



Enforcement Team Meeting Notes

Wednesday, February 17, 2010 1:15-2:45 p.m.

Present: Gary Braun (Recovery School of Southern MN), Debbie Carter-Barth (Project HOME), Becky Ford (Faribault Drug-Free Communities grant), Scott Hanson (Bethlehem Academy), Zach Pruitt (Northfield Healthy Community Initiative), Kathy Sandberg (Rice County Family Services Collaborative), Jim Severson (Discovery Public School), Tori Stewart (Rice County Attorney's Office), Ellen Unruh (4 Corners Partnership/Public Health)

Minutes Approval

The group reviewed and approved the minutes from January. *Becky will post the notes to the Enforcement Team web page.*

Agency Updates:

Law Enforcement –

Sheriff's Department – No one present to report.

Northfield Police – No one present to report.

Morristown Police – No one present to report.

Faribault Police – No one present to report.

Community Corrections – No one present to report.

County Attorney's Office – Tori reported that there have not been any new provider cases in the last month. She has seen an increase in drug-related cases since January. The group agreed that the Drug Task Force must be busy and noted the recent arrests made for meth-related charges. Tori also commented that Steele County recently convicted an individual of 3rd degree murder for supplying drugs to a victim that resulted in death. The plea hearing for Jillian Wetzel's death will be on March 1.

Schools:

Bethlehem Academy – Scott reported that the canine units are scheduled to search his school. He is also currently organizing another drug awareness parent night and student day for B.A. He mentioned that 12th graders will have a separate session on what to expect when entering post-high school situations, such as college, etc.

Discovery School – Jim reported that things are quiet. They are keeping the CD counselor busy and it has had a positive effect on students being seen and also the school in general. He noted that the students struggling with depression and suicide have been coping better recently. Dr. Reznikoff talked with his 11th and 12th grade students regarding substance use and the exchange was very positive.

Recovery School of Southern MN- Gary updated the group regarding the Patrons Club fundraising initiative of his school and passed out membership information. He also reported that several schools in MN who use the recovery school model will be gathering in Lanesboro to discuss best practices and better coordinate their efforts. MN has 13 recovery schools, which is the highest in the United States.

Zach reminded the group that the School Prevention Request for Proposals is due on February 24 at 5:00 p.m. The money can be used for curriculum planning and implementation. So far only a couple of schools have submitted requests.

Drug Task Force- No one present to report.

ZAP Assessment

Shelia Nesbitt from the MN Institute of Public Health has completed 20 interviews with project stakeholders and is in the process of finalizing her report. All law enforcement agencies in Rice County were able to provide her with data regarding underage drinking dating back to 2005, which will be included in the report. Coalition staff members expect that report to be available by next month's Enforcement Team meeting.

Zach also noted that the Take It to the Box initiative has resulted in over 750 pounds of drugs collected.

Tobacco Update - Ellen Unruh, 4 Corners Partnership, Rice County Public Health

Ellen updated the group on what's been happening with the tobacco industry in recent years and about her role with the 4 Corners Partnership. Ellen pointed out, the tobacco industry continues to spend billions of dollars advertising each year. She encouraged us all to consider the effectiveness of convenience store signs that boldly market specific cigarette makers and special pricing. She shared that kids are twice as likely to remember advertising compared to adults.

Ellen also shared information about incentives that retailers receive for marketing tobacco products in their stores. In order for retailers to receive special pricing, they must market the products in accordance to the tobacco companies' standards. The tobacco industry seems to have a lot of control over these small businesses.

Ellen also shared some statistics about youth smoking. She stated that 3,900 youth, ages 12-17, start smoking each day. 1,000 youth move to daily smoking each day. It's relatively easy for youth to obtain tobacco. The tobacco industry is working hard to replace their dying customers with youth, who have the potential to be life-long users of tobacco.

What can we do? The 4 Corners Partnership stresses the importance of noticing advertisements, paying close attention to placement in relation to products attractive to youth, how things are attractively packaged, etc. Ellen suggested working with retailers to educate them about the new regulations from the FDA to further reduce the tobacco industry's ability to market to kids. **Ellen also challenged us to visit www.unfilteredmn.org to get the latest information about the tobacco industry's newest strategies aimed at getting cigarette users through the increase in smoke free environments, which also happen to be very attractive to youth.** She shared some examples, such as flavored cigars, smokeless/spitless tobacco pouches, tobacco strips and orbs, which are similar to breath mints. The group commented that these new smokeless products would be difficult to detect in a school setting. The group also expressed concern over the trend of video games utilizing themes of tobacco use as a part of game play. Ellen would like us to keep in touch and explore ways we might collaborate on this important issue.

Project HOME SAMHSA grant – Debbie Carter-Barth

Debbie shared with the group about new federal funds Project HOME has received to help people who are chronically homeless. Under this new funding, Project HOME will be able to expand its services by targeting individuals who are chemically dependent, mentally ill, or frequent user of other services, such as detox, emergency rooms, or jails. In order to qualify for the new program, people also must meet the definition of “chronically homeless”, (i.e. living on the street, in a car, etc.) “Couch hopping”, moving from place to place, fits the MN definition of homelessness, but does not meet the federal criteria.

Project HOME will provide intensive case management for these individuals, including securing housing. They are able to work with subsidized housing programs and landlords to get individuals in regardless of barriers, such as lack of work, criminal history or poor credit. Project HOME then spends 2 – 10 hours a week, in home with clients, working on problem areas that have contributed to their homelessness. They may provide therapy for chemical dependency and mental illness, as well as overcome barriers associated with having a criminal history.

Debbie handed out referral forms and said even if someone does not qualify for their program, they will work to connect them to more appropriate existing resources.

2009 Enforcement Team Evaluation

The group tabled this discussion until next time.

Other

Kathy mentioned that the MN Prevention Resource Center will be hosting a series of spring forums on Prescription Drugs in April and May. The coalition does have funds to send folks who may want to attend. Forums closest to Rice County are: Rochester – 4/6, Apple Valley – 4/16, St. Paul – May 18. Becky will send the registration information out to Enforcement Team members in case additional representatives from agencies would like to attend.

Also in April, there will be a Prevention Specialist training, which is 5 days over the course of two weeks. This is a good opportunity for coalition members to increase their understanding of best practice prevention strategies.

Next Meeting Date:

Tentatively, Wednesday March 17
Rice County Government Services Building – Room 3A
1:15 p.m. – 2:45 p.m