

Item 9

Report to Joint Policing Committee

Mountview & Blakestown Problem Solving Group

Awareness:

The group collectively designed a household flyer (See attached) which raised awareness of the following aspects of drugs misuse:

- Where money spent on drugs ends up
- The power of influence of one person's drugs use has on another
- The risks of young people being unaware that buying/selling drugs is a business arrangement
- How to estimate how much money a given area may supply to drug gangs
- How using drugs is not a harmless, passive behaviour
- Recreational drug users are linked to criminal gang behaviour through being part of the package
- Things to look out for if you suspect your child or young person is involved with drugs

With the support of Mountview Boys & Girls FC, Foroige Garda Diversion Project and local community reps a total of 2,500 flyers were delivered directly into every home in Blakestown and Mountview

Large pull out banners and posters have been erected in Blakestown & Mountview Youth Initiative, Blakestown Community Centre, St Peregrines GAA Club, Fortlawn Facility, Neighborhood Youth Project, Mountview Boys & Girls FC and Mountview Community and Youth Centre.

Election style posters have also been placed at entrance to Whitestown, Sheepmoor, Fortlawn and Whitechapel estates.

A number of residents have passed positive comments in relation to these posters and banners. So, they are being somewhat noticed within the community.

{Requests form community reps from other areas for the Household flyer to be made more generic have been made. Consequently another 2,000 have been ordered for distribution to centers and projects across Dublin 15.}

Presentations:

Presentations continue to be offered to partners with presentation and brief survey already made to:

Foroige Garda Diversion Group,

Coolmine Community Training Centre

Additional presentations are being arranged to be made to St Peregrines Juvenile Coaches & Mountview Boys & Girls FC Coaches.

In partnership with the principle of Blakestown Community School, Safer Blanchardstown is working to involve the school's student's council to deliver the presentation to peers. It is hoped this will increase community participation and awareness of the issues surrounding recreational drug use and this behaviours impact on the local community.

Our brief survey will be taken before and after each presentation

If partners are aware of any groups, adults or youths, whom you think may benefit from the presentation please contact me to arrange.

Podcasts:

So far, we have produced 3 twenty five minute podcasts which are all available on Spotify (See attached). These podcasts discuss how a parent coped with her daughter's addiction in the late 1980's, a young man's struggle with weed addiction and the experience of a veteran drugs worker.

The common thread running through the podcasts, according to interviewees, is that weed is addictive and is a behavior that may bring people in contact with stronger drugs, intimidation, addiction, criminal offences etc.

Our fourth podcast will be recorded and published next week where two mothers who has been through Ashleigh House will discuss her experiences.

So please listen to and recommend the podcasts to family/friends and encourage any groups you may be working with to listen to and discuss/question issues raised in the podcasts.

The podcasts are short, informative and can be easily listened to on the drive home, on the bus or in a group setting.

The podcasts have been downloaded in Ireland, Australia, Austria, U.K., Croatia and U.S.A.

Motocross bikes:

In order to try to address the negative effects of Motocross bikes within the community, Blakestown Mountview Youth Initiative (BMYI) identified a group of at risk youths interested in motorbikes. Foróige Garda Diversion project produced a poster to raise awareness of the opportunity of attending an open day (restricted to youths from Mountview/Blakestown) within the local area

Safer Blanchardstown facilitated the restricted open day of Mulhuddart Motocross (MMC) Practice Track for these young people and interested youths and adults. The aim of the open day was to ascertain if any local youths would be interested in joining the Motocross Club

On the day of the visit approximately 20 youths and young people attended, 10 with BMYI and others on their own or with parents. One parent was signing up her 2 young children stating, "it's better to get them involved at a young age instead of them ending up riding their bikes in the park". Another Father from Fortlawn brought his son (both with their own bikes) in response to the poster, signed up there and then and stated he had two more children who will be joining. Another mother brought her son and his pal along and both stated they would join MMC

The BMYI group of youths have now formed into an MMC hub, but none of them have bikes. They readily agreed to pay €10 per week each in an effort to get some funds into the kitty to purchase “Club” bikes and to develop a proposal to submit to various organisations seeking funding.

This group will be facilitated by BMYI and be supported by Safer Blanchardstown and Fingal County Council Community Dept

Enhanced Employment:

We are engaging with local employers and so far, 2 apprenticeships have been pledged. Work is still ongoing on expanding the group of employers.

Support for MB&G F.C.

Blanchardstown Local Drugs & Alcohol Task Force and Safer Blanchardstown provided funding for the clubs 40ft container to be refurbished as it had been completely destroyed in an accidental fire. A new roof, flooring, painting inside/outside and new heater were supplied from the funding. The club, by way of including the wider community in this initiative, is working with Foroige on graffiti logos for the outside of the container .

The club, through Fingal Community Dept have partnered with Fingal Volunteer Centre and are currently in the process of developing a volunteer drive in an attempt to attract new volunteers.

Recreational Drug Use:

Recreational and widespread use of weed is recognised by the group as being a major point of influence for younger people. This influence is experienced through the behaviours of older or cooler seeming youths and adults within their community/family openly smoking weed.

In addition, the significant seizures by Gardai of large quantities of the drug point to the importance of this income stream to local drug gangs from the sale and supply of weed to recreational and other users.

All partners continue to promote the link between recreational drug use, the large sums of money this behaviour provides to criminal gangs and the consequent threat of violence used to control local markets. In addition, the serious violence experienced by individuals, intimidation of families and the part drug use plays in anti-social and criminal activity in local communities and wider Irish society should continue to be raised.

Gardai

One bone of contention raised by young people in the area is that they never mind being stopped and searched by local community Gardai as they have built up a relationship with them. But they feel that Gardai from other units who stop and search them can be abrupt.

Gardai will continue with stop and search in the area and in addition will meet with and build positive relationships with local youths under their Teenagers And Gardai (TAG) programme.

Social media

The short Think Before You Buy video has been boosted on Facebook with the video receiving 5765 view's so far.

Partners should promote the short video, one minute long, to their organisations, friends, family and groups

Connections

While working to implement this initiative new connections have been made between: Youths and Motocross Club, Foroige and Mountview Boys & Girls F.C., Foroige and St Peregrines GAA Club, Fingal County Council Community Dept and a number of local groups and between groups of local youths and Gardai.

