



Beach Cities Partnership for Youth Coalition Kickoff Report January 10, 2019

The Beach Cities Partnership for Youth Coalition (the Coalition) kickoff took place on January 10, 2019 with more than 100 stakeholders representing a wide variety of sectors – youth, parents, business, media, schools, youth-serving organizations, law enforcement, religious/fraternal organizations, civic/volunteer groups, healthcare professionals, government agencies and other organizations involved in reducing substance abuse – to formalize into an official community Coalition with the goal of improving student mental health and well-being while reducing substance use and bullying in the beach cities.

Most of the attendees are active members of four committees – Youth Advisory Council, Parent Advisory Council, School Leadership Council and Health Provider Task Force – that Beach Cities Health District (BCHD) convenes on an ongoing basis to address concerns in the community. Each of the committees reported on their accomplishments to date and brainstormed within and across sectors to set priorities.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS/VIDEO UPDATES

- Tom Bakaly, CEO, Beach Cities Health District
Great progress has been made in the area of improving the physical health of students. Beach Cities Health District is now moving forward to address social emotional wellness and the reduction of substance in partnership with all three school districts.
- Dr. Michael Matthew, Superintendent, Manhattan Beach Unified School District
Students live in a highly stressful and competitive community and all three school districts are committed helping students navigate those challenges in healthy ways.
- Steven Keller, Superintendent, Redondo Beach Unified School District
Promoting the education of the whole child and following the social emotional wellness data is vital to the academic success of students.
- Joan Stein Jenkins, City Prosecutor, City of Manhattan Beach
All of the programs combined including therapy and support services are a collective effort towards the goal of substance use prevention in young people.
- Izzy Stein, Senior and Member of Youth Advisory Committee
The Youth Advisory Council has student representation from every school. They planned a series of events for students and have gotten to know fellow members better.
- Raunda Jones, Alcohol and Drug Prevention Coordinator, Behavioral Health Services
Behavioral Health Services is engaged in educating parents about social host ordinances and advocating for policy to prevent young people from getting access to alcohol and drugs.
- Linda Reeves, Certified LGBT Therapist, Manhattan Beach
LGBT youth experience higher rates of anxiety, depression and self-harm. Local therapists are working to support LGBT students who are coming out and want to ensure that this population is incorporated into the Coalition's plan. She commends the Youth Advisory Council for recognizing the diversity of the community's needs.



- Jeanette Bareto, Director of Business Development, Clear Recover Center
Clear Recovery Centers provides clinicians to offer support and conduct outreach at educational events, screenings and task Force meetings.
- Angela Wilson, Director of Mental Health Programs, South Bay Children’s Health Center
This partnership is an opportunity to bring together everything that is being done. There has been a lot of adult input, but by giving young people a voice in the process it will yield better results. The forums give the community a chance to first understand the needs.
- Liz Glzman, Secretary, South Bay Families Connected
A walking group for parents has been created to provide an opportunity to connect.
- Suzanne Hadley, Treasurer, Manhattan Beach Coordinating Council
The Manhattan Beach Coordinating Council puts emphasis on wellness and well-being over achievement as part of the partnership.

Following is a summary of the goals set by each group.

STUDENTS

- Focus efforts on a student-led and created substance use prevention campaign during the school day with doctors/experts, but also individuals who are in recovery and are close to their own age.
- Plan a Club Fair at Mira Costa High School that is modeled after the Redondo Union High School event which connects youth to campus life and introduces them to adults at school who they can reach out to for support. Students felt it was vital for incoming freshmen to feel connected, find their passion and make friends early in the school year. They also want to invite health providers who can offer mentorship/internship components to both high school Club Fairs.
- Create a social media awareness campaign for young people to learn posting etiquette and the importance of their online reputation. Students felt that a lot of social media training is being directed at parent, but that more is necessary for students including middle school and elementary school age students.

PARENTS

- There is a need for centralized communication for parents about events and resources. Currently there is no “one-stop shop” that serves to consolidate information to parents about events and resources. Parents felt it would be valuable to pull together a resource directory. There was also conversation about the need for parents to understand the explicit terminology of substances used by youth and emphasizing a universal language when information is issued to parents.
- Develop a wellness pledge for parents that includes healthy actions that they can do for themselves.
- Seek support for teacher wellness in order for them to model healthy behavior in the classroom for students. Parents discussed that student respect for teachers needs to improve.



SCHOOLS

Conduct an environmental scan of all the social-emotional wellness efforts and programs at all three school districts. The results will inform discussions on what is and is no longer working at schools and determine if there is a more inclusive curriculum available as well as identify potential partnerships between the school districts. Specifically, the MindUP and Second Step Program will be evaluated.

- Prepare a Parent Readiness Checklist for new parents that includes volunteer opportunities, engagement opportunities, recommended reading and resources. Kindergarten Round Up was identified as an ideal time to distribute the checklist to parents.
- Take an inventory of all assessment tools used by school districts to diagnose the social-emotional wellness needs of students. Suggestions were made to have a single, cohesive system that all districts can be trained on. It was also recommended that the assessment be part of the standard school screenings that all students must take.

HEALTH PROVIDERS

(Due to the high number of health providers in attendance, two Health Provider groups were formed. The goals from both of those groups are combined here.)

- A key theme for health providers was the need to centralize information with a community calendar and resources in a way that is easy to navigate by users as well as those making referrals. This would allow providers to have a better grasp of what everyone is offering and not duplicate services. Some felt they operate in silos.
- The group discussed the need to incentivize both students and parents to achieve a greater reach. Meeting parents at their workplace to offer education talks would be a good way to increase outreach. Parents can also be invited to health fairs on campus and stay connected during the summer with blogs or workbooks.
- A safe place for students who have thoughts of suicide, homicide or gun violence to go to needs to be identified. Students in the “middle group” which means that they are curious about substance use, but not necessarily engaged in illicit activities also need a safe point of contact.
- Continue collaborating with schools and offer a life skills program to students.
- Use public health messages that resonate with teens to educate and de-stigmatize mental health issues. It was recommended that focusing on the social norms that everyone is not using substances as a vital marketing approach.

GOVERNMENT/COMMUNITY

- Tell “real stories” about what youth are experiencing in the community to drive the message home about substance use prevention. It is important that everyone knows that they have a role to shift the norm and be good examples. There were comments about parents using public/school events as an opportunity to drink alcohol.
- Take a holistic approach with students that includes guidance, mentoring and leadership at an early age. Parents need as much support as the students.



- The lack of social media training or rules for young people was a big concern. There needs to be a progressive safeguard to new users.
- There was discussion about current substance use policies across the Beach Cities. The group was interested in advancing efforts to bring tobacco control and social host ordinances to the City of Redondo Beach.
- Individual commitments were made from everyone in the group to act on. These ranged from sharing information/resources, serving as mentors adopting a holistic approach among other tactics.

NEXT STEPS

The Beach Cities Partnership for Youth Coalition generated multiple ideas by and for the community to improve student mental health and well-being while reducing substance use and bullying. All of the recommendations will be reviewed in detail by the committees at their next meeting. They will look at the feasibility of the proposals and begin to engage partner support to put together a 12-month action plan.

During the kickoff members of the Coalition were polled to gather additional information. When asked which two substances should be prioritized the top responses were alcohol (39%) and marijuana (29%). The need to increase youth involvement in prevention efforts (29%) and partnerships with business, health providers and other stakeholder groups (23%) were ranked as the top to areas of importance. This data along with common themes shared between groups like centralized communication, social media education and reaching students at an earlier age with support and interventions will also be considered.

To learn more about the Beach Cities Partnership for Youth Coalition, visit <http://www.bchd.org/youthpartnership>.

SAVE THE DATE

Youth Advisory Council
March 19 at 6:30 p.m.

Parent Advisory Council
March 20 at 11 a.m.

Student Mental Health Task Force
April 18 at 8:30 a.m.