



### Annual Report of the Youth Council 2011

#### **Youth Council Strategic Plan and Goals:**

The Youth Council met on February 15 to develop a strategic plan and set goals. With Liz O'Connor facilitating the YC set out the following:

Overarching Goal: Get kids to stay in school, and support efforts to resolve transportation issues in our region.

How can we work together to create supportive pathways for youth to enter employment?

- Promote Positive Foundations
- Build Stepping Stones
- Support Networks and Networking

In February, YC and STC Coordinator left the position. Joan McDonald, Operations Manager, Coordinator of grants CAMP and ARRA Health Care Skills Gap took on the position.

#### **Professional Development Day :**

This year the Youth Council Community Partnerships Committee offered a three part training—*—Current Issues in Pupil Services—Substance Abuse, Bullying, Wellness.*

**Substance Abuse-** Representatives from schools, law enforcement and community resources to discuss issues of substance abuse, especially current issue of prescription drug addiction. Elizabeth Griffin, LMHC, CAGS, School Adjustment Counselor; Lieutenant John Doble, Bourne Police Department; Kate McHugh, M.S., M.B.A, Mental Health Counselor, School Social Worker; William M. Ferney, M.Ed, CADAC, LADC 1 Director, Gosnold at the Miller House

**Bullying-** Elizabeth Kandel Englander, professor of Psychology and the founder and Director of the *Massachusetts Aggression Reduction Center* at Bridgewater State College, a Center which delivers anti-violence and anti-bullying programs, resources, and research for the State presented information on how to respond when bullying is witnessed and how online interaction between children affect the behavior you see in school. Dr. Englander also presented preliminary data covering the relationship between cyber-bullying and substance abuse.

**Wellness--**Adam Liss, Director of Cape Stress Reduction and Optimal Health in Marstons Mills, MA, introduced the participants to Mindfulness based programs. These programs have been used in medicine, psychology and education for over 30 years; evidence has exploded in the past few years regarding its positive impact on the brain, cognitive function, social-emotional and behavioral regulation. Children and adolescents who participate in mindful awareness training demonstrate increased self-regulation skills, improved impulse control, reduced emotional reactivity and quicker recovery from negative moods. Mindful awareness training with children and adolescents reduces symptoms of stress, anxiety, depression and Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder.

#### **YES Curriculum:**

The Youth Employability Skills (YES) Curriculum continues to be used in our School to Careers participating High Schools and other organizations across the Cape & Islands, including: Barnstable High School, Martha's Vineyard Regional High School, Southeast Alternative School, Cape Cod Regional Technical High School, Upper Cape Cod Regional Vocational Technical School, Dennis-Yarmouth Regional High School, Career Opportunities/JTEC, etc.

During a strategic planning session this spring, the Youth Council goal is to adapt the curriculum for middle school age youth as a part of its plan to keep kids in school and create supportive pathways for youth to enter employment

**“Keep Them Coming” truancy pilot at Station Avenue Elementary**

The Community Partnerships Committee which includes, the Working with the Dennis-Yarmouth School District administration, the 2008 pilot program in Grades K-3 at Station Avenue Elementary School was so successful, that it was expanded to include all K-3 grades in Yarmouth in 2009 and further expended into grades K-8 in 2010. The program will be rolled out to include all Grades K-12 in Yarmouth and Dennis for fall 2011.

**Career for a Day:**

The Mentoring Committee has moved the Career for a Day program to the fall. It will be held on October 7, 2011 during the *Cape Cod Collaborative All Cape In-Service Day*.

**Youth Council Scholarships:**

We received seven excellent applications for a total of three \$1,000 scholarships. We were able to offer three scholarships this year due to lack of response from one of last year’s recipients. This year’s scholarship recipients are ---- Casey Beede, Southeast Alternative School, Shana Narcisse and Natalya Guglielmo, Cape Cod Regional Technical High School.

**School to Careers:**

407 juniors and seniors participated in the School to Careers program this year. Barnstable High School, Cape Cod Museum of Art, Cape Cod Regional Technical High School, Chatham High School, Dennis Yarmouth Regional High School, Falmouth High School, Harwich High School, Martha’s Vineyard Regional High School, Mashpee High School, Nantucket High School and Upper Cape Cod Regional Technical School all participated in the program.

The STC Leadership Team, made up of WIB board members, School superintendents or principals, Cape Cod Community College and other key members of the STC team like the Museum of Art and Cape Cod Healthcare, recently voted to include itself as a committee of the Youth Council. The move was made because the WIB and Youth Council support, inform and guide the work of the School to Careers program. According the RFR, the WIB Youth Council works in partnership with the local STC Partnership to coordinate and guide its work. It does not change what STC does in general and we can leverage the larger Youth Council membership in the program—especially around the topics of career exploration, services for at risk youth, etc.

**WIA Committee:**

WIA funding for In and Out of School Youth is further reduced for FY 12. The WIA subcommittee agreed to post RFP’s for In School Youth programs –four applications were received. The WIA committee meets on June 29 to finish rating the RFP’s for funding.

Respectfully submitted by Joan McDonald