Dedham Organization for Substance Awareness

September Meeting Minutes

September 15, 2020

In Attendance:

Krissy King – DFC Program Director

Jason Sullivan – School Resource Officer

Cassandra Bigness – DFC Program Coordinator

Fiona Flynn – Youth Representative

Mike Butler – Coalition Chair

Michael Buckley – Dedham Police

Alan Meister – Program Director of Connect2Recovery at Riverside

Melissa Pearrow – Dedham School Committee

Sarah MacDonald – Select Board Member

Michael D’Entremont – Chief of Police

Kelly Celata – Brockton Neighborhood Health Center, DOSA Harm Reduction Team

Kathy Reda – Vice Chair, Dedham Board of Health

Kim Rutherford – DHS Parent Connection Committee

Meeting called to order at 6:00 PM

**Presentation**

*Mental Health and Overdose Updates-Michael D’Entremont (Chief of Police)*

* Chief D’Entremont presented on mental health and overdose calls from March 1st until present. Over that time period, DPD had 172 incidents that have been classified in one way or another as related to some type of mental health issue involving an emotionally disturbed person.
* There has been a 26% increase in mental health calls over a 1 year period.
* 4PM is the prime time for these calls.
* For the 6-month period ending May 31st , DPD found that there was an increase of 11 calls to the INTERFACE line compared to the year before. Anxiety and depression continue to be the top two areas they were receiving calls about.
* Breakdown of INTERFACE line callers- 59% female, 41% male
* 29 overdoses this year compared to 27 last year. This year DPD has seen what they believe are 3 overdose related deaths.
* Last year, first responders administered Narcan on 6 occasions compared to 1 time this year.

*Annual Coalition Update-Krissy King (Program Director-DFC Grant)*

* We are in year 3 of a 5-year grant that can be renewed to a 10-year grant.
* One thing that was exciting was that we got a new name, and this new name was in the new logo (created by high school students).
* Before Covid, we were able to partner with Dedham High School, Dedham Police and the Youth Commission to host substance free alternative events for youth.
* Cassandra (DOSA-Program Coordinator) and I went into some health classes at the middle school and high school level to give presentations on vaping on cannabis (marijuana) and on mental health and substance use.
* For Dedham Day 2019, we brought in the MEGA giant inflatable brain exhibit and had an educator come in and talk to hundreds of kids and adults about the effects of substance use in the brain.
* We worked with not only Erin Boles Welsh from the Parent Team, but also Prevention Solutions (our technical assistance consultant) and the Youth Commission social worker (Angela Osei-Mensah), to put together a series of three mini webinars for parents. The idea is to spread it to as many parents as possible because they're 15 minutes long (20 minutes with questions); It's very bite sized skill building and education for parents.
* In August, in response to a nationwide unrest around social injustices, we hosted an Interrupting Racism online training that had attendance from members of the Select Board, members of the School Committee, parents, members of the Human Rights Commission, a lot of town leaders, as well as community members.

*Coalition Capacity Survey Results*

* The coalition capacity survey is completed on an annual basis and measures capacity for community engagement in a variety of areas.
* 47 items improved in their scores from 2019 to 2020.
* The items with the highest scores this year were that the coalition makes all residents welcome in the coalition regardless of income, race, gender, age or education level.
* The coalition advertises its meetings with sufficient notice and recognizing and rewarding all member contributions, large or small, because it does everyone does contribute.
* The item “our coalition has a monthly newsletter to keep members informed” went from 1.9 to 4.3 out of 5.
* Two updates- One is that we have funding to do a mental health ad campaign targeted at youth and parents online. Another is that we have funding that's carried over from previous years to hire a youth engagement coordinator to help us get a youth coalition going at the high school level.

**Group Discussion: Action Team Updates**

*Youth Action Team- Jason Sullivan (Dedham School Resource Officer)*

* We talked about developing programs that stay connected with the kids long term and trying to get away from relying so much on the school aspect of it, because we don't really know how school is going to play out, especially in the fall.
* One thing we talked about from the school part of it is all the schools are using a login system. Cassandra talked about maybe on that main login page, having a link to a quiz that connects to the Dedham Organization for Substance Awareness just so that kids are connected and getting some information from there.
* Trying to get some sort of virtual game night or virtual movie night that the kids look forward to, e.g., word games or drawing games or something like Spotify Bingo to get kids engaged throughout the fall.

*Parent Action Team-Kim Reda (Vice Chair of Board of Health)*

* We're thinking of doing a virtual parent coffee hour. So, taking a spin-off of some of the webinar topics and maybe doing a panel series.
* Due to the request of support for parents with children going into the ninth grade; we thought it would be helpful to connect parent to the Link Crew.
* Promoting mental health and substance use resources for parents.

*Data Team-Mike Butler (Coalition Chair)*

* We'd like to expand and focus on key informant interviews with currently underrepresented groups in the coalition.
* Analyze archival school survey data for trends.
* High schools have conducted student surveys in the past, so we wanted to make sure we went through the files up there before we left and then added them into data we have and identify alternative data sources and how to obtain data from them.
* More research will be done on that to see if there are examples that other communities like Dedham have done and found it to be of value and then identify captured current data.
* The idea of bringing in an intern, maybe someone, a grad student of public health, to help us organize us a little bit better.

*Harm Reduction Team*

* We talked about the four tasks that have been identified in the action items, one of which was virtual Narcan training, which so far to two weeks ago was a national overdose awareness day.
* A couple of people have suggested the idea of potentially mailing Narcan to people who are interested or finding a way to get it to anyone who participates in this virtual overdose training.
* We wear masks for the pandemic -- Narcan should be normalized along with those other measures to take the stigma away from substance use.
* We talked about resources for substance use in the area, including Riverside and other mental health resources.

Meeting ended at 7:30 PM