S.A.F.E. GRANT COUNTY COALITION

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Another Successful Youth Leadership Conference

The S.A.F.E. Grant County Coalition held their annual Youth Leadership Conference at Bethel Horizons in Dodgeville on July 6-8, 2015. This year's conference provided an experience unlike any other previous conference. Due to the expiration of the federal Drug Free Communities Grant, the coalition had to fund this year's conference by other means. As a result, the coalition partnered with WIA (Workforce Investment Act) to help with costs associated with the conference. WIA's primary focus is assisting and providing disadvantaged young adults with the resources to not only discover their career goals, but also to achieve these goals. This partnership allowed for a diverse group of campers ranging in ages from 12 to 22 years old.

During the two and a half day conference, the youth and young adults had the opportunity to participate in a variety of activities. A majority of the first day was spent listening to author and speaker, Ron Glodoski. In conjunction, Ron's wife, Bobbi Aguero, did hands-on activities to identify each individual's strengths and weaknesses as well as educating the participants on how to use these strengths to their advantage. Ron based his presentation on his life and experiences. As a former gang member and drug lord, Ron discussed what led him in the wrong direction and how he got his life back on track. He inspired the students to go after their dreams and stay way from drugs and alcohol that will prevent them from reaching their goals. Following the presentation, the students divided into groups based on their hometown communities and schools and created leadership action plans. These plans consisted of changes the students would like to see in their schools or communities and the steps they are going to take to make these changes happen. More on page 2.

One of the stunning views at Bethel Horizons.

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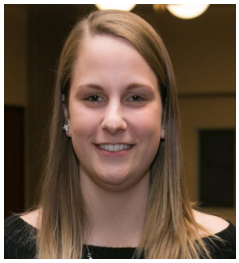
Youth Leadership Conference 2015

The bulk of the second day was spent outside on the low and high ropes courses. However, before starting these high thrill activities, the participants engaged in a lesson about how to trust, provide encouragement, listen, and be an effective leader. Then, the students were able to put what they learned to practice. The low ropes course was a test of teamwork and leadership as students were challenged to complete certain tasks in groups of nine or ten. The high ropes course, which included repelling, rock climbing, and the big swing, was a measure of trust and faith in others as many of these obstacles required trust and courage to even attempt let alone complete. After a long day outside, the students watched *The Ultimate Gift* and shared what they learned and their thoughts on the movie.

Overall, the conference provided a wonderful opportunity for students in the state to connect, have fun, and learn to improve their communities. The feedback received from the participants of the conference was not only useful for improving the program, but also very positive. The S.A.F.E. Grant County Coalition and its supporters were thrilled with this year's turnout and look forward to planning and holding next year's conference if funding is available.



Meet S.A.F.E Grant County Coalition's Area Health Education Center's Intern

Maria Leighton

Hello! My name is Maria Leighton and I am a recent graduate of UW-Platteville. I graduated with a major in Biology with an emphasis in Biohealth/Physiology as well as a minor in Psychology and a minor in Chemistry. With this education I'd like to go to medical school and eventually become a physician in an underserved rural area.

Through the Community Internship Program (CHIP) created by the Wisconsin Area Health Education Center (AHEC) at the University of Wisconsin—Madison, I have had the opportunity to complete my summer internship at the S.A.F.E. Grant County Coalition. During my time at the coalition I was able to participate in Rural Safety Day, shadow some public heath nurses, play a role submitting an application for a federal grant, assist with the Youth Leadership Conference, and learn everything I could ever want to know about drugs!

Over the course of the summer I have had a wonderful time getting to know and connecting with the staff at the Grant County Public Health Department and the young people of Grant County!

Meet S.A.F.E. Grant County Coalition's PACCE Summer Intern:

Becky Homa

Hello everyone! My name is Becky Homa and I worked for the S.A.F.E. Grant County Coalition this summer. I am a UW-Platteville senior majoring in Biology with a Psychology minor and a Biohealth/Physiology emphasis. I aspire to one day become an occupational therapist. Growing up in Minooka, Illinois, I was excited to be offered this opportunity to help educate other rural communities in a different state about alcohol, substance abuse, and other risky behaviors.

This summer I worked with Kathy Marty to help coordinate Rural Safety Day and the Youth Leadership Conference for the youth in the county. Both of these events educate students and young adults about the negative side effects of underage drinking and substance abuse, how to be a leader, and also how to respond to bullying and stress.

Some other things that I did this summer were: 1) help reformat policies for the Public Health Department, 2) help write a grant to remove lead-based paint from houses in the county, 3) conduct a tobacco environmental scan in a convenience store in Grant County, 4) help prepare for the Grant County Fair, 5) job shadow other health professionals in the office, and 6) complete many activities to help me learn about drugs and substance abuse. I have thoroughly enjoyed my experience here and am very grateful to have had this eye-opening opportunity!

See also the Rural Safety Day article on Page 5.

Grant County Rural Safety Day

Grant County Fairgrounds

MESSAGE FROM THE PROJECTS DIRECTOR

Hi, Everyone!

In case you have not heard, I wanted to let you know that I have resigned as the Projects Director for the S.A.F.E. Grant County Coalition and the Grant County Health Department. As a result, this is the last newsletter that I will be helping to create and send out. (Seems strange to say this after 13 years!) My last full day in the office is Friday, August 7, but my final resignation day is Thursday, August 13. After a lot of thought/consideration, I have accepted a position as a School Guidance Counselor for the Cassville School District. Prior to working as the S.A.F.E. Projects Director, I worked as a School Guidance Counselor and I have missed working with students on a more full time basis. Also, as you may know, funding for my full time position has become more challenging with the expiration of the ten-year Drug Free Communities (DFC) grant.

I also wanted to write and thank all of you for any efforts/contributions (big and small) that you and/or your agency/organization have made to the coalition and for your support over the years to help make Grant County a safer and more drug-free place. Together we have accomplished a great deal! I have enjoyed working or partnering with all of you and I will really miss interacting with you, so please stop in and say, "Hello" if you are in the Cassville area or drop me a line if you would like to stay in touch!

You may be wondering what will happen to the coalition after I leave. I am just one person and there are many active coalition members/partners with such wonderful leadership skills/talents and dedication that I believe that the coalition can continue to thrive and grow**.** Currently, I am helping with this latter effort. Thus, "stay tuned" and if you would like to assist during this time of transition, please let Jeff Kindrai at the Grant County Health Department (jkindrai@co.grant.wi.gov) know.

Thanks again for all of your help and support. I wish the best for all of you!

Kathy Marty

Rural Safety Day continued from page 4. On June 16th the Grant County Health Department, the S.A.F.E. Coalition, UW-Extension, Grant County Sheriff's Department, and the Grant County Rural Safety Committee held their annual Grant County Rural Safety Day. This event is focused on informing 2nd to 8th graders about the prominent dangers for those living on farms and in rural areas. This year, Grant County's youth had the opportunity to learn about a plethora of safety topics including: Electrical, Weather, ATVs, Fire, Internet, Extraction, Grain, and staying drug free. During the course of the day about 300 students attended 25 minute seminars on each of these topics.

The S.A.F.E. Grant County Coalition's focus this year was primarily educating students about the dangers of alcohol consumption and driving while under the influence. The 2nd and 3rd graders watched a puppet show demonstrating the consequences of drinking. Additionally, they role played how to so say "no" when offered alcohol. The 4th through 8th graders watched a video on the effects of alcohol and other drugs on the brain. Following, the students discussed the social, physical, mental, and emotional impacts of binge drinking and drinking alcohol before reaching full physical development around the mid-twenties. In addition to the video, the 4th, 5th, and 6th graders also participated in role play to say "no" when offered alcohol. The 7th and 8th graders were tested on their knowledge of alcohol and how much beer, wine, and liquor constitutes one drink to avoid binge drinking when of legal age.

Overall, the information was well received by the enthusiastic students!

Flakka: Are We Doomed?

Methamphetamine, cocaine, and heroin are what come to mind when we think of the most dangerous drugs known to man. However, there's a new drug that is posing the same, if not more, dangerous; it is called flakka.

Scientifically known as alpha-pyrrolidinopentiphenone, or alpha-PVP, this drug has been most prominent in Florida. Unfortunately, the drug appears to be travelling to other parts of the country. Reports of flakka possession and use have been noted in Texas, Ohio, New Jersey, and even locally as Dubuque. Law enforcement experts believe this is just the beginning, and we are going to see more cases in the future. Despite the horrific media stories, including users believing they have powers and doing unmentionable acts, there are a number of reasons why incidents involving flakka are going to increase.

At a cheap rate of three to five dollars a pill (due to importation from China), flakka is one of the cheapest drugs available. Media articles have indicated this with titles such as, "More Dangerous Than Cocaine, Cheaper Than a Big Mac".

The main ingredient functions as a re-uptake inhibitor of both dopamine and norepinephrine causing users to experience delirium as well as euphoria. Additionally, the drug can last longer than cocaine and be more addictive than meth.

As more reports of flakka usage arise, experts have learned the life-threatening dangers of this drug. Belonging to the bath salt family, flakka has caused individuals to become delirious and paranoid. During these episodes, individuals have put not only themselves in danger but also those in their vicinity in danger. *Frequently, four or five law enforcement officers need to restrain someone who is high on flakka.* Additionally, it can cause kidney damage, kidney failure, or even death after just one use. When this stimulant is introduced into the body , the muscles begin to work at a rapid pace. In turn, the body can heat up to temperatures above 105°F. This condition is known as hyperthermia and will cause disruption throughout the body. One of the most concerning consequences of hyperthermia is rhabdomyolysis, a breakdown of protein within the muscle. The protein then enters the blood stream where it is filtered by the kidneys. However, with a large amount of protein in the blood the kidneys will become damaged, or even fail. If the kidneys suffer enough damage, then the user will have to be on dialysis for the remainder of his or her life if death has not already occurred.

Although at this point in time there is a small number of reports involving flakka, there is potential for grave destruction not only on an individual level, but also a societal level.

Information retrieved from: medicinenet.com

Upcoming Events

S.A.F.E. Display Grant County Fair—August 21-22, 2015 Fairgrounds - Lancaster

Teen Fair Dance (coordinated by S.A.F.E.)- August 22, 2015, 7:30-11 pm; Livestock Pavilion-Fairgrounds - Lancaster

In lieu of the Coalition meeting, **Adverse Childhood Experiences** (**ACE) Training**– September 28, 2015 at 5-8 pm— Lancaster HS Auditorium. Free to community with registration. Register by calling (608) 723-6416

We're on the Web!

www.safegrantcounty.org

See inside for more news about the S.A.F.E. Grant County Coalition!