

Drug abuse

Area students feel national push toward stomping out drugs not doing the trick

(EDITOR'S NOTE: The following story has not been written to imply there is a drug or alcohol problem at either Dallas or Lake Lehman high school, but to ask the students for their response to drug use warnings and programs that have been initiated nationwide.)

By JOHN HOINSKI
Staff Writer

The echoing message that is car-

rying across the country to combat drug abuse is clear and simple enough for anyone to understand, "Say no to drugs."

Billions of dollars have been spent to spread the word and personalities ranging from the President of the United States to sports heroes have offered their time to advocate it. But how much of an impact is the slogan really having on our youth?

Last week, students at Dallas and Lake Lehman High Schools were

asked that question and others, and although most agree there is an abuse problem in the country, they feel the message is only moderately effective.

"I think it works as far as people want it to help," said one student from Dallas. "It's up to the individual. If kids want to do drugs they are going to do them no matter what anyone says. They may listen to some things, but when they are warned about something they are

already into, they won't listen because they don't think it applies to them."

But to what extent does the problem exist involving high school students?

Ironically, while legislators and the media have bombarded the public with drug-related stories, all of the students interviewed say that alcohol, and not drug abuse, is the real problem facing high schoolers.

"There are kids in school who do

drugs," said a Lehman senior, "but I wouldn't say it's a problem. People use drugs in all schools and occupations. I think there is even less of a problem here at Lehman than at most schools, but a lot of kids do use alcohol."

At Dallas, students also say that alcohol is the No. 1 problem at their school, too, and in fact, have noticed a decrease in drug use over the past three years.

Said one Dallas senior, "The foot-

ball players have been getting on those people who are into drugs and are trying to push it on the younger kids. They have broken up a few parties already. If the person doing the drugs doesn't like it, well, then, they have to deal with them (the players.)"

Said a junior from Dallas, "You could see the difference between this year and last year alone. Last

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Programs teach students to cope

Accepting or rejecting drugs and alcohol is not as simple as a "yes" or "no" answer. It's a complicated decision that takes in a number of factors that can put a heavy strain on the mind of a teenager.

To help ease that strain, a program entitled 'Here's Looking At You Two,' is being taught in both the Dallas and Lake-Lehman School Districts and is geared toward making students aware of the consequences of their choices.

"Everything we teach in the program is aimed toward the total wellness of the individual," explained Dallas health educational instructor Larry Schuler. "Educating students about the dangers of drugs and alcohol is only a part of the program. We get into the drugs and smoking phase in the seventh grade and then we gradually bring them along."

"They are taught to develop attitudes and self-esteem, how to deal with peer pressure and how to mold their coping skills, so that by the time they are in junior high they are already involved in decision-making and are aware of the consequences of their decisions."

At Lehman, the program is basically the same, but also includes a "Think Drink Game"

"It's a game we use in the junior high school," said Wilma Schierer, health instructor. "It's a game with cards and a wheel that shows the blood alcohol content, and it is effective. It shows the number of drinks a certain body weight can handle before the senses begin to be altered. Kids are amazed to find out how fast they can be affected."

The program, which started four years ago at both schools, is taught

in grades K-10 at Dallas and K-8 at Lehman, although a high school follow-up class is currently being studied. One method both schools use on the high school level to reinforce earlier instructions is spot programming films.

"We had one just before the prom last year," explained Schuler. "Then we wanted to make an announcement following the film but the microphone went dead. We didn't even need it. You could hear a pin drop, that's how much of an impact it (the film) had."

Even though instructors at both schools feel their respective programs could improve on all levels, there is one problem they say will never be eliminated — alcohol abuse.

"You won't ever be able to change that," said Schierer. "So you have to do the next best thing. You have to teach them when to say 'no.' It's a social thing and it is always going to be around."

Schuler agrees. "You have to teach kids how to drink," he said. "That might sound like an off the wall statement, but it's true. Just because somebody turns 21 doesn't mean they automatically know how to drink. First, they have to be taught how to use it."

Added Sally Kennard, another health education teacher at Dallas, "What we are doing is providing them with a knowledgeable opinion and a knowledgeable option. We are asking them to make adult decisions with adolescent minds. I'm not saying that they aren't mature, but we are still dealing with young people. We just hope they make the choice that will be the least harmful to them."

— JOHN HOINSKI



Dallas Post/Jane Renn

Showpiece

This family from Philadelphia stands proudly with their Harley-Davidson in the parking lot at Joe's Grotto at Harveys Lake. The three are members of the Harley-Davidson Dresser and Touring Association which converged on the Wyoming Valley

area to participate in a three-day convention at the Woodlands Inn and Resort in Wilkes-Barre Township. More than 100 motorcycles made their way through the Back Mountain and around Harveys Lake last Thursday before stopping at the Grotto for lunch.

Attendance at this contest was over 'bear' ing

By CHARLOT M. DENMON
Staff Correspondent

Hundreds of men, women and children visited the Third Annual Teddy Bear Contest sponsored by the Overbrook Marketplace, Overbrook Avenue, Dallas on Sunday.

The contest, started three years ago by the management of the Bay Window and The Porches, drew residents from the Back Mountain, Wyoming Valley, Pittston, and visitors in the area from as far away as Florida, New Jersey and California.

Handcrafts, and other items were exhibited and there were food and beverage stands open

during the entire day. A Bear House, Halloween Bear Parade and face painting proved to be popular with the children.

A large Puppet Teddy Bear, donated by The Bay Window and The Porches, was raffled and the entire proceeds of more than \$50 was turned over to the Noy Aug Park Zoo.

The Teddy Bear Contest was divided into five categories — Largest, Best Holiday Dressed, Smallest Jointed Bear, Best Dressed Female Bear and the Best Dressed Male Bear.

Judging began at 2 p.m. with the first category, the Largest Bear. Winner of this category was declared a draw since there were two identical huge, white bears entered. Winners were Michael Lee Roth and Clarice Coyne.

In the Best Dressed Holiday Bear category, there were only three entries, Michael Lee Roth, Halloween Bear; Jennifer Kovacs, Christmas Bear; and Sharon Ormando, Christmas Bear. Jennifer Kovacs was winner of this category.

Michael Lee Roth's entry was winner of the Smallest Jointed Bear. The Best Dressed Female Bear was the bear entered by Michelle Kline of Nanticoke and the Best Dressed Male Bear category was won by Alexis Shipula of Hanover Township.

Dozens of bears of all sizes and colors, dressed in various costumes were entered in the contest. Free lollipops were presented to each contestant.



Dallas Post/Charlot M. Denmon

Furry friend

This little dog, who accompanied his master to the Third Annual Teddy Bear Day on Sunday, was the hit of the day as he entertained children. The Teddy Bear Day was sponsored by the Bay Window Shoppes and The Porches.



Dallas Post/Donna Suttiff

Gizmo Express

Gizmo's Rebel Express, engineered by "Gizmo the Clown," prepares to begin one of its rides Sunday on the campus of College Misericordia. Gizmo and his train were part of the Great Balloon Race sponsored by Custom Management Corporation and benefitting area non-profit organizations.

Story completed

In an article entitled 'Police try to halt speeding' in the September 24 issue of The Dallas Post, the last sentence of the story was inadvertently deleted. The full paragraph should have read as follows:

In other business, the board: Met with officials from the Dallas Acme concerning the traffic problem with motorists pulling out of the lot onto Church and Foster Streets which about it, causing traffic congestion. Borough Solicitor Jack Fine will meet with Acme officials in the near future to help clear up the problem.

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