

Belmont Wellness Coalition (BWC)
DFC Grant SPO-80659-01
Meeting Minutes
Tuesday, October 1, 2019 at 9:00 – 10:30 AM
Fire Department HQ Conference Room, Belmont, MA

BWC Members Present:

Lisa Gibalerio (Wayside), Nicole Rogers (Wayside), Anne Wang (EDC, Grant Evaluator), Annie Gladfelter (BASEC), Beth Rumley (Nursing Director), Corinne Jackman (Belmont High School Nurse), Pam Eager (Town Meeting Member), Wendy Conroy (Chair, Sexuality Educator), Melissa O'Connor (BHS SRO)

BWC Members Absent:

Stephanie Sunderland (Wayside), Sara Masucci (Teacher), Kristine Pugliese (CMS SRO), Elizabeth Dionne (Warrant Committee/TMM member), Julie Crockett (TMM), Jonna Logan (Nurse), Caroline Dustin (Youth), Lily Sama (Youth), Jane Fox (Public Health Professional), Portia Thompson (Parent), Barbara Bulfoni (PTO President, Chenery Middle School), Janice Darius (Assistant Superintendent), Fire Chief David Frizzell, Wesley Chin (Director, Health Department), Diana Ekman (Assistant Director, Health Department), Kate Bowen (School Committee member), Rev. Joe Zarro (Clergy), Jeff Hansell (Media Specialist)

I. Introductions

Introductions were made around the table.

II. Where have we been?

Lisa reviewed the following:

- Last year, we gathered and reviewed new data (parent surveys, student focus group, guidance department, YRBS)
- We updated the Root Causes based on the data (stress, low perception of harm)
- We identified the beginnings of a Strategic Action Plan (parent and student centered)
- As an aside, we are prioritizing involving youth more actively in the Coalition (hence the alternating of day and evening meetings)

YRBS Data Highlights

Anne noted that alcohol and vaping (nicotine/weed) are the two substances that surfaced to the top for the Coalition to focus on. She shared some highlights of the 2019 YRBS data. (This data will not be discussed outside of this Coalition meeting.) She discussed data related to student perceptions of harm, the 30-day use of alcohol and marijuana, as well as data related to stress/mental health/suicide ideation.

Anne then reviewed the Logic Model (the Coalition's strategic road map) and explained where the data came from to support the Logic Model.

She noted how the Coalition's work will dovetail with the Substance Abuse Prevention Collaborative (SAPC) work in order to better understand sources of youth stress and the coping mechanisms that our youth currently engage in.

III. Developing the Strategic Action Plan (SAP)

As a group, we discussed incorporating the following items as components the Coalition's Strategic Action Plan:

1. Supporting parents via reinforcement of Belmont's SEL Framework

The Coalition will work to reinforce Belmont's SEL Framework to help parents use the same language at home. Anne then explained the CASEL framework that Belmont utilizes.

2. SAPC – Understanding Student Stress

Anne and Lisa explained what is happening here (i.e., we will hold middle school student focus groups in order to better understand the sources of student stress as well as the coping mechanisms that students currently use to alleviate stress).

3. A Brainstorm on How to Support Parents

- Hold a workshop for parents on the *Social Host Liability Law* (this has happened several times in the past, with fairly low attendance)
- Continue to offer the parent workshops that Lisa/Wendy have offered in the past
- Hear from the school Principals concerning what topics they think parents would like to learn more about
- Form parent support groups (topics could vary from meeting to meeting)
- Offer a workshop for parents on "*how to hold parent coffees*" which gives parents a toolkit and shares salient information
- Offer best practices class for parenting teens (maybe via The Loved Child)

4. Student Low Perception of Harm

Lisa discussed what has worked and what has not worked to increase youth perception of harm (and reduce substance misuse). Wendy talked about the science that we now know about the impact of these substances on youth brains. Pam P. discussed the effectiveness of youth leadership (peer to peer) education. Annie noted that Planned Parenthood focuses on *values*, which differ from family to family – this could be an opening for parent education. Wendy noted that the values piece is a great way to meet families where they are at and then accurate information can be imparted. (There is scientific evidence concerning the impact of drinking/marijuana on the brain.)

Annie also shared about the STARS program, which involves kids learning in the classroom (as a part of the health/wellness curriculum) about a variety of teen issues (bullying, social media, mental health, etc.) and then teaching younger kids.

Pam P. noted that parents in her community have expressed the need for more parent

support; some have suggested that parent support groups be created to share best practices and experiences; many have said that this would be helpful. Parents feel isolated and could use support. She suggested having a social worker or some professional preside over the group meeting.

The Coalition brainstormed ways in which the Coalition can incorporate effective strategies, e.g., creating a Coalition speaker series, PTO outreach, use of social media, piggy-back on other presentations that are happening in town (like the November Vaping presentation), etc. Lisa discussed her experience of holding parent coffees.

Anne asked if *understanding student stress* is a topic that parents would be interested in in Belmont? The impacts of stress on students is certainly meaningful and concerning.

See recent Washington Post article: <https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/2019/09/26/students-high-achieving-schools-are-now-named-an-at-risk-group/>

IV. YRBS Event

- Lisa will be speaking with Janice Darius today about presenting the YRBS data
- Anne will create the power point of data highlights and will lead the discussion
- There will likely be two presentations: one to the School Committee and one to the general community
- Nicole suggested offering the Coalition's speaker series or other community events at the YRBS meetings – In other words, use this time to share Coalition resources and raise awareness

V. Updates, other topics of concern:

- **Vaping Update**

Wendy noted that there is a Vaping presentation (at Belmont High School) geared toward parents on **November 21, 2019 at 6:00 PM**.

Lisa noted that Belmont is in compliance with the state's vaping regulations, but that its current Tobacco Regulations do not explicitly include Vaping products. Corinne noted that the state had passed legislation that broadened out the Tobacco Regulations to include Vaping products. She will send information to Lisa.

- **Principal Meetings**

Wendy informed the Coalition that she has reached out to the Principals across the district to set up meetings to inform them of the Coalition's existence, to share our mission with them, to hear what the parents (at the school) are concerned about, and to explore how can the Coalition might address those concerns.

- **Screenagers Reboot and/or the move "Like"**

Wendy informed the Coalition that she and a subset of parents will screen two different screen time focused movies (the new Screenager movie and a movie called *Like*) on Friday, Oct. 11, at 8:30 AM at the UU Church on Concord Ave. All are welcome to attend the screening. A brief discussion ensued about the Coalition tackling screen time under the DFC grant.

VI. Set Next Meeting

(Lisa)

- Lisa will send a scheduling doodle for the next meeting. It will be an evening meeting to allow for youth to attend.

The meeting was adjourned at 10:33 AM.

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