

Belmont Wellness Coalition (BWC)
DFC Grant SPO-80659-01
Meeting Minutes
Monday, Feb. 25, 2019 at 12:00 – 1:30 PM
Fire Department HQ Conference Room, Belmont, MA

BWC Members in Attendance:

Lisa Gibalerio (Wayside), Stephanie Sunderland (Wayside), Marisa Melanson (Youth Coordinator), Anne Wang (EDC, Grant Evaluator), Beth Rumley (Nursing Director), Barbara Bulfoni, PTO President Chenery Middle School, Corinne Jackman (Belmont High School Nurse), Sam Chan (Wayside)

BWC Members Absent:

Kristine Pugliese (CMS SRO), Fire Chief David Frizzell, Rev. Joe Zarro (Clergy), Sara Masucci (Parent/Teacher), Asst. Police Chief Jamie MacIsaac, Brittany Taylor (Fire Department), Melissa O'Connor (BHS SRO), Janet Amdur (Health Department), David Neylon (Health Department Nurse), Mike Clark (Clergy), Jasen Boyle (Substance Use Disorder Clinician), Kara Harlow (Clinician), Jeff Hansell (Media Specialist), Mark Paolillo (Board of Selectman), Wendy Conroy (Chair, Parent, Sexuality Educator), Jane Fox (Parent, Public Health Professional) Cristina Palladino (VP Belmont Savings Bank), Caroline Dustin (Youth), Lily Sama (Youth), Portia Thompson (Parent), Julie Crockett (Parent), Wesley Chin (Director, Health Department), Diana Ekman (Assistant Health Director)

The meeting was called to order at 12:04 PM.

I. Introductions – were made around the table.

II. Brief Review of January Meeting - Root Causes

Anne reviewed the process that the BWC has engaged in thus far. Areas (substances) that rose to the top among Belmont youth include: vaping, alcohol use, and marijuana use. There is a low perception of harm in general (concerning these substances) among parents and youth. In December, we engaged in a “root cause” brainstorm. There is a lot of stress among youth and there are not a lot of places for kids to hang out in.

Brainstorming root causes led to the concept of distributing a parent survey (at various events) and holding student focus groups – all in an attempt to gather more data from the community.

III. Finalize Parent Survey

The BWC members present took a minute to review the draft. Feedback was

gathered and the survey was adjusted.

- Make Plan to Implement Surveys e.g., at school events

Lisa will send out possible event dates and times and request Coalition members to be present at the events to hand out (and collect) the survey. Beth suggested that the grade 7 parents be brought into this process as they are partaking in SBIRT this spring. The survey would need to be put in google form or survey monkey.

Barbara offered to help put the survey into google form.

Beth will ask Superintendent Phelan if the survey can be disseminated to parents in this way. Both Barbara and Beth will send Lisa dates/times of upcoming events that parents will be at.

IV. Discuss Holding Student Focus Groups

Lisa distributed the *draft* focus group prompt questions. Stephanie noted that there is a specific way to hold a focus group. Lisa suggested that perhaps Marisa and Sam could be present at the student focus groups as they are closer in age to the youth. Anne offered that she could train Marisa and Sam in how to hold a focus group. She noted that the prompt questions will hopefully reveal *why* kids are vaping and/or using other substances.

Corinne noted that she is working with the Diversionary Program at BHS. As for *why* kids are vaping, those involved in this program have reported stress, the novelty of it, and boredom contributed to their use. She explained her survey process and noted that the sample size is small at eight kids.

Anne suggested that we start with two focus groups (one at the middle school and one at the high school) and see what information is put forth and determine if that information is useful.

We brainstormed ways to hold the focus groups, e.g., in a health class, during a lunch split, or a health class with a split. The BWC might be able to host a group during the grade 10 health split at the high school and Beth will look into grade 8 health classes at the middle school. Lunch will need to be provided!

V. Identify Belmont Strengths

(Anne)

Anne explained that strengths can be used within the community as a part of the overall change strategy in Belmont. Youth strengths are identified and then built upon in creating the change strategy. The group brainstormed youth strengths:

- Town and school sports involvement

- Stellar music programs
- Amazing theater program at BHS
- Kids value education and evidence based information
- SEL curriculum (social justice equity piece)
- Overall high employment, low food/housing insecurities
- Highly educated parent population
- Ethnically diverse
- Proximity to Boston/Cambridge
- Parents open to education
- Newly resurrected Youth Commission
- Outdoor pool (great for younger kids)
- A wide variety of after school clubs

VI. Updates, other topics of concern

- Subcommittees (fundraising [for swag, snacks for teens, etc.], youth group development, events, speakers, website development, branding, logo, etc.)

Lisa noted that the BWC may need to form subcommittees in order to address topics like the ones noted above.

VII. Set Next Meeting

Lisa will send a scheduling doodle for the next meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:32 PM.

Respectfully submitted by:
Lisa Gibalerio,
Prevention Specialist, Program Coordinator
Wayside Youth & Family Support Network