

Wisconsin Prevention Network

January 17, 2007

Minutes

Present: Ken Ramminger, Deb Burgess, Lucy Gibson, Gretchen Dypold, Karen Torgerson, Ron Biendseil, Kathy Wolf, Susan Rodriguez, Shel Gross, Brenda Jennings, Rick Peterson, Holly Matucheski, Karen Knudson, Julia Sherman, Chris Wardlow

I. Public Policy

- Julia Sherman has graciously agreed to take over as chair of the Public Policy Committee. Shel will continue to stay active in the committee. Thank you to Shel for all of his work in organizing this committee and for his past leadership. Thank you also to Julia for volunteering to take over as Chair.
- WCCF Children's Lobby Day on March 14
 - Representatives from WPN met with Charity Eleson, Executive Director of Wisconsin Council on Children and Families, to learn more about the Council's lobby day and how WPN can participate. Charity welcomed WPN's involvement and indicated that WCCF would have no problem with WPN reps using the meetings with legislators to raise some of its own issues (i.e., like support for universal home visitation and policies to curb underage drinking).
 - The Children's Lobby Day will be on March 14th in Madison. For more information and an agenda visit: http://www.wccf.org/event_lobbyday_2007_home.php.
- After School Network
 - The After School Network -- Both Kathy Wolf and Gretchen Dypold have been active in this Network. Ron Beindseil had suggested sometime ago that WPN explore whether or not this is an initiative it should get more involved with. Kathy agreed that it was.
 - The network is a public/private partnership working to establish a statewide infrastructure that fosters policies, funding, and technical assistance to support high quality after school programs/extended learning opportunities. The shared vision of this work is that all Wisconsin school age youth have access to a high quality after school programs.
 - Project Goals
 - To improve academic outcomes and strengthen youth development skills for all children and particularly children of color and those living in poverty.
 - Advance the growth of statewide policies that secure the resources necessary to increase the quality and sustainability of new and existing after school programs.
 - Develop a network of statewide, regional, and local after school programs and partners to build public will for increased investments in quality after school programming.
 - One concern raised by several members was that funds being made available through the Network for after school programs were restricted to serving "high risk" kids when these programs have demonstrated positive outcomes for all kids. WPN will send a letter to the state leadership team urging them to make these funds available to any district or community interested in competing for funds to start an after school program.
- Alcohol Policies
 - Beer Tax update – It appears that Representative Berceau of Madison is going to reintroduce legislation to increase the beer tax. In preparation, WPN will begin to collect names of folks at the local level who can coordinate advocacy efforts once the time is right.
 - Role of WPN in advocating for responsible alcohol policies – Members agreed that WPN should develop a WPN fact sheet that promotes effective, responsible alcohol policies from a Wisconsin perspective. The Clearinghouse will lend its expertise in developing such a tool.

- CSPI Sign-on Letter to Increase Federal Alcohol Tax - Members agreed that Chris should contact CSPI to express WPN's desire to be included as a signatory on CSPI's sign-on letter urging Congress not to decrease, but in fact increase, the federal excise tax on alcoholic beverages.
- Any updates on the federal STOP Act recently signed into law – No updates to report other than there is some concern nationally that the act was significantly under funded.

II. Healthy Marriage Initiative (HMI) and its status in Wisconsin

- Ken Ramminger reported on a series of articles published in the Wall Street Journal on ending poverty. His primary interest was in an article that reported on the federal government's Healthy Marriage Initiative (HMI), which has awarded roughly \$500 million in funds to support state and local projects. He reported that at a state level, Wisconsin seems to want to distance itself from this initiative. However, there are a number of local organizations that have received HMI grants. Ken recommends that WPN learn more about this initiative and its relevance to prevention.
 - One such organization, the Center for Self Sufficiency in Milwaukee, is willing to meet with representatives from WPN if there's an interest in learning more about how HMI funds are being used in the state.
 - Suzie Rodriguez indicated that Parents Plus is part of a network that also wrote for and received HMI funds. Their interest in the funds was to provide early education for parents. Suzie is willing to help pull together an informational meeting for WPN with representatives from these agencies.
 - Kathy Wolf raised the concern shared by several others that there appears to be a hidden agenda that underlies HMI, being that the federal government has defined "marriage" as a union only between a man and a woman. In addition, HMI funds are further restrictive in that when it comes to pregnancy prevention and family planning programs, the focus has to be abstinence only, a strategy with little or no proven effectiveness.
 - Suzie acknowledged that this was in fact true, but explained that Parents Plus and its partners are focusing their efforts on parenting education and are reaching out to all parents.
 - The general sentiment of the members was that this was an initiative that the organization needed to learn more about while maintaining its focus on advocating for human and financial resources for prevention and wellness for **all** people.
 - Please visit www.acf.hhs.gov/healthymarriage/ for more information on HMI.

III. Prevention Conference Update

- The Wisconsin Prevention Conference will be July 24, 25, and 26 at the Holiday Inn & Convention Center in Stevens Point. This year Coalitions Connect will be a part of the conference, which is the reason why a third day was added. The theme of the conference will be "Research to Practice."
- The planning committee is meeting via teleconference on January 19 to begin identifying sessions and speakers for the conference.
- WPN members suggested the following issues/topics be considered for workshops:
 - Information about federally funded Healthy Marriage Initiatives in Wisconsin
 - Report from the Legislative Council's Committee on Strengthening Wisconsin Families
 - Research on the role of juvenile justice in youth development
 - Parents Who Host
 - Adolescent brain development
- The Clearinghouse is partnering with the Alliance for Wisconsin Youth in putting together an online survey to gain input from the field on the conference. Julia will e-mail the WPN listserv with the link to access that survey.

IV. Membership

- Membership directory- Members agreed that a membership directory, distributed electronically, would be a very useful resource. Chris will pursue this.

V. Financial Report

- Suzie is awaiting the most recent bank statements, but indicated that very little has changed since the last report other than the deposit of a handful of membership dues.

VI. SCAODA Prevention Committee and SPF-SIG Update

- ➔ No update at this time. The committee meets again in February.

VII. Wisconsin Legislative Council Special Committee on Strengthening Wisconsin Families (SCSWF)

- ➔ SCSWF has drafted a list of legislative options for consideration titled Memo No. 6 “Options for Legislation on Strengthening Wisconsin Families.” Members are encouraged to review this document (go to: http://www.legis.state.wi.us/lc/3_COMMITTEES/Special%20Committees/2006/SFAM/index.htm and select Memo No. 6) and inform the Public Policy Committee of any specific options WPN should consider taking action on.

**The next WPN Public Policy Teleconference is
Wednesday, February 21 at 9:30am**

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