

East York Strategy Planning Session

August 29, 2006 7:00 PM

Westminster Presbyterian Church, 154 Floyd Ave

Welcome and introductions of the 21 people (or so) in attendance representing Churches, Social Agencies, Police, Local Government, Schools, the Community and Businesses.

Updates from last Meeting

- Results from Church Survey -- through the coordination of MP Jack's Layton's office, a call around to the various churches was made. Some connections, resources, and relevant information was gleaned and will be referred to in the future as the need arises; some immediate follow-up will also be pursued
- The meeting was introduced to the 7-member **EYS Steering Committee** (5 present at meeting); the Steering Committee held their first meeting August 16 .
- **Touchstone Youth Centre's** Executive Director, Suzette Clunis,
 - thanked the community for their extraordinary outpouring of donations and support. She informed the meeting that there were currently 25 youths (age 16-24) residing at Touchstone. That Touchstone was now inviting residents to a tour of the facility every Thursday evenings.
 - *Touchstone Inaugural Dinner is planned for September 17th* at Whistler's Restaurant and interested individuals should contact Diane Morgan at (416)696-6932 or email dmorgan.touchstone@sympatico.ca

Urban Promise: Training Evening. There will be a *Volunteers Training session on Friday, November 3rd* specifically designed for people who are or who are planning to work with Youth. Urban Promise is a Christian-based organization doing East-York-Strategy type ministry in other parts of the city, and our willing to help EYS in whatever way they can. For details or ideas of what training should be covered, please contact Jim Parker.

- **East York Community Youth Initiative** - This is the new (acting) name to the continuing partnership among Eastview Community Centre, Madina Mosque on Danforth, and EYS. Our local MPP, Peter Tabuns, who has been instrumental in getting this initiative underway, reported that an application will shortly be made to the United Way (and others) for funds to employ staff and run programmes.

Programme Updates:

Cooking Group - The meeting was advised that although there were plenty of volunteers who would be willing to participate in coming together to form a cooking group, the summer was "much too short" to plan anything sustainable before September. Some of the ideas were to invite Toronto Public Health to kick off the programme with a Peer Nutrition presentation, invite local residents to share "recipes from around the world", have a bake sale to raise funds for a group or programme.

Drum Circle - Woodbine Heights Baptist is continuing to develop this programme. They have a leader in place, and are exploring the idea of a drum circle meeting every other week.

Basketball League - This idea is still a viable possibility, but not for this fall. Gary Cockburn, Youth Leader at Calvary Church (Pape and Danforth Avenue), advised that there is a Thursday Nite Basketball Drop-In programme for high school students and also a Friday Nite programme for Junior High from 4:00pm-8:00pm.

Moving Forward

- Anatomy of an effective and Sustainable Programme.
To help volunteers and those who wish to contribute to this initiative, Jim Parker presented a framework for getting a programme up-and-running:
 1. Have an IDEA e.g. Cooking, basketball league
 - 2 Identify a LEADER
 - 3 Put together a TEAM e.g. people who can cook, develop recipes
 - 4 Have a PLAN e.g. materials, schedules, advertising, funding, etc.
 - 5 TARGET GROUP or BENEFICIARIES - identify who would benefit from programme

- it is our hope that churches and other groups could inform us of existing programmes and initiate new ones, offering programmes for children and youth. The website is one way to advertise our collective programmes.

Brainstorm: Connecting positively with our schools - first week of school

The meeting agreed that it would be a good idea to do something positive such as writing a letter to the principals of the local school community as a way of expressing EYS's commitment to their school. A number of individuals volunteered to personally visit "their" school and introduce themselves to the principal but the meeting agreed that there should be just one letter and it should be printed on EYS letterhead.

Jim Parker agreed to write a letter on behalf of EYS and deliver it in the first week of school (i.e. by Friday, September 8). Other contacts could then flow after that. Staff Inspector Fitzgerald agreed to highlight EYS at an upcoming Police-School meeting.

Open Discussion

- A volunteer needed to place telephone calls to EYS members who were not on email. 2 members volunteered.
- One concerned member brought up the issue of "toy guns" being sold at a local store. It was unanimous that this practice of selling toy weapons to kids was not advisable; it was also noted that toy guns are problematic for the police, since distinguishing toy guns and real guns is sometimes difficult. It was agreed to turn this matter over to the Steering Committee, with the general consensus that EYS should pursue this matter by respectfully approaching the storekeeper (staff) in an effective and positive manner and solicit the input of the Pape Business Association and the local police.
- idea put forward (after meeting) Create a "clearing house" for donations to possible EYS endeavours (i.e. basketballs)
- Gary Cockburn offered that anyone from EYS would be welcome at his volunteer training session (focussing on counselling teenagers); free of charge on Sat. September 16 (contact Gary at papeyouthcentre@yahoo.ca)

Next Meeting - To accommodate as many as possible, meetings will be held on the last Tuesday of each Month and occasionally on the Wednesday at 7:00pm. A location will be advised each month.

Closing Prayers