



CMCHC

Bulletin Board



central massachusetts center for
healthycommunities

A program of LUK, Inc.

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Letter from the Director

This month we have decided to focus our newsletter on the use of Environmental Strategies in the prevention of underage drinking and substance use. I recall a story told to me when I first entered the field of prevention that has stayed with me ever since. The premise of the tale is the notion of ‘working upstream’.

Once upon a time there was a village set in a valley next to a flowing river. One day a village woman found an infant floating down the river. The baby was hungry, wet and had bumps and bruises from his journey. The villager immediately called to her neighbors, and they came running to assist her. The next day found two infants floating by the village, and the numbers continued to increase. The villagers organized a ‘baby watch’ group to keep an eye on the river so they could pull out every infant that floated past the village.

The villagers’ anxiety increased, they felt stretched to their limits, but their commitment was clear and strong. No baby would

get by the safety net they created. The village cobbled together resources that allowed them to build a “Baby Intervention Center” right on the bank of the river. They were exhausted by the constant flow of babies. No matter what they did, the babies kept coming, every day a few more than the day before. All their efforts didn’t seem to make a difference. Still they didn’t dare stop for a moment, one baby might die if they let their vigilance slip.

Then one day a stranger entered the village. He walked down to the river and found the entire community busy at their task of saving the babies. He asked who was in charge of the efforts and was led to the village woman who had found the first infant. He asked her, “Has anyone gone upstream to see why the babies are getting into the river in the first place?” The answer was, “No, we are much too busy here, trying to save the babies.”

There is a powerful message here for prevention practitioners; we are the ones who need to make the journey upstream to address the

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root causes that encourage youth alcohol and other drug use. In closing, I’m reminded of a message from the *Face Project*. “Holding young people solely responsible for underage drinking is like holding fish responsible for dying in a polluted stream.” Thanks for listening; let’s continue to work together to create environments that support positive, healthy and happy youth and families.

-Dodi Swope

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Environmental Strategies By José Rivera

“Coming together is a beginning. Keeping together is progress. Working together is success”; Henry Ford could have been talking about Environmental Strategies when he spoke these words. Studies and experience have proven that efforts that include a broad base of people who are impacted by and/or are passionate about community issues tend to be more effective and sustainable than efforts that operate in isolation. The substance abuse prevention field, among many others, has taken notice. As a result, there has been a move at both the state and the federal levels to encourage, support and fund initiatives that demonstrate true collaboration. Environmental Strategies are prime examples of “working together.” The idea behind these strategies is simple: change an environment and the behaviors within that environment will change accordingly. The execution is more complex. For an environment to change in a sustainable way, multiple layers must join

and work together. Policies, regulations and procedures need to be congruent with the desired change, success may be related to the number and diversity of venues conveying and supporting a unified message, and the efforts must be responsive to the idiosyncratic needs, assets and stage of readiness of each particular community. Clearly, “working together” is not an easy undertaking, but the result, the success makes it a worthwhile challenge.

For almost a year, LUK (Let Us Know), Inc., a non-profit human service agency founded in 1970, and CMCHC’s host agency, has been hard at work bringing one of these science-based environmental strategy to Fitchburg and its surrounding cities and towns. The strategy follows the Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol (CMCA) model, which has been proven to be effective in reducing underage access to (and, consequently, use of) alcohol in communities where it has been imple-

mented. This initiative, funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health (MDPH), engages a broad spectrum of the community in working collaboratively toward its goal. As it has done through the years, LUK is working with area coalitions, the North County Coalition for Healthy Living (NCCHL) in particular, service providers, civic leaders, law enforcement, parents, youth, and concerned individuals from different community sectors in the implementation of this model.

Find more related information at:

- Join Together <http://www.jointogether.org>
- Science-Based Prevention Programs and Principles 2002 <http://ncadi.sambsa.gov/govpubs/BKD479/BKD479.pdf>
- Facilitating Community Change by D. Ayre, G. Cough and T. Norris, 2000.
- CMCA: <http://modelprograms.sambsa.gov/pdfs/FactSheets/Cmca.pdf>

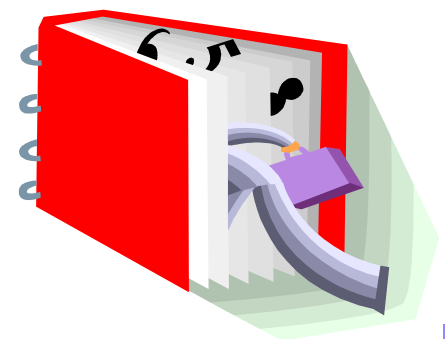
Resource Center Update By Faye Fulone Sweeney

In keeping with the mission of the Central MA Center for Healthy Communities, our resource center has a good foundation of Science-based and Environmental Strategies materials, all of which are used when writing grants. The Environmental Strategies curricula currently available in our library are: Communities Mobilizing for Change on Alcohol (CMCA), Creating Lasting Family Connections (CLFC), Project Northland, Project Success, Residential Student

Assistance Program (RSAP), and Start Taking Alcohol Risks Seriously (STARS) for Families.

If writing a grant is not part of your duties, but you would still feel that environmental strategies could work within your organization, we also carry videos that relay the message such as; Coming Together on Prevention, Community Oriented Policy and Problem Solving and Working Together For Healthier Communities, to name a few.

Please feel free to give us a call or visit the resource center. We are open 8AM to 5PM Monday, Wednesday, Friday and 8AM to 6PM Tuesday and Thursday.



YOUTH DEVELOPMENT NEWS



Wow! YMCA-Citizen Schools By Laura Martínez

This Fall began a new collaboration with youth development partner Citizen Schools. Sponsored by the YMCA of Greater Worcester, Citizen Schools is an innovative program that partners apprenticeships with local professionals that share their skills and knowledge. The apprenticeship sponsored by the CMCHC



was media focused. A Citizen Teacher and a team of 10 middle school students from A.L. L. School worked for ten weeks creating public health poster ad campaigns. Laura Martínez, *Youth Outreach & Media Specialist* took on the role of Citizen Teacher. Laura prepared and taught the Media Apprenticeship which was designed to increase the students' awareness of issues related to media literacy. The Media apprenticeship



was a great opportunity for CMCHC to put into practice positive youth development models and the promotion of healthy lifestyles, offering students opportunities to make a difference in their community. In addition, the apprenticeship helped the youth improve their writing, public speaking, and critical thinking skills. This hands-on learning experience culminated in high-quality public health posters and a formal community presentation held on May 19, 2004.

Youth Development Roundtable By Lara Adeyinka

The Youth Development Roundtable was a great experience for me. It was good to bring together area organizations committed to positive youth development work in the community of Worcester. The Roundtable gave us the

opportunity to network, share outcomes from the Youth Development Assessment interviews, and discuss opportunity for a community-wide youth development project. It was clear to me that these individuals strive hard to provide

safe and nurturing programming for young people in the Worcester community. We have all agreed to meet again to continue our conversation and discuss next steps. We'll keep you informed!



Youth Appreciating Youth Day By Laura Martínez

Understanding the need for positive youth appreciation, a group of young people and adults who represent various youth serving agencies and community groups in Central MA came together to form the *Youth Appreciating Youth Coalition* (YAY), and planned an event that celebrated positive youth involvement and engagement. The **Youth Appreciating Youth Day** took place at the Boys & Girls Club on April 20th from 5

**If you can imagine it,
you can achieve it.
If you can dream it,
you can become it.**
William Arthur Ward

to 9 p.m. with approximately 60 youth attending and participating in athletic tournaments, arts & crafts, and a talent showcase. Youth Appreciating Youth Day was an opportunity to recognize youth by promoting positive youth interaction and activities. Notably, young people were engaged and participated in every aspect, from planning and outreach to staffing the event. A special thanks to the following Youth Development partners for



making the event a success: Community Build, Great Brook Valley Health Center, Boys & Girls Club of Worcester, HOPE Coalition, PAL, The Willis Center Outreach, Youth and Family Network and all of the great youth leaders.



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Address Update:
In order to serve you better we would like to keep our list serve/database up to date. Please e-mail:
lmartinez@cmchc.org or
fax 508-438-0516 with your current contact info. **Thank You!**

Calendar Of Events

June

- 3 *Facilitation Skills Training**
10:00-12:00 p.m.
@CMCHC
- 7 MassCall Training: *Implementing Environmental Strategies to Combat Underage Drinking***
8:00-4:30 p.m.
@Worcester Holiday Inn
- 9 *Fundraising 101**
1:00-4:00 p.m.
@CMCHC
- 14 - 20 National Men's Health Week**
www.menshealthweek.org
- 17 *Youth Dev Series Part II: Skills Training for Youth**
3:00-5:00 p.m.
@CMCHC
- 18 North County Youth Summit**
8:00-1:00 p.m.
@Monty Tech Voc H.S.
Fitchburg, MA



4th of July

- 20 *Youth Dev. Series Part III: "On the Same Page: Youth & Adult Workshop"**
1:00- 4:00 p.m.
@CMCHC

Congratulations!

To José and Peter who are celebrating their 14 year commitment to each other with a June wedding.



August

National Immunization Awareness Month
www.partnersforimmunization.org

Have a Safe &



Healthy Summer!

Calendar Of Events

** Please note: There is a \$25 registration fee for these workshops. We would never want anyone not to be able to attend due to financial restraints, so scholarships are available.*