formed a subcommittee to create draft materials for distribution at events.
- c.* Jeanne suggested contacting groups which already do good work in the community, and asking to speak at a meeting: the Lions Club, Historical Society, Masonic Lodge, Patriot Parents and the Gray-New Gloucester Optimists were all suggested, and Carol will follow up with each about presenting at an upcoming meeting.
- d.* Deputy Schnupp suggested working with local media to do interviews and create public service announcements and press releases. These would not only raise awareness of what the Coalition is doing, but let community members know who is already involved. He has local media contacts and will explore this.

 - i.* Carol is hesitant to brand these with 21 Reasons's name and logo and would rather use the DFC logo, but the group agrees that 21 Reasons is well known in the community and could give the G-NG Coalition credibility with community members. Carol suggested that it might be time to create a separate logo for this group.

V. Coalition Capacity Building and Structure

- a.* Carol distributed sample materials from 21 Reasons and Casco Bay C.A.N. which demonstrated some of the tools other coalitions have used to build capacity and structure:

 - i.* From 21 Reasons, a sample MOU and membership agreement (attached).
 - ii.* From Casco Bay C.A.N., the group's Guidelines and Practices, outlining the mission, goals, structure and rules of the coalition (attached).
- b.* Vicky suggested that a mechanism for people to *sign-on* would help us when visiting stakeholders and community groups. This would allow us to publicize this

connection, while acting as a mechanism to hold the group accountable for participating in whatever way they said they would (for example, sending a representative to meetings). Vicky pointed out that these formalized documents and statements make it easier to present to groups and get them to sign on.

- c. The group wondered who creates a mission and guidelines like these. Carol suggested a half-day retreat in February or March to create these documents, and the group agreed that four hours would be enough time, as long as electronic communication before and after was strong. In the meantime, Beth Blakeman-Pohl suggested that DFC, Casco Bay C.A.N., and 21 Reasons have language the G-NG Coalition could adapt to get groups to sign on. Joan suggested re-crafting the language used by DFC, Casco Bay C.A.N., and 21 Reasons to suit this coalition, and sending it out for approval. **The half-day retreat was tentatively scheduled for March 2nd, 2011, from 9:00 AM – 1:00 PM**, Special Services Conference Room at Gray-New Gloucester High School.
- d. Deputy Schnupp suggested a few points to consider in forming our mission and guidelines, noting that, to be successful, we need to grab the attention of busy, over-committed parents, and make it clear that we will be useful to them in concrete ways. In the long run, we'll need to reach the parents who are less involved, but that's a long term goal. Vicky added that we're working to change behavior by changing to community environment; we're creating new norms. Other groups working to create new norms and a new image/"brand" for Gray and New Gloucester are a big part of our audience.

VI. In-Kind Budget

- a. Carol briefly explained the match requirements within the Mentor Grant budget. The match budget is 100% "in-kind", meaning that a value is assigned to certain activities, contributions, goods or services. Examples include time that Coalition members donate for meetings, 1x1's, and working on projects; time that a community member spends in a 1x1 meeting with a Coalition member; mileage from travel to meetings; and media mentions. Carol distributed a table describing all match budget items (attached). While we don't need to specifically track every hour and item, it is a good habit for us to be aware of how much time we are devoting to Coalition activities.
- b. Jeanne suggested that some of the things listed on the handout were appropriate at different points in this process; a visual representation or timeline of this information might be helpful. Carol will send the existing timeline to all Coalition members.

VII. Next Steps

- a. Our next meeting will be a mini-retreat, focusing on two objectives: crafting a mission statement and shaping some guidelines for the coalition member roles and responsibilities.

- b.* Members will continue to conduct 1x1s as assigned (see attached) and report back to Carol with notes; as other potential sources of information arise, more 1x1s will be scheduled and completed. Carol will work with each Coalition member who is doing 1x1 meetings to coordinate schedules when appropriate.
- c.* Continue to gather other tools and resources for the community assessment, in addition to 1x1s; at the next meeting, Carol will present a draft Community Opinion Survey.
- d.* Carol, Deputy Schnupp, Jeanne and Kim will begin the process of developing print materials for distribution at public events.
- e.* Carol will attend a school board meeting (and will work with Vicky ahead of time to plan for this) to present information about the GNG Coalition and ask to be recognized as a school-sanctioned group.
- f.* We will begin to contact community groups about attending/presenting at their meetings.

Next meeting date: Retreat Wednesday March 2nd, 9:00-1:00

Next regular meeting: March 23rd, 8:30-10:15

Primary contact: Carol Swicker, Project Manager, 21 Reasons Mentor project, cswicker@mcd.org 773-7737.

The new Project Director for 21 Reasons is Linda Williams, lwilliams@mcd.org, (207) 622-7566 ext. 243.



The G-NG Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition is partnering with the 21 Reasons Coalition as part of a 2-year Drug-Free Communities Mentoring Project, funded by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration, US Dept of Health & Human Services. 21 Reasons is a project of Medical Care Development. FMI: www.21reasons.org