

What are Circle Talks? Circle Talks are informal gatherings of friends and acquaintances, to openly discuss issues that youth are dealing with as they enter the young adulthood years. No one ever said raising a child would be easy and many didn't fully realize the various additional challenges that they would face as children grow into young adults. The goal of a Circle Talk is to address this and more.

As a parent, who can you turn to for support in difficult situations? If you have a child that is experimenting with drugs or alcohol, do you have friends you can lean on for support or do you find it a personal matter and maybe even feel ashamed? What are the community resources available to you? What if your child tells you something of concern and you want to follow up on it or what if you are concerned about someone else's child? These are just some of the questions that will be up for discussions at Circle Talks.

How do they work? The idea is to gather together with friends who are in your own social circle, in an informal setting, to open up dialogue around the subject of youth and issues facing them. What is the importance of doing this? It raises awareness but also develops communication and builds safety nets for families and the community as a whole. Much like the old mentality that "It takes a village to raise a child," these 'talks' will help us build our community's awareness of available supports while increasing our ability to talk about difficult issues and openly discuss solutions.

On February 2nd at 5:30 p.m., a focus group of parents, grandparents and other concerned adults will meet to develop the concept further for the Raymond community. The committee will meet two additional times to advise and revise the format for our volunteer Circle Talk hosts. This coming spring these talks will be taking place in homes throughout the community with volunteers available to facilitate the talks and incentives being offered for families who offer to host 'Talks' in their homes. Hosts can be a parent, grandparent, or concerned neighbor who is willing to have a small group of friends over to share in the dialogue. If you would like more information, want to be a part of the planning in February or are interested in hosting a 'Talk' in your home this coming spring, please contact The Raymond Coalition for Youth office at info@rcfy.org or 895 4735 x 125 www.rcfy.org or check us out on FaceBook.