Welcome to the 16th Madison County Youth Forum

“HUGS NOT DRUGS”
Madison County Youth Forum

Hugs not Drugs
Influences of Alcohol Use
Influences of Alcohol Use

**Problem:**

The average age students in Madison County begin drinking regularly is 16. Teens are bombarded by a number of factors that influence their decision to use and abuse alcohol.
Influences of Alcohol Use

Areas of Concern:

- Internal reasons students use
  - To reduce stress, as a coping mechanism
  - Depression
  - For fun, or it feels good
  - Boredom and curiosity
- Community influences
  - Kids grow up around alcohol use
  - Family and parents use, never ending cycle
  - Alcohol is not seen as being as harmful as other substances
- Media and society
  - Glorified by pop culture (music, movies, television)
  - Promoting social drinking and smoking
- Peer pressure
  - More likely to use if your friends use
  - To have fun and show off
  - To fit in with friends
  - To be popular
SOLUTION 1: Require students to sign up for at least 2 extra curricular activities to keep them busy and for social interaction with peers.
**SOLUTION 2:** Increase assemblies in high schools that appeal to the youth with eye opening speakers that have previous experiences with alcohol abuse/substance abuse.
SOLUTION 3: Provide students with an anonymous way to express their feelings such as an “Ask Alice” column in the weekly newspaper or during the weekly announcements. Students will anonymously write about a problem they are having and a counselor will write them back with advice or a solution to their problem. This will help them cope with stressful situations that might lead them abuse alcohol.
Access to Alcohol
Access to Alcohol

Problem:

In Madison County, 65% of 12th graders reported alcohol use in the last year. Teens report easy access to alcohol from a variety of sources in the community.
Access to Alcohol

Areas of Concern:

- **Family**
  - Parents provide alcohol with permission to their teens
  - Teens steal from their homes
  - Bought by older siblings

- **Stores**
  - Teens use fake IDs to purchase alcohol
  - Store clerks are not strict on carding
  - Teens steal alcohol then give or resell it to their friends

- **Peers and friends**
  - Alcohol provided at parties
  - From friends

- **School and community response**
  - Perceived lack of consequences for students that use drugs
  - Perceived “slap on the wrist” punishments from schools and police
SOLUTION 1: Collaborate between school districts to make stricter and more consistent consequences for alcohol use

GOAL: To form a countywide coalition that meets regularly to discuss and implement consistent policies regarding alcohol

Students from each school will collaborate to come up with strict, consistent consequences and present their ideas at school board meetings.
SOLUTION 2: Promote awareness and surveillance of local party locations such as barns, open fields, parking lots. Students will bring petitions regarding surveillance of party locations in their communities to county board meetings.
SOLUTION 3: Media advocacy to educate parents on dangers and problems with alcohol

- Produce a video using statistics, personal stories, and information on the realities of underage drinking and the problems and harmful effects it can cause
- Will also educate parents on how teens are getting access to alcohol and how to prevent it
- Will promote stronger, more honest relationships between parents and kids
Influences of Marijuana Use
Influences of Marijuana Use

Problem:
On average, students who use marijuana begin at the age of 15. Teens are bombarded by a number of factors that influence their decision to use and abuse marijuana.
Influences of Marijuana Use

Areas of Concern:

- **Internal reasons students use**
  - To reduce stress, as a coping mechanism
  - Depression
  - For fun, or it feels good
  - Boredom and curiosity

- **Community influences**
  - Kids grow up around drug use
  - Normalized
  - Family and parents use, never ending cycle

- **Media and society**
  - Glorified by pop culture (music, movies, television)
  - Promoting social drinking and smoking
  - Marijuana seen as more “natural” and not as dangerous as other drugs

- **Peer pressure**
  - More likely to use if your friends use
  - To have fun and show off
  - To fit in with friends
  - To be popular
SOLUTION 1: School budgets for more events that keep students away from bad influences like marijuana. Example: “After Prom” and “Edwardsville High’ Tailgate event by EPIC”
SOLUTION 2: Improve education on marijuana and effects. Educate younger (5th grade), use real life stories from people that have suffered consequences, use a “peers teaching peers” presentation, reiterate teaching of the material.
SOLUTION 3: Have all schools in the county implement block schedules. This would create less demand on students; reduce their stress which would decrease use.
Access to Marijuana

GROUP 4
Access to Marijuana

Problem:

In Madison County, 37% of 12\textsuperscript{th} grade students reported using marijuana in the last year. Teens also report easy access to marijuana from a variety of sources in the community.
Access to Marijuana

Areas of Concern:

- **Family**
  - Parents knowingly provide drugs to their teens
  - Bought by older siblings

- **Peers and friends**
  - Marijuana provided at parties
  - From friends
  - From dealers, other teens or older, college aged dealers

- **School and community response**
  - Perceived lack of consequences for students that use drugs
  - Perceived “slap on the wrist” punishments from schools and police
SOLUTION 1: Informational session for families to be able to speak with their own family about marijuana.

Guidelines how to start a conversation

Send a link to parents from the school

Social media
SOLUTION 2: Creating more awareness for the Madison County Hotline, promoting that it will be anonymous.

- Make a movie that is relatable and shocking that highlights consequences.
Access to Marijuana

- **SOLUTION 3**: Strict consequences for community and schools made more public
- More drug awareness in health classes with peer influence
  - Every other Friday for example have a discussion about drugs
Influences of Tobacco Use
Influences of Tobacco Use

**Problem:**

Of those that use tobacco products, the average age of their first use is 14 years old. Teens are bombarded by a number of factors that influence their decision to use tobacco.
Influences of Tobacco Use

Areas of Concern:

- Internal reasons students use
  - To reduce stress, as a coping mechanism
  - Depression
  - For fun, or it feels good
  - Boredom and curiosity

- Community influences
  - Kids grow up around drug use
  - Normalized
  - Family and parents use, never ending cycle
  - Tobacco use common in the community

- Media and society
  - Glorified by pop culture (music, movies, television)
  - Promoting social drinking and smoking

- Peer pressure
  - More likely to use if your friends use
  - To have fun and show off
  - To fit in with friends
  - To be popular
Influences of Tobacco Use

SOLUTION 1: Educate people on how it can affect your health.
Influences of Tobacco Use

SOLUTION 2: Enforce consequences.
Influences of Tobacco Use

SOLUTION 3: Be a leader in your school and community.
Access to Tobacco
Access to Tobacco

**Problem:**

In Madison County, 20% of 12th grade students reported using tobacco in the last year. Teens report easy access to tobacco products from a variety of sources in the community.
Access to Tobacco

Areas of Concern:

- Family
  - Parents provide tobacco products to their teens
  - Teens steal from their homes
  - Bought by older siblings

- Stores
  - Teens use fake IDs to purchase tobacco
  - Store clerks are not strict on carding
  - Purchase e-cigs and other tobacco products online

- Peers and friends
  - Cigarettes provided at parties
  - From friends

- School and community response
  - Perceived lack of consequences for students that use drugs
  - Perceived “slap on the wrist” punishments from schools and police
  - Normal to smoke in the bathroom or elsewhere on school grounds
Access to Tobacco

SOLUTION 1: Higher Consequences for Tobacco Use-

- Promotion of equal and stricter standards for all members and students in the community, regardless of the social or economic standpoints of rule breakers.
- Dealers and users need to be punished fully, and ignorance in certain situations (athletes) should be eliminated.
SOLUTION 2: Promotion of Negative Effects -

- Reach out to student clubs and organizations to create a school-wide stigma over the use of tobacco products such as chewing tobacco, electronic cigarettes, hookah bars, cigarillos, and all other various products.

- Give examples of the unattractiveness of tobacco in all aspects of life such as the ads on TV. Use school social medias to post things about the negative effects of tobacco to each community’s various students.
SOLUTION 3: Education and Awareness-

- Use platforms such as Twitter, Instagram, Facebook, and school websites to have anti-tobacco ads.

- Another possible partnership could be with social media, radio applications, public radio, and area news channels to show ads and talk about the general facts of tobacco usage in order to inform the area.

- On a nation wide note, a solution could be to partner with television channels such as Disney to show ads generated for the youth in order to start awareness at an early age.
Influences of Prescription Drug Abuse
Influences of Prescription Drug Abuse

Problem:
Teens are bombarded by a number of factors that influence their decision to use and abuse prescription drugs, such as pain killers, Xanax, Codeine, and Adderall.
Influences of Prescription Drug Abuse

Areas of Concern:

- **Internal reasons students use**
  - To reduce stress, as a coping mechanism
  - Depression
  - For fun, or it feels good
  - Boredom and curiosity

- **Community influences**
  - Kids grow up around drug use
  - Normalized
  - Family and parents use, never ending cycle

- **Media and society**
  - Glorified by pop culture (music, movies, television)
  - Promoting social drinking and smoking

- **Peer pressure**
  - More likely to use if your friends use
  - To have fun and show off
  - To fit in with friends
  - To be popular
Influences of Prescription Drug Abuse

SOLUTION 1: better testing of individuals, should be unplanned, consistent, and random, if an individual fails the test there should be harsher consequences rather than getting a slap on the wrist.

Rules will apply to student organizations and athletics.
SOLUTION 2:

- Have students who have been affected by prescription drug abuse act in videos (using the Human Angle) to be shown before class in the morning
  - Teachers must show the video
- Open a texting hotline for concerned students, making it available to all students without the fear of getting in trouble for reporting.
  - Made available through the schools and/or the Health Department
SOLUTION 3: Distribute information to parents in print and video format

- Students who are in clubs who are in need of volunteer hours will be able to participate in making the print media and videos.

- The flyers and videos will be explaining behaviors, prevention and side effects to educate parents.
Access to Prescription Drugs

GROUP 8
Problem:

In Madison County, 12% of 12th grade students reported using any prescription drug to get high in the last year. Teens report easy access to prescription drugs from a variety of sources in the community.
Access to Prescription Drugs

Areas of Concern:

- **Family**
  - Prescription pills “just there”
  - Taken from medicine cabinets in their homes or homes of friends and family
- **Stores**
  - Order online
- **Peers and friends**
  - Pills found at parties
  - From friends
  - Dealers, other teens or older individuals

- **School and community response**
  - Perceived lack of consequences for students that use drugs
  - “Slap on the wrist” punishments from schools and police
  - Students come to school after using or use at school
Access to Prescription Drugs

- SOLUTION 1: School:
  - Nurses need stricter rules to give out medicine to students, registered medications
  - Mandatory drug tests for all students, not just a threat, not just to athletes
  - Teacher/counselor education to be aware of drug awareness
  - Anonymous tip-line/reporting for students that are or might be taking drugs, simple box for the students to drop off a note, located by other popular locations so nobody questions why you’re in a designated area (counselors office/nurses office), which means that the school must follow up with consequences
Access to Prescription Drugs

- SOLUTION 2: Friends/family/community
  - Secured access to grandma’s medicine
  - Don’t leave boxes of medicine around the house
  - Awareness of Expiration dates
  - Flyers out to students and their families
  - Easy access to Drop-Off Boxes for old and extra prescription in multiple areas of the community
SOLUTION 3: doctors/pharmacy:
- someone else to agree or sign off on written prescriptions
- authorized people to pick up your prescriptions with ID-local pharmacies,
- Reduced refills and amount per prescription so there isn’t as much leftovers
- “Take as needed” know how much an individual would actually need for a certain ailment
OPEN DISCUSSION

16th Madison County Youth Forum
Thank you for attending!

Hugs not Drugs