

Dialogue Day IV

**What can
YOU
and the
Community
Do?**



**Community sectors
can take actions
to build assets
with our youth
and families**

*A report from
Connecting the Community: Dialogue Day IV*



**Royal Oak Community Coalition
707 Girard Ave
Royal Oak, MI 48073**



About Dialogue Day

Dialogue Day is an event held every other year hosted by the *Royal Oak Community Coalition* in collaboration with *Royal Oak Neighborhood Schools* and the *City of Royal Oak*. Teens review concerns and develop solutions in discussion groups with community leaders and other concerned adults.

How to use this Brochure

The ideas presented in this document were made by students and community leaders from Dialogue Day IV. There are eight separate discussion topics. This condensed report is a compilation of Search Survey 2007 protective and risk factors with Dialogue Day concerns and solutions.

"Think of an idea to change the world and put it into action", Pay It Forward

Through generous support from Royal Oak Neighborhood Schools, City of Royal Oak, OUTBACK Steakhouse, Royal Oak Optimist Club, Fresh Approach Market, Gordon Foods, Kroger, Trader Joe's, and Shrine Catholic High School

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2007 Royal Oak Youth Survey Results

- 69% feel a high level of love and support from families
- 62% feel their friends are positive influences
- 68% have a positive view of their future
- 66% feel honesty and integrity is important
- 56% value diversity

An Invitation to Join

Royal Oak Community Coalition is a non-profit organization that works to prevent substance abuse by strengthening and sustaining a safe and healthy community.

We invite you to become a member. Your membership fee helps support all of our efforts.

Please complete the membership form and send to:

ROCC
 707 Girard Ave.
 Royal Oak, MI 48073
 248-588-5050 Ext. 231
 Fax 248-588-2881
 ropc@royaloakschools.com
 www.ci.royal-oak.mi.us/ropc



*Our Mission
 To promote through collaboration, a healthy community, free of substance abuse for youth and those who live in, work in and/or visit Royal Oak*

Membership

<input type="checkbox"/>	Student /Teen Group	Free
<input type="checkbox"/>	Adult/Family Membership	\$20.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Non-profit Organization	\$35.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Business Membership	\$50.00
<input type="checkbox"/>	Senior Citizen (62 & up)	\$15.00

Please make checks payable to the **Royal Oak Community Coalition**. Donations to ROCC are tax deductible under our 501c3 status. Please email any questions or concerns to ropc@royaloakschools.com.

Below you will see the names of the groups of Dialogue Day IV and their main concerns. In the next section, it shows the solutions that the groups collectively came up with, and those solutions are based on sectors.

- Brothers and Sisters**
 - Poor school environment
 - Limited community resources
 - Bullying
 - Lack of adult involvement
- Safety Through Enforcement**
 - School expulsion policy
 - Physical confrontation
 - Trust in authority
 - Fair rule enforcement
- Protecting Our Space**
 - Intolerance and gender differences
 - Vandalism
 - Threats and intimidation
 - Harassment
- Home Away from Home**
 - Lack of personal connection
 - Non relevant homework
 - Critical atmosphere
 - No Student contributions
- Above the Influence**
 - Under-age drinking
 - Substance use data and trends
 - Adults don't say anything
 - Teens unprepared for life choices
- Pressure to be Perfect**
 - Extreme expectations
 - Low Self-esteem
 - High Stress
 - Pressures
- The Neutral Zone**
 - Lack of positive activities
 - Shortage of transportation
 - Limited financial resources
 - No awareness of teen activities
- Involved Youth**
 - Limited school funding
 - Unaware of volunteering opportunities
 - Lack of school board dialogue
 - Absence of youth employment

CONCERNS

Business

1. Include students in informational gathering
2. Provide donations for youth activities
3. Website and school newspaper for teen employment
4. Develop employment opportunities for tweens
5. Raise awareness of educational work conflicts
6. Propose co-op opportunities

Faith Communities

1. Provide a forum for youth expression
2. Develop educational sessions for:
 - Self-esteem
 - Over scheduled teens
 - Substance abuse
 - Stress
 - Communication skills
3. Increase positive teen activities in the community

Media

1. Increase awareness on both victim and bullying issues
2. Utilize Public Service Announcements (PSA)
3. Promote self-esteem through targeted campaigns
4. Promote community involvement
5. Increase articles to empower parents
6. Advertise more opportunities for youth employment

Youth Serving Agencies

1. Create PSAs with positive messages
2. Enlist the return of summer centers
3. Get involved with the local PTA
4. Create a website for healthy asset building
5. Work with teens to design programs
6. Create a list for teen volunteer opportunities

Civic organizations

1. Heighten public awareness through city-wide poster contest
2. Include students in discussions and debates
3. Promote car-pooling
4. Support school funding alternatives
5. Hold a Volunteer Fair including teen opportunities
6. Organize an Art show to decrease graffiti

Government

1. Provide a space for expression of acceptable messages
2. Promote student involvement
3. Address lack of transportation for youth
4. Create a website for youth activities
5. Review work permit requirements

from the Students

- ❖ A female 11th grade student definitely intends to address “what others have said” and “become more involved in the prevention the coalition is doing.” Another Female 11th grader talked about gaining her voice from the strength of others as well as their feelings. She continued to compliment DD IV by stating “Dialogue Day was very useful to me, and getting an understanding on what needs to be done in the community within the school, kids, adults and the people within the community.” She is going to be more involved in the school board.
- ❖ An adult stated the most significant concept was the “trust that was developing between the youth and the authority/ adults.” She continued to say she “found the whole experience refreshing, I enjoyed conversations with students and adult leaders and learned how students are learning through technology.”



Comments

- ❖ One female 8th grade student indicated that a skill she learned was “not to judge people by first impression, get to know everyone.” She felt the goal of coming together was “good for the community.”
- ❖ Female 7th grade student stated, “I loved the whole experience and I loved learning new things. It helped me realize the problems facing our society.”
- ❖ Female 9th grade student “I learned to speak my mind because the adults would never know these things otherwise.” Another 9th student stated, “The most useful concept was learning we have many priorities we need to grasp. She would like more time to talk about how to apply the solutions in our community.
- ❖ A female 10th grade student “I really appreciated this program... it really showed that the community really cares and am willing to listen and take action on the solutions.” She intends to show that her opinion counts and she is “willing to be honest and take solutions all the way!”
- ❖ A 10th grade male stated” Teens have a big impact in the community, and they need to be involved and be accepted.” He continued to say DDIV is a “great experience and should be continued but at a higher level. Give it more attention and present information to the school board.”

School

1. Create an uplifting learning environment
2. Post positive messages throughout the school environment
3. Find creative consequences for school suspensions
4. Foster the students code of conduct
5. Maintain counselor through duration of high school
6. Establish clear expectations for student behavior

Law Enforcement

1. Teens using their positive “voice” of the majority
2. Implement Anti-gang measures
3. Educate about legal consequences of substance abuse
4. Provide referral information for citizens
5. Seek out alternative programs of policies
6. Address concerns of drug use in the community

Health Care & Treatment

1. Provide information on ethical friendship issues
2. Increase awareness on appropriate conflict resolutions
3. Increase awareness of substance abuse issues
4. Empower teachers to take action on youth issues
5. Encourage teen to teen positive influences
6. Conduct workshop increase trust between students and school adults

Senior Citizens

1. Volunteer in the schools and promote open discussion
2. Coordinate transportation for youth activities
3. Promote fundraisers to enhance youth activities
4. Empower students to impact the community

Parents

1. Teach youth to respect themselves, property and others
2. Encourage community involvement where youth are given a voice
3. Offer transportation to youth attending positive events
4. Attend events to increase parental awareness of substance abuse

Youth

1. Talk with respect to on another
2. Take and interest in the school climate
3. Offer to sit on a board
4. Take suggestions to the school board
5. Seek out leadership training
6. Give honest feedback and support to peers

ROCC Overview

Successes

As a result of the Search Institute's "Student Survey of Beliefs and Attitudes," teens' overwhelmingly voiced their concern about being valued by the community. Furthermore, they expressed a lack of involvement in the decisions being made within the community. In exploring ways to achieve a positive objective for forming partnerships between students and adults, ROCC's idea for Dialogue Day was born. The teens not only wanted to express their concerns, they also wanted to be part of the solution.

Evaluating is a big part of the prevention strategic plan. On the objective part of the evaluation, the 100 responses were 98% positive. Scoring highest on:

- The youth-adult dialogue was open and meaningful
- The meeting increased community ownership of youth-related issues
- Improvement of important skills at this meeting
- Feeling more connected to the community because of this experience.



Dialogue Day

Past Results

The learning of new things was repeated over and over as a very positive aspect of the day. The students learned that the community leaders were willing and receptive to the young people's suggestions for improvement and change in our community. The following is a partial list of actions taken and changes that have occurred over the last 8 years of this event of Community Leader and Youth Dialogue Day from 1999 to 2006.

A parent education night was created to coincide with the monthly teen activity night.

***Moments that Matter*, a collection of positive messages distributed annually to over 121 community agencies.**

Over 17 city advisory committees have invited high school students to participate as non-voting members

Students became active members of the Royal Oak Community Coalition. Foster by DD the Youth Action Squad was established and is called Lead By Example (L.B.E) in its present form today.

As requested by the students, the *drug dog* makes regular unannounced visits at the high school.

The Police Dept. and ROCC begin face-to-face visits to distribute ID Checking guides to businesses selling alcohol, to curtail youth access.

The City Commission voted to install viaduct lighting at locations teens identified as unsafe.

Coalition responded to student request and offers leadership training annually.

A training manual was compiled to help other communities plan and structure an event that meets the needs of their community. Communities across the country now replicate "Dialogue Day" and share with Royal Oak the monumental impact of this on-going event. Elizabeth Bauer, of the Michigan State Board of Education writes after attending Dialogue Day IV: "I learned so much from the students, it will help me as a policy maker to make decisions that are relevant to the people they affect. Your Board and staff are making a significant contribution to the Royal Oak Community and communities beyond your borders.

Dialogue Day has inspired many ideas to be implemented, programs enhanced or influenced by the input made by the students and community leaders and concerned adults. Dialogue Day has been instrumental in setting the stage for change in Royal Oak as well as across the nation.