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**Youth Engagement Core Group**

**Minutes**

**November 7, 2012, 3-4:30 p.m.**

**The Common Roof (165 Ferris Lane), Barrie, ON**

**Present:**

Sarah Stea - Chair (YMCA), Deb Woods (Coalition Coordinator), Kristina Veenstra (Coalition Executive Assistant and recorder), Alicia Henry (E-Fry), Kara Thomson-Ryczko (Simcoe Muskoka District Health Unit), Lisa Cluett (New Path), Josee Lefavre (La Cle), Melanie Cooper (United Way), Cathy Dandy - by phone (Kinark).

**Regrets:**

Aleta Armstrong (CMHA), Noelle Bickle (consultant ), Chenoa LeCaille (BANAC), Amanda Meawasige (BNFC),Laurie Nicholson (Simcoe County District School Board), Kristi Pitkin (Simcoe Community Services), Nancy Stratton (City of Barrie), Pauline Robillard (College Boreal), replacement for Richelle Vorsiuk (CAS), Jennifer Summerfield (SCDSB), Shelley Generoux (BNFC).

1. **Welcome and Introductions** roundtable introductions were done including background.
2. **Goal of Youth Engagement Core Group:** The Coalition has as one of its strategic goals to engage youth actively in developing and participating in program planning. This group we hope will help identify what works for young people and listen to them in the planning and evaluation of our members’ services. We wish to elevate best practices so we can share among all Coalition members. This group was started February 2012.
3. **Roger Hart’s Ladder**: Copies of the ladder were distributed for discussion and review. Sarah spoke to the ladder and where each organization may plot themselves on the ladder. This will help us understand where we are all starting from. YMCA: Rung #7; E-Fry: Rung 4/5 but for Restorative Justice a 6; SMDHU: goal is to work at the top where possible and cycle between different Rungs depending on situation; New Path: Rung 6-8; United Way: Aim Rung 6-8; Kinark: Rung 6-8. Roger Hart’s Ladder has been revised by New Mentality – Ready, Set, Engage in a star formation (not a hierarchy) as there seems to be some disappointment if not at Rung 8; it was discussed that sometimes this Rung 8 is not appropriate and you need to move between Rungs 6-8. Many have set mandates depending on funding therefore, that is what runs the work with youth with as much freedom as possible between guidelines and expertise. **ACTION: Members to access online the New Mentality document called Ready, Set, Engage.**
4. **Engaging Youth:** How are we going to engage youth to get the message to Coalition members? The group discussed the age of “youth” – 15-30 is YMCA which is the upper end and the Coalition takes from the broader sense (12-17 E-Fry, New Path 13-25, SMDHU focus on like age groups together i.e. young adults, high school students, elementary school students). There is a huge range within Coalition membership of where youth engagement is at. Everyone is doing work to enhance the level of youth engagement in their organizations and we have to all decide that this is part of our business; CMH guidelines.

Group discussed the need for best practices and share them with Coalition members to improve things for youth when using services. Wish to use the brainstorming notes from Pamela Thorne (CMHA) and Sarah Stea (YMCA) focus groups over the summer as well as a report done by Lisa Cluett (New Path), Brian Shelley (YMCA) and Jessica Wolfe (City of Barrie) a year+ ago.Group discussed having some youth come together in a task group and work on how to present this feedback to member agencies; what works and what doesn’t.Call out to those youth involved in the focus groups, report and any others interested to join and work on how they see this information and best practices presented to the CEO’s at the Coalition Council table. Have to let them know that we are ready for next steps. **ACTION: Need a group of young people who can reflect on how structure was different in one agency compared to another (their experiences) and have an understanding of what youth engagement is; a presentation to youth would be helpful to get information and their input. Then they can develop a presentation to Coalition Council members with a best practice and mentorship/consultation.**

1. **COMPASS Local Team Request: Georgian West is looking for a presentation on Youth Engagement:**  Lisa Cluett offered to help with this.
2. **Next steps:**

* Use information we already have from resources and pull in youth that have been engaged and obtaining specific examples of their experiences of youth engagement in organizations (mixture of good and bad experiences). Agency front-line workers will be able to identify these youth; offer skills, food etc.
* Deb to bring this idea to Council members by e-mail (agenda for this month is full and they do not meet until January 2013) and know that there is buy-in and room for change.
* Provide Council members with the input in a presentation with best practices that can be implemented across the whole Coalition.
* Need board member buy in from Coalition members; it is a systematic piece.

1. **Next meeting:**

Wednesday, December 5, 3-4:30, The Common Roof (165 Ferris Lane, Barrie).