

Gray & New Gloucester Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition

Presented with support from the 21 Reasons Coalition

Wednesday, July 27th, 8:30-10:15 – Council Chambers at Gray Town Hall

MEETING MINUTES

I. Welcome & introductions

a. In attendance:

Rev. Natalie Blake, E. Baldwin Congregational Church and Gray resident
Beth Blakeman-Pohl, Drug Free Communities Coordinator, Casco Bay CAN
and New Gloucester resident

Victoria Burns, Superintendent, MSAD #15

Christina Foster, Dunn School PTO, Healthy Patriots, Gray resident

Deb Nickerson, Gray Rec. Dept, Project Graduation, Booster Club

Geoff Robbins, GNG Middle School Assistant Principal, Healthy Patriots

Anne Tricomi, Healthy Casco Bay, Gray resident

Joanne West, Day One, Gray resident

Carol Swicker, Project Manager, 21 Reasons, Medical Care Development

Sarah Kinsler, Project Assistant, 21 Reasons, Medical Care Development

- #### b.
- Carol announced the exciting news that all twelve of our required community sectors are filled. We are still trying to recruit Hannafords to serve as the Business Sector representative. Tina Martell, who is already active in the GNG Coalition, has also offered to fill that sector if need be.

II. Community Assessment

- #### a.
- As a group, we discussed the current draft of the Gray-New Gloucester Community Assessment, sent out last week via email. We focused our discussion on the Root Causes section of the assessment. Carol explained root causes as answering the question, “But why here?” For example (*not specific to GNG*), a cause (“Why?”) of underage drinking may be that youth find alcohol easy to access. Root causes (“But why here?”) might include local stores selling to underage youth, or parents who don’t lock their alcohol up at home. Attendees gave feedback on the root causes identified in the Assessment, and brought up a few issues: How will we acknowledge our sources for these themes? What assertions do we need to back up or collect further evidence to support? Beth raised the point that Gray and New Gloucester residents may react differently to some statements or generalizations. We agreed to add root causes for prescription drug misuse.
- #### b.
- Carol discussed the plan for printing and distributing the assessment. Our Project Director, Erica Schmitz, suggests waiting until we’ve written our Strategic Plan so the two can be printed and bound together. If we choose to do this, we would pre-pay for printing and binding services.

III. Coalition Guidelines and Membership Agreement

- a. Sarah reviewed the Coalition Guidelines (attached), adapted from similar documents created by 21 Reasons and Casco Bay CAN.
 - i. We discussed the Coalition's decision-making process (consensus) and the role of official sector representatives in the event that consensus can't be reached and a vote must be made.
 - ii. The Coalition unanimously agreed to adopt the Guidelines.
- b. Sarah reviewed the Coalition Membership Agreement. Beth will email the form used by Casco Bay CAN; Sarah will make changes and distribute by email later this week.

IV. Updates and Activities

- a. Church presentations: Carol has recruited several local churches to present sermons over the next few months related to youth substance use and the impact parents and community can have, and is presenting or giving:
Good Shepherd UMC (7/31), 1st Congregational Gray (9/18), Community Crossroads and New Gloucester Congregational (date TBD), and a couple others who may be interested.
- b. New Sheriff's deputy: Carol met with Sheriff Joyce and Naldo Gagnon, the Chief Deputy, about the new deputy position. She was able to share our priorities (increased communication with community members including school, families and youth; increased local law enforcement presence) as well as hear more about the hiring process. The new deputy will be working 40 hours/week over four days. This might include day or night shifts, or both, and may allow the deputy to attend coalition meetings. The position will be filled based on seniority, and will hopefully be in place by late-Aug/mid-Sept.
- c. Healthy Patriots: Christina described the work of Healthy Patriots in the Dunn School, including some creative activities and education for kids. It's possible that, as the Healthy Patriots expand their programs to other schools and older grades, we could partner in doing parent education or creating materials for distribution to parents.
- d. Fall events:
 - i. Project Graduation: Debbie is heading this year's Project Graduation. She and Chief Morrison of Gray Public Safety have discussed holding a public event like a mock car crash over Homecoming weekend. We discussed ways in which the Coalition could partner with Project Graduation to help ensure long-term education and impact from an event like this.
 - ii. New Gloucester Community Fair: No updates at this time.
 - iii. Table Talks: Joanne proposed holding Table Talks in conjunction with community events and partners (churches, the Rec. Departments, etc). She is a facilitator and trainer.
 - iv. A variety of popular local youth sporting events are coming up this fall (GNG football games; two soccer tournaments); Debbie suggests these are great opportunities for publicity for the coalition.

- v. An Events/Publicity subcommittee was formed to identify and plan for upcoming activities, including Debbie, Christina, Jeanne, Natalie and Carol.

V. Mini-Grants

- a. Carol briefly discussed the status of the mini-grant project, for which time is running out. Grantees would need to complete proposed projects and spend down any funds prior to the end of our grant year. Anne suggested that it was not too late, and that Healthy Casco Bay could provide a Request for Application form. Carol will explore interest among local groups to see whether this is feasible.

VI. Branding

- a. We have money in our budget (a few thousand dollars) to hire a graphic designer to create a logo, colors, and other brand materials. The first step in this is deciding on a new (shorter) name. To end the meeting, the group brainstormed possibilities, narrowing the choices down to three:

GNG CARES
GNG PRIDE
GNG RESPECT

Possibilities for what the acronym could stand for –

CARES:
Community Alliance for Respect (/Responding), Empowerment and Support.
Changing Attitudes, Responding, Empowering, Supporting.

PRIDE:

RESPECT:
Respect, Empower, Support: Prevention Education for Community Togetherness.
Respect, Empower, Support: Partnership for Community Togetherness.

A subcommittee was formed to further develop a name and tagline, and send to group for feedback, as well as engaging with a graphic designer to move the branding process along. Subcommittee includes Beth, Brad, and Carol.

Thank you to everyone who was able to attend this meeting!

Action Items:

Carol and Sarah – Update Assessment based on feedback

Beth – Email CAN's membership form to *Sarah* who will update GNG's form.

Carol – Convene meeting of Events/Publicity subcommittee

Carol – Explore feasibility of distributing mini-grants this grant year with potential applicants, and talk with Anne about process HMP uses.
Carol – Convene meeting of Branding Subcommittee.

Next meeting date: Wednesday, August 24th, 8:30 to 10:30, New Gloucester Location TBA

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

Sarah Kinsler, Project Assistant, 21 Reasons, skinsler@mcd.org 773-7737.

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

