

STANDUP FOR KIDS - Worcester



Greetings from the Executive Director

Donna Katsoudas, Executive Director

I first want to thank all of the StandUp For Kids - Worcester volunteers who planned and participated in the 24 Hours on the Street Awareness Event. It was very successful in allowing us to reach out to both youth in need and the public at large. We hosted the largest information session I have seen, thanks to Michelle Varner and the group she brought up with her. Overall it was a very successful event. A special thank you to Isaac Boateng, from the Abbey Kelly School, for participating in the entire 24 hours. He MC'd the Talent Showcase, participated in the sleep out and attended the Saturday events.

I would also like to use this opportunity to welcome our new volunteers: Kathy Senior, Brian Finley, Cleon McClure, Angela Della Porta, Jason Goranson and Diane Racine. They all will be a great addition to the StandUp For Kids - Worcester

program.

While we are excited to have these new volunteers, we are also sad that we must say goodbye to Ken Latham (Co-Executive Director) and Allyson Trull (Director of Outreach).

Jose Alvarez Rodriguez will be assuming the role of Director of Outreach. Jose has been with the Worcester program for over two years and has been our most committed outreach counselor. We look forward to perfecting our outreach efforts under his guidance.

This spring, StandUp For Kids - Worcester has participated in the Walk for Homeless and the Youth Summit. We have many plans for this summer including our presence at Fathers Fest, a Turn Purple Campaign and a Chalk on the Streets Awareness event. Be on the lookout for updates!

*P.O. Box 60372
Worcester, MA
01606*

774.242.4289

**Volume 2, Issue 2
Winter 2010**

Special points of interest:

- 24 Hours on the Street Report
- Goodbye Allyson Trull, first Director of Outreach
- How you can help the newly established Backpack Outreach program



Read All About Us!

Each week volunteers with StandUp For Kids - Worcester write about the weeks events in an internet blog.

To keep up to date, visit us at: <http://www.standupforkidsworcester.blogspot.com>.

Backpack Outreach: What Is It

Liz Burrows, Assistant Executive Director

More than 18 Million children in America rely on free or reduced-priced meals at school to get the nourishment they need. But what happens during the weekends or school vacations?

What is the goal of the program?

The goal of this backpack program is to discreetly provide food to homeless youth during weekends and school vacations when other resources may not be available. It is hoped that improving access to nutrition meals will help to increase the student's ability to be successful at school.

How does it work?

StandUp For Kids volunteers, in collaboration with other local volunteer groups, will meet weekly to fill backpacks with nutritious, non-perishable food items (enough food for three meals on both Saturday and Sunday). These bags will be brought to the participating schools each Friday and the administrators will distribute the backpacks to the kids in need. Volunteers will then pick up the empty bags from the school administrator the following Monday and fill them for the next Friday.

Where do you get the food?

All of the food provided is donated by community members. In the future, we hope to work with local businesses who can assist by donating supplies and/or gift cards to enable us to purchase the necessary materials.

How do you ensure the safety of the food?

All of the food is store-bought in sealed packages; there is no food preparation involved. Volunteers inspect the food to ensure it is unopened and has not yet expired.

Follow us on Twitter:

twitter

Search: SUFK Worcester

Follow us on Facebook:

facebook

Search: StandUp For Kids - Worcester

Backpack Outreach: How You Can Help

Liz Burrows, Assistant Executive Director

The Backpack Outreach program is always looking for individuals to fill backpacks and individuals willing to donate or solicit food donations. We are additionally seeking schools who have identified students who can benefit from this service to partner with us.

Donations of the following food items are greatly needed and will be greatly appreciated by the youth of Worcester:

Breakfast

- Individual-Sized Boxes of Cereal
- Individually-Packaged Muffins
- NutriGrain Bars / Cereal Bars
- Cans of Breakfast Shakes

Lunch/Dinner

- Soup / Chili
- Spaghetti-O's / Raviolis
- Beef Stew
- Tuna
- Packages of Tuna or Chicken Salad
- Chicken or Beef Spread
- Canned Veggies

Snacks

- Trail Mix / Raisins
- Canned Fruit / Applesauce
- Cheeze-Its / Smart Food
- Beef Jerky / Beef Sticks
- Nuts
- Pudding / Jell-O
- Fruit Cups

Beverages

- Bottled Water
- Sugar-Free Drink Mixes
- Gatorade
- Juice Boxes

24 Hours on the Street Awareness Event

Kristina England, Co-Director of Adult Training

On April 23-24, 2010, the StandUp For Kids – Worcester program hosted our 2nd Annual 24 Hours on the Street event.

The event kicked off with our very first fundraiser, the Worcester Talent Showcase, at Wesley United Methodist Church. Isaac Boateng, a student at Abby Kelley Foster Charter School, hosted the fundraiser. Those who attended enjoyed performances from local dancers, poets, and musicians: Boys & Girls Club Hip Hop Group, Salsa Encendida, Lea Deschenes, Jackie Morrill, Talisman, and Brad & Ron.

After the Talent Showcase, volunteers Ally Trull (*former* Director of Outreach) and Jose

Alvarez (*current Director of Outreach*) led a sleep out event outside Wesley United Methodist Church. Participants set up tents and camped out right in front of Main Street to raise awareness about youth homelessness.

On Saturday, April 24th, the chapter held several awareness events at the Downtown Common. Events included a Turn Purple Campaign and a Chalk on the Streets event. Volunteers who participated in the daylong events included Liz Burrows, Kristina England, Donna Katsoudas, Ken Latham, Kathy Senior, Adi Tibrewal, Ally Trull, Megan Tuggle, and Michelle Varner. Many other members of the Worcester com-

munity attended the event including students from Clark University and Abby Kelley Foster Charter School.

The success of this event was not only due to the major involvement of our volunteers during the event, but also to the ambitious planning efforts of our Fundraising, Publicity, and Activity Committees. For over two months, many of our volunteers contributed countless hours to planning every little detail of the event.

From what I hear, the volunteers already have some ideas in the works for the 3rd Annual 24 Hours on the Street event.

Goodbye Allyson Trull, Director of Outreach

Kristina England, Co-Director of Adult Training

In April, we announced that Allyson (Ally) Trull, our first Director of Outreach, will leave us at the end of the month. Ally has contributed countless hours to the StandUp For Kids - Worcester chapter over the past three years. In honor of all her hard work and commitment, we recognized her during our Spring 2010 Volunteer Appreciation Event.

Through her efforts the StandUp For Kids - Worcester program has led a successful outreach campaign. Under her guidance the program has reached out to a countless num-

ber of youth, providing them with support at a difficult time in their lives. Additionally weekly street outreach has been conducted 112 of the past 114 weeks.

In late April Ally Trull conducted her last night of street outreach. Ally was joined by four members of the street outreach team: Jose Alvarez, Austin Eisele (Outreach Counselor), Kristina England, and Donna Katsoudas (all pictured right).



Her spirit will be missed by the volunteers of StandUp For Kids - Worcester. We wish her luck in her future endeavors and know she will make a positive impact on whatever community she chooses to call home.

Calendar of Events

June 12

Turn Purple / Chalk the Streets
10:30– 11:30 am
Downtown Worcester
Common

June 16

Information Session
7:00– 8:00 pm
Banx Room
Worcester Public Library

Every Saturday

Drop In Center
12- 4 pm

To Be Announced

Volunteer Training
Those interested in being trained must first attend an information session.

Program Needs: How You Can Help

As our program continues to grow, we are in need of a variety of supplies and support. There are a countless number of ways you can help, all of which will have a dramatic impact on the youth we serve.

While financial support is always appreciated (and needed), there are a number of other ways you can assist the program.

Do you have a few free hours each month?

Consider joining our volunteer team. Volunteers commit to as few as four hours a month or as many as ten hours a week. Volunteers are needed in the following areas: general program support, fundraising sponsors, outreach counselors and various leadership positions.

Do you have a special talent that you would like to share?

Each week our Outreach Center will be providing activities to those youth who visit. This is

where you come in. We are in need of individuals with skills they can share with youth. This can be something as simple as conducting an art class, teaching a juggling lesson or any other life skill or talent you have to share.

Do you have supplies to donate?

Please contact us for more information on what supplies we are in most urgent need of.