



# TCYSD COMMUNITY UPDATES

DECEMBER 5, 2014

Welcome to the second issue of the Tompkins County Youth Services Department's Community Updates!

We are honored to be charged with investing time, resources, and funding into local Tompkins County communities to enable all youth to thrive in school, work and life, and hope that this quarterly communication will serve as another resource to help create a community where all youth are given the opportunities to thrive.

## Celebrating the Municipal Youth Services System

The snow didn't deter the volunteers of the Municipal Youth Services System from coming together to celebrate the success of this unique system. As they were welcomed by Jean McPheeters, former Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce director and owner of Jean McPheeters Consulting, guests thought back on the importance of community members to their upbringing. Ms. McPheeters celebrated the importance of volunteerism and supporting our youth in Tompkins County.

Working through the alphabet soup of quality (RBA & PQA presented by TCYSD), commission and community council members learned about new tools that will be implemented over the next one to two years in the Municipal Youth Services System to assess programmatic performance and quality. Following the formal presentations commission members were able to network with staff from Cornell Cooperative Extension's Rural Youth Services program to learn more about programming happening throughout Tompkins County.



# Ensuring Program Quality

## Results-Based Accountability

The data is in! Over the first two quarters of 2014 our contracted agencies honed their data collection instruments so that beginning in the third quarter that information could be collected.

Working with the Results Leadership Group, we can now begin to analyze the programmatic success which allows us to see if anyone is better off as a result of participation in their programs. Using the data we will better be able to measure the quantity and quality of the results.

With the continued support of a two-year grant from the Community Foundation, the Tompkins County Youth Services Department will continue to work with our community-based organizations funded by TCYSD to fine tune their performance measures, which are now being tracked quarterly through a web-based Scorecard. According to the Harvard Family Research Project, the RBA model is well suited for program/agency improvement plans.



## Program Quality Assessments



Quality influences the participation of youth, the satisfaction and retention of youth workers, and the impact programs have on young people, families and the community. Although they may feel right, sometimes programs fail to meet the high bar of quality that is essential for producing meaningful outcomes for young people. This is why the Tompkins County Youth Services Department is embracing the PQA tool. The tool will help youth programs assess and meet quality standards ensuring that their programming is achieving positive outcomes for participants.

On September 10, the Onondaga County Children and Family Services Training Coordinator, Marnie Annese, joined us as we prepared the program managers of the Rural Youth Services programs to begin to implement PQA in our community. Assessments have begun and already this energetic staff is learning from one another best practices in ensuring quality programming.

## Spotlight on Runaway and Homeless Youth Services

Berkshire Farm Center & Services for Youth of Canaan, NY announced that they will no longer provide services to Runaway and Homeless Youth (RHY) through their Bridges for Youth and Families program in Tompkins County, effective November 1, 2014. This created an immediate gap in services that has already been felt for our Runaway and Homeless Youth population. While the Learning Web's Youth Outreach program continues to provide services geared at independent living, the loss of the family reunification programming offered previously by Bridges for Youth and Families left many wondering how to support our runaway and homeless youth population.

The Tompkins County Youth Services Department continues to work with local agencies to provide supportive services for the RHY population while a new interim family/reunification provider is identified. We are proud to announce that *Open Doors*, a new program providing case management and supportive services to runaway and homeless youth in Tompkins County will begin operation in January 2015.

If a youth is in danger of/or currently are runaway or homeless, they may contact any of the following agencies for supportive services:

Tompkins County Youth Services Department, Amie Hendrix: 607-274-5310

Tompkins County Department of Social Services: 607-274-5356

Family and Children's Service of Ithaca, Marisa Matsudaira: 607-273-7494

The Learning Web, Youth Outreach: 607-272-8162

# November is National Runaway Prevention Month



## [Tips for Parents on Runaway Prevention](#)

### Two Resources for Youth & Youth Workers

The OJ Guide is back! The updated 2014 OJ Guide lists services that are available in Tompkins County for teens, primarily ages 13–19. The Guide contains activities and services that promote healthy living for teens, opportunities to help teens know the community and get involved, programs that build skills, and services to get help and support. [The Guide is available electronically.](#)



In October, TCYSD also released the 2014-15 School Listing. The Listing contains contact information for all Tompkins County schools including superintendents, building principals, social workers and psychologists, PTA leaders and more. [The School Listing is available electronically.](#)

# Trainings for Youth Workers

Effectively training youth workers can improve the success of the youth that they serve. The TCYSD is committed to providing the resources to youth workers to allow them to better serve the communities they are working in. As a result of our commitment to training and continued learning, we were excited to offer two half-day sessions at the Highland Lodge in Trumansburg facilitated by Roxi Bahar Hewertson. Over 20 attendees from several local youth serving agencies participated in the two sessions.

The first session focused on self-awareness and how to understand one's own leadership strengths and abilities through the use of the Native American Medicine Wheel. The group also discussed group connections and how to implement this discussion on leadership with the young people they work with.

The second session focused on Emotional Intelligence (EI) and competency around this topic. Participants learned more about their strengths and limitations with EI and how to apply this to the settings in which they work.



## Calling All Youth Workers!

On November 5<sup>th</sup> youth workers from a variety of agencies met with Tompkins County Youth Services staff to talk about training needs they have. A wide variety of ideas were presented including: CPR & AED training, How to negotiate DSS; What is PINS and Pre Pins; How to talk to teens about marijuana; Healthy Lifestyle and Exercise for teens; Understanding the Burmese Culture; and many more. The Youth Services Department will be hosting a training series for youth workers in 2015, there will be more information to follow.

## Upcoming Events & Trainings

### **Career Readiness and Youth Employment Mapping**

*December 17, 2014 from 1-3pm in the Borg Warner Room East of the Tompkins County Library*

A meeting of ALL Tompkins County youth employment, work readiness, career preparation, and college/career exploration programs & funders to map out and define the workforce preparation opportunities available for youth in our communities.

RSVP by December 8, 2014 to Theresa Albert at [talbert@tompkins-co.org](mailto:talbert@tompkins-co.org)



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# News from the Community Coalition for Healthy Youth



Though its ten-year federal grant has ended, the Community Coalition for Healthy Youth (CCHY) continues its work to engage a wide range of community members in reducing youth substance use. The Tompkins County Youth Services Department coordinated the grant, provided staffing, and assured full compliance with all grant requirements. Our new role is as a CCHY board member.

CCHY's first major post-grant activity was the administration of the biannual countywide student survey in late October. This survey was a grant requirement and also provided invaluable data to many planning groups in our county. Many community partners felt it was vital to continue the survey and agreed to collaborate in funding it. Data and reports from the 2014 survey of students in grades 7-12 from all Tompkins County public secondary are expected in early 2015.

CCHY has prepared a work plan for the coming year. Without grant funds, activities will be cut back but significant initiatives will continue, including public presentations, Sticker Shock, media campaigns, underage drinking tip line, and outreach to parents and families.

A summary report of CCHY's accomplishments during the grant period is being prepared; details will be available in our next newsletter. CCHY welcomes individuals or organizations to join its efforts. It also welcomes donations; please visit [www.healthyyouth.org](http://www.healthyyouth.org) for more information.

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## Opportunities for Involvement



Do you support the mission of investing time, resources and funding in communities to enable all youth to thrive in school, work and life? Are you willing to commit to providing your thoughts, insights, and time to help advise the Youth Services Department?

If you answered yes to these questions perhaps membership on either a local youth commission or the Tompkins County Youth Services Board is the right fit for you!

Current vacancies include:

- Tompkins County Youth Services Board is in need of representatives from Caroline, Danby, Groton, Ulysses/Trumansburg, and the City of Ithaca as well as two Tompkins County youth ages 16-21.
- The Joint Youth Commission is looking for commissioners residing in Caroline, Town of Ithaca and Village of Lansing;
- The Dryden Recreation and Youth Commission has one vacancy for commission members residing in the Town or Village of Dryden or Village of Freeville.

For more information on ways you can get involved please contact Amie Hendrix at [ahendrix@tompkins-co.org](mailto:ahendrix@tompkins-co.org).

## Don't Miss Out!

Although this is only our second edition, do you find yourself anxiously waiting to learn more about what's going on at TCYSD? Don't fret, we have more opportunities for you to find out what is happening!

**Twitter:** You can now find the Youth Services Department on Twitter @TompkinsCoYouth . Please follow us to learn about upcoming events, resources for parents, youth workers and agencies, updates on research and much more. Feel free to mention us in your tweets at #ToCoYouth

**Monthly Messages:** Would you like to have some practical advice, research information or other relevant youth items at your fingertips each month? Join our monthly message list by emailing [Amie](mailto:Amie) and learn more about what important happenings occur each month in the lives of Tompkins County Youth.



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