

Caring Communities Consortium

MINUTES

September 24, 2004

22 Attendees were: **Kendra Weible**, Department of Children Youth and Families; **Bob Hume**, Board member Octorara CTC; **Brooke Hedderick**, PHY Board – Crime Victims Center; **Camille Richardson**, Girl Scouts of Freedom Valley; **Linda Reddon**, Mobilizer –Program Coord. For Parenting Wisely Downingtown CTC; **Danielle Salada**, Mobilizer Octorara CTC; **Meg Polvino**, CC Drug and Alcohol; **Sandy Claus**, Great Valley School Dist.; **Brad Zerr**, Upper Main Line YMCA; **Mary Ann Hughes**, Downingtown CTC Board Chair; **Frank DeLuise**, Kennett CTC Mentoring Program Chair; **Janet Wendle**, Downingtown CTC Board Member; **Erin Ford**, Big Brothers Big Sisters; **Pat Yoder**, CC Health Dept.; **Reggie Wade**, Chesco Juvenile Probation Officer; **Nancy Clegg**, Community Prevention Outreach Coordinator – The COAD Group Community Prevention Dept.; **Carol Henson**, Childhood Education Coalition of Chester County; **Dolores Perry-Hunter**, The COAD Group Board, PHY Parenting Network Coordinator; **Doreen Ellis**, PHY Mobilizer; **Paul P. Karaman III**, New Life Youth and Family Services; **Dolores Winston**, Mobilizer Phoenixville CTC; **Laura Heikkila**, Executive Director – The COAD Group.

The meeting began at 9:30 A.M. with informal networking communications. At 9:45, **Nancy Clegg** gave the welcome and introductions were made around the table.

Progress from the CTC sites was shared:

Great Valley reported that their “Expo” held Sept. 21st from 6-9 was a great success and attended by hundreds of people (300-500 attendees estimated). Sandy Claus, Brad Zerr, Doreen Ellis and Brooke Hedderick each commented on the encouraging side of seeing parents and youth together at this event. What started as a small idea became a huge expo to showcase everything from the youth’s after school clubs and activities, garage bands, and volunteer opportunities to parent information on Drug and Alcohol, and various County service agencies, counseling services, SAT and College Prep, scholarship opportunities, etc. They also had an opportunity to raise awareness for PHY and for their Parenting Network, and to connect resources. The event was not without challenges, but it was felt that it was well worth the effort and planning to carry it off.

Doreen Ellis highlighted the funding that came over the summer from CC Drug and Alcohol to sustain their Families That Care for 4th-8th grades and The Parenting Network contract for this year. They would also like to target and capture parents in the K-3rd grade group.

They are leveraging some opportunities at the Upper Main Line Y for 4th, and 6th graders to offer something to the parents during the same time period.

The PCCD sustaining funding makes possible mobilizer funding, a Key Leader meeting, and an annual “newsletter”. Dolores Perry –Hunter is working on filling the gaps in parent education for parents of the K-3rd grade.

Danielle Salada reported for **Octorara**. She commented that she has been on board as mobilizer now for two weeks. They too, are looking for ways to link parents into the CTC community meetings. They have 11 months to implement the new funding given by PCCD and D&A. Danielle would like to attend meetings at other CTC sites and learn as much as she can about other CTC projects. She and her Board began conversations with the school district this week to begin implementing Life Skills component to the Across Ages program in Nov. 2004.

Across Ages held a Senior Expo and recruited several more mentors for the program.

Danielle plans to have a CTC information table at Octorara’s homecoming on Oct. 7th. Pamphlets, resources, and materials will be available there, as well as two new resource centers at the Parkesburg and Christiana Library’s.

Bob Hume, Octorara Executive Board Member, Octorara School Board member, and Across Ages Mentor, commented that the main accomplishment of bringing the CTC initiative to Octorara has been to open up the school district. Children, youth, and families are best served through this community and school partnership. The schools are now saying “we want you”. Although the Olweus Bullying Program is not a CTC initiated program, it is also a successful research- based program that is helping in the school environment, along with Across Ages. These programs, and the cooperation that is developing, are addressing the problems of Octorara’s rural, spread-out community. Bob reiterated that serving school and the whole family are examples of what CTC is about.

Frank DeLuise began by saying he has now been the new Program Coordinator for **Kennett CTC** for three weeks. He is working closely with Patti Olenik who coordinates mentoring and volunteer efforts for CTC and the Garage Youth and Community Center. The Adult Mentoring Program is thriving with regular mentoring coffees. At each of these coffees they deal with what is working and what is challenging. Frank encourages them and gives them information that they can then share with their mentees. The Up with Care Peer to Peer Mentoring Program at the High School functions as a “meet and greet” opportunity so that “new to the district” high school students are introduced and have peers who can show them the ins and outs of the school and its activities. They had a picnic in August to launch there efforts to acquaint “new to the district” students with school routines before they go back to school, and also to introduce mentors to the new students and each other.

Youth Advisory Council continues to involve youth in various leadership opportunities. This summer they worked with Good Neighbors Home Repair Ministry to repair homes for senior citizens and the community on Linden Street in Kennett. They have also served as facilitators in the After the Bell Program for the Middle School. Youth representatives are scheduled to attend the Unleashing the Power of Youth (Oct. 10-12) and the Youth to Youth event around January 6th 2005.

New possibilities are to bring kids into the Kids on the Block training and to plan a Senior Citizen Prom for the day after the Prom in the spring of '05. Exciting is the new relationship with the SAP team (KIT) at Kennett who will offer training to the mentors and volunteers who are helping with youth.

Phoenixville CTC was represented by **Dolores Winston**. She reported with excitement that 27 children attended the Summer Camp. This year it was held at the Kindergarten Center, which gave them more flexibility than being in an outdoor park environment. This camp is made up of children who are recommended by their school counselors (3 different schools). The camp is specific to strengthening social behaviors.

The Second Step program is now in all 3 schools and 4 Pre-Schools. On Oct. 6 it will be introduced to parents at the Kindergarten Open house. It is a successful Researched-based Bullying Prevention program.

The Fatherhood initiative is starting its 10th class. 42 men have been trained to date. Thanks to County Drug and Alcohol funds an 11th class will begin Oct. 19th. This is the first time classes are able to be back-to-back without stopping to wonder where the next funds will come from.

Family Night Out is a once a month opportunity for parents and children. There are also resources available to share with them at this event, giving them more opportunities throughout the month.

Having the local cable television station has been a boost to raising public awareness for Phoenixville programs. Phoenixville Health Foundation has also been a tremendous support.

The challenge for Phoenixville has always been involving the youth. This fall the community board meeting will be held at the high school allowing for at least two youth representatives to come.

Mary Ann Hughes reported for **Downingtown**. The After School Mentoring Program partnered with Big Brothers and Big Sisters. Together, they were able to expand to 3 more sites. Now there are 6 sites involved in recruiting 100 high school mentors and 100 elementary-aged mentees.

This has been a 4-year project in the making. Cooperative partnerships with 3 of the Brandywine YMCA's and Big Brothers Big Sisters have continued to open up this opportunity for expansion.

One of the funding awards given by Brandywine Health and Wellness specified it was to be for a public service announcement to raise CTC name recognition, and parent-to-parent encouragements from those who had completed the Parenting Wisely course. Janet Wendle will coordinate this project. Although this initially seemed challenging, it will give opportunities for new venues to open up.

Through brainstorming, Downingtown also decided to run a full-page ad in the football program this fall. Mary Ann commented that Downingtown CTC is trying to come out of their corner into a more visible place in the school district.

Work is also in progress with coordinating opportunities in the faith community. In particular, a local Methodist Church has decided to focus more intently on community outreach. They brought in a speaker on sexual issues and presented both to youth and the next day to parents. These connections are starting.

The Drug and Alcohol award has made it possible for Downingtown mobilization efforts to keep moving forward. Both a mobilizer and part-time graphic designer and administrative helper are in place. Brandywine Health and Wellness also awarded some surprise funding that has been like a "windfall" to use as needed.

The Student Resource Officer was funded for both East and West High Schools this year through cooperation from the school district and the Borough of Downingtown. Downingtown's biggest challenges are that they are missing the full expression of the "parent" voice. They have good agency representation, and good buy-in from the school district and law enforcement personnel. They are focusing on parents as the next key to "opening doors".

West Chester regretted not being able to attend. Their initiatives are moving forward, and progress is being made. They were awarded County Drug and Alcohol funding to sustain their community efforts to fund-raise, network for greater awareness, and fund a part time mobilizer. They continue to strongly influence agency-to-agency communications and provide resource linking in their community.

Nancy Clegg commented, with all this progress, it is certainly an appropriate time to be planning a Countywide CTC Key Leaders celebration of progress. She reminded the group that in thinking through those who would be invited to this event on Nov. 16th, to think of the ones who have that "key" to the next door of community progress. She reminded them, that in the Phoenixville community, a young mom in a housing project who wants to make a difference for the youth **IS** a key leader and catalyst for positive change.

She then suggested we come back to key leader planning after hearing from our speaker.

Paul Karaman III acquainted us with the development and history of the **New Life** day treatment center in West Chester. He is director of services there. New Life is located at 210 Carter Drive, West Chester PA in the Matlack Industrial Park. They are a therapeutic program serving adolescent males and females who have been referred by the juvenile court or public schools and live within a 45 minute commute of the program.

New Life uses a “team” approach to provide individual, group, and family counseling, educational services, and independent life skills training. The goal of the services is to help the young person function in the family, school, and on the job, and in community in a manner beneficial to all.

Returning a student to graduate from his own public or private school is another goal. Although educational instruction takes place at New Life, it is felt a degree from the student’s recognized high school has more weight in giving them the best possible future.

Individual counseling, group therapy, and family counseling are also part of the treatment provided to give youth the best possible chance at new patterns of wellness and success.

Paul then fielded questions and asked questions of agency and community about working together.

Paul’s presentation was followed by refocusing on the plans for the Key Leader CTC Celebration Nov. 16th. Nancy gave a brief synopsis of the pieces that are in place. A short brainstorming time with all the communities yielded the idea of each CTC site having a 3 minute “real story” of how CTC initiatives had resulted in positive change in communities. This would occur after Charles Gray gives his talk. It was decided this would be discussed further at the Oct. 4th planning meeting. Nancy gave each of the communities 25 written invitations to send out to their community key leader list, funders, and people they want to acquaint with the CTC process in their community. More invitations are available by contacting Nancy. Nancy will be responsible for sending out invitations to the legislators, Government Service Building Agencies, and any Key leaders that are common to all sites. She requested that each site send a representative to the next two planning meetings Oct 4th and Oct. 25th to continue to plan further details and logistics.

Nancy reminded everyone to complete the Meeting Inventory Assessment that they received with their agenda sheet at the beginning of the meeting. This evaluation tool was agreed upon at the beginning of the formation of CC Caring Communities Consortium last winter. This periodic review of whether the meetings are meeting the needs of everyone involved will keep the group on track and determine whether we are meeting the appropriate goals in working together on prevention.

Laura Heikkila then presented a brief overview of the County Youth Survey results for 2003/2004 school year. Copies were made available to all attendees. Laura encouraged these to be used in identifying gaps that needed to be addressed and in seeing where there

is over all progress. They can also be helpful in grant writing situations to line up the individual community data with overall countywide data.

There was a time for Community Announcements and feedback that had not previously been addressed in the community reports. Parenting seemed to be an issue that we might collectively investigate addressing for future meetings.

Nancy gave the dates for the next quarterly meeting. **Friday, January 28th from 9-11:00** the consortium will meet for its regular meeting. From **11:30-2:30 a professional training called “Risky Business – Planning for Successful Outcomes” will be available** –Maggie Marcopul will prepare this training to focus on the best highlights of Risk and Resource training as well as Community Planning. **NOTE A SNOW DATE OF FEBRUARY 4TH IS ALSO ON THE CALENDAR** as a back up for this meeting and training.

The meeting adjourned at 11:30 and networking continued.

Respectfully Submitted,

Nancy Clegg
Community Prevention Outreach Coordinator
The COAD Group
Community Prevention Department