

Healthy Sussex QUARTERLY

COMING TOGETHER FOR A HEALTHY SUSSEX COUNTY

July 2017

MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR



One question every nonprofit is familiar with: "How is your organization going to sustain?"

The term **SUSTAINABILITY** generally means finding a way to utilize resources so that it prevents the depletion of a program or organization. For the statewide or local nonprofits, the phrase "sustainability" is commonly used to describe how an organization will sustain itself over the long term, perpetuating its ability to fulfill its mission.

Sustainability in the nonprofit context includes the concepts of financial sustainability, as well as leadership succession planning, adaptability, and strategic planning. Often funders will request for a sustainability plan specifically regarding programming they are currently funding. However, it's really about being more mindful of the Mission. Given the national landscape, state landscape and local landscape, many of our nonprofits are extremely concerned about their organization's survival, keeping programming going and maintaining its quality!

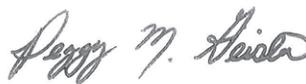
The reality is that with fewer resources, services must shrink for each individual organization. However, through creative partnership, true collaboration and strategic alignment, some of our critical services can continue through collaborative work and cost sharing. We often tend to shy away from partnerships and collaboration when resources become scarce but that is the time it is most needed. Collaboration provides several core support mechanisms that can help ensure an organization remains sustainable.

As the saying goes, there is strength in numbers. A chorus of voices that are advocating for the same goal will have far more impact than any single organization alone could.

By drawing upon each partner organization's skills and resources, collaboration avoids duplication and allows organizations to do what they do best in support of a common agenda.

Collaboration increases the potential for sustainability because each partner organization comes with its own constituency and contacts that provide a range of support that can benefit the social sector including potential funding sources. In addition, collaboration can tip the scales in favor of funding from grant makers such as foundations and state agencies that have begun to show greater interest in these types of partnerships.

Remember, one sheet of paper tears easily. 30 sheets of paper are much harder to tear. Collaboration braids a stronger community; one where the work is more sustainable.



Peggy Geisler
Director, Sussex County Health Coalition

SCHC MISSION

The Sussex County Health Coalition exists to engage the entire community in collaborative family-focused effort to improve the health of children, youth and families in Sussex County.



SCHC VISION

We envision a community in which our citizens and institutions (public, private, and not-for-profit) are actively engaged in community health promotion as a shared community good, and working together to create a cultural and physical environment which supports healthy lifestyles for our children and their families.

HEALTHIER SUSSEX COUNTY TASK FORCE



Healthier Sussex County
Connecting Community & Health Resources

WHAT IS IT:

A collaborative effort of community members, community resources and area hospitals that was initiated in 2011, in Sussex County. The mission of this collective effort is to make Sussex County one of the healthiest in the nation, by addressing health issues and working toward optimal health.

WHO ARE THE MEMBERS?

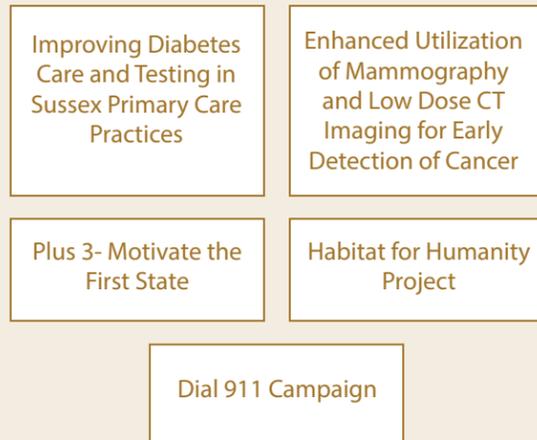
Bayhealth-Milford, Beebe Healthcare, Nanticoke Health Services and several other health and community organizations joined together to support residents in their quest to achieve better health. This group is also working in close partnership with La Red Health Center and the Sussex County Health Coalition.

OBJECTIVES SET TO DATE:



Each hospital works on a Community Health Needs Assessment to identify and analyze community health needs and assets, in order to put action plans in place to meet those defined unmet needs.

SAMPLE OF INITIATIVES TO DATE:



SCHOOL BASED MENTAL HEALTH COLLABORATIVE

by Cheryl Doucette, Project Director for Sussex County Health Coalition

CREATING BETTER BEHAVIORAL HEALTH OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH THROUGH COUNTY-WIDE COLLABORATION

The Sussex Schools Comprehensive School Based Mental Health Collaborative is a multi-faceted approach to facilitate policy and practice change for School Districts' Social Emotional Wellness efforts for youth in Sussex County.

Sussex County Health Coalition (SCHC) identified a need for increased youth behavioral health services that reduced wait time and school absences. The Coalition began engaging school districts and creating a collaborative foundational upon increased communication, best practice sharing, leveraging existing resources and advocacy for increased, barrier-free services for youth.

After receiving a small grant from Discover to launch the collaborative efforts, SCHC was awarded a Highmark BluePrints for the Community Grant to fully implement the collaborative pilot. The model engaged four school districts, with SCHC as the convener and our Behavioral Health Consultant, Rob Schmidt of Integrated Solutions, to guide the schools through their mental health plans.

Each of the four school districts were tasked with:

- Identifying current landscape of services and gaps in services
- Developing a comprehensive mental health plan for the district
- Implementing policy and practice change to increase mental health access through streamlined referral processes and on site behavioral health services for students who need it.

The four school districts doing this work were:

- Indian River School District
- Cape Henlopen School District
- Woodbridge School District
- Milford School District



During the last 18 months, the Collaborative has seen drastic improvement in the behavioral health environment for youth in our partner Districts. Each District works at a pace conducive to their needs, with each mental health plan as diverse as the landscape of Sussex County, however each District has worked toward a set of common goals as priorities for comprehensive behavioral health success:

1. Identification and referral of youth in need
2. Access to quality mental health professionals
3. Solutions to barriers for services
4. Training and infrastructure for school staff to support behavioral health access for students including suicide prevention

One of the Project Leads for this initiative, Cheryl Doucette, shared, "We were thrilled to have all School Districts attend a special group training, held on March 17, facilitated by Dr. Robert Schmidt. Dr. Julius Mullen, Chief Clinical Officer for Children & Families First of Delaware, was also on hand to share his thoughts on the importance of a positive School Climate and focused on the importance of Developmental Assets. We are extremely happy with the results of this initiative and are committed to finding more funding to continue this very important work."

Here is what our partners had to say about their experience with the School Based Mental Health Collaborative:

WOODBIDGE SCHOOL DISTRICT:

Rachel Donaldson, the Social Emotional Learning Specialist with the Woodbridge School District has this to share about her experience with the Collaborative.

"Sussex County Health Coalition has been a great collaborative partner in the development of school-based mental health services provided in the Woodbridge School District. We are grateful for the support and guidance provided by the Sussex County Health Coalition as we look forward to continuing to grow our services and reach more students in need of mental health services."

INDIAN RIVER SCHOOL DISTRICT:

Jay Owens, the Director of Special Services, and Kim Taylor, the Special Outreach Services Coordinator, with Indian River School District shared the following thoughts:

"Thank you to the Sussex County Health Coalition. With their continued partnership, we have been able to expand our focus to include a pilot program to influence a change in the school climate at George W. Carver Academy. Without their assistance, the expansion and quality of the S.O.S. Program would not be possible!"

MILFORD SCHOOL DISTRICT:

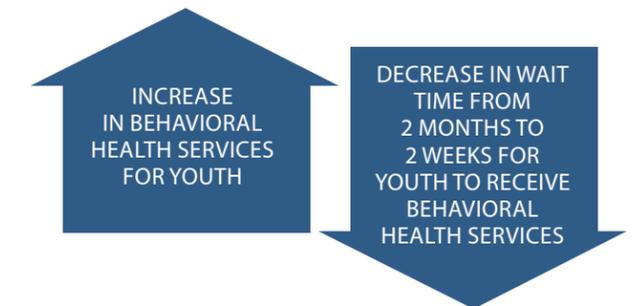
Jason Peel, Ed.D., the Director of Secondary Education with the Milford School District shares

"Sussex County Health Coalition has helped Milford School District embark on a journey of renewed focus on the mental health needs of our students. Being a part of this collaborative has reinforced the importance of data collection and a system of overall district coordination. We are working toward establishing new and improved processes for the upcoming school year."

CAPE HENLOPEN SCHOOL DISTRICT:

Ed Waples, the Supervisor of Student Services with the Cape Henlopen School District, shared,

"Through the work we have been able to do with the Sussex County Health Coalition, we were able to take the topic of Mental and Behavioral Health off the back burner and move it the front burner. We are grateful for the resources provided by the Highmark Community Blueprints Grant. This funding allowed us to host a targeted training around Suicide Risk Assessment. My staff is better prepared to assess, refer and support their students because of this training."



SCHC looks forward to continuing the work of the Collaborative and expanding its reach to other Districts as well as provide targeted strategies and assistance to populations and areas of need within the collaborative's partners. We see this as a sustainable model, that could be replicated statewide.

UNITED WAY OF DELAWARE AND PARTNERS FOCUS ON YOUTH DURING THE SUMMER

by Tynetta T. Brown, Director, Community Impact, United Way of Delaware



United Way of Delaware (UWDE) and a host of agencies once again are continuing to focus on positively maximizing Summer for Delaware's youth; particularly those from low income families in high needs communities.

Summer Reading Success (#MakeSummerSmarter) is a collaboration focused on reducing the "summer slide" or learning loss that happens during the summer, predominantly among low-income children. Children who participate in enriching activities are more likely to retain or increase their reading levels. 86% of students participating in 2015 maintained or increased their reading levels.

This collaboration is being delivered in partnership with the Summer Learning Collab, Boys and Girls Clubs of Delaware, community based organizations, school districts and many others to impact and reduce summer learning loss for future educational success.

The 4 key goals are to:

Increase access to summer learning

Maintain high program quality

Motivate student asset development

Ensure continuous program improvement

Agencies supported through this initiative include Boys and Girls Clubs across Delaware (Fram, East Side Charter School, Shortlidge Academy, H. Fletcher Brown and Western Sussex), Hilltop Lutheran Neighborhood Center, Kingswood Community Center, the Latin American Community Center, Neighborhood House, Urban Promise, the Walnut Street YMCA and West End Neighborhood House.

All of the sites will be participating in a reading intervention approach to improve literacy gains through Reading Is Fundamental (RIF). Staff will receive professional development trainings and guidance through various resources to enhance program outcomes.

HELPING STUDENTS DEVELOP TOOLS AND SKILLS THROUGH SUMMER YOUTH EMPLOYMENT

Additionally, (UWDE) continues its focus on empowering youth through its' Summer Youth Employment Partnership (SYEP). It is a collaborative effort supported with and powered by the resources of the Treasury Department of Delaware, Strive Leadership, Public Allies, The Delaware Department of Education, Colonial School District, New Castle County Vo - Tech School District, New Castle County government and the City of Wilmington.

SYEP links Delaware schools, employers, community-based organizations and state agencies in partnerships that make it easier for youth to connect to school-based career pathways with related summer employment to gain first hand knowledge of the work place, while developing career and college readiness skills. Youth participants receive two weeks of training that covers financial literacy, soft skill development, asset development and other crucial skills necessary to increase their competency while also addressing employer needs.

"This is a great opportunity to equip our youth with the tools and skills they need to realize their full potential." said Orrin White, Manager of Community Engagement at United Way of Delaware.

We all remember having to start "somewhere." United Way of Delaware puts energy and resources towards building pathways to college and career readiness for Delaware students. These initiatives place a student on a trajectory towards success and strengthen the workforce in communities throughout the state.

SUSSEX 
COUNTY HEALTH COALITION

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