



CV CARES Action-Focused Monthly Meeting Agenda

Thursday, September 10, 2009

1:00 PM

First United Methodist Church – Heritage Hall

37 W Beauregard

San Angelo, TX 76903

Mission Statement: To eliminate substance abuse through community effort.

Vision Statement: Our Dream is through God's guidance, we unite our community, and create an environment that encourages the elimination of substance abuse, so our children and families can thrive in a spiritual, moral, healthy, drug-free environment.

Attendees: E. Angelina Osornio – CARES Coordinator, Tabitha Ramirez – Newbridge Family Shelter, Judge Penny Roberts – County Court at Law #2, Julie Alonso – CARES Program Director, Retha Fortenberry – Meals for the Elderly, Sergeant Marc Odom – Goodfellow AFB, Officer Kathy Walker – San Angelo Police Dept, Bernie Coffee – Workforce Development, Tom Early – Health Foundation, N. Gary Smith – Juvenile Justice Center, Deanna Watkins – SAISD (Lake View), Sammy Sablan – MHMR, Kristi Buckingham – Children for a Peaceful World

1. Reading of Mission & Vision Statement (Tabitha Ramirez)

2. Attendee Introductions & Announcements

Tabitha Ramirez informed the group that October is Domestic Violence Awareness Month. For more detail contact her at 655-5775 or tabitha.ramirez@icdbridges.org.

3. Drug Free Community Month (Julie Alonso)

Julie passed out a DFC Calendar highlighting events. *Please see attached document; Drug Free Community Month calendar of events 2009*

Julie informed membership about the Parent Guide being distributed via the San Angelo Standard Times. It will have information regarding the most commonly used drugs, slang terms, and the CARES pledge. 19,000 will go out with the Standard Times, 10,000 will be available via ADACCV/CARES, and 5,000 will be available in Spanish. She informed the group if their agency wanted copies to distribute, they could contact her or Angelina.

CARES will host an interactive booth at Community Day at Sunset Mall on 09/26/09. The idea is to replicate a teen's bedroom and plant signs throughout pointing to drug use. Parents will be asked to find the signs. Julie explained a few CARES members met Wednesday, September 9th with Rebecca Gutierrez and her Youth Advocate Group to plan details for the teen room.

Retha asked how many people were in attendance. Deanna responded approximately 15-16 – 10 being teens.

Julie emphasized the signs planted will not be the obvious one, such as a pipe or empty package of cigarettes. One example she provided was a cassette tape case. Most kids do not have a tape deck and would not normally have a cassette tape cover simply lying around. The case can be used to hide items.

Julie asked for volunteers to sign up for a shift to monitor the teen room during the day. She passed around a sign-up form. *(Note: email angelinao@adaccv.org if you want to sign up.)*

Julie also brought up Family Day – A Day to Eat Dinner With Your Children™ on 09/28/09. She mentioned Angelina has been in contact with Pizza Hut to get them on board but has not heard a confirmation yet. The hope is that Pizza Hut will offer a family discount on Family Day. The purpose of Family Day is to have families eat together to open dialog about substance abuse. Studies show parents are the number 1 reason youth choose not to use drugs.



Another event for DFC Month is Dress Your Campus in Red. Julie mentioned last year's event "was phenomenal!" Local schools decorate their campuses in red. The schools with the most red win. The schools were very excited last year and did such a great job that ADACCV had to pull together more money to offer prize money because it was difficult to determine 1 winner. Julie told the group to contact Angelina or her if they were interested in being a judge for this year's contest.

Kathy discussed National Night Out on 10/13/09. She stated 6 locations are on board (to see sites visit <http://www.cvcare.org/articles/view/23>). Kathy explained it is a community-wide, family event. Last year had 2500 people attend. Several organizations had a presence. Kathy asked for those interested in helping to contact her at 657-4332 or at kathy.walker@sanangelopolice.org.

Kathy mentioned they are trying to secure a donor for drinks. Last year Coke was able to help but due to the economy, they are unable to do so this year. She has been in contact with Dr. Pepper. She explained Bishop Pfeifer has donated money. Angelina suggested Wal-Mart, Julie mentioned Albertsons, Deanna mentioned getting different stores to each site. Kathy explained she hoped to have one major sponsor for all drinks to simplify things. Tabitha explained McDonalds donated all the drinks to an event the NewBridge Shelter hosted recently. Deana suggested Sonic will donate cups. Julie also mentioned the Food Bank because agencies with accounts there can purchase in bulk - 5¢ per lb. ADACCV has an account and may be able to purchase on their behalf.

Kathy also explained there will be a kick-off event the night before in the Target parking lot. Time is to be determined. Once set, details will be on CARES website under Upcoming Events.

4. Drug Courts Presentation – with room for Q&A (Judge Penny Roberts)

Judge Roberts began by explaining she had heard about Drug Courts a few years back. What intrigued her was the opportunity to change offenders' behaviors than allowing them to be repeat offenders. They applied for funding to start a Drug Court program in Tom Green County. TGC now has 4 Drug Courts – 3 at misdemeanor level and 1 at felony level.

Individuals recommended for Drug Court must meet certain criteria – one specifically is they are repeat offenders. Judge Roberts explained there are many options for 1st time offenders but rarely for repeat offenders. She knew of individuals that would get convicted with a DWI twice, pay fines, then on their 3rd offense get sent to 7 years in prison. If was such a drastic jump, she decided to try Drug Courts.

The process begins with a probation screen then is presented to judge. The judge will review the criteria to determine if they are eligible for Drug Court. They do not mix the misdemeanor and felony offenders.

Normally DWI offenders may pay anywhere from \$750-\$2000 in fines, \$60 per month for probation, a surcharge to the state of Texas equaling \$1000 over 3 years, and community service. Repeat offenders will pay more.

The Drug Court program costs \$500 and those in the program will be required to adhere to very strict requirements; such as:

- Report weekly
- Community service
- Meetings on regular basis
- Individual counseling
- Group counseling
- AA/NA meetings (30 meetings in 30 days & can be up to 90 meetings in 90 days)
- 10pm curfew
- House arrest

Violations can lead to individuals having more community service to complete or write reports to judge and read aloud in court. Other violations include having to wear a SCRAM Monitor on ankle to measure the amount of alcohol in an individual's perspiration. SCRAM reports are sent electronically to judge for review. Another option is a drug patch an individual wear (similar to nicotine patch) to measure narcotics in perspiration for up to 10 days. Judge Roberts



explained more advanced tests are coming out, such as one that can measure alcohol for up to 80 days in the past (5 days use).

Retha asked if Judge Roberts sees an attitude shift when individuals are in the program.

Judge Roberts answered that many individuals think they are getting the easy way out by joining the Drug Court program but very quickly learn that it is very intense. They begin truly hating the program but most end with true behavior change. If an individual successfully completes the year-long program, they will have their charges dismissed. She also explained some individuals don't take the program seriously at all and will repeat offense. If they repeat after going through Drug Court, they will not be permitted in again.

Judge Roberts also explained to help the individuals understand the cost of their alcohol abuse; she will provide calculations on the amount of money spent on alcohol. Many will spend thousands per year. She will ask them, "What do you think you could buy for \$7000 if it had not been spent on alcohol?" It proves to be an eye-opener for many.

Each Individual will receive individual counseling to determine what their triggers are for their behavior. Each counseling session is unique to the individual.

Judge Roberts stated many of the offender think she is the "meanest" judge but she explained she would rather be considered the meanest than allow individuals the chance to drunk drive and kill someone.

Retha asked how many people have completed the program.

Judge Roberts answered approximately 70 people per year, per judge will complete the program. She also emphasized that jail is not the solution for alcoholics or drug addicts. The goal is to change behavior and that is what Drug Courts aims to do.

Judge Roberts explained the average grade level for the offenders in her program is 8-9th grade. Drug Court will require those in the program to get their GED. She stated many of the individuals already in their 40's will go "kicking and screaming" but in the end are very proud of their accomplishment and have raised self esteems.

Judge highlighted a key factor to having a successful program is to not only offer consequences for violations but to offer praise and incentives for success. An example of an incentive is a \$5 gift card to Starbucks or Sonic. Judge Roberts explained that a simple \$5 gift card can truly make a difference.

Kathy mentioned San Angelo has so many DWI's. Judge Roberts thought most of it stems from the bars selling shots to the customers. Deanna mentioned it was a major thing done to celebrate a person's 21st birthday. Retha stated it would be very helpful to have proof that lead back to the shots to get shots eliminated in bars.

Angelina explained that she had several years in the service industry and was a bartender throughout college. She has been TABC certified numerous times over the years and has an understanding of the class and laws. She stated that in her opinion, the problem lies primarily with bar owners/managers. Often, they will not have consequences for bartenders/servers if they over-serve customers. But there are establishments that do enforce consequences. Another concern Angelina mentioned was the lack of truly explaining the consequences of over-serving during TABC certification classes. Often, bartenders care more about the \$50 tip earned from someone than what might happen once they leave an establishment.

Judge stated more education about the true consequences of alcohol abuse needs to be shared with teens and college students. Julie mentioned ADACCV works with ASU students that need disciplinary action for alcohol and drug violations.

Judge Roberts stated Texas universities are supposed to have a disciplinary program for violators. She has been trying to find out if ASU does so. At times Judge Roberts will see college students in her program and would like to know their true offense history – including incidents at college.



Judge Roberts mentioned a program that exists in Austin, TX for UT students. Parents can set up an account for their children that pay for cab rides. Each student is issued a “debit card” for the account and every cab company in Austin will accept it. The purpose is to ensure the students have a ride when they have consumed alcohol and are impaired. Kathy mentioned she thought it was a good idea.

Julie asked Judge Roberts if the public is allowed to view the Drug Court in process. Judge answered yes but attendees are required to practice discretion by not sharing who they have seen on the program.

Judge Roberts concluded by stating the importance of getting TABC on board and emphasized Law Enforcement are not the “bad guys”.

Julie mentioned she really enjoyed the dialog that was opened up during the meeting and asked how CARES can help?

Judge Roberts explained that she, nor the other judges, is permitted to solicit donations. She did mention that they are able to accept gift cards to offer as incentives to individuals in the program. She mentioned Bishop Pfeifer donated \$100 to the program that she was able to use to purchase gift cards.

5. Next Meeting

- a. DATE: Thursday, October 8, 2009
- b. TIME: 1:00pm
- c. LOCATION: First United Methodist Church – Heritage Hall, 31 E Beauregard

Minutes submitted by E. Angelina Osornio