



WECOSS Prevention & Education Working Group

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, May 8th, 2025

1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m.

Present: Jennifer Bradt (WECHU), Alexis Erickson (WECHU), Ashley Kirby (WECHU), Francis Kalamba (WECHU), Kelly Farrugia (WECHU), Amy Lofaso (WECDSB), Allyson Hallahan (VON), Kim Willis (CMHA-WECB), Karen Trotter (CSC Providence), Jodi Pearce (weCHC), Joe Bell (GECDSB), Christian Morneau (NEWBE), Margo Cameron (CMHA-WECB), Kelly Barill (WECHU).

Regrets: Melissa Major (HDGH – MHART), EMS-MHART Representative, Sean Patterson (WPS), Stacey Yannacopoulos (NEWBE), Stacey Shepley (Essex-Windsor EMS)

Co-Chairs: Kim Willis & Jenny Bradt

Recorder: Kelly Barill

		Action Required
1.0	<p>Welcome and Introductions (Co-Chairs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Welcome to all, including our new members: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Stacey Yannacopoulos, New Beginnings ○ Christian Morneau, New Beginnings ○ Superintendent Joe Bell, Greater-Essex County District School Board 	
2.0	<p>Approval of the Agenda (Co-Chairs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approved. 	
3.0	<p>Review of Action Items from March 20th, 2025:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulate evaluation report from the 2024 continuous communication campaign with the minutes (A. Erickson). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complete. • Follow-up with Lori Kempe at Children First about service mapping for child and youth substance use prevention and interest in PEWG membership (J. Bradt). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attended an in-person meeting at HDGH to review a draft service map for child and youth services. ○ Discussed the options available, staged interventions, and where service providers would be referring clients. More to come. • Build on the 2025 project plan based on the feedback gathered from the group (F. Kalamba). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ To be discussed later in the agenda. • 2025 Membership: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reminder to forward ideas/suggestions on new members you think would be a good addition to the group. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Kelly suggested reaching out to primary care providers or Mental Health and Addictions Nurses from Ontario Health. <p>Approval of Minutes from March 20th, 2025 (Co-Chairs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Approved. 	Explore opportunities to onboard primary care or Mental Health and Addictions Nurses at Ontario Health into the PEWG (A. Erickson).
4.0	<p>Meeting Goals (Co-Chairs)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Review progress on the 2025 PEWG project. 2. Discuss upcoming activities and next steps for project implementation. 	
5.0	<p>2025 Project – Youth and Family Engagement and Outreach for Substance Use Prevention (F. Kalamba)</p> <p>Project Progress:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Reviewed presentation with updates on project progress. ● Attending family-centered events focusing on educating parents on how to speak to their youth about substance use, as well as youth symposiums geared towards student vaping. ● Social media post released on April 7th with messaging on a new School Mental Health Ontario (SMHO) webinar series geared towards educating parents/caregivers on the early signs of substance use and providing tips and strategies. ● On May 15th, messages on students against impaired driving will be posted to educate students prior to the start of prom season. ● Social media messages are sent out from the WECHU’s social media accounts. ● A school newsletter was developed and sent out to local school boards highlighting the SMHO webinar series. The recordings will also be shared for those interested in watching them. ● A prom night safety webinar series associated with Drug Free Kids Canada was also promoted. ● Additional newsletters will be created and distributed with dates for upcoming webinars. ● Kelly Farrugia: WECHU has a larger monthly school health newsletter for elementary and secondary schools and information can always be added to this. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Reach out to Jenny Bradt or Francis Kalamba with suggestions/ideas. ○ Subscribe to the newsletter here: https://www.wechu.org/school-health/subscribe ● Reviewed a Family Substance Use Prevention Workshop presentation. 	<p>Circulate a copy of the project presentation with the minutes (A. Erickson).</p> <p>Investigate WECOSS-branded options for social media promotion related to the 2025 project (J. Bradt).</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Partnering with CMHA and the WEC-Housing Corporation to attend health events at high-risk community housing units. ○ The goal is to deliver this short workshop presentation to parents at these events. ○ The workshop is related to youth substance use and its effects, creating a supportive relationship, early warning signs, how to talk with youth, self-reflection, and available resources. ○ The workshop will be hosted by a WECHU Public Health Nurse. ● Group Discussion on Workshop Presentation: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Kim Willis: Practical steps and resources are helpful tools. ○ Jenny Bradt: The WECHU has print resources to hand out during events as well. ○ Amy Lofaso: Grade 9 orientations (August 22nd – 29th), transitions to kindergarten, and parent teacher nights provide natural opportunities to educate students/parents. Working through the WECDSB’s parent councils to organize an event is also a good option. They have a budget of \$1,000 to use for resources, refreshments, etc. These topics can also be discussed through the PIC committee, which is comprised of one representative from each school along with the Executive Superintendent and trustees. ○ Kelly Farrugia: WECHU has nurses assigned to higher priority schools, and they often attend parent information nights and can support this workshop. ○ Joe Bell: The GECDSB has an executive group consisting of staff and parents. They attempted an event in April for parents, but cancelled due to low registration. Suggested having these presentations for parents with youth in grades 5-7 and holding them at individual schools. Could perhaps offer childcare or food as incentives. ○ Jenny Bradt: Suggested handing out journals or other SWAG to get parents to come over and sit with staff. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ WECHU also recently partnered with both French school boards and the parent council with CSC Providence to coordinate an information session hosted by two nurses. <p>Upcoming Activities and Next Steps:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Deliver family substance use prevention workshops at upcoming community events. ● Prepare a school newsletter advising parents on where to access the SMHO webinar series recordings in June. 	<p>Circulate a copy of the Family Substance Use Prevention Workshop presentation with the minutes (A. Erickson).</p>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Will also be developing new school action plans in collaboration with school administration. A school health survey was sent to high priority schools due back in September. The WECHU’s school nurses work with their assigned schools to come up with a plan based on their specific needs. See relevant information here. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ WECHU’s Healthy Schools webpage will be updated with related resources, along with a template for anti-vaping and smoking policies for schools. ○ Adding in referral steps for support to the policy may be an option, as it gives staff and students an alternative besides suspension. • Joe Bell suggested continuing with education for school staff on vaping and how it works so they have a better understanding. • Kim Willis – Some secondary schools had vape sensors installed in the washrooms. If they are alerted to students vaping, they can offer education instead of consequences. • Jenny Bradt – The WECHU’s enforcement officers get numerous complaints about high nicotine products, and some stores selling them to students. • Kelly Farrugia – Vapes sold in the black market are starting to have fentanyl added to them. • Need a multi-level approach, making sure that we’re getting to students who are younger, as well as in high school, and potentially those already using substances. • With alcohol being more accessible in our community, more people are consuming it. We could look at adding messaging around this in our planning process as we move forward with this group. 	<p>Review the Healthy Schools webpage and reach out to Jenny Bradt, Kim Willis, or Francis Kalamba with any suggested additions or changes (All).</p>
<p>6.0</p>	<p>Community Agency Roundtable (All)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Kim Willis (CMHA-WECEB) – On Sunday June 1st, CMHA is holding its annual Ride Don’t Hide Event for mental health at the Ciociaro Club. This year, you can walk, run, or ride. All funds stay within our community to support CMHA programs. Volunteers are needed. Sign up is available at https://windsoressex.cmha.ca/events/ride-dont-hide-2025/. • Joe Bell (GECDSB) – The GECDSB is working with SMHO this week, with approximately 20 teachers providing digital technology use and addictions education. Two of these teachers are from Westgate, who have their grade 4/5 students engaged in learning about these aspects. Also looking at different approaches on how to share information with parents and students. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Francis Kalamba (WECHU) – Provided the link for those interested in joining the Knowledge Development and Exchange Hubs for the Icelandic Prevention Model Community of Practice. You would be part of the Co-Op meetings occurring every 3 months. There are lots of great resources and access to previous meetings. Kelly Farrugia/Ashley Kirby (WECHU) – The WECHU is currently running a “Connected Not Controlled” challenge for students in grades 6-12. This is from youth for youth around digital technology use from a harm reduction perspective: https://www.wechu.org/cnc. The challenge uses the same format as that used for last year’s Break the Vape Video Challenge, where youth submit videos with messaging around technology use. Several videos have been submitted since the start date two weeks ago. The WECHU’s nurses have connected with their schools and the information has gone out with lots of support and partnership with school board colleagues as well. Margo Cameron (CMHA-WECB) – CMHA is embarking on a small pilot project in three high schools. A youth outreach model will be used in the schools to connect youth with both primary care and social work resources. The initiative will start in late May and will consist of one RPN and two social workers through the Regional Children’s Center. There will be an assessment tool used to track the utilization of services. More to come. 	
<p>7.0</p>	<p>WECOSS Pillar Updates (A. Erickson)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Alexis Erickson provided updates on the projects that the other three WECOSS Working Groups are undertaking. Harm Reduction Working Group – Currently working on an anti-stigma project related to harm reduction. The overall goal of the project is to develop an organizational policy template and educational workshops for service providers that can help to reduce the overall perpetuation of stigma within various care settings and in the delivery of care to people who use drugs. A survey went out to all of the WECOSS Working Groups recently to get some feedback on what organizations are seeing as knowledge gaps and policy needs when it comes to harm reduction and anti-stigma. Results will be used to develop the policy template and workshop content. Treatment and Recovery Working Group – This group will be offering training sessions to service providers on opioid agonist therapy, otherwise known as OAT – what it is, who can benefit from it, and how to connect folks to it in the community. A survey will be sent out to community partners shortly to gather information on knowledge gaps and education needs regarding OAT. The goal is to offer some in-person and virtual training options for service providers, informed by the data collected through the survey. 	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforcement and Justice Working Group – This group is continuing with the neighborhood safety planning project started by the SSNAPP initiative over the last couple of years. The group is partnering with the WEC-Housing Corporation, CMHA-WECB, and other community partners to attend regularly scheduled events at community housing units to distribute and provide education to residents on the existing safety plans. Will also be looking at expanding the safety plans to Essex-County, starting with the Leamington area. Working on a Community Safety and Policing Grant application with the OPP and the City of Windsor to support this work. The WECOSS also plans to update our action plan as a strategy this year. It was last updated in 2021. Looking to do some consultations over the summer, both with our WECOSS partners and with the community to explore what the WECOSS should look like moving forward and our priorities for the next few years. More to follow. 	
8.0	Summary of Action Items & Next Steps (Co-Chairs) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explore opportunities to onboard primary care or Mental Health and Addictions Nurses at Ontario Health into the PEWG (A. Erickson). Circulate a copy of the project presentation with the minutes (A. Erickson). Investigate WECOSS-branded options for social media promotion related to the 2025 project (J. Bradt). Circulate a copy of the Family Substance Use Prevention Workshop presentation with the minutes (A. Erickson). Review the Healthy Schools webpage and reach out to Jenny Bradt, Kim Willis, or Francis Kalamba with any suggested additions or changes (All). Proceed with next steps for 2025 project implementation (F. Kalamba). Continue to reach out with ideas and suggestions on activities that can be undertaken to reach youth, parents, and families with substance use prevention information (All). 	
9.0	Meeting Wrap-Up (Co-Chairs)	

Next Meetings:

- Thursday, September 11th from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.
- Thursday, November 6th from 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.