

**Maryland Youth Advisory Council**  
**Wicomico County Community Conversation**  
**December 19, 2016**  
**Salisbury University**  
**6:00 – 8:00 pm**

**The Hand, the Head, the Heart, the Human Exercise**

- This exercise allows the group to recognize its strengths and assets in order to strategize how those assets can be used to address community issues.
- The Hand identified the strong skills of the individuals. The skills include:
  - Fencing
  - Piano
  - Baking
  - Trumpet
  - Wrestling
  - Fitness
  - Speedwriting
  - Saxophone
- The Head identifies the special knowledge held by the individuals. The knowledge include:
  - Language – French and Arabic
  - Geography
  - Math
  - The Bible
  - Law
  - Politics
  - Youth Leadership
  - Self-Growth
- The Heart identifies the passions of the individuals. The passions include:
  - Healthcare reform
  - People
  - Politics
  - Travel
  - Social justice issues
  - Giving thanks/giving back
  - Community service
  - Teaching
  - Responsibilities
  - Personal morals and ethics
- The Human identifies the people, organization, or associations connected to the individuals. The human connections include:
  - Bennett High School SGA
  - #ClipperPride
  - Internet Group Chats
  - Muslim Community
  - Mock Trial Coach – Mr. Portier
  - Family – Brothers and Mom
  - Court of Appeals Judge Getty
  - HALO – Homeless Shelter
  - Salisbury Mayor’s Office
  - Wicomico Republican Central Committee

**Community Conversation**

<b>Assets and Strengths in Wicomico County</b>		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Revitalization of Downtown Salisbury – Markets and events</li> <li>• Mayor Jake Day</li> <li>• Salisbury University</li> <li>• PRMC – Hospital</li> <li>• Perdue Farms</li> <li>• Crossroads of Delmarva – Economic Development</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Green City – Leader</li> <li>• CTE programs</li> <li>• High School Athletics</li> <li>• 2<sup>nd</sup> largest port in Maryland</li> <li>• Committed teachers</li> <li>• Guidance counselors</li> <li>• Youth Career Prep Organizations</li> <li>• NASA</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Internship Opportunities – engineering</li> <li>• Programs supporting trade careers</li> <li>• Strong Alumni</li> <li>• Community focuses</li> <li>• Interfaith environmental summit</li> </ul>

### Problems, Issues, and Concerns in the Community

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Roadwork√</li> <li>• Parental involvement in education√√</li> <li>• More opportunities for all socio-economic groups</li> <li>• Racial equity √√</li> <li>• Hunger √√</li> <li>• Public Health – esp. in Somerset √</li> <li>• income inequality</li> <li>• lack of public awareness √</li> <li>• school funding √√√</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lack of school resources</li> <li>• youth literacy</li> <li>• outdated schools √</li> <li>• rise in opioid abuse √√√√</li> <li>• lack of Naloxone workshops</li> <li>• better care of students with disabilities √</li> <li>• lack of professional development opportunities for teachers and school admin staff</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• integrated schools</li> <li>• lack of early childhood education</li> <li>• lack of job opportunities √</li> <li>• lack of coding and computer training in schools √</li> <li>• lack of teacher appreciation</li> <li>• lack of cultural appreciation and awareness √√√</li> </ul>
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### Prioritized Issue Areas

1. Opioid and Heroin Abuse
2. Racial Equity/Cultural appreciation and awareness

### Causes of Opioid Abuse

- Over prescription of pain killers
- social media
- perpetuating chronic use
- “so and so” did it and they are OK
- Lack of education
  - Prioritizing education
  - Making it more meaningful
- Not enough interference in the Hot Spots
- Lack of jobs – heroin is cheap
- Lack of access to treatment centers and rehab programs
- Lack of access to Narcan
- Lack of education in healthcare community – prescribing pain killers
- Big pharmaceutical companies promoting opioids to doctors
- Rise in health care costs – lack of competition across state lines
- Peer pressure
- Lack of consequences on drugs’ effect
- Only 1 quarter of health in school – not integrated into other subjects

### Causes of Racial Inequity and Lack of Cultural Awareness/Appreciation

- Gerrymandering in districts
  - Segregates school populations
  - more and better resources going to some schools
- Magnet schools are not accessible to everyone
- Lack of exposure to other cultures through study abroad/student exchange programs
- Lack of understanding about other cultures in community – Haitian, Korean, Hispanic communities
- Unequal access to resources
- Parental involvement – two-parent homes
- Cultures that are different are put down and labeled “other”
- Lack of sensitivity to others
- Not accepting differences
- Lack of opportunity
- Lack of multi-cultural fairs

- More diversity on TV
- Marginalizing other cultures in the media
- Lack of participation in community events – breaking barriers
  - Lack of interest
  - Lack of advertising/PR
- Lack of knowledge
- Lack of volunteers who speak other languages
- Detention center and agriculture business bring more Hispanic families in the community – community does not know how to deal with community change

### **Solutions for Opioid/Heroin Abuse**

- Integrating substance abuse education into school curriculum – Mandatory
  - History, English, current events/social studies
  - Scared Straight opportunities
- Hearing personal experiences in small settings vs school assembly
- Making teachers care through professional development
- Class discussions
- Surprise quizzes
- Utilize school resource officers
- Provide different points of views about experiences
- Scaring youth to understand consequences
- Social media campaign similar to cigarettes
- Prevention – rehab centers, research
- Programs not criminalizing drug use – Good Samaritan Law
- Reduce stigma of getting help
- Job availability – instilling a sense of drive, goals, and meaning
- Opportunities for post-crisis discussions in schools and communities
- De-normalization campaigns
- Holding people accountable for actions –not getting into a car if someone uses
- Using peers vs authority figures
- “I’m not going to hang out with you if you do this...”
- Social media and celebrity involvement
- Mock crash experiences
- More respect for authority