

Mansfield Youth Services  
Advisory Board  
Minutes  
Tuesday, February 7, 2006  
12:30pm @ MMS Auditorium

In attendance were: Ethel Mantzaris, Resident/Chairperson; Frank Perrotti, Resident/Assistant Chairperson; Kevin Grunwald, Director: Social Services Department, Town of Mansfield; Michael Collins, Resident: Shawnee Mason, grade 8 MMS; Jake Hovanic, home schooled, 7th grade; Janit Romayko, Coordinator, Mansfield YSB; Patricia Michalak, counselor, Mansfield YSB; Donna Koropatkin, grade 7, MMS Teacher and Producer, "The Secret Life of Girls"

Regrets: Officer Marchon, Chris Murphy, Eileen Griffin, Candace Morrell

Agenda items included:

Update: JR distributed January update. It was a busy month with post holiday crises and six major activities occurring. There were no questions or comments about the activities. DVD: Donna Koropatkin, grade 7, MMS LA Teacher commented on the process of making the film. The girls choose the subject, wrote the script and acted in their own production. It took three eight (8) hour days to film and for many of the scenes, there were sometimes up to fifteen (15) retakes of the scene to have the correct lines and ideas incorporated. Mrs. K. said that the girls had a great deal of patience, maturity and honesty. They also had fun in the process. While it was a learning project, it was also made into a summer/fun time experience. The parents of the students viewed the DVD on January 20th, 2006 and loved what they saw. They gave permission for the girls to present their DVD to other groups and for them to participate with outside groups. The girls will participate in the 12th Annual PAWS (Peers Are Wonderful Support) Conference at Manchester Community College on March 23 and 24, 2006 as their DVD will be shown to the conference participants. The DVD will also be shown to MMS staff and then will be used for the Advisor/Advisee program. It could be shown to the Town Council and to the Parent Association as well as the public access channel. Mrs. K commented that the content was such that what was said, written, acted and edited ran parallel to research: girls bully in school and out of school. Boys bully but sometimes in more physical ways and at a later age. When a DVD such as this is shown, the impetus is then to respond and to communicate. Adults, at times, do not know what to say. Social pressures in Mansfield are tremendous. Bullying is not a new issue and now it is recognized. Frank Perrotti commented that it was serious problem when he was principal and superintendent in the 70's and 80's. Technology has changed communication among 7th/8th graders and students can IM each other, start rumors, gossip, etc all online. Bullying can occur in ways that adults do not even recognize, especially if it online. Bullying has to be dealt with and school is only one part of the solution. Parents also need to address their behaviors. They are often "social engineers" as they manipulate what parties, friends, groups, and sports their sons/daughters attend

and often times, these groupings are in competition with each other. The DVD was then shown.

Other: a. NECASA: Request for funding was referred to a sub-committee of Ethel Mantzaris and Michael Collins as suggested by Frank Perrotti. NECASA is asking for \$3108. b. School Readiness: Having John DeStefano of New Haven on February 25th to speak about early childhood activities.

Meeting adjourned 1:20pm

Respectfully submitted,

Janit P. Romayko

Secretary

JR/jr