

**Mitchell-Yancey Substance Abuse Task Force
General Task Force Meeting
March 13, 2018
Mauzy Phillips Community Center, Blue Ridge Regional Hospital, Spruce Pine**

Attendees: Rachel Suddarth (Appalachian Counseling and Psychological Services), Ashley Beam (Mitchell County Sheriff's Office), Angela Atkins (Mitchell County Schools), Mechelle Akers (Pharmacist), Katherine Savage (Yancey Alliance for Young Children), Basil Savitsky (RHA Health Services), Janet Wise (Celebrate Recovery), Barbara Harrell (Blue Ridge Christian News), Deborah Trexler (Celebrate Recovery), Jim Haaga (Retired Physician), Brian Shuford (Yancey County Sheriff's Office), Sam Sutker (VAYA Health), Jessica Farley (Toe River Health District), Drew Brown (Toe River Health District), Diane Creek (Toe River Health District), Dan Barron (Guardian ad Litem), Ron Pallick (Appalachian Counseling and Psychological Services), Jeannette Murray (Counselor, Mayland Community College), Jeff Miller (Retired Community Member), Leslie McCrory (VAYA Consultant), Becky Carter (Blue Ridge Regional Hospital), Amy Earnheart (Mountain Community Health Partnership), Randall Roundtree (Yancey County Schools), Pierce Bingham (Mountain Challenge), Neil Crisp (Celebrate Recovery), Rebecca Reeve (WNC Healthy Impact), Donald Street (Mitchell County Sheriff), Jeff Edwards (Mission Hospital Manager of EMS)
Staff: Schell McCall, Jeff Spargo, Terri Leiser

Welcome: Jessica Farley, Chair of MYSATF, welcomed all to the meeting and initiated introductions.

Working Dinner and Alternatives to Opioids for Pain Management - Basil Savitsky, RHA Prevention Specialist for Mitchell and Yancey Counties – In January, Basil met with County Commissioners and a variety of others to prioritize ways to allocate funds from the CURES Grant for Opioid Prevention. One of the priorities determined at this meeting was to conduct a series of trainings that would bridge medical providers with complementary practices or alternatives to treating pain without opioids. Basil, along with Schell McCall and Jim Haaga, have been working to determine what it would take to bridge those two communities and to present the choices in treating chronic pain without opioids to the community.

There will be a working dinner at Spruce Pine Methodist Church at 6pm on March 26, 2018. If you would like to attend, please RSVP to Basil, Schell, or Jim by March 19, 2018. There will be informative presentations and open discussion surrounding alternatives to prescribing opioids. There will also be discussion on having informative sessions for the public that will teach on other ways to handle pain.

Underage Drinking Survey – This is an assessment that Basil is conducting. Please submit your underage drinking survey by email as soon as possible. Also indicate if your responses are specific to Mitchell, Yancey, or both counties. This survey will help gauge the best prevention strategy for combating underage drinking in our community. Input from the surveys will help direct where grant funds need to be focused for underage drinking prevention.

Youth to Youth- Terri Leiser, Youth Team Advisor for Partners Aligned Toward Health (PATH) – Youth to Youth is an after school drug prevention program in the middle schools in Mitchell and Yancey Counties. Youth to Youth is open to any student in middle school. The groups have been busy since beginning last fall:

- Name – Students who participate in Youth to Youth voted to name themselves Appalachian Youth to Youth.
- Samantha Skunk – Youth to Youth participants will be presenting Samantha Skunk, an evidence based skit on medication safety, to elementary school students at selected schools
- Sticker Shock – The Youth to Youth group at Bowman Middle will be conducting a Sticker Shock campaign in Spruce Pine. A Sticker Shock campaign is posting stickers on beer packages reminding buyers to not give alcohol to minors. Thank you to Cruz Thru in Spruce Pine who is partnering with Youth to Youth for the Sticker Shock Campaign. Other alcohol retailers are also being considered.
- Videos – Through funding from the CURES grant, a videographer has been hired to make professional videos of the students. One video will be a recruitment video, and the other aimed at the community.
- Field Trip – Youth to Youth students in Yancey County toured the Yancey County Sheriff's Office and Burnsville Police Department. Youth to Youth in Mitchell County toured the Mitchell County Sheriff's Office and Spruce Pine Police Department.
- Rising 8th graders and older Youth to Youth members are eligible to attend the Southeast Regional Youth to Youth conference in Charlotte this summer. We hope to take students from each group to attend.

Upcoming Events –

- March 27, 2018 at 3pm – We are bringing Ty Sells, Founder of Youth to Youth International, to Mitchell County to address school and community members. Location is TBA. Contact Jeff Spargo for details.
- March 21, 2018 at noon, Lenten Lunch Series - The Task Force is grateful to have been chosen as the nonprofit recipient of the offerings of the Lenten services in Yancey County. The last service is at noon at Higgins United Methodist Church.
- March 26, 2018 from noon-3pm, Yancey Preschool & Kindergarten Registration, Burnsville Town Center - The Task Force will have a table to educate families about medication safety.
- March 29, 2018 from 1-6pm, Mitchell County Kindergarten Registration - The Task Force will have a table to educate families about medication safety.
- April 21, 2018 from 10am-2pm, Child Fest - The Task Force will have a table at Child Fest with a kid-friendly craft and a message about substance use/abuse prevention.

Narcan – The Task Force has free kits of Narcan with the goal of getting these into the hands of the people who need it. If you or someone you know needs a kit, please contact us.

Task Force Teams – The Task Force broke out into small Teams during the remaining 25 minutes of the meeting to effectively address different tasks.

The next Task Force Meeting will be May 8, 2018 – 12 noon, at the Yancey County Public Library in Burnsville.