

Boxborough Well-Being Committee
Meeting Minutes: January 23, 2013

Attendees: Liz Markiewicz, Laura Arsenault, Maureen Adema, Warren Ryder, Channing Wagg, Gail Walsh, Curt Bates, Cindy Worthington-Berry, Susie Allen, Frank Powers, Kate Smyers, Randy White, Selina Shaw

The September minutes were approved as amended.

Liz Markiewicz provided an update on the Substance Abuse Task Force. She said the group plans to bring recommendations back to the Well-Being and Acton Safety Net Committees in the near future.

Curt made a presentation of the 2012 Youth Risk Behavior Survey results for Blanchard 6th graders from 2011. Two areas of concern: 1) 4% of students reported that they'd seriously considered suicide; 1% said they has attempted suicide, and 2) 6% of students reported having ever had a drink of alcohol; 1% have had a drink in the last 30 days. Curt noted that stress levels were high, especially among Asian females. He noted that this seemed to be a result of parental pressure. Bullying at Blanchard was 14%, slightly higher than average (13%), with a higher reporting of being bullied by boys (19%) vs girls (9%). He reported that inhalant use was increasing somewhat (7%) and was higher than the average (6%), but concluded that overall, not many problems with this age group. He said that in conversation with a state education official, that statewide there is an increase in drug use among students starting in junior high, especially marijuana. A question was asked whether the school planned on any follow-up based on the results. Curt says they look at each cohort. They have talked about doing things with the 5th graders and focus on computer literacy and the importance of not sharing things online. Gail Walsh does the "2nd Step" program with the kids, which is a violence prevention program for K-6. It involves empathy training, impulse control and anger management. The program caps off in 6th grade with the book "Crash" and continues into junior high. The school has also brought in a speaker to talk about girls and cyberspace, but not many parents came. They expressed the concern that it was hard to get parents to hear what they need to hear.

Kate Smyers suggested parent-to-parent networking. Gail may follow-up on that-and may approach one parent at a time and see if she can get something going.

Warren Ryder said there were 4 heroin cases in Boxborough in the past month involving 20-30 year-olds. All were unintentional overdoses. He's seeing a slight decline in prescription drug abuse. He noted that domestic violence peaks over the holidays.

Frank Powers said he liked the idea of reaching out to parents starting one-at-a-time. He suggested that next meeting people should have some suggestions for actions for the community to take and then agree on 3 or 4 things the community can follow-up on.
Next meeting: March 6.

Respectfully submitted,
Liz Markiewicz