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The Power & Benefits of Coalitions

By Andrew Robinson, Community Health Specialist, Southeast Center For Healthy Communities, A Program of Health Imperatives

A coalition can be defined as a diverse group of individuals and organizations that work together to reach a common goal. The goal will differ based on a number of variables but most often includes efforts to effect public policy, influence people's behavior, or build a healthier community. Coalitions are most often created as a response to something such as an incident of some kind, a spike in some behavior, the recognition of duplication of services, a response to an outside threat, or a desire for some kind of broad change. There are many things to consider in the early stages of coalition development that will help to set it up for

success. It helps to understand the issue at hand as comprehensively as possible. What kind of data is available to support the need for action? Does the community at large recognize the same need for change? If not, what can the coalition do to educate the community on the importance of the issue and the need for change? What kind of action is needed to create the desired change? Is this something that can be accomplished simply through education, or will it require systemic or behavior change to achieve the desired outcome? Think about who should be at the table to create the most effective change.

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**Working Together,
Making A Difference!**

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Youth Health Connection: Upcoming Meetings

April 6th: Parent Partner Advisory Meeting from 8:30-10:30 AM at Notre Dame Academy, Main St. Hingham. We will meet in the Board Room.

New Members always welcome!

May 2nd: Creative Problem Solving Training for Faculty Advisors. Want to learn more? Read the article on Page 2 or contact kimberly_noble@sshosp.org

NOTE THIS IS A CHANGE!!!!
There will not be a School Nurse Meeting this month.

May 4th: **JOINT MEETING** School Mental Health Providers & Parent Partners 8-9:30 AM at Hingham High School, Guidance Office.

This is the LAST ADVISORY Meeting for this academic year! Curious about Youth Health Connection? Join US!

Tip for Better Living:

"A poem begins in delight and ends in wisdom."

Robert Frost (1874-1963)

April is National Poetry Month!

The Power & Benefits of Coalitions (cont) by Andrew Robinson

It's important to build a membership that is reflective of the community and which involves key players, local experts on the issue, and people affected by the problem. It will also be important to continually assess the resources that are available to support the coalition including personal, professional, and financial assets. This is important because it will

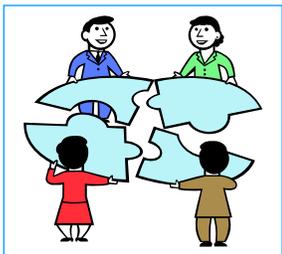
help a coalition determine what can realistically be done with the resources available as well as what additional resources may need to be leveraged to create the kind of change that is ultimately required or desired.

Although there are many things to consider and a lot of work involved in the development of a coalition, ultimately a coalition can be a powerful tool for change in

a community; coalitions have the capability to engage a broad array of individuals and agencies in working towards a common goal, they often revitalize the energies of groups and individuals who were unable to create desired change on their own, they can maximize the use of minimal resources toward a common goal, they can increase communication between groups and reduce stereotypes that may have

existed prior to common participation, they have the ability to bring necessary attention to important issues and create a common understanding of those issues, and they can reduce blame and create a sense of shared responsibility that results in more creative solutions. These are all things that when realized make the work, time, and energy of starting up a coalition worth a community's investment.

Creative Problem Solving: Faculty Advisor Training



Teens improve resiliency through better problem solving; learn how you can help any size group quickly improve this skill using **PIP** (Problem/Ideas/Plan) Risk factors associated with mental illness include poor problem solving skills, inability to generate alternative solutions, elevated levels of stress and poor coping skills. **PIP** engages teens and is a psycho-educational tool that promotes resiliency by building protective factors in teens. Each

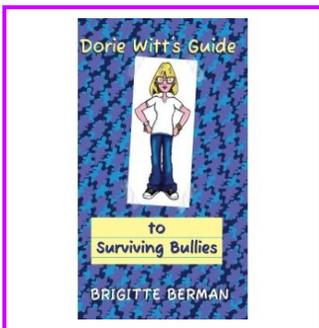
participant learns how to frame problems, create more options and become better problem solvers. Feedback from teens who have participated in the program; 91% of teens report they learned something new, describing **PIP** as worthwhile, important and useful. 79% felt that they would apply their new skills to real life situations by: Breaking large problems into smaller pieces, knowing that

acting within 24 hours as essential, enlisting others' help, deferring judgment.

We are fortunate to have nationally known speakers from the Creative Youth Leadership Program and Adolescent Wellness, Inc. to lead this session!

This event is free and open to Youth Health Connection Advisory Members; **registration is required**, contact karin_farrell@sshosp.org.

Save the Date: May 13, 2011



On Friday May 13, 2011 the South Shore Y at Mill Pond in Hanover and Youth Health Connection will jointly host an evening event for pre-teens, teens and their parents. This will be a great event with a presentation from Brigitte Berman the author of "Dorie Witt's Guide to Surviving Bullies"

In this inspiring program, Brigitte will discuss all aspects of bullying and the urgent need to "raise the consciousness and take action on the topic of bullying" working together, we can put a stop to bullying! This event will include with an interactive arts based

project.

This program is **FREE** and open to the public.

To register contact Jamie Beaudry, Youth and Family Coordinator, South Shore YMCA in Hanover at 781-829-8585 x 372 or at jbeaudry@ssymca.org

Summer Programs: CORSE and Scituate Recreation Department

Just announced on the Cohasset SEPAC website are courses being offered this summer by the Scituate Recreation Department and Community of Resources for Special Education (CORSE). Registration begins for Scituate Residents on April 2nd and for all other local residents on May 2nd. Fees for these programs vary; please check the website linked listed to the right.

Maritime Adventures through AccessSport America: August 1-7, 2011. This program is for children 6-22 years of age. There will be a variety of water sports offered during this week! **Summer All Stars** from August 8-19, 2011. This program will include a wide variety of sports, gym activities, arts & crafts, water play, etc. No two days are the same and this program is for children ages 6-12. There

will also be a new program called **All Star Teen Summer Extreme!** Participants will enjoy a variety of activities that are geared towards building teen-based social interactions. This camp is for children ages 13+.

For more information visit: www.cohassetsepac.org click on South Shore Events, give it time to load there is a lot of information!



College Concerns Today

by Kim Noble, RN, BS, MBA; YHC Program Coordinator

I was able to attend the recent WBZ Business Breakfast entitled "The Price of Admission: Getting Into and Paying for College". What was shared about "Getting In?" Truly take the time your time researching and visiting colleges to help your child find "the right fit school for them". Affording College, this is a major concern across our nation currently. It was stated that paying for college I know the most complex financial decision a family will make today! The

panel at this event highlighted that 37% of college graduates are struggling to repay their loans. On average students take on \$20,000 in debt per year of college! A surprise to me was that student loans are not cleared if someone declares bankruptcy. So what can a student today do? Consider alternate college paths, community college then transfer to complete a 4 year degree, some colleges are offering a 4 year degree in 3 years (student will attend

summer session, however these tend to have a lower cost per credit), work and save, seek out local community scholarships. The key is not to look at the "sticker price" but determine what college will cost; one way to learn this is to ask the admissions staff what is the typical cost for a family in "X" income range.

To watch video clips from this event go to: <http://boston.cbslocal.com/category/wbz-business-breakfast-series/>



BMI Training for School Nurses

Cathy Burgess from DPH is coming to Braintree High School on Wednesday, May 11 at 3:00 p.m. to complete the official Body Mass Index (BMI) training for schools in our region.

Feel free to send any of your nurses and also contact your

partner school and private schools to let them know to send nurses.

All schools not involved in the ESHS grant if the nurse attends he/she can get a voucher for a free stadiometer and digital scale.

To register please email Paula Dowd at PMDown@braintreema.gov



Youth Health Connection

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**Health Knowledge
and Risk Prevention
through Collaboration,
Respect, Connectedness
and Coalition Building**

Youth Health Connection is a community benefits program of South Shore Hospital dedicated to the positive mental health and physical well-being of youth. Our programs collaborate with schools, community health providers, law enforcement officers, state agencies, religious leaders, parents and peer leaders to help young people deal with the various challenges they face and the decisions they must make as they grow and mature. By combining efforts, we can ensure that local youth have access to the health-related knowledge, skills and resources they need to make healthy decisions throughout their lifetime.

Youth Health Connection is a community benefits program of South Shore

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email karin_farrell@sshosp.org**



Seeking a Few More Readers!



Youth Health Connection is fortunate to have a “thriving bookshelf”. Included on this bookshelf are books that have been listed on past Youth Health Connection Suggested Reading Lists (these are now available to loan out to members); as well as new additions that are in need of a volunteer reader/reviewer.

A number of our Parent Partner Advisory Members recent “adopted” a number of these books to preview and review for us, THANK YOU!

However, there are still a few books on our shelf that need to be reviewed. They are “U Chic: The College Girl’s Guide to Everything” by Christie Garton, “Kids First: Five Big Ideas for Transforming Children’s Lives and America’s Future” by David L. Kirp, “The Happiest Kid on Campus: A Parent’s Guide to the Very Best College Experience (for you and your child)” by Harlan Cohen and “Just a Little Too Thin: How to Pull Your Child Back from the Brink of An Eating Disorder” By Michael Strober, Ph.D. & Meg Schneider, MA, LMSW.

If you would like to review one of these books for us, please contact:

karin_farrell@sshosp.org

For more information on these titles visit the following:

<http://www.helpmeharlan.com/>

<http://universitychic.com/uc-hic-approved>

<http://gspp.berkeley.edu/academics/faculty/kirp.html>