



**Healthy Community Working Group
Municipal Chambers
3 Primrose Street
Newtown, CT**

The Healthy Community Working Group held the first of four special meetings on Tuesday, March 27 2018 in the municipal chambers, 3 Primrose Street, Newtown, CT. Jennifer Crane, Director of the Center for Support and Wellness, called the meeting to order at 9:30 am and began by introducing First Selectman, Dan Rosenthal, who briefly welcomed the group. Jennifer Crane then proceeded with guidelines for the meetings.

PRESENT: Jennifer Crane, Dan Rosenthal, Jessica Ward, Desiree Lee, Jill Pluta Mary Nielsen, Della Schmid, Alex Lunding, Matthew Crebbin, Anna Weidemann, Lorrie Rodrigue, Amy Mangold, Jennifer Barahona, Dave Jacob, Stephanie Cinque, Ann LoBosco, Dorrie Carolan, Candace Bohr, Anka Roberto, Tricia Pinto, Melanie Bonjour, John Boccuzzi, James Viadero, Ned Simpson

All present were asked by Jennifer Crane for a brief personal introduction.

After introductions, Jennifer Crane reiterated to the group that meetings are open to the public and encouraged participants to invite community members to attend the remaining meetings. Jennifer shared that the main purpose of these meetings will be creating a common definition and common language of a healthy community for Newtown. She gave a brief description and history of the Center for Support and Wellness and the differences between behavioral health and mental health. Jennifer shared that in meetings to come, data that has been collected prior this working groups creation will be shared with the group.

Jennifer elicited the group for participation regarding what makes a healthy community and possible gaps seen in specific areas of behavioral and mental health. Most attendees participated in this discussion, contributing comments not only on gaps seen in the community but positive and protective factors that are already in place. There was emphasis on the idea of encouraging community members to better utilize services already available in town that are not necessarily behavioral health but wellness related activities, such as sports, groups, arts, etc. Prevention was also mentioned numerous times by various group members. A group member suggested looking into community demographics such as who has moved in to town, who is leaving town, and who has been here for many years to better conclude who is or is not being reached.

There was additional discussion regarding two specific groups, students and seniors, and what has and has not worked in the past and what can be done differently in reaching out to each demographic for health and wellness activities. Transportation and substance use were cited as determining factors for each group.

Communication was also cited as a main factor in hindering community participation in wellness activities. Future use of social media platforms and mailings were discussed to help elicit participation.

Group members were asked to participate in an activity which required writing on posters on the walls in the municipal chambers regarding what individuals see as social determinants of health. All members took part and attached are photos of the material completed by the group.

ADJOURNMENT: Jennifer Crane moved to adjourn the meeting at 11:00 am with closing remarks and a reminder of the date and time of the next meeting and the announcement of two community forums.

Respectfully submitted,

Corinne Ofgang