



## River Valley Rising Meeting Minutes

June 29, 2016 11am-12:30pm Rumford Public Library

Attendance: Kristen Provencher, Patty Duguay, Andrea Benya, Justin Thacker, Katie Sloma, and Allie Burke

### Check in:

- *Marijuana Talking Points and Teen Brain AD:* Everyone at the meeting looked over the talking points and circles ones that they thought were the most important or would have the most impact. These talking points are part of our “Teen Brain Under Construction” poster, which we plan to post around the community (final draft attached). We will send this poster out in hopes that coalition members will display them where they can, such as in community centers and schools, with the goal of both teens and adults seeing them.
- RVR attended a Dover Youth to Youth training in Westbrook which gave us resources, information, and a new motivation to develop a youth coalition within our community starting with our involvement in the WFKA Summer Program.

### RVR Updates:

- *Medical Marijuana Updates:* Creating poster to display around community focusing on the teen brain. Allie will deliver a twenty minute presentation on marijuana to the staff at Swift River Health Center in August in hopes to increase their awareness of the issue. A large issue is increasing the perception of risk among everyone in our community as we noticed the recent trend that marijuana is no longer seen as a harmful drug to many in the community.
- *Ordinances:* Allie will be meeting with the Dixfield town manager to discuss developing ordinances around marijuana growing operations, caregivers, and where medical marijuana dispensaries can be in our communities. Chief Roy of Mexico will be proposing a set of ordinances on how we should regulate marijuana to the Mexico Zoning Board on June 30, as we attempt to prepare for the November 7<sup>th</sup> vote on whether or not to legalize recreational marijuana.
- *Coalition Classification Tool (CCT):* RVR’s 2<sup>nd</sup> year work plan has been approved. This classification tool includes a lengthy 100 question survey on how the community and coalition members believe RVR is doing. We plan to send out a shortened version of the survey to all coalition members to get a better idea of how we can improve and what we are doing well, so that the survey can be completed as accurately as possible.
- *Mid-Year CADCA Conference:* This year’s conference is being held in Las Vegas from July 18<sup>th</sup> to the 22<sup>nd</sup>. Allie will be attending the conference. The Dover Youth to Youth group



we met will also be at the conference allowing us to reconnect with them. This conference will be a great opportunity to gather more information on topics we focus on as well as to see what other coalitions are doing in our field.

- *Youth Coalition*: Within the next year we are trying to form a greater connection with the youth of the area. We want to see what their perceptions are, what they hear and see, and how their voices can help us communicate our message more effectively. The WFKA summer program: Full Steam Ahead, will hopefully allow us to make those first few connections with middle and high schoolers and get some youth interested in the work we are doing. We may also collaborate with Justin Thacker and the youth he works with to get a sense of what they see in the community.
- *RSU 10 Administrator Meeting*: Presented mostly on marijuana, its different forms, the complications, and how it effects our youth. Admin's reported that a lot of the issues come from children coming into school smelling like marijuana because their parents do it, causing unnecessary complications with the child as schools often lack protocol for many of these kinds of issues. RVR is trying to get into the annual RSU 10 staff meeting to present to the entire district about these issues and to distribute a consistent message of facts to our teachers, as many administrators were unaware of the information RVR presented to them at the meeting.

#### Community Update:

- *Bethel Area Taskforce*: New name is the Mahoosuc Communities Coalition. Virtual meetings will be held this summer, with the next in person meeting being held after Labor Day. The coalition will focus mostly on underage drinking but may also include some other relevant topics, such as marijuana. There will be an evening town hall type of meeting at the end of September/beginning of October, using a \$500 grant to bring in a speaker or presentation on underage drinking. There will also hopefully be a short assembly at Telstar High School on the same day promoting and providing incentive for teens and their families to attend the evening event.
- *Western Maine Addiction Task Force and Project Save ME*: In the task force we focus heavily on prevention, but we also want to see more of the treatment and recovery aspects. There is a plan to re-assess the goals of the task force as well
- *Law Enforcement*: Police department put on a demo for kids in drivers ed by having them try to drive a golf cart through an obstacle course with beer and marijuana goggles on. This helped the kids to realize what it's like and how dangerous it is to drive under the influence. RVR is hopeful to collaborate with the department for the summer program and use the goggles with the middle schoolers on a bike to show them the same impairment these drugs have on operating any type of transportation.



- **WFKA Summer Program Updates:** This summer we will be present at the summer program working with kids to educate them and create a PSA for RVR about our community and substance abuse.

Action Plan:

- Nothing on the schedule for July, but we did add the work on ordinances and the summer school programming. Our goals are continuing to work on messaging in the schools as well as in the community and on policies/ordinances. So far RVR's focus has been on marijuana and underage drinking, we are waiting to be approved to start work on opioid use.