

The Norwalk Partnership (TNP)

Meeting Minutes, 9/27/23 at City Hall

Attendees: AnaVivian Estrella (Norwalk Community Services), Anamilena Moreno (Norwalk ACTS), Larry & Ginger Katz (Courage to Speak Foundation), Nicole Hampton (High Focus Centers & parent), Nina Chanana (project evaluator), Chief Jim Walsh (Norwalk Police Dept), Jake Tejada & Anthony Certo (Norwalk Strong club at BMHS/CGS), JoAnn Malinowski and Jennifer Rollinson (NPS Nursing), Jessica Vivenzio (Family & Children's Agency), Vicki Oatis (Norwalk Public Library), Yohanna Ramirez (Youth Business Initiative), Vanessa Wilson (Positive Directions), Jahliah Green (Norwalk Health Dept), Dayna Macari (Positive Directions), Dave Walencyk (Norwalk Youth Services), Brian Weeks (Norwalk Health Dept), Sasha * (Norwalk Community Health Center), Dyan Sommerville (Norwalk Strong club at NHS/PTECH), Margaret Watt (Positive Directions)

A resource table was set up with sign-in sheet, handouts, and other resources shared by TNP members. As the kickoff meeting of the year, the first part of the meeting focused on a presentation about TNP, members' roles in the coalition, and how prevention works. Please see attached slideshow. Toward the end of the meeting, participants were asked to walk around the room and look at this year's coalition workplan, organized according to the 7 strategies for community change, and to add comments, suggestions, and other collaborations.

1. Overview of TNP & Introductions:

TNP leadership team members AnaVivian Estrella & Cadence Pentheny gave an overview of The Norwalk Partnership and led an ice breaker discussion. See first part of slideshow (attached separately). Content covered:

- a. About The Norwalk Partnership
- b. Why a coalition? Who is part of it?
- c. Introductions of members by sector
 - a. Special welcome to our teens Jake Tejada, Anthony Certo and Dyan Sommerville from our Norwalk Strong Club. They set up the presentation they will be showing at the school club fair tomorrow.
- d. Personal reflection/Turn & Talk
 1. What's the earliest message you remember receiving about substance use – whether pro or con?
 2. Who or where did the message come from?
 3. What was your reaction? Was that message impactful?

2. Prevention in the 21st Century:

Margaret Watt, TNP leadership team member and director of the prevention grants supporting the coalition, explained prevention research findings that underscore how we work. Content covered (see separate slideshow) included:

- a. Prevention research
- b. The new norm: fewer teens using substances

- c. Addiction is a childhood onset disease
- d. For teens, all substance use is connected
- e. Perceptions matter!
- f. Research on individual substances
- g. How aware are we as coalition members?

3. Our Work: How we respond to the challenge

Nina Chanana, project evaluator, explained the key concepts in prevention science (see slideshow, attached separately):

- a. The Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) Model
- b. The 7 strategies for community change
- c. Input into current work

4. Input into this year's workplan - Seven flipcharts were placed around the rooms with an overview of TNP work planned for this year. TNP members were asked to -

- a. Add any prevention-related work that your agency/group will be doing this year. We want to reflect *all* the work being done!
- b. Add your name to any activity you want to be involved in (like hosting a training, planning an event, doing outreach, etc.).
- c. Share your questions or feedback with the TNP Leadership Team member at that station.

Please see workplan, attached separately.

5. Next steps & Announcements

- 1. MST therapy grant just started at FCA
- 2. NPD just got \$1M grant with \$500K matching grant for BHU - also have Liberation Programs available
- 3. Norwalk Community Cannabis Forum on 10/3 - Jim, Denique and Margaret will be among the panelists. 2 of the 3 incoming cannabis retailers will be represented.