

**CARING COMMUNITY CONSORTIUM
QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES
APRIL 22, 2005**

In attendance:

Danielle Salada	Octorara CTC
Bob Hume	Octorara CTC
Allina Boutilier	Big Brothers Big Sisters, Southeast PA
Kate Konkle	The Second Mile
JoAnn Tarrant	New Life Youth – Family Services
Frank DeLuise	Kennett CTC
Carol Henson	Childhood Education Coalition
Jane Hagy	ARCH
Rachel Manson	Functional Family Therapy
Christina Valocchi	West Chester CTC
Reggie Wade	Chester County Juvenile Probation Office
Kim Lewis	Chester County Juvenile Probation Office
Mary Ann Hughes	Downingtown CTC
Ellen Moeller	Coad, ARCH
Ceil Harkness	OIC
Cathie Lammy	OIC
Linda Redden	Downingtown CTC
Dolores Perry-Hunter	Coad, PHY
Barry Schickling	Childhood Education Coalition of Chester County
Lisa Carroll	West Chester CTC
Sean Saunders	PHY, Coad
Voni Moore-Mastovich	Family Service of Chester County
Gina Basciani	Crime Victims Center of Chester County
Nancy Clegg	Coad
Terry Kenworthy	Coad

WELCOME AND INTRODUCTION

Nancy Clegg opened the meeting at 9:15 AM, in the Blue Room of The Coad Group. She welcomed everyone and briefly reviewed the history of this group, beginning with the first consortium meeting in February 2004, until the present. She outlined the Power Point handout concerning the original Focus Group Sessions, which identified goals, objectives, and mission statement. (“The Chester County Caring Communities Consortium is a web of agencies, individuals, and organizations aimed to prevent and reduce youth health and behavioral issues including substance abuse, delinquency, teen pregnancy, school drop out and violence through connecting resources that promote healthy youth and families throughout Chester County.”)

The participants were reminded by Nancy that this group is organized to bring and share resources with one another, and that we are an umbrella organization, offering a bridge of support to one another, to foster cooperation, and to support one another in education, awareness-raising, and in improving outcomes.

The Consortium now holds quarterly meetings, has a website, utilizes the Youth Survey process in our communities and enhances knowledge about evidence-based programs specific to identified risk factors.

The twenty-five participants were asked to briefly introduce themselves and to circulate any written information that they had brought to communicate with the others.

OLD BUSINESS

N. Clegg asked for corrections to the 1/05 Consortium minutes. F. DeLuise moved that the minutes be accepted, and B. Hume seconded the motion. The minutes were accepted as printed.

NEW BUSINESS

Interim Co-Chairs, N. Clegg and T. Kenworthy asked the participants to consider the present consortium structure. As discussion ensued, T. Kenworthy posed the questions, “where are we today and where are we going?” We do presently have the basic Board structure, but do not have subcommittees in place. She indicated that there was a potential thrust of requests for letters of support for upcoming grant proposals from members of the Consortium and that it was important to ensure that we had the structure and procedures in place to support these types of request. A handout entitled “REQUEST FOR PROGRAM PROPOSAL SUPPORT” was distributed and members were asked to reflect and review. Members addressed issues regarding the benefits, expectations, levels of support, content and responsibilities.

It was agreed the Consortium can help one another “partner” by sharing services of expertise and not competing for the same dollars from the same funders. Some funders are looking to see that organizations are collaborating (and not unnecessarily overlapping services). Collaboration guidelines should be clearly drawn so that if members are applying for the same grant, that the Consortium does not support a proposal that would, in essence, present a conflict in interest for another member. It was suggested that the Consortium may want to consider that we would not be applying for grants, but would be in a position to offer a letter of support, or of partnership, for member organizations who are seeking funds. However, it was further suggested that *IF* the Consortium were to apply for funds, it should be for technical support or for marketing dollars that could be of benefit to the Consortium as a whole.

J. Hagy (ARCH) asked if the Consortium members should agree to focus on the same risk factors. M. Hughes pointed out that each CTC site has its own individualized needs, and that it does not follow that the Consortium as a whole is working on exactly the same risk factors. The identified top risk factors for each CTC site can be found on the Consortium website, <http://caringcommunitiesconsortium.org/>.

S. Saunders (PHY, Coad) stated that what separates one grant proposal from another are the letters of support. They are like letters of reference and are meaningful in that way.

In terms of decision making, it was identified that the general Board is making the decisions for the group and that those guidelines have already been established and agreed upon early in the development of this group. It was reviewed that this is an at-large Board and majority votes rule.

The handout (Guidelines and Criteria for Request For Program Proposal Support) was suggested to be a place to start regarding how to assure we are supporting our members and grant applications. It was agreed to pull a subcommittee together to formalize this process in the future, to determine the group's needs, and to propose support guidelines for future requests.

T. Kenworthy stated that Bucks County coalition has in the past applied for a Federal Government Mentoring Grant to be able "to mentor" a new coalition, and that they have offered to mentor this Consortium. T. Kenworthy said that we have done some preliminary investigating. We have visited Bucks County and have attended their coalition, and have modeled our Consortium after them in some ways. If Bucks County receives the grant money, we will have to have the Coad Board's support, because some Coad staff time will be utilized. We would also have to change our name from "Consortium" to "Coalition," and be willing to meet a minimum of 8 times per year. It was agreed that the group would support the name change and increase of meetings throughout the year. T. Kenworthy agreed to do more research and to find answers to questions about this arrangement. Some members wanted to know if participating in this mentoring might inundate us with more documentation and paper work than is useful.

C. Valocchi made a motion, and M. Hughes seconded, that T. Kenworthy be asked to do more research on this "mentoring grant," and that we discuss its merits through email communication.

A majority (18 votes, total) confirmed the decision to ask T. Kenworthy to continue to research this as a possibility.

M. Hughes made a motion and D. Salada (Octorara CTC) seconded, that if the research that Terry does lines up as she has already reported, and that this process of being mentored would help to complement our growth as a coalition, rather than to complicate our position, that we accept this opportunity. By a vote of 20, it was approved.

PROGRAM PRESENTATION

Voni Moore-Mastovich, of Family Service of Chester County made a presentation for Burroughs Mack, who could not be present today. The Early Childhood Families and Schools Together Program (FAST) is a research-based program that has been working successfully in the West Chester School District for 7 years. Over the last three-and-a-half years, Family Service has also been running the program in the Coatesville and Phoenixville area Head Start Programs. FAST is a collaborative prevention and parent involvement program. Children are identified by risk factors, and their families are invited to attend a 10-week program, on a volunteer basis. The families participate in interactive programming that is facilitated by a collaborative leadership team. Each week, they share a family meal, they play several communication games, parents have a chance to meet and talk with other parents, there is a self-help parent group, and there is one-on-one quality playtime. Also, there is a fixed lottery, which each family wins once. The program ends after 10 weeks, with a graduation and evaluation. V. Moore-Mostovich reported that the program has been well received, that it is very interactive, and that they are completing their third year in the Coatesville area. Evaluation results from this session will be available June 30.

They are presently seeking a PCCD (PA Commission on Crime and Delinquency) grant to expand the program in Chester County to the Kennett area.

Family Services requested a letter of support from the Caring Communities Consortium as part of the grant application.

After much discussion and identification as to others that may want to support this grant application, M. Hughes made a motion, and it was seconded, that we (the Caring Communities Consortium) supply a letter of support for Family Service of Chester County FAST Program, in support of their PCCD grant application, to offer our networking support of their program, identifying this organization's involvement in this collaborative (as well as West Chester CTC) and recognizing FAST as a valuable, effective research-based program.

Sixteen voted "yes," in favor of this motion, a majority.

In addition connections were made between Family Services of Chester County and Kennett CTC to provide additional support and resources for this application.

N. Clegg invited CTC sites to write updates and community announcements from their sites that we will post as addendums to these minutes. The meeting was adjourned at 11:40 AM.

Respectfully Submitted,

Ellen Moeller