
Parenting for Prevention

Student Assistance Services Corp., 660 White Plains Road, Tarrytown, New York, 10591, September, 2009

Off And Running



Despite the fact that most school districts started a week later this year, all the community substance

abuse prevention coalitions seem to have gotten off to a quick start.

As you will see, many coalitions are doing new and interesting initiatives this year. They range from “mapping” the places where alcohol is served or sold in a community, to documenting the number of advertisements for alcohol and tobacco in a store, to an innovative Internet program called AlcoholEdu for secondary school students which incorporates prevention techniques with science-based alcohol education. Last spring, another coalition used technology to send a phone message about prom safety to all the homes in their district.

I would really appreciate it if you would keep me updated about initiatives in your communities.

Also, please let me know about prevention programs that are being held for parents. It is very helpful to share this knowledge so that communities can replicate programs or preview presentations before bringing them to their home communities.

Patricia Murphy Warble, LMSW, CPP, Editor

Substance Abuse Prevention Coalitions and School Districts

Meaningful Partnerships

In the past few years, many communities have formed substance abuse prevention coalitions or designated committees to deal with issues related to the use of alcohol and other drugs by youth. Most of these groups have a very close partnership with the school districts in their community. Working together, each enhances the work of the other, and together, they can provide many different activities or initiatives to address these issues.

In some communities, school personnel play an active role by being the chairperson of the coalition, attending the coalition meetings or by being the representative who coordinates the activities involving the coalition and the district. In addition to their participation and support of coalition activities, school personnel also play an important role by updating the coalition members about their concerns. This is very helpful in order to keep the coalition focused on the needs of the community in terms of what issues should be addressed. Most recently, several districts have asked coalitions, to sponsor presentations about prescription drug use and Internet bullying because of what they were observing with students.

In addition, most coalitions also fund prevention and education-based activities for both students and their parents about issues related to substance abuse. Some of the activities that coalitions have funded include: speakers for student assemblies; presentations at community events like *Family University*; or supplies to be used at initiatives like *Red Ribbon Week*. Last year one of the coalitions paid for red ribbons to be put on every school bus in the district and then students from the high school SADD club put the ribbons on the buses. The students also made badges with the ribbons and many of the teachers wore the badges during *Red Ribbon Week*.

Following is a brief summary of some of the coalitions in Westchester. Other coalitions will be featured in future newsletters.



Bedford, Lewisboro, Pound Ridge Drug Abuse Prevention Council (DAPC)



The flagship event of this coalition is *Family U*, a model that was designed 16 years ago.

Family U is a cooperative effort between the Bedford Central and Katonah-Lewisboro Districts, parents and the DAPC. When *Family U* is held many of the presentations are funded by the DAPC. The schools contribute by mailing the brochures and providing custodial staff and other school-based services. In addition to funding other substance abuse prevention presentations, the DAPC also pays for supplies that are used during events like Red Ribbon Week and other activities that are celebrated during the school year.

Briarcliff Manor Community Coalition

This coalition co-sponsors many programs with the Briarcliff school district, PTAs and other community groups. Most recently they co-funded a presentation by Freedom from Chemical Dependency and a workshop on Internet safety. Along with the Booster Club this group sponsored a presentation on how substance use undermines athletic performance.

The coalition also promotes alternative activities. They organized a 5K race with the Friends of the Library to promote substance abuse free living and family fun and co-sponsored a summer theatre program with the Friends of the Performing Arts.

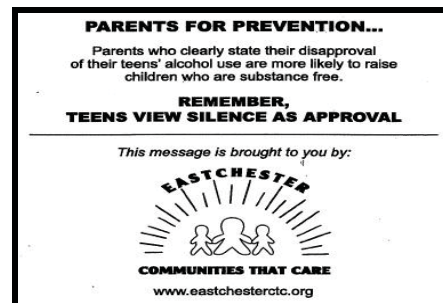
Chappaqua, R21K

Some of the most interesting initiatives being done by R21K are educational.

- *Conversations That Count* for middle school parents,
- *Parenting A Teenager* for the parents of ninth graders,
- *150 Days Until Graduation* for 12th grade parents
- *The Balancing Act: Independence and Boundaries* for the parents of incoming ninth grade students (a spring program.)
- A *Youth Speak Out* will be held if funding can be secured. This program invites teens representing diverse interests and peer groups to address the adults in the community about the challenges they face growing up in New Castle. The group will also discuss their perspective on how the community supports the healthy development of students. After this meeting is held an action plan will be put into place.

Eastchester Community That Cares

During the past year, the school district displayed the coalition's "Parent's Who Host, Lose The Most" banner on school grounds. Additionally, the school and coalition held a Safe Prom and Graduation Expo in April and distributed a 45 second Public Service Announcement in June to parents of EHS seniors and juniors through the districts automated phone system. They reached 92% of the 459 called either by reaching a live person or a voice mail system. The coalition also had a Training for Intervention Procedures (TIPS), this summer for servers and sellers of alcoholic beverages. They are also planning an Interfaith Summit this fall.



Larchmont-Mamaroneck RADAR

In cooperation with the school district, the coalition has purchased AlcoholEdu, a web-based course that incorporates prevention techniques with science-based alcohol education that will be given to all ninth graders. There are other activities being planned by school personnel to support this activity. The school counseling staff will make a presentation to students about the dangers of alcohol and other drug use.

This group is also sponsoring, along with the school district and Rye YMCA, a monthly *After School at the Café* from 3 to 6. There, students can hangout and play games, go skate boarding, watch videos or do other things in a safe, alcohol-free environment.

Mt Kisco Drug and Alcohol Abuse Prevention Council

This coalition's primary activity is the successful Drug Court initiative which was started in 1991 when a coalition leader realized that more than 78% of the misdemeanor and violation charges before their Justice Court were alcohol and drug related. Since then, the coalition's goal is to get people who come before the court into treatment. This coalition is also active in the Emergency Shelter Partnership which provides shelter to the homeless in Mt Kisco from November to March.

New Rochelle FOCUS

They are planning a new activity this year, *If your license is out of state, a second ID would be great*. This coalition, which has a close working relationship with the New Rochelle High School SADD group, also sponsored *Parents who Host, Lose The Most* by placing large signs on the New Rochelle train station platforms and other educational events for parents and students. Other activities include:

- *Family U*
- Several TIPS trainings
- A community prevention event sponsored by a local bicycle store.

Ossining Communities That Care

As a result of the personal advocacy of the coordinator of this coalition the PRIDE parents survey is now available in Spanish. Ossining is also doing the *Tickets to Soar* program that recognizes students for good behavior and will hold a *Value and Youth* evening in October to consider the various ways the community can positively value and appreciate their youth. Like RADAR, Ossining with funding from the coalition is also implementing AlcoholEdu in their school district.

Pelham, Parents and Community Together (PACT)

They have a new project to celebrate *Family Day* called *Family Time, Connections Count*. Pelham's local restaurants and food outlets will kick-off this town-wide initiative by offering special incentives to encourage family meals whether made at home or eaten in a restaurant.

Peekskill Agencies Together Coalition (PAT)

Students in the community produced two public service announcements about substance abuse prevention. This coalition has an alternative-activity arts program for young people and the art projects will be exhibited at a Youth Art gallery on the top floor of the Youth Bureau. Working closely with the local police department, the coalition sponsors a gang prevention program for middle school students and an annual Prayer Breakfast that brings together the clergy and other community leaders.

Port Chester Community That Cares



This coalition is involved in an initiative that documents alcohol and tobacco signage in stores in Port Chester. The coalition coordinator trained students about this issue and invited them to participate in this project. Once they collect data about the signage, the coalition coordinator and several students will return to the stores and ask them to remove the advertisements. This will educate the community about alcohol and other drug use, provide relevant data about a concern, involve students in a meaningful project, and changes a norm in the community about what is acceptable in terms of positive alcohol and drug messages.

Cortlandt Community Coalition

This coalition works very closely with the SADD clubs and Cortlandt Youth Council on several activities. They include: producing a substance abuse PSA that was shown on Channel 12, ESPN, Nickelodeon and other networks; sponsoring a community volleyball tournament for high school students and adult leaders such as state troopers, teachers, and other coalition members; sponsoring Guitar Hero and Dance, Dance, Revolution contests for high school students. The coalition also sponsored assemblies for students.

Mt Vernon Communities That Care

This coalition holds a *Youth Speak Out* at the beginning of the school year. If a parent attends this event with their child, the child receives free school supplies from the coalition. They are also holding *Family Day* activities. One of their most successful projects continues to be *Tickets To Soar*. This activity recognizes students for good behavior and will continue this year.

Westchester Coalition for Drug and Alcohol Free Youth

In addition to all the active community-based coalitions in Westchester County, under the leadership of Tom Meier at the Westchester County Office of Drug Prevention and STOP DWI, there is an umbrella organization to support and coordinate the work of these groups called the Westchester Coalition for Drug and Alcohol Free Youth.

Four years ago the Westchester Coalition for Drug and Alcohol Free Youth received a federal

grant to support and expand its work with local coalitions. The grant has enabled the Westchester Coalition for Drug and Alcohol Free Youth to provide: on-going technical assistance to communities; county-wide trainings for parents, police officers, school nurses and others; and opportunities to network with the leadership of other coalitions in the county. Currently, representatives of over 20 coalitions or groups attend the monthly steering committee meetings.

As we start the 2009-2010 school year we are hoping that additional communities will join these monthly meetings. They are usually held the first Thursday of the month from 11:00am to 1:00pm at Student Assistance Services.

The monthly meetings provide valuable, practical information through presentations and offer the opportunity to learn about and share projects with the other coalition members who attend these meetings. If you do not already attend the monthly meet-

Coalition for Drug and Alcohol Free Youth, please consider participating this year.

The coalition has also sponsored county-wide activities such as: partnering with local pharmacies to provide information about prescription drug abuse, partnering with dry cleaners to have drug prevention messages on hangers, and producing ads for bus shelters to raise awareness about the importance of not using alcohol and other drugs at prom and graduation activities.

Upcoming Events

October 14, 7:30pm

Pelham Memorial HS Cafeteria C
Bullying Affects Every Child: What is Bullying? What is our role as Parents?

Andrea Fallick, Student Assistance Services, Corp
Contact: 738-0482

October 18, 7:00

Harvey School, Katonah
DUI: A POWERFUL LESSON
Mark Sterner
Contact: 234-3227