

Creating an Asset-Based Community Initiative With a Zero Budget

Presenters:

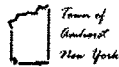
- Geoff Klein** Amherst Town Justice
- Chelsea Bath** High School Student
- Kathy Mobarak-Miller** Amherst Youth Board
- Anne Rohrer** Amherst Task Force
- Mary-Diana Pouli** Amherst Youth Board

Amherst Task Force for Healthy Community*Healthy Youth

Amherst, New York



Amherst, New York...



- First ring suburb of Buffalo
- Second safest city in the country
- Largest population in Erie County – 116,510 (2000 Census)
- 45,076 Households; 29,885 Families
- Household Median Income \$55,427; Family Median Income \$68,951
- Home to University of NY at Buffalo, Erie Community College, Daemen College

School-Age Children

- Amherst Central School District – 2,986
- Sweet Home Central School District – 3,813
- Williamsville Central School District – 10,600
- Private and Parochial Schools – 3,000

20,399

Free and Reduced Lunch - 2,253 students – @ 11%

Numerous youth programs and sports operated through community groups, non-profit organizations, the schools and the Town of Amherst

History of the Task Force

- Began in 1990 as Amherst Task Force on Substance Use/ Abuse
- First members –
 - Town of Amherst Police Department
 - Town of Amherst Youth Board
 - Amherst Central School District
 - Sweet Home Central School District
 - Williamsville Central School District

Original Purpose:

Cooperate with each other to provide programs and services for young people.

Jointly apply for state and federal grant money.

Current Purpose:

Maintain and enhance assets in the lives of young people in Amherst.

Diminish risky, deficit behaviors.

Name changed to Amherst Task Force for Healthy Community*Healthy Youth in 2000



MISSION:

Support, promote and link community asset building efforts for youth, their families and residents.

GOALS:

- Collaborate to support the Healthy Community*Healthy Youth Initiative
- Disseminate current Search Institute survey results of our elementary, middle and high school youth
- Support activities to reduce underage drinking
- Recognize businesses that support youth
- Partner with youth in developing a healthy community
- Encourage communication among schools, families, youth, adults and the Task Force
- Reach out to communities beyond the Town of Amherst to share resource and ideas to create a common vision

Membership

- Voluntary
- Organizations
- Government
- Individuals
- No dues
- Memorandum of Understanding

MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

September 1, 2007 – August 31, 2008

The XYZ Central School District supports the mission, goals and the guiding principles of the Amherst Task Force as an active Amherst Task Force For Healthy Community*Healthy Youth member.

Expectations and Responsibilities

As members of the Amherst Task Force, we agree to:

1. Support the Amherst Task Force mission.
2. Attend monthly Amherst Task Force meetings.
3. Participate/serve on at least one standing committee of the Amherst Task Force.
4. Agree to operate within the parameters of the Amherst Task Force By-Laws.
5. Provide in-kind resources to support the mission and function of Amherst Task Force activities.

Specific Contribution(s)

Representatives:

School Counselor

Assistant Principal

Superintendent

History of the Amherst Youth Consortium

• Began in 1989 as Amherst Youth Consortium on Substance Use/Abuse

• First members –

Students at Williamsville South High School and Buffalo Academy of the Sacred Heart who wanted adults to know that youth were not the only ones with drug problems

• Program of the Amherst Youth Board

Name changed to Amherst Youth Consortium in 1995

Focus on youth as asset builders

Mission:

To introduce the Search Institute's 40 Developmental Assets for healthy youth development to youth and adults.

Through volunteer work, members seek to build and strengthen assets in members, all youth in the Town of Amherst and in the greater community.

Membership

- Voluntary
- Individuals
- Middle and High school students
- No dues
- Pledge to be drug, alcohol and nicotine-free

Financing/Budget

- Amherst Task Force for Health Community*Healthy Youth – zero dedicated dollars
- Amherst Youth Consortium – zero dedicated dollars

Amherst Youth Consortium Funding

- Amherst Youth Board provides a portion of a staff member's time and free facility use
- Adult members of the Amherst Task Force for Healthy Community*Healthy Youth partner with Youth Consortium on a number of endeavors
- Most activities involve "people power" and require minimal outside resources
- Youth and families contribute own resources, when necessary
- Young people "creatively fundraise" if they have a special project

Amherst Task Force Funding

- Memorandum of understanding to provide in-kind resources
- Ask members to allocate or re-allocate existing resources for certain projects
- Apply for grant dollars using the Task Force member best suited to pursue/administer funds in collaboration with other Task Force members
- Local foundation used as a "pass-through" for donations
- Advocate for targeted legislative discretionary funds
- "Creative fundraising"

A separate 501(c)3 –
To be or not to be?



For us, the answer was "NO"

- Cost and upkeep prohibitive
- History of other collaborations where incorporation resulted in demise
- Multiple not-for-profits in our community pursuing funding – field is saturated
- Had a partner willing to serve as a financial pass-through and lend its 501(c)3 status when appropriate
- Had support of Town of Amherst (Youth Board) and school districts
- Successful in how we had been operating

Successful No/Low-Cost Activities

- Red Ribbon Week
- Book Drive
- Underage Drinking: Not a Minor Problem Initiative
- Amherst Bee Newspaper Monthly Column

Administration of Search Institute Survey

- Every two years, all 8th, 10th, 12th graders
- School districts pay for surveys and reports using federal funds
- Youth Board pays for town-wide report using interest from checking account
- Community meetings held to roll-out results – space and refreshments donated in-kind
- Results inform the work of the Task Force, Youth Consortium, town and school districts for the next two years

Drug-Free Communities Grant

- Federal funds (SAMHSA)
- Two years in the planning
- Prepared by team of Task Force members
- Research-based
- Letters of commitment and in-kind contributions from Task Force members required
- Allocates resources to different partners each year of the 5 years

DFC Activities

- Additional research
- Capacity-building
- Evaluation of existing programs
- Media campaign (creation of award-winning DVD)
- Participation in Town Hall meeting (additional funding received)

Sustainability

We will be sustainable **after** the grant, because we were sustainable **before** the grant!

Capacity-building activities
funded under the grant

MOUs, By-Laws Update,
Blueprint for Necessary Change
will enhance sustainability.

