

Alcohol and Drug Awareness Program of Weston Minutes from January 15, 2009 Board meeting

Attendance: Charlene Chiang-Hillman, Susan Earle, Debra Eldon, Kristen Ferrara, Carl Filsinger, Danny Goldberg, Jamie Katz, Khadija Lalani, Meredith Lomuscio, Celeste McGeehan, Linda Nash, Karen Sitney

Guest Speaker: Charlene Chiang-Hillman, Director of Weston Social Service Council

Charlene presented the results from the 2008 Youth Survey of Weston. This grant was administered through Positive Directions. The last time the town's teens was surveyed was 2000. There appear to have been substantial decreases in the use of alcohol, cigarettes, marijuana and inhalants during that period. Drinking alcohol within the previous 30 days by 7th and 8th graders decreased from 25% to 10%, and from 62% to 34% among 9th and 10th graders. While the data was all self-reported, the data was judged to be consistent with 2000 survey results and of comparable veracity. In Weston, frequency of first-use of alcohol, cigarettes and marijuana before age 13 was substantially lower than state or national statistics. There was a strong association between use of alcohol and use of other substances.

Charlene also shared the results of the companion Parent Survey. Parents' perceptions of teen drug and alcohol use were lower for all substances than the teens' self-reported use. The youth survey indicated that teens are usually consulted about problems, and in fact, this perception was higher among students than among parents. In other words, the students are listening to their parents more than parents think they are.

Charlene felt that although the trend was a decline in substance abuse, only continued vigilance will keep the rates low. Parents of younger teens who attended the public session were concerned and interested in getting involved. Jerry Belair, Weston School Superintendent, stated at this session that he wants the schools to focus on this issue, possibly through the Health curriculum.

Positive Directions has expressed their desire to create a task force in Weston to address alcohol and drug awareness. A discussion followed about not duplicating what already exists and using the ADAP organization with programs already in place or expanding already existing ADAP programs.

President's Report: Celeste McGeehan

The next Board meeting will be Thursday, February 12th at 7:00 P.M. There will also be a nominating committee meeting on January 22 at 4:00 P.M. at Susan Earle's home. Celeste thanked Olga and the parent volunteers who made the Evergreen ball a success (net income to date from Evergreen is \$3304). Celeste also thanked the YLC Reps and John McGeehan, YLC director, who participated on the panel for the Parent and Student Survey. Celeste thanked Jamie Katz for

generating the 7th and 8th grade YLC membership data. There will be a New Parent Support Group on a date yet to be chosen. The invitation will go to all the parents who attended the town meeting about the Student and Parent Survey as well as YLC parents.

Secretaries' Report and Grant Writing: Celeste (for Karen Sitney)

A motion was made and seconded to approve the minutes of the December meeting. The motion passed. The Mid-Fairfield SAC grant for \$2400 was submitted in December.

Treasurer's Report: Debbie Eldon

A detailed Treasurer's report was submitted by Debra and reviewed by the Board. The cash balance as of the end of December is \$12,102.31. We received fundraising checks this month in the amount of \$405, bringing the total for the year to \$1456, and just offsetting our fundraising costs. YLC expenditures for the month were \$2310.

Youth Leadership Council (YLC) Student Report: Susan Earle

YLC members will have the opportunity to visit the Mountainside Treatment Center in Canaan CT with John McGeehan. This is a treatment facility for patients 18-30 years old. YLC members will also attend an alcoholics anonymous meeting.

Publicity: Linda Nash

Linda will submit an article about the visit to the Mountainside Treatment Center to the Forum.

Weston Police: Carl Filsinger

Detective Filsinger stated that marijuana seems to be the drug of choice in Weston, and that there are active dealers in the schools. He feels that there are less "wild" parties in recent years, indicating that the kids are somewhat better about policing themselves.

Respectfully Submitted,
Lisa Foster and Karen Sitney, Secretaries