



YOUTH ENGAGEMENT WORK GROUP

Purpose: To address the results of the Coalition Assessment and make 3-5 recommendations for improvements for this year to the AHL Coalition.

Outcome: Youth across the community are engaged in the mission and work of A Healthy Lynnfield.

COALITION ASSESSMENT

- Youth are engaged and involved (3.37)
- Youth are actively engaged in decision making (2.82)
- AHL has structures and opportunities in place to engage youth (3.71)
- AHL needs more representation from youth (4.0)-100% strongly agree



POSITIVE YOUTH DEVELOPMENT

- **Positive Experiences + Positive Relationships + Positive Environments**
- <https://youth.gov/youth-topics/positive-youth-development>



CORNERSTONES OF YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

- 1. Activities are designed *with* youth not *for* youth**
- 2. Youth are partners with adults in decision making**
- 3. Focus on strengths and assets/protective factors**

PROTECTIVE FACTORS

- family support and monitoring
- caring adults
- positive peer groups
- strong sense of self, self-esteem
- future aspirations
- engagement in school and community activities
- community norms/policies that do not support underage ATOD use

PRINCIPLES OF YOUTH ENGAGEMENT

- **Preparation.** Young people need to be effectively prepared and empowered to make informed decisions about matters that affect their lives;
- **Support.** Young people should have customized services and a network of supportive relationships that meet their needs and promote a healthy transition to adulthood; and
- **Opportunity.** Young people should be provided with an array of life opportunities that promote optimal growth and development. These include experiential learning; healthy risk-taking; and participation in normal everyday activities that contribute to social confidence and positive identity formation.

Who is doing this in Lynnfield??

WHAT IS THE ROLE OF HEALTHY LYNNFIELD IN SUPPORTING YOUTH?

- Enhance opportunities for positive youth development
- Provide additional substance free alternative activities
- Build skills/knowledge base (“capacity”) of other youth providers (“Gatekeepers”) to decrease substance misuse through evidence based strategies

Mission: *To empower residents to make positive choices every day. Together, we work to prevent substance misuse, to improve the quality of life for those impacted, and to support programs that help all young people thrive*

IDEAS FROM FIRST MEETING

- Need to have others who are directly involved at the table to help connect and prioritize: school, athletics, recreation, fields, youth sport leagues
- Speakers/Athletes in Recovery-LMS (strategy designed for youth)
- Clergy Association-Leadership Training/Day for Youth Ministry
- Library-youth group/town wide book read-GUTS/Anxiety
- YMCA-looking for ways to partner
- Community Schools-looking for ways to partner/school vacation weeks?
- Sport Community-Coaches and Student Athletes
 - Meeting for parents/athletes pre-season
 - Training for Coaches/Westfield State Professor of Movement Science

AHL FUNDING FOCUSED ON EVIDENCE-BASED PROGRAMS

Strategies with Gate Keepers

- Consideration of All Stars or Girls Circle Curriculum- "moving from speakers to studied program interventions"
- Continuation of SBIRT Screening and SOS Screening/Training & Curriculum Support
- Discussing Alternative to Suspension Supports & Nicotine Cessation Support
- Teacher Professional Development
- Youth MHFA-Clergy/Paraprofessionals
- Parent Night/Pre Sports Season (on hold)
- Speaker/Training for Coaches (on hold)
- Request to fund LMS Advisory Curriculum

Strategies with youth for youth

- Youth Focus Group
- LHS: Youth Council/Summer Fellowship
- LMS: Healthy Lynnfield Youth Leadership Club
- Captains Program for Freshmen Athletes (e.g..Atlas and Athena-example not yet discussed in Lynnfield)



PRIORITIES FOR THIS YEAR?

The list is big...what can we achieve together?

PRIORITIES

- Reshape AHL's youth coalition into a Community Based Youth Council
- Develop an alternative to suspension program
- Continue evidence based curriculum supports (Signs of Suicide, SBIRT)
- Implement a community-wide theme "Above the Influence" to pull work together and allow different student groups, sports, and organizations to join in participation in a way the fits their interests.

Note: The strong community feedback to work with sports organization is acknowledged. Strategies for this are on hold until more information unfolds due to reopening after pandemic.

PULLING IT ALL TOGETHER

- Above the Influence Campaign
 - Invite Sports Leagues to Participate
 - Invite Other Student Groups to Participate
 - Invite Community Groups to Participate
 - Invite PTO's to Participate
 - Invite Churches/Church Youth Groups to Participate

“Unifying existing great work by many partners into one community wide theme.”

