

Livingston HSCB

HUMAN SERVICES COLLABORATIVE BODY

QUARTERLY NEWSLETTER

FROM FALL 2011

LIVINGSTON FACTS

- 5.7% of Livingston youth had their first experience with alcohol when they were younger than 13.
- Adults who are high school drop-outs are 60%-150% more likely to use illicit substances than adults who graduated from high school.
- Livingston County youth initiate alcohol use at age 13.3 yrs and marijuana at age 14, on average.

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What's New in Livingston?

Not that long ago, Livingston County service organizations realized something was missing... it was the voice of parents.

Many health and human service organizations identified this gap and began working hard to open seats on their boards, their committees and in their formal inquiry processes to fill this need area.

Numerous incredible parents stepped forward into the uncharted waters of appointed and volunteer positions as pioneers without much support or training. While Livingston was fortunate to have so many parents step forward, parent participation opportunities continue to grow as more and

more groups come to understand the value of parent voice. While some parents identified themselves as leaders and discovered their own areas that they feel passionate about, other exceptional parents were not sure where to start.

The Livingston Parent Involvement Institute (Pii) was formed collaboratively by Livingston County organizations that value parent voice, participation and involvement. This community owned course was designed to balance the committee playing field by sharpening parents' existing skills and promoting new opportunities for their involvement.

This six week curriculum takes place locally and childcare as well as a light dinner is offered to remove potential barriers for par-

ents who want to attend.

Class attendees gain knowledge about: the importance of their role in community organizations as parent "experts."

Participants explore their own personalities (and how to work with opposite personalities), tips on the power and importance of their personal stories, review how to harness their strengths and convert their potential weaknesses to opportunities. Participants sharpen skills that enhance the work of the groups they are a part of and learn how to become more involved in their communities, and more.

For more information please contact: livingstonpii@gmail.com.



Collaboration Works

It is that time of year again, time for the fifth installment of Community Connect! This annual event showcases an assortment of health and human service agencies and resources from around the county in a one-stop-shop atmosphere—a welcome reprieve from driving around the county for services.

On January 28th from 9AM-2PM, everything from housing

information, health screenings, mental health resources, books, legal advice, haircuts and even massages are offered to individuals in Livingston that are networking to meet their needs during these hard economic times.

Collaboration on the part of the private, public and faith based communities make this

day a fun-filled information heavy day possible. Clients are guided by community volunteers around the event center, (this year Parker Middle School) to explore the services and vendors offering resources. In addition to information, tangible items such as personal care bags, clothing and food are distributed.

This event is hosted by the Homeless Continuum of Care workgroup of

HSCB Workgroups Hard at Work



** A survey of teenagers by the Partnership for a Drug-Free America found that 1 in 5 teens has tried Vicodin, a powerful and addictive narcotic pain reliever.*

** 1 in 10 students have taken barbiturates without a doctor's prescription one or more times during their life.*



Livingston County registered the largest drop in median income in the nation, falling to \$72,129 in 2010, a nearly \$15,500 decrease from the 2000 real median of \$87,620.

-WHMI

The Livingston County Community Alliance (LCCA) is quickly becoming a common name in the media as they advertise the expansion of their innovative solution to combat access to prescribed medication.

The LCCA has developed large red barrels and placed them around the county at local law enforcement locations to collect unused and excess prescription medications. The collection effort thus far has yielded thousands of pounds of medications that were at-risk of falling into the wrong hands and misused.

Given the high number of opiate drug related fatalities and overdoses in Livingston, these preventions could not come at a

better time. As the community comes together to reduce the negative outcomes of substance use, LCCA has provided an organization under-which passionate community members can unite with.

LCCA has plans to expand the number of EPA approved barrels available around the county, hoping to one day have barrels in every community and in every law-enforcement building. The barrels are required to be located at law enforcement centers due to the sensitive nature of their contents, however no questions are asked when deposits are made.

All materials collected are transported by law enforcement to a nearby medical waste grade incinerator

where they are destroyed.

This effort was spearheaded by the LCCA and a few local concerned citizens dedicated to getting these dangerous substances out of the homes of Livingston residents who unknowingly could be supporting the misuse of these gateway drugs.

Research has shown that one of the easiest places for youth to obtain opiate drugs, like Oxycodone or Percocet, is in their family member's medicine chest at home. These opiate products have the same addictive qualities as street grade heroine and are often perceived as "SAFE" by the young people using them because they were originally prescribed by a doctor.

For more information contact: TheLCCA@sbcglobal.net or call 517-545-5944 or visit: www.livingston-countycommunityalliance.org and www.neversaynevermi.org.

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Dollars to Watch...



A new bill was signed into law that eliminated the LIEEF and instead established a Vulnerable Households Warmth fund. Funds previously held in escrow as part of the LIEEF will be refunded to consumers.

The money from the new Vulnerable Households Warmth fund is to be collected and administered in much the same way as LIEEF, with some additional state funds included. While this fund and solution addresses the current heating sea-

son, legislators will have to meet again to address a more long term solution for future years. Previous LIEEF grant awards have been re-organized to become Vulnerable Households Warmth fund and are given to the same agencies and the department of human services state emergency relief.

However, there will be fewer funds collected in the new fund and there is potential for a longer wait to draw down funds as they will be distributed as they are

collected, not distributed from the previous year as the former fund was.

The Vulnerable Households Warmth fund is anticipated to serve 95,000 households statewide, whereas the LIEEF has previously benefitted up to 130,000 households statewide. The new fund also does not include services previously included, like weatherization.

For more information contact: 517-552-7140.

Livingston County Community Taking Action



During the holiday season many Livingston families seek out additional services to make their celebrations bright. While there are numerous food and giving programs that offer everything from fully cooked holiday meals, to gift baskets stocked with all the needed 'fixings, these programs did not traditionally know much about one another. This year, members from many of the local giving programs got

together to organize a single page menu to be shared with the community, highlighting the various options available to families and individuals during the holidays. The listing provided details about how to contact or sign-up for the service, when and where the service was offered, and some details about how to apply.

These details were helpful to service organizations who often receive the calls from the individuals seeking assistance, and also offered a unique opportunity to share information that could help prevent duplication of services and frustration on the end of the consumer who might have previously signed up for a service not knowing they were ineligible.

Another bonus generated out of this ad hoc group was a common donation list of needed items generated by the local food bank. The common list was distributed through health and human service agencies, local churches, and to the community with hopes of increasing donations of food items that are increasingly popular during the holidays like canned gravy and cranberry sauce.

The food bank has already reported an increase in the number of holiday friendly items and the organization that assembled to develop the community wide lists indicated that they both learned from the collaborative activity and wanted to do it again next year. This small example of the community coming together to streamline and simplify resources is one of the many efforts that make Livingston a leader in the state as resources continue to shrink and more individuals seek assistance for the first time. For more information contact: 517-552-7140.



Livingston Stories of Hope

One of Livingston's CASA (Court Appointed Special Advocates) volunteers was recently appointed to a case of a 17 year old foster care child who was currently living in a secured residential facility.

The youth had been placed in 10 different foster homes prior to his placement in this facility, both of his parent's rights have been terminated. This young man had very few people in his life until a CASA volunteer was assigned to advocate on his behalf. It was clear that the CASA program (through

LACASA) came into his life at the right time.

As it approaches the holiday season, a time to spend with friends and family, many foster children and youth are faced with the struggle of not having family or friends to spend the holidays with. Thanks to the CASA connection, the young man able to be excited to finally have someone in his life to work with him on his goals for the future. He was particularly excited to have someone to be with around this time of year, to have someone that cared about his holiday.

The young man made the choice to invite his CASA volunteer to a holiday lunch the residential facility he was at as was hosting, where the children were allowed to invite family and friends. Up to this point he had not had anyone to invite to special events and gatherings.

It was very last minute and the volunteer had a busy schedule on that day— but that did not matter in the end. The CASA worker could see the hurt in the young man's eyes as he thought of another event where he would have no one there. After some last minute schedule rearranging, the volunteer surprised the lad and went with him to his holiday lunch. It was clear that this meant the world to him and gave him hope for the future. Tremendous thanks to this outstanding CASA volunteer. Because of CASA this child now has someone, not just for the holiday season, but for as long as he needs her.



Livingston County Human Services Collaborative Body

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Ensuring a system of support for members of our community.

What is the Purpose of the Livingston County HSCB?

The Livingston HSCB started in 1989 and was officially recognized as the county Multi-Purpose Collaborative Body by the state and county Board of Commissioners in 1995. Now, referred to as a Community Collaborative by the state, the HSCB is comprised of 26 appointed members that work together to coordinate health and human services across systems. The HSCB also:

- Develops strategies and programs to meet current and future needs
- Fiscally manages state-funded collaborative initiatives
- Monitors the effectiveness and efficiency of collaborative projects

The HSCB does this work through established committees and workgroups which have specific goals and objectives to complete. The HSCB and most workgroups meet monthly and consist of representatives from public and nonprofit organizations, business, and interested residents of the county. To learn about the work of the HSCB, contact Lindsay Beaudry at lbeaudry@cmhliv.org.

*"Individually, we are one drop.
Together, we are an ocean."*

Upcoming Events in Livingston

Community Connect will be held on January 28, 2012 from 9AM-2PM at Parker Middle School. For more information about how to volunteer or if you have questions about attending please contact 211.

Join us for a date with our Lansing legislators! The Livingston County HSCB will be hosting a legislative get-together on January 20, 2012 from 9:30-11:30AM.

OLHSA's Walk for Warmth 2012 will be on Saturday, February 25, 2012 from 9:00am-11:00 am at the Hartland Educational Support Service Center at 9525 Highland Road, Howell.

Happy Holidays and New Year!!!