

**The Town of East Greenwich
Substance Abuse Prevention Task Force Minutes
East Greenwich Citizens Who Care
PO Box 1146, East Greenwich, RI 02818**

Meeting date: September 13, 2005

Time: 10:30 AM – 11:45 AM

Location: East Greenwich High School, Room 132

Attendance: Jeannine Light, Michael Levine, Mary Ann Andries, Sandy Masterson, Bob Houghtaling, Patty Streich, Mary Jane Jansen, Lauren Bedard, Ptlw. Michele Mowrey and Lisa Allum-Cruff.

All were welcomed as we begin our new year. Mr. Michael Levine, the interim principal at East Greenwich High School was introduced as were all members attending.

Mr. Levine spoke with the group about his focus for this year. He sees benefits of having SRO's in the building. Members had concerns regarding safety at night and the need for improved lighting in the parking lots.

Reports and Announcements and updates from Mr. Houghtaling our substance abuse prevention counselor, School and Community Liaisons:

Ptlw. Mowrey reported that the SROs (School Resource Officers) have had ongoing safety concerns regarding: poor lighting in parking lots at night, lack of parking space lines and no numbers on the spaces which would help them identify students improperly leaving the campus during school hours. Assigned spaces would also help with hit and run accidents. SROs are in the school from 7:10am – 2:40pm. They are walking the grounds after school to address possible bullying and smoking. They have had to address specific issues regarding internet safety and larceny. A female student was being harassed by fellow students on the internet and money was stolen at football practice.

Bob Houghtaling distributed and reviewed the 2005 Needs Assessment. The 7 page report was very thorough. It stated in conclusion that the Town of East Greenwich does an exemplary job in many areas regarding substance abuse. The community has a teen center, many youth leadership/prevention groups, strong parent support and outstanding collaboration between the schools, police and service providers. Also noting the town has a full-time drug counselor who services both the community and schools in both prevention and treatment. The town addresses many issues that lead to substance use, i.e. diversity, dating violence, truancy, gambling, parent concerns and alienation.

We will be looking at ways to implement the areas listed as “need for

continued success” such as: arranging for additional administrative support to comply with prevention grants and provide direct service to adolescents, expanding the task force to include elderly, youth and clergy (have had in the past but none currently serving on the task force) and offering media literacy workshops and education to counteract perceived social norms that “everyone is using”.

Overview of summer programs: Teen Center remained open and was well attended with Kevin DeCristofaro managing the programs. Bob Houghtaling coordinated our efforts to have 48 students attend the Eastern States Youth to Youth Summer Conference at Bryant University on July 31 – August 3, 2005. The RATPACK (Reaching All Teens through Prevention, Alternatives, Counseling and Knowledge) Retreat was held at URI Alton Jones Campus on August 8, 2005.

Bob Houghtaling reported that 40 students attended a Youth to Youth Mini Conference at URI Alton Jones Campus on September 10-11 with Dr. Lewis Dodley as one of the presenters.

Reports from community liaisons: Lauren Bedard from SATRC (Sexual Assault and Trauma Resource Center will be offering support groups and is working with Mrs. Cullen on this. She will be coming in once a week and have open office hours for students. She stated that statistics indicate that 1 in 4 girls and 1 in 6 boys will be assaulted.

Erika Cannon from Elizabeth Buffum Chase House sent the following

message. A presentation on Child Safety and Internet Safety will be held on October 3 from 9-12 at her facility at 821 West Shore Road, Warwick. The session is free and open to all.

A Community Dinner was held on Friday, September 9, 2005 at Swift Gym. Donations were accepted to support the Hurricane Katrina survivors. Youth to Youth students from EGHS served the meal with a diverse group from the community attending.

Other concerns and issues Bob Houghtaling reported there is a complex situation where 5 youth are being charged with felony assault. He also stated there is a need to address how alcohol parties are broken up.

Old Business: none

New Business:

Archie R. Cole Middle School initiating Character Counts Program and Nancy Merrill will be coordinating this effort.

We continue to recruit representatives from all the schools and welcome Jeannine Light, our newest member from Meadowbrook Farms School.

Diversity Programs will be presented in all 6 of our public schools on either November 21 or 22, 2005.

Payment of bills – annual fee for the PO Box has been paid

Minutes submitted by Mary Ann Andries