



D & A News

Lawrence County Drug and Alcohol Commission, Inc.
(Single County Authority)

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Charlotte Sheffield Recognized for Board Service

Charlotte Sheffield was recently recognized for six-years of service on the Lawrence County Drug and Alcohol Commission (SCA) Board of Directors, serving as Board President for the past three and a half years. During her presidency, the SCA implemented drug and alcohol intervention and treatment services in the Lawrence County Jail, a Middle and Elementary Student Assistance Program (K-6), and the Comprehensive Tobacco Control Program. Charlotte is the owner of Sheffield's Funeral Home and recently was elected to the New Castle School Board. The SCA Board and staff are extremely grateful to Charlotte for her dedication to our community.



Thomas Johnston (current Board President) presents a plaque to Charlotte Sheffield (former Board President) in recognition of six years of service.

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Lawrence County Students are Too Good For Drugs

As drug and alcohol use continues to be an issue in Lawrence County, many school districts are taking action to prevent such activity among their students. Six Lawrence County school districts have joined forces with the Lawrence County Drug and Alcohol Commission to provide a ten-lesson program titled, *Too Good For Drugs II (TGFD)*. During the 2003-04 school year, approximately 2200 students have completed or are currently involved in the *TGFD* program in our county.

Raschelle Smith, Kevin Webb, and Tracey Rodgers, Prevention Specialists, deliver weekly presentations using the *TGFD* curriculum. Developed by the Mendez Foundation, *Too Good For Drugs II* focuses on teaching children about goal-setting, decision-making, bonding with others, identifying and managing emotions, and communicating effectively. The curriculum also includes information about the harmful effects of the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, as well as healthy alternatives to such use.

Too Good For Drugs II encourages children's participation in classroom activities to give them practical, hands-on experience with the concepts being taught. Activities include role-playing and refusing peer pressure to use alcohol, tobacco or other drugs. In addition, cooperative learning strategies and group discussion are used to teach children the importance of effective social and communication skills and to promote positive bonding with peers. (Continued on page 2)

MESAP – Middle and Elementary Student Assistance Program

The MESAP program is provided in conjunction with the Human Services Center and funded through HealthChoices Reinvestment. Implemented in November 2001, it has made a positive impact within the participating schools. The drug and alcohol portion of MESAP services are provided by Julie Jendrysik, Student Assistance Program Specialist (K-6).

MESAP is currently being provided in nine elementary schools in Lawrence County. Referrals for the program are made by guidance counselors, principals, teachers, parents/guardians, and school nurses. Concentrating on “at-risk” children from Kindergarten to sixth grade, MESAP focuses on self-esteem, stress and anger management, drugs and alcohol, and other social issues. Each child is assessed to determine his/her specific needs. If there is a need for services beyond the drug and alcohol MESAP program, the MESAP Specialist works with both school personnel and parents to meet these needs. The goal of this program is to provide the students with coping skills and information that may decrease the number of adolescents/children who turn to drugs and alcohol to escape life’s problems.

SAP - Student Assistance Program

SAP is a program that is geared for “at-risk” youth in seventh through twelfth grade. SAP is designed to assist school personnel in identifying issues that pose a barrier to students’ learning and school success. In each school, SAP-trained school personnel comprise a core team, along with representatives from county agencies. Referrals are made by guidance counselors, principals, teachers, parents/guardians, school nurse as well as students. The core team decides whether the youth should be tracked, and if so, tracking sheets are distributed to all the student’s teachers. Tracking sheets ask for information regarding observed changes in academics, behavior, peer groups, etc. If the sheets show evidence of a problem, additional services are requested.

The Lawrence County Drug and Alcohol Commission (SCA) is represented by Tarra DeRosa, Student Assistance Program Specialist (7-12), on the core teams of all eight county school districts and Lawrence County Vo-Tech. Once parental permission is obtained, the SAP representative evaluates the student to determine the need for drug and alcohol services, such as outpatient, inpatient, or intervention. Length of stay, selection of provider, follow up and financial assistance are also determined at the time of the assessment. If consent is given by the student, the SAP representative reports back to the core team about the status of the student.

Utilizing HealthChoices Reinvestment funding, the Lawrence County SCA recently contracted with Catholic Charities to provide adolescent intervention services. These services are geared towards adolescents that may have a lack of knowledge regarding substance abuse, violated school drug and alcohol policy, or are in need of education to prevent further issues. Currently, Catholic Charities is providing services at their facility and in one county school. If you are interested in intervention services, please contact Tarra DeRosa or Darcy McKinney at 724-658-5580.

Lawrence County Students are *Too Good For Drugs* (cont. from page 1)

Too Good For Drugs II was selected based on its high rate of success. An evidence-based program, TGFD has proven to reduce students’ intentions to: smoke cigarettes by 33% for middle school and 58% for high school, drink alcohol by 38% for middle school and 50% for high school, smoke marijuana by 25% for middle school and 45% for high school, and get into fights by 45% for high school students.

Puppet Show Teaches Children the Dangers of Tobacco

In January 2003, Lawrence County Drug and Alcohol Commission's Tobacco Control Program developed a partnership with Lawrence County Cares. Through this collaboration and through the use of the "On Applebee Pond" puppet program, we have been able to impact over 3000 students regarding the dangers of tobacco use. The program, developed by the Mercer County Behavioral Health Commission, Inc., provides tobacco prevention education to primary students (K-3rd grade) in our public and parochial schools. Lawrence County Cares utilizes the BUSTED! youth movement members as the puppeteers.

The "On Applebee Pond" puppets teach the children the dangers of using tobacco, the problems that can occur from the use of tobacco, the harmful effects of secondhand smoke, what it means to be "hooked", and how to say "NO" to those who ask them to smoke a cigarette or chew tobacco.

During this school year, students will be provided with a new message that suggests ways children can ask a parent, relative, friends or someone they love to stop smoking. The students are excited when they see the BUSTED! youth, and Joe Sarbo and Stacey Cox of Lawrence County Cares returning with a new story from Applebee Pond. The students remember what happened at Applebee Pond last year and are eager to see what is happening this year.

These educational and delightful stories of Arnold and his friends at Applebee Pond have a wonderful way of reaching the children. The pond creatures have definitely impacted our Lawrence County youth in combating the dangers of tobacco and promote healthy lifestyles.



On Applebee Pond Puppeteers:

Nicole Christian, Jenny Michlich, Aleigha Cavalier, and Josh Ross



Staff:

Seated: Tracey Rodgers (Tobacco Prevention Specialist) and Tarra DeRosa (Student Assistance Program Specialist 7-12)
Standing: Julie Jendrysik (Student Assistance Program Specialist K-6)

Rhianna Slagle wins State Poster Contest



Rhianna Slagle, a first-grade student from New Castle and a local winner of the Lawrence County Drug and Alcohol Commission's 2003 Alcohol Awareness Poster Program, won at the state level of the Pennsylvania Liquor Control Board (PLCB) competition. Overall, about 1500 posters were entered in the state contest, and Rhianna's poster was judged against those drawn by other kindergarten students. Rhianna was invited to an awards ceremony held in Harrisburg during the fall of 2003, and her poster is featured in a PLCB screensaver. The screensaver can be downloaded at <http://www.lcb.state.pa.us/edu/youth/Index.asp>.

**Lawrence County Drug and Alcohol
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Educational Presentations Available

LCDAC staff is available to provide educational presentations regarding alcohol, tobacco, or other drugs. If your group is interested, please call Michele Orłowski at 724-658-5580.

Treatment Available

Do you know someone who has a problem with alcohol or drugs? The LCDAC Case Management staff can help! We'll provide a free confidential assessment and referral. Based on eligibility, we have funding available for treatment services. Call 724-658-5580.

Educational Material Available

The LCDAC is a Regional Alcohol and Drug Awareness Resource (RADAR) Network Associate Center, affiliated with the PA Department of Health. As a RADAR site, we can provide you with free pamphlets, posters, and other materials regarding alcohol, tobacco, drug, and other health-related issues. For more information, please call Kevin Webb at 724-658-5580.

To add your name to our newsletter mailing list, call Raschelle Smith at 724-658-5580.