

To Whom It May Concern,

My name is Joyce Sixsmith, LADC, private practitioner and the Co-Advisor of the New Canaan HS Ram Council(a substance abuse prevention/healthy decision making group for approx. 70 substance free 9th-12th graders. I have been an active member of this RAC for years. I wanted to take the time to advocate for the continuation of the fabulous Communities 4 Action RAC of Lower Fairfield County CT which has been a tremendous support to me over the years.

Firstly as a professional it provides me with an abundance of current, cutting edge materials for myself, colleagues, parents and youth for my practice and namely the educational forums which I present.. Ingrid Gillespie, Director does an extraordinary job at providing substance abuse awareness, education and prevention initiatives that all the members can choose to partake in as well as bring back various concepts/projects to their communities. Our RAC has done a superb job of enlightening us on behavioral health issues and has educated members on the use of screening, brief intervention and referral. This has truly broaden our scope where both substance abuse and mental health are concerned. Another wonderful component of the Lower Fairfield RAC is the media advocacy,program development and legislative advocacy. We not only have articles in the press, but have several local and state representation at many of our events, conferences and meetings.

I came to know the RAC when I was running NC Coalition. Ingrid and the RAC were extremely helpful in educating me about the strategic framework and how valuable it was to reach those goals in order for a coalition to succeed. The RAC also provided resources for programming which marketed our mission to parents, youth and community professionals alike. As a major contributor in the field of substance abuse prevention in Fairfield County, I depend on the RAC for professional education and guidance on which cutting edge initiatives are vital for myself and my Co-Advisor to address in our Ram Council. I also depend on our RAC as a network for high quality speakers from all over the county who can speak on numerous topics for town wide forums or small group discussions. And finally,I depend on the RAC to provide funding to support vital local and county wide initiatives.

The Lower Fairfield County RAC is the hub for all the towns to draw from for substance abuse and mental health awareness etc. I can not imagine operating as a professional in the field without such a positive FORCE to keep me motivated fresh and productive as a substance abuse clinician and prevention specialist. Please do everything you can to keep our RAC functioning at full capacity with our fearless leader , Director, Ingrid Gillespie at the helm!

Sincerely,

Joyce S. Sixsmith, M.A.,LADC
Co-Advisor to the New Canaan High School Ram Council, RAC member

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