



Health, Housing and  
Human Services Council

## STEERING COMMITTEE

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### Affordable Medical & Dental Care

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### Childcare for Children with Special Needs

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### Youth Drug and Alcohol Abuse

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### Contact Information

For more information about the needs assessment follow-up process or to obtain a copy of the Summary Report or Action Team reports, please contact Jan Lambert, HHHS Executive Director, at 842-9335.

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# FROM ASSESSMENT TO ACTION

## FOLLOWING UP ON BAINBRIDGE ISLAND'S HUMAN SERVICE NEEDS ASSESSMENT

In 2002-2003, the Bainbridge Island Health, Housing and Human Services Council (HHHS) conducted an assessment of our community's human services needs. The assessment focused on identifying service gaps – areas where the perceived need was identified as high and the current capacity to meet it low.

Even before the needs assessment was completed, HHHS realized that the assessment was only the beginning of our community's commitment to ensuring access to needed human services. The assessment's value went beyond identifying service gaps; it also laid the groundwork for devising strategies to address the identified needs. Between November 2003 and May 2004, over 70 community members and others have been involved in the important work of moving from assessment to action.

### Organizing to do the work

A **Steering Committee**, including representatives of Island human service agencies, the city, business community, interfaith community, schools and HHHS, was formed to oversee the follow up to the needs assessment findings.

**Five Action Teams** were formed around the service gaps identified in the needs assessment:

- Affordable Housing
- Affordable Medical and Dental Care
- Childcare for Children with Special Needs
- Senior Day Services and Affordable Assisted Living
- Youth Drug and Alcohol Abuse

Action Team members were selected because of their knowledge and involvement in the issue being addressed by each team. Several teams included representatives from off-Island agencies, greatly enhancing the teams' understanding of county and state resources available to Bainbridge residents.

**In an effort to build on existing efforts** where possible, the Bainbridge Island *Just Know Coalition* was approached and agreed to serve as the Youth Drug and Alcohol Abuse Action Team. Since there were a variety of groups already working on the affordable housing issue, the Housing Action Team worked to support and connect the existing efforts in addition to adding its own perspective to the issue.

### Clarifying and redefining identified needs

The charge to the Action Teams included confirming and clarifying the perceived service gaps identified through the needs assessment. This was a critical first step since it resulted in three teams redefining the identified needs.

- The **Senior Action Team** determined that "affordable assisted living" is an unachievable goal at this time, so they reframed their work to focus on helping our community's seniors "age in place" and stay in their homes.
- The **Childcare Team** learned that the issue is not that no providers offer childcare to special needs children, but that there are challenges for parents in seeking care and for providers in caring for special needs children.
- The **Youth Drug and Alcohol Abuse Team** recognized that youth substance abuse is a symptom of a broader issue – youth development. This led to a focus on the meaningful engagement of youth in our community as a key prevention strategy.

## **Highlights of action team recommendations**

Each action team produced a set of recommendations for meeting the need they were charged with addressing. The recommendations include actions and strategies requiring additional work as well as several that can be acted upon immediately. Highlights of each team's recommendations are listed below. (The complete set of recommendations is described in the *Needs Assessment Follow-Up Report*, available from HHHS.)

### **AFFORDABLE HOUSING**

- Support the Mayor's 2004 Affordable Housing Task Force Report and recommended actions.
- Inventory publicly owned land to identify sites with potential to be developed for affordable housing.
- Convene a Housing Summit to educate and engage the community in housing solutions.

### **AFFORDABLE MEDICAL AND DENTAL CARE**

- Develop a dental referral system for low-income adults and children.  
*New system will be in place by July 2004. Services to be provided by local dentists and hygienists, with referrals managed by Helpline House.*
- Support establishment of a Peninsula Community Health Clinic on Bainbridge Island.  
*New clinic, serving uninsured and underinsured persons, will open in August 2004 at the Kitsap County Health District location at the Commons.*
- Improve the current Island medical referral system, including improved provision of mental health services and prescription assistance mechanisms.

### **CHILDCARE FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS**

- Increase parent awareness of and access to existing caregivers, including improved referral resources.
- Increase provider capacity through information, support, and development strategies.
- Create options for working parents during traditional and non-traditional childcare hours.
- Address financial considerations for families and providers.

### **SENIOR DAY SERVICES AND AFFORDABLE ASSISTED LIVING**

- Increase awareness of and access to case management and supportive services, including personal care, companionship and home care.
- Support increased collaboration between social service and medical providers and assist seniors in accessing prescription drugs.
- Explore ways to offer adult day health and respite care on Bainbridge Island.
- Develop additional resources for assisting people in need of financial supports.
- Explore alternative models for affordable housing and assisted living and encourage developers to think in terms of senior needs.
- Provide ongoing opportunities for consumers and providers to coordinate and support strategies for "aging in place".  
*First quarterly forum – open to all interested persons – is scheduled for July 8, 2004 at the Senior Center.*

### **YOUTH DRUG AND ALCOHOL ABUSE**

- Establish mission and direction for "Just Know" community coalition for sustainable, focused action.
- Implement policies and practices that validate and legitimize the role of youth in our community.
- Create a stable funding mechanism to support enhanced funding for youth programs and initiatives.
- Explore options for creating a multi-generational community facility that supports expanded youth activities on Bainbridge Island.
- Enhance youth access to confidential medical, counseling and social services on Bainbridge Island.
- Work with "youth-oriented" businesses and organizations on the Island to expand programs, hours of operation and the involvement of youth in shaping the programs and services offered.

## **Next steps in the needs assessment process**

The Steering Committee and the Health, Housing and Human Services Council are in the process of identifying how to move ahead with the Action Team recommendations that require additional research and planning before they can be implemented. It is anticipated HHHS, human service agencies serving Bainbridge Island and any other concerned persons in our community will play key roles as we continue to move from assessment to action.