

Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria
Draft Minutes: Steering Committee Meeting

Lee Center, Conference Room 4

1108 Jefferson Street

Monday, February 26, 2007

11:30 AM – 1:00 PM

Steering Committee Members Present:

- Marian Van Landingham – Chair, *Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria* Steering Committee
- Mary Riley – Chair, Community Services Board; Member, Public Health Advisory Commission; Co-Chair, Mental Health / Substance Abuse Work Group
- Rika Maeshiro – Vice-Chair, Alexandria Public Health Advisory Commission; Co-Chair, Healthy Lifestyle Work Group
- William Euille – Mayor, City of Alexandria
- Dick Merritt – Member, Alexandria Public Health Advisory Commission
- Rose Berler – Chair, ACPS Health Advisory Board
- Arlene Hewitt – Member, Alexandria Public Health Advisory Commission
- Robin Wallin – School Nurse Coordinator, ACPS
- Ann Huston – Representative, Chamber of Commerce
- Charles Konigsberg – Director, Alexandria Health Department
- Silvia Portillo - Organizer, Healthy Community Program, Tenants' & Workers' United
- Bob Custard – Environmental Health Manager, Alexandria Health Department
- John Porter – Assistant Superintendent, ACPS
- Kathy Bury – Infection Control Nurse, Inova Alexandria Hospital
- Cara Pennel – Health Planner, Alexandria Health Department

I. October Steering Committee meeting minutes were approved.

II. Update on Work Group Activities

Mental Health / Substance Abuse Work Group – Mary Riley

- Overview of Needs Leading to Action Steps – handout

Mary provided an overview of the local mental health and substance abuse needs data, using 2004 Alexandria Community Health Assessment, 2001 Developmental Assets survey, and reports by the *Healthy Families Alexandria* (Northern Virginia Family Service).

A question was raised as to the number of 2001 Developmental Assets surveys completed and whether the sample size was too small to be

meaningful. Cara will report back on the number of surveys. (Update: There were 3708 surveys completed by 6th-12th graders. 410 surveys were discarded due to inconsistent responses, missing data, reports of unrealistically high drug/alcohol usage, or the wrong grade. Comparing the 2006 Developmental Assets data, which will be available in the coming weeks, should provide a good comparison to the surveys from 5 years ago.)

- Flow Diagram – Action Steps – handout

Mary reviewed the flow diagram handout, describing the Year 1 activities for the Mental Health/ Substance Abuse Work Group. These activities include:

- A programs and services inventory for the 6-12 age group, which is almost completed. The inventory has been shared with community partners that provide these efforts to ensure the information is correct and complete.
- Community-wide anti-stigma campaign (see below for more information)
- Interventions for ages 6-12, which will be explored once the inventory is completed and gaps are assessed.
- Youth Risk Behavioral Surveillance System (YRBSS) and Developmental Assets surveys, which will be analyzed to develop additional action steps
- Long-term initiatives for mental health and substance abuse. A Substance Abuse Task Force has convened to begin looking at existing programs/services strictly for substance abuse and will compare 2001 and 2006 Developmental Assets substance abuse data to help guide their next steps. The group had initial conversations about implementing a social marketing campaign targeting parents, such as "Parents Who Host Lose the Most." Another long-term initiative for MH/SA might be TeenScreen, a universal screening program for anxiety, depression, substance and alcohol abuse, and suicidal thoughts and behavior among youth. Mary announced that Cate Alexander had agreed to chair the Substance Abuse Task Force. It was also noted that Inova Kellar Center's Senior Director, Rick Leichtweis, has joined the MH/SA Work Group and will provide important input to the group.
- The MH/SA Work Group will assist the *Alexandria Mentoring Partnership*, managed by Mike Mackey, Alexandria Court Services, in engaging businesses and others in mentor recruitment. Ann Huston, the Partnership's Chamber of Commerce representative, offered to provide information through the Chamber to Alexandria businesses.
- Other activities include creation of a website for the *Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria* (see below for more information) and participation in the Alexandria Business Philanthropy Summit in March.

- Anti-Stigma Campaign: Theory of Change – handout

The mental health anti-stigma campaign will target youth and their parents through multiple channels to reduce stigma and increase help-seeking behaviors. Activities for the anti-stigma campaign have included or will include the following:

- Conducting focus groups and surveys with youth and with the faith community to get their feedback and ideas on what types of methods, channels, materials, and messages will reach youth and their parents.
- CrisisLink and Fairfax Partnership for Youth: Youth Suicide and Depression Task Force developed a faith-based toolkit that they've used for several years to educate the community and promote action and the involvement of faith communities to address youth mental health issues. This toolkit has various faith-based materials and activities, including sample sermons to be used during Mental Health Month. *CrisisLink* made a presentation at the last MH/SA Work Group meeting and offered their assistance to the Work Group in their anti-stigma campaign activities.
- Youth surveys conducted with T.C. Williams students indicated that: 1) the Internet is the best way to reach students on mental health issues and 2) hearing real life stories of young adults dealing with mental illness is a preferred method to convey an anti-stigma message. John Porter has worked with other ACPS staff to post the www.nostigma.org website on the T.C. Williams electronic blackboard, so students can hear these real life stories. This website also has 1-800 numbers, so students can call and talk to someone. It was suggested that we track the number of hits to that link through the electronic blackboard. Cara will work with ACPS staff on getting this information.
- During Mental Health Month in May, the Partnership, CSB and Friends of Alexandria Mental Health Center will sponsor and promote a community event with Pete Earley, author of "Crazy: A Father's Search Through America's Mental Health Madness."
- Partner with CrisisLink to provide Depression awareness & suicide prevention workshops.
- Host a community event with the award winning movie "Eternal High."
- Sponsor media activities including press releases, PSAs, drop-in articles, etc.
- Dr. Christina Theokas, ACPS Monitoring and Evaluation Analyst, has been helping the MH/SA Work Group with the development of short and long-term outcomes. Dr. Theokas has had considerable experience at Tufts University in working with logic models and community partnerships.

- Youth Focus Group Report – handout

One youth focus group has been conducted with the T.C. Williams Student Council Association to gain feedback on the anti-stigma campaign. Internet/Websites were identified as the top way to reach students about mental health issues, followed closely by peers/friends, public events with speakers, videos, etc. and school staff. The majority of students indicated that they went to their friends when they have a sensitive question or problem. Two more youth focus groups will take place with students in STEP and youth involved in CSB prevention programs.

Two faith-based focus groups have been scheduled with clergy and youth ministers for March.

- Meeting Minutes – handouts
- Other Discussion:
 - The topic of a Teen Center came up at the Substance Abuse Task Force meeting. Rose Berler asked whether the City was still pursuing this. Mayor Euille responded that the City had located a site for a Teen Center at Landmark Mall a couple of years ago. There is still funding for a Teen Center, but this was put on hold for various reasons, one of which is scheduled redevelopment of the mall. After reviewing the Developmental Assets data, the Substance Abuse Task Force will revisit this in the future.
 - Rose also raised the concern as to whether the Substance Abuse Education and Violence Prevention Advisory Committee needs a new charge. John Porter thought that over the years this committee provided a forum for parents concerned about these issues to convene and address emerging issues. They also serve to educate the school board on substance abuse and violence issues, policies and trends.
 - Mayor Euille recommended that the *Partnership* schedule a joint work session with the City Council and School Board to update them on the *Partnership* activities and efforts. He will raise this issue at the joint session that evening.
 - Cara announced that the National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) is interested in highlighting the MH/SA Work Group's activities as a case study in a compendium on integrating mental health and public health. A NACCHO staffer interviewed Cara on the Work Group's progress in February.
 - Silvia Portillo asked if the Mental Health/Substance Abuse Work Group activities were only for youth. Cara responded that the work group recognized that there are MH/SA issues with other populations and had discussed the possibility of including the homeless populations, immigrant

populations, etc. in the target audience. However, the work group members decided to keep the focus narrow for the first year and concentrate their efforts on youth, with the intention of expanding these activities to other populations in the future.

Healthy Lifestyles Work Group – Rika Maeshiro

Rika indicated that the Healthy Lifestyles Work Group has split into two groups. One group is addressing the two physical activity initiatives and one group is addressing the tobacco use initiatives.

- Stair Use Initiative

Draft Stair Use Initiative Poster - handout

One of the activities is a stair use initiative -- an evidence-based strategy to encourage stair use by using hanging posters in buildings with elevators. The group decided to pilot the project in City-owned buildings (there are 16 with stairs and elevators), based on a recommendation by Donald Dodson, in City General Services. He suggested including the City-leased buildings in the community-wide expansion, which we hope to implement in May.

- Raynard Owens, Communication's Officer in the City Manager's Office, has worked on redesigning the existing CDC stair signs to tailor them for Alexandria.
- Pre-assessments of stair use have been conducted in a sample of City buildings, 2 times during the day, each for 1 hour. After the posters have been hanging for a couple of weeks, there will be a post-assessment conducted to see if the posters actually encouraged greater stair use.
- Mayor Euille is on board with the initiative and we will circulate a message from him, announcing and promoting the initiative to City employees.
- We had hoped to have the posters hanging by now. Due to weather and other unexpected delays, we hope to have them hanging in the next few days. As soon as the City Manager's Office is presented with and approves the signs, we can begin hanging them in the City buildings.
- We hope to have a kick-off event in May for the community-wide expansion (possibly at the Masonic Temple).

- Team Workplace Competition

Draft Website: Team Workplace Competition – handout

The team workplace competition is a way for people who work together to support each other and compete with their co-workers to increase physical activity. The City's eGovernment Department has created a website for Alexandria, that will allow individuals and teams to track the miles they have exercised and compare their team mileage to other teams. This initiative is being piloted at the health department to work out any procedural and technology kinks, with a community wide expansion in late spring/early summer. The website will also have the capacity to collect data and create reports. The eGovernment Department is anticipating an early March launch date.

- Tobacco Use Control:

Mayor Euille updated the group on the City's efforts to prohibit smoking in Alexandria restaurants and bars and to be the first locality to do so in Virginia. This would either be implemented as a Zoning Ordinance, as a condition of restaurants' Special Use Permits, or to mandate no smoking across the board in all Alexandria restaurants and bars.

The Tobacco Use subgroup addressing the issue of smoking in restaurants has been working to 1) continue the *Proud To Be Smoke Free* program and 2) market those restaurants that are already smoke free. These efforts have included the following:

- Bob Custard, Alexandria Health Department Environmental Health Manager, has located a volunteer that will continue the *Proud To Be Smoke Free* program 1-2 days per week.
- Virginia Department of Health is in the process of updating their online smoke free dining guide. Alexandria's smoke free restaurants will be added in the near future, and we will continue to add as more restaurants join the program.
- Lisa Baker arranged for Cara to present the Healthy Lifestyles work group activities to the City Wellness Committee, Well! Well! Well!. They want to participate in the Healthy Lifestyles WG activities, through collaboration, staff support and some funding. They have agreed to allocate funds for materials to market the smoke free restaurants through posters, brochures, etc. (David Del Rosario, member of the City Wellness Committee, will continue to serve on the Healthy Lifestyles Work Group).

- Brochures and posters will be redesigned by Alexandria neighborhood/region (Old Town, Del Ray, West End, etc.), to facilitate locating nearby smoke free restaurants.

As the City's smoke free initiative moves forward, the Tobacco Use subgroup will discuss and possibly re-evaluate their focus.

Meeting Minutes – handout

- Other Discussion:
 - Ann Huston offered to help connect us with business & civic associations for the community-wide expansion of the stair initiative.
 - Update: Inova Health System has completed the Northern Virginia region-wide Healthy Weight Collaborative survey. The survey data will be rolled out at a regional meeting in late March or early April. This data will help guide the longer-term plans related to overweight/obesity in the Healthy Lifestyles Work Group.

III. Review Draft Partnership Website, Logo

The City's eGovernment Department has been working on a website for the Partnership. The Steering Committee was shown a draft of the homepage. Ann Huston suggested we add a universal image that indicates we are not excluding those with disabilities.

Draft Website Homepage – handout

The City's eGovernment Department has also created a draft logo for the Partnership. The Steering Committee was shown the draft logo. Steering Committee members made suggestions that will be passed on to the creator of the logo (apple in red outline, make bottom of the apple rounded, etc.). The group thought the logo was reproducible and a good illustration of health, partnerships and community.

Draft Logo – handout

- Press Releases

Ann Huston suggested that an overview or a bulleted list of the Partnership's activities be made available for press releases, to send out in Alexandria listservs, etc. There is already an overview in existence and Cara will modify it for this purpose.

Based on Rika's suggestion, Cara submitted an overview on the *Partnership for a Healthier Alexandria's* efforts to National Association of County and City Health Officials (NACCHO) late last year. They placed the article in their December 2006 newsletter.

NACCHO Article – handout

- Continue Resourcing/Funding Discussion (donations account, 501(c)3, etc.)

Dick Merritt spoke to the Public Health Advisory Commission about creating a donations account so that individuals and businesses can contribute funds for specific Partnership activities. Dr. Konigsberg and Cara will discuss this with Michael Weiner, AHD Business Manager, to determine how to best implement this and see that there is administrative support.

- Next Meeting – June

Cara will send out possible meeting dates & times for the end of June in the coming weeks.