

# THE IMPORTANCE OF ADULTS IN THE LIVES OF CHILDREN

JANUARY 2004

## UPCOMING PARENT PROGRAMS

### DID YOU KNOW?

- On school days, between 3pm—6 pm, violent juvenile crime triples. (US. Dept. of Justice, 1998)
- The most common time for youth to engage in sexual activity is between 3 and 6 pm. (Schools Out Consortium, 1995)
- Children who are unsupervised for 11+ hours/week are twice as likely to use alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs (ATOD).

The Greater Herndon Community Coalition (GHCC) will be sponsoring two Parent Programs. The first program highlights the AP/Honors Program at Herndon High School. The program will be held on Wednesday, January 21st at 7:00 pm at Herndon High School (701 Bennett St., Herndon).

The AP/Honors program is strong and growing. Currently, there are two programs that offer students the opportunity to pursue college-level courses while still attending high school. AP (Advanced Placement) is the program that is offered at Herndon High School. Nearly 60% of high schools in the U.S. participate in the AP program. More than 90% of colleges have a policy granting students credit, placement, or both for qualifying AP Exam grades. The other college-level program offered in some schools is IB (International Baccalaureate).

Parents can attend this program to find out about which courses offer Honors and/or AP. Understanding the differences in courses is often confusing and

this is a perfect opportunity to find out more information about taking a more challenging academic course load.

The second Parent Program that GHCC will be sponsoring is entitled How to Motivate the Unmotivated Student. This program will be held on Wednesday, March 24th at 7:00 pm at Herndon High School. Our guest will be Dr. Peter Spevak who is the Director for the Center for Applied Motivation.

Dr. Spevak writes that broadly speaking, under-achievers are individuals who do not consistently apply effort and are working far below their potential. Their problem is not ability, but attitude. By their actions, they deny that today impacts on tomorrow. He is also the co-author of *Empowering Under-achievers: How to Guide Failing Kids (8-18) to Personal Excellence* (New Horizon Press).

Please mark your calendars and pass the word to your neighbors and friends about our upcoming Parent Programs. We look forward to seeing you on January 21st and March 24th at 7:00 pm at Herndon High School.

## WHO IS GHCC?

The Greater Herndon Community Coalition (GHCC) is a group of parents, teachers, and community members whose focus is to educate, inform, and take a leadership role in coordinating the Herndon High Pyramid schools and communities. Last year, we co-sponsored the Herndon High Homecoming Parade, co-sponsored five Parent Workshops, created HCTV shows on subjects regarding our children and our community, sponsored after-school programs at the elementary and middle schools, and sponsored student peer mediation programs..

For more information on GHCC or to become involved—contact John Werner at 703.810.2203 or via email—[John.Werner@fcps.edu](mailto:John.Werner@fcps.edu)

### OUR MISSION

*Out of concern for the safety and well-being of all children in our community, members of the GHCC believe that we must unite our efforts to support all young people with regard to character issues that will help foster drug/alcohol prevention and violence prevention in the Greater Herndon Community.*

## TALK TO YOUR CHILDREN ABOUT MARIJUANA

Here are some facts about Marijuana—

- ♦ Many more kids use marijuana than any other illicit drug by far
- ♦ In the past decade, the number of 8th graders who have used marijuana has doubled.
- ♦ Marijuana today is more potent and its effects can be more intense.
- ♦ Even short-term marijuana use has been linked to memory loss and difficulty with problem solving.

**What can you do to keep your kids away from Marijuana?**

- ♦ Be involved in your kids' lives. Ask *who*, *what*, *when*, and *where*.

- ♦ Know who your child's friends are, what your child is doing, when they'll be home, and where they're going.
- ♦ Set a firm rule of no drug use in your family.

**What to say if your child says:**

- ♦ *"It's not addictive."* More kids enter drug treatment for marijuana than for all other illicit drugs combined.
- ♦ *"Marijuana is harmless."* Smoking marijuana is at least as bad as smoking cigarettes, and you already know how dangerous tobacco is to your health.



You can help keep your kids safe from drugs. Two-thirds of kids say that losing their parents' respect is one of the main reasons they don't use drugs.

## GIVING KIDS THE ABILITY TO SAY NO

Why do some kids grow up with ease, while others struggle? Many factors influence why some young people have successes in life and why others have a hard time. The Search Institute believes that if kids are given positive assets they can make wise decisions, choose positive paths, and grow up competent, caring, and responsible.

They need **Support** from their families and many others, especially the adults in their lives. They need feel **Empowerment** that they are valued in their community. They need to be given **Boundaries and Expectations** to know

what is "out of bound" behavior. Their free time needs to be a **Constructive use of time**.

A **Commitment to learning** helps them develop a lifelong commitment to education. **Positive values** help them develop strong values that guide their decision making. Young people need **Social competencies** that equip them to make positive choices in relationships. And, a **Positive identity** gives them a strong sense of their own power, purpose, worth, and promise.

Take the time to talk to your kids. Get involved in their lives. Know who your kids' friends are.

*You can make a difference in a child's life!*

## DRUG/ALCOHOL INFORMATION PRESENTATION

Would your community group or organization want to have a Drug & Alcohol presentation given to your group? The GHCC has two presenters who are Fairfax County Drug Awareness Presenters who will give a Drug & Alcohol information session free of charge. They will show you what kids are using and drinking. They discuss ways to use any moment to open a dialogue with kids about risky behavior; indeed, there are "no ordinary moments." For more information, contact Mr. John Werner at 703.810.2203.

