

Benton Franklin Recovery Coalition

Building Community Coalitions

June 16, 2023

www.509recovery.org

509recovery@gmail.com



Purpose

- ▶ Benton Franklin Recovery Coalition (BFRC) is 501–C3 non–profit organization
 - Completely private
 - Run by volunteers who receive no fees or payments of any kind
 - Founded on back porch in Richland, June 2018
 - 8 Tri–Citians; 2 visitors
- ▶ Purpose: promote opportunities for recovery, & remove barriers to recovery, for people with Substance Use Disorder (SUD –addiction)
 - Largest Recovery Coalition in WA State!!!!



Original organizing team

Today: Hundreds of Members; All Sectors of Population



Structure

▶ Officers:

- President – Michele Gerber
- Vice President – Jason Bliss
- Secretary – Jaime Carson
- Treasurer – Mary Rosen
- Webmaster – Andrew Godinez
- Engineering Consultant – Eric Gerber

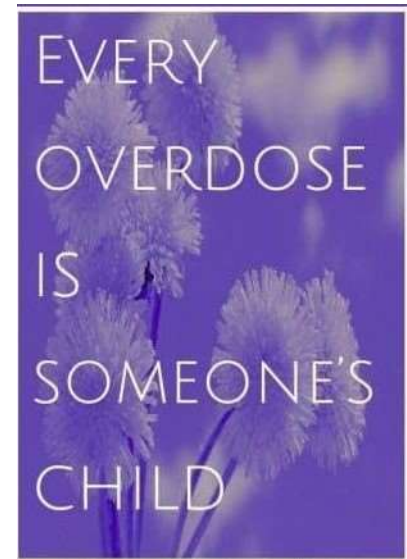
Facebook page: Benton Franklin
Recovery Coalition

- ▶ Board of Directors (alphabetical)
 - [Jason Bliss](#), Director, Washington Alliance for Quality Recovery Residences (WAQRR)
 - [Jaime Carson](#), Director, Somerset Counseling Center
 - [Cameron Fordmeir](#), SUD Program Manager, GCBH
 - [Michele Gerber](#), Ph.D.
 - [Courtney Hesla](#), Quality Officer, Comprehensive Health
 - [Jim Millbauer](#), Kennewick City Councilman
 - [Amy Person](#), M.D., WA Department of Health
 - [Nancy Roach](#), Parent Advocate/Fundraiser
 - [Mary Rosen](#), Parent Advocate
 - [Dani Stenehjem](#), MHP, Behavioral Health

Most BFRC Board members have lived in TriCities more than 30 years

Purpose

- ▶ Create a network in Benton & Franklin Counties that catches people at vulnerable points & actively connects them to help
- ▶ Achieve “Warm Hand-Off” (not “cold shoulder”)
 - Threshold Moment: Every encounter with addicted person should be **opportunity** to connect him/her with treatment, medication, housing, peer support, etc.
 - Premise: the whole community benefits if addicted people receive treatment



Why?

- ▶ Benton–Franklin County area (Tri–Cities) is only metro area in WA State with:
 - NO detoxification services
 - NO inpatient residential treatment centers for SUD
- ▶ Population of 300,000, with 450,000 more in 8 surrounding counties in SE Washington
- ▶ Also: inadequate inpatient services for mental illness
- ▶ Verified by 2019 & 2023 Community Health Needs Assessments (CHNAs), & Community Health Improvement Plans (CHIPs) of Benton Franklin Health District
 - Also verified by CHNAs & CHIPs of largest regional hospital – Kadlec Medical Center



Our Project: Comprehensive Behavioral Health Recovery Center

- ▶ We have raised \$21.3-M in public funds!
- ▶ Partner is Benton County
- ▶ County has purchased 2 facilities & is beginning renovation
- ▶ Medical treatment contractor has been selected



Kennewick
General
Hospital and
Bruneau Street
Facility



How Did We Begin?

- ▶ Strategy: Each person invited 2 people to next meeting:
 - Not their friends
 - People from at least 2 different walks of life
 - Persistence until at least 2 invitees promised to attend
 - Tried to get people with areas of interest & need **similar to our own**
 - Business owners
 - Law enforcement
 - Primary medical providers
 - Agreed on a basic message
 - i.e. We need treatment & detox
 - Our next meeting drew nearly 50 people
 - This topic touched a nerve!



Roadmap: First General Meeting

- ▶ Have an Agenda, a short Presentation, & run meeting as a **professional business meeting**
 - Reserve room in local library, police station, school district office or United Way
 - Be Prepared!
 - Make sure you have screen & projector; or paper copies for everyone if no projector
 - If using a white board or flip charts, have markers ready
 - Know what you're going to say, & be **succinct!**
 - No jokes (especially inside jokes), banter, etc. until the end
 - Can have cooler with soft drinks but do not serve food (sets an expectation)
 - 3:30 or 4 PM is ideal time for meetings



First Meeting, con't.

- ▶ Have nametags available for everyone, & sign-in sheets at sign-in table
 - Make sure this table is staffed with a greeter
- ▶ Begin with Introductions – **everyone!**
 - Name, affiliation if any, what are you interested in the topic of addiction
 - People love **sense of community & networking**
 - Can foster key connections leading to Action items
 - If any elected officials attend, allow them a short chance to say a few words
 - They thrive on audiences; this will keep them coming back



First Meeting, con't.

▶ State Ground Rules

- Extend Courtesy to All
- This is not a Support Group!
 - It is Action/Advocacy group
 - Not the right place for personal stories
 - We will help you find a support group if wanted
- This is not a marketing opportunity
 - No soliciting patients, clients or any financial interests
- Use respectful language concerning addicted people
 - No pejorative terms like “druggie,” “junkie,” “tweaker,” etc.
- Identify solutions; don't recite barriers
- We reserve the right to refuse participation to anyone not abiding by our rules



First Meeting, con't

- ▶ Presentation should focus on 3 things:
 - There is a problem (drug epidemic with no treatment or detox facilities here)
 - Local solutions are needed
 - We can't change the world, but we can make some positive changes here
 - **Your help is needed**
- ▶ Then **MUST** give people something to do
 - Initially, break into 3-4 Action teams
 - Examples: Law & Justice; Medical; Public Information
 - Have people physically move their chairs into team circles
 - **Networking is valuable, even if no concrete solutions at first**
 - Natural leaders will emerge
 - Gives you opportunity to observe any troublesome behavior
 - Keep groups going no more than 15 minutes

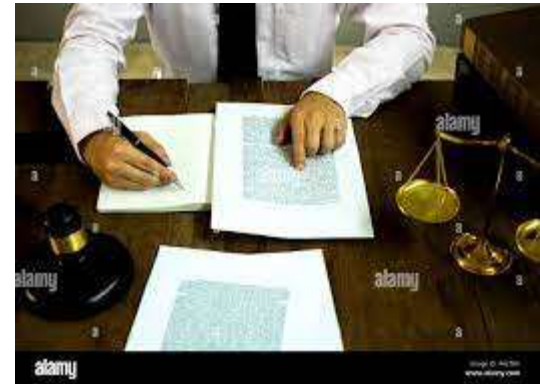


First Meeting, con't.

- ▶ Reconvene large group
 - Have a spokesperson from each group give brief report
 - *The content does not matter as much as the sense of participation!*
- ▶ Announce next meeting (have it planned in advance)
 - Ask each person to bring 1–2 more people to next meeting
- ▶ Do **not** hold open Q&A or ask for comments in large general meetings
 - Avoids “grandstanding,” arguments, challenges, or overly long speech/questions from some people
 - Say you will be available to answer questions one-on-one in networking time
- ▶ Urge people to **stay for Networking Time** and talk to someone they don't know!

Real Work Behind The Scenes!

- ▶ Meanwhile, convene a core group to build a formal organization
 - Charter, Articles, ByLaws, & Policies
 - Board of Directors & Registered Agent
 - Formal organization as a 501-C3 is **essential** in order to get donations & recognition
 - Tax benefits to donors
 - Qualification for many grants & discounts
 - Help available to non-profits by United Way & others
 - Ask a local attorney to help you with formulating charter, etc. **pro-bono** (free) & ask him/her to pay the filing fee
 - This work is **tedious but must be done!**
 - Time & effort spent building formal organization will pay you back 1,000 times!



Real Work, con't.

- ▶ Purchase general insurance for meetings, etc.
 - Also Directors' insurance
 - Also may need special insurance for special events (large gatherings in city parks, etc.)
- ▶ Branding – create a logo
- ▶ Print business cards, a brochure, banner
- ▶ Establish website, email account, & other social media for communications
 - Facebook page (not group)
 - Twitter?
 - Others?
 - Get a volunteer who knows IT to administer these media for you if don't have technical knowledge
 - Later can hire a student for minimal pay



Goal-Setting

- ▶ Hold a goal-setting session after about 3 meetings
 - United Way of Benton-Franklin Counties granted us a **facilitator** & meeting room at no charge
 - We had no funds!
 - Session should be about ½ day
 - Can serve fruit, cookies & soft drinks
 - Everyone who wishes can participate
 - ***Once goals are articulated, discuss Committee structure needed to achieve goals
 - Remind group: **Goals are subject to discussion & approval by Board of Directors**
- ▶ Remember, goals are not the same as activities!
 - Activities are means to achieve goals
 - Big, gala activities consume much energy & time -- & should be used sparingly
 - Example: a 5K Race is an activity whose goal is to raise money & public awareness
 - Beware of too many activities that seem like goals but are not
- ▶ Leave goal-setting session with written record of Goals & Committee structure articulated
 - Send this record out to participants, & go over at next General Meeting
- ▶ Revisit goals every year!!
 - Perhaps twice a year in first few years



Media

- ▶ **Media is Absolutely Vital to attract attention!**
 - Issue press release announcing your formation as a non-profit; including your purpose
 - Ask for Editorial Board session with local papers
 - Try for Op-Ed in local papers
 - Invite media to your next meetings
- ▶ **Publicity will attract people to your group!**
 - Try to hold one “gala” event with press release to draw media
 - 5K Race
 - Hands Across the Bridge, others
 - But not too many events; the real work is done elsewhere



Media, con't.



Our
5K
Race



Presentations

- ▶ Ask local civic groups if you can come & speak
 - Rotary & Kiwanis clubs, school & police training days, nursing groups, local bar association or medical group, major employers
 - Groups are always looking for speakers for safety meetings, training days, etc.
 - Have a canned presentation ready
 - Can be modified to each group
 - Can be easily updated
 - **Succinct**: who we are; what we do; why needed; how audience can help
 - Identify a few speakers who have **good delivery skills**
 - Some people do; some definitely do not!
 - Can conduct some speaker training if necessary



Local Resource Fairs, Open Houses, etc.

- ▶ Many organizations such as local Health departments, cities, hospitals, Chambers of Commerce, United Way, etc. have events where you can have a table
 - Sign up to staff a table
 - Bring your literature, business cards, banner, etc.
 - Beware of “giveaways” such as bowls of candy
 - These attract people interested only in the treats!
 - Use ALL of these opportunities to get known as an organization
 - You never know the connections you may make!



Relationships with Policy-Makers

- ▶ It is **essential** to interact with city councils, county commissioners, your legislators, sheriffs, police & fire chiefs, etc.
 - Start by attending their public meetings; observe
 - Bring your brochures & business cards
 - Stay afterward; approach those who seem most approachable or most interested in causes such as public safety, drug use, homelessness, panhandling, etc.
 - They may/will come to see your group as a resource
 - Invite a few to coffee; & ask for a chance to present at their meetings
 - Say you may be able to help them when they need treatment referrals, etc.
 - Invite them to speak briefly at your meetings
 - Public officials need & want audiences
 - THANK them always!



Other Important Contacts

- ▶ Local Chamber(s) of Commerce

- Join for networking benefits

- ▶ Local economic development organizations

- Let them know that addressing addiction will benefit local economy
 - Show them how...
- Network & offer to speak at their meetings



- ▶ Local Visitors & Convention Center(s)

- Let them know that reducing addiction, homeless encampments, panhandling will help attract visitors
- Network & offer to speak at their meetings

Fund-Raising: Beginning

- ▶ Funds are always necessary:
 - Insurance costs
 - Brochures, business cards, office supplies, etc.
 - Videos – having them produced professionally by local media company, for website
 - Chamber dues & lunches
 - **Always ask for non-profit discounts**
- ▶ Apply for small local grants to get started
 - United Way
 - Hospital Foundation grants
 - Local credit unions
- ▶ Ask wealthy community members to pay for small, discrete projects
 - Ask persons with compatible interests first (such as doctors)
 - Example: business cards & banner
- ▶ **ALWAYS thank donors with IRS-acceptable acknowledgment letters**

Fund-Raising, con't.

- ▶ Have an annual “signature” fund-raising event
 - BF Recovery Coalition has “5K Run for Recovery” each year during National Recovery Month
 - As always, form a committee, meet regularly,
be organized!
 - Advertise!
 - Could do a gala breakfast or lunch
 - Other ideas

Sponsorship Levels for 5K Race:

Platinum - \$1,000.

- Sign to be displayed at race event
- Recognition on BFRC website
- Name announced at Event-
- Name on back of T-shirts (if by August 25)
- Ability to have your table at event
- 5 complimentary registrations

Gold - \$500.

- Sign to be displayed at race event
- Recognition on BFRC website
- Ability to have your table at event
- 3 complimentary registrations

Silver - \$250.

- Recognition on BFRC website
- Ability to have your table at event

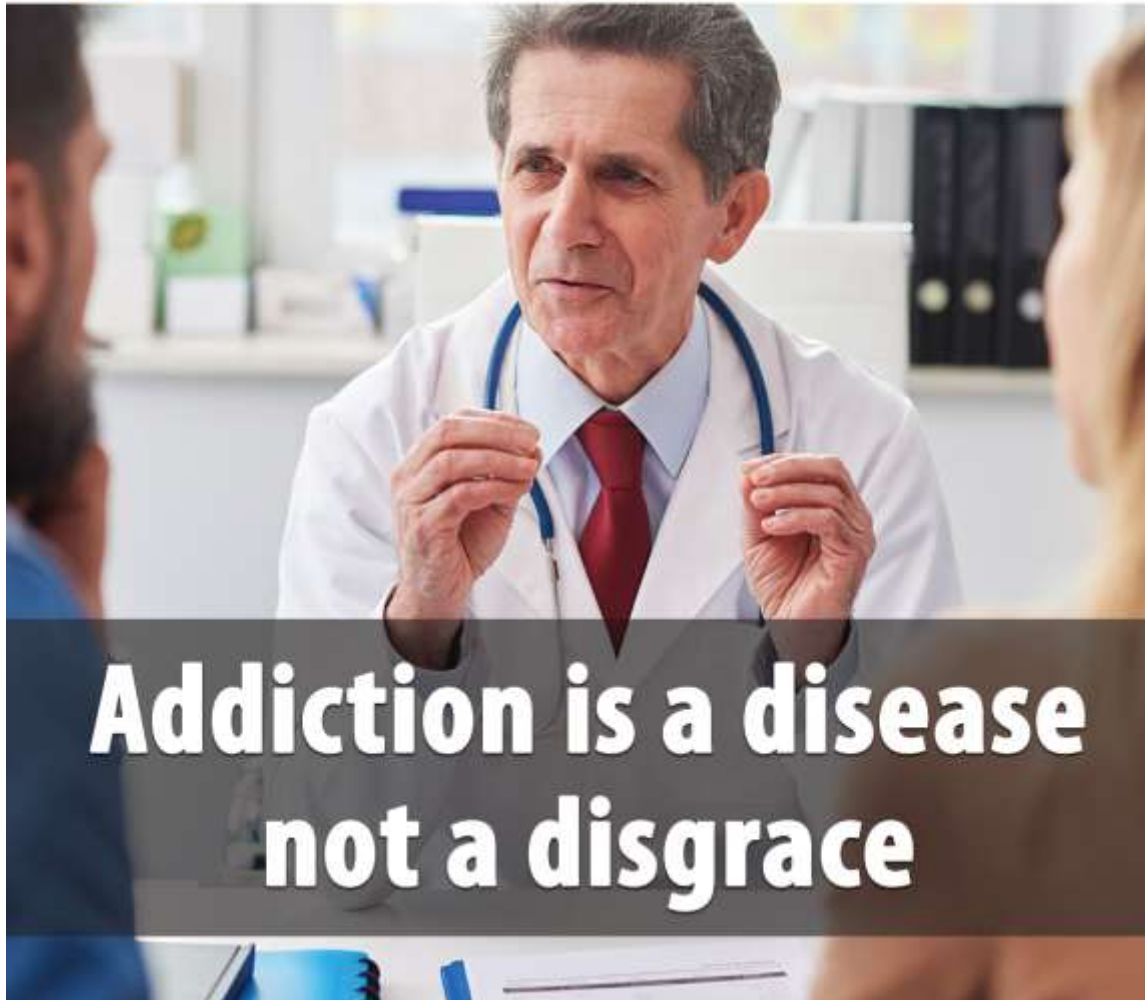
Bronze - \$100.

- Recognition on BFRC website

Summary: Best Practices:

- ▶ Gather small core group & branch out to all community sectors
 - Identify “natural allies” with common interest
- ▶ Be **succinct & organized** at your meetings
- ▶ Build the “strong bones” of your organization behind the scenes
 - Charter, Articles, By-Laws, etc.
- ▶ Set firm goals
- ▶ Involve the **Media!**
- ▶ Solicit opportunities to speak & present
- ▶ Involve Policy-Makers, community organizations, etc.
 - **Get out of your “stovepipe”!**
- ▶ Ask for the funds you need





**Addiction is a disease
not a disgrace**

Questions?
Comments?

Michele Gerber, Ph.D.
509recovery@gmail.com
www.509recovery.org