

## **Community Safety Subcommittee**

### **Final Report to the Board of School Directors May 1, 2007**

The Community Safety Subcommittee has been meeting biweekly since February 15, 2007 to review the research on safety in communities and consider a course of action that may best serve Springfield Township. The Committee deliberated on a direction for the first two sessions. It was clear that it wanted to be certain that its recommendations were directed toward a community effort, not another school initiative. It was important also to take into account the demographics of Springfield Township as it currently exists and make recommendations that will capitalize on the rich history of the Township. As the Committee examined much of the criteria for at risk communities, it found that Springfield Township did not meet many of those criteria. Thus, it focused its efforts on finding ways that would make a meaningful impact on the community at large.

The Committee used a process developed by Family Friendly Schools to write a mission statement, goals and suggested actions that it believes will effect positive change in the community. Further, the Committee recommends that the School Board and Township Commissioners collaborate on the ways that these actions can become a reality. The mission, goal and suggested actions that the Committee recommends are as follows:

#### MISSION

To promote a community culture that fosters mutual responsibility and respect to ensure safety and welfare in Springfield Township.

#### GOAL

To develop a coalition of volunteers, whose membership is composed of individuals representing the diverse population of Springfield Township that will embrace the mission established by this committee by the fall of 2007.

#### SUGGESTED ACTIONS

The following suggested actions are proposed to serve as guide to the coalition and are merely meant to be used as a starting point and in no way are designed to limit the creative spirit of the coalition.

- Provide educational programs on monthly topics concerning community safety and welfare issues including, but not limited to:
  - Gun Safety
  - Environmental Concerns/Hazardous Waste
  - Unintentional Injuries such as auto or bicycle accidents or common areas where accidents occur in the home.
  - Physical Safety such as fire, floods and assault
  - Suicide/Depression and Mental Health
  - Abuse including children, elderly and domestic violence
  - High Risk Behaviors

- Coordinate an effort to promote mutual respect and responsibility both in the schools and within the community.
  - Unify the community behind common core values that would be embraced by existing organizations, businesses, churches, schools etc. such as recognizing random acts of kindness.
  - Develop venues for recreation, networking, and support for intergenerational community members.
  - Provide a venue to recognize those who serve as models in our community i.e. “unsung heroes”.
  - Offer opportunities for parents in the community to sign contracts that identify common rules of operation especially for teens gathering in their households.
  - Train coaches in the community to recognize signs of problems and make appropriate referrals.
  
- Expand the communication vehicles, through the use of technology, to ensure notification and access of timely information to everyone in the community as well as opportunities for involvement of individual citizens as well as businesses, community and service organizations and clubs.
  - Promote opportunities for parents in the community with common needs according to the ages of their children to share information and support each other.
  - Develop “Public Service Announcements” to be aired on the Education Cable Channel to inform the community of ways to promote safety.
  
- Establish community venues that build relationships
  - Explore the possibility of developing a community center.
  - Develop periodic events and entertainment programs to build relationships and to provide all ages with places to go and things to do.
  
- Seek grant money to support the coalition’s programs and hire a director to ensure the sustainability and success of this association and these initiatives.
  - Conduct a needs assessment to determine community awareness regarding safety and welfare issues and emergency response preparedness.

Respectfully Submitted by:

Community Safety Subcommittee Members: Don Berger, Amy Cardamone, Carrie Eisenhandler, Mike Evans, Claire Gawinowicz, Gail Inderwies, Rick Lesniak, Charmaine Libier, Jeff MacFarland, Roseann Nyiri, Joseph Roy, Margie Scherzer, Ann St. Clair, Marcia Thompson, Johnny Whaley Jr.