

Developing a Local Parenting Awareness Month Coalition

PARENTING AWARENESS MONTH COALITIONS — an opportunity to mobilize communities to support their citizenry in their role as parents and caregivers.

PURPOSE: Local PAM coalitions bring diverse people and resources together, for a focused and systematic approach to increasing parent education and involvement in the community.

FUNCTION: In a PAM Coalition individuals and organizations retain their identity but agree to work together to achieve local Parenting Awareness Month goals, during the March campaign or year around.

POSSIBLE FUNCTIONS FOR A PAM COALITION INCLUDE:

- ▣ Setting local priorities.
- ▣ Planning events.
- ▣ Providing a forum for community issues or concerns.
- ▣ Creating awareness about or ensuring ready access to parenting education and resources.
- ▣ Working with the media.
- ▣ Getting information to local organizations.
- ▣ Involving more parents and community members.
- ▣ Advocating for policies that support parents.

POSSIBLE COALITION MEMBERS:

◆ parent organizations and networks ◆ MCRUD and Safe Communities coalition members
◆ religious communities/clergy ◆ businesses ◆ civic organizations, fraternities, clubs ◆ city councils and county commissions ◆ local public health, mental health, social services, substance abuse services ◆ 4-H and Extension programs ◆ local Girl and Boy Scout councils ◆ youth organizations ◆ law enforcement, judicial systems, juvenile justice ◆ neighborhood organizations ◆ child welfare organizations ◆ RSVP and other senior citizen programs ◆ schools kindergarten through college ◆ health care providers and hospitals ◆ 4-C, day care centers/workers ◆ community leaders ◆ local media.

CHARACTERISTICS OF COALITIONS THAT WORK:

- ▣ Clearly defined and agreed upon operating procedures; democratic decision-making.
- ▣ Clear and agreed upon goals—both short term and long term.
- ▣ Facilitative leadership and delegation of responsibility.
- ▣ Meaningful roles for everyone; clear definition of roles.
- ▣ Processes for bringing closure, for evaluating efforts, and for revising or renewing mission and goals.
- ▣ A coordinating "headquarters."
- ▣ Good communication—within the coalition and with the community.
- ▣ Responsiveness to community input.
- ▣ A working relationship with media.
- ▣ A collaboration mentality, which includes:
 - ▣ **Focus** — setting aside turf issues to accomplish a common goal.
 - ▣ **Trust** — believing others will do their part and do it well and will let you do yours.

As you develop a local PAM coalition consider the following –

"Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it is the only thing that ever has." —Margaret Mead

"It's amazing how much can be accomplished when it doesn't matter who gets the credit." —Anonymous Wise Person

2008 PAM Organizers' Packet

For more information about coalitions or Parenting Awareness Michigan call Prevention Network at 800-968-4968 or www.preventionnetwork.org