

CHESTER COUNTY CARING COMMUNITIES COALITION
MEETING MINUTES
JUNE 23, 2006 - 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM, EXTON, PA

IN ATTENDANCE:

John Bakken	The COAD Group
Mike Barnard	ChesPenn Family Health Center
Wendy Beck	The COAD Group, Recovery Expo
Tracy Behringer	The COAD Group
Gary Blair	Chester County Youth Center
Tom Bux	SE Regional CTC Consultant
Janet Bradley	West Chester University
Sarah Brooks	COAD SAP
Heidi Bryan	Feeling Blue Suicide Prevention C
Sandy Claus	Great Valley School District
Nancy Clegg	The COAD Group
Kathy Collier	Great Valley PHY
Toni Davis	Amnion Crisis Pregnancy Center
Colleen D'lauro	Devereux
Carole Flounders	Bryn Mawr Rehab Hosp Cruisin' not Boozin'
Lori Gracek	DVCCCC
Joshua Grove	The COAD Group
Ceil Harkness	Chester County OIC
Brooke Hedderick	Crime Victims Center
Molly Henry	Kennett Square CTC
Carol Henson	Childhood Education Coalition of Chester County
Samantha Horosky	COAD SAP
Mary Ann Hughes	Downingtown CTC
Brett Illig	Message of Hope
Candace Kamar	Chester County Health Dept.
Kim Lewis	Juvenile Probation Office
Teri Mahoney	Owen J. Roberts School District
Dallas Matthews	Daybreak Lions West Chester
Ellen Moeller	The COAD Group, ARCH
Dolores Perry-Hunter	COAD Board, Great Valley PHY
Meg Polvino	CC Dept of Drug & Alcohol Services
Susan Power	DVCCC
Linda Reddon	Downingtown CTC
Margaret Rivello	Health Dept., Activate Chester County
Jill Santiago	Parent Involved Network
Sean Saunders	GV PHY, COAD Board, Boy Scouts, Second Mile
Krista Schemmer	CC Health Dept.
Barry Schickling	Childhood Education Coalition
Susan Siensa	New Life Youth & Family Services
JoAnn Tarrant	New Life Youth & Family Services
Erin Taylor	COAD SAP Coordinator
Christina Valocchi	West Chester Area CTC

Sandra Vaughan-Lewis
Melissa Walsh
Kendra Weible
Candy Whitehead
Lenore Wyant

Domestic Violence Center
Chester Co. Health Dept.
Dept. of Children, Youth and Families
COAD SAP
Center for Juvenile Justice Training & Research

Welcome and Introductions

The meeting was facilitated by Nancy Clegg, who opened with a welcome and invited each participant to briefly introduce him/herself with name and organization (s) of affiliation.

Old Business

Ellen Moeller, acting secretary, reported that the minutes from the March 24, 2006 meeting were distributed electronically 2 weeks ago. As no corrections were noted, the minutes are approved and will be added to the Caring Communities Coalition website (www.CaringCommunitiesCoalition.org). She also reported that an updated copy of the Participant Directory (June, 2006) has been sent electronically. For those who are new in attendance today, a paper copy can be obtained. Please contact Ellen or Nancy with corrections and updates to contact information, so the directory can be kept current.

New Business

Community Summary reports were given by each CTC site, as well as by 3 prevention coalitions.

The Downingtown Communities That Care (CTC) report was given by Linda Reddon, program coordinator. They recently held their Key Leader Recognition. They conducted ten Parenting Wisely workshops throughout the community this grant year and have funding to hold ten more next year. Plans are underway to offer a parent support network for parents who have participated in Parenting Wisely. School Resource Officers have been a presence in the schools throughout the year. Plans are underway to form a panel of local individuals (mostly parents) who are willing to share their stories of finding recovery and hope (for youth and families) amidst serious troubles. This idea was previewed at the Key Leaders Recognition and will be utilized as a way to inform and encourage parents as well as youth. After-school mentoring programs were facilitated this past year. The Downingtown CTC has three grants (to sustain current programs) currently pending. Big Brothers Big Sisters will provide funds for sustaining '06-'07 after-school mentoring.

The West Chester Area Communities That Care (CTC) report was given by Christina Valocchi, Mobilizer. She is just completing her first full year as mobilizer. Their '06-'09 strategic plan has been completed, a new logo is being selected, an updated risk and resource study has been completed, and a new executive committee has been selected. In partnership with United Way of Chester County, they conducted Youth Leadership Focus Groups. Representatives of the focus group gave a presentation at the Key Leaders Luncheon on May 31, 2006. The Key Leaders Recognition was held in partnership with Great Valley PHY and Octorara CTC, to share the year's accomplishments with the community and county leaders who are endorsing the CTC prevention process. West Chester Area CTC is just beginning to introduce Parenting Wisely classes. They are looking to take the program to locations in the community where parents are already meeting.

The Great Valley Partnership for Healthy Youth (PHY) report was given by Kathy Collier, Mobilizer. A focus on parenting has been the cornerstone of their prevention plan. *Shaping Children's Behavior* has been held for parents of children in grades K – 5. *Guiding Good Choices* was offered for parents of students in grades 4 through 8. *Media Wise* was held in the fall, and again in the spring, in conjunction with TV Turn Off Week at KD Markley School. The Parent Network has been a long standing support group for parents of all ages, including some parents whose children are post high school. Approximately 80-100 parents are in contact through emails, phone calls, or direct participation in the monthly meetings. PHY X was a community resource event, highlighting a large assortment of community resources for families in the Great Valley area. PHY sponsored a speaker for middle school students, encouraging them to stay grounded in core values. PHY offered a parent seminar prior to prom season, with presentations from The Crusin' Not Boozin' Program and The Crime Victims Center. The Great Valley School District, in conjunction with The Crime Victims Center, has introduced a new prevention program in the health curriculum, entitled The LINK. PHY has conducted Youth Focus Groups, an opportunity for students in middle school and high school to talk about what issues they are facing, and to have the opportunity to be genuinely heard. They have conducted transition programs for 5th- 6th graders. They have published 2 issues of the PHY newsletter. For further information on PHY, see their website www.GVPHY.org.

The Phoenixville Communities That Care (CTC) report was given by Nancy Clegg, in the absence of a community member. The CTC end of the year recognition luncheon was held on June 7, focusing on recognizing youth and community volunteers who have contributed to advancing prevention programming this year. The Fatherhood initiative has continued to have a successful year. Fathers who have participated have become mentors and facilitators for new participants in this program. They have used sports leagues as places to find more fathers to encourage participation. They have conducted a structured play ground group as an opportunity for children to learn social and behavioral skills. Youth from Cat-Pickering have helped with this endeavor. A summer camp for approximately 20 socially at-risk youth is taking place again this summer with the help of guidance counselors in the school who help identify the children who can benefit. They continue to hold monthly Family Night Out activities. Recently they have been partnered with Chester County OIC for one of those family events.

The Octorara Communities That Care (CTC) report was given by Kathy Collier, in the absence of a community member. Mentoring programs have been successful this year. The community-based Big Brothers Big Sisters program has had an active presence in Octorara community since the fall of 2005, mobilization efforts are being done to implement the school-based BBBS program - Bigs in the fall of 2006. CTC has participated and led the High School SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) chapter, as well as the post- prom committee. The Community has sponsored 3 successful Family Fun Nights. These evenings are seen as healthy opportunities for families to have fun together. They will continue the next fiscal year with opportunities every other month. A community wide Health and Safety day was conducted this quarter assisting the community in learning about and accessing community resources. **Project Alert** researched based prevention program, has been started in high school classes. CTC is maintaining 3 resource centers in the community. *Its Great to be a Girl* program was successful the school year and will continue again this fall.

The Kennett Area Communities That Care (CTC) report was given by Molly Henry. She handed out a new 2006 brochure that highlights the programs offered by The Garage Community and Youth Center and the CTC. The After-School Tutoring Program and the Mentoring Program have been very successful this year. Approximately 200 young people have received services through these programs. Intercambio - a program for Spanish and English language and culture exchange has also been successful. The Girl Talk Program is an opportunity for high school girls to receive information and support on a variety of topics through workshops given by adult community volunteers and professionals. The Huddle is a group opportunity for high school guys. They have facilitated a speaker series through a new partnership with corporate sponsor Exelon Corp.

The *ARCH – Area Residents Caring and Helping* report was given by Ellen Moeller. ARCH is a community coalition in Tredyffrin and Easttown townships that is working to keep kids alcohol and drug free. They have benefited by learning about the CTC model. They are a completely volunteer, grass roots organization. They have monthly community meetings and an array of affiliated partners who participate in a variety of projects. Meetings have 20+ community members in attendance, while the email s\distribution list of community members who receive information from ARCH is close to 250 people. Accomplishments for this year have been: 1) The Community Partnerships Committee has begun a partnership with the Athletic Department of Conestoga High School, through a grant from the PA Liquor Control Board to focus on the topic of athletes and underage drinking. 2) The Youth Focused Committee has been conducting safe, supervised activities for middle school and high school aged youth. The committee was given a chance, in conjunction with Great Valley PHY, to observe and participate in PHY's Youth Focus Groups and now have made a proposal to the administration of Conestoga High School to conduct a similar focus group next year. 3) In publicizing its message, ARCH has a website, and a brochure and party guidelines. ARCH has had 4 letters-to-the-editor published in local publications. One of them was a recent letter written by a father who hosted a party for his 15 year old daughter. The letter can be found on the www.ARCHcares.org website. Recently ARCH received a grant from a local employer to display bill boards along the Septa R5 Line, with a prevention message about underage drinking directed to parents.

The *Childhood Education Coalition of Chester County* report was given by Barry Schickling. Through community partnerships, they are focusing on high quality early care and education. They seek to raise public awareness and improve the quality and availability of early care and education programs with a focus on school readiness and transitions for all children. They have recently revised their strategic plan. They have been educating the community about the Keystone Stars Program, and generally seeking to network and improve early child education and care. They have been building their Executive Board and revamping their website. If you would like your organization to have a link from their website, they would be happy to do so. Contact Barry Schickling. The website is www.CECCC.net.

The Phoenixville Area Violence Prevention Network update was given by Brooke Hedderick. She announced that PAVPN anger management classes are being conducted at Phoenixville Hospital. She also gave an example of how networking at Coalition meetings between various agencies and organizations has resulted in a need being met at St. Gabriel's.

The Chester County Caring Communities Coalition's '05-'06 accomplishments were reported by Nancy Clegg. We held 5 meetings this year. Over 215 attendees were recorded. The welcome to Chester County Caring Communities Coalition

attend has been extended to more organizations as the year has progressed. Some come and go, attending as they experience benefit. Others have been regular attendees around the table on a regular basis. In December, we met as Coalition-to-Coalition, with the Family Partnerships Coalition, to hear the results of the Penn State study on CTC. In January, Pro-Act gave an introduction to their services. The Coalition directory presently has 54 organizations and 87 core group participants attending meetings. There is a temporary bylaws steering committee that is presently working to suggest structure and establish governing bylaws for this coalition. Technical Assistance and trainings have been made available to participants in Coalition. Matching organizations with others for the purpose of receiving letters of support for grant applications has been another benefit of this coalition. Displayed around the room, were posted website pages of partner organizations whose sites are currently linked from the Coalition website (www.CaringCommunitiesCoalition.org).

Nancy asked attendees to complete a Meeting Effectiveness Inventory and a COAD Resource Room Evaluation before they leave today.

The Temporary Steering Committee report was given by Mary Ann Hughes. Last meeting, the committee reported they had reached a fork in the road (please refer to minutes from March 24, 2006 meeting), and had elected to gather further research and input before proceeding. Mary Ann reported that she had informal discussions with a legal advisor to inquire about the risk to our organization when writing a “Letter of Support.” She learned that there is very little risk (that the pursuit of assets of individuals would occur) secondary to the Coalition writing a letter of support. The risk goes up significantly, if writing a “Letter of Partnership.” To protect our Coalition in that setting would require having an insurance policy of protection and handling the funds that holding a policy would require. The committee was directed to see if there might be a larger organization who might serve as “umbrella” by which we would be protected in such a situation. The committee spoke with Kim Bowman of Chester County Drug and Alcohol Services, who in turn spoke with their risk manager. The opinion was expressed that the county felt there was very little risk. It was learned that a personal umbrella policy would not be useful in this setting. If the steering committee of this coalition were to purchase insurance, how would we pay for this? It may not be very expensive, but exact quotes have not yet been given. Would we “pass the hat” to raise the necessary funds? People who participate in Coalition, and who are employed or serve on a Board would be covered by their employer. People who are self employed, are participating in a volunteer capacity, or are part of a CTC would thus be vulnerable.

Barry Schickling – steering committee member, pointed out that a third option for the Coalition to consider is to have loose structure and not write letters of any kind. This would mean operating as we have been operating to date—for the purpose of networking and sharing information, but without the capability or writing support letters for participants, other than by individual organizations. This does not address the question of “who” would conduct the meetings and administrative work that has been done by Nancy and Ellen. Would they continue to be available for such work?

It was pointed out that the Chester County Family and Community Partnership Coalition has been writing letters of support, and they have not acquired insurance. It was also pointed out that they are all employed and covered by their own employers.

A motion made by Meg Polvino and seconded by Heidi Bryan: The Coalition structure shall include a governing Board to deal with any Coalition issues that may arise between general
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Coalition meetings, or any other issues that the Coalition shall deem appropriate. This motion was voted on and passed with no opposition.

A second motion was made by Mary Ann Hughes and seconded by Delores Perry Hunter: The Coalition will write Letters of Support if asked to do so by participating members, but will not write Letters of Partnership. This motion was approved by unopposed vote.

There was some discussion about the value of letters of support that are fairly “generic” in nature. Some felt that these would be the letters we could write and would be of value. Others felt that letters of support to be useful should be specific and detailed to be of worth. It was also pointed out that showing coalition and active partnerships are of value to today’s funders.

The question about researching insurance coverage, what kind, how much, and at what cost was tabled. The Steering Committee will continue to draw bylaws for presentation at the September meeting. Participants were advised to determine his/her role in the Coalition. Several who attend meetings are affiliated with 2 or 3 organizations. If you elect to become a “voting member,” you will have to declare what organization you represent with your vote. The Directory that the Coalition has developed is for networking purposes only and does not define membership status at present.

S.E. Regional CTC update was given by Tom Bux. He reported that in July, the 5-phase training and orientation will be offered again, with new, updated information. All CTC sites and other coalitions are eligible to attend. PCCD is always available to offer technical assistance. Christina Valocchi reported that SE Regional CTC is conducting its quarterly meeting at COAD on August 17 from 10:00 to 2:00. There will be a hands on training to teach skills (for use in your organization) with youth and your Board. All are invited to attend.

PA State Coalition This report was given by Christina Valocchi. The State Coalition meets quarterly. They are presently building their Board. PCCD is conducting a 2-day Sustainability Training for community teams throughout the state. Chester County was selected to send a team to this two part training.

Cross Promotional Activities for Chester County Youth and Families Margaret Rivello presented the community health initiative *Activate Chester County*. In July, 2004, the YMCA of the USA launched Activate America designed to fight obesity, and to encourage people to move more, eat smarter, and to improve health and wellness of all Americans. In 2005, local YMCA’s brought the initiative to Chester County. They have received funding to develop a steering committee as part of “Pioneering Healthier Communities.”

Activate Chester County has a website: www.ActivateChesterCounty.org
Families can be steered to the website and calendar to learn health tips, learn where to participate in work outs and screenings and how to link to health and wellness sites. Organizations can register an event on the calendar and then it will be promoted through the Activate Chester County Website. You can invite Susan Herr to speak at your organization and to assist your community to organize activities. During the discussion, many attendees shared ideas about how to cross promote their own initiatives in the context of Activate Chester County to the benefit of many. Some ideas that were shared: Family Day (Sept 26) which promotes eating together as a family as a prevention activity, can also be publicized as an opportunity to eat healthy. Turn Off TV week can promote Chester County Caring Communities Coalition

family togetherness and also promote active healthy activities. Walking together can be a stress reliever, prevention activity and a healthy activity. (Recovery Expo – September 30) Recovery is not just putting down the drink. It is also actively choosing healthy life styles. National Alcohol Screening Day in April can also be linked to promoting healthy choices instead of drinking. The mental health aspect of activity and healthy choices can also be promoted.

Christina Valocchi encouraged participants to contact your state legislator to request that they not cut Drug and Alcohol budget. You can email you legislator, as well as write letters and make phone calls.

Heidi Bryan showed some posters that Feeling Blue Suicide Prevention have available that were designed by a young artist who is a teen survivor of suicide. They are also making a quilt to remember people who have died by suicide. Please contact Heidi if you wish to post something in their newsletter or participate in the quilt project.

Tom Bux stated that “depression” is the 6th target behavior in CTC now.

Wendy Beck announced that Recovery Expo 2006 (September 30) is looking for artists and musicians to participate in the Expo.

Upper Uwchlan Township Day is Saturday June 24, beginning at 4:00 PM. All are invited.

The meeting was adjourned at 11:00 AM, and attendees were encouraged to network. The next Coalition meeting is planned for Friday, September 29, 2006, from 9:00 AM until 11:00 AM at the COAD Group, in Exton.

Respectfully submitted,

Ellen Moeller
Acting Secretary