

Coalition for Asian Substance Abuse Prevention (CASAP)
Quarterly Coalition Meeting
Meeting Minutes

Date: May 11, 2010

Time: 11am – 1pm

Location: Chinese American Service League
2141 South Tan Court
Chicago, IL 60616

Purpose: Strategic Plan and Coalition Goals Discussion and Update

Introductions & Call to Order:

Meeting was called to order at approximately 11:12am. Present members introduced themselves, stating who they were, what organization they were from, what sector they represented, and how long they have been part of this coalition.

Members Present:

Name	Organization	Sector
Kevin Van Eron	K. Van Eron, Psy D	Health Care Professional
Adrienne Carmona	Project Vision	Youth Serving Agency
Mila Verdugo	CDPH: Tobacco Control	Local Government
Esther Wong	CASL	Civic Agency
David Lee	CASL	Civic Agency
Hong Deng	Metro South Hospital (MSMC)	Health Care Professional
P.O. Mary J. Chan	CPD	Law Enforcement
P.O. Albert Choi	CPD	Law Enforcement
David Wu	Pui Tak	Religious Organization
Meme Wang	AHCI	Other Organization
Heidi Golz	AHCI	Other Organization
Celine Woznica	AHCI	Other Organization

Opening Remarks by Meme Wang:

The meeting was opened with a welcome by Meme Wang, followed by a PowerPoint presentation regarding recent accomplishments, updates regarding funding, and additional funding that was recently applied for, and other programmatic updates.

It was suggested by Esther Wong of CASL that a current partner of hers, Kelly, needs to be recruited into this coalition as she would be able to recruit the one remaining feeder high school located outside of the community to participate in the Illinois Youth Survey (IYS)

First a brief review of the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA)'s Strategic Prevention Framework (SPF) for new and existing members.

Updates were given regarding the substance abuse prevention curriculum currently being implemented within Chinatown Schools.

Updates regarding the "Creating Harmony" DVD project were addressed. The Mandarin translations of the discussion booklet were recently finished and therefore distribution of the DVD will begin shortly.

Meme then introduced discussion regarding the currently coalition starting with reading the current mission statement and asking for feedback. After giving present members a few minutes to reflect and discuss the mission among one and other, it was decided that the coalition mission did not need any changes at this time, as the mission is still reflective of what the current members present wish to accomplish.

Current Mission (no changes requested):

This mission of the *Coalition for Asian Substance Abuse Prevention (CASAP)* is "to prevent substance abuse among Asian youth in the Chicago area through building community partnerships and capacity, assessing the needs and resources of the community, strategic planning, and implementing and evaluating culturally appropriate prevention strategies for awareness, advocacy, and education."

In the same way, the CASAP vision was discussed. Coalition members suggested we add tobacco to the mission and vision as the proposal for the Drug Free Communities grant contained the coalitions wish to focus on tobacco prevention in addition to alcohol prevention in the coalition's target population.

Previous Vision:

The vision of the coalition is "to reduce rates of substance use and abuse among Asian youth and adults."

Amended Vision:

The vision of the coalition is "to reduce rates of **alcohol and tobacco** use and abuse among Asian youth and adults."

Coalition members then discussed the issue of tobacco use among adolescents in Chinatown. Major concerns included:

- Children of new immigrants see smoking as a cool thing and do not see any of the negative health implications. Due to the fact that smoking is legal for youth in China the do not understand how smoking could be a bad thing and thereby do not follow U.S. regulations regarding youth and tobacco.

- Youth and parents in this community need to be targeted. Parents do not realize the health implications until someone close to them gets lung cancer. Only then do parents get a “wake-up call to quit.” Once parents get the “wake-up call,” they can quite cold turkey because their will to live is stronger than the addiction
- Need to demonstrate to parents and youth what a smoking lung looks like compared to a non-smoker ‘healthy’ lung. This may prevent youth from starting to smoke and make get currently smoking parents to quit.
- Youth can be instrumental in getting prevention messages and quit messages out and be the ones who get their parents to stop. We need to work closely with the “Reality Illinois” teen campaign, as they have many helpful resources already created.
- Teaching teens can help empower them, preventing them from stopping, and able to motivate other to not smoke or quit smoking
- Project Vision could help through a health fair. They could work with smoking prevention as a service learning tool. This organization only serves Bridgeport and Chinatown.

The question was then posed, “Is [preventing] smoking more important than [preventing] alcohol use in this community?”

Coalition members were split and the consensus remained that this coalition should be focusing on both of these substances at this time.

- Officer: Alcohol and tobacco are both gateway drugs. Gateway drugs do not just mean gateways to other drugs and substances, but also to other problem and risk behavior for adolescents.
- Currently there are no limits on alcohol or tobacco in China – only in America, so kids in this country who come from China do not think that alcohol is a poison. Youth need to see the brain scan demonstrating the negative affects of alcohol in order to understand just how harmful alcohol use can be to adolescents.
- Both substances need to be focused on in all youth, but particularly among Asians, and more specifically among new immigrants, as their parents and grand parents don’t know how risky these behaviors can be for people, but particularly how detrimental the effects are when youth use. From their understanding, if it’s legal, which it is in China, it must be ok. They equate booze and tobacco with tylenol as all of these substances are legal. They do not understand that

Other important substance abuse issues were then brought up by coalition members using an open forum.

- Officer Choi: explained his current work with the DARE (Drug Abuse Resistant Education) and the standard curriculum police offices in Chicago are

implementing within schools. This program addresses how to think and increases relationships between police officers and youth.

- Officer also thinks we as a coalition should discuss domestic violence as from his experience, 99% of domestic violence has alcohol involved.
- Mila from the Chicago Department of Public Health recommended working with the Consumers of Business Affairs in Chicago as they also do compliance checks for tobacco, as well as the SAMS unit for the Chicago Police Department
- Coalition members then discussed the difficulties in compliance checks, that being that youth from the community to not apply to program. Many members feel community youth do not want to participate because it is a close-knit community and youth do not want to be seen as snitchers.
- Coalition members then questioned where youth are obtaining alcohol from and many believe, and data supports, that youth within this community are obtaining alcohol through older, of-age, friends, siblings, or other relatives. Office Choi said that retailers are legally selling the alcohol, though it is important to note that the establishment who sold an individual's last drink can be sued if individual is in an accident, and that Illinois has some of the strongest and harshest laws in terms of substance use.
- Through coalition discussion at this meeting it was determined that compliance checks would not be a good fit for the community and our current strategic plan should be altered to reflect this.
- Officer Choi: works in a substance abuse program. DARE is a federal program and though it does not target a specific population. The coalition should work to replicate the DARE program to ensure it can reach Asian youth.
- The next item discussed was regarding the groups perception that smoking is much more prevalent in China compared to in the United States. Members discussed the fact that there is currently exploitation by big companies because they can no longer make money in the U.S. To date, Chinese officials have been happy to comply with companies like Philip Morris as it is increasing Chinese revenue, and have turned a blind eye to the negative public health implications.
- Recommended to share this story of Chinese exploitation by companies like Philip Morris when listserv is up and running.
- Members suggested feeding this information to youth within the community to increase community advocacy to change this as youth have a great sense of what is wrong and can play on each other, identifying what is 'not fair'. Teens could show teens that their parents and grandparents were unfairly targeted, as this would be a great way to empower youth
- Also suggested that youth have been targeted as "replacement smokers" and youth should be empowered to change this as it is now illegal.
- Suggested that youth could get inspiration from the truth campaign. It was also suggested to share information regarding truth campaign on newly created listserv.

- Cautioned by coalition members that we need to take into consideration the liability of blasting Philip Morris on listserv or website as they have a strong group of lawyers. It was suggested to quote PBS directly, or link to website where PBS launched story.
- Another issue brought up by members was regarding how much cheaper Chinese cigarettes are. They are currently being sold on the street in Chinatown and else where. They look just like Malboros, however they are brought in illegally from China. These cigarettes are much more dangerous as they do not follow the strict U.S. laws regarding tar and other chemicals that cigarettes often contain.
- Officer Choi brought up the fact that illegal cigarettes are a national health concern and the ties these cigarettes have with terrorists. They are making billions of dollars off of these illegal products, and worse, they are spending the money on evil initiatives, and the federal government has done little at this point to stop this. One way to stop this is to educate community members so they will not buy these products and youth may be a good way to get this message across. Additionally, China is just the producers of this product and China is not making much money on these Cigarettes. The factory workers in China making the product are treated like slaves and being exploited. Teens therefore would be a good means of disseminating this message as they can be very motivated to stop the exploitation of their country. Not to mention the fact that local business owners are being robbed because of these counterfeit cigarettes being sold in their community.
- Coalition members brought up the fact that billions are spent each year on ads promoting products, and though tobacco companies can no longer spend money on promotions, alcohol can and there is far too much paraphernalia out there promoting substances. Perhaps, community could benefit from a get rid of paraphernalia drive and give incentives to students or community members who donate these negative promotion items.
- It may also be important to target older siblings or family members as many youth reported obtaining alcohol from of-age family members. Messages such as, “what’s best for your little brother?” could be used to motivate older youth to do the right thing and not endanger the health of their younger siblings by supplying them with alcohol.
- Coalition members suggested scratching the law enforcement focus on our current strategic plan and develop a working group to focus on community-wide concerns, focusing specifically on empowering the community members of Chinatown.

Next, coalition members were informed about an upcoming opportunity that the Asian Health Coalition has on Friday, May 14th, to discuss substance abuse prevention efforts in Chicago with delegates from the Chinese government who are on a several month trip to the United States to learn about substance abuse prevention and treatment strategies of the U.S.

Finally, a second PowerPoint presentation was given to recap the recent Town Hall event for the Coalition for Asian Substance Abuse Prevention and the launch of the DVD “*Creating Harmony*.” Coalition members seemed very pleased with the presented survey results. Additionally, CASAP members were informed regarding a project started by the Asian Health Coalition’s Substance Abuse Prevention Program working to create a separate coalition in the Chicago neighborhood of Uptown with is also using the SAMHSA’s Strategic Prevention Framework but only focusing on the first three steps. The first coalition meeting for the Uptown project is scheduled for Thursday, May 13th, and current CASAP members were invited to attend this meeting.