

MINUTES: Healthy Carolinians of Macon County – **Substance Abuse Task Force**

DATE: November 18, 2008

PLACE: Health and Human Services Building

TIME: 3:00 – 5:00 PM

ATTENDEES: Stephanie Almeida, Rhonda Blanton, Jim Bottomley, John Cherry, Jennifer Garrett, M.R. Hall, Larry McDonald, Kathy McGaha and Patti Tiberi

FACILITATOR: Susan Johnson

TOPIC	DISCUSSION	ACTION	FOLLOW-UP
Welcome and Approval of Minutes	Kathy McGaha welcomed everyone to today’s meeting of the Substance Abuse Task Force. Ms. McGaha asked the task force members to review the minutes of the last meeting. Stephanie Almeida motioned for the approval of the minutes. Patti Tiberi 2 nd the motion, with a unanimous vote for approval.		
Strategic Framework Planning Process	► <i>See attached updated draft of the Strategic Prevention Framework Planning Process</i>		
Assignments	Assignments were: <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ All task force members were asked to bring lists and data sources on the topics discussed during today’s meeting – prescription drug abuse and underage drinking.○ Rhonda Blanton will contact Amy Stewart about attending our next meeting on December 18th and asking her to bring local data on underage drinking.○ Rhonda Blanton will contact a local pharmacist to attend a future meeting.		
Other Items for Discussion	Other Items for Discussion: <ul style="list-style-type: none">▪ Patti Tiberi passed out a handout on Mothers Against Drunk Driving. A Candlelight Service will be held on December 6th, at 8:00 PM at the Haywood County Sheriff’s Office in remembrance of those who have lost their lives on North Carolina highways. Ms. Tiberi invited everyone to attend.▪ Patti Tiberi also passed out a handout on an upcoming Prescription Drug Abuse Awareness Program. This program will be held on December 8th from 6:30 PM – 8:30 PM at the		

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	Ramsey Center at Western Carolina University. Ms. Tiberi invited everyone to attend.		
Next Meeting Date	The next meeting of the Substance Abuse Task Force will be held on Thursday, December 18 th , from 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM in Meeting Rooms A/B at the Health and Human Services Building.		

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Priority area 1. Prescription drugs

How do you know this is a problem (data sources)

- o Focus groups with youth regarding health (nothing else to do)
- o Individual conversations with youth
- o YRBS – usage rates – high school levels decrease:
 - MS lifetime: 2007 - 6.7% / 2005: 10.9%
 - HS lifetime: 2007: 26.2% / 2005: statistically close to 2007
- o CDC research – supports perception of a safer drug and easier to conceal
- o Research from other states (see CDC research)
- o Investigations of physicians
- o Methadone data from state regarding deaths (from Medical examiner)

The group reviewed the list of contributing factors and prioritized the following:

- Access. It was noted that this factor may be easier to change than some others. Target/educate adults & parents, because their kids' friends are taking the prescription drugs
- Lower perceived risk than other drugs - "Safer drug"/easier to conceal use/less stigma than other drugs
- Combining drugs and alcohol
- Self-medicating (due to lack of coping skills). Suggested strategies to address this area included promoting alternatives; identify supportive networks; and programming for youth
 - o Use youth as messengers to teach coping skills (train youth peer support groups)
 - o Connect with youth groups

Other action item: The group would also like a pharmacist to come speak to what they are doing to monitor drugs. This would be good to do in the new year. Rhonda is looking into this.

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Priority area 2. Underage Drinking

How do you know this is a problem (data sources)

- YRBS (youth reports) – statistics including lifetime use; age of first use; 30 day use; 30 day binge; use on school property; source of alcohol (middle school data reveal they get it at store, however , from youth conversations, they get alcohol from 18-21 year olds)
 - 2007: High School – 15% - other way; 10% - give someone money to buy; 8% get from someone of age; 5.3% take from home; 3.7% parent purchase
- Youth conversations
- District court records (ask Amy Stewart)
- ALE agent

The group reviewed the list of contributing factors and prioritized the following:

- Access
 - Get from parents (parents not aware of laws/liability)
 - May take from other kids. Parents have a low perception of risk (safer than other drugs)
 - Siblings and older adults
- Lack of prevention programming. Strategies may include looking at Red Ribbon Week; creating a speakers bureau; Increase access to resources
- Lack of Supervision. Strategies could include helping to strengthen families. It was noted that lack of supervision is also partly due to parent denial

At our next meeting we will focus on discussing potential strategies for the above areas.