**The Norwalk Partnership**

**MInutes of Virtual Meeting held April 24, 2024**

**Attendees:** Jennifer Garcia (Child & Family Guidance Center); Jake Tejada, Anthony Certo, Vivian Balaz (Norwalk Strong club / youth coalition members); AnaVivian Estrella (Norwalk Human Services Department); Paul Reinhardt (New Canaan Parent Support Group); Noelle Swift (MADD); Christian Reid (Youth Business Initiative); Chief James Walsh (NPD); Kelley Tomlinson, Jahliah Green, & Shari Van Ness (Norwalk Health Dept); Chanelle Campbell & Olga Davila (Norwalk Community Health Center); Shaaron Sinvilcin\*, Anamilena Moreno & Brandalyn Williams (Norwalk ACTS); Tory Sullivan, Rob Pennington\*, Angela King & Ryan Harold (Norwalk Public Schools); Nicole Hampton\*, CPRS & High Focus Centers); Ayesha Santana & Diamond Sead\* (Human Services Council); Jessica Vivenzio (Family & Children’s Agency); Ginger Katz & Larry Katz (Courage to Speak Foundation); Nina Chanana (project evaluator); Eve St. Surin (Community Action Agency of Western CT): Aida Cruz (Behavioral Health/Smilow); Hiba Nbou (Prevention Corps member); Margaret Watt, Dayna Macari, Karlene Barnett & Vanessa Wilson (Positive Directions) *\* = NPS parent*

1. Coalition updates since last month

* Submitted grant to CDC for next 5 years of funding
  + Reviewed local conditions that we will be addressing in the work
    - Low substance use rates; but uptick moving forward; certain groups with higher substance use rates (gender and sexual minorities, race and ethnic minorities, youth with IEPs)
  + Have great increased partnerships - continue to grow this
  + Full sector representation now
    - Looking for more parent engagement, more representation of underserved/high risk groups as ambassadors, community educators
* 28 teens attended Talent Show night at TNAS
* 45 teens attended mini-golf Teen Night Out
* MADD promposal project will take place at both high schools with our Norwalk Strong clubs supporting
* Norwalk Strong clubs had awareness tables in both high schools
  + Club made new BMHS/CGS resource video
* Ongoing Walk & Wellness Fair planning & advertising - arts, crafts, yoga, resources, MH screenings, food trucks,
  + 47 agencies are participating!!
  + Organize your walk team!
* 189 viewers from Norwalk registered to livestream documentary *If They Had Known* - available through end of June
  + Sign up at [positivedirections.org/events](http://positivedirections.org/vents) to get the livestream link and password emailed to you
  + Please share blog post to get word out - film is only 35 minutes
* Narcan training for 10 Supportive Housing staff today
* Regional LPC meeting

1. Cannabis Discussion
   1. Social Equity Community Conversation (do not have date yet)
      1. NAACP/local fraternity applied for a grant (supported by City of Norwalk) to hold these conversation
      2. Need those that have been impacted at these conversations; show up to talk about how the funds can be used; Community involvement
      3. When the money comes in we want to be in a good place to allocate the dollars
         1. How have PEOPLE been impacted by ‘war on drugs’ and cannabis/drug use?
         2. Want to identify folks to be ambassadors in the planning and work
   2. Cannabis-infused drinks discussion - “Social tonic” or “THC seltzers” - non-alcoholic but has THC in it. The tag line for CANN is “Party drink with no alcohol”
      1. CAAN brand- sold in Stew’s; one member who went to purchase did have her ID checked at check out,
      2. There is a bill in the current legislation to be able to sell THC infused drinks at only liquor and cannabis retailers
         1. If it does not pass there are some gray areas that need to be considered;
      3. Comments:
         1. Shaaron, Teens working at retailers who sell these products - are they mature enough to be responsible to check IDs
         2. Karlene, LADC, where is the protection especially to youth who are in recovery or treatment
         3. Larry- also consider the impact to those who drink these beverages and are now impaired drivers; also bringing the products home to their families who do not know about the impact of THC. Packaging is very ‘wellness’ drink looking and flavors are enticing
            1. Suggestion that we can provide responsible use information alongside these products
         4. 753 places in CT selling this product (owner is from Westport and pushing it)
         5. Paul- discussed the loophole with Delta 8 products that has been closed; in NC they had parents fill out complaints when local retailers were selling and it seems that they do follow up; don’t need to feel helpless; go to your legislator to raise your concerns and reference bill #5150
         6. Diamond - we don’t want to come across as ‘anti-cannabis’ and should be focusing on providing information on underage risk, safe storage, etc.
   3. Delivery issue
      1. Door Dash - according to police Chief, 80% of legalized cannabis are internet that are pre-placed; door dash is delivering pre-orders cannabis
      2. Fine Fettle - uses their own delivery service
      3. Establishments do have secure vaults so that delivery drivers can return orders directly to retail stores.
2. Upcoming coalition events (help needed!)
   1. Video project follow-up - Margaret will send out a Doodle poll to schedule
   2. Walk - hang banner this Sunday - looking for helpers - Nicole Hampton, Shaaron Sinvilcin, Brandalyn Williams, Diamond, Dayna, Margaret offered to help.
   3. May 1st 3:30-5pm: TNP Marijuana/Vaping Committee Meeting online - let Margaret know if you plan to attend
   4. May 4th 9am-12pm: NorWALK for Mental Health: Walk + Wellness Fair
   5. Parent convos at FCA - May 6 (English) and May 8 (Spanish)
3. Other community events & announcements
   1. April 27, 12-4pm: Earth Day on the Norwalk Green
   2. Drug Takeback Day this Saturday (April 27, 2024)
   3. June 8 (rain date June 9), 12-8pm: Pride in the Park - Vets Park - volunteers & vendors can sign up <https://ctpridecenter.org/pride-in-the-park/>
   4. June 11, Norwalk ACTS Quarterly Convening
   5. June 18, 9:30am-3pm: Day of Training for youth-serving providers at Jefferson Elementary School, contact Shaaron [ssinvilcin@norwalkacts.org](mailto:ssinvilcin@norwalkacts.org)
   6. July 20, 9am-5pm: YBI Community Day - contact Dajuan [dwiggins@ybict.org](mailto:dwiggins@ybict.org)