

**Faces 4 Change DFC/CACA Community Coalition  
May 2024 Coalition Meeting Minutes**

Dr. Harper calls the meeting to order at 6:04 PM

**Members Present:** Dr. P. Thandi Hicks Harper, Luke Morgan, Mr. Billo Harper, Mo, Brenda Bechler, Christine Spillman, Hannah Vasquez, Melissa Rodas, Alisia Garcia, Dylan Morrison, and Victoria Riddle

Introductions

Luke Morgan goes over meeting agenda

Dr. Harper goes over success of DTBD (Drug Take Back Day) from April 27th compared to 66 pounds from 2023. “Touch a Truck” event also transpired at the same time; children and adults were able to see police cars, fire trucks, SWAT trucks, etc. 195 pounds of expired medication collected throughout the day.

Luke discusses Parker delivering fact sheets about the non-medical use of prescription drugs to local doctor’s offices.

May 12-18 was SAMHSA’s (Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration) National Prevention Week. Christine Spillman shared how Harrisonburg High School shared info through morning school announcements along with newsletters.

Suggested idea of speaker coming in to share info with both students and parents. Mo explained how one student suggested to her that an app could be developed where parents could be informed on the risks/dangers associated with certain social media apps that their children use.

Luke discusses potential media advertising campaigns in order to raise greater awareness of Faces4Change’s mission - posters, social media, TV, radio and PSAs.

Luke introduces the meeting speaker, Brenda Bechler.

Brenda shares how the Futuro Latino coalition aims to prevent/reduce alcohol and substance abuse among Latino youth throughout the Harrisonburg/Rockingham County Area. Latinos are the largest minority group in the United States as of 2022 (19.1% of the population).

Hispanic males are three times more likely to die from a drug-related overdose compared to Hispanic females. Opioids are common drug of choice for this demographic group. Often used to cope with emotions, sleep and pain relief. Latinos who work in agricultural environments where long workdays are conducted in harsh, outside conditions can often lead to the increased risk of opioids. Used to cope with pain and provide higher energy levels to continue work throughout the day.

Mental health issues among Latino youth are often deemed as “spiritual” issues by their parents; lack of legitimacy given to child’s issues. Immigration issues/trauma can often lead to higher risk of substance abuse. Adapting to American culture is also a quite difficult task that many family members can have trouble dealing with.

Individuals of certain ethnic groups have different preferences in how they wish to be addressed. Some people are fine with being labeled as “Hispanic/Latino,” while people from Cuba may wish to be identified as Caribbean instead. Good rule of thumb of learning appropriate way to address certain groups is to directly engage with the respective community to get their input.

Some language used in posters/flyers is too formal or not the common style of speaking; “overly worldly or hyper formal”. Trial and error in finding out what works/what does not work based on feedback. Finding out which form of communication works best is critical in helping get message across and fostering healthy, effective relationships amongst community groups.

Dr. Harper calls meeting to end at 7:04 PM