



INFORMAL STAFF REPORT

MEMORANDUM

To: Ronald L. Olson, City Manager
Thru: Susan Thorpe, ACM Safety Health Neighborhoods
From: Jay Ellington, Director
Date: August 20, 2015
Subject: Commission on Children and Youth's Gap Analysis Update

Issue/Problem

The City Manager has requested an update on the efforts of the Commission on Children and Youth (CCY) and related city departments since their report to City Council in April 2014 and how the Gap Analysis relates to the commission's action plan.

Background & Findings

In April 2014, the CCY made a presentation to City Council which included a report on the risk factors that lead to juvenile delinquency. The CCY proposed three areas of focus to mitigate the impact of risk factors including:

- Youth Development and Education – school readiness initiatives so youth in kindergarten/first grade are ready to learn from a physical and developmental standpoint
- Youth Employment – linking youth with training and higher education opportunities
- Youth Health and Prevention – reduce alcohol and drug abuse by connecting youth with education, social and recreational opportunities that teach them about making healthy choices.

Since the presentation the CCY has:

- Hosted a Community Connections Forum for over 100 people from educational, social and health organizations, law enforcement, the legal system and private business to share the report on risk factors and discuss current programs available.
- Coordinated a proclamation to celebrate Literacy Week where City Council members read to students from the Navarro Head Start Program. The Friends of Corpus Christi Public Libraries provided a copy of the book to each child and their families to promote reading at home.
- Created a partnership with the Tobacco Prevention and Cessation Coalition and its youth committee to support their initiative for tobacco-free parks.
- Connected the Junior League of Corpus Christi (JLCC) with the United Way's Success by Six Program to assist with efforts to create a continuum of services for youth and families to ensure kindergarteners arrive at the first day of school cognitively and physically ready to learn and grow.

The CCY worked with the Parks and Recreation Department to identify funding for a Gap Analysis to measure availability, accessibility and adequacy of prevention and intervention services and programs to youth and families throughout Corpus Christi. The study will cost approximately \$31,500. The Parks & Recreation Department has approximately \$26,500 in vacancy savings in FY15 to dedicate towards the initiative and the Corpus Christi Port Industries has granted the commission the remaining \$5,000. A copy of the one page brief on the analysis is included for your review.

In addition to the regular menu of programs and services, the Parks & Recreation Department:

- Partnered with the YMCA to provide a tutoring program at Oak Park Recreation Center last school year.
- Is establishing an agreement with the Well Med Foundation to improve Zavala Senior and Joe Garza Recreation Centers and increase programs and services for seniors and families in the adjacent neighborhoods.
- Assistant Director, Stacie Talbert Anaya, is serving on the Success by Six Steering Committee
- Offered Anti-bullying and Lifeskills workshops to youth participating in Latchkey and Recreation Center summer camps.
- Partnered with the Beautify Corpus Christi Association, the Calvary Baptist Church and the local general contractors and builders association to improve Dilworth Park and increase opportunities for youth and families to play and exercise.

The Library Department has:

- Assisted 17 local Head Start Programs with satellite collections that provide books to compliment lesson plans and enhance teacher resources and eventually connect students with the local library system.
- In collaboration with the United Way's Success by Six Program the Department will expand to 9 additional sites in three neighborhoods in the Greenwood/Agnes/Ayers triangle. The expansion will occur in two phases:
 - (1) satellite collections will be provided at each site and
 - (2) family literacy libraries for access by parents\guardians will be placed at each site so materials can be taken home to extend learning time.
- Created a satellite collection at the Nueces County Juvenile Boot Camp facility to help low level readers improve their reading skills.
- Coordinated a second opportunity for City Council members to read to Head Start students during a city council meeting and promote the importance of reading to young children.
- Collaborated with the JLCC to host the National Star Wars Reads Day at La Retama Library this October to target teens and young families.

Conclusion

All three entities are moving forward at a steady pace. The Library and Parks & Recreation Departments continue to work within their current budgets and mission elements to address the risk factors associated with juvenile delinquency.

The next step for the CCY is completing the Gap Analysis of services available for youth and families. This is a key data set for advising City Council and other community leaders on what resources are needed to create a positive environment for all youth in Corpus Christi to lead healthy productive lives.