



Substance Abuse Network
March 9, 2011
Marcella Bianco, Chair

Members Attending: Marcella Bianco, Connie D'Antonio, Kathy Florack, John Poli, Steve Barker, Drew Itnyer, Nakeshia Tompson, and Kim Thomas.

I. Welcome and Introductions

Marcella Bianco welcomed everyone and introductions were made. Ms. Bianco thanked everyone for attending and appreciates the opportunity to chair this Coalition.

II. Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey Results

Kim Thomas presented the 2010 Florida Youth Substance Abuse Survey Results.

The good news is that most of St. Lucie County kids are not drinking and not doing drugs. Alcohol is the most commonly used drug and 30% of students report using it in the last 30 days. 13% are using marijuana and 9% are smoking cigarettes.

Of those that are drinking, the source of alcohol shows that someone either gave it to them or bought it for them, or they took it from a family member. Only 6% bought it in a store.

Binge drinking is heavy consumption of alcohol over a short period of time with the primary intention of getting drunk. Among high school kids that are drinkers, almost 30% are drinking five or more drinks per sitting.

Cigarette smoking has gone down, and only 6% of students think it would be seen as cool to smoke cigarettes – most see it as harmful. Marcella Bianco discussed the statistics from the 2010 Florida Youth Tobacco Survey, which shows that they are not smoking cigarettes, but they are smoking flavored tobacco products and this has gone up. Specialty tobacco use is up which includes hookahs, flavored cigars and flavored smokeless tobacco.

Marijuana usage has increased from 2008 in middle and high school, and in middle school it is higher than the state at 6.9%. In high school it's at 18.4%. The perceived risk of harm has gone down. The perception of being seen as cool for smoking marijuana is at almost 16% and rising.

8% of middle school kids are huffing, or using inhalants. This is breathing in fumes – anything from gasoline to spray paint. This is higher than the state at 4.8% and higher than 2008 at 6.8%.

Prescription pain reliever usage has gone down since 2008, and we are lower than the state in middle and high school (St. Lucie – 2.1%, Florida – 2.9%).

Top delinquent behaviors are getting suspended, attacking someone with the intent to harm, being drunk or high at school (almost 13%), and being arrested. We are higher than the state in all of these, especially in getting suspended (St. Lucie – almost 30%. Florida – almost 15%).

Almost 40% of middle school kids were taunted or teased. 31% said bullying caused worry. Almost 30% say they were the bully. High school numbers are considerably lower. Most of those who are being bullied report that it is being done in the classroom, with the teacher present. Next was online, phone or text messaging (cyber bullying). Next was in the hallways or stairwells.

The question of delinquent behavior in school among gang members was asked for the first time. 58% say gang members are fighting; 36% selling drugs; 33% vandalism; 33% stealing/robbing; and 22% carrying weapons. 78% said they have never belonged to a gang. Those that are in a gang reported the reasons for joining was: (1) for fun and excitement; (2) have a friend or relative in a gang; (3) for protection.

Risk and Protective Factors

Protective factors are healthy behaviors. In order for young people to develop healthy behaviors, adults must communicate healthy beliefs and clear standards for behavior. Bonding between a child and an adult motivates the child to follow healthy beliefs and clear standards.

Protective factors should be 50 or above. Results show that none of St. Lucie middle school kids are above 46. The lowest was “School Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement” at 32, which means they feel they have fewer opportunities to interact closely with teachers, get involved with special projects and activities in the classroom, and participate in sports, clubs and other activities outside the classroom.

“Community Rewards for Prosocial Involvement” is at 41. Students who report high scores here receive encouragement and praise from neighbors and other members of their communities. “School Rewards for Prosocial Involvement” is at 42. This means students get less positive feedback when they work hard and do well in school. “Religiosity” is at 44.

“Family Opportunities for Prosocial Involvement” and “Family Rewards for Prosocial Involvement” are the highest at 46. Students with high scores here indicates that activities that promote family attachment are available to them.

Risk factors are conditions that increase the likelihood of a young person becoming involved in drug use, delinquency, school dropout and/or violence. These should be less than 50. Our middle school risk factors are all high, with the highest being “Transitions and Mobility” at 67. This means students are changing homes and schools more frequently. This can inhibit the ability of young people to become involved with prosocial organizations and individuals within their school and community.

Next is “Community Disorganization” where students report the presence of social turmoil in their neighborhoods such as abandoned buildings, fighting and drug selling. “Poor Family Management” is next. Students with high scores live in families in which child supervision is a lower priority. Parents place less emphasis on making sure homework is completed, monitoring children’s activities outside the home, and setting clear rules.

School, peer and individual domain risk factors: “Lack of Commitment to School” was the highest. This means that students have negative feelings about school and are less likely to report that school work is meaningful or important for their future.

Discussion:

Nakeshia Wilson – Surprised about the involvement of middle school kids. We will have to focus on the younger kids instead of high school.

Drew Itnyer – We should crack down and let them know it is not okay to come to school high – self patrol.

Steve Barker – For some it is a badge of honor to be arrested in front of their peers. The kids don’t want to be a snitch. There are crime stopper programs in the some of the schools, but budget-wise most can’t do it right now.

John Poli – Would be interested in a comparison to Martin and Indian River Counties.

Marcella Bianco – Mr. Lannon has requested that we not compare ourselves to the state because they aren’t doing well either. Instead, he would like us to compare to a state that is doing well.

Connie D’Antonio - Project Northland has a program called Class Action where the kids break into legal teams to prepare cases where someone has been harmed as a result of underage drinking. It

was noted that Circuit 19 does a teen court at Centennial High School. Jennifer Romelien will be asked to present at the next meeting.

III. Revised Logic Model and Resource & Capacity

Members were asked to review the existing Logic Model and the Resource & Capacity documents to see in which direction the Coalition needs to go in the future. These documents will be discussed further at the next meeting. It was noted that the Face It Program's funding has been cut and the program is no longer available.