



HEALTH AND HUMAN SERVICES DEPARTMENT

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City of Newton, Youth Commission January 11, 2023 – 6:30 p.m.

Attendance/Introductions:

Eitan Leshem, Vikram Schefke, Zach Gusenoff, Rachel Miller, Phoebe Anthony, Gassia Minassian, Priscilla Situ, Aanika Monta, Ethan Dhadly, Rhiannon Esposito, Kaveri Krishnamoorthy, Spencer Solcoff, Nick Makura, Matthew Wrigley, Andrew Feinberg, Audrey Wei, Kenneth Tsay, Shivani Gulati, Armine Freeman, Ryn Leffler, Preethika Vemula, Julie Feldman, Georgia Finkelstein, Emma Zhang, Chloe Lee, Chloe Lyons, Julia Dun Rappaport, Michelle Menken, Jenna Bancroft and Meghan Murtagh.

Meeting called to order at 6:38 p.m.

Youth Commission Updates:

Code of Conduct Policy: The City of Newton, requires all newly appointed Commissioners and Advisory Board members to read the Code of Conduct Letter and sign the policy form. Attendees were asked to sign printed documents and/or sign electronic documents shared to their emails.

- **MLK Day:** The City of Newtons, 55th MLK Day Celebration is scheduled for Monday, January 16 at 9:30 a.m. at Newton North. Commissioners and Advisory Board members were encouraged to attend, as well as volunteer during the resource fair portion of the event.

Presentation & Discussion:

- Jenna Bancroft, LICSW, City of Newton Social Services. With the assistance of YC Advisor, MM, recapped the 12/14, “Stress Survival Guide” workshop and led the attendees through activities and conversations related mental health and substance use.
- Activity 1: attendees were asked to complete a worksheet related to personal/individual stress, then work in groups to compare, find similarities and differences.
- Activity 2: attendees then worked in groups and were asked to talk through the following three questions:
 1. What are stressors for your peers and your community?
 2. How do you see your peers dealing with stress?
 3. What can the commission do to help Newton Youth manage stress?
- Attendees reported out the following for Q1:
 - school & assignments
 - internal and external pressures (family, teachers, peers)
 - social media presence
 - stress/competition within friend groups
- Attendees reported out the following for Q2:
 - Exercise
 - Peer to peer support
 - Substance use
 - Jenna then shared information about the City of Newton, Substance Use Coalition
 - Discussed the relationship between mental health and substance use
 - Shared ways the Youth Commission can get involved
- Attendees reported out the following for Q3:

- Influencing/challenge the NPS, 5-day absence policy to include mental health days
- Create safe space outside of school for intervention, supports and peer to peer support since school tends to be the place stress can come from
- Access to supports without parent consent

Subcommittee Updates:

- **Community Engagement:** Project selected is related to bike safety. In the process of setting up meetings with the City, NPS and community organizations to find out what is already happening related to bike safety and how the YC can support and add to these efforts.
- **Communications:** Has launched a campaign to encourage youth to subscribe to YC newsletter and to follow on Instagram. Subcommittee will begin working on a February/March newsletter for publication late February. Plan to put out 3 newsletters to ensure quality of content and to avoid repetition of information.
- **Mental Health:** Next meeting scheduled for Tuesday, January 24 at 7:30 p.m.
- **Guest Speaker:** Next meeting scheduled for Wednesday, January 18 at 6:30 p.m.

Meeting closed at 7:55 p.m.

Next Meeting:

Wednesday, February 8 at 6:30 pm.
Newton Free Library