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**Youth Engagement Core Group**

**Minutes**

**February 13, 2013, 10-12 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), Josee Lefavre (La Cle), Tracey Burnett-Greene (SMDHU), Kristi Pitkin (Simcoe Community Services).

**Regrets:**

Aleta Armstrong (CMHA), Noelle Bickle (consultant ), Alicia Henry (E-Fry), Kara Thomson-Ryczko (SMDHU), Chenoa LeCaille (BANAC), Cathy Dandy (Kinark), Amanda Meawasige (BNFC), Laurie Nicholson (Simcoe County District School Board), Nancy Stratton (City of Barrie), replacement for Richelle Vorsiuk (CAS), Jennifer Summerfield (SCDSB), Shelley Generoux (BNFC), Pauline Robillard (College Boreal), Lisa Cluett (New Path), Melanie Cooper (United Way), Lia DePauw (CAMH).

**Guest:** Natasha Manzone, BSW Laurentian Student (with Coalition until May on an internship)

1. **Youth Engagement Subcommittee Plan:** Copies were distributed prior to the meeting for review. Tracey walked through the document for discussion. Members felt that Coalition Council needs to understand and adopt a set of youth engagement principles which would then have to be implemented in their own agencies/organizations. We should also look at the Readiness Checklist that was completed by members for review as a baseline. Once Council members agree to the principles we can offer some resources and examples to help them implement them. The Coalition Council members may wish to know how we incorporated the voices of youth in these principles; it was discussed that we need to have the background, foundation and principles in place before you bring youth on board with a designed role, goals and objectives for them or they will not be interested; as well the principles do incorporate the feedback and research that has been done in focus groups with youth in the past (they have many points from our focus groups last summer).

Council meets in March and May then not until September. This presentation will need to go to the Planning Table first therefore, would be great to get into Planning in March or April then to Council in May. We can use this as a Hot Topic for Principle discussion at the Council meeting in May.

Members started to review the youth engagement principles as follows:

1. **Inclusiveness:** this is a value of the YMCA already; remove barriers, including economic; $ commitment for e.g. transportation; time away from paid employment; social determinents of health, LGBT.
2. **Positive Youth Developments:** healthy adolescent framework (Y); asset development (Devel. Assets); use framework that works for you; youth engagement = a tool to help develop positive framework.
3. **Accountability:** job description, clear outcomes and methods; accountable to youth; feedback at many points; youth accountable also, clear expectations; adult ally provide feedback to youth.
4. **Operational Practices:** organizations readiness; policies and procedures to support youth engagement; mind shift of adults and youth = partners; SCS youth retreat planned by youth but supported by adults; mutual learning; Y adult mentors and youth; interview prospective new staff Y – Skill development, see from other side, employment seeking skills; less face to face time now a-days; peer to peer Youth Quest at Y; sharing experience, presentation, work on tobacco; value youth contribution – not token (e.g. co-decision-making) – pay them, gift cards, giveaways, community hours, awards, certificates.
5. **Strength-Based Approach:** ID needs, build on strengths; skill development, training; opportunities for feedback; focus on what youth are good at, development skills through training, build self-esteem (conferences, workshops); using youth strengths; self-reflection, confidence builder; kids breaking into cars example – now used as an expert for police consultation.
6. **Flexibility and Innovation:** challenges of social media (e.g. HU). Y allows twitter but not Facebook – control issues for organizations, liability, school boards and cell phone rules, what’s rude/what is not, always on cell phones.
7. **Space for Youth:** caring, supportive, safe; HU – own phone, office, desk, computer etc.; welcoming – how received at organization, staff know names.
8. **Transparency:** clear re purpose, keep in the loop; youth friendly approaches e.g. World Cafes, snowball opinions, voting with sticky dots etc.
9. **Sustainability:** plan for maintaining youth engagement efforts; HU – not able to pay for youth efforts – change on Hart’s Ladder.
10. **Cross Sector Alignment:** Coalition = asset; can help energize efforts.
11. **Collaboration:** knowledge and resource sharing.

Deb let the table members know that a motion was passed by Council January 24 to include LGBT in our planning processes. There may be additional resources that will be struck within the Coalition which may link with this group or not.

**ACTIONS: This table needs to review the principles from Tracey’s presentation to ensure that they encompass all/most of the Coalition’s member agencies/organizations. These principles would then be presented to Council and ask them to adopt them and then this group can focus on disseminating information on how agencies can move forward to implement a youth engagement framework (see attached Plan document). Deb and Kristina to review the Readiness Checklist results of who filled it out (staff, CEO’s, which organizations?). Kristina to add presentation to the May Council meeting agenda. Members to look for a video to begin the Coalition Council presentation as an introduction (snippets from a couple different videos within our agencies/organizations).**

1. **CAMH Service Collaborative Initiative on Transitional Aged Youth (TIP Program)**: Members still have a lot of questions on the TIP program; TIP orientation is February 20, 9-12 p.m. at Kempenfelt Conference Centre for information. It seems that possibly some of the questions that we utilized in our focus groups over the summer with youth are the same within TIP. This is something CAMH out of Toronto as running the service collaboratives that are short term but hoping to embed TIP as a program within Simcoe County. It is aimed at Transitional Aged Youth 16-24 years. **ACTION: We need to clarify with Lia what this program expects from this group.**
2. **Next steps:**

* Discuss the principles in depth and finalize.
* Review the Readiness Survey results.
* Schedule with April Planning Table and May Council agendas.
* Understand TIP more effectively and what their expectations are for this group.
* Look for video of youth engagement that we can use as an introduction to the Council presentation (overview of what may have already been done for youth engagement and presented by youth). Preview some of these videos at our next meeting.
* Discuss the presentation to Council.

1. **Next meeting:**

Wednesday, March 20, 2013, 10-12 p.m., The Common Roof (165 Ferris Lane, Barrie). **ACTION: Kristina to send out notice to all members and book a room.**