



**CITY OF KIRKLAND**  
**Department of Parks & Community Services**  
505 Market Street, Suite A, Kirkland, WA 98033 425.587.3300  
[www.ci.kirkland.wa.us](http://www.ci.kirkland.wa.us)

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## MEMORANDUM

**To:** Mayor and Members of Council

**From:** Kirkland Youth Council Leadership

**Date:** April 25, 2006

**Subject:** Kirkland Youth Council Leadership Study Session with Council

The 2005-06 Kirkland Youth Council is in the midst of yet another busy and success filled year. The group began with implementing its new Leadership structure. Seven members were each charged with leading specific projects/topics. So far, it has been quite effective. In October, the Youth Council added 18 new members to bring total membership up to 41. The group's first activity involved the always exciting teambuilding ropes course trip. This got the group ready to tackle its two big projects for the year; the Youth Summit and the Bluefish Festival.

### 2006 Youth Summit

This year's Youth Summit, "This is My Story..." took place at the Lake Washington Technical College on Thursday, March 30, 2006. It was a great success with 200 teens in attendance.

### Bluefish Festival

Last June's Blue Fish Festival was a success. Both the Youth Council and the Teen Union Building are excited to be partnering on this music, art, and dance festival again. This year's Blue Fish is slated for June 10<sup>th</sup> to coincide with the Kirkland Teen Union Building's 5<sup>th</sup> Anniversary.

### Community Service Projects

Each year, the Youth Council sets out to complete four service projects during the school year.

- The first of these projects took place November 19<sup>th</sup>. The Youth Council decided to hold a rummage sale at the Peter Kirk Community Center to raise funds for the hurricane relief efforts.
- In December, the Youth Council returned to the Peter Kirk Community Center to host the 5<sup>th</sup> annual Holly Day brunch. This event has been an extremely rewarding and successful project in the past and the Youth Council hopes to continue the tradition for years to come.
- On March 26<sup>th</sup> the Youth Council took over the Kirkland Plaza Apartments to clean resident's apartments, common areas, and the building's exterior. It was a great success and the residents were so grateful for KYC's work.
- The Youth Council's final service project will be on Saturday, April 29<sup>th</sup>. The group will join in on the Green Kirkland initiative by participating in an ivy pull.

### Kirkland Against Tobacco

A handful of Youth Council members have formed Kirkland Against Tobacco. This is one of six Youth Action Teams in the State that is working to raise awareness of the dangers of tobacco and second hand smoke. These groups are supported by the Department of Health's Tobacco Prevention and Control Program.

KAT has been working closely with the KTUB to have a presence at music shows and dances giving out various anti-tobacco materials to teens. In addition to this, KAT members attended a Media Relations 101 training where they learned about the media, how to use the media, and the influence of media. The training ended with the group shooting a PSA at KOMO studios.

#### Police – Fire – Youth Council Softball Tourney

In a quest to continue to improve relations with both the Police and Fire Departments, the Youth Council hosted its first ever Police – Fire – KYC softball tourney and barbeque May 2005. This event was so much fun for everyone involved, that the Youth Council decided to make it an annual event. This year's event is scheduled for Saturday, May 6<sup>th</sup>.

#### Continuing Projects

*Teen Traffic Court* – The Youth Council continues to serve as judge and jury for the bi-monthly Teen Traffic Court at the Municipal Court. During the 04-05 school year, about 60 teens participated in this program.

*We've Got Issues* – 2004-05 school year was a banner year for the Youth Council's television program, We've Got Issues. The hallmark program dealt with teen house parties. For 2005-06, the Youth Council began with "A Day in the Life Of..." where they followed several people in Kirkland to get a snapshot of a typical day. This program should be airing soon. Up next will be the "Teen Music Scene." This program will look at the diverse music in Kirkland from a teen's perspective. Filming will take place in mid May.

*Superintendent Meetings* – The Youth Council Leadership continues to meet quarterly with Lake Washington School District Superintendent Don Saul. During these meetings a wide variety of issues are covered including implementation of the Level 5 graduation requirements including WASL, school nutritional policies, school levy, and credit concerns.

*City Manager Meetings* – KYC Leadership looks forward to their quarterly meetings with City Manager, Dave Ramsay. Topics that have been discussed include annexation, Totem Lake Mall redevelopment, and emergency preparedness.

*Mini Grants* – Every year, the Youth Council awards \$10,000 in mini grants to area schools and youth serving agencies for one time funding toward small events, projects, and activities that foster Developmental Assets in Kirkland teens. Awards range from \$150-\$750. Programs that have received funding include Japanese Cultural Festival at Juanita High School, programs at the KTUB, community clean ups, musical productions, and several after school programs and clubs.

This is a quick summary of what the Youth Council is and has been working on during the 2005-06 school year. Members of the Youth Council Leadership are looking forward to sharing and discussing event and project details with Council during the Study Session.



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### MEMORANDUM

**To:** David Ramsay, City Manager

**From:** Regi Schubiger, Youth Services Coordinator

**Date:** April 25, 2006

**Subject:** 2006 Youth Summit

The 2006 Kirkland Youth Summit, "This is My Story...", successfully took place on Thursday, March 30<sup>th</sup>. This year's summit took a more personal approach to some very relevant and important issues. Each session focused on personal experiences, stories to illustrate the topic. 200 teens from all over the Kirkland area attended the Summit at the Lake Washington Technical College. Each participant was able to attend three of the five offered workshops during the event; Money, Money, Money, Hatred in the Hallways, Get Out of My Way, Addiction to Nowhere, and Power of the Second Choice.

Youth Council members dedicated a significant amount of time and efforts researching and then selecting the topics for the Summit. They looked at current issues of concern for Kirkland teens and then speakers that could best illustrate that topic avoiding a lecture style presentation. The goal was to make it real to the participants and give them tangible things that they could do to help themselves and/or their friends dealing with these issues.

#### **Money, Money, Money**

This session featured two speakers, Chris Bruntz and Cory Shepard. Chris, Edward Jones Investment Representative and Limited Partner, graduated from Whitman College in 1993 with a degree in Economics, been with Edward Jones for 13 years in the North Bend office. Many of us were already familiar with Cory as the former Director of the Kirkland Teen Union Building. He is currently working with Chris at the Edward Jones Investment Representative in North Bend. This team brought energy, enthusiasm, and real stories to a potentially bland and obscure topic. This session was selected for several reasons. Teens love money and they want more of it. It is estimated that teens spend over \$172 billion per year and 1 out of 3 high school seniors have a credit card. At the same time, 52% of high school seniors have no knowledge of basic finance. As a result, young adults (ages 24 and under) are also the most rapidly growing group of bankruptcy filers in the US.

Cory and Chris addressed credit cards, interest accounts, and retirement plans with the participants. Their focus was increasing teen awareness about these areas so that they could become smarter consumers and make money.

### **Hatred in the Hallways**

Brian Bailey from Youth Eastside Services was the featured presenter in for this session. Brian is the Violence Prevention Supervisor at Youth Eastside Services. Has worked with At-risk and violent youth for the past 10 years. Also has experience working with gangs and juvenile inmates. The Youth Council selected this topic for several reasons. Bullying has been in the spotlight over the last few years. It is an issue. In addition, fighting has been a regular occurrence at school. 33% of LWSD teens were in a fight in the last year. More disturbing is that 35% of teens either walked away from school fights or watched and did not get help.

Brian discussed harassment which included gossiping, physical, sexual, racial and sexual orientation. Of particular interest was the discussion dealing with on-line bullying in blogs and MySpace. Brian also gave the participants helpful steps to combat bullying in a safe manner. This included awareness, forming a peer support group, lead by positive example, and informing an adult when things get really bad.

### **Get Out of My Way**

This session was presented by Firefighter Randy Scott and Sergeant Mike Ursino. Randy is an instructor for the Think Again Program, which informs teens (young adults) about the consequences associated with choices made regarding driving, and drug/alcohol use. Ursino is Kirkland's own traffic guru and collision re-constructionist, with a plethora of information and stories to share with the participants regarding pedestrian safety.

This topic was selected for the obvious reason that kids are driving, riding with someone, or walking in Kirkland. Choices that kids make can and do have life long ramifications for teens. One third of all fatality accidents involved speeding and 25% of crashes involve driving distractions such as cell phones and car stereos. In Washington State, 10% of all motor vehicle related fatalities involved pedestrians.

Sgt Ursino shared several stories of motor vehicle pedestrian accidents in Kirkland. He also gave the participants suggestions on how to walk defensively; pay attention, make sure drivers know when you are crossing, and pay attention.

Firefighter Scott discussed the issue of street racing and seatbelt use. Scott was the first person on scene at the fatality street racing incident on 124<sup>th</sup> three years ago. Randy shared this gut wrenching experience with the participants and encouraged them all to make smart choices.

### **Addiction to Nowhere**

Gray Wolf Ranch is a residential program for young men ages 14 to 25. It is designed as a relatively short term transition (three to four months) for graduates of a chemical dependency treatment program, or young men who have at least 30 consecutive days of abstinence from chemical use. Two of Grey Wolf's current residents came to the Youth Summit to share their stories.

Substance abuse continues to be an issue for teens. Twelve percent of 8<sup>th</sup> graders and 41% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders in the Lake Washington consumed alcohol last year. In addition, 7% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders and 37% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders reported smoking marijuana.

Both guests from Grey Wolf began their session by sharing their personal stories and how they ended up at the facility. This was quite effective as the presenters looked like they could have been participants, not speakers. They spoke candidly about addiction and the consequences of it; incarceration, institutionalization, or death. They spoke about strained relationships with family and friends and their lost dreams. Participants were also given a few suggestions when it comes to addressing a friend's addiction; moral support, tough love, reaffirm gifts and talents, and intervention.

### **Power of Second Choice**

Linda Matherne founded Power of the Second Choice last fall and is currently sharing the Message of Acknowledgement throughout the Puget Sound area. Power of the Second Choice is a movement created to end our silence in the face of suicide through empowerment and acknowledgment.

Last year, 12% of 8<sup>th</sup> graders and 14% of 12<sup>th</sup> graders in Lake Washington School District seriously contemplated suicide. Clearly this is an issue that affects teens in Kirkland.

Linda began with sharing several personal stories involving young people who had attempted suicide. At the last moment they decided to reach out for help from a loved one. Reaching out, saved their lives. The presentation continued with a discussion regarding the fact the suicide is 100% preventable. If we acknowledge that this is an issue and are willing to address it head on, we will make a difference. We need to create an environment where people are not ashamed to talk about suicide.

The session continued with helpful hints to move toward acknowledgement. Suggestions included; suicide summit, peer support group, school based suicide prevention programs, and support group at the teen center.

All participants were asked to give suggested topics/issues that the Youth Council should address. These included teen sexuality, eating disorders, gambling, decision making, success in school, and

nutrition. Youth Council members will use this list for future We've Got Issue programs as well as other projects.

Participant evaluation forms came back overwhelmingly positive. Youth Council members heard repeatedly that the event was not only interesting but informative and helpful as well. The participants could relate to the speakers and their stories. The discussions gave them insight and helpful suggestions. Clearly the Youth Council met their goal.