



COMMUNITY OF SOLUTIONS

TEENS, parents, COMMUNITY WORKING TOGETHER
JUNE 19, 2013, MANTUA SWIM & TENNIS CLUB

We, 4 male teens...2 dads...22 "moms" & professionals

Participated in a SWOT Analysis to discuss:

the adversity/challenges that we face...

- What are the strengths (internal)?
- Weaknesses (internal)?
- Opportunities (external)?
- Threats (external)?

Read on for key insights...

Blue Jeans Background by Foto76 www.freedigitalphotos.net

We all wore jeans...connected through the **FRAYS**, in some way.

Community of Solutions invites more members of the larger community to strengthen our safety net of fabric as we

BUILD ON EACH OTHER'S IDEAS and **act** for

safety, health and **HAPPINESS**. We want to:

Build capacity for dealing with today's issues... **Hear you**, our teens... Help you learn what's at stake...

Facilitate, educate & participate in community programs about growing up, school pressures, competition, drug & alcohol use, depression... and more.¹.

Who are We?

KNOWLEDGE/SKILLS

- DRUMMER
- IMPROV ARTIST
- RN WITH HOLISTIC APPROACH
- ALCOHOL & DRUG SUBJECT MATTER EXPERT/RESOURCE
- MENTAL HEALTH PROVIDER

MEMBERS OF A "COMMUNITY" THAT IS BIGGER THAN WASHINGTON DC METRO

GIFTS

- LOUD
- EMPATHIC
- SOCIAL PLANNER
- ORGANIZER
- GOOD AT FOLLOW-THROUGH
- A LISTENER WHO CAN STEP BACK
- TENACIOUS
- OPEN MINDED/CAN SEE PERSPECTIVES
- LIKES DETAIL AND DATA
- CREATIVE

PASSIONS

- VALUE GROWING UP IN A TIGHT KNIT COMMUNITY
- LOVE MY WORK
- I DON'T TAKE "NO" FOR AN ANSWER
- LEARN THROUGH EXPERIENCE
- FOCUS ON BUILDING RELATIONSHIPS
- WORK TO BUILD HEALTHY COMMUNITIES
- GOOD AT FINDING RESOURCES
- TEENS WANT TO BE INVOLVED!

SWOT ANALYSIS

How can teens & parents partner to better deal with adversity/challenges?
Small, diverse groups identified their priorities, shared with larger group who then agreed upon priorities.

OUR STRENGTHS?

- Communication*****
- Compassion****
- Knowledge*

WEAKNESSES?

- 80% of parents unaware of teen's depression**
- Feel overwhelmed/shut down*
- Skeptical/judge self & others*
- Lack knowledge*



THREATS?

- Drugs in the community*****
- High expectations/competitive*****
- Lack of sleep****
- Many AP classes Jr. yr**
- No one knows how to bring up/talk about depression**
- Don't know how to talk to counselors**
- Social stigma**
- Social media/virtual world/reality disconnect, pressure*

OPPORTUNITIES?

- Focus on parents' needs (e.g. depressed parents may not have strength to help; lack of resources for teens)*****
- Screen all teens for depression**
- Belong to a group, club**
- Resources, communication, motivation, social media*
- Listen & acknowledge concerns*
- Observe neighbors & act on concerns*

Now What?

BUILD ON OUR STRENGTHS...REFLECT...SHARE

What struck you? This struck me...

Why don't teens ask for help when they have suicidal thoughts or feelings? They...

- think the problem will go away on its own
- think they should be able to deal with it on their own
- don't know who to go to
- don't know how their parents will respond
- fear they will be hospitalized

Shared by members of the FCPS Depression Awareness and Suicide Prevention (DASP) Work Group who attended the Community of Solutions meeting:

Kari Olsen, South Lakes High School Counselor, former Woodson parent

Jenn Spears, FCPS School Psychologist

Recovering My Kid,
a book recommended by
Sarah McDade, mom and
volunteer expert on drug
and alcohol abuse

Next Meeting
JULY 18, 7:30 PM

Location: Mantua or Truro TBD

Tentative agenda items:

1. Talk through key points of the Fairfax County Youth Survey; identify how to build assets
<http://www.fairfaxcounty.gov/demogrph/youthpdf.htm>
2. Create actions based on high-starred items from SWOT analysis
 - What can we do to take advantage of our strengths?
 - What can we do to eliminate a weakness?
 - What can we do to leverage an opportunity?
 - What can we do to protect against a threat?
3. Other?

I'll be reaching out to those of
you who offered to help!!!
THANK YOU ALL...

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