



City of Waterbury

Waterbury Prevention Policy Board • 95 North Main Street • Waterbury, CT 06702 • (203) 568-0575

Waterbury Prevention Policy Board Meeting
January 13th, 2010 – 12:30-2:30- Family Services of Greater Waterbury

Meeting Notes

Present: Barbara Tacchi, Caryn Olcik, Stacy Propfe, Nancy Vaughan, Laurie Reisman, Mary Bruce, Iven Rodriguez, JoAnn Reynolds-Balanda, Sandy Porteus, Kelly Cronin, Jennifer DeWitt, Caryl Hallber, Christine Bianchi, Brie Sodano, Shannon Longo, Kenny Curran, Laura Coffin, Jim O'Rourke, Kathie Lang, Yoellie Iglesias

Staff Present: *Lori Hart and Nicole Porto*

Welcome & Introductions: Sandy Porteus, Chair, welcomed everyone to the PPB meeting and called the meeting to order at 12:45 PM. Introductions went around the room of all who were present.

Committee Updates:

- **Family Focus Partnership (PPB-FFPC)** – Mary Bruce- chair- updated the PPB that FFP is made up of parents, providers, and care coordinators. The committee is working on identifying one project to complete/accomplish this year. Mary noted that in March, a lawyer will come speak about bullying and help FFP understand how to identify what bullying is. Another project the committee is interested in is Fathers in the Hallway. This was a program that was started in some of the Waterbury Public Schools, but there were concerns about finger printing and background checks. Nancy Vaughan state that parents usually come in once/twice a year to volunteer in their child's classroom- however these "watchdog dads" are like mentors and therefore need to be fingerprinted. Mary also noted that FFP is looking into extending the Wrap Around program that is in Milwaukee which is a program designed to provide comprehensive, individualized and cost effective care to children with complex mental health and emotional needs.
- **Child Health & Development (BTS-CHDC)** – Nicole Porto, staff, noted that the Child Health and Development committee met for the first time this morning. A total of 10 people have signed up to be on the committee (3 of which are parents). The co-chairs of the committee are Gary Steck from Wellpath and Christine Bianchi from StayWell. The committee is still deciding what to work on. They want something fun, concrete, low cost/no cost, and to build on current programs in the City. Christine Bianchi added that there is a lot of energy around the table and again the committee is looking to collaborate or support existing programs. They want to work on something fun or unique around the topics of Child Development, Primary Care, and/or Oral Health.
- **Community Advocacy Committee (PPB-CAC)** – JoAnn Reynolds-Balanda-chair-

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updated that in December, Tony Pinto was invited to explain how the grant money the City received will be spent. JoAnn noted that although the grant was awarded, there really is a zero gain. Programs included under this grant are individual tutors, IDA, Prep-Time Academy, Summer School, Professional Development (40 Developmental Assets will compliment this), Smart Boards, and Special Ed. The agenda for the upcoming meeting is to develop process and agenda for advocacy. Sandy Porteus had a question in regards to media coverage and whether or not we should respond to the newspaper article in this past Sunday's paper about the City's downtown revitalization. JoAnn suggested we do not respond, but let other coalitions know we exist and are proactive and that we are about prevention. Kenny Curran stated we make sure we separate out. Jim O'Rourke apologized and stated he was misquoted in the Sunday paper. Brie Sodano suggested inviting Robyn Adams to PPB. Kenny noted that the social service agencies are not going to harm the revitalization of Waterbury. Iven Rodriguez stated that if we take defensive actions, things will only snowball. It is important to be out there in a more positive way. It is also important to highlight what is working. Kelly Cronin stated she'd be willing to call Penny Overton to see if she will come to PPB. The CAC committee will discuss calling her at today's meeting and will get back to Kelly.

- **40 Developmental Asset Committee (PPB-40 DAC)** – Jim O'Rourke – chair- explained that 3 years ago the PPB administered the Search Institutes 40 Developmental Asset survey in the Waterbury Public Schools. From that survey, initiatives were created. The goal of the 40 DAC is by January 25th, 2010 to have approval from the Board of Education to re-administer the survey to see if we have moved to needle. The issue right now is Opt-In vs. Opt-Out. Overall, we will probably get Opt-In. Louise Allen Brown has put together a document over 150 pages of all PPB has accomplished over the last 3 years, because of the 40 Developmental Asset survey. All members of the Board of Ed, the superintendent, PPB Executive Committee, and staff will receive a copy of the packet. Jennifer DeWitt noted that today we have a letter and if PPB members wouldn't mind signing it, listing your name and organization and providing it back to Nicole we would appreciate it. Nicole will also send out an electronic version if that works better for some people. Also, if any agency is willing to write up a brief memo or bulleted points on your agencies actual story of how the 40 Developmental Asset survey has been crucial to your program, we would need to have that by 5:00 PM Monday the 18th. Jen also noted that there is a sense of urgency, because we need to use the same cohort of students. Also, all the 21st century grants are based on the 40 Developmental Assets. The 40 DAC's biggest fear is that the board is going to say no to Opt-Out, thus we want to have a middle road. We understand that there are concerns around the sensitivity of questions. Therefore, we will ask for Opt-In in 6th grade and Opt-Out in grades 9 and 12. Christine Bianchi noted that when StayWell administered a survey in the schools, they did not anticipate the peer pressure labeled by peers. Jennifer also noted that the 40 DAC discussed using the schools phone system to send out two reminders to parents. A letter would also be mailed home to the parents. JoAnn Reynolds-Balanda suggested having a public education or community campaign about the 40 Developmental Assets. Sandy Porteus anticipates that the results of the survey this time around will be worse than they were 3 years ago due to the current economic crisis. There may be an increase or decrease by category and not actual assets. Lori Hart also noted that the Four Core Measures of DFC are specific questions addressed in the 40 Developmental Asset Survey. The core measures are defined as:

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- *Past 30-Day Use*
- *Average Age of Onset*
- *Perception of Risk*
- *Perception of Parental Disapproval*

Brie Sodano suggested getting a letter of support from the Mayor since he supports the PPB. Finally, Kelly Cronin noted that a grant was up for a program to reduce underage drinking. The funders wanted to know if we have Board of Ed support to do surveys. There was no clear committee and therefore Waterbury did not receive the grant. \$350,000 was lost to combat underage drinking. Kelly suggests Waterbury go for Drug Free Communities Grant opportunity and anyone interested should contact Kelly or Caryn Olcik.

- ***Early Care & Education Committee (BTS-ECEC)*** – Barbara Tacchi, SRC Staff, noted that the ECEC has met a total of 3 times. There are currently 16 committee members- 4 of whom are parents. The co-chairs of the committee are Tiffany Murasso from Catholic Charities and Debbie McCusker a parent. The committee has reviewed headline and secondary indicators and has made recommendations that will be brought forward to the Bridge to Success Management Committee. The ECEC has decided to work on the Born Learning Initiative and Kindergarten Orientation/Registration.
- ***Family Engagement Committee (BTS-FEC)*** – Lori Hart, Staff, noted that the FEC has volunteered to provide transportation to parents who want to be involved, but do not have access to transportation. FEC is meeting the last Thursday of this month. They have been looking at indicators of success and have recommended a change to the overall goal.
- ***Workforce Development Committee (BTS-WFDC)*** – Nicole Porto, staff, noted that the WFDC is meeting this afternoon at NVCC. They have met a total of 2 times and have 29 members signed up. The co-chairs of the committee are Mike Hayden from Northwest Regional Workforce Investment Board and Terry Brown from NVCC. The committee has looked at indicators of success at the last meeting and they hope to finalize and recommend any changes at today’s meeting. They also are going to determine what activities they will try to accomplish over the next 6 months. Kelly Cronin added that Waterbury students are not ready for college when they graduate high school. They spend their first year of classes taking remedial courses. Kelly noted that the committee suggested accomplishing activities such as interview skills and a Day of Campus. JoAnn Reynolds-Balanda asked if the committee knew about the New Hope Initiative which the high school’s set bench marks along the way. Yoellie Iglesias suggested making contact with the college clubs, because those students may like to get involved.
- ***Positive Youth Development Committee (BTS-PYDC)*** – Lori Hart, staff, noted that Kathy Wells from the YMCA of Greater Waterbury is the chair person of this committee. The 2 goals of the committee are increasing the number of out-of-school time opportunities (# priorities by the community) and increasing the number of 40 Developmental Assets youth have. The committee has been meeting at PAL. Lori also noted that a parent read about Bridge to Success in the newspaper and is now an active member of the PYDC.
- ***PPB Executive Committee (PPB-EXC)*** – Sandy Porteus noted that the PPB Executive Committee has been working on the following: reviewing the bylaws, the 40 Developmental Asset Re-Test, Re-application for funding (United Way and CCF), Funding Challenges, Contingency Plan, and Personnel Committee has been
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established to provide annual reports on the staff. Sandy also noted that without staff, everything that has been going on could not have been accomplished.

Updates:

- Website: Lori Hart informed PPB that the minutes from all PPB and BTS meeting are available to view on the PPB website as well as the dates, times, and locations of upcoming meetings. There have been 4 additional 40 Developmental Asset advisories added to the website as well for a total of 21.
- Child First: ChildFIRST was created by Darcy Lowell. It was initially piloted in Bridgeport and they noticed that there were issues with single families living in poverty. Robert Woods Johnson has agreed to fund this initiative and would provide a replication grant to 6 communities in CT. Waterbury was fortunate to receive the grant. Kelly Cronin added that they were scouting out Waterbury, because Waterbury was the only community to have a plan addressing children birth to 21.
- SUN Program: Yoellie Iglesias explained that the SUN program is a prevention program for 2nd and 3rd graders at Sprague Elementary School. Yoellie has sent out parent consent forms and has received 90% back. Parents were contacted by phone and/or letter. In December 2009, Yoellie held a parent night in which 5 different organizations came and were available to answer any questions parents had. 40 parents (including fathers) came that night. Parents and teachers are excited and continue to ask when the program is going to get started and they also want to learn more about PPB. On January 28th, 2010 a training will be held and the principle as well as a parent liaison will also be at the training. Yoellie noted that because of Bridge to Success, it opened the door for parents to come. Yoellie noted that in February another parent night will be held and parents will do an activity with their children. The 40 Developmental Assets will also be incorporated.
- 40 Developmental Asset Pre & Post Test: Lori Hart stated that PPB hired Education Connection to develop a pre and post test in order to document to funders their progress. 2 surveys were created- 1 for elementary school and 1 for middle/high school. Reliability testing was done with Education Connection. PPB asked several organizations to field test the surveys and so far Waterbury Youth Services and the YMCA have provided feedback. There was a questionnaire that staff filled out as well if they had any questions or concerns. There were basic instructions given to staff administering the pre-test. The surveys will be free of charge for any organization in Waterbury. The following results have been compiled for the 6 programs piloting the survey:
 - 6 programs evaluated- 82 children completed the pre-questionnaire
 - Elementary School:
 - 19 children from 3 elementary schools
 - Students were willing to participate and all seemed to understand the questions being asked
 - Very few (2) answered the open-ended questions: (1) How does the program you are involved in help you? (2) Is there anything else that would help you?
 - They did not answer question #43, because of the age of the group they didn't feel it was an appropriate question ("I try to stay away from drugs & alcohol")
 - Middle School:
 - 63 youth from 5 different programs

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- No specific questions or concerns about the test
- Had a general perception that the children didn't have a sense of community or neighborhood- they try to provide this in their program
- Kids have a sense of being part of the greater Waterbury community, but not necessarily their own smaller neighborhood – possible due to moving a lot
- Answers were not so accurate for children at risk who were referred to the Drop In Center by the Courts – perhaps reviewing the questionnaire one on one would be better for this population
- 95% of youth answered the questions below thoughtfully:
 - How does the program you are currently involved in help you?
 - Is there anything else you think you need to help you?
- Overall notes:
 - Some assets agencies focused on were also assets the children needed assistance with- there was not a strong correlation. It might be interesting and useful to evaluate assets the children are low in and then adjust programming in focus on those assets.

Information Sharing:

- *Bill Bassett:* Sandy Porteus mentioned that Bill Bassett is a volunteer working with safe homes. He has used furniture and appliances and is currently looking for a place to store these items. Carol Hallberg from Covenant to Care indicated that she would like to coordinate with him, because Covenant to Care delivers furniture. Carol noted that they do not collect electronics or appliances, but basic furniture. There is also a need for dressers in the Waterbury area. Anyone who would like to donate or request furniture can contact Charlie at 860-243-1806. Also a request form is available on the web @ www.covenanttocare.org.
- *LIST:* Kelly Cronin noted that LIST –Local Implementation Service Team is a group of people who will look at the Juvenile Justice System to see where the gaps in service currently exist. On January 29th, the group will meet with local judges and prosecutors to discuss the system. Kelly noted that there may be funding going forward and the RFP will be community based not state based.
- *Give Kids A Smile:* Christine Bianchi informed PPB that on February 6th, StayWell Health Center will be holding free clinic for uninsured kids who need dental treatment. Christine will send Lori the flyer to send out to PPB members.
- *Robert Woods Johnson:* Jim O'Rourke stated that February 17th-19th the Dream Team will be going to Washington, DC regarding childhood obesity.
- *Safe Places:* Kelly Cronin talked briefly about Safe Places which is a program designed to let children know that if they see this particular sign they know they can get help. Kelly noted that in the past Waterbury Youth Services had this program, but lost funding. They would like to reapply for funding this year to get this program implemented back into the City. Kelly noted that the fire departments have already signed on. Specific training for staff is necessary for any building with a sign. Kelly noted that the problem right now is that most programs/agencies are opened from 9:00 AM-5:00 PM, but what do we do from 5:00 PM-9:00 AM. Part of the funding that Waterbury Youth Services is looking into is to have an on call staff person who would be in charge during the night hours in the event that a child goes to a fire department. Kelly also noted that the old signs have been taken down and new ones will be put up. Currently Waterbury Youth Services, Catholic Charities, YMCA and the Fire
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Departments have signed on and are trained.

- National Mentor Month: Nancy Vaughan stated that January is National Mentor Month and the Mayor will give a proclamation on Tuesday, January 19th, 2010.

Meeting was adjourned at approximately 2:30pm.

The next meeting of the Waterbury Prevention Policy Board is on **March 10th from 12:30 -2:30 PM** at Family Services of Greater Waterbury