



Rice County Chemical Health Coalition Update

July 2007

Since 2004, the Rice County Chemical Health Coalition has been working to prevent youth use of alcohol and other drugs throughout Rice County. From its beginnings as a county-wide, multi-sector work group convened by the Rice County Family Services Collaborative, the Coalition developed a comprehensive, research-based plan to address youth substance abuse in Rice County. The Coalition is comprised of Action Teams each focused on a particular aspect of drug and alcohol abuse prevention. Work of the Coalition and its Action Teams is largely based on best practices found to be effective in other communities. Description of the teams include:

Mayor's Task Force on Youth Alcohol & Drug Use (Northfield specific) – City Council-appointed positions; membership includes local citizens committed to reducing youth alcohol and drug use

Accomplishments & Planned Areas of Focus:

- Raise community awareness around youth alcohol and drug use
- Examine existing policies and practices within the community around youth use
- Develop and implement recommendations
- Partnered with the Minnesota Institute of Public Health to administer a Community Readiness Survey to 600 Northfield residents to assess community norms on this issue
- Worked with the Rice County Attorney's Office and Northfield Police Department in parent education campaigns during the prom/graduation time
- Implementing parent education campaign through the summer about preventing substance use and risk factors
- Working cooperatively with the Parent Communication Network to promote active and responsible parenting
- Conducting court monitoring of court cases where adults provide alcohol to minors
- Assisting with and supporting compliance checks to alcohol vendors

Provider Team – members include local chemical health providers and general health care providers, including representatives from Northfield Hospital, District One Hospital, Allina Clinic, Carleton College Wellness Center, Rice County Community Corrections, Rice County Social Services, Omada Behavioral Health Services, Family Focus, Recovery School of Southern Minnesota & the Center for Human Resources

Accomplishments & Current Areas of Focus:

- Examining the continuum of prevention and intervention services in Rice County for youth and families dealing with substance use issues
- Worked with District One Hospital and Northfield Hospital on developing protocols for responding to patients with presenting substance use issues; developed systems for physicians to be able to consult with local chemical health providers when necessary
- Developed online chemical health resource directory (www.northfieldhcai.org) of Rice County prevention and intervention services; available in English & Spanish
- Developed and implementing a pilot adolescent-only outpatient treatment group

- Provided trainings for local healthcare providers about identifying and responding to substance abuse issues
- Working with Northfield medical community to identify physicians to attend Buprenorphine training in order to locally manage opioid (including heroin) withdrawal

Enforcement Team – members include the Chiefs from the Northfield, Faribault, Morristown, and Lonsdale Police Departments; the Rice County Sheriff; the Rice County Attorney; and additional representatives from the Rice County Sheriff’s Department, Rice County Attorney’s Office, and Rice County Community Corrections, as well as local school officials

Accomplishments & Current Areas of Focus:

- Work on policies around the sale of alcohol to minors - beverage server and vendor training requirements, compliance checks, and enforcement practices
- Implemented a grant focused on enforcement of underage drinking laws and identifying adult providers of alcohol to minors; secured funding to continue after the grant - Rice County ZAP (Zero Alcohol Providers). Officer training and call out procedures completed
- Organize monthly alcohol beverage server training sessions in partnership with South Central College to assist servers in identifying false IDs and avoiding sales to minors
- Partnering with school representatives to reach parents about youth substance use

Media Team – members include local media professionals, graphic designers, parents, and public health educators

Accomplishments & Current Areas of Focus:

- Media campaigns providing age-appropriate information to parents of youth in grades K-5 & 6-12
- Supported two youth media teams to design youth-specific messages for grades 6-12
- Plan and funding to continue media campaigns are in place

School Team – in formation; community-specific groups; members include district staff, parents, students

Accomplishments & Planned Areas of Focus:

- Look at chemical health curriculum and services in the schools, any gaps in services, and ways that these gaps could be filled
- Administered HCI Survey in Northfield Middle and High School in years when the Minnesota Student Survey was not administered. Several years of data available.
- Began administering HCI Survey in Faribault Middle and High School
- A licensed alcohol & drug counselor (Sarah Shippy from Omada Behavioral Health Services) spends over a day per week in the Northfield schools to meet individually with students with substance use issues
- Healthy Learners Prevention Plan completed in Faribault schools; presentation to Administrators in September, 2006, and to Board of Education in November, 2006