

Community Coalition seeks input via online survey

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The Monroe Community Coalition is seeking additional support from citizens in hopes that they'll participate in an online Community Prevention Wellness Initiative Community survey.

The coalition is a grassroots volunteer organization dedicated to improving the health and wellness of the Monroe community by reducing underage drinking and other substance use. They utilize evidence-based prevention strategies to help identify and mitigate community risk factors that are often associated with underage drinking and substance use.

The coalition meets on the second Thursday of every month from 1 to 2:30 p.m. at the Monroe School District's administrative building. All are welcome to attend the monthly meetings.

The Community Prevention Wellness Initiative survey provides the coalition with guidance on how to best direct their efforts moving forward, by providing them with input on the perception of substance abuse and other mental health concerns in the community. The coalition hopes to have the responses back by December 31.



"The purpose of the survey is to assess what people think about substance abuse in the community of Monroe," said Coalition Coordinator Joe Neigel.

The coalition, which was formed in July of 2013, is supported by both state and federal grant funding that is dedicated to the Community Prevention and Wellness Initiative. The initiative is a collaborative effort between state agencies, counties, schools and other prevention coalitions.

On Thursday, Dec. 11, the coalition meeting included a presentation by Sea Mar Community Health Centers in Monroe. Sea Mar is "a community-based organization committed to providing quality, comprehensive health, human and housing services to diverse communities, specializing in service to Latinos."

Additionally, they offer services for other limited or non-English speaking communities.

Sea Mar offers mental health and substance abuse treatment for adults at their Behavioral Health Services clinic, medical and dental care services at their community health center, and substance abuse treatment oriented

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towards youth at their youth center. The youth center's substance abuse treatment services utilize the Seven Challenges Program, an evidence-based treatment program that was designed specifically for adolescents.

"We meet youth where they are without labels of 'alcoholic' or 'addict,'" said Sea Mar Case Manager Paola Saldana. "Last year all of our kids but one graduated the program."

The Seven Challenges Program helps adolescents focus on whichever issues are most relevant for them. The program allows youth to examine their drug and alcohol use comprehensively by working through seven journals, each focused on one of the seven challenges.

"There are only a handful of evidence-based treatment services" said Neigel, "It's very expensive but it's also very effective."

Sea Mar accepts Medicaid, and can help clients who are seeking either inpatient detox or inpatient treatment services, or both. They also offer case management, premarital counseling, mental health counseling, psychotropic medication management and more. For additional information on Sea Mar, please visit their website at: <http://www.seamar.org/>.

Per the CWPI grant funding criteria, the coalition includes members from several different sectors of the community including law enforcement, education, health, parents, youth, media and others. Anybody who wishes to work to prevent underage drinking and substance use is welcome to join.

During the past year, the coalition has worked to implement several programs meant to facilitate awareness and early prevention. They've also been able to fund Student Assistance Program Specialist's Sandra Olson's position at Park Place Middle School. Olson has been working to coordinate intervention strategies at the middle school.

The next Monroe Community Coalition meeting will take place on Thursday, Jan. 8.

The CWPI survey is oriented adults 18 years of age and older. A link to take the wellness initiative survey in English can be found here: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/MONXON>

To take the survey in Spanish, please go here: <https://es.surveymonkey.com/s/MONXSP>.

The Monroe School District administrative building is located at 200 E. Fremont St. in Monroe. More information on the Monroe Community Coalition can be found here: <http://monroecommunitycoalition.com/>.

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UPCOMING EVENTS

April 9, 2015 10:00 am

Tabitha House - Clothing Drive

April 14, 2015 7:00 pm

Monroe City Council

April 16, 2015 6:30 pm

Evergreen Republican Women's Club

April 17, 2015 7:00 pm

**The Slaughterhouse Lounge presents
psychic/medium Ankhasha Amenti**

MAGAZINES



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



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Chris Hendrickson is Chief Reporter for the Monroe Monitor and Valley News.



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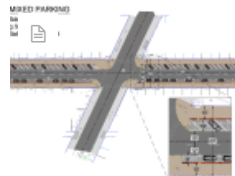
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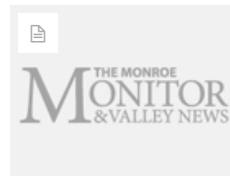
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