**Minutes of Coalition Meeting held April 28, 2021**

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| **Present:** Denique Weidema-Lewis (Norwalk ACTS), Lt. David Orr (Norwalk PD), Ginger Katz (Courage to Speak Foundation), Laila McGeorge (Prevention Intern), Margaret Watt (Positive Directions & NPS parent), Nina Chanana (TNP evaluator), Peter King (Alateen), Kelsey Ciarleglio (High Focus Centers), Diana Toomey-Wilson (NPS Parent), Diamond Sead (Human Services Council), Maria Escalera (Norwalk Human Services), Frank Castorina (Catholic Charities), Jasmine Prezzie (Norwalk Mentor Program, HSC), Jodi Giorlando (CT Counseling Centers), Prema Winn (The Odyssey FEC), Sabine Romsaint (The Odyssey FEC), David Walenczyk (Youth Services ) |
| 1. **Minutes were approved.**
2. **Coalition Updates**
* Our planned youth survey has been approved by the Board of Ed but implementation date has not yet been set. School counselors are aware and messaging to parents and staff is ready but admin changes at the high schools are affecting planning. We hope to survey in May but will probably not survey seniors at this point.
* We are bringing motivational speaker/comedian David Edward Garcia to speak at NHS 4/29 and BMHS 5/5, funded by The Norwalk Partnership, Norwalk Youth Services, Norwalk Community Services, Norwalk Education Foundation, High Focus Centers, and Courage to Speak Foundation. The schools will also get 12 months’ access to a library of 100+ social-emotional videos from the speaker’s bureau.
* Subcommittee members are working on a series of prevention postcards – tell Margaret & Diamond if you want to help develop these to send out to families.
* We have held 2 meetings with a group of Haitian community members to date and are creating a subcommittee to be led by Diana Revolus. The adults in the group will identify/adapt educational materials and/or presentations around behavioral health and wellness for Haitian parents and community leaders. We also have a group of Haitian teens who are interested in collaborating.
1. **Community Partner Updates**
* Lt Orr shared graduation dates for the various schools:
	+ All Middle Schools: Wednesday 6/16/21 @6PM
	+ Center for Global Studies: Friday 6/11/21 @6PM
	+ Norwalk High and P Tech: Monday 6/17/21 @ 6PM
	+ Brien McMahon: Tuesday 6/18/21 @ 6PM
* ACTION: Lt Orr will provide info on any planned post-proms.
* SMART Recovery: The Norwalk SMART Teen group has run for a few years in the community but has been online since COVID. During May it is coming back live in the high schools, alternating between both buildings, weekly on Wednesdays 3:30-5pm. Everyone please help get the word out. In the summer it will meet in the community. Discussion about SMART Recovery:
	+ Non-clinical support group
	+ Facilitated by trained peers
	+ Focuses on building skills by teaching participants the use of a number of tools that are based on CBT and motivational interviewing
	+ Directed by the group
	+ Allows cross talk
	+ No higher power
	+ Self-referral, referrals by teachers or counselors or JRB are all welcome
	+ There is usually a monthly social activity for kids in the community
	+ SMART Family & Friends is great for families who are trying to help a loved one with a behavioral health disorder. It’s based on the CRAFT model. Positive Directions runs a group.
	+ Visit turningpointct.org/smart
* Alateen has been asked to come back into NHS
* May is Mental Health Awareness Month and also National Prevention Week. Events:
	+ - Mayor’s Town Hall tonight online at 7pm – also available on youtube afterward
		- Press Conference Friday 11-11:30 at City Hall
		- Youth Town Hall on Mental Health – May 12, 7-8pm online
		- Community Fair on Mental Health – Sat. May 22 11am-2pm – location TBD
		- QPR Suicide Prevention training, Thursday, May 6th, 9-10:30 – rsvp to info@positivedirections.org
		- Learning to Cope When Things Get Tough – For teens & young adults, by the peers at TurningPointCT.org - May 18, 3:30-5pm, online
		- If They Had Known – next Monday the 10th 7-8pm
		- More will be in the May bulletin – check it out!
* The Hub is gathering data for the biannual regional priority report on mental health and substance use. Please fill out the survey at <https://tinyurl.com/reglsurvey> by Friday April 30th.
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| 1. **Findings of** **Community Survey**
* Nina presented the data – see slideshow here and also on [thenorwalkpartnership.org/issues-summaries](https://www.thenorwalkpartnership.org/issues-summaries)
* Discussion & chat:
* Jodi Giorlando : “my daughter who is a freshman at Staples came home on 4/20 stating that kids were handing out "marijuana candy" all day long and she threw it out when someone put it in her hand”
* Sabine Romsaint, MSW - The Odyssey FEC : “Being that this is my first meeting - My take away was WOW so many things are going on. I did appreciate seeing the results of the survey. There is a lot of work that needs to be done but there is also so much in place already so I was happy to see that.”
* Jodi Giorlando : “fentanyl is a growing concern...they are putting it in everything- marijuana included, which is scary as a mom and treatment provider”
* Denique Weidema Lewis: “Resources that are the most known are not the most accessible”
* Teachers don’t know what to do with resources for students, they do not know about them
* Parents also do not know the resources that are out there for their children.
* In response to the need to raise awareness of specific resources like 211, Teen Talk, etc, we have created a new Behavioral Health Resources flyer for Norwalk (aimed at providers, schools, and the general public) as well as a slideshow of emotional supports for teens. Everyone please help disseminate these!
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