

# Gray & New Gloucester Youth Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition

Presented with support from the 21 Reasons Coalition

Wednesday, December 14<sup>th</sup>, 8:30-10:15 – Gray Town Council Chambers

## MEETING MINUTES

### I. Welcome & introductions

#### a. In attendance:

Sue Steele, Coalition Chair, 21 Reasons; Portland Public Schools  
Bruce Beasley, Superintendent, MSAD #15  
Sarah Blanton, Healthy Casco Bay  
Shelby Briggs, Health Casco Bay  
Alex Hughes, Healthy Casco Bay  
Kate Genovese, GNGHS Guidance Counselor  
Joanne Grant, Day One  
Becca Matusovich, parent  
Joe Schnupp, Cumberland County Sheriff's Dept.  
Carol Swicker, Project Manager, 21 Reasons, Medical Care Development  
Sarah Kinsler, Project Assistant, 21 Reasons, Medical Care Development

### II. Discussion: Parent Engagement – led by Sue Steele, Chair of 21 Reasons Coalition

- a. Sue distributed handouts summarizing her top ten lessons learned for parent engagement, noting that parent engagement is always a challenge, and that it's a constant project.
- b. 10 Tips:
  - *Manage logistics relentlessly:* Have a documented action plan, assign tasks, and have due dates for each item. Designate one person as the "nagger" to give weekly updates and check in on progress. It's important to present a professional, organized, together look for the coalition.
  - *Make it convenient – time, location, parking:* Schedule to avoid conflict with other events (i.e., kids' sports or other commitments). Don't rule out doing an event twice, for example, for MS and HS parents.
  - *Create an invite tree – ask people to ask people:* An invite tree uses natural social connections to bring folks in – People are more likely to come if they're asked personally, and it will grow on its own over time.
  - *Go to where parents/community already meet:* And think outside the box! Kids' sports games, school open houses, parent-teacher conferences are all great venues.
  - *Involve credible partners/allies:* Including students! Bruce noted that anything kids create or participate in gets good parent turnout. The schools often try to tie in other information as well.
  - *Follow the group's passion/energy:* Example: work with students and teachers to do a science project about the negative effects of alcohol

and present at the school's science fair. Example: Create a related service learning or community service project.

- *Be action oriented:* Make sure you know what you want people to do, and communicate that. Ask for commitment. Include actionable strategies for parents to use. Health teachers might be a good way in for these issues!
  - *Make interactions engaging:* Humor always helps, and including students builds credibility. Be creating about how to do this – work with drama groups to create a play or other performance, for example.
  - *Explore all media:* Email, school messenger, Facebook, Tip of the Month, robo-phone calls, twitter, webinars, TV, radio... to invite people to meetings or events and to distribute your message.
  - *Know your supporters:* Collect contact info (by raffle, for example), and nurture your supporters by keeping folks engaged on a regular basis. Don't discount grandparents as influential adults in kids' lives. Also: food works. Joe suggested that collecting feedback about an event immediately is a great way to keep folks engaged and help them feel heard; one great way is to have a SurveyMonkey waiting in their inbox when they get home. Sue agreed: it's important to solicit and act on feedback; rather than waiting for the next event, contact attendees and let them know what you heard for feedback, and what will change next time.
- c. Thanks to Sue for her great tips, and for coming out to Gray for our meeting. We look forward to drawing on her expertise further in the future!

### **III. Logic Model draft review**

- a. Carol guided the group through a review of our drafted Logic Model, with particular attention to activities and output/outcome targets.
- b. With regard to outcomes, Becca suggested we consider what a 15% increase really looks like – how many parents is this? Do our activities and process targets account for reaching this number of parents? We should use the same thought process as we examine our goals for changes in student attitudes and behaviors.

### **IV. Coalition Chair and Vice Chair**

- a. Three coalition members expressed interest in taking on these leadership roles. Two, Joanne Grant and Beth Blakeman-Pohl, have continued to show interest. We nominated Joanne for the role of Chair and Beth for the role of Vice Chair; these nominations were unanimously accepted by attendees. Congrats and our thanks to Joanne and Beth as they take on these new roles!

### **V. Updates and Coalition Involvement Agreement**

- a. *MIYHS data:* Still waiting on 2011 MIYHS data, hoping to have this early in the new year.
- b. *Web and brochure development:* We're in the proof stage for shiftGNG.org, and will develop brochure text and design based on the web design.

- c. *Cole Farms Event:* Carol gave an update on our February event at Cole Farms. Due to the generosity of Cole Farms owners and especially coalition member Sandy Waltz, who has agreed to serve at the event, we are able to limit ticket prices to \$10/person. We'll be selling the tickets at Cole Farms and from our website. Planning and solicitation of door prizes is going great!
- d. *Grant writing schedule:* We'll begin to write the DFC grant in earnest in January – in the meantime, Carol has started on some pieces which are consistent from year to year. Look forward to more updates coming soon.
- e. *Coalition Capacity Survey:* Carol reminded the group to please complete the Coalition Capacity Survey, online at <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/shiftGNGcms>, as soon as possible!

**Our next meeting will be on Monday, January 9<sup>th</sup> from 4pm-5:45pm. Location TBA.**

Carol Swicker, Project Manager, 21 Reasons Mentor project, [cswicker@mcd.org](mailto:cswicker@mcd.org) 773-7737.

Sarah Kinsler, Project Assistant, 21 Reasons, [skinsler@mcd.org](mailto:skinsler@mcd.org) 773-7737.

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