

Belmont Wellness Coalition (BWC)
DFC Grant SPO-80659-01
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, July 9, 2019 at Noon – 1:30 PM
Fire Department HQ Conference Room, Belmont, MA

BWC Members Present:

Lisa Gibalerio (Wayside), Stephanie Sunderland (Wayside), Anne Wang (EDC, Grant Evaluator), Julie Crockett (TMM), Kate Bowen (School Committee member), Wendy Conroy (Chair, Sexuality Educator), Fire Chief David Frizzell, Barbara Bulfoni (PTO President, Chenery Middle School), Diana Ekman (Assistant Director, Health Department), Lindsey Sharp, Health Department Intern, Rev. Joe Zarro (Clergy)

I. Introductions

II. Brief Review of May's BWC Meeting

Lisa reviewed the following points covered in May.

The Coalition – having a) collected and analyzed various data points (parent surveys, student focus group, guidance), b) conducted a root-cause analysis, and c) identified Belmont's strengths – is now poised to develop prevention strategies to address substance use through tackling the root causes of 1) lack of skills for dealing with overwhelming stress and boredom and 2) parent permissiveness around drinking and knowledge of vaping. The prevention strategy (or strategies) to address coping skills for overwhelming stress and boredom will tie in with the School's SEL approach to support student coping skills for dealing with these same factors. The prevention strategy (or strategies) to address parent permissiveness around drinking and knowledge of vaping will likely include communication strategies to parents.

III. Belmont's SEL Curriculum

Anne provided some information on Belmont's SEL approach. It uses the framework developed by CASEL (Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning), which is holistic and has three main parts:

- Intrapersonal (self-awareness and self-management skills)
- Interpersonal (social awareness and relationship skills), and
- Cognitive (responsible decision-making skills).

Wendy discussed a pilot program that the high school will embark on whereby faculty and staff are assigned a group of students as they enter high school and will meet with them periodically so as to offer them a consistent, caring adult. The middle school tried out a similar program this past year. Lexington also created a peer support group that may serve as a good model for Belmont.

Links:

- <https://www.belmont.k12.ma.us/bps/Parents/Social-Emotional-Learning>
- <https://casel.org/>

IV. YRBS Updates:

- After a 7 year hiatus from the YRBS, we now have data for grades 6-12
- Mostly improvements since 2012; Vaping (which was not measured in 2012) is a concern
- A question was raised about a town-wide Vaping policy; Diana will research if one exists and will report back to the BWC
- There will be a full YRBS report by August 2019; Anne will assess the full report and then look at data and will highlight areas we want to learn more about
- The School Department and the BWC will work together to present data highlights to the community in the fall via a Joint SC-BOS meeting in the fall to present the data highlights and also via a community forum/town hall event to present the highlights of the data to residents

V. Peer Leadership Development

- One BWC strategy will concern establishing a Peer Leadership program
- There are several different Peer Leadership models
- Wayside's new Prevention Specialist (Nicole Rogers) and perhaps Belmont's new Youth Coordinator (Tiana Watson) could work on establishing a PL program
- Could then establish an 84 Chapter (tobacco cessation, which includes Vaping)
- High School group seems more likely, but we need to also aim our prevention efforts toward elementary and middle school (this point was explored)
- Rev. Joe and Elizabeth Dionne has also expressed interest in moving this forward
- Kate offered to get some preliminary information on what is involved in starting such a group

IV. Other Possible Strategy Components

1. Parent Education to reinforce the SEL curriculum, so parents can reinforce SEL at home (Wendy will oversee)
2. Meet with parents at Back to School Nights, PTO Meetings, 5th and 9th grade parent orientation sessions, parent athletic education nights, Meet Belmont Event, direct mailing, electric bill insert, etc. (Lisa will ask Janice what ways might be appropriate for the BWC to get the word out about its existence as well as to offer prevention strategies and other information to parents)
3. Spread the word on Social Host Liability at the above noted events as well as Parent Tip Sheets, etc.

V. BWC Subcommittees

Anne suggested formulating the following three subcommittees:

- a. **Communications** (website creation/logo/branding, Facebook posts, community outreach (Nicole) community messaging, increasing BWC presence in the community, etc. – (Lisa))
- b. **Peer Leader Development:**
Nicole at BHS
Tiana at CMS/elementary (?)
- c. **SEL Curriculum / Parent Education**
Wendy will Chair; Anne and Janice

VI. Updates:

- New CMS Assistant Principal is very knowledgeable on Vaping – Lisa and Julie will meet with her
- Lisa and Wendy will meet to look at BWC's mission/vision statement, to create a brief BWC fact sheet, to discuss which sector reps are mission (e.g., Business)
- Lisa will explore with Janice about piggybacking on events where parents are gathered to share information about the BWC
- Lisa and Wendy will meet with new BHS Principal
- Nicole will help with BWC's website

VII. Set Next Meeting

Lisa will continue to meet and/or stay in touch with Coalition members over the summer. She will send a doodle for a September meeting.

The meeting was adjourned at 1:31 PM.

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