

COALITION MONTHLY MEETING

JULY 30, 2025

Attendees:

- Aissa Acuna – SEAHEC
- Kerri Munoz – SCC Superintendent's Office Gear Up Program
- Abraham Nuno – PSY Clinical Services
- Fernando Silvas – SCC Health Department
- Kayla Navarro-De La Cruz – SCC Health Department
- Jessica Gallego – Circles of Peace
- Eva Zuniga – Circles of Peace
- Corporal Marina Duran – Nogales Police Department
- Kiara Gutierrez – Circles of Peace
- Renne Aguirre – Circles of Peace
- Kazandra Navarro – Circles of Peace
- Claudia Hernandez – Circles of Peace
- Jasmin Ayala – Circles of Peace
- Channing Velasquez – Circles of Peace
- Ruben Portillo – SCC Justice Court

Quick recap

The Drug Communities Coalition held its 7th virtual meeting in July, discussing various updates and planning initiatives, including funding awards, school-based programming, and community events. The coalition reviewed its ongoing projects and services, including harm reduction programs, mental health initiatives, and youth programs, while also exploring new collaborations and partnerships. The conversation ended with discussions about upcoming community events, organizational developments, and plans for standardizing their application processes and funding requests.

Next steps

- Coalition members to join subcommittees and refer schools/youth groups to host programs
- Coalition members to mentor/support YADA youth
- Coalition members to connect with media, schools and local leaders who aren't involved
- Coalition members to stay connected and send representatives to meetings if unable to attend

- Coalition team to develop logic model for Restorative Prevention Program
- Coalition team to conduct needs assessment for youth prevention
- Coalition team to schedule school programming and community trainings
- Coalition team to organize rural pop-ups in Patagonia and Sonoita
- Coalition team to present programming options to parents/teachers
- Data Center Subcommittee to meet monthly for substance use planning
- Mental Health Wellness Alliance to collaborate on utilizing therapy services for Hispanic community
- Health Department to transition clinic contractors for vaccinations
- Health Department to develop standardized application process for funding
- Rotary Club to present Community Days event proposal to county departments
- Court-ordered Parents Commission to start parenting classes next month
- Coalition team to recruit senior volunteers for reality program
- Coalition team to organize kickball tournament for suicide awareness month
- Coalition team to distribute back-to-school supplies at Rio Rico and Nogales locations

Summary

Drug Communities Coalition Virtual Meeting

The meeting of the Drug Communities Coalition held its 7th virtual, welcoming new faces. The group approved the meeting minutes without discussion.

Restorative Prevention Program Funding Award

Circles of Peace was awarded \$100,000 in federal funding from SAMHSA through Matforce for the Santa Cruz County Restorative Prevention Program, which will run for three years from July 1 through June 30. The program aims to build youth resilience, reduce substance use, and expand coalition capacity by implementing evidence-based programs like Too Good for Drugs and Thrive for justice-involved youth, while also supporting youth leadership and mentorship opportunities. The coalition plans to develop a logic model, conduct a needs assessment for primary prevention, and continue recruiting youth and adult members, with a focus on school-based and community programming.

Coalition Expands School and Mental Health Programs

The coalition discussed expanding its school-based programming, particularly focusing on supporting traditional and charter schools, and planned to reach out to school sector representatives for potential meetings. They also discussed conducting rural mental health pop-ups in Patagonia and Sonoita with the help of existing partnerships, and encouraged coalition members to join subcommittees, refer schools to host programs, mentor youth, and connect with media, schools, and local leaders to strengthen the coalition.

Coalition Updates and Community Impact

The coalition discussed upcoming meetings focused on logic models and needs assessments. Fernando shared insights from a recent tech conference in Nashville, highlighting its size and focus on building programs and working with community leaders. The coalition team was praised for creating a comprehensive contact directory, which is available to all members. Additionally, they distributed school supplies to approximately 1,200 students at back-to-school events in Rio Rico and Nogales.

Kickball Tournament for Suicide Prevention

The meeting discussed plans for a kickball tournament to raise awareness for suicide prevention, aiming for at least 16 teams. The event will feature resource fairs, a QR code for sign-ups, and color themes of teal and purple. The tournament will include divisions for players aged 65 and over, with 12 teams and 20 schools participating.

Harm Reduction and Mental Health Initiatives

The meeting discussed harm reduction programs, including a county program that provides meals, Naloxone, and other services, and plans for future outreach events. Participants also discussed mental health initiatives, including telehealth services, therapy for the Hispanic community, and employee assistance programs. The group explored collaboration opportunities between agencies and mentioned a new "Local Heroes" room offering services to law enforcement and firefighters.

Youth Programs and Community Updates

The meeting covered various updates and activities related to youth programs, community services, and organizational developments. Organizations discussed ongoing projects, including drug curriculum delivery, movie nights, and upcoming fundraising events. They highlighted the addition of new services like a mobile dental clinic and perinatal mental health support, as well as the recruitment of new staff and providers. The group also mentioned plans for a 40th anniversary celebration and discussed challenges in working with specific age cohorts and the need for fiscal agent partnerships.

Team Progress and Funding Initiatives

The team discussed their work with Dr. Eric Mclotham, who is knowledgeable and motivational, and they completed their assessment. They are seeking funding to bring in a canopy and have an approval plan in place. The group is also working on standardizing their application process for funding as they expect more inquiries. They reviewed two flyers and their website, which will be updated with more resources. The team shared feedback on a recent video and discussed participating in a free planning initiative. They also mentioned submitting a grant modification for their justice court programs and upcoming hearings for record expungement cases.

Community Days Event Planning

The meeting discussed plans for a community event called Community Days, which will be held on April 3rd and 4th. The event will feature various activities, food trucks, and organizations participating to promote community involvement. The Rotary Club of Rio Rico is organizing the event and has been working to get support from local organizations and the county. They are also planning to start parenting classes next month and are recruiting senior volunteers to help with their programs.