



TRI-TOWN COUNCIL ANNUAL REPORT

FY 2016

Supporting Tri-Town Youth and Families since 1968!

WHO WE ARE: Serving and supporting youth and families for nearly five decades, Tri-Town Council (TTC) is laser focused on providing programs and services which **support and empower** youth to make healthy and safe decisions and to provide parents/guardians, educators and community members the tools and strategies needed to support youth in effective, positive and impactful ways.

Each year we offer a variety of mission-driven programs and services including youth leadership, parent education, professional development, prevention services, after-school enrichment and various types of family and community support. Established in 1968 and originally named the *Tri-Town Council on Drugs*, TTC was organized by concerned citizens to address underage youth drug and alcohol use. This grassroots effort has evolved over the years to become a vibrant community mainstay centered on **positive youth development**.

Our work is guided by the **Developmental Assets Framework**. Developmental Assets are 40 research-based, positive experiences and qualities that influence young people's healthy development, helping them become caring, responsible, and successful adults. Grounded in the tenets of positive youth development and rooted in prevention research, the Developmental Assets framework is widely used in the United States and, increasingly, around the world in support of the health and well-being of youth.

Tri-Town Council (TTC), a 501c3 not-for profit organization proudly serves the communities of Boxford, Topsfield and Middleton.

HOW WE DO OUR WORK: We achieve our annual programming goals as a result of strategic collaborations with a host of community partners including Masconomet Regional School District, Tri-Town Elementary School Union, town health departments, town police departments, faith-based organizations, and mental health professionals among others to provide social/emotional wellness, service-learning, leadership, enrichment and recreational programs for youth; parent/guardian education, workshops and family support; and professional development opportunities for our educators. *It is as a result of these partnerships that TTC, whose small staff of employees (2.75 FTEs), is able to accomplish our ambitious goals each year reaching thousands across the tri-town community.*

TTC relies on the financial support from the Towns of Boxford, Topsfield and Middleton along with hundreds of individual donors; community and family foundations; and corporate and institutional grants, which together make our work possible.

OUR IMPACT: In the 2015-2016 program year, TTC's efforts reached thousands of youth, parents and educators with more than 100 educational, enriching and empowering programs and workshops including alcohol & drug prevention education for youth and adults; community conversations focused on the Youth Risk Behavior and Adult Perception Surveys looking at the data and the positive norms which prevail; Developmental Assets workshops for youth and adults; programs which focus on adolescent anxiety and depression, conflict resolution and raising resilient teens; youth leadership workshops; a peer mentoring; after-school enrichment; and substance-free events among others.

CORE PROGRAMS

- The Coalition** - established in 2010, *The Coalition* continues to expand its activities and reach. This TTC program is a community-wide partnership which includes our schools, law enforcement, public health, mental health professionals, faith-based, youth and parents. This program is TTC's directed focus on reducing and preventing substance use among tri-town youth. *The Coalition* provides local coordination, collaboration, education and advocacy towards the ultimate goal of reducing youth substance use ensuring and sustaining a healthy tri-town community for all. Activities include data collection/dissemination, substance-free activities, information/education campaigns, youth engagement and advocacy.


- Horizons After-School & Summer Enrichment** - Horizons is available to K-6 elementary school children in Topsfield and Boxford during the academic school year and to all Tri-Town K-6 residents during the summer. Classes, taught by experienced adults, may include art, science, physical activity, Lego Engineering, sewing and nature workshops. Horizons is offered in 4, 6 and 8 week sessions during the fall, winter and spring; weekly during the summer; and includes a 6 week ski program for Boxford students at Bradford Ski. Community service opportunities are available for high school youth. Programs are held at the elementary schools right after dismissal during the school year. During FY16 over 500 Tri-Town youth participated in Horizons.


- TTC High School Youth Council** – Led by high school youth and facilitated by our Youth Program Coordinator, the TTC HS Youth Council engages in fun social activities, leadership opportunities, participates in community service programs and supports special projects such as 6th Grade Fun Night.


- TTC Middle School Youth Council** – Led by the Tri-Town Council Youth Program Coordinator, this group is open to Tri-Town youth in grades 7 and 8. This youth group engages in fun social activities, community service opportunities, leadership development, special programs and projects.
- All-Night Graduation Party** - Tri-Town Council sponsors and coordinates this annual event with the input and support from parents of Masco Seniors. This event, run since our inception, takes place the night of graduation with approximately 80% of seniors participating and is chaperoned by parents of juniors and TTC staff. The graduates enjoy a full night (9PM-7AM) of fun activities and food with buses transporting them to each location (kept secret from the seniors) keeping them safe on a high risk night. Almost 300 graduated seniors (our biggest group ever!) and 40 chaperons participated in the 2016 event.



- **Tri-Town Council Scholarship Program**- Scholarships are awarded to three graduating Masconomet Seniors, one from each of the tri-towns, recognized for their academic performance, community service and being exemplary role models to peers during their high school years. **The 2016 recipients were Kelly Baker (Topsfield), Madison Hughes (Middleton) and Lily Pearsall (Boxford).** FY16 marks the 6th year these scholarships have been awarded. In FY16 TTC awarded \$750 to each recipient.
- **Project Safety Net 24/7 Helpline – Counseling** provided 24/7 via telephone and text access to a licensed mental health counselor. **Project Safety Net** is used by both parents/guardians seeking advice or guidance regarding issues with their children, and youth in need of someone to talk to as well as concerned community members for information, referral/crisis counseling.
- **Tri-Town Community Resources for Families in Need** - Tri-Town Council with local community and school support, developed a [community-based resource list](#) and outreach protocol which highlights the efforts of local organizations helping families in need during the holidays and year-round. TTC and the Masconomet School Health Council (SHAC) provide a comprehensive list of local resources, regional and state resources to include mental health, substance abuse, food/fuel assistance, safety and more. This resource list is accessible on-line and in print. TTC also works with schools and local agencies to facilitate support for tri-town families in particular need during the November/December holiday season.
- **Youth Risk Behavior Survey (YRBS)** – the YRBS is a data collection tool which focuses on the major risk behaviors that threaten the health and safety of young people. This tool is used across the state and nationally to assess youth behavior and perception. Administered biennially to Masconomet middle and high school youth, the anonymous survey includes questions about alcohol, tobacco, marijuana and other drug use; bullying; depression; stress; sexual behaviors; dietary behaviors, physical activity; and behaviors associated with intentional or unintentional injuries. Data from the survey provides accurate estimates of the prevalence of risk behaviors and perceptions of use among Masconomet middle and high school youth. This information is used to inform health education and risk prevention programs within the schools and community. The next YRBS will be administered in November 2016. During the 2015-2016 program year, TTC held a public Community Conversation to present survey findings from the 2014 administration which was followed by data presentations to all three town Boards of Selectmen and Boards of Health. In addition, data was presented throughout the year to various other stakeholders including youth, parents and educators. The data is used to inform our programming, in particular our Positive Community Norms initiative. Executive summaries of all YRBS administered to date are available on our website www.tritowncouncil.org/coalition.
- **Adult Perception Survey (APS)** – conducted biennially since 2011 and implemented by TTC with the support of our Coalition partners, this survey asks tri-town adults (parents, teachers, administrators, law enforcement, clergy, business owners as well as any other adult vested in the local community) for feedback on issues youth face, or will face, in making safe, healthy choices as they grow and mature. Participation is open to all tri-town adults who parent, educate and care for and about tri-town youth.

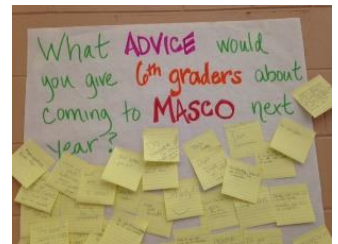


In 2015 more than 500 adults participated offering us an insight into areas of concern as well as perceived alcohol and drug abuse among tri-town youth. This information was also presented to the community in conjunction with the YRBS survey data. Executive summaries of all APS administered to date are available on our website.

ENRICHMENT PROGRAMS & WORKSHOPS (Youth, Parent, Community)

Youth Workshops/Activities

- TAG-IT Tuesdays** – Opportunities in the Middle School for youth to ‘shout out’ on a particular topic; Tag-It’s spark discussion on various topics and give youth a chance to be heard on specific issues in an engaging and unique way. *What will **you** do to create a safe school, community and online environment? How will **you** support students who are being bullied?*
- Massachusetts Conference for Women (Young Women’s Program)**
Tri-Town Council, for the fifth year, secured sponsorship for Masco HS youth and adult chaperons to attend this annual event in December which focuses on leadership, self-esteem and empowerment. In 2015 our attendees were sponsored by State Street Bank.
- PhotoVoice** – This program, run since 2012, encompasses both a photographic and written component on a chosen topic. Volunteer assistance is provided by community members. The 2016 topic was **“Exploring What Matters Through the Eyes of Youth”**. Projects were unveiled at TTC’s Annual Meeting and at a reception at Masconomet. They are displayed at town libraries at various times during the school year.
- Open Gym Nights for Middle & High School Youth** – run by Tri-Town Council for Middle and High School youth on select Saturday evenings during the winter months from November-March and hosted by Masconomet in the Field House, Open Gym is a free, supervised drop-in program for Masco teens. Activities include basketball, floor hockey, volleyball, Frisbee, hula hoops, and more.
- 6th Grade Fun Night now in its third year.** Expanded this year as a result of the partnership with 6th grade committee events prior to the Fun Night. TTC provided 1-way bus transportation from the upper elementary schools to Masconomet. This event provides another opportunity for tri-town 6th graders to meet one another in a fun environment at Masconomet for an evening of games and activities. We rely on many middle and high school youth who help plan and facilitate during the evening. More than 260 6th graders attended in May 2016 which represented a 50% increase from 2015.



- **High School Youth Leadership Retreat** – 4th annual ½ day workshop held on an early release day in March, this year at Danvers Indoor Sports. Over 35 Masconomet high school youth participated in this free program focused on leadership, communication and self-advocacy. 1-way transportation provided from Masco to Danvers Indoor Sports.



- **Middle School Youth Leadership Retreat** – new this year and modeled after the high school leadership retreat, the afternoon focused on team building and making new connections with peers. Over 20 middle school youth attended the program which was held at Creighton Pond in Middleton.



- **Randy Pierce presents to the Junior Class** – a dynamic visionary and inspiring motivational speaker with an innate and powerful ability to engage his audience, Randy spoke to Masconomet juniors and staff of his own struggles and triumphs over adversity sending a powerful message of hope and optimism to the audience. Classroom teachers had the opportunity to follow up with small group discussions following the presentation.
- **Essex County Youth Summit** – ten 9th and 10th grade Masconomet High School student council leaders and 2 Masco staff advisors attended this summit sponsored by the DA's office which featured nationally recognized speakers Chris Herren and Al Duncan.



- **Girls 4 Girls Mentoring Program** – in its inaugural year, this program matches Proctor girls in grades 4-6 with Masconomet High School girls grades 10-12 and meeting regularly over the course of the school year to develop relationships, serve as a mentor, role model and to help with the transition to middle school. TTC works collaboratively with Proctor School staff member Kim Boucher in program design and delivery.



- **Stand Tall!** A four session program, run annually and open to tri-town middle school aged girls (grades 6-8), addresses self-esteem, social pressures as well as promoting leadership skills and healthy dialogue. Stand Tall! is facilitated by Spofford School guidance counselor Julie Benson and psychologist Courtney Eckhoff. Funded in part by The Women's Fund of Essex County.

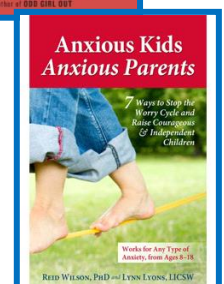
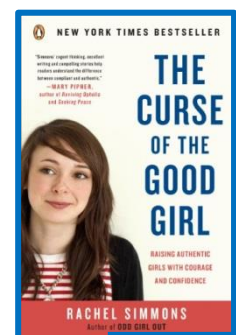


- **Developmental Assets for Youth** - Developmental Assets are 40 research-based, positive experiences and qualities that influence young people's development, helping them become caring, responsible, and productive adults. Using the metaphor of a 'lifepack', TTC intentionally engages with youth, educators and our community partners focusing on what kids need to be productive, thriving, resilient contributors to society.
- **6th Grade Student Transition** – Facilitated by Masconomet Middle School Guidance staff, select Masco Middle School students are transported for visits to 6th grade students at the elementary schools answering questions and concerns regarding their upcoming transition to Masconomet. TTC funds transportation costs for this annual visit.
- **Youth Artisan Fair in its third year** - held in conjunction with the Topsfield Strawberry Festival in June. This program affords tri-town youth aged 9-18 the opportunity to sell their handmade, quality items as well as polish their business and public speaking skills at a fun, community event. This year we expanded to include youth musicians to share their talent and entertain during the day.



Parent/Community Presentations & Workshops

- **Conflict, Competition & Companionship** – in this workshop developed for Tri-Town Council and our elementary schools, Boxford resident and educator Stephanie Meegan, this program was designed to teach parents and caregivers how to reduce unnecessary conflicts among children and learn how to intervene effectively when unavoidable conflicts arise.
- **Failing Well: Raising Resilient Kids** – an evening with **acclaimed author and nationally recognized speaker Rachel Simmons** presented during the day to Masconomet 7th, 8th and 11th grade students; middle school student council members and, in the evening, to parents and educators offering practical advice and helpful strategies to help our children/teens become braver and interpret setbacks with more optimism and resilience. She also explored adult relationship to failure so that we can model resilience for our children.
- **Anxious Kids Anxious Parents** – an evening program presented by **Lynn Lyons**, LICSW and anxiety expert, addressed how parents/adults can help teens manage anxiety and know the signs of depression. Specific strategies and exercises were provided as well as a link to an on-line video resource. Recorded by Boxford Cable to expand reach.



- **The Secret Life of a Massachusetts (Masco) Teen with Jon Mattleman-** This program co-sponsored with the Middleton Board of Health covered teen behaviors including drug and alcohol use, depression, suicide, and more. Real life examples and life tips and strategies were offered which could be implemented by parents immediately.
- **Opiate Forum** – State and local officials discussed policy and legislative action being taken to combat the deadly disease of addiction. Tri-Town Council, Tri-Town police and other local organizations were present to educate the community on information, resources and support available to families and individuals in need of help. The purpose of this round table discussion was to eliminate the stigma of addiction and assure families they are not alone.



PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT for Educators, Administrators & Community Partners

- Sponsor local participation (14 community partners – including school and law enforcement representatives) at the **Essex County District Attorney Annual Safety Conference** in March.
- **Developmental Assets Project for Educators** - initiated during FY15 with support of the TBM Rotary- TTC works with educators and community partners using the Developmental Assets (building blocks of health development) Framework developed by the Search Institute which help young people grow up healthy, caring and responsible.

COMMUNITY OUTREACH


TTC is a trusted resource for children and families in the Tri-Town area. TTC works to expand its community engagement by participating whenever possible in community events. Examples of this outreach include:

- Social media presence including TTC Facebook page, Teen Facebook page and Twitter account
- Elementary, Middle and High School Open Houses
- Presentations to Boards of Selectmen
- Presentations to Boards of Health
- Presentations to School Committees (K-12)
- Programming information sent regularly via TTC e-mail
- Positive Community Norms direct mail campaign to parents of 9th-11th grade students
- Prescription drug abuse prevention mailer (all households)
- Steward School Wellness Fair
- “Welcome to Topsfield” for new Topsfield residents
- TBM Rotary Fall Foliage Road Race
- Topsfield Holiday Walk
- Strawberry Festival

AFFILIATED ORGANIZATIONS

Tri-Town Council has several affiliated organizations which benefit from our non-profit status, administrative support and fiscal sponsorship affording them the opportunity to serve the Tri-Town community including:

- Disability Awareness Starts Here (DASH)** Since 1994, D.A.S.H. has provided an innovative, hands-on sensitivity awareness experience for elementary school students in Boxford and Topsfield and more recently in Middleton. This parent led program relying on more than 250 volunteers and embraced by the school district, emphasizes abilities rather than disabilities; encourages empathy and understanding; fosters an atmosphere of mutual respect and friendship; and strives to eliminate fear and misunderstanding. Each year almost all youth in second through fifth grade participate in this program. D.A.S.H. presents four unique curriculums which utilize hands-on activities designed to simulate what it is like to live with a disability. Children are encouraged to explore their feelings, think creatively, and discuss alternatives and solutions to the challenges created by a disability. Each program concludes with a guest speaker where the children are invited to ask questions and share their new perspectives. The grade level curriculums are Visual Impairments - Grade 2; Hearing Impairments - Grade 3; Invisible Disabilities - Grade 4; Physical Disabilities- Grade 5.


- Sponsor-A-Child** – run in the Boxford Elementary Schools since 1980, provides a tangible and meaningful way for elementary school children to be part of a community service activity along with their classmates and family. This program raises awareness about children, close to home, who are underprivileged and in need, and how others, both individuals and a community can help. Sponsor-a Child working with Santa's Helper of Salisbury, facilitated the donation of hundreds of wish list gifts (clothing and essentials) with the help of 45 classroom volunteers to 38 needy children in Salisbury as well as made a cash donation of \$1300 to the Salisbury Santa's Helper program during the 2015 holiday season.

TRI-TOWN COUNCIL LEADERSHIP

Tri-Town Council Board of Directors provides leadership, governance, fiscal oversight and long-term strategic planning in support of the organizational mission. Led by an Executive Board consisting of a President, Treasurer and Secretary, sub-committees and an Advisory Board, Tri-Town Council Board is engaged in the vital and on-going process of identifying and achieving the goals and objectives of the organization.

Tri-Town Council employs a full-time Executive Director who is responsible for the development and implementation of programs and services, provides organizational leadership and Council management; and several part-time professional staff members who assist with program implementation, communications, youth activities and business functions.

OUR FUNDING

Municipal funding contributions from Boxford, Topsfield and Middleton represent a significant portion of Tri-Town Council's annual operating budget. The balance of our income comes as a result of private donations, corporate donations, foundation contributions, grants, fee for service programs and fundraising events. This funding is vital to the financial health and organizational stability of the Tri-Town Council.

IN SUMMARY

Through our educational, enrichment and leadership programs, sponsored programs and organizational affiliations, Tri-Town Council proactively strives to meet the needs and address the concerns of the Tri-Town community. We collaborate with schools, parents, youth, law enforcement, community organizations and area resources to insure the highest impact and most cost effective delivery of our programs and services. We maintain high visibility in the community through our website: www.tritowncouncil.org, E-news via our in-house database and through school newsletters, in local media resources such as the Tri-Town Transcript (**our regular bi-weekly spot called the “Tri-Town Council Corner”**), local phone books and other organizational websites including Masconomet and the Tri-Town School Union.

We also connect with parents via **Facebook and Twitter**, providing important programming information and resources pertaining to various family issues, challenges and raising children of all ages.

In addition we host the **TTC Teen Spot on Facebook** allowing us to connect with high school youth regarding programs, activities and important issues. Our website, E-news and social media posts contain timely

information for parents/guardians, educators and youth on topics such as resilience, asset building, bullying and cyber bullying, Internet safety, stress management, and alcohol and drug abuse as well as updates regarding Tri-Town Council events and activities.

Tri-Town Council actively participates in and collaborates with several Tri-Town committees including; the Masconomet School Health Advisory Council (SHAC) whose mission is to promote youth health, wellness and safety ; the K-12 Umbrella Group which consists of local volunteer leadership and school superintendents meeting monthly to share projects and ideas; the elementary school Parent-Teacher Organizations; public libraries; TBM Rotary Club; faith-based institutions and TTC maintains connections with professional groups including of CADCA, Community Anti-Drug Coalitions of America, Bolster Collaborative and the Massachusetts Non-Profit Network. We work with local organizations and agencies sharing ideas, co-sponsoring programs and events to both broaden our impact as well as sharing the costs whenever possible and appropriate.

The Tri-Town Council is grateful for and depends on the continued support we receive from our funders - it is as a result of Municipal, Corporate, Foundation, Individual and community support and involvement that we are able to pursue our mission educating youth, parents and educators providing pro-active solutions which support, engage and empower Tri-Town youth to make informed, healthy, safe and compassionate decisions while strengthening their social and emotional well-being.

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Respectfully submitted,

Lisa G. Teichner

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Executive Director