

## **GHS Youth Forum Meeting Notes**

### **February 10, 2017**

**Participants:** Dian McCarthy (Crispin's House Coalition for Youth), John Webb (GHS), Sandy Whipple (Goffstown Public Library), Gene Piana (CHCY), Amani Tyrance (GPD), Jackie Pelletier (GPD), Eric Blow (JPPO), Jill Girolimon (SAU 19), Colby G., Lidia V., Cassander R., Abby P., Shane H., Adam Z., Mitchell S., and Allison B.

**Opening Introductions:** After a brief welcome, participants paired up with the person they knew the least to consider the following: "What is your favorite 'big storm' story? Life has a way of bringing on many different types of storms and sometimes those storms can make us feel like we've lost our own personal power. Who or what is your "go to" when dealing with personal storms?" Answers were then shared collectively and included the Blizzard of '78, arriving at an important destination moments before the way was blocked by a tree, losing power while babysitting, taking time for oneself, writing poetry, running and listening to music.

#### **Group Updates:**

- **GPD** is celebrating Random Acts of Kindness week by shifting their community policing to point out the things people are doing right. Those caught doing the right thing may be rewarded with a small gift card. Crispin's House loves this idea and is happy to help sponsor. GPD is also working on an outreach video for parents about sexting as they are seeing a huge increase in incidents among local youths.
- **Eric Blow** is a JPPO and is glad to be at the Youth Forum table interacting with young people in a different capacity from that which his job typically requires. Vanessa Tancrede is a new JPPO in their office – welcome Vanessa! Eric is noticing that the young people he works with are dealing with many unaddressed underlying issues in addition to that which led them to be court involved.
- **Jill Girolimon** is the Family/School Liaison for the district working with families in need. She has been keeping very busy recently with foster child intake which has doubled due to the heroin addiction crisis.
- **Student Ambassadors** is teaming up with Crispin's House VolunTEENS. Peter, the VolunTEENS Program Coordinator, is scheduled to be a guest at their next meeting.
- **Guidance** has had a couple of close calls with suicide recently and was able to get the students connected with help.
- **Lydia** shared that she wouldn't have known about these issues had she not come to YF as she doesn't hear about serious issues out in the community. As a journalism student, she suggested maybe discussing them in the Paw Print News.
- **GSA** is a LGBT support group that meets regularly to make sure all students are safe and feel welcomed here. They work on suicide prevention within the LGBT community as it is higher than average. They hold the Day of Silence in April representing those who lost their voices to suicide. They held a bake sale to raise funds for Equality House, a LGBT health clinic in Concord.

- **Peer Outreach** focuses on encouraging options for substance-free activities. They moved their Semi-Formal dance to April 1<sup>st</sup> due to the impending snow storm. This year's theme is Harry Potter.
- **Performing Arts** production of The Addams Family is coming up. The recent storm activity has caused them to miss several rehearsals, but it is coming together and going to be a great show as usual! Tickets are \$12 per adult, \$8 per student.
- **Student Council** has worked hard on plans for Winter Carnival that takes place Feb 20-24. Themes for dress up days are PJ day, Tie-Dye Day, Sports Day, Flannel Day and Class Colors. Plans for the assembly include all kinds of games and LARPing. It's going to be awesome!

They are also working on planning Prom which is going along well. Tickets are \$55. Jill G asked if there was any financial aid available if cost was a barrier. The students present weren't sure that anyone had ever asked for help. Jill would like to help any students needing financial aid, and Crispin's would as well. Crispin's also reminded everyone that the Community Clothing Center has prom dresses and would love to see them put to use.

Additionally, several members went down to the LEAD conference in DC where they learned about leadership and how to listen to others in a manner that makes them feel heard.

- **NHS** is all set up for their Valentine's serenades next week.
- **GOAL** had several members participate in the Penguin Plunge fundraiser for Special Olympics which was a lot of fun.
- **Empower** is holding their Women's Drive to benefit the YWCA although the snow storms have been making things difficult. They are hoping for more donations next week.
- **Ripple Effect** has put up their Wall of Positivity in the 200 wing with lots of sticky notes. Students are encouraged to take a positive note and/or leave one. Their bullying movie is in full gear and should be ready for release soon. There was some discussion around making sure that photo releases were signed so that the movie could be widely shared. They are also very happy to share that they finally got tee shirts!
- **Leos** held a winter clothing drive and donated the coats, etc to the elementary and middle schools. They are hoping to have a used sports gear drive in the spring.
- **Crispin's House** has opened registration for their 3-on-3 Basketball Tournament coming up on March 25. Volunteers and players are needed - All are welcomed and encouraged to join.

Their Diversion Program is participating in the SBIRT (Screening, Brief Intervention and Referral to Treatment) pilot program with the NH Juvenile Diversion Network where 100% of the kids coming through Diversion will be screened for Substance Misuse and Mental Health concerns. While this is not very different from prior practice, the intended outcome is increased efficacy and impact.

MVMS Youth Forum talked about plans for an end of year project and had their Starfish ceremony at their last meeting. Many of the HS students were curious about the Starfish ceremony, so Mr. Webb and Mrs. McCarthy promised to share it with them at next month's meeting.

- Crispin's House also reported on behalf of **Makin' It Happen** about a video project for the DEA 360 rally scheduled for March 7. GHS Freshmen and Sophomores will be attending the rally at the SNHU Center. It would be ideal if upper classmen with video-making experience could mentor the 9<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> graders. The video will preferably be 30 seconds or less and participants will be able to vote on a winner during the rally. Mary will forward more info as it becomes available to Mrs. McCarthy and Mr. Webb.
- **Goffstown Public Library** has brought back their Open Mic night at the GPL on the 4<sup>th</sup> Friday of every month. They are happy to have partnered with Crispin's VolunTEENS for this really fun way to spend a Friday.

On Sunday April 4 from 1-3, they will host their Human Library where patrons can "check out" a "human book" (a person who has overcome adversity or experienced discrimination due to race, religion, gender, sexuality, etc.) for 15 minutes of one-on-one question and answer conversation.

**Group Conversation:** With the few minutes left, Allison shared that her Women's Perspective Class asked the same question that Youth Forum asked back in October – "What do you think the most pressing issue facing youth today is?" The answer they came to was the same – Peer Pressure – in particular, they talked about pressure to fit the mold. After a healthy discussion, the group agreed on the following homework:

Do research on peer pressure-related PSAs (What's out there? What's not out there? What speaks to you?) and come back to our next meeting with your favorite PSA about peer pressure. This can be one you've found or a message you or your club created.

**Next Meeting Friday, March 10, 10am-noon.**