



WECOSS Prevention and Education Working Group

Meeting Minutes

Thursday, September 11th, 2025 | 1:00 p.m. – 3:00 p.m.

Present: Jennifer Bradt (WECHU), Alexis Erickson (WECHU), Milan Iacobelli (WECHU), Dominique Chauvin (WECHU), Gillian Stager (WECHU), Kelly Barill (WECHU), Amy Lofaso (WECDSB), Allyson Hallahan (VON), Kim Willis (CMHA), Michelle Bloomfield (CSC Providence), Jodi Pearce (weCHC), Margo Cameron (CMHA), Michella Mollicone (Essex-Windsor EMS), Joe Bell (GECDSB), Melissa Major (HDGH – MHART)

Regrets: Kelly Farrugia (WECHU), Sean Patterson (WPS), Ashley Kirby (WECHU), Christian Morneau (New Beginnings), Stacey Yannacopoulos (New Beginnings)

Co-Chairs: Kim Willis & Jennifer Bradt

Recorder: Kelly Barill

Agenda Item	Action Items
1.0 Welcome and Introductions (Co-Chairs) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Welcome to our new member, Michelle Bloomfield (Principal of Safe Schools, CSC Providence).	
2.0 Approval of the Agenda (Co-Chairs) <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Approved.	
3.0 Review of Action Items from May 8th, 2025 <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).<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ The WECOSS is in the process of renewing its action plan. Further onboarding of new members is on hold while that process is underway.• Circulate a copy of the project presentation with the minutes (A. Erickson).<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Complete. The presentation is also saved to the WECOSS Member Portal (password: W3coss@018).• Investigate WECOSS-branded options for social media promotion related to the 2025 project (J. Bradt).<ul style="list-style-type: none">○ Jenny Bradt checked in with the WECHU's Communications team. The WECOSS had its own unique social media accounts previously. It was a lot to monitor and maintain, so a decision was made to move all posts to WECHU platforms.	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Circulate a copy of the Family Substance Use Prevention Workshop presentation with the minutes (A. Erickson). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Complete. The presentation is also saved to the WECOSS Member Portal (password: W3coss@018). Meeting materials and other documents from each of the WECOSS committees are regularly stored and can be accessed within the portal. • Review the Healthy Schools webpage and reach out to Jenny Bradt, Kim Willis, or Francis Kalamba with any suggested additions or changes (All). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ongoing. Francis Kalamba has moved into a new role with the WECHU. Milan Iacobelli, Health Promotion Specialist in the WECHU’s Substance Use Prevention and Harm Reduction Department, is now supporting the 2025 PEWG project. • Proceed with next steps for 2025 project implementation (F. Kalamba). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updates to be provided later in the agenda. • 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). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Ongoing. <p>Approval of Minutes from May 8th, 2025 (Co-Chairs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Approved. 	
4.0	<p>Meeting Goals (Co-Chairs)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Facilitate a focus group for the WECOSS Action Plan Consultation. 2. Provide status updates on the 2025 PEWG project. 	
5.0	<p>WECOSS Action Plan Consultation – Focus Group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alexis Erickson provided a presentation on the WECOSS’ Action Plan Consultation, which will be shared with the minutes. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ The WECOSS has launched a comprehensive community consultation that will inform the development of a renewed, multi-year action plan for the strategy. ○ The WECOSS’ action plan was last updated in 2021 and requires a refresh to meet the new and evolving needs of the community. ○ The consultation will involve key informant interviews with WECOSS Leadership Committee members and other community leaders, focus groups with each of the WECOSS Working Groups, a focus group with the WECHU’s Substance Use Peer Advisory Committee, and other supporting activities. ○ Together, the feedback gathered will be used to create 	<p>Share meeting presentation with the minutes (A. Erickson).</p> <p>Share preliminary results from the Action Plan Consultation at upcoming Working Group meetings (WECHU).</p>

	<p>a new action plan for the WECOSS, with fresh goals and actions for the partnership to achieve over the years to come.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A focus group was facilitated with the PEWG as part of the action plan consultation. • Preliminary results and findings from the consultation will be shared at upcoming Working Group meetings. 	
6.0	<p>2025 Project – Youth and Family Engagement and Outreach for Substance Use Prevention</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Milan Iacobelli shared a presentation with project updates. <p>Status Update: Since Last Meeting in May 2025</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planet Youth – Awaiting grant approval. Agencies involved are reconvening to discuss next steps. • Family and Youth Substance Use Prevention Workshops <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ 4 workshops held at CSC Providence, Unemployed Help Centre, GECDSB (A Public School), and St. Clair College. ○ 88% of evaluation respondents reported improved awareness of these topics (44/50). ○ 1 upcoming workshop with parents and families at the Welcome Centre Shelter. • Youth Substance Use Prevention Education at Community Events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Attended 7 community events to distribute youth substance use prevention information – Viamonde Health Fair, Amherstburg Health Fair, CHC Youth Wellness Events (2), Pride Fest, and School Readiness Events (2). ○ 100% of evaluation respondents felt more aware of how to talk to or support youth with substance use. • School Board Support for Youth Substance Use Prevention <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Updated policy recommendations for schools on how to address tobacco, vaping, and nicotine use at school. ○ Developing an e-learning module for youth who are caught smoking/vaping at school to complete as an alternative to punitive measures. ○ Gillan Stager (WECHU) – Decided to expand on the information provided for our school toolkit to include the updated information found in PPM 128 (Code of Conduct) and PPM 145 (progressive discipline piece and how it interrelates with the Smoke-Free Ontario Act). Education and supportive tools are now being included as a progressive discipline approach for students caught using cell phones, social media, vaping, and other substances, suggesting that when students get caught, they have the alternative to choose the e-module over suspension. 	<p>Share meeting presentation with the minutes (A. Erickson).</p> <p>Continue with Family and Youth Substance Use Prevention Workshops and attendance at relevant community events (WECHU).</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ E-module release date will hopefully be end of October. The e-module will be for the age range of grade 6-12. It will eventually be offered in French as well. Initial launch will be in English. ○ Also included a policy template for the schools to adapt in part or in full if they see fit. ○ Three letters are going to be included as well: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ The first letter will be sent out at the beginning or middle of the school year to inform parents about vaping issues and what the school board will be doing at their level, what's being done at the provincial level, and what parents can do at their level. ▪ The second letter will be sent to parents if their child is caught vaping. ▪ The final piece is to have the Tobacco & Vape Enforcement Officer (TVEO) for the school help the administrators with how to work with kids when they've been caught and how the officer can come in and act as a partner for addressing these issues. 	<p>Complete and release education, progressive enforcement, and policy tools for schools on student smoking and vaping (WECHU).</p>
7.0	<p>Community Agency Roundtable (All)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Kim Willis (CMHA-WECEB) – Annual meeting coming up on September 17th at 5:00 p.m. It will be held at Ambassador Golf Club. Guest speaker is three-time Stanley Cup champion, Jordan Nolan. Open invite to all. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ October 2nd: Normative grief training. Registration open to all. ○ October 3rd – Trivia fundraiser in support of the Youth Wellness Hub at Ciociaro Club. ○ October 7th – Check In Don't Check Out Series on men's mental health. Guest speaker is Tyler Smith (survivor of the Humboldt bus crash and won Amazing Race Canada). ● Milan Iacobelli (WECHU): Three campaigns underway with the Southwest Tobacco Control Area Network (SW TCAN). <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ September 28th – Promoting "Not An Experiment" in social media marketing campaign for student and parent allies (6 weeks). ○ Mid-November is Quash campaign (4-6 weeks). ● Alexis Erickson (WECHU): Patrick Kolowicz from HDGH, who is our current Co-Chair for the WECOSS' Leadership Committee, wanted us to pass along a new learning opportunity through META:PHI. META:PHI is holding their annual virtual conference on April 17th to April 18 of 2026, which is a two-day interactive learning opportunity for clinicians, community workers, administrators, researchers, learners, community members, 	

	and advocates. They are looking for abstract submissions for the conference on new initiatives underway in the area of substance use (e.g., innovations in care, new policies, clinical practice resources, etc.). Further details are attached to the meeting invite for those who might be interested in submitting an abstract.	
8.0	<p>WECOSS Pillar Updates (A. Erickson)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Treatment and Recovery Pillar: Will be offering training opportunities this Fall for frontline service providers on opioid agonist therapy (OAT). A needs assessment survey was issued to community partners in the Spring to assess knowledge gaps and learning needs of frontline providers around OAT. Results will be used to inform training content and delivery methods. • Harm Reduction Working Group – Focusing on anti-stigma work. Developing a policy template that can be used by other organizations to have policies and procedures in place around preventing substance use stigma and using trauma-informed care approaches within community service settings. Looking at implementing this policy at the WECHU first, along with education workshops around anti-stigma for our staff. Will then offer this to other community partners who are interested in doing something similar. • Enforcement and Justice Working Group – Continuing with safety planning project. Will be creating a new neighbourhood safety plan for the area of Leamington. Launching a community consultation soon to get feedback from residents and people who work in the area on community safety needs related to substance use. This information will be used to develop a tailored plan for Leamington. 	
9.0	<p>Summary of Action Items & Next Steps (Co-Chairs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share meeting presentation with the minutes (A. Erickson). • Share preliminary results from the Action Plan Consultation at upcoming Working Group meetings (WECHU). • Continue with Family and Youth Substance Use Prevention Workshops and attendance at relevant community events (WECHU). • Complete and release education, progressive enforcement, and policy tools for schools on student smoking and vaping (WECHU). 	
10.0	<p>Meeting Wrap-Up (Co-Chairs)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adjourned at 2:55 p.m. 	

Next Meetings:

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

