

**Special Report**  
**of the**  
**Needs Assessment**  
**Committee**

**Sponsored by the United Way of Hood County**

**March 11, 2008**

## **INTRODUCTION**

In 2006, the United Way of Hood County (UWHC) Board of Directors authorized a needs assessment survey of Hood County. This was done principally to assist in funds allocation to assure that the biggest needs received priority. Results were provided at a public meeting on April 24, 2007. The number one issue identified by Hood County residents is drug abuse. In order to assist the United Way in the assessment of drug abuse in the county, a committee with diverse membership from the community was established. This report documents the work of the committee and includes 14 findings and 27 recommendations. This special report may also be helpful to county leaders (political, education, law enforcement, health care, United Way partner agencies) to coordinate resources to address drug abuse.

## **NEEDS ASSESSMENT SURVEY**

During the fall of 2006, ETC Institute conducted a community needs assessment survey for the United Way of Hood County. The primary purpose of the survey was to gather information from residents and community leaders to help identify health and social welfare conditions. The results of the survey were to be used to help identify needs and set priorities for the community. The method included a mail and phone survey of 401 Hood County households and a similar survey of 100 community leaders.

Survey respondents were asked to rank the priority that should be placed on nearly 40 issues. Based on the results of the survey, the top two issues were youth substance abuse (37%) and adult substance abuse (30%). This means that 37% and 30% of the respondents selected these issues, respectively, in their top 5 choices that leaders thought should receive the highest priority over the next 3 years. The next three areas to complete the top 5 were affordable housing (29%), poverty (26%), and child abuse (25%). Drug abuse, as a whole, was identified as a major problem at a rate 3 times higher than any other issue needing immediate attention.

The results of the needs assessment survey were communicated in a public meeting on April 24, 2007. At the same time, the United Way of Hood County announced the formulation of a task team to review drug abuse in the county and provide recommendations to the United Way and other stakeholders on a course of action. This report summarizes the findings and recommendations of the task force, referred to here as the needs assessment committee.

## **CHARTER OF THE NEEDS ASSESSMENT COMMITTEE**

The following is the charter established for the needs assessment committee.

The poll done as part of a needs assessment survey conducted for the United Way by ETC Institute identified drug abuse as the number one concern in the county. The purpose of this committee is to:

- analyze the current situation in Hood County
- determine the impact to the community
- explore the potential services/solutions to address prevention, treatment, intervention, and interdiction
- develop a set of findings and recommendations for interested stakeholders and the UWHC

It is expected that various stakeholders and resources will be consulted in the development of the committee's findings and recommendations.

The deliverable is a set of recommendations for consideration by the UWHC and other key stakeholders in the county to deal with the drug abuse issue in a coordinated manner. These should include:

- recommendations to the UWHC for alignment of partner agencies and allocation of funds
- recommendations to the community for
  - prevention
  - intervention
  - community involvement (give neighborhoods a voice)
  - assist victims and their families
  - alignment and coordination of community efforts

## **IMPACT ON THE COMMUNITY**

Drug abuse is an insidious behavior that has negative consequences across the community. It requires resources from law enforcement, schools, health care (hospitals and emergency rooms), mental health care, and aid agencies, all of which are funded primarily from the public through tax dollars and donations. Drugs and alcohol cost the state of Texas in excess of \$26 billion annually. Additionally, drug abuse has the following impact:

- More than half of the prisoners in jail, and more than half of the adult parolees in Hood County, have drug related offenses.
- Half of the drug abusers not in jail perform criminal acts to support their habit.
- The reputation of the area can be negatively effected. This can impact decisions on companies and families to locate in Hood County, can

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depress home values, and result in "flight" of those with the resources to do so.

- Drug abuse plays a significant role in risky sexual behavior, increases the risk of sexual assault, and is a leading factor in child abuse and neglect.
- Substance abuse can cause a range of physical consequences to the individual or to a fetus.
- Alcohol abuse can cause alterations in the structure and function of the developing adolescent brain, which continues to mature into the mid and late twenties.
- Alcohol consumption is the leading contributor to death from injuries, and is the main cause of death for people under age 21.
- Substance abuse causes a host of secondary effects to family members and victims of drug abusers.

### **PERSONNEL CONTACTED**

In the course of the committee's investigation, several experts and stakeholders were contacted to gain their perspective and input. The following people assisted the committee in both educating the members about drug abuse and in formulation of the recommendations.

Trooper Earl "Dub" Gillum, Texas Department of Public Safety  
Sheriff Gene Mayo, Hood County Sheriff's Department  
Deputy Jerry Lind, Hood County Sheriff's Department  
Tom Kemp, Community Coordinator, STAR Council  
Susan Denevan, Director of Youth Services, STAR Council  
Pete McDowell, Adult Counselor, STAR Council  
Jim Roberts, Supervisor, Hood County Adult Probation  
Name withheld, a 17 year old male recovering drug addict  
Name withheld, a 36 year old female recovering addict  
Diane Fullerton, Principal, Granbury Middle School  
Norma Wright, Children's Charities  
Larry Beasley, Director, Granbury Boys and Girls Clubs

### **FINDINGS**

1. The causes of drug abuse are complex and defy any easy solution. Factors that can affect drug use include, but are not limited to: socio-economic condition; education level; family history; church, parental and peer influence; emotional and physical maturity; mental illness; and effectiveness of law enforcement. While there are socio-economic causal factors, no group is immune to drug abuse and addiction cuts across all socio-economic classes.

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2. There is a link between unemployment and drug abuse. Factors that decrease unstructured free time and increase employment opportunities tend to reduce the behaviors that lead to drug dependence.
3. Vocational training opportunities and access to junior colleges are limited in the area.
4. Youths frequently complain that there "is nothing to do or any place to go" in the community.
5. In a community where drug abuse is not tolerated, it diminishes. Examples are effective law enforcement, neighborhood watches, neighborhood cleanups (pride), youth activity centers with multiple support functions and good role models.
6. There has been a net decrease in drug arrests and perceived drug problems in some areas. The reason for this appears to be a combination of church assistance (for example, the presence of Acton United Methodist Church at Rancho Brazos and First United Methodist Church at Brazos River Acres "adopted neighborhoods"), the presence of the Boys and Girls Clubs at both locations, and a community effort to improve.
7. There are a lot of caring people that are trying to help; however, there is no central coordinating effort to combat drug abuse in Hood County.
8. Methamphetamine production, sale, and use have received some attention recently. While the drug is deadly and addictive, it is not the only, or even major, abused drug. Narcotics, alcohol, over-the-counter and prescription drugs and marijuana are all of concern in Hood County; however, alcohol remains the most abused drug by both adults and children.
9. Underage drinking is a serious problem nation-wide. Peak years for alcohol initiation are the 7th and 8th grades and about 10% of 9-10 year olds have started drinking. The highest prevalence of alcohol dependence in the U.S. population is among 18-20 year olds. When youth between the ages of 12 and 20 consume alcohol, they drink on average about 5 drinks per occasion about 6 times a month (binge drinking).
10. Factors that tend to reduce child drug abuse are good role models; engaged parents; effective and credible drug education programs; sports, church and social organization participation; and community activities geared to teenagers.
11. Drug awareness and education programs have mixed success. Peer-to-peer programs tend to be more effective, and the message should be age appropriate. The message of the dangers of drug abuse need to be repetitive,

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diverse, and provided in multiple settings (example: home, schools, churches, social organizations).

12. Identification of "high risk" individuals and enrollment in special assistance programs will reduce their potential of drug dependency.

13. The dissolution of the inter-jurisdictional task force at the state level has had a negative impact on policing drug abuse in Hood County and the presence of DPS narcotics officers has been negligible. The number of Sheriff's deputies in Hood County is significantly below the national average for officers per 1000 population. Due to the geographic make-up of Hood County, the Sheriff's Department assumes the bulk of the enforcement responsibilities in the county.

14. Drug possession, sale, and use are problems in the public schools that divert attention from their primary mission. School Resource Officers are a help, but the extent of the problem exceeds their ability to adequately address the magnitude of the problem.

## RECOMMENDATIONS

### I. Drug Awareness and Prevention

Drug awareness and prevention are important factors in the overall process when evaluating how a community will deal with drug abuse. Several items are necessary to make drug awareness and prevention possible. These include: continuation and extension of drug abuse education programs, involvement of local churches, developing and sustaining high quality mentoring programs, and identification of high risk youths for early intervention. This section will deal with the first, specifically drug abuse prevention programs.

As children progress through the school system, attention should be paid to providing information about causes and effects of drug usage. The D.A.R.E. program is a great educational tool for elementary aged students; however, there are not currently any programs available in Hood County that continue this educational program beyond the elementary school level. The D.A.R.E. program gives students the skills and education that they need to avoid involvement in drugs, gangs, and violence. There are many communities that are extending the D.A.R.E. program into both the middle and high school levels, but the overall effectiveness at these levels has been questioned. Nevertheless, education and teaching students the need to abstain from drugs are very important and have their place in the school system.

The state of Montana has had some success with an anti-methamphetamine ad campaign called "not even once", emphasizing its highly addictive nature. In

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Granbury, DPS Trooper Dub Gillum has given many presentations on the dangers of "meth". Diverse and repetitive messages like these can be effective.

The schools indicate that many of the abused drugs they confiscate are prescription or over-the-counter medications. Additionally, it has been reported that a common occurrence at teenage parties is the presence of a bowl of multi-size/color unlabeled medications for the taking. The source of these medications is often legitimate purchases by parents that subsequently have been stolen. The safe storage and disposal of these medications can reduce their abuse potential and parents should be educated on this problem.

Alcohol remains the most abused drug by both adults and children. Unfortunately, parents are often contributing to the problem by knowingly providing access. When a non-parent is involved, it is a criminal action to provide alcohol to an underage person, regardless of the location. Adults may not be aware of this.

### **Recommendations: I. Drug Awareness and Prevention**

1. An extension of the D.A.R.E. program, or equivalent, should be provided to middle and high school students. An important element of any successful program is credibility with the students. (Law Enforcement, Schools)
2. The drug prevention presentation by DPS Trooper Dub Gillum should be given to as many community and neighborhood groups as possible. The schools should also continue to use this program periodically. This type training could be more effective if it was family oriented, with the entire family participating in the session. (Law Enforcement, Schools, Community Associations)
3. Utilize success from the Montana Meth Project "not even once" campaign to reduce the incidence of methamphetamine use in Granbury (45% reduction in teen meth use). (Schools, STAR Council)
4. Develop a "this can hurt you" campaign to educate public on the dangers of abusing over-the-counter medications. Local physicians' offices, pharmacies, and the hospital can help educate people regarding the potential abuse of over-the-counter and prescription medications and their safe disposal. (Hospital Board)
5. Educate parents on the dangers of underage drinking. Adults need to understand that if they give alcohol to an underage person (other than their own children in their own home) they have committed a crime. (PTA, Channel 27, Project Graduation, Community Associations)
6. County leadership should work with law enforcement to establish constructive educational/treatment programs for the jail to help those with drug dependency to

break that dependency. (Hood County Commissioners Court, STAR Council, UWHC)

## **II. Law Enforcement**

Law enforcement plays a necessary role in the community effort to deal with drug abuse. More than half of the prisoners in the jail and more than half of the adult parolees in Hood County are for drug related offenses. Civil cases (example, divorce) are often impacted by drug abuse and many of the non drug related offenses such as robbery, burglary, etc. are to obtain money to support drug use. Law enforcement is the “big stick” that takes substance abusers and sellers off the street, but their role is much larger.

An effective community program to deal with substance abuse must include training and education in the community and in the schools, effective disruption of manufacture and distribution of drugs, apprehension of abusers and dealers, training and rehabilitation of users, effective monitoring and assistance for parolees, and assistance in resolving the basic needs of the community.

### **Recommendations: II. Law Enforcement**

7. Recognizing that both community leaders and county residents identified drug abuse as the number one issue, it is recommended that the state, cities, and the county re-evaluate the law enforcement resources dedicated to drug enforcement. This is even more important for the county since more than eighty percent of the population resides outside of city jurisdiction. The current staffing of the Hood County Sheriff’s Department is inadequate based on the number of officers per 1000 population. (Hood County Commissioners Court)

8. Other counties have successfully and effectively established inter-jurisdictional task forces using county and city peace officers within that specific county. Hood County and the incorporated cities therein should establish a county inter-jurisdictional drug task force to more effectively utilize peace officers to interdict the supply of drugs. (Law Enforcement, Hood County Commissioners Court, Granbury City Council)

9. One teenage user indicated that more frequent use of drug dogs in the school could help to reduce the drug problem in the schools. Current policy is that the dogs, when used, cannot be allowed to screen students. Students are allegedly aware of this policy, and just conceal the drugs on themselves when the dogs are present. Drug dogs have been used very effectively in other locations to detect drugs on individuals as well as in lockers, desks, automobiles, etc. Since drugs in the school have been identified as a problem, the school board and administration should re-evaluate this policy to determine whether the drug dogs could be used more effectively in the schools. (Schools)

### **III. Community Project**

The war on drugs is an ongoing battle. Drug abuse occurs everywhere in the county but sadly, the communities most affected by the drug epidemic are our low income housing communities. Some children and adults of low income neighborhoods are turning to drugs for recreation, emotional escape or freedom from their problems. Through education and skills training, individuals see and understand that their lives can improve and grow; they can become contributing citizens of Hood County.

Community projects designed for a specific area are essential to combat the expanding drug culture. When a community decides that it will not tolerate drug abuse and the presence of its consequences, the abuse diminishes. Using a variety of resources these projects provide support for children whose parents are not able or willing due to either poverty or drug use and they distribute food and provide classes such as ESL, GED, life skills, and drug awareness in their own neighborhood places or local church facilities. Through neighborhood watch and other law enforcement coalitions, police become more effective in ridding drugs and crime from the area. These community projects provide a safe haven for children, and through their mentoring and education programs, work to prevent them from using drugs. With this support available to them they can begin to make positive choices in their lives and work to make their neighborhoods safer. These community projects will provide a lasting effect on the drug problem. When people are provided with acceptance, caring, hope and dignity there can only be a positive outcome.

The UWHC can assist in a community project in several ways. This includes direct funding or grants to support specific elements of the community project. An example of this would be establishing a facility or community center to be the focal point for many activities. It can also work with partner agencies, some who already have a presence there, to bring needed additional services to the area. A pilot community project, such as at Oak Trail Shores, could be a good test of this approach to the long term task of reducing drug abuse.

#### **Recommendations: III. Community Project**

10. The UWHC should consider implementing a pilot community project with a narrow focus. This focus, for example, could be a program directed at a geographic location such as the program being developed for Oak Trail Shores. (UWHC)

11. Partner with Granbury First United Methodist Church, the Boys and Girls Clubs, and other organizations to provide a building to house all existing and future activities at the Oak Trail Shores community center, and to help support

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maintenance, utilities, on site paid supervisor, recreation equipment, transportation, upkeep and gas needed for the center to continue to operate. (UWHC, Ministerial Alliance, United Way Partner Agencies)

12. Install playground equipment and basketball courts at Oak Trail Shores community center in order to provide positive physical recreation and support the community center's efforts to keep children off drugs. (UWHC, Community Associations, Hood County Commissioners Court)

13. Provide vehicles to Oak Trail Shores community center to transport families. This will ensure attendance at classes and activities provided at the center and other positive community activities. (Boys and Girls Clubs, Community Associations)

14. Home owners associations and other community support groups should consider starting or re-enforcing a neighborhood crime watch. Appropriate law enforcement should work with the neighborhood groups to effectively implement the programs. (Community Associations, Law Enforcement)

### **IV. Mentoring Programs, Education and Skills Training**

While drug abuse cuts across all socio-economic barriers, there is a correlation between poverty and those prone to abuse drugs. When there is no perceived escape from poverty, hope dies and drugs provide an escape. The best road out of poverty involves acquiring education and skills to increase employment opportunities. Individuals should have easy access to English as Second Language (ESL) and Graduate Equivalent Degree (GED) courses with encouragement to attend classes and complete the curriculum. Currently, there is little in the way of vocational or skills training and the public school curriculum is centered on a college bound track. The demand for skilled labor and other technical specialties is on the rise and employment outlook is favorable. The community should prepare young people to be productive by providing vocational training to children that are not college bound. A junior college would provide an opportunity for students to pursue associate degrees that would increase employability. Decreasing unemployment in the community will raise the standard of living and minimize the attraction of drug usage.

It is often noted that when a youth succumbs to drug abuse, many were not surprised and predicted the outcome. There is more to this than anecdotal evidence. It is the committee's belief that individuals that are high risk for drug dependency can be identified, often very early in their development. Intervention at this stage is more effective than treatment later in life, and programs to identify and assist these individuals could be established. Drug awareness efforts noted earlier have a broad audience, attempting to reach as many age appropriate

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people as possible. The programs referenced here are focused, targeting individuals at various stages of their development.

Based on information gleaned from representatives from community agencies and recovering addicts, a mentoring program would be highly beneficial for youth and adults who are at high risk for addiction. Family involvement is an essential component of success. It has been shown in a 2001 study by Columbia University that children who live with “attentive parents” stand a better chance of never using drugs than do those with “hands-off parents”. Needless to say, parents need to have a continuous and very “hands-on” approach with their children in order to give them the confidence, strength, and self esteem necessary to fight against peer pressure, parental indifference, and other influences that drive our youths to experiment with drugs.

Methods for coping with stress and the importance of living healthy lives should be taught. Families would benefit from being taught parenting skills, how to develop and utilize healthy coping skills, communication, and stress management. This is where education, church and community involvement, a strong mentoring program, and most importantly the creation of an attentive and hands-on environment that provides a loving and caring process which ultimately makes the use of drugs unnecessary.

### **Recommendations: IV. Mentoring Programs, Education and Skills Training**

15. Adults should have easy access to ESL and GED classes. (Schools, Cleburne Adult Education, Ministerial Alliance)
16. Vocational training and junior college classes should be accessible for the non-college bound students to enhance their employability thereby decreasing unemployment. (Schools, Hood County Commissioners Court)
17. Identify high risk mothers/families at birth and pair them with a mentor to assist in the first three years of a child’s life. The state funded Early Childhood Intervention (ECI) could facilitate the program, identifying high risk families and working with them for the first three years; providing services and education as well as linking with resources. (Hospital Board, Ministerial Alliance, UWHC, United Way Partner Agencies)
18. Identify high risk students at the elementary level and enroll in special classes or mentoring programs with the intent to intervene at an early age and assist in developing skills, such as coping and healthy living, and positive life choices. (Schools, United Way Partner Agencies)
19. Develop a peer mentoring program for high risk high school students and young adults with successful graduates teaching and supporting new members. Life skills training and drug awareness should be the focus. Local universities

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should be contacted to provide student interns from social work, human sciences, and child development programs to provide mentoring to families while simultaneously receiving college credits. (TSU, UTA, Schools)

20. Teach skills such as stress management, coping skills, self-care, communication, personal responsibility, and drug prevention to families. Utilize existing programs to facilitate training after school or around pick up time at an after school program to provide free training to parents. Incentives should be offered to parents who attend (examples: homework pass, community service time). (UWHC)

### **V. Coordination of Church Efforts**

Churches have created paths in our community and surrounding neighborhoods that no other entity has been able to duplicate. Their positive, unobtrusive program seeds have been planted in some neighborhoods and the harvest has been very positive. One area, Brazos River Acres, has become empowered to address the drug issue in their neighborhood. Their group of stakeholders is continuing to grow. Churches have been instrumental in helping this change occur in Brazos River Acres.

Three necessary elements identified by churches as part of their foundation for success are communication, volunteer assistance, and core stakeholders within neighborhoods serving as the leaders for change. Our churches have not attempted to become the moral compass for the areas surrounding their churches; however, they have modeled the teaching of the various religions by actions and a willingness to serve their fellow man. Additionally, they have addressed not only basic needs, but also emotional needs and education. Several area churches have outreach programs that have targeted issues such as women's health, women in crisis, parenting skills, and obtaining GED certificates to mention only a few.

Churches and mentoring are important in community drug awareness and prevention. Church involvement on a personal and a community level keep parents involved with their children and teach faith based lessons that inspire a higher spiritual level that leads to improved self confidence, awareness, and esteem. Mentoring expands and continues this self improvement and educational process by providing a one-on-one environment with high risk youths and attentive and knowledgeable adults. There are numerous examples of this mentoring process lasting for many years. Also, the overall benefit is not just for the youth who is mentored, but for the mentor and the community as well.

### **Recommendations: V. Coordination of Church Efforts**

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21. The Ministerial Alliance is encouraged to appoint or elect a representative to serve on a standing committee of key stakeholders (see recommendation 25) with the objective of communicating drug abuse initiatives to the faith based community and obtaining their support of initiatives, as appropriate. (Ministerial Alliance)

22. Churches can facilitate raising children without drug dependencies through various programs (including drug awareness) and influencing parental involvement. Mentoring programs are especially effective. Area churches are encouraged to continue these programs where they exist, and consider developing ones where they are absent. (Ministerial Alliance)

### **VI. United Way of Hood County**

Throughout our discussion of Hood County's drug problem, we wrestled with a simple but difficult question: is drug use a cause of the many social problems in our community, or is drug use caused by these social problems? The paradoxical truth is that drug use is both a cause and an effect of these other social problems.

To address this challenge, the United Way of Hood County should attack the problem on two fronts. First, it should continue to fund partner agencies that address the causes or symptoms of drug abuse. Second, it should implement its own initiative to address the problem of drug abuse in Hood County.

Problems of violence, poverty, ignorance, lack of health care, and mental illness create an environment where drug use thrives. If we help people out of these problems, we reduce the likelihood that they find themselves addicted. The UWHC, through the generous efforts of our community, has made great strides in addressing the needs of the community. One of the missions of the UWHC has been to ensure accountability amount partner agencies. It should continue to foster strong partner agencies to ensure donated funds address the target problems and to encourage greater donations in the future. Therefore, the first task of UWHC is to continue to address the critical needs of poverty, violence, health care accessibility, housing, and emergency services.

The societal impact of drug abuse is large. It affects schools, law enforcement, churches, aid agencies, medical and mental health institutions, and more. Each of these organizations has developed some process or program to deal with the challenges that drug abuse creates. An example of this is drug awareness education, which several agencies provide. Most of this is done on an *ad hoc* basis. A local coordinating function could bring the stakeholders together to develop and execute a comprehensive and coordinated strategic plan. This would eliminate duplication of effort and fill voids in addressing needs. Public policy makers and key stakeholders should have a voice in the development of

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this strategic plan. It could be a blueprint for aid agencies, United Way funding, aid organization planning, and public and private efforts. It could also be a mechanism for follow-up to recommendations made by this committee as well as a basis for seeking grants.

Leaders of this coordinating function would have to be sensitive to the capabilities and independence of the individual stakeholders. It is a facilitative role, rather than executive. A comprehensive plan that includes all stakeholders should take into account the unique skills and abilities of the contributors, and lead to better use of resources, avoid duplication, and improve results.

Therefore, the second task of the UWHC is to establish a team to develop a strategic plan, oversee its implementation, and help direct the efforts of the various agencies and stakeholders in the county to efficiently address the problems of drug abuse. Included in this should be the support of the pilot community project in Oak Trail Shores.

### **Recommendations: VI. United Way of Hood County**

23. The UWHC should continue to fund partner agencies that address the specific problems of domestic violence, child abuse, health care, juvenile programs, substance abuse, and poverty. (UWHC)

24. The UWHC should take steps to coordinate the efforts of the partner agencies involved in drug education to ensure that all members of our community are reached using diverse and effective methods. (UWHC)

25. The UWHC should charter a team of key stakeholders to form a standing committee, reporting to the UWHC Board. This committee is to develop a comprehensive long-range drug abuse plan that includes performance measures, and then oversee the execution of the plan. Representation should include law enforcement, school administration, mental health care, health care, counseling, the Ministerial Alliance, and other interested parties. (UWHC)

26. Appoint a board or staff member to lead the committee as a facilitator. The facilitator would be the executor of the long-range plan, and should periodically update community leaders and seek their actions, feedback and guidance. (UWHC)

27. The facilitator should seek grants, if applicable, to assist the community in meeting the long range plan. (UWHC)

## **CLOSING**

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Drug abuse is a complex phenomenon with no solution. However, there are many cost effective things that a community can do to reduce the influence of drugs. Multiple approaches are needed. These include education and skills training; effective intervention and treatment; law enforcement and neighborhood involvement; and addressing the socio-economic factors that contribute to drug abuse. Many of the committee's recommendations address these issues.

Drug abuse has been markedly reduced in at least one Hood County community and this success suggests a methodology to be used elsewhere. By utilizing a strategic plan and coordinated effort between the various stakeholders, this method can be further tested in another area of the county. This committee recommends a pilot program to focus and coordinate efforts of community agencies. This approach could be measured and if successful, become a template for others to follow.

### **THE COMMITTEE MEMBERS**

**Helen Best** moved to Granbury in 1986. She has had the opportunity to work with Hood county families through programs such as Head Start, WIC, Mission Granbury, Ruth's Place, and currently at Granbury First United Methodist Church as program coordinator for the Stepping Stones program. The Stepping Stones program provides ESL, GED and life skills classes to women and men and provides participants with childcare and transportation at no cost. She is a member of the Board of Directors for Christmas for Children and Operation School Supplies. Helen is a member of the Missions Committee at Granbury First United Methodist Church that provides food programs for Hood County residents and other outreach programs such as Healthy Kids and Adopt-a-Neighborhood.

**Toni Brown-Belew** is a sixteen year resident of Hood County. She has spent forty years working in the non-profit field. Presently, she is Executive Director of the Hood County United Way. She has been director of the Tarrant County YWCA, Adopt-a-School of FWISD, Fort Worth Sister Cities, and Fort Worth Adolescent Pregnancy Board. She has a degree in Psychology & Sociology from East Texas State. She served on the founding Board of Mission Granbury, on Children's Charities Board, Ruth's Place Board, Operation School Supplies Board and Christmas for Children's Board. Toni has served on National and State Boards on teen pregnancy and on a teen pregnancy panel for President Ronald Reagan.

**Heather Brogan-McCarty, LBSW, M.Ed., LPC** is a Licensed Baccalaureate Social Worker and Licensed Professional Counselor in private practice in Granbury, Texas. She obtained her education from Tarleton State University in Stephenville, Texas. Heather has worked with at risk populations for ten years in

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roles ranging from Program Manager for the Chrysalis Project, Child Protective Services Specialist, to Clinical Director of the Hood County Regional Juvenile Center. Heather also provides counseling services for children, adults, and residents at Mission Granbury. Play therapy is one of her specialties in which she works with children in a non-threatening manner using toys, games, books and the child's imagination to aid in healing. She conducts parent education trainings for residents of Hood County as well as trainings for staff and volunteers at Mission Granbury.

**Rob Christian** is an eleven-year Hood County resident. He has served as the Hood County District Attorney for six years. Rob was on the first board of directors for the Hood County United Way and is currently on the board of directors for the Children's Advocacy Center for Hood and Somervell Counties. He received a bachelor's degree from Texas Tech University and a law degree from Baylor Law School.

**Marsha Grissom** is a life long resident of Hood County. She has been involved in numerous community organizations and is currently serving on the Board of Directors of the Lake Granbury Medical Center. Marsha is currently the principal of Granbury High School. She holds a Bachelors of Science and a Masters of Educational Administration from Tarleton State University.

**Bill Hooks** has been a Hood County resident for over thirty years, owning and managing the family automobile business of Hooks Ford, Chrysler, Dodge in Granbury and Hooks Lincoln Mercury in Weatherford. He also has Hooks Lakeside Motors and with wife Shirley owns Century 21 Shirley Hooks. He has served in many volunteer positions over the years including serving on Boards of Directors for the Chamber of Commerce, United Way, Lake Granbury Economic Development Foundation, The Texas Automobile Dealers Association and many more. He also served as City Councilman for the city of Granbury. He has been Chairman of the Hood County Hospital District Board for over ten years and is on the Board of First Financial Bank.

**Margie Messina** has lived in Granbury for twenty-one years with her husband and three children. She is an attorney and has practiced law since 1985. She is the Prosecuting Attorney for the City of Granbury Municipal Court. She serves as President of the Board of Directors of Mission Granbury and has worked with several other service organizations in the community.

**David Moore** first moved to Hood County in 1987. He has been involved in several community organizations and started Parents for Academic Excellence. He was on the Board of Directors of the United Way of Hood County from 2001 to 2003, and again beginning in 2006. David is currently the director of engineering for Shaw Stone & Webster, a prime contractor for the Comanche Peak nuclear power plant. He holds a B.S. in chemistry from the University of

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South Florida, a MBA from Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute, and was a US Navy nuclear submarine officer.

**C. Brooks Smith, M.D** is ten-year Hood County resident and family practice physician. He received a B.A. in chemistry from the University of Texas at Arlington, his medical degree from the University of Texas Health Science Center at San Antonio, and completed his internship and residency at University Hospital and the Audie L. Murphy Memorial V.A. Hospital in San Antonio, Texas.

**Lance Terry** is a twenty-one year resident of Hood County. He is a retired employee of TXU Energy, where he was a Senior Vice President and Principal Nuclear Officer responsible for TXU's nuclear program. He has been involved in various community activities over the years, including being a member of the charter United Way Board, being a Board Member and President of the Board of the Granbury Opera House, Chairman of the Acton Municipal Utility District Impact Fee Advisory Committee, a Board Member for the Hood County Senior Citizen Center, and a Board Member for the Pecan Plantation Owner's Association. Prior to his employment by TXU Energy, Lance was employed as a Quality Assurance Manager by Stone & Webster Engineering Corporation. He also had a career in the U. S. Navy including a tour as Commanding Officer of a U. S. Navy warship. Lance received his BS in Naval Science from the U. S. Naval Academy, and an MS in Electrical Engineering from the Naval Postgraduate School.

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