



Mission: Prevent and reduce youth substance use and abuse in the communities of Madison, Chatham Borough and Chatham Township through collaboration, education and community-wide change.

Madison Chatham Coalition Membership Meeting

April 23, 2024- 9:30 am In-Person/Hybrid Meeting

Meeting Minutes/Summary

Attendees:

Allison Bardon (director), Vicky Bukey (PCP), Brian Colatrella (Chatham PD), Rozella Clyde (citizen), Heather Flaherty (CHS SAC), Christine McIntyre (PCP), Gabe Suarez (MCC Intern), Barbara Wyatt (Women of Encouragement)

Note:

Amy Lewis (MACC/MAASA Representative) provided materials with her organization's updates. Print out copies were provided next to the sign in sheet for the meeting.

9:30- Meeting called to order

- Allison Bardon calls the meeting to order and gives short run through of all the meeting will include. Gabe will be presenting his senior year capstone and explains that tomorrow is his last day with the coalition. Allison will then present on previous and upcoming events, then moving onto the other sectors before concluding with the mental health logic model.
- Allison lets members know that MACC/MAASA updates are located next to sign in sheet.

9:32- Senior Capstone Presentation (Gabe Suarez)

- Gabe introduces himself as the MCC intern for this spring. He explains that he is a senior studying public health at Rutgers. This has served as his professional field work experience. He was glad to reconnect with his community and make an impact.
- He recaps with some of things he has worked on at the high schools and with students and how he is thankful for the experience he has gained.
- He begins his presentation by explaining some major facts. 3.2 million youth (12-20) reported binge drinking in the past month, which is problematic because this is illegal and binge drinking adds to the risks. ¼ of high school students reported vaping in the past month.
- He mentions how the legalization of marijuana in New Jersey has contributed to difficulties in explaining to teens that it is still illegal for them. At times, social media, parents, and peers are making it difficult to understand it is still a crime.
- He continues by explaining that the CDC shows the substance use has many negative consequences, especially among youth.
- Gabe discusses the framework MCC uses which is the strategic prevention framework. The presentation shows the methodology cycle and explains its steps. First, assessing the needs through a survey or asking for interviews and determining what the most pressing issues are. Next is building capacity, this means developing materials or finding space and personnel to work on these issues. Then, it is onto planning the initiative and working with community

members. He provides Sticker Shock as an example, which requires working with liquor stores to find time when this initiative will work best. After that is implementing it into the community and spreading the word through press release or discussing it with the community. Last is evaluating the impact and seeing changes that may occur with the initiatives.

- The main goals of the coalition are organizational sustainability and cultural competence to make it relevant to people, especially to youth.
- He moves on to some of the work he has done over the past semester with MCC and PCP. He has created and presented a lesson plan for MCC and PCP to be presented to students. He discussed pressing issues with them and asked questions to find out what was most relevant to teens. Tomorrow he is giving a guest lecture to MHS health classes to provide details on MCC/PCP and discuss the transition from high school to college. It can be difficult to adapt to a rigid high school schedule to a more independent college experience.
- He has also translated 13+ MCC materials into Spanish to assist in cultural competency and helping that community feel more heard. Coming from an immigrant family, a main goal of his was to make people feel included in the community he came from. He wanted to hear these students out and make connections with the people he relates to.
- Gabe moves on to talk about their new partnership with the Madison Housing Authority. MHA has a huge impact for the Spanish-speaking population as many of them are in low-income housing. MCC and PCP can reach the students in the schools and parents through the MHA.
- He also worked on social media and created posts for many different days and events involving MCC, like National Drug and Alcohol Facts Week. He celebrates reaching 1,000 followers on Instagram. Gabe also connected his public health knowledge into posts with 'health side chats' to give essential knowledge of public health to followers. One example was the social determinants of health, which he explains plays a role in every single person's life, like zip code or socioeconomic status. Another example is epidemiology, the study of how diseases spread, which can be COVID or the opioid epidemic. The myth v. fact campaign was another project Gabe worked on.
- To conclude, Gabe explains the community will engage with you if you invite them and make them feel comfortable. Like with Hidden in Plain Sight, it asked parents to get involved in the problems students are facing.

CADCA 7 Strategies for Community Change

- Gabe recaps what these strategies are and how they relate to the work MCC does.
- 3 are individual changes and 4 are more environmental changes.
 - o Providing Information: sharing messaging through tabling and brochures
 - o Enhancing Skills: providing workshops and trainings
 - o Providing Support: PCP counseling, basketball at the Y, safe alternatives
 - o Enhancing Access/Reducing Barriers: materials being translated
 - o Changing Consequences: sticker shock, remind people of the consequences
 - o Physical Design: permanent changes, updating and/or adding signs
 - o Modifying/Changing Policies: changes in community policies
- He explains the upstream prevention model. Upstream is prevention, and downstream is receiving treatment. Midstream is addressing individual social needs to understand potential

problems before the problems progress. Upstream is about changing community conditions in order to prevent the problem.

- Gabe finishes his presentation and asks for any questions.
- *One member mentions how video games and music are dangers to children and impacts decision making. He explains how he thinks teachers are extremely important to helping kids develop skills and find their purpose. Gabe connects that back to the social determinants of health. Another member wonders how we can keep children on a path to belonging and identity. They discuss how Gabe is young enough to be cool but old enough to be a role model to these kids. Parents and teachers come across differently than someone's peers.*
- *A member compliments Gabe and his passion for this. She explains that she is planning a youth day and is hoping to find a young adult to speak to youth and make them feel safe in his words.*
- Allison thanks Gabe for all of his hard work and sees how his goals have been accomplished and how many people he has been able to connect with. Gabe thanks MCC and how much value he has found in this experience. He has found so many avenues through this that he knows he can help people through.

10:12 MCC Updates (Allison Bardon)

- Allison runs through a recap of past events. They had basketball at the Y two weeks ago and had the highest turn out yet. She explains that Madison and Chatham PD came to play with the children. They are looking for another date for basketball but are considering another activity somewhere else to change it up.
- Allison asks Christine to talk about SPTS. Christine says they had a great presentation from Society Prevention for Teen Suicide. They spoke about raising resilient teens in challenging times. PCP is going to bring them back for another presentation in the fall. She mentions that the presentation is done virtually, which is very convenient for families. Allison explains that SPTS is growing and becoming more prevalent, which can add onto the resources they have from MHA.
- Allison says her and Gabe were at MHS for a wellness table during the lunch period. April is Alcohol Awareness Month and they had trivia questions and giveaways at the table. Last week, they were also at CHS for Mending Minds Club. They talked about wellness wheels and gave them the opportunity to talk with students and give them resources. They will be at MHS tomorrow for health classes.
- Allison expands on the discussion of modifying and changing policies is the hardest thing for a coalition to accomplish. We tend to think about it more broadly as a community wide change. However, this could be a school community or a home community, there are ways to affect smaller communities. Being able to talk to graduating seniors at MHS is a policy change because all seniors are required to listen.
- She continues to discuss Teen Mental Health First Aid, which had their first session with the Rosettes. There are 6 45-minute sessions, they were all engaged and participated. It was good to work with a group that was already familiar with each other. There are two trainers in each session, and the last will have all of them. They are very happy with how it is going. *Vicky mentions that the students already seem very knowledgeable and informed on issues.* Allison spoke with other organizations about how TMHFA is slightly difficult to implement because it

can be hard to find a contractor and host site. Only school districts and youth serving organizations can be the host, so it has taken a while for it to be run.

- Allison then says they are hosting a dangers of vaping workshop which is the third time it has been run.
- She also adds that on Friday they are hosting another Bagels and Brainstorming session. She explains that when they first started this initiative, they were going to work through multiple sectors. They did this at the beginning with law enforcement and local government, but now they are focusing more on local law enforcement. This is the 4th one they have hosted for the police. They have had individual meetings with law enforcement recently but are looking forward to a group conversation.
- Allison says they are working on their data collection and are starting to organize key informant listening sessions. They are also doing their school surveys at MHS and hopefully the junior school on May 17th. There hasn't been Madison student survey data since 2019 so it is overdue and will be good to see the changes.
- Allison mentions there will be summer interns starting soon. Jordan will be starting in three weeks and is a rising junior at TCU. She is a social work major and is from Summit, New Jersey but now lives in Chatham. Elyse is also coming back as an intern for the summer. She was a Teen Task Force member and is finishing her freshman year at the University of Kentucky. She is starting back in June and will be helping with data collection.
- Lastly, MCC is doing project graduation again this year for MHS and CHS. These are bags with information on binge drinking, mental health, resource cards, and more. They will be handed out on Day of Service at MHS and CHS gets them with their senior signs. *Christine asks how many seniors there are.* Allison replies that Chatham has 292 and Madison has 230. Chatham has come down a lot and Madison has increased by a little bit.
- Following back to Gabe's presentation, the DFC grant has two goals which are to establish and strengthen community capacity and reduce youth substance use. This is a broad set of goals and throughout the years, the main focus has changed. In the past three weeks, there has been more capacity building than we've ever done. This speaks to how community needs are shifting and engaging different groups.
- Allison connects with TMHFA and how one of the important parts is finding a trusted adult. For every child that is a different person. She mentions a discussion of how we help people have the tools to become a trusted adult for a person. This connects back to Gabe and how some students might feel more comfortable with him as he is younger, but for someone else, that might not be the case. We want to make everyone feel like they have the tools to be there for a child that might rely on them.

10:29 Sector Updates

- **Law Enforcement:** Member explains how they were at the MHA law enforcement collaboration. He explains that this has been a great thing for some of the problems they have been dealing with. There is someone on the day and night shift, and it has been amazing for the community. There have already been signs of how effective and helpful it is for the community. *Allison asks if other agencies in Morris County are implementing this.* He responds that Madison, Morristown, Mendham, and a few other agencies are involved, but it is currently the Morris

County pilot program. He says that officers coming to Bagels and Brainstorming likely will have more details.

- **Chatham High School (Heather Flaherty):** She says there is not too much going on, but she is planning programming for Mental Health Awareness Month. MCC also came back with the fatal vision goggles during lunch. The mental health club is planning a sunset yoga fundraiser which was started last year. AP tests are also coming up and there is more stress and anxiety among students, so they are helping students prep for those.
- **Project Community Pride (Christine McIntyre):** She explains that they are wrapping up the school year and considering their summer programming. They are working on coming into the BRIDGE program in Madison. They have also connected with Chatham to see how they can get more involved. There are also running programs with the Y and the Y summer camps. The collaboration with MCC has helped grow their impact tremendously. Vicky mentions the Emerson Group. Christine explains they have been invited to speak at an organization in Florham Park to talk about self-care and positivity.
- **Women of Encouragement (Barbara Wyatt):** She explains how she has 30 grandchildren in the Madison area and there have been a number of ups and downs. The police department and the Madison YMCA have been a blessing to her family. Madison goes above and beyond for their youth especially when coming to drugs and alcohol. She mentions how the legalization of marijuana has made it more difficult to explain that it is not legal for youth. She planned a community fun day with games and bouncy houses. They are still working with the administration to figure out all the details. She is hoping to see now if Gabe is willing to speak to the community. She invites the Chatham police department to come to the event. Her goal is to get everyone involved and bring the community together. Anyone can text her if they are interested in volunteering or getting involved. *Allison is excited to be there and be involved. She mentions it is the day after Fishawack, so they can promote the event there as well.*

10:43 Meeting Closes

- Allison asks if there are any other sector updates. She explains that they were going to work on the logic model, but this has been a full meeting, and they will focus on it next month.
- Allison thanks everyone for attending and the meeting closes at 10:45AM.

NEXT MEETING:

May 14th, 2024

9:30 AM

Hubbard Conference Room, Madison Area YMCA