

Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria
Healthy Lifestyles Work Group
Meeting Minutes – Wednesday, May 9, 2007
Lee Center, Conference Room 4
12:30 – 2:00 pm

Work group members present:

- Rika Maeshiro – Vice-Chair, Alexandria Public Health Advisory Commission; Co-Chair, Healthy Lifestyle Work Group
- Leslie Clark – Division Chief, Recreation Services; Representative, Department of Recreation, Parks and Cultural Activities
- Angela Crawford – Epidemiologist, Alexandria Health Department
- Rose Berler – Chair, ACPS School Health Advisory Board
- Dennis Burstein – Curriculum Specialist, ACPS
- Bob Custard – Environmental Health Manager, Alexandria Health Department
- Charles Konigsberg – Health Director, Alexandria Health Department
- Arlene Hewitt – Member, Alexandria Public Health Advisory Commission
- Dick Merritt – Member, Alexandria Public Health Advisory Commission
- Cara Pennel – Health Planner, Alexandria Health Department

I. Introductions & Program Updates

- Leslie Clark reported that the Neighborhood Recreation Centers are in the process of re-evaluating their vending contracts for the purposes of providing healthier food and beverage choices and improved customer service. They are working with Heather Jones, VA Cooperative Extension Agent, to provide an educational component for youth, in this transition with the vending machines changes, to promote nutrition and healthy choices.
- The City of Alexandria is moving forward on their initiative to eliminate smoking in Alexandria restaurants using the Special Use Permit process to “zone out” smoking. There is a public hearing being held on Saturday, June 16. The Work Group will ask Marian Van Landingham to speak on behalf of the *Partnership* at the public hearing on the dangers of second-hand smoke.
- Kelly Woodward will be joining the health department staff as Medical Director on May 21, 2007. He is board certified in family medicine and preventive medicine.

II. Update on Healthy Lifestyles Work Group Activities

Proud To Be Smoke Free – Smoke free restaurants have been separated into the following Alexandria neighborhoods for ease in locating: Arlandria, Bradlee, Del Ray, Eisenhower-Duke, Landmark, Old Town, Potomac Yard, West End. Brochures and posters will be created from this listing. Lisa Baker and the Environmental Health Division at the Health Department are working to locate another volunteer or an intern from GWU.

Healthy Workplace Initiative - The Healthy Workplace initiative website is complete. See website: www.alexhealth.org/healthier_alexandria/. The Terms and Conditions have been approved by the City Attorney's Office and will soon be posted on the website with the Rules and Regulations. Geoff Crego, City eGovernment Department, who created this website indicated that staffing will be required to carry through this initiative. The initiative will be ready once staff replacement is on board.

Stair Use Initiative – We saw a 38.5% increase in stair use in a sample of City-owned buildings after hanging the “point-of-decision” prompts (stair posters). The group decided the community-wide kick off should be postponed until September, when kids go back to school and a key time for behavior change. The new Health Planner will be hired by then and can coordinate logistics. Public Health Advisory Commission members can begin reaching out to potential early adopters. Cara will contact Ann Huston to reach out to the Chamber of Commerce and the business community. The group had discussed holding the community-wide kick-off event at the Masonic Temple, but it was suggested that we consider an early adopter business or site. Cara will talk with Patrick Jones about possible contacts at the U.S. Patent Office. The group had discussed the Mayor being the face of the stair campaign, but Dick Merritt suggested we might think about another public face such as Comcast's Tony Hill.

III. Next Steps

Dennis Burstein provided an overview of what the schools are doing:

ACPS has a Wellness Committee and newly created wellness policy. Physical Education and recess have been increased at schools. P.E. occurs daily in middle schools and high school and 2 days per week for 45 minutes in elementary schools. ACPS is trying to incorporate opportunities for active learning in the classroom. Teachers can no longer use removal from P.E. or recess as a student punishment. ACPS Food Services are very progressive and provide healthy meals. ACPS

received a grant a few years ago and was able to incorporate alternative forms of physical activity into the schools, such as a climbing wall in each gym, thousands of pedometers, bicycle programs, in-line skating in elementary and middle schools, outdoor adventures, and heart rate monitors. The school is currently trying to hire a P.E. technology specialist that would provide even more opportunities for the students to be active and could further build the P.E. Program and involve the community. Dennis also mentioned that Spotsylvania School District has a Wellness Director whose salary is covered by the local hospital and health department.

Discussion about select PowerPoint slides from the Inova childhood obesity survey and possible strategy/intervention options:

The schools have reached limits on what they can do to impact the students; it might be time to reach out to parents to make changes in homes.

According to the Inova survey, healthcare providers were 2nd only to parents as the party perceived as playing a role in fighting childhood obesity. Healthcare providers are already very limited on time they can spend with patients and prevention may not be a high priority. The group thought it would be difficult to reach providers and possibly a campaign should put the onus on parents to ask pediatricians about their child's weight. Healthcare providers would need to be equipped with referral resources to share with parents. The group will continue to discuss possible strategy options.

IV. Next Meeting

The Work Group decided to meet on Wednesday, June 13, 12:30-2:00 p.m. in Conference Room 4 at the Lee Center. Cara will make room arrangements at the Lee Center through the summer and the group can decide whether they want to continue meeting in July and August without staffing. The other summer meeting dates would be Wednesday, July 11 and Wednesday, August 8, 12:30-2:00 p.m. in Conference Room 4 at the Lee Center.