

Belmont Wellness Coalition (BWC)
DFC Grant SPO-80659-02
Meeting Minutes
Thursday, January 23, 2020 at 12:00 – 1:30 PM
Fire Department HQ Conference Room, Belmont, MA

BWC Members Present:

Lisa Gibalerio (Wayside), Pam Palmucci (Wayside Intern), Caroline Dustin (Youth), Melissa O'Connor (BHS SRO), Corinne Jackman (Belmont High School Nurse), Barbara Bulfoni (Chenery PTO), Anne Wang (EDC, Grant Evaluator), Wendy Conroy (Chair, Sexuality Educator), Julia Patriciu (parent), Kim Raubenheimer (parent), Elizabeth Dionne (Warrant Committee/TMM member), Michelle Drolsbaugh (Minding Your Mind), Elizabeth Brown (Parent, Public Health Evaluator), Kate Bowen (School Committee member), Rev. Joe Zarro (Clergy), Kristine Pugliese (CMS SRO), Veera Mylapore (Parent), Analia Barrantes Karma (parent)

BWC Members Absent:

Stephanie Sunderland (Wayside), Leah Lesser (parent), Beth Rumley (Nursing Director), Annie Gladfelter (BASEC), Pam Eagar (Town Meeting Member), Sara Masucci (Teacher), Julie Crockett (TMM), Jonna Logan (Nurse), Lily Sama (Youth), Jane Fox (Public Health Professional), Portia Thompson (Parent), Janice Darius (Assistant Superintendent), David Frizzell (Fire Chief), Wesley Chin (Director, Health Department), Diana Ekman (Assistant Director, Health Department), Jeff Hansell (Media Specialist), Patti Forte (parent)

1. Introductions and Welcome:

2. Updates:

Lisa reviewed the following updates:

a. BWC Website – logo

Lisa explained that the website is moving forward slowly. She passed around the draft logo options for the BWC to review.

b. Screenagers Next Chapter – over 200 in attendance!

Wendy provided a brief overview of the second Screenagers movie, which was shown at BHS on January 14, 2020. Most of the students in attendance were middle school age. Lisa and Wendy reviewed the questions that the audience asked.

Race to Nowhere (2010) is another movie dealing with school pressures that youth face. Belmont showed this film several years back and it powerfully exposes all of the intense pressure that kids are under and the impacts of that pressure. It might be time to consider showing *Race to Nowhere* again.

To Do: Pam will explore bringing RTN back to Belmont.

c. *The Loved Child* parent conversations

Explore: Should the BWC have a role in developing an ongoing group that meets (twice monthly) to support parents/care givers?

Veera suggested having that if we move forward with a support group, we could offer themes and also having professionals facilitate the process.

Rev. Joe noted that he is interested in getting a parenting workshop at his church, led by a social worker. He also offered suggestions of possible spaces and ways to publicize the groups. Michelle mentioned that “*Parents Helping Parents*” is a great resource and has a Watertown site.

To Do: Lisa/Wendy will follow up with TLC concerning the establishment of some type of ongoing support group for care givers.

d. BHS Stress Busters (hot cocoa and therapy dogs during midterms)

BWC worked with the BHS PTSO to support this midterm stress-buster event; Caroline said the dogs were very cute.

e. Peer Group Development – BHS student focus group is scheduled for Wed. Feb. 5

Input Requested: What kinds of questions should we ask the 12 students? Basic topic concerns what the students would like to see, as we think about forming a Youth Group at BHS.

The Coalition offered some suggestions for the SFG as well as for a follow up SFG. The follow up SFG should be in a neutral space, not a living room. We might want to hold one for the 8th grades, as well. At the follow up student focus group, we could present the first focus group’s data and get feedback from the second group.

To Do: Lisa will check in with CMS Principal about holding a SFG at Chenery to get feedback from the 8th graders.

3. Possible Upcoming Events:

▪ ***Minding Your Mind* event** –

Michelle provided some additional information on MYM. Their mission is to end the stigma with mental health. She explained the young adult speaker program, which features a person with lived experience (talking about their personal experiences). These presentations are held during school assemblies to middle and high schools. Michelle noted one possible speaker who would talk about her experiences with perfectionism, anxiety, substance use, and her path to recovery, etc. Michelle thought this young woman would be a good fit for Belmont.

Kristine noted speakers that there have been presentations in Belmont with speakers who shared about their personal experiences, in fact two are already

scheduled this Spring, e.g., Chris Herren at BHS and Mykee Fowlin (at the Chenery). John Halligan has a presentation geared toward middle school kids. His child (Ryan) died by suicide after cyber bullying. (Cyber bullying is an issue at the Chenery.)

With regard to MYM, Wendy suggested it might be useful to have a speaker brought in to the 10th grade health class.

To Do: Wendy and Lisa will talk with Janice concerning the MYM speaker and Wendy might follow up with the FBE.

Screen Time

The Coalition then discussed issues relating screen time, what the data suggests concerning the impact on mental health, norm setting around cell phone perceptions, and cyber bullying.

- **\$1,000 donation for Senior/Parent event**

Lisa noted that last year we hired Jon Mattleman to do a “transition to college presentation”. Melissa informed the BWC that the Chris Herren event will be held in place of the Senior/Parent event.

4. Chenery Updates:

As requested at the last meeting, Wendy and Lisa met with Mike McAllister to discuss the following topics.

- Community Block
- Two Parent Coffees – evening and day time
- Mykee Fowlin – day and potential evening presentations
- Mike requested two YRBS data deep dive meetings with faculty

5. Youth Update from Caroline

Caroline spoke about her concern regarding her younger brother’s screen use and about having a way for student voices to express experiences concerning certain YRBS data points (specifically relating to stress and mental health). She emphasized the intense, burdensome homework-workload that students carry with roughly 5 hours of homework at night.

Melissa suggested that Caroline (and friends) present their concerns to Principal Taylor and staff at an upcoming faculty meeting. Corinne noted that the teachers are also feeling pressure and stress with the demands that have been placed on them.

To Do: Lisa/Wendy will follow up with Janice concerning Melissa’s idea for Caroline and peers to present at a BHS faculty meeting.

6. Set Next Meeting

- Lisa will send a scheduling doodle for the February meeting.