

Greater MDI Communities for Children

Thursday, February 13th, 2003
Superintendent's conference room, MDIHS
4 – 5:30 pm

I. Brief review of January 16th meeting, next meeting dates and introductions

Present: Ron Beard (Facilitator), Terri Lanpher, Stephanie Fullam, Marty Lyons, Susan Buell, Ann Luther, Dave Chapais, Irene Greene-Murphy, Doug Michael, Jennifer Gott, Chris Kaiser, Barbara Neilly

Check-in/ announcements:

Marty – approaching towns of Tremont and Southwest Harbor for funding to support a youth outreach worker/teen center program.

Susan – Read in BDN, Middle school task force hosting conf. In Augusta – March on intramural participation policies. MDI folks will be in attendance.

Doug – PROP (peoples regional opportunity program) offering Youth Resiliency Training – “Resiliency in Action: Building Bounce Back Kids” Feb 25, Westbrook, Maine. Cost \$95. call 1-800-698-4959 to register.

Barb Neilly – MDI HS budget approved with funding for a late bus!

Marty – Passed read a note from Jane Fuller announcing a new island non-profit called “SAFE” Safe Family Exchange:

“A new nonprofit corporation named SAFE (Safe Family Exchange) is currently being created. This project will facilitate the court ordered visitation of children when the parents are conflicted and/or abusive. The place of Exchange will be the Church of Our Father in Halls Cove.

One parent will bring the child, park in one parking lot, go in a separate door and wait in a separate room. The parent picking up the child parks in a different parking lot, goes in a different door, and waits in a different room. Trained volunteers will take the child from one parent to the other. The parent with the weekend visitation would then leave. The other parent must wait 10 minutes to leave. The two parents never come in contact with each other.

We have 33 people who have signed up to be volunteers but we could use more. We have a board of directors and officers. What we need is a part-time paid employee – an Exchange Coordinator who would be a Guardian ad Litem of the court. Initially, it would be a 10 hour a week and we are

thinking of offering \$12.00 per hour with no benefits. This person would work out of their own home with a cell phone and answering service paid by the corporation. If any of you have any suggestions of who might be a good candidate, please have them write a resume and or contact Jane Fuller at 244-5409, or Penny Evans at 244-3526. We will soon have a P.O. Box in Southwest Harbor and hope to have an article about this in the three newspapers.

We hope your group will be enthused about this project. It is a much needed service which will help the children involved to be less traumatized.”

Next 3 meetings confirmed: (note change of time)

March 13, 3:30 – 5pm, Superintendent’s Conf. Rm, MDI High School

April 10, 3:30 – 5pm, Same location

May 8, 3:30 – 5pm. Same location

II. Task Force Updates

Inventory community organizational grid – setting a cutoff date (Irene)

Peg and Irene request setting a cut-off date for gathering information on the community resource grid. Additional grid spreadsheets handed out. Group agreed to having completed the information and presenting to Peg by the next meeting – March 13. A reminder of task assignments:

Marty – all island public schools and Neighborhood House

Patti Haslam – Lamoine Elementary, outer island schools, YMCA, YWCA

Susan – all island libraries

Chris – Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Big Brothers, Big Sisters, and COA

Irene – MDI Hospital, Kids Peace, Next Step, Open Door Recovery Program, and Downeast Health Services

Stephanie – Parents Are Teachers Too

Peg – Island Montessori School, Acadia Waldorf School, Kids Corner Day Care

Mary Ellen – Harbor House

Additional copies of the America’s 5 Promises model was passed out (previously sent by email) to have definitions of the promises to categorize the matrix inventory check list. Any questions or snags, call Peg at 288-5331.

Press Release – Susan and Peg revising. Will have a draft to share with the group by March 13 if not before.

Youth Forum on MDI meeting notes (Marty)

Meeting scheduled for last night cancelled due to snow. Meeting with Youth leaders who will be functioning as facilitators will be rescheduled for March 4 or 5. Marty, Ron, Susan and Peg are working with Emily Ellis, Adrian Monroe, Caleb Davis and others to organize a (March/April?) forum for youth around the region. This group has assembled a list of more than 30 names so far of Youth to invite, grades 6-12.

ACTION: Please forward names and contact info (address, phone, email) for any youth grades 6-12 in the region – outer islands, Trenton and Lamoine included – to Marty Lyons.

VISTA update (Doug for Peg)

Doug asked peg to share with the leadership council a summary of her VISTA volunteer work to date. In Peg's absence, copies of Peg's update were distributed to the group. Doug gave some context for this update, as we will be discussing a second year vista application later on today's agenda, it is important we all have an understanding of the work Peg has been doing in her year of service.

Peg is about halfway through her year of service which will end in August. Our re-application for another VISTA would be for a year of service beginning August 2003.

The format of Peg's written Update follows that of the C4C model itself, and is organized by work which falls under the MOBILIZE, ASSESS, IMPLEMENT & EVALUATE functions. Peg's work to date has mostly been focused on the MOBILIZE and ASSESS functions, as might be expected in the first year of a C4C effort.

Some of her efforts include:

MOBILIZE:

Supports the capacity building efforts and recruitment of the

- ❑ Greater MDI C4C Leadership Council,
- ❑ MDI Tomorrow Youth Issues Group,
- ❑ Healthy Acadia Advisory Board,
- ❑ Wellness Task Force
- ❑ One Maine Substance Prevention Team.

ASSESS:

Assess the realities (issues and opportunities) facing children and youth in the greater MDI region. Researched information and local data used for:

- ❑ Youth Issues chapter of the State of the Island Report
- ❑ Substance use issues for a successful substance prevention grant application
- ❑ Gathered information on child and family services and resources in the greater MDI region, compiled a Resource Book of agencies and services categorized by 3 of the 5 America's Promise: "Healthy Starts" "Safe Places" and "Caring Adults".
- ❑ Surveyed 6th grade classes in Trenton and Lamoine to assess perceived assets and social skills. This mini survey was used by the teachers and Peg as part of a pilot program where 2 sixth grade classes took the pre-test, then participated in a leadership and social skills building challenge course day at Camp Beech Cliff. One of the classes opted to continue working with Peg monthly on a skills development curriculum selected by the teacher and Peg, based on the group strengths and weaknesses which the kids perceived in the pre-test, as well as observations of the group challenges and the teacher's experience with and understanding of the class. Peg's asset (relationship) building sessions with the 6th graders include: diversity training, understanding and dealing with stereotypes and discrimination, and what makes a successful relationship.

Please look over Peg's handout for more information, and feel free to speak with Peg for further detail.

III. Mobilize & Assess: (Irene & Doug)

Carla Ritchie, of the National Center For Student Aspirations, is working on a summary of findings of the 1999 Aspirations Survey conducted in Maine. Carla will be looking at the data combined for Union 98 schools, plus Trenton and Lamoine schools, to get a uniform snapshot of the greater MDI region. Superintendents Howard Colter (U98) and William Fowler (U92) have been supportive in granting permission for the release of this information. Doug anticipates the summary report will be ready in the next week.

Irene presented an overview of the One ME Substance Prevention community assessment process underway. Healthy Acadia partners have received funding from the Office of Substance Abuse for implementation of evidence-based prevention programming. The first few months are dedicated to a broad-based

community needs assessment, which will provide information useful for the Greater MDI Communities For Children effort. Irene commented on how well the Assessment process has been laid out, and how nicely it dovetails with the Healthy Maine Partnerships, Coordinated School Health Program and Communities For Children.

Irene is Coordinator of the local Healthy Acadia One Maine project, and would like to ask the leadership council for help organizing focus groups and doing key informant interviews.

The overall assessment process consists of:

MYDAUS surveys (Maine Youth Drug and Alcohol Use Survey) – examines risk and protective factors for youth in the peer, family, school and community domains. Jen Gott will be coordinating implementation of these surveys in all U98 schools next month

OSA Indicators – Irene will be gathering this information from web and other sources.

Environmental Scans – of media, business and community environments. Irene and Peg Wood will accomplish

Coalition Focus Group – Doug

Community Resources – Peg & Irene (Community resource inventory grid)

Key Informant Interviews Needed:

School Leadership: (Appendix G): – Barbara Neilly and Terry Lanpher

Law Enforcement: (Appendix D): – Dave Chapais and Ann Luther

Parks and Recreation (Appendix H) – Chris Kaiser

Focus Groups Needed:

2 groups with multi-sector representation

1 group with Youth

1 group with Parents

Irene and Doug are willing to facilitate focus groups if others can assist in recruiting and scheduling. Groups should have 8-12 participants. Sessions should last approx 1 to 1.5 hours.

1. **Parents** – Irene will use the newly formed parents group at the high school.

2. **Youth** – Irene will approach the H.S. Hearing committee for one group, Barbara will coordinate a younger youth focus group (6–8th graders) from Tremont and Bar Harbor.

3. **Multi-sectored group 1:** The C4C leadership group will be a focus group at the next meeting on March 13.

4. **Multi-sectored group 2:** Susan Buell will recruit a diverse group from rec center board members and school committees around the island

Irene thanked all for their help in pulling together focus groups and conducting interviews. Focus groups and interviews should be completed by the end of March.

The VISTA work plan for next year

- What do we want the VISTA to accomplish?
- Where do we place the VISTA?
- How do we fund the \$4000 cost share for the current VISTA position?

The initial application and work plan for a VISTA volunteer was submitted by Doug and the Healthy Acadia Coalition one year ago. While that workplan has supported the creation of the local C4C effort, it was created prior to formation of the Greater MDI C4C Leadership council, or its predecessor the MDI Tomorrow Youth Issues committee. Now that we have a Children's Leadership Council in place, the new application, and the work of Next year's VISTA volunteer should be guided by this group. The Healthy Acadia coalition is willing to continue to house and supervise the VISTA volunteer if the group believes that is the best fit for the job functions. Healthy Acadia also would support an application for the VISTA to be hosted elsewhere if it made more sense to the group. While Healthy Acadia funded the \$3,000. cost share last year, it is unlikely they will be able to fund this years' cost share of \$4,000. Healthy Acadia is willing to continue providing in-kind resources of office space, phone, fax, computer office supply, travel expenses and supervision.

Over the last 2 weeks, email dialogue has been circulating with ideas for next years work plan. Marty Lyons raised the question of weather we could apply for more than one VISTA placement. Peg found out that we can in fact submit more than one VISTA application. For instance, Healthy Acadia and or the Children's Leadership council could submit one application for continuing our regional work, and the Youth& Rec centers could submit another application to support the development of specific programs or services – such as teen centers etc.

Doug mentioned the goals of the AmeriCorps VISTA service projects are to build capacity in communities; not to provide direct services. Often, VISTA placements are “behind the scenes” doing program development, fundraising etc.

The council brainstormed about some goals and objectives for the VISTA next year. Ideas include:

- Assist with One Maine Implementation phase
- Continue to support the greater MDI C4C council by:
 - Fundraising
 - Communications (among partners, and public relations)
 - Project administration
 - Administrative assistance – agendas, minutes, documents etc

- Advance Pilot projects like the Lamoine school program
- Follow-up to the Youth Forum – engaging youth in an active council maybe? – or follow-up with whatever the kids advance.
- Expand and coordinate pilot projects with other sites – i.e., U98 Tremont doing Camp Beech cliff
- Help to expand programs like the substance prevention program of Janice Dunnlawe – working with Connors/Emerson 4th graders
- Possibly expand opportunities for Mental Health, social services in schools

We are at a stage where our C4C effort is on the verge of using information gathered (Assessment) to guide project implementation in the communities. Next year’s work plan should position the VISTA to support implementation.

Given the nature of the work functions above, the group thought it made sense for this VISTA placement to be hosted and housed at the Healthy Acadia office.

Since the Marty had to leave early and the no one representing rec/youth centers are present, Doug/Peg will follow –up to see if the Harbor House, Camp Beech Cliff, YMCA, and these groups are interested in submitting separate VISTA applications for additional VISTA placements.

The group came up with the following ideas for fundraising the \$4000. cost share:

- ❑ Ask Partners to contribute
- ❑ PTSA’s
- ❑ Use some OSA grant funding
- ❑ Rotary, Lions and Lionesses clubs
- ❑ Solicit private donations

- ❑ MDI Drug and Alcohol group
- ❑ Seek grant funding (Maine Community Foundation, - Hancock Funds)

Doug thanked group for input. Peg and Doug will draft and circulate a VISTA application.

IV. What are our next steps?

5:20-5:30 Next steps for Task Forces/Sub-groups and next meetings' agenda items

Since we have firmly established the Greater MDI C4C leadership council, Ron Beard will be stepping back as the facilitator of this group. The council briefly discussed the possibility of filling the facilitator role on a rotating basis among council members. The exact mechanisms to be put into place will be discussed at a later date.

See task assignments and next steps above.

Chris Kaiser circulated a document entitled "Let the Children Speak". He asked folks to read and consider his proposal for an alternative community school. Direct questions, thoughts, dialogue to Chris at circleofthesun9@hotmail.com