

WAHKIAKUM NETWORKING CAFÉ DECEMBER 3, 2009

September's Networking Café was held from 6:00 – 8:00 PM at the River Street Meeting Room.
Attending were:

Lisa Frink	Wahkiakum School District Prevention Intervention Education
Christina Marneris	Southwest Washington Agency on Aging and Disabilities
Jerry Wetle	Wahkiakum Co. Prosecuting Attorney
Erin Wilson	Board of County Commissioners
Chris Holmes	Wahkiakum Health & Human Services
Karen Fleming	Board of County Commissioners
Kassy Burdick	Wahkiakum School District
Susan Schillios	St. James Family Center/Charlotte House
Carole Lewis	Media/Public At Large
Linda Hartung	Wahkiakum Health & Human Services
Lisa Ridout	Wahkiakum School District
Jon Dearmore	Wahkiakum Co. Sheriff's Office
Kelly Guest	AmeriCorps: Wahkiakum Co. Health Department
Blair Brady	Board of County Commissioners
Tammy Peterson	Wahkiakum Community Network
Lia Sealund	Wahkiakum Community Network

Focus of Event: The goal of the Wahkiakum Networking Café is to answer two questions – are we doing the work *right*, and are we doing the *right* work. During the Café's held the months of September, December and March, individual services are reviewed to determine if the services are being delivered as intended by the funders. This will answer the first question if we are doing the work *right*. To determine if we are doing the *right* work, data will be reviewed in June to assess the health and welfare of our surrounding community and the needs of our families in Wahkiakum County.

PROGRAM REVIEW

COMMUNITY BASED INTERVENTION AND PREVENTION SERVICES

1. Consolidated Juvenile Services and Victims' Assistance

Intended Goals of the Services Provided

Jerry Wetle presented the services offered to Wahkiakum youth and families through Consolidated Juvenile Services. The goal for his department is to rehabilitate kids. They focus on working with the family as a whole with the understanding that kids are to be accountable for their actions and parents need to parent their youth and provide them the tools to be productive adults.

Current Status of the Families, Children and the Community

Throughout the nation, Jerry has witnessed there is a trend that kids are engaging in aggressive behavior for the thrill to experience extreme violence. However, he

reported that he perceives Wahkiakum County to be a very safe place for youth to grow up.

Collaborative Efforts

Local programs such as the department's anti-bullying program, a collaborative project in the community among Wahkiakum Co. Prosecuting Attorney's Office, Wahkiakum Co. Sheriff's Office and others, are helping, but with fewer resources the problem will be harder to battle.

Barriers to Success or Improvements Being Made

Youth's substance of choice is alcohol in Wahkiakum County. With numbers as high as approximately three-quarters of the high school youth reporting they have consumed alcohol, we still have data that reflects zero arrests for underage drinking. When presented this challenge, Jerry clarified that past practice has allowed for deferrals to be common prosecuting attorney practice, reducing the number of youth who are actually charged for their law violations. However, there is new approach now in place eliminating automatic deferrals for youth. Future arrest records should reflect the efforts of the Sheriff's Department on youth arrests. This effort should help to move families forward; to help families accept that children make mistakes, but their actions will be held accountable.

For More Information Contact: Jerry Wetle, Wahkiakum Co. Prosecutor's Office
Phone: 360-795-3652 E-mail: jwetle@wapa-sep.wa.gov

2. Violence Prevention and Victims' Assistance

Intended Goals of the Services Provided

Susan Schillios presented the services offered to Wahkiakum youth and families through the Charlotte House Domestic Violence Services and Community Sexual Assault Program. The goal for these programs is to provide services for victims of domestic violence and/or sexual assault including, but not limited to, advocacy based counseling, medical advocacy, legal advocacy, social service advocacy, and information and referral. The shelter recently achieved accreditation status in November 2009. An element of accreditation was to demonstrate over the past four years that it is accomplishing 100% of the requirements of a Community Sexual Assault Program.

Current Status of the Families, Children and the Community

Direct feedback from families is hard to assess due to the transient nature of the families served. Using survey tools available, data reflects that after working with the Charlotte House program, clients know more about ways to plan for their safety, increase in understanding of community resources and increased awareness of their choices. Families served at the house have been consistent over the past 10 years, with an average of 60 clients served at the center each year. Annually, there has been a steady increase in clients served over the past four years; this trend is reflective of the increase in domestic violence offenses over the past 10 years in Wahkiakum County.

Collaborative Efforts

Collaboration is a key component of the success of the services offered at Charlotte House. The program has strong collaborative ties with Wahkiakum Health & Human Services for referrals to their counseling program, chemical dependency program, community outreach programs and employment opportunities through Elochoman Valley Partners. A particularly successful partnership has been increased collaboration with Wahkiakum School District, which has offered the staff the opportunity to provide increased education and prevention presentations to youth. They work closely with DSHS and the housing authority to assist victims in accessing services and are members of regional and national coalitions to receive technical assistance and training for staff and volunteers. There are close ties with law enforcement and prosecuting attorney's office to ensure responders are available at the scene.

Barriers to Success or Improvements Being Made

Affordable housing and employment opportunities continue to be a barrier to client success; requiring clients relocate to secure these basic necessities. The program has increased its focus on delivering youth and adult education to help reduce the stigma surrounding both domestic violence and sexual violence to help reduce the perception that the victim is somehow to blame for what has happened to them. Domestic violence and sexual assault continue to be huge issues in our community. Staff continues to look for new ways to end the acceptance of violence as a norm.

For More Information Contact: Beth Hansen or Susan Schillios, St. James Family Center
Phone: 360-795-8612 E-mail: bhansen@stjamesfamilycenter.org

3. Community-Policy Partnership

Intended Goals of the Services Provided

Jon Dearmore presented the services offered to Wahkiakum youth and families through Wahkiakum Sheriff's Office. The agency continues to hold a zero tolerance towards youth substance abuse.

Current Status of the Families, Children and the Community

Ongoing recent budget cuts have forced the department to shift from a proactive preventative approach, to a reactive approach as the department has had to cut down staff and eliminate programming. Recent cuts have eliminated School Resource Officers, Citizens Academy, and a variety of other efforts that in the past have kept the officers at the forefront of prevention. Only time will tell how the loss of these programs will impact substance abuse and violence in the community.

Collaborative Efforts

Recent budget cuts have caused the department to discontinue participation of the Cowlitz Wahkiakum Drug Task Force. However, collaboration continues with the

Wahkiakum Meth Action Team, Wahkiakum Community Network, and the department is an active participant in reducing domestic violence with Wahkiakum County Prosecuting Attorney's Office and St. James Family Center.

Barriers to Success or Improvements Being Made

The department has three reserves trained to assist in law enforcement. In addition, the Search and Rescue team is extremely strong, with recruitment ongoing, successful fundraising and outreach to the community, and mentoring elements are in place to strengthen youth volunteers and reduce risk factors in their lives.

For More Information Contact: Jon Dearmore, Wahkiakum Co. Sheriff's Office
 Phone: 360-795-3242 E-mail: jond@sd.co.wahkiakum.wa.us

BRAINSTORMING/CHALLENGE QUESTIONS

Due to extended length of oral presentations, breakout sessions were not available for brainstorming.

EVALUATION

Participants completed a brief survey at the conclusion of the event. Results are as follows:

- I. 100% of the participants stated they believe the programs presented tonight are doing the work right to achieve the goals of the funders.
- II. 100% of the participants stated they believe the agencies presented tonight are doing the right work to fill the needs of the community, but comments gathered indicated participants feel stronger communication between Wahkiakum Sheriff's Office and Wahkiakum County Prosecuting Attorney's Office would be beneficial.
- III. Recommendations to improve Wahkiakum Networking Café:
 - a. Emphasize from the very beginning the time limit for each presentation
- IV. 100% of the service providers (who have presented a challenge tonight or in the past) report they "strongly agree" or "agree" that at tonights or past Networking Café's they have received valuable suggestions or ideas for the challenges their organization was facing.
- V. 71% of service providers reported they have made or plan to make improvements or adjustments to service deliver, based on suggestions or ideas received at this or past cafes.
- VI. 100% of service providers report that attending this or past Networking Café's have contributed towards, or are in development of, increasing collaboration between their organization and others in our community.

Upcoming Wahkiakum Networking Café

March 3rd: Community and School Services

June 2, 2009

Community Mobilization	<u>Community Outcome and Evaluation</u>
Childcare	
Early Intervention & Educational Services	
Drug & Alcohol Abuse Prevention & Early Intervention in Schools	