

YOUTH FORUM

October 5, 2011

John Jacobson introduction to why students are here today.

Comments from students during question, “What do you like about the Atchison community?”

- Small
- Kind people
- Family
- Small town
- Different schools
- Not busy – small
- Educational opportunity
- College part of community
- Benedictine College
- All sports
- Like the people
- People know one another
- Community binds together
- Support
- Amelia weekend
- Care about people
- Hospital
- Tech Center
- Simplicity of Atchison
- Open to BC
- Get up and go community (Caitlin McMurty)

Caitlin presented a PowerPoint – Understanding the Challenge – Handouts were included.

Lunch – 11:45 a.m.

Small Group Discussion

Facing the Challenge

Areas of Greatest Concern/Why Concern

- Adult Obesity
 - I see it everyday
- Teen Pregnancy
 - See a lot in OB clinic
 - Life children will live
 - Reflected in #'s of high school graduates
- Motor Vehicle Crash Rate
 - Texting & drinking
- Teenage Drinking
 - Not other activities to do
 - Tolerance for this behavior (social norm)
 - Bad decisions made while under influence

Any areas – Baloney?

Standards ought to have been higher

Children in single parent households - she doesn't see that

What contributes to adult obesity?

- Economy – can't afford healthy foods
- Exercise – safe sidewalks, gym membership high

Teen Pregnancy

- Generational
- Drinking link
- Lack of supervision of kids – parental guidance

How to dampen this rate?

- Health education/sex education
- Awkward sex ed movies
- Suggestion – nursing students to educate students
- Keep in school because everyone goes to school
- Parents should preach more
- Need more family bonding – like a board game night or scheduled time together

Why make good choices?

- Sports
- Set goals
- Accountability
- Don't want to disappoint parents
- Set example to siblings
- Accountable to coaches, principal, school officials
- Coaches more a part of athlete's lives

Caitlin asks – Smoking? Concern?

- Kids less than 18 and not getting in trouble – we need that
- Parents contribute
- Influence of older peers

Caitlin brought up mental health.

- Because small community kids have greater opportunity to be involved
- Everybody has a bad day
- Community has big space between need resources for group with less

Caitlin asked if Church plays a big role.

- Yes.

VISION – Atchison in 10 years.

- Places for adolescents to go. (Middle school – go to YMCA, movies)
- Lower unemployment rate – more industry
- More street lights
- Less crime – vandalism
- Not enough consequences for first offense (DUI/MIP)
- Civic engagement

Caitlin asked about job shadowing.

- Good education – system we have certain teachers stick out as going above & beyond
- More promoted or clear mentoring programs
- Develop high school to mentor middle school (variety of people to mentor)
- More opportunities for family activities
- Need program in Effingham (play like 60)
- Need open gyms after practice is over
- Options to stay in school on Wednesdays at AHS

PRIORITIZE/IDEAS

- Obesity – Places for activity – Healthy food options
- Teenage Pregnancy – Cultural acceptance (norms) – Is adoption considered? Options?
- Smoking – Cultural norms
- Alcohol – Cultural norms
- Changing perception of the value of education

TOP 3

- Places for activities – 15
- Changing cultural norms – 12
- Changing perception about education – 7/12

GROUP 1

Top 5 problems

1. Drinking/drugs
 - Harsher punishments
 - After school programs
2. Obesity
 - Education classes
 - Community exercise programs
3. Pregnancy/STD
 - Sex education
4. Poverty
 - Boys & Girls Club
 - Salvation Army/food drives
5. High School Graduation Rate
 - Tutoring opportunities
 - Place to hang out
 - Speakers

GROUP 2

Top 3

1. After School Activities
2. Cultural Norm Change
3. Change Perception of Value of Education

NEXT STEPS

- October 11 – Committee meet with community leaders
- October 25/November 15 – General meetings

Gather all information – take top – prioritize & develop action teams and action plans.

Also, develop a youth council.

Notes from Susan Myers