



## NEEDHAM YOUTH COMMISSION

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Dear Parent:

Thank you for your interest in the “Parent Coffees” created to address the issue of drug and alcohol use by teens. Originally created by the Needham Public Schools, the Needham Youth Commission in collaboration with the Needham Community Council is dedicated to continuing to bring this vibrant program to Needham parents.

This document is your welcome to the program and is part of the “Parent Coffee Starter Packet” designed to assist you in making this program accessible to other parents. A few quick facts before we begin:

- **These are offered at no cost (thanks to the Needham Community Council)**
- **The program is fun and informative**
- **Programs are held in the evenings from 7:00 to 9:00 in your home**
- **We will help you identify and recruit other parents to participate**
- **Over 650 Needham parents have participated in this program**
- **This is an important program which is having an impact in the community**

**A “STARTER PACKET” complete with all program information is available at the Youth Commission office or by contacting us at 781-455-7518.**

On the following pages are forms, ideas, and flyers to help get you started. Thank you again for your interest...we look forward to working with you!

*Jon*

Jon Mattleman, Director  
Needham Youth Commission

# Parent Coffee Series

Weaving a Web of Safety

## Making Your Parent Coffee a Reality...



### How to Recruit People:

- Think about who to invite
- Think about your space-how many people you can accommodate, and where you would meet
- The goal is to have 15 – 20 in attendance; which means you will need to invite many more than this number to begin with
- Use a range of outreach methods – email, email with an attachment, telephone calls, & letters

### Expectations for the Hosting Parent(s):

- Open your home for an evening to invited guests
- Provide dessert for those in attendance

### Benefits:

- Discussing a sensitive topic with the aid of a skilled facilitator
- You will receive resources and learn considerable information about drugs and alcohol
- The evening is fun and a great way to connect with other parents who are at the same life stage

### What We Will Provide:

- Information packets for all participants
- Technical and logistical assistance to make your Parent Coffee a reality and a success
- A trained and skilled facilitator
- Local and national resources
- Local and national information about drugs and alcohol

## Parent Coffee Series: Weaving a Web of Safety

# How to Recruit People

There are many methods to use in an effort to attract people to attend one of the parent coffees. To begin with, think about a few of the key “selling points” that might be appealing to other parents. These include the fact that the evening is free, provides valuable and new information about drugs and alcohol, and gives parents ideas and skills they can implement immediately. Before the Parent Coffees actually begin, there are a few things for you to consider:

- Select a date that works for you, your schedule, and your family’s schedule.
- Talk to your child/children about your desire to host and be a part of this program. Explain that while there may not be any active issue, you feel the need to know more about this topic.
- Run this idea by a few friends to get a gauge of their interest.

There are many methods at your disposal that fall under the category of “recruitment.” Most parents employ a variety of methods, and below is a short summary of the benefits and drawbacks of each:

- **E-mail:** This is the easiest method to reach a large audience of friends and can be accomplished with no cost. The Youth Commission has created sample “scripts” that you can simply cut-and-paste into your e-mail and send off to your friends/acquaintances.
- **Email with an attachment:** Including an attachment such as one of our “pre-made” flyers can be an interesting way of generating enthusiasm for this program.
- **Letter:** Who gets personal “snail mail” anymore --- maybe this is why when we get such mail it is read more carefully by the recipient. Using this method increases the chances that your message (and flyer) is read as people tend to retain information to a greater degree when they read it as a hard copy.
- **Telephone Call/Face-To-Face:** This is both an easy and challenging option. For close friends it may be very natural to call them and invite them to this event, for those you have more of a casual relationship with, this can be more difficult. There are several advantages to using this method and they include:
  - People have a difficult time saying “no” to a real voice and real person;
  - You might ask the person for names of other parents to invite; and
  - You can give have an active dialogue about why you are doing this and explain the program at greater length.

**Confirmation Process:** Whichever method(s) you decide to employ, keep a list of people as well as their e-mail addresses who have committed to the program and send them a confirmation immediately after they have “registered.” In addition, one week prior to the program, send a reminder notice.



## E-mail, Letter, & Call Scripts (continued)

### Call:

Hi \_\_\_\_\_. I wanted to call/talk to you about a program I am hosting at my house entitled "Parent Coffees --- Weaving a Web of Safety". This program is offered by the Needham Youth Commission and is for parents like us whose kids are entering an age where drugs and alcohol use is becoming commonplace. **This is NOT a typical event, and I think that the information we discuss will be new and exciting to you.**

Over 400 Needham parents have participated in this program and the response has been overwhelmingly positive...and the truth is that we are at the life stage where we will have to address this issue with our kids. By the way, like I said, this program is NOT the same old stuff...and I was talking to a parent who was in one of these and she raved about what she learned and felt so much more comfortable about the topic as well as how to address this issue with her son.

The date of this program is \_\_\_\_\_ and it will be held in my home at \_\_\_\_\_ from 7:00 pm to 9:00 pm (I will be serving dessert). Please get back to me ASAP as space is limit.

### Confirmation e-mail: Send this immediately after a friend "registers"

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

I am thrilled that you will be attending the program at my house on \_\_\_\_\_ at 7:00 pm entitled "Parent Coffees --- Weaving a Web of Safety."

I think it will be fun and it will give us a chance to talk as a group --- which never happens due to our hectic schedules and lives. If your husband/wife/partner would like to attend, please let me know as space is very limited.

Please e-mail or call me at 781 - \_ \_ \_ - \_ \_ \_ \_ if you have any further questions.

### Reminder e-mail: Send this approximately one week prior to the program

Dear \_\_\_\_\_:

Just a polite reminder that the "Parent Coffees --- Weaving a Web of Safety" discussion is happening in about a week.

*I look forward to seeing you on \_\_\_\_\_ at 7:00pm. Please e-mail or call me at 781 - \_ \_ \_ - \_ \_ \_ \_ if you have any further questions. Also, if you cannot attend, please let me know so that I can give your space to another parent.*