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COMPASS: Unity through Strength & Diversity

COMPASS Unity through Strength and Diversity is Bellport/South Country School District's alcohol and drug prevention and awareness coalition since 2009. COMPASS covers the towns of Bellport, Brookhaven and parts of East Patchogue, Medford and Yaphank. COMPASS Unity strives to keep the youth of the South Country area safe and alcohol/drug free.

The coalition is thriving, with representation from the 12 sectors within the community including youth, parents, business community, media, schools, youth-serving organizations, law enforcement agencies, religious or fraternal organizations, civic and volunteer groups, healthcare professionals, state, local or tribal agencies.

COMPASS recently received additional support from a partnership between the Suffolk Care Collaborative and Family Service League. The added support was designed to create an Underage Drinking Prevention program. With the help of Family Service League's Prevention Specialist, COMPASS is making healthy and exciting changes happen in the South Country community.

COMPASS Unity, making healthy changes!



Environmental strategies were the trending theme for COMPASS Unity this summer. Environmental strategies are prevention efforts that aim to reduce underage and binge drinking by changing the context in which alcohol use occurs. COMPASS Unity created a fluorescent orange sticker that reads, "Thank you for keeping our kids alcohol

free! Preventing Underage Drinking is everyone's responsibility!" The sticker is designed to raise awareness about underage alcohol use through positive messaging, and increase awareness of COMPASS Unity, with contact information for Coordinator, Lynette Murphy, and Family Service League's Prevention Specialist, Cierra Corbett.

COMPASS Unity members – including students from the community and elected officials --kicked off the summer of environmental strategies with an *Operation Pizza Box Campaign*, held at Papa Nick's Pizzeria in Bellport

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Village, a very popular establishment and hang-out for youth. COMPASS placed over a hundred stickers on pizza boxes for dissemination to local customers within the South Country community. "We're happy to assist COMPASS Unity with its *Operation Pizza Box Campaign*. As a community, we can all help keep our youth alcohol free!", says Sebastian Tauriello, owner of Papa Nick's Pizzeria.

Using the same stickers, COMPASS Unity followed up *Operation Pizza Box* with a *Sticker Shock Campaign*. The *Sticker Shock* campaign was held at Dave's Bellport Cold Beer and Soda on Station Road in Bellport, another heavily patronized local retailer. COMPASS Unity members placed stickers on over 300 alcoholic beverages including kegs, twelve packs of beer, and wine coolers. "I've always held a hard lens on underage drinking, but once it [alcoholic beverages] leaves the building, you don't know where it goes. This [*Sticker Shock Campaign*] is a reminder to the purchaser to be mindful of where it ends up.", says Dave Schultzer, owner of Dave's Bellport Cold Beer and Soda.

"In providing the same prevention messaging through two well established community businesses, our hope is to enhance the community's buy-in for preventing underage drinking, and make COMPASS Unity a well-known entity in the community," says Cierra Corbett. This was the first year COMPASS Unity conducted these campaigns, with support from the Long Island Prevention Resource Center (LIPRC), operated by Family Service League. The LIPRC has years of experience assisting substance abuse coalitions with utilizing evidence based strategies and in this case helped to develop the message for the stickers and provided technical assistance on effective implementation for these two campaigns. In addition to LIPRC, officers from Suffolk County's 5th Precinct and elected officials, Kate Browning and Josh Slaughter were present to assist in carrying out these campaigns.

The reception was so positive, COMPASS Unity plans to annualize these campaigns and engage additional local businesses in the activities, thereby increasing the exposure of the message, creating a safer and healthier community.



Bellport Middle School's Harvest Festival!

COMPASS Unity joined Bellport Middle School in celebrating the transition from summer to fall with its Harvest Festival.

COMPASS Unity had a table at the Oct 21st Harvest Festival that served as an information

station for festival attendees. The table included copies of South Country's community resource guide, brochures and educational booklets. The table also included Red Ribbon Week pledges for youth and adults, in effort to kick off Red Ribbon Week.

A raffle is being held for a mountain bike, Ninja food prepper and gift certificates. If you're wondering, it's not too late to join the raffle. Contact Prevention Specialist, Cierra Corbett at ccorbett@fsl-li.org to enter to win.

Red Ribbon Week: YOLO (You Only Live Once)

Join us in celebrating Red Ribbon Week from October 23-October 27th. This year's theme is YOLO (You Only Live Once): Making Healthy Choices for a Healthier Life.

During Bellport Middle School's Fall Festival, COMPASS had numerous youth and adult attendees sign the Red Ribbon Pledge. The pledge encourages its signees to strive to be healthy, safe, respectful and responsible by making healthy choices, respecting themselves and spreading the word to family and friends about the importance of being healthy.

Pledges that were signed during the Harvest Festival are on display at South Country's Central School District office. These pledges will be on display until the conclusion of Red Ribbon Week, on October 27th.

To learn more about Red Ribbon Week visit www.redribbon.org.

South Country's Youth Development Survey

Supported by DSRIP* funding through Suffolk Care Collaborative's Underage Drinking Prevention Initiative, Family Service League and COMPASS is administering the 2017-18 Youth Development Survey to South Country students this fall.

The Youth Development Survey will be given to a randomly selected group of students in grades 7th through 12th during PE classes. The survey was designed to assess risk and protective factors that predict substance use and other problem behaviors. These surveys are used for policy development and planning at the state and regional levels. They are also used to secure additional funding that promotes prevention efforts.

The New York State Youth Development Survey was produced by International Survey Associates/Pride Surveys, under a contract with the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services.

For more information about the Youth Development Survey, visit www.pridesurveys.com.

*DSRIP is part of New York State's Medicaid Redesign Program.

Join Our Efforts!

Meetings are held every second Tuesday of the month. Morning meetings are held at 10AM-11:30AM at South Country Central School District administration building, located at 189 North Dunton Ave. East Patchogue.

Evening meetings are held every third month at 6PM-8:30PM, at various locations, such as the Boys & Girls Club and South Country Public Library.

Trainings are often given during the meetings by the Long Island Prevention Resource Center, the Prevention Specialist or other professionals that are knowledgeable in substance abuse prevention.

