



# Northern Berkshire Community Coalition

June 2002  
Volume XVI Number 10

# Newsletter

## Youth Guide Coalition Discussion About Prevention Services

Over seventy Coalitioners attended the April 12th monthly meeting of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition. The topic of the meeting was Youth as Partners in Prevention. What was exciting about this meeting was the number of different sectors represented, including youth, public safety, youth services, schools, parents, and interested residents.

After an overview of how we got to this discussion and our strategic planning process (see p. 5), Elena Traister and Erica Schmitz facilitated this discussion among youth and adults. What works for kids was the question permeating the discussion and our youth discussants had much to say about this topic. We need programs where kids interact with their parents, organized activities for parents and kids to do things together. Rules of the house should be set with parents and kids together. We need to have lots of opportunities available for all kids, ranging from academics, to the arts, and sports.

I loved how one youth, Amelia Wood (an intern at the Coalition office) summed up what young people need. They need to feel a part of community through community services, youth-adult partnerships, and opportunities for youth to interact with other youth. The field of youth development is pretty clear about what youth need to be healthy. It's important that our young people and youth service providers both agree on what is important for young people.

The purpose of this meeting was to talk about the strategic prevention plan that is underway, but what was evident was the quality of relationships and respect that young people and adults had for each other. More will happen. This meeting was followed by a meeting between youth and North Adams Public Safety Commissioner Morocco to hear more about effective programming for youth. As Joe Manning said, we need to have more of these discussions than just through the monthly Coalition meetings. Any ideas? - **Al Bashevkin**



Above: Youth and adults discuss prevention issues at the May Coalition meeting.

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## May Coalition Meeting

*"Looking Back at our Year to Plan for our Future"*

**Friday, June 14th**

10 AM -to Noon

**OPEN TO THE PUBLIC**

**Northern Berkshire Community Coalition**

85 Main Street, Suite 624 • North Adams, MA 01247 • (413) 663-7588 • [www.nbccoalition.org](http://www.nbccoalition.org)

## Coalition Supporters :

### Public Sources :

- MA Department of Social Services,
- MA Cultural Council,
- Berkshire County Teen Pregnancy Prevention Coalition,
- NA Public Schools' 21st Century Grant,
- National Endowment for the Arts,
- US Office of Juvenile Justice and Delinquency Prevention,
- MA Department of Public Health.

### Foundation Supporters

- Campaign for Human Development
- Harvard Pilgrim Health Care Foundation.

### Local Support

- City of North Adams
- Town of Adams
- Contributions from our many supporters.

*The Coalition is a member agency of the Northern Berkshire United Way and the Williamstown Community Chest.*

## To Submit to NBCCoalition Newsletter:

The Newsletter is a publication of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition. To submit articles (100 words or less) for the Summer newsletter, SEND BY May 25th TO :

E-Mail : [cfeab@bcn.net](mailto:cfeab@bcn.net)  
[albash@bcn.net](mailto:albash@bcn.net)

Fax : 413 663-9877

## May Coalition Meeting to Recap Year's Events

Join us for the May monthly Coalition Meeting (May 10) from 10 AM to noon for an open discussion about our year as a community. This meeting will be held at Mass MoCA (a break in tradition) to encourage and support those riding their bikes to MoCA as part of Bike to Work Week. The meeting will be above the Eleven Restaurant which is accessible by stairs outside the eleven restaurant or by the elevator located inside MoCA.

It's time for us all to reflect on the year's events and to use the Coalition meeting as a time to see where we've been and where we are going as a community. We began this year with a community discussion four days after the September 11th attack on New York. Over eighty Coalitioners participated in that discussion, followed by a discussion in October of what does it all mean? Since October, our monthly meetings have been topic centered, yet the cloud of September 11th and the State budget crisis hovers over the work that we do. The May Coalition meeting will be our chance to catch up and talk about what this year has meant. Join us on May 10 (this month only.. next September we'll be back in our traditional location of the Baptist Church ) for our monthly meeting.

## Coalition Offices Have Moved Upstairs at 85 Main Street

Wow.. after two years in our third floor office and lots of compromising in our crowded space, we have moved to the 6th floor of the 85 Main Street office building (suite 624). Come visit us at our new office.

Without the support of the Trial Court Community Service Program Berkshire Division, this move would not have been possible. Community service volunteers under the supervision of Trial Court Community Service staff tore up old carpets, painted, removed unnecessary fixtures, and prepared the office for the move. Dave Carver and Larry DeMarco of Carver Associates helped make this transition possible. Kathy Keeser was the lead planner from the Coalition office and did a remarkable job at making this move work.

Our office has moved, but our phone number and e-mail addresses remain the same. We look forward to seeing you in our new space.

## Congressman Olver Scheduled to Speak at Coalition Annual Meeting

Come join us on June 7th from noon to 2PM at the Church Street Center of MCLA for the sixteenth Annual Meeting of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition. Congressman John Olver has agreed to be the keynote speaker for the event, and we're hoping that his schedule in DC will free him to come to our annual meeting. In addition to hearing from the Congressman, we will enjoy local music, food from MCLA, honors, awards, and the year in review.

Registration forms for the Annual meeting are included in this newsletter. First ten registrants receive Shirley's top ten award. Join us for our annual celebration of the work that goes on in our community. - *Al Bashevkin*

## Public Health Incentive Grants Available

The Coalition is once again offering Public Health Incentive Grants (PHIGs) for community projects in North Berkshire. Public Health Incentive Grants are minigrants that individuals and community groups can apply for to support projects that make our communities a better place to live and work. Applications for the Incentive Grants are available in our newsletter and also on the Coalition website, [www.nbccoalition.org](http://www.nbccoalition.org)

Residents of the North Berkshire seven town region (Adams, North Adams, Cheshire, Williamstown, Savoy, Florida, and Clarksburg) are urged to contact the Coalition for details and to obtain an application for these grants. There is \$4000 available and funding requests should not exceed \$500. Grants smaller than the maximum amount are encouraged.

There will be an opportunity for interested applicants to ask questions about the incentive grant process at a meeting on Wednesday, May 8<sup>th</sup> at 1:00 p.m. in the Conference Room of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition, 85 Main Street, Suite 624. Final applications are due by 3:00 p.m. on Friday, May 17<sup>th</sup> at the Coalition office.- *Al Bashevkin*

## North County Medical Interpreter Training

Berkshire AHEC will be sponsoring a fifteen hour Spanish Medical Interpreter Training at the offices of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition. The training will take place on May 21, May 24, May 28, and May 31st from 5 - 9 PM. These trainings will prepare the participants for more accurate medical interpreting within the Standards of Practice developed by the Massachusetts Medical Interpreters Association. Attendance at all sessions is required.

For a brochure, or to register, contact Berkshire AHEC at 413 447-2417.



Photo above: Graduation Day for UNO kids who participated in the Healthy Neighborhood program showing their certificates and special tee shirts.

## Northern Berkshire Legislative Contacts

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## **Free Healthy Family Night Scheduled for May 10<sup>th</sup>**

Save the date, Friday, May 10, 2002, for a night of **FREE FAMILY FUN**, including a concert by **David Grover**. The eighth annual Healthy Family Night will be held from 5:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Northern Berkshire YMCA. Activities will include: a resource fair with information from various community agencies and how to stay healthy and safe, a concert by David Grover, and activities for the whole family to enjoy. Free pizza and drinks will be available from 5:00 - 6:00 p.m.

At the Resource Fair, families who collect stamps from the various vendors will be entered in a drawing for prizes and gift certificates donated by area businesses. The event offers a great opportunity for families to spend time with each other enjoying an evening of fun and music, as well as a chance to learn more about resources that are available to them in their community.

The evening is **FREE to the public** and has been planned by the following health and human service providers: **Child Care of the Berkshires, Family Tobacco Education Project, VNA and Hospice of Northern Berkshire, Early Intervention, Northern Berkshire Community Partnership, Lead Poisoning Prevention and Education Project, Young Parents Program, Northern Berkshire Family Net, Parenting Partners and Passages Healthy Families**. For more information, Call **Shelbea Wooster-Cote at 664-4725**.

## **New Drop in Center for Teens at 85 Main Street**

Suite 328 at 85 Main Street has become the new home of the Teen Drop-in Center run by Sheri and Dave Simon. The space is rented to the Drop-in Center by Tapestry on Tuesday afternoons at 2:30( when Tapestry is closed). Funding for this Center is provided by the Conte Program to Prevent Teen Pregnancy and is geared toward sharing ideas and conversation about ways to abstain from sexual activity as a teen. Although one of the main focuses of these meetings is abstinence, Sheri and Dave want it to be clear that anyone is welcome and that abstinence is only part of the program. Kids are welcome to "Drop" in and grab a snack, chat for a bit or stay for the many topics of conversation discussed at the Center. Topics have ranged from the conditions of Foster care for Teens to part-time work for kids to discussions about long and short term goals associated with staying abstinent. Sheri and Dave have received positive feedback from the kids and with some luck will be able to secure money for the summer and next fall. Good Luck to you Sheri and Dave and keep up the good work!- **Erica Cruz**

## **Cultural Competence Conference Planned**

The Newcomers Committee continues to work on the needs of newcomers to the area, especially those who do not speak English. Berkshire AHEC with assistance from the Elizabeth Freeman Center and the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition are planning a conference to help train health and human service workers to be more aware of the needs of the newcomers and how better able to understand cultural differences. The conference will probably be held in mid-June, (likely on June 18th) and will be open to North county residents and workers. If you have ideas or suggestions for the conference, please contact **Marie Lafayette at Berkshire AHEC 413-447-2417 or e-mail at [mlafayette@berkshireahec.org](mailto:mlafayette@berkshireahec.org) - KK**.

## Apply to the New World Fund

In the first quarter of 2002, the New World Fund, which gives small grants to new immigrants and organizations that serve them, received only two grant applications. With \$3,500 to give away this year, we hope to hear from more individuals and programs here in the Berkshires.

In the past, individuals have won grants for things like clothing, college texts and driving lessons. Organizations have received grants for projects, such as translating a brochure into Spanish and providing interpreters. The fund's mission is to ease the adjustment of new immigrants to the Berkshires and help them establish themselves here.

Information and applications are available from the New World Fund, 292 Main Street #31, Great Barrington 01230, (413) 528-5599.

## WIC Guidelines Change

**WIC Update!** The new income guidelines are here! More than ever working families are taking advantage of the FREE food and nutrition education for pregnant women, infants and children to age 5 that WIC offers! A family of three can earn up to \$535 and still be eligible. ALL foster children and any child on Mass Health is also eligible. And, Dads and Grandparents raising grandchildren may apply. Let WIC Work Wonders for your family. Call Berkshire North WIC at 413-663-3012 - *Starlene Lang*

## Substance Abuse Prevention Plan in the Works

On Thursday, March 14, the Community Wellness Advisory Board held an all-day retreat devoted to the development of a new community-wide Strategic Substance Use Prevention Plan. Lauri Turkovsky from the Massachusetts Prevention Center presented information about community-wide prevention efforts and led off the morning session. Over thirty people attended and spent the day working together to map the assets and resources directly pertaining to substance abuse prevention in North Berkshire. Representatives of community programs and organizations presented the specific resources their group offers and then collaborated in thinking about where the strengths and weaknesses existed in sixteen different service areas.

This represents the first step in our planning process. Elena Traister is compiling a report summarizing the findings of the retreat and following up with agencies that were not represented at the meeting. When this report is completed, the identified gaps in service will be prioritized. The third and final step in the planning process involves developing actions to address the most pressing needs identified.

Already this strategic planning process has sparked discussion in the community around issues it has unearthed. April's monthly Coalition meeting focused on the perspective of North Berkshire youth around such topics as law enforcement of underage substance use and the apparent lack of involvement opportunities for middle school youth. This meeting was then followed-up by a meeting between North Adams youth and NA Public Safety Commissioner John Morocco. At the NBCC and in the North Berkshire Community, we are excited by the widened perspective this process has afforded us.

## *What works with Kids.. Comments by Youth at the April Coalition Meeting*

Programs where kids interact with their parents, like music.. have parents appreciate what kids do.....

Organized activities where parents and kids do things together.....

Sitting down with kids and making rules and expectations together.....

Having a positive attitude about kids....

Employment.....

Engaging with youth who are "hanging out.".....

To have lots of choices for kids activities.....

My mom.. She's very involved in my life.. friends are real important.....

We want structure, but don't nag on me. Set an expectation and trust your child to follow through on that expectation.....

Other people's parents who have had a big influence on me.....

Community services for youth / Youth-adult partnerships / youth interaction with

## Innovative Ideas...

**All Day, All Night. Our society goes non-stop. No wonder millions of Americans get up tired and fall into bed exhausted. Here are some simple strategies to prevent fatigue from WIC:**

- Energize your morning with a healthy breakfast. It will give you nutrition and energy to help you get through the day, and it also gets your metabolism going and that means weight loss.
- Resist sugar loaded foods. They don't have the nutrition you need and after the initial spike, they drop and leave you feeling tired and droopy.
- High fat meals stay in your stomach longer, taking blood away from your brain, muscles and other tissues. You may feel sluggish for up to 6 hours.
- Don't forget your water intake. Mild dehydration lowers concentration, and your heart has to pump harder to get the energy you need.
- Perk up with a brisk 10-minute walk.
- Your Mom was right. Sit up straight. Poor posture causes you to feel tired and achy and puts a strain on your back and neck.
- Skip the late-night movie. Try to go to bed and get up around the same time every day. It helps reduce stress.
- Balance work, children and other responsibilities. Stay grounded by your values; family, friendships and health.

**- Berkshire North WIC 413-**

## Bike to Work Week Commences May 10

There has been a growing movement of finding ways to get to work, other than driving our cars. On May 10th from 7 AM to 10 AM on the grounds of Mass MoCA, there will be tent to welcome bike to workers from Northern Berkshire County. Bikers will be treated to a breakfast, courtesy of the Berkshire Bike Path and will be able to sample the give-aways, and share the good feeling that incurs when you exercise on your way to work. We are trying to log in all the bicyclists to workers during the May 10th week, so be sure you register. For information, contact the Coalition office, or check out the bikepath website, [Berkshirebikepath.org](http://Berkshirebikepath.org). - **Al Bashevkin**

## Alternative Transportation Coming Soon to Northern Berkshire

After a year and a half of planning and support from the Berkshire Regional Planning Commission, the Berkshire Regional Transit Authority, and the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition, our work to create a local demand-response system is finally coming into being. A call center is currently scheduled to open this June to enhance the ability of unemployed and underemployed individuals to access work and work-related activities. Transportation will be provided free-of-charge to anyone living in Florida, Clarksburg, Savoy, Cheshire, North Adams, Adams and Williamstown. People in these communities will be able to call a toll-free number located in North Adams to request a ride.

Our thanks must go to Congressman John Olver who spearheaded the effort to enhance transportation service to the Northern Berkshires and helped find resources to support this project. North Adams Mayor, John Barrett, III, is providing key support in helping to acquire office space for the newly created Northern Berkshires Transit, inc, a non-profit organization composed of five board of directors who will oversee the project.

Roger Brechner has been hired to lead this project. He will be an employee of the Community Transportation Association of America (CTAA), will serve as project manager and work with state and local government officials in coordinating and consolidating transportation operations and resources. Brochures will be distributed soon throughout the seven towns that will list the Community Transportation Center toll-free phone number residents can call to make transportation arrangements. CTAA is a national organization that is an advocate for rural transportation needs

## Roger Brechner Lyme Disease Spreads to Berkshire County

The reported incidence of Lyme Disease in Berkshire County has increased from 9.6 cases per 100,000 in 1998 to 36.3 cases in 2000. Statewide, the reported incidence of Lyme Disease has increased from 11.6 cases / 100,000 in 1998 to 18.1 cases/ 100,000 in 2000.

Lyme Disease is caused by bacteria that are spread by tiny infected ticks (in Massachusetts by Deer ticks). Both people and animals can be infected with Lyme Disease. Berkshire County is now a region to be concerned about Lyme Disease. If you are walking or present in an area where ticks are prevalent, then you should act preventively. For full information about Lyme Disease, contact your local Board of Health or call the Massachusetts Department of Public Health at 1 888-682-9211 or visit their website at <http://www.state.ma.us/dph>. - **Al Bashevkin**

**(21st  
Century)**

**(21st  
Century)**



# Northern Berkshire Neighbors

## News

*“The mission of Northern Berkshire Neighbors is to connect and support residents within neighborhoods to build community, create stronger neighborhoods, and make linkages to groups, institutions and other resources.”*

May 2002

## Calendar

Greylock Housing

Coalition

Neighborhood Summit

UNO

Neighborhood Connection

Mohawk Forest Neighbors

Blackinton Neighbors Assoc.



The Northern Berkshire Community Coalition:  
"Organizing people and resources dedicated to  
improving the quality of life in Northern Berkshire."

**Northern Berkshire Neighbors**  
*Neighborhood News*

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# UNITY Page

# Community Bulletin Board

## Seniors:

• **Family Caregiver Support Program at Elder Services of Berkshire County, Inc.** Contact Bea Cowlin, Caregiver Liaison for Berkshire County, with information concerning caregiver needs in your area. Elder Services hopes to develop grant funded programs to address these needs. For information contact: **Bea at 413-499-0524 or 1-800-544-5242.**

## Agency:

• **Berkshire Works 2nd Annual Job & Service Fair** will be on **May 7th at the Boy's and Girl's Club of Pittsfield from 1:00 - 5:00.** 40+ Berkshire County Employers and Service Representatives will be available to discuss Employment Opportunities as well as Services available to meet a variety of needs. For more information contact: **Berkshire Works at 413-499-2220 or 413-663-1111.**

• Saturday, May 11th **the Youth Center, Inc.** in Adams will be holding a dinner-dance in honor of Mother's Day. Bring your mom, grandmother, aunt, or special woman in your life to Notre Dame Church in Adams. Contact the **Youth Center at 743-3550 for details.**

• **Budget cuts affecting your clients and their services?** If they are disabled or blind, contact social security. They may be eligible for disability based benefits. 413-664-7951.

• **Red Cross Youth Leadership Group**, meets every Tuesday (except during school vacations) from 6 - 8 p.m Meetings are held at the Red Cross Chapter House, 480 West St., Pittsfield, MA. **Contact: Marlena Willis at 413-442-1506 ext. 27.**

• To sign up for the **Safe House** working group, please contact: **Elena Traister at the Coalition office (663-7588) or by e-mail etraiste@wso.williams.edu**

• **Berkshire County ARC** is sponsoring a Golf Classic on May 23rd at the Berkshire Hills Country Club in Pittsfield. For details on entry, sponsorship or contributions, please call **Michael Caritey, ext. 233 or Paul Gavrity, ext. 240 at 413-499-4241.**

## General:

• **Spring is in the Air!!** Check out the happenings at Western Gateway Heritage State Park. There are programs scheduled from May to June. There will be storytime, children's crafts, family movies, family fun days and an exciting close up look at birds of prey. Biodiversity Day is Saturday, June 1 from 10:00 - 12:00, Off-site. Identify plants and animals at **Natural Bridge State Park.** For more information and to preregister call **413-663-6312.**

• **Citizens Health Program** has added a vision benefit to their Citizens Health Card. You can now be covered for eye examinations, lenses, frames, contact lenses, and bifocals along with the discounts on prescription drugs. Any questions? **Call 1-800-JOE-K-4RX (1-800-563-5479).**

• **National Day to Prevent Teen Pregnancy - May 8, 2002.** Go online at **www.teenpregnancy.org** and take the confidential "quiz". This quiz includes a series of scenarios, fun facts, and storylines that will prompt teens to decide how they would act in various challenging situations involving relationships and sex.

• **The Men's Health Partnership (based at NARH)** is continuing to offer free health screenings for men age 19-64 who are uninsured, underinsured or face financial barriers to getting care. Services screen for heart disease and diabetes. Call: **664-5240 for information.**

• **The Native Community** welcomes all people to come to powwows to learn and have fun with Native Americans. The powwow list is at **www.wanderingbull.com.**

• **Send announcements of your upcoming events to NBCTC to post on our video bulletin board.** E-mail at **nobctv@bcn.net, Fax; 663-3924.** Please include an information number and a termination date for the announcement.

• The next **Railway Cafe** performance will take place Saturday, May 11th with Colleen Sexton and opener Gloria Jean. The Railway Cafe is a once a month coffeehouse taking place at the Parish House of St. John's Church on Summer St. in N. Adams. For more information, call **664-6393 or railwaycafe@juno.com**

May 6th and 10th

## **Northern Berkshire Tonite**

Local access TV at 7:30 pm (5/6) and 8 pm (5/10). This week co-hosts Al Bashevkin and Ken Swiatek will have guests: Marie Harpin of N. Berkshire Community Action and Phil Moreau, North Adams Postmaster who will talk about the postal food drive and lots of other community issues.

May 6th

## **Safe Homes**

Planning meeting 5:00 - 6:00 p.m. at Northern Berkshire Community Coalition, 85 Main Street, Suite 624. Join the working group to provide homes and parties for teens to go to that are alcohol and drug free. Contact: **Elena 663-7588**.

May 10th

## **Healthy Family Night**

From 5 -8p.m. at the Northern Berkshire YMCA. Activities for the whole family. David Grover will be appearing and there will be pizza and drinks served from 5 - 6. Free admission.

May 10th

## **Bike to Work Week Kick-off**

The Berkshire Bike Path will be kicking off its Bike to Work Week activities on May 10th at MASS MoCA in North Adams. Bike to the MoCA tent between 7 AM and 10 AM and enjoy a free breakfast and lots of giveaways. Afterwards join us for the May Coalition meeting to be held at MoCA.

May 10th

## **Monthly Coalition Meeting**

At 10 a.m., immediately following the Bike to Work Week Kick-off, the Monthly Meeting of the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition will take place. Discussion will be about "The Year In Review".

May 15th

## **Newcomer's Meeting**

At the Coalition office, 85 Main Street, Suite 624 at 2:30. The needs of newcomers, especially those who do not speak English will be addressed.

May 16th

## **Northern Berkshire Collaborative for Non Violence**

Facilitated by the Elizabeth Freeman Center in the EFC conference room, 85 Main Street, Suite 300 at 9:00 a.m. Contact the Elizabeth Freeman Center @ 663-9709 for more information.

May 27th

## **Northern Berkshire Youth Collaborative**

Noon to 1:30 at the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition office. This meeting is an opportunity for all youth serving organizations to talk together about youth and their work. Lunch will be provided.

This group communicates by E-mail. To get on the list, contact the Coalition office @ 663-7588.

May 21st

## **UNITY Writing Workshop Public Reading**

Main Street Stage, North Adams at 7:00 p.m. Come early so you can get a seat.

June 7th

## **16th Annual Meeting of the Coalition**

Save the date of June 7th for the Coalition Annual Meeting (our 16th). The event will be held at the Church Street Center of MCLA in North Adams. Registration Forms are available in this newsletter on page 10. Remember to register early.

### *From the Archives*

*Who are these people  
and what are  
they doing?*



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## *Final Thoughts...*

It's that time of year again to ask for your support for the Northern Berkshire Community Coalition. Your support of our work has been fundamental to our success as an organization. Inside, you will read about Public Health Incentive Grants for neighborhood programs, a new transportation resource that is just beginning in the region, in May a Medical Interpreters training to be held at the Coalition office as well as plans for a June training in cultural competency. These are activities that the Coalition has been instrumental in bringing to the Community and are activities that will make a difference for us all.

Our financial support as an organization is a mix of Federal, State, local, and foundation support. We depend on contributions to keep us going and whether you can afford ten dollars or a thousand dollars, your contribution helps.

So if you haven't yet done it, please return the enclosed envelope with your contribution. Know that we will use it well and plan to join us for the many community activities that keep us going. *– Al Bashevkin*

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## **Northern Berkshire Community Coalition**

85 Main Street, Suite 624

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