

Belmont Wellness Coalition (BWC)

DFC Grant Meeting Minutes (Virtual)

Friday, November 20, 2020 at 9:00 – 10:00 AM

BWC Members Present:

Lisa Gibalerio (Wayside), Sophia Suarez-Friedman (Wayside), Wendy Conroy (Chair, Sexuality Educator), Melissa O'Connor (BHS SRO), Anne Wang (EDC, Grant Evaluator), Leah Lesser (parent), Veera Mylapore (parent), Corinne Jackman (Belmont High School Nurse), Amy Kirsch (Belmont Helps, parent)

BWC Members Absent:

Jennifer Gillette, (The Loved Child, parent), Mike Crowley (School Committee, parent, Belmont Media Center), Kim Raubenheimer (parent, nutritionist), Elizabeth Dionne (Warrant Committee/TMM member, parent), Michelle Drolsbaugh (Minding Your Mind), Elizabeth Brown (parent, Public Health Evaluator), Sue Morris (Chair of the Youth Commission), Traci Doherty (parent, nurse), Stephanie Sunderland (Wayside), Rev. Joe Zarro (Clergy, parent), Beth Rumley (Nursing Director), Annie Gladfelter (BASEC), Pam Eagar (Town Meeting Member), Sara Masucci (Teacher), Julie Crockett (TMM, parent), Jonna Logan (Nurse, parent), Jane Fox (Public Health Professional, parent), Portia Thompson (Parent), Janice Darius (Assistant Superintendent), Wesley Chin (Director, Health Department), Diana Ekman (Assistant Director, Health Department), Jeff Hansell (Media Specialist), Patti Forte (parent), Kate Bowen (School Committee member, parent), Kristine Pugliese (CMS SRO), Barbara Bulfoni (Chenery PTO, parent), Julia Patriciu (parent), Analia Barrantes Karma (parent), Michael Patti (Youth Coordinator)

1. Welcome, Introductions, Check-Ins

Lisa welcomed those in attendance and introductions were made.

Lisa Gibalerio, MPH - Program Coordinator for BWC

Sophia Suarez-Friedman - Prevention Specialist and Clinician

Wendy Conroy - chair, parent, Master's in Public Health, Sex Educator

Amy Kirsch - Belmont Helps and moderator of Belmont Parents Group, parent

Leah Lesser - parent, Marketing and Communications at Emerson Hospital and media relations

Melissa O'Connor - Police Officer and School Resource Office at BHS

Veer Mylapore - parent

Anne Wang - Evaluator for the Coalition

2. COVID-19 Community Conversations

Leah shared with the Coalition her idea to hold Community Conversations in Belmont. Lisa described how this won't be so much a lecture series, as much as engaging and enrolling the community in important updates and developments.

1. Beginning in late January 2021
2. BWC will sponsor and potentially partner with the Health Department
3. Panel of local, Belmont-based experts - 4 parts

Topics:

1. Medical lens (potentially late January) with Physicians and Healthcare professionals in Belmont
2. Youth lens (potentially early February) with Belmont-based child psychiatrist and pediatrician - team with the new Youth Coordinator of the Belmont Youth Coalition and the Health Department
3. Science lens and vaccines with local scientists - late February
4. Political lens (mid- March) with the new administration

Leah is looking for BWC members to help with planning - there will be some monthly planning meetings.

- Amy volunteered to help select panelists.
- Anne can help with data collection, making a feedback survey for each panel, etc.

Present members said the idea seems worthy. Wendy raised the idea of talking to the Library to see what attendance has been like for their zoom events. Amy says Belmont Helps can help get out the word, and cautioned against taking political sides in the last topic.

3. BWC Updates:

- a) Update on first Parenting Group (11/10/20)

Sophia provided an overview of the first parenting group which involved laying out the guidelines and expectations for the group and brainstorming future topics. We used surveys and break out rooms to make it engaging and interactive. We had 14 participants for the first meeting because of 50% attrition - for next month we will invite everyone who signed up which is about 50 people total.

The next Parenting Group is Tuesday, December 8th at 6-7 pm on Zoom - if any Coalition members want to join now, please email sophia_suarez-friedman@waysideyouth.org. Our topic for December will be the Pandemic and related issues - social interactions, school focus, screen time, and mental health. Please feel free to forward the Parenting Group information to others.

b) McLean Programming (planning)

Wendy has been talking with Clinicians at McLean about programming/workshop for Belmont parents. They already have programs planned with the school:

- Dec 1 - Presentation for Elementary Parents on Emotional Resilience for Parents (Wendy and Lisa will attend)
- Dec/Jan Parent Workshop for Middle and High School parents

Wendy is interested in having a skills-based Dialectical Behavior Therapy (DBT) workshop to teach tangible skills around emotion regulation, acceptance and change, and validation. Wendy is going to stay in contact with McLean to see if the DBT workshop can be a follow-up to the Dec/Jan workshops in Jan-March.

c) New Partnerships: Library and Belmont Against Racism (BAR)

Lisa explained the *One Book, One Belmont* themes for this coming year and noted how the BWC will be involved. They are choosing multiple themes: wellness, the pandemic, social justice, grieving and will discuss with related books, panels, activities. BWC may help with organizing a wellness related panel. The Library planning group meets on the first and third Tuesday at 3:00 pm; if any Coalition member has interest to join, let Lisa know. Amy says Belmont Helps wants to organize a discussion on "The State Boys Rebellion" and could partner with the Library.

Sophia noted that she has reached out to BAR about what they are working on and how BWC can support and partner with them. BAR meets on the second Thursday of each month at 7:30 pm. Amy Kirsch is already involved and can give BWC updates on what they are doing and how to collaborate - Thank you, Amy! BWC may present for a few minutes at the next BAR meeting in December (Thursday 12/10) where they are talking about racial health disparities in the pandemic.

Anne shared <https://sites.google.com/lincnet.org/lps-resources-for-antiracism/home>

d) Welcome to Belmont's new Youth Coordinator: Michael Patti

Lisa noted that there is a new Youth Coordinator and the BWC hopes to establish a partnership with the Belmont Youth Commission going forward. Michael Patti will hopefully be joining Coalition meetings in the future. Welcome, Michael - we are excited to have you in town working with youth!

e) SEL student survey

The survey (SEL, stress, pandemic stress) will go out to students in grades 7 - 12 in mid-December. We are looking forward to assessing the data as it will inform us as to where we need to focus in order to support kids in Belmont. Anne will put together a data report which will help us with programming in the Spring. Thank you, Anne!

- f) Links to weekly video segments can be found on BWC website: www.belmontwellness.org

Check them out!

- g) SAPC work: messaging around student stress

The *Substance Abuse Prevention Collaborative* is working to create messages (for social media, etc.) to youth around stress and ways to mitigate stress. We may send some of these messages out to the Coalition and the Student Ambassadors for feedback and sharing.

4. **Student Ambassador Updates:**

- a) Student Survey Feedback - offered meaningful and helpful feedback on the survey that we were able to incorporate.
- b) Virtual Meeting - hope to meet soon and review the survey data.

5. **Closing Thoughts, New Business, etc.**

- a) Pandemic - Lisa shared her concern with how everything seems to be opening when the numbers are higher than April (when we were in a close-down mode), and is wondering if the Coalition can speak out about being safe. Amy shared that Belmont Helps tracks numbers, and that Belmont numbers are high considering the population, and that surrounding towns are “yellow”.

Maybe Ellie Lesser can do another “mask-up” blurb. Lisa will circle back to Ellie. Lisa might offer to do a 30 second PSA for the Belmont Media Center. Corinne has an idea of “Marauder Masked Up” and having students from each school with masks on. Anne shared that in her community they have masks with their mascot on it for a fundraiser.

- b) Next meeting in January; a scheduling doodle will be sent.

To Do:

- Join planning for Pandemic Community Conversations planning
- Join Parenting Group - our next meeting is on December 8th 6-7 pm Zoom
- Fill out scheduling doodle for January meeting