

Advancing Our Community Coalition
June 1, 2006
Centennial Hall

In attendance: Curt Ledford – Community Schools, Doug Osbourne – SEARHC Health Promotions, Ginny Moring - SAFV, Penny Lehmann – Public Health, David Sleifert – SEARHC Clinic II, Chris Baumann – SAFV, Rebecca Howe – Raven’s Way; Matthew Turner, Kayla Boettcher

Announcements

Curt: Community Schools/Safe and Drug-Free Schools received information about a grant from DOE to work on integrating schools and mental health systems. Curt wants to call together representatives from SEARHC, SCPS, YAS, and the school district to see if this is something we should apply for. The grant would be for 18 months, starting in the fall, \$100,000. It is primarily to support planning and system-wide integration, not really for direct services with kids. He comments that our systems may already be integrated enough and this grant may not be for us. David suggests including MEHS. Kayla and Matthew agree to try to set up a meeting among these entities in the next week or so.

Chris: SAFV has been totally crazy busy this spring, but things are wrapping up now. She says the Family Justice Center was supposed to open in May, but they discovered the ceilings aren’t sound proof and they need to renovate that. Aug 25 is now set for the Grand Opening date.

Doug: SEARHC Health Promotions is working on a Men’s Health campaign. The first men’s health challenge will be on June 15, 11:30-6:30 at the ANB Hall. They’ll have miniature golf, free lunch, health screenings, and booths with information/agencies. They will do a proclamation with STA and the City (Woody Widmark and Marko Dapceвич will issue the proclamations), which shows some unity around this issue. They’re hoping some agencies can be encouraged to let people come during work day in the afternoon.

Also, Doug tells the group that they have been talking about forming a coordinated response to reduce the number of dog bite injuries. There was a dog attack last spring, and that dog had history of biting. There’s been more talk recently about improving safety around this issue, especially for kids and elderly. Barry Allen from SPD is willing to participate – they’re hoping to get a cross section of people to discuss and brainstorm. Doug said he’s talked with Matthew about putting this under AOC umbrella to do things like create a model ordinance, and information about dealing with different breeds. Curt mentioned that some dog laws were passed a couple of years ago, and maybe some of those people should be involved, like Susan Royce, Karen Kluting, Galen Payne.

Penny: Public Health, working with SEARHC, have been meeting about a CDC school wellness assessment done by the school district. This group suggested a policy that was recently approved by assembly, and they will be meeting again in September to put some of that policy in place. Aug 10 is the start of a 3-4 day workshop sponsored by the state for the school wellness groups in SE. The wellness initiative links back to WIC school lunch program – it’s been mandated that these wellness committees happen. Public Health has also been working on emergency preparedness – there was a pandemic flu conference in Sitka

and we've been working on a mass dispensing/ mass vaccination plan – it's part of emergency operations for the City.

David Sliefert: SEARHC Clinic II has a grant to work in villages with kids who have neurodevelopmental disorders and also a history of FAS in utero. They're bringing kids in from all over SE for 12-16 hours of testing on one kid. After the tests, they'll meet with the child and determine if they should continue trainings. If anyone wants trainings on FAE, etc., David volunteers to do them – the training would be a minimum of 4 hours, or he can do an abbreviated version. They also have occupational therapy and speech pathologists – if you want to talk with them about related issues or training in those areas, that would also be possible.

COALITION EVALUATION

In May, Matthew and Kayla distributed a coalition evaluation survey to everyone who had attended more than one AOC meeting in the last 9 months. They got a 50% response rate, and they share the results with the group today. Some highlights of today's discussion (full results are attached to the end of the document):

Things that stood out:

- **Changed/ altered dates or events to accommodate other things – 9 said no.**
- 11 have never sought funding with another agency
 - Someone comments that's what the former facilitator thought – we all came together and talked about it, but we don't really collaborate
 - If you look at it historically, like 6-7 years ago, we've come a long way in the level of collaboration. There's definitely still room to grow. The Family Justice Center is a great example of current projects that may have blossomed under this collaboration. New people may not have the knowledge base – they may not even know that they're working under a grant that came through AOY. We need ongoing education to keep that knowledge alive.
- Half the people that filled this out attended less than half the meetings –
- Under section 3, regarding the facilitators: Curt comments that he enjoys what they're doing, they're doing a fine job. He's more concerned about coalition members taking action; it's so easy to go back to work after a meeting and not follow through.
- Section 4 – about how the meetings are run: There were lots of “don't knows.” There seems to be high agreement that the members can learn from each other.

Matthew offers his own review of how he and Kayla approached this group from the beginning – they started from the strategic plan that was developed in 2004, and for a while kept trying to point efforts toward that, but it didn't seem to take. It seemed more enjoyable to folks if things happened more organically, like finding issues to coalesce around, making it mission driven, not necessarily goal/objective driven. He says it's important that everybody knows that the facilitators are paid out of drug-free communities grant – we can worry about dog bites, but we also have to realize that we have to deal with prevention and drug abuse, etc. and certainly this is what we want to get students involved with. He says he thinks that we need to *do* more things, not just meet; need to have causes to get involved in, or some activities – for example, Curt has money to host a community meeting next fall re: drug abuse/prevention.

Someone else comments that this kind of takes us back to the question of “who are we?” The coalition has evolved, but the vision/goals have remained pretty consistent – it’s neat to see how it evolves with new facilitators over time. Many of the original initiatives were successful, then we reached a lull – we’re still in that lull. Another person suggests we do events that make AOC visible, like maybe doing a walk over the bridge for this town meeting next fall, and shut down the bridge for it.

Kayla and Matthew both add that it’s been challenging for them as facilitators to determine how much they should do the work for the coalition vs. how much they should cheerlead, because the greatest benefit to the coalition actually happens when the members make things happen. The YRBS campaign is a good example – this was a great idea from several AOC members and getting numerous people of the community involved in sharing their expertise with the rest of the community. But it’s been hard to sustain the enthusiasm for the idea, and it’s turned into a lot of bird-dogging for Kayla, which is hard to continue if there’s no energetic responses.

Curt mentions that AOC has a pot of money in the bank, which is set aside as Flexible Funding. The group encourages Matthew and Kayla to publicize Flexible Funding again, because the needs are out there, we’re just not hearing about them. Recommending agencies should also be reminded about providing follow-up reports to AOC. It seems we also need to re-educate providers about what Flexible Funding is and what it can be used for. Or, the Flexible Funding committee could decide to use that money in other ways – perhaps this topic should be revisited with them in August.

Coalition Evaluation

May 2006 results

A list was made of all people who attended an AOC meeting – either a general or committee, since September, 2005. This resulted in 41 people. Of these, two people were dropped from the list because they stated that they were observing the meeting and not participating in the coalition, leaving 39 people. These people were hand-delivered surveys and provided with addressed return envelopes between May 11 to May 16. They were given until May 26 to return the survey. Sixteen surveys were returned. Below are the results. The number in bold adjacent to each response indicates the total number of responses to that item. Zero responses are left blank.

- 1) In the past 12 months, have you: (circle YES or NO)
- a. Served as a member of the coalition? YES **(14)** NO **(1)**
 - b. Served as a member of a subcommittee? YES **(8)** NO **(7)**
 - d. Chaired a committee? YES **(1)** NO **(13)**

2) We're interested in knowing how you interact with other coalition partners and AOC resources. (Please circle the response to the right of the question that best represents your answer.)

In the last 12 months, about how often have you					
—					
	Never	1 or 2 Times	Every two or three months	Once a month	More than once a month
a. attended an AOC-sponsored meeting		(3)	(5)	(3)	(4)
b. exchanged information about such things as meetings or conferences, training opportunities, funding sources, community survey data, or programs with other partners in your coalition?	(2)	(2)	(4)	(6)	(2)
c. changed or altered your event dates, fundraising plans, or program activities for the mutual benefit of other coalition partners?	(9)	(6)	(1)		
d. shared resources such as office space, staff, costs, or funding for the mutual benefit of other coalition members?	(9)	(2)	(1)		(2)
e. planned jointly with one or more coalition partners to meet a common goal?	(5)	(5)	(5)		(1)
f. jointly planned and implemented programs with one or more coalition partners?	(5)	(5)	(4)		(1)

g. jointly sought new funding with one or more coalition partners for programs to serve a common goal?	Never (11)	1 or 2 Times (3)	Every two or three months (2)	Once a month	More than once a month
h. accessed the AOC website	Never (3)	1 or 2 Times (3)	Every two or three months	Once a month (5)	More than once a month (5)

3) Below are several statements about the facilitators of AOC. Please consider each statement, and then choose the answer that comes closest to expressing your feelings. If you have trouble deciding, choose the answer that describes your feelings most of the time. (Please circle the response to the right of the question that best represents your answer.)

In the past 12 months, the facilitators of your coalition —					
a. encouraged and explored all points of view	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Don't Know (2)	Agree (11)	Strongly Agree (3)
b. were knowledgeable about the issues the coalition was seeking to address	Strongly Disagree	Disagree (1)	Don't Know	Agree (10)	Strongly Agree (5)
c. were able to reduce or resolve turf issues among member organizations and community agencies	Strongly Disagree	Disagree (2)	Don't Know (7)	Agree (6)	Strongly Agree (1)
d. effectively managed conflict and channeled it toward the coalition's goals	Strongly Disagree	Disagree (1)	Don't Know (6)	Agree (8)	Strongly Agree (1)
e. were knowledgeable about problems and issues across the community	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Don't Know (2)	Agree (11)	Strongly Agree (3)
f. were effective at advocating the coalition's perspective with community leaders and decision makers	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Don't Know (5)	Agree (8)	Strongly Agree (3)

4) We'd like to know about the way things run in AOC, based on the past 12 months. If you have trouble deciding, choose the answer that describes your feelings most of the time. (Please circle the response to the right of each statement that best represents your answer.)

a. The coalition has a feeling of cohesiveness and team spirit	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Don't Know (3)	Agree (12)	Strongly Agree (1)
b. The members of this coalition are representative of the varied groups/citizens of this community	Strongly Disagree	Disagree (3)	Don't Know (2)	Agree (10)	Strongly Agree (1)
c. The coalition is disorganized and inefficient	Strongly Disagree (3)	Disagree (11)	Don't Know (1)	Agree (1)	Strongly Agree
d. Coalition members share a common vision for our community	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Don't Know (3)	Agree (11)	Strongly Agree (1)
e. The coalition's direction is dominated by one or a few individuals	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (8)	Don't Know (5)	Agree (2)	Strongly Agree
f. There is a lot of tension and conflict among coalition members	Strongly Disagree (1)	Disagree (11)	Don't Know (4)	Agree	Strongly Agree
g. The coalition's overall plan of action is effective	Strongly Disagree	Disagree (2)	Don't Know (4)	Agree (10)	Strongly Agree
h. My abilities are effectively used by the coalition	Strongly Disagree	Disagree (4)	Don't Know (9)	Agree (3)	Strongly Agree

i. I feel strongly committed to this coalition	Strongly Disagree	Disagree (3)	Don't Know (1)	Agree (10)	Strongly Agree (2)
j. The coalition is effective at reducing leadership turnover	Strongly Disagree	Disagree (1)	Don't Know (11)	Agree (4)	Strongly Agree
k. The AOC website is a useful tool	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Don't Know (2)	Agree (9)	Strongly Agree (5)
l. After every coalition meeting, I share the coalition information with people in my agency	Strongly Disagree	Disagree (4)	Don't Know (1)	Agree (9)	Strongly Agree (2)
m. The style of communication in the coalition reflects the diverse styles and needs of members.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree (2)	Don't Know (4)	Agree (9)	Strongly Agree (1)
n. The coalition provides opportunities for members to learn about other members and the services that they provide.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree (1)	Don't Know	Agree (11)	Strongly Agree (4)
o. To help plan, the coalition gathers objective information (e.g. research, statistics, and other resources).	Strongly Disagree	Disagree (1)	Don't Know (4)	Agree (10)	Strongly Agree (1)
p. The coalition uses a strategic plan as a guide to develop clear, attainable, short-term and long-term goals.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree (2)	Don't Know (5)	Agree (9)	Strongly Agree
q. The coalition develops (or is developing) stronger relationships with key individuals and groups in the community.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Don't Know (8)	Agree (8)	Strongly Agree
r. The coalition has developed (or is developing) an effective process to use for running coalition meetings.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree (1)	Don't Know (5)	Agree (7)	Strongly Agree (2)
s. The coalition monitors and assesses progress made on plans.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Don't Know (7)	Agree (8)	Strongly Agree (1)
t. The coalition debriefs its actions to learn from them.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree (1)	Don't Know (6)	Agree (9)	Strongly Agree
u. The coalition regularly achieves goals and celebrates its "victories" and achievements.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree (4)	Don't Know (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly Agree (1)
v. The coalition frequently recognizes individual member contributions and accomplishments.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree (2)	Don't Know (5)	Agree (9)	Strongly Agree
w. The coalition publicizes its goals and accomplishments to the community.	Strongly Disagree	Disagree (5)	Don't Know (5)	Agree (6)	Strongly Agree

5) Do you collaborate with other agencies and organizations outside of AOC? In what ways?

Yes. Formally through meetings, MOU's, and other groups such as Sitka Family Justice Center (SFJC), CID-COPS, & DV Task Force. Informally, in working with clients to get services we work with every provider in town at some point.

Work with faith-based organizations and Salvation Army on programs for homeless and needy.

Yes, treatment, programming, training, etc.

Yes, meeting with staff of agencies to share about our services

Yes

Some.

Yes, to meet our Agency's goals it is vital that we collaborate with other services to gain access to professional and rehabilitative services.

Yes, plan programs, coordinate on projects.

Work closely with Juvenile Justice; collaborate to provide training for other agencies such as SCPS, STA, etc.

Yes, regular monthly meetings.

Yes. Information sharing, resource/referral.

Yes, regular meetings of various social services agencies.

Yes – providing mental health and substance abuse services to youth.

6) In Your opinion, what is working best for AOC?

Don't know.

Monthly meetings, subcommittees for planning for specific issues.

I don't have enough experience to say. I never really "bought in" to the work AOC does.

Positive, efficient info sharing at meetings.

Momentum is good directly after meetings when people have lots of input.

I would say that the consistency of the participants and the development of the subcommittees is a great solution.

Consistent meetings, updated website, consistent stakeholders attending.

The energy of the facilitators, may not always agree with ideas, but still good, positive energy.

Facilitators' energy and skills, several E.D.'s in group. AOC has a good niche as an umbrella group.

Sharing info about different programs.

Few subcommittees.

Community agencies meeting to discuss issues in community. However, agencies need to buy in and commit to providing identified services their agency is responsible to provide.

Meeting regularly to share info, ideas, resources. Committee structure to do work and report back seems to work better than doing work at meetings.

Interagency cooperation.

7) In your opinion, what needs improvement for AOC?

Continuity. I hope you (K&M) will be around for awhile.

Need to define role of AOC toward developing a comprehensive community action plan with agencies committing to serve the needs of community.

Leadership grooming to build a solid base. Hands-on guidance/facilitation to move forward.

Learn from past, so as not to repeat same mistakes.

Meeting time is inconvenient – morning would be better.

The AOC meeting could further distinguish itself as a meeting that's actually fun by doing a 5 minute icebreaker/game at every single meeting. Also, a few more reps from group might help UAS, SJ, SCH, SNEP etc. Maybe even churches or civic groups like soroptomists. If the goal is broad enough, i.e. Improve the level of health and well being for all Sitkans then there could be something for everyone. Something that could bring the group together like a common cause, goal etc. that are very tangible and everyone can do one small thing to make a success. It makes sense that all the Turning Point people, infrastructure etc should merge with AOC to strengthen AOC.

Representatives from a few more other groups in our community, i.e. parents, faith organizations, city leaders, police again...

More members (more diverse members)

The solidification of a philosophy (I'm sure there is one, but it is not always "present").

Better organization of meetings to include establishing short-term goals & meeting them (not facilitators but participants).

Morale seems to drop half way through the school year.

Take more action and less talking and meetings.

More political clout.

More frequent publication of achievements, meetings after school hours to increase SSD staff attendance.

8) what value do you bring to the coalition?

Unfortunately the AOY committee began meeting earlier in the day, and I was no longer able to attend.

Broad based experience and education in health & human services. A “do it” person.

none.

info re agency

commitment to the cause/ a desire to see it become an even more powerful force in the community.

Desire to create an environment for youth that ties together all resources, opportunities and best intentions of the community.

I don't really know yet.

A clog dancing ability that is second to none, and a public health perspective and sincere love for this community.

I haven't been able to participate enough.

Knowledge and History.

A community agency that serves all community members.

Participation, experience, another voice & perspective, a desire to be part of the community.

Awareness of community culture, 20+ years experience with youth.

9) What value do you take away from the coalition?

Networking & keeping informed re: community services and event. Being “part of”.

Better understanding of agencies working toward specific goals in principle. Need to implement solutions to goals identified.

Lack of participation.

Hope.

Common-united direction.

Cooperation. Communication.

Hope. The level of participation has promise for the future.

None.

Connecting with other agencies & people.

Awareness of other programs and efforts.