

## The Operative Word Is TEMPORARY

# A Coalition Is A Temporary Alliance To Solve A Problem

The Quincy Sun this week introduces a new feature on Impact Quincy. The column will highlight some of the projects and endeavors that Impact Quincy is involved in to create more

**By ARTHUR KEOUGH**  
Almost twenty-two years ago a very intrepid band of people got together to do something about substance abuse; and they called themselves a COALITION.

Some were there because their lives were personally touched by the problem; others were there because their work brought them "up close and personal" with the problem. The police were there; and the city hospital was there; the assisting agencies were there; and they called themselves a COALITION.

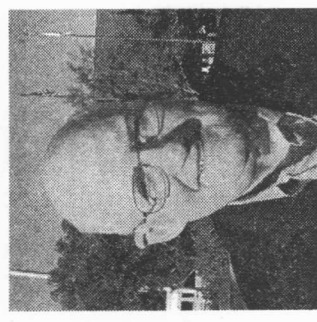
In the beginning, the problem, which the group determined, was alcohol; and their goal was to create strategies to deal with that problem on a City-wide level. Out of the hours of discussion and debate, IMPACT QUINCY was born. It would be the grassroots organization to bring awareness to the community.

did decline; and IMPACT QUINCY became a recognized success.

Now flash forward to the present. We see another intrepid band of people getting together to do something about the problem of substance abuse; and they call themselves a COALITION.

The problem of today is hard drug addiction - heroin to be precise. More young people are becoming addicted and more overdoses are being recorded. It is difficult to find middle-aged addicts because most of them are dead. Today's COALITION attempts to build on the grassroots work of the past.

Reaching out to the health care first responders, training session were conducted. A month-long, public awareness, multi-media campaign on the danger of prescription drugs in the home medicine cabinet was



**ARTHUR KEOUGH**

If the COALITION were asked then whether or not they knew what they were doing, a resounding answer would have been "NO!" No one was a community organizer. The coalition was made up of individual policemen, hospital workers, teachers, agency directors, and concerned parents.

None of them really understood grassroots organizing. But as the weeks and the months and the years rolled by, significant headway was accomplished. The community awareness was achieved. Teenage drinking

organized. Currently, a Social Marketing Campaign with Quincy young adults is being developed.

The goal of this Campaign will be to discourage young adults from buying alcohol for minors. Finally, the Impact Quincy Peer Advocates have been formed, and they will use social media to reach their peers on issues of substance abuse. In all, the COALITION is building on its 20 plus years of existence.

The names of the individuals have changed; the participating organization are different; the problem has found a new, and more terrible face; and a temporary alliance has become something of a permanent fixture in the community. The COALITION continues because of the dedication and commitment of the individual members.

Nothing could be accomplished without them. They are all true heroes.

## Impact Quincy:

### A Community-Based Coalition

Impact Quincy (IQ), a program of Bay State Community Services, founded in 1991, is a community-based coalition consisting of educational, health, law enforcement, religious, professional and business organizations dedicated to fostering an environment which strengthens communications and relationships within the community.

Impact Quincy provides opportunities for the creation and support of community

collaborations which promote and sustain a drug-free community and healthy living. This collaboration with key members of the Quincy community is invaluable to IQ's efforts.

IQ is currently working

on three initiatives. First, a substance abuse prevention program to educate the Quincy community about responsible choices regarding underage drinking.

The second initiative is promoting a social marketing campaign to educate students and parents of middle school in Quincy to promote and reinforce healthy behaviors. The third initiative addresses the issue of opioid overdose in the City of Quincy.

IQ is funded by the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, Bureau of Substance Abuse Services, and by the Office of National Drug Control Policy, Drug-Free Community Program.

Impact Quincy