

ALLIANCE of BARRINGTON COMMUNITIES for DRUG EDUCATION



ABCDE UPDATE: WHAT'S HAPPENED IN BARRINGTON

Using a task force approach and with broad based representation of professionals, volunteers and parents, ABCDE pulls the community together and encourages organizations and agencies-in-place to fight against alcohol and other drug use by school-age youth. It recognizes that, while there is no "quick fix," a community can work together to manage the dilemma.

Accomplishments include:

I. Increased awareness of drug-related problems among all segments of the community through:

A. Publication of CHOICES. This newsletter is mailed to over 14,000 households and businesses in School District 220 and to parents of students in other-than zip code 60010. It is also distributed to school and police personnel and, by representatives of the Chamber of Commerce and Welcome Wagon, to new homeowners.

B. Informational presentations to PTO, church, club, and other groups.

C. Obtained films and tapes, many of which are available at the Barrington Area Public Library.

D. Increased media coverage by the local newspapers which promotes prevention activities and gives prevention information. Increased attention is given to prevention activities in school, church, and other organizations' newsletters.

II. Provided week-long drug prevention/intervention training for nearly 500 school, professional and community persons, either at Community Intervention, Inc., Minneapolis or at CI staffed summer workshops in Barrington.

III. Helped to develop a sharper focus on drug-related problems by schools, churches, individuals, agencies/organizations, government/police, and mental health professionals.

IV. Support for and a better understanding of each other's role in intervention/prevention among community persons, agencies, organizations. e.g. parents know more about school and/or police policies.

A. School

1. A review of the Drug Policy was conducted by a School Board Committee and a revision made to include prevention activities.

2. Barrington High School created a Chemical Health Program to deal with violations of chemical use policy at school, support students who are concerned about someone else's use of chemicals, and support for those needing it after in-patient treatment for chemical dependency. A Core Team of workshop-trained staff is in place.

The Athletic and Activities Codes were revised and Leadership Groups were conducted with student team and organization leaders. Other prevention activities were initiated and/or increased.

Continued sponsorship of peer counseling program with Barrington Youth Services.

A student/parent committee plan an after-Prom activity.

A drug and alcohol-free student group (DAFS) was begun.

3. Barrington Middle School, lead by a Core Team of trained staff members, has instituted an alternative-to-suspension policy and program for students who use chemicals at school or school-sponsored activities. It promoted alternative activities and, with BYS, increased Snowflake activities, participated in national Red Ribbon week, worked with the PTO in educational programs, sponsored Chemical Awareness Month, and initiated support for students who are concerned about another person's use/abuse. A pilot "special friend" program to provide a student with additional support and guidance from an adult was initiated.

4. Each elementary school's special services team can help a child at high risk for chemical use/abuse; a referral system is also used. Fourth grade Just Say No Clubs were encouraged to form in order to enrich the prevention effort. JSN groups participated in special projects. One , presented a petition signed by 1,800 students to the Barrington village board which requested passage of an ordinance to prohibit the sale of tobacco products to minors as well as the possession of tobacco products by minors. A yearly JSN march of all 4-6th grade students and some junior and senior high students helped to emphasize and enrich the curriculum, take part in a national march effort, and provide an opportunity for adults to be supportive.

(See Barrington Youth Services re: high risk.)

An Elementary Advisory Council composed of representatives from each elementary school, including parents, teachers, principals and other personnel, meets regularly during the school year to exchange information about activities at each school/PTO, coordinate efforts, examine curriculum-enrichment programs, and promote community education.

B. Church

1. A number of churches sponsored workshops or retreats concerning self-esteem, decision-making, and other prevention tools. Some increased alternative fun activities.

2. Some churches held adult educational programs concerning alcoholism, prevention, support groups, and resources for help.

3. A number have "Core Teams" within the church for membership help and support.

4. Support groups meet in church space.

5. A number of churches' youth pastors network to share information and promote joint alternative activities.

C. Government/Police/Parks

1. Village governments have supported ABCDE programs and have provided funds for CHOICES and workshop training.

2. All villages except one in BACOG have adopted the "model" ordinance package providing a uniform legal process and for assigns greater liability to parents for teenage partying and illegal drug use in their homes. The "model" was developed by an early ABCDE committee of police, legal, social service providers, student and parent representatives.

3. The same committee drafted and obtained acceptance by Cook County Court system of an educational Deferred Prosecution Program for first-time youthful violators of drug laws, and which is conducted by Barrington Youth Services.

4. Police from several Barrington area villages are networking and cooperating to deal with illegal parties/use of alcohol and other drugs by students. The Barrington Police Chief issued a position paper describing possession and constructive possession of illegal drugs as well as consequences of violation. Enforcement of "constructive possession" has resulted in some police intervention/arrests.

The Village of Barrington Police Dept. initiated a DARE program in the Village of Barrington schools; Barrington Hills and Carpentersville Police Departments also has a DARE officer. All 220 elementary schools are now covered, including St. Anne School.

5. Barrington Paramedics presented programs to Driver Education classes at BHS.

6. Langendorf Park Board decided to enforce its no-alcohol-on-park-premises policy.

7. In cooperation with Barrington Youth Services, and with funds provided by the Barrington Area United Drive, a junior leader program (IMAGES) was developed and conducted at Langendorf Park, later joined by South Barrington Park and Countryside Park District.

D. Professional

1. A Social Service Network was formed after the first summer workshop in Barrington when religious, police, mental health, and social service participants discovered a need to share information and be more informed about each other's services and specific youth-related topics.

2. Family Service of South Lake County provides brief parenting sessions for parents while their young children are in a Library program.

3. Barrington Youth Services sponsors an Operation Snowball Chapter, chartered by the Illinois Alcoholism and Drug Dependence Association; it provides information, support, and activities for high school students. It also promotes and provides scholarships for Illinois Teenage Institute, a week-long summer peer leadership training camp.

BYS instituted an Aftercare program for students who return from in-patient treatment.

A Barrington High School faculty member and a BYS counselor co-sponsor a peer counseling group (PFCs) at the high school. Special benefits have been provided to transfer students. Some PFCs give prevention/education talks to elementary students while a cooperative project with Operation Snowball members provide a workshop and Snowflake events for BMS students. Some work with the DARE program to provide healthy role models and answer elementary student questions about high school.

A BYS counselor and a Middle School counselor developed a stress challenge program.

BYS staff and school special services personnel facilitate groups for younger students at "high risk." BYS staff works with their parents. BYS initiated other prevention programs, including a Rainbows support group program for elementary children suffering the effects of divorce, death, or other family trauma.

A Group for "chronic" Saturday detention BHS students was conducted by BYS staff.

BYS counselors increased the number of parent education programs, e.g., STEP, support for parents of children in Rainbows, ACOA, etc.

E. Other

1. All service providers--park districts, library, YMCA, etc.--were urged to examine and increase their activities, especially for students on school holidays. A meeting for representatives of park boards in School District 220 to explore prevention possibilities was held.

2. Increased attention and support was given to treatment programs and support groups, e.g., Adult Children of Alcoholics, AA, Al-Anon, by individuals and organizations.

IV. Parent Networking

A. ABCDE Parent Networking Representatives

1. While ABCDE has no committee structure now, several from the original ABCDE Parent Networking Committee have presented educational and awareness programs to parent groups in schools, churches, and other organizations.

2. A half-day workshop was developed to teach parents and other community persons how to organize, conduct and facilitate a parent networking (PN) session. A "hands-on" small group experience gives each participant an opportunity to experience and understand how communication between parents, at any level, is beneficial to prevention efforts. Such workshops trained over 255 persons. An evaluation session was held and a second-level workshop was developed.

B. Summer Workshop and/or Parent Networking Workshop-trained Parents

1. Parent Networking is occurring in many organizations, schools and individual groups. This is not ABCDE programming; rather it is sponsored by the individual organization, school or group.

2. Trained leaders from elementary and middle school PTOs, including St. Anne School, held parent networking sessions in all elementary schools, at nearly every grade level. A number of fathers-only sessions were conducted by trained father-facilitators. Communication among parents is urged at any time and in many forms.

3. PTO PN representatives formed a Parent Networking Council which meets to share program information, promote parent networking activities/ideas, and promote joint educational/speaker programs. This has become an important factor in ongoing PN through PTOs.

4. Parent Networking became a part of the BHS Home-School Committee (now BHS Parent Assoc.) commitment. Parents of incoming Fall 1988 BHS freshmen expressed desire/need to continue the kind of parent communication they began at elementary school levels when it is "easier" to do. "PROM TALK" for parents has given parents information, courage, and support to set guidelines for before and after prom activities.

5. Regular networking sessions (Connections) are offered for parents of pre-school children.

6. Parents, especially in parent networking sessions, are addressing student social behaviors which may lead to high risk activities in older age levels. Increased attention is given to skill building and communication techniques. Other parenting issues are coming to focus along with increased support for the tough job of parenting.

7. PTO presidents initiated Parents Allied to Communicate which invited parents to subscribe to a "no-serve" pledge and follow-up phone confirmations.

V. Students

A. More high school students participate in community volunteer and other alternative activities.

B. Students took active roles in peer leadership against drunk driving, prevention programs with younger students, and participated in training sessions, e.g., Operation Snowball, Illinois Teenage Institute. They raised money to support their programs and training scholarships. Students helped to plan the first after-Prom event and served with DARE officers in elementary classrooms.

C. A number claim the feeling of more support for those who do not drink or use other drugs. At BHS, a new drug and alcohol-free students (DAFS) group was formed.

D. A 1988 survey at BHS and BMS showed a slight drop in use (similar to that of the government-sponsored national survey of high school seniors) AND a change in attitude toward recognition of a need for helping students in trouble with use of alcohol/drugs (rather than punishment).

E. Two ABCDE student board members conducted a survey of BHS and BMS students to support a need for a community center for teen activities.

F. Elementary students became more involved and active through Just Say No Clubs and Middle School students through Operation Snowflake.

VI. Unknown Activities

It is recognized that individuals who have received CI workshop training, attended educational programs or parent networking sessions have performed unknown prevention/intervention activities. We can never estimate the total impact of such experiences. However, we do know that many young people and families have sought and received needed treatment, support, and other services.