

www.teeninstitute.org

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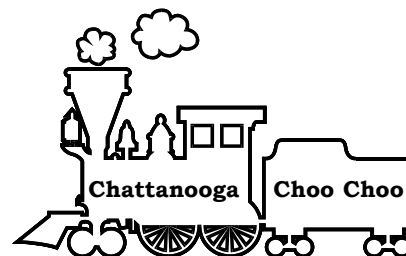
National Association of Teen Institutes
3520 General deGaulle Drive
Suite 5010
New Orleans, LA 70114
Phone: (504) 362-4272
Fax: (504) 362-9561



Mark Your Calendars!
Start planning now to attend the
2007 NATI CONFERENCE
October 3-7, 2007

The event will be held in the
historic Chattanooga Choo Choo
Holiday Inn in
beautiful, bustling downtown
Chattanooga, TN.

Conference information will be
posted on NATI's website
as the event draws closer.



www.teeninstitute.org

This newsletter is brought to you by the NATI Board of Directors and the Membership Services Committee.

We encourage all readers to submit articles, program news and updates, as well as suggestions on how to improve the newsletter.

Please mark all submissions "NATI Newsletter" and include your name, your state and the name of your program.

Via e-mail:
guideinc@mindspring.com

Via mail:
Ari Russell
Newsletter Editor
P.O. Box 1922
Lawrenceville, GA 30046

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nati *news*

Volume 7 Spring 2007

In the SPOTLIGHT.....



Tennessee Teen Institutes

Tennessee earned its nickname, the "Volunteer State," during the War of 1812 in which volunteer soldiers from Tennessee played a prominent role. Tennessee's long history of volunteering and helping others can be seen to this day through the Tennessee Teen Institutes that grow each and every year.

From the mountainous region of East Tennessee, through the hillside land of Middle Tennessee and into the delta flatlands of West Tennessee, youth are empowered through Tennessee's Teen Institutes. Even though all three TTI's follow the same basic framework, they are as unique as the three regions of Tennessee. They vary in size, activities and style, but one message rings true to all and that is the message that promotes healthy choices and an alcohol and drug free lifestyle.

The East Tennessee Teen Institute began in 1989; the Middle Tennessee Teen Institute began in 2002; and the Teen Institute returned to West Tennessee in 2004. The Teen Institutes are sponsored by the Tennessee Department of Mental Health's Division of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Services and are conducted through three Community Services

Agencies of Tennessee. The Teen Institutes reach inner city youth as well as youth from the many rural communities within the state and enable them to implement Community Action Plans that meet the needs of their communities.

Without the support of many volunteers, the Teen Institute programs would not be able to continue to grow. Currently about 600 youth are being served across the state. The youth staff program enables youth to come back as staff after they have attended as participants. If the camps do not occur during the same week, many youth participate as staff at more than one TTI.

Currently TTI is participating in the Service to Science program conducted by the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention's Southeast CAPT. This initiative is helping the program demonstrate more clearly the connection between the work accomplished as part of TTI and a delay in the onset of ATOD use. The programs attribute the delay to a strengthening of the bond between their targeted youth and the pro-social messages promoted by all three of the Tennessee Teen Institutes.



The STOP Act

On December 7, 2006, both houses of Congress passed the Sober Truth on Preventing (STOP) Underage Drinking Act (H.R. 864 / S. 408). Upon passage of the bill, CSPI released a statement to the press by George Hacker, director of the Alcohol Policies Project, which may be viewed their website: www.cspinet.org/new/200612071.html

TAKE ACTION

It is important to thank and acknowledge the champions of the STOP Act. If any of your Congressional representatives co-sponsored the STOP Act (a list of cosponsors is accessible from the "Take Action" page), please take a moment to thank them and encourage their continued involvement and support in the fight against underage drinking. Submit a letter from CSPI's "Take Action" Web page: <http://takeaction.cspinet.org/campaign/STOPAct>

FIND OUT MORE

For more information on passage of the STOP Act, see the special edition of APP's "Washington Report" online newsletter: <http://www.cspinet.org/booze/2006/WashingtonRpt0612.htm>

Alcohol Policies Project
Center for Science in the Public Interest
1875 Connecticut Ave. NW #300
Washington, DC 20009
Office: 202-332-9110, ext. 311
CSPI web site: www.cspinet.org

Make your voice heard on important health and nutrition issues!
Join CSPI's online action network at www.takeaction.cspinet.org.

Morgan's Story

West Tennessee Teen Institute is an experience of a lifetime!! It is such a great feeling that for one week people from all different backgrounds can come together and be themselves no matter what their situation is back home. WTTI lets you forget about all your worries for just that one week. Maybe that's why everyone is so happy!

WTTI, though, just doesn't make people happy; it changes people's lives forever. You could go into WTTI and be mad at the world and not want to talk to really anyone. But once you leave WTTI, you leave with tears of joy because you have made life long friendships and you have a whole different outlook on life.

Stereotypes don't exist at this Leadership camp. Everyone goes with everyone no matter what you look like, dress like, or talk like. WTTI isn't here just to do all of the above; this camp is also here to display the more serious things of life also. WTTI shows you the dangers and consequences of

drugs, alcohol, and sex before marriage. Although we high school students have heard enough about these three subjects to make our ears bleed, you will never hear people speak of these subjects like they do at WTTI. You can walk into the room half knowing about the subject they're talking about, and leave waaaaaayyyy more educated than you ever thought you would be.

WTTI also has community action teams. This is where all the students from your community get together with a YAB and a Junior Staff member and discuss what you are going to do in your community when you return. But, my favorite part would have to be the morning energizers! They consist of different songs that get everyone pumped up! They are kind of wacky, but by the end of the first day of camp, everyone loves them! Overall, WTTI is one of the most energizing and refreshing camps that there is!

*Contributed by Morgan Goodman,
WTTI Junior Staff*



HOT TOPICS

Beverage Firm to Change Name for Cocaine Energy Drink

The maker of the Cocaine Energy Drink announced this week that it was changing the name of the beverage in the face of pressure from officials and others who insist it glamorized the illegal drug. NATI was one of many groups that opposed the beverage's name. Legal troubles for Redux Beverages, the firm that manufactures the drink, began when the FDA issued a warning that it considered the drink illegal, saying it was being marketed as an alternative to an illegal street drug and making claims to treat or cure disease. Redux said its caffeine-loaded drink - that contains no cocaine despite its name - would get a new name, but that the company planned to fight to get back the "Cocaine" name. They just don't get it, do they???

Can't-Miss Fitness Tricks

You'll get more out of exercise with just a few simple moves:



WALK softly. To boost your calorie burning by as much as a third, seek sandy terrain or soft dirt when fitness walking. Bonus: You'll also exercise more muscles in the foot.

RUN spiritedly. One study found that runners who focus on the horizon ahead have a longer stride and use oxygen more efficiently than those who look down.



GOLF aerobically. You'll cover about five miles and burn about 500 calories walking an 18-hole course. Carrying your bag may



burn 100 more. Added benefit: Walking and carrying are better for your joints, especially if you have arthritis.

CLIMB carefully. To get the most from a stair-climbing machine, hold the rails just lightly enough to avoid losing your balance. Don't lean on the rails or front monitor. You will reduce your energy expenditure.



WATCH energetically. Try turning on the TV if you use a treadmill or stationary bicycle. Studies show you're likely to walk, run or "spin" longer when watching.



"Never mistake motion for action." --- Ernest Hemingway

This article was taken from a TOPHealth Newsletter.

More NATI Survey Info

NATI members were asked how they incorporate wellness into their TIs. Out of 17 programs that responded:

- 17... build humor and fun into program;
 - 16... include physical activities in free time;
 - 16... have dress codes that restrict offensive images and sayings;
 - 16... don't allow smoking/other tobacco use by youth or adults;
 - 16... have opportunities to participate in talent shows or other performances;
 - 15... have fruits/vegetables at all meals;
 - 15 accommodate vegetarian, vegan & other dietary needs;
 - 15... offer stress management as a workshop topic;
 - 15... have dress codes restricting suggestive or revealing clothing;
 - 14... encourage participants to positively affirm themselves and others;
 - 13... include creative activities during free time;
 - 12... build relaxation time into schedule;
 - 12... honor requests for time/opportunity for spiritual pursuits during free time;
 - 11... build reflection time into schedule;
 - 9... provide door prizes/giveaways.
- These strategies should give you some ideas for building wellness into TI.

*Treat people as if they were what they ought to be,
and you help them become what they are capable of being.* Johann Wolfgang von Goethe

Helping Communities In The Wake Of Tragedy

Addressing Mental Health and Substance Abuse

As the Nation comes to grips with recent tragic events in Virginia, now more than ever it is important for community members to take a moment with their families, friends, and neighbors to provide support to each other and open a discussion among all groups to prevent a tragedy like this from happening in the future.

There may be individuals in your community who are suffering from mental illness and/or problems with substance abuse. Sadly, these individuals can go unnoticed and not get the help they need. It is important that we work

together to recognize and support members of our communities who may be struggling with feelings of isolation or helplessness.

In an effort to address such issues, the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, has created a special edition of its "Keeping Our Eye on Prevention" communiqué that offers a starting point for increasing community awareness about how to effectively deal with mental health problems and/or substance abuse issues in the aftermath of a violent event. For more information, go to: www.samhsa.gov/MentalHealth/understanding_Mentallness.aspx

Coming Down Hard on Alcoholic "Soft Drinks"

Illinois advocates are taking on the alcohol industry over the issue of alcopops - alcoholic "soft drinks" that they say are frequently marketed to teens.

Alcopops are a combination of malt liquor and hard liquor with sweet, fruity flavors. Sold under names such as Smirnoff Ice, Mike's Hard Lemonade and Bacardi Silver, these drinks are meant to appeal to people who don't drink beer. As Anheiser-Busch's Director of New Products told Advertising Age magazine, "The beauty of this category is that it brings in new drinkers, people who really don't like the taste of beer."

Not surprisingly, the "new drinkers . . . who really don't like the taste of beer" include lots of teenagers. The 2005 Monitoring the Future study found that 74 percent of high school seniors had tried alcopops, and 31 percent of high school seniors had drunk alcopops in the last 30 days.

In the view of prevention advocates, liquor industry marketing is contributing to the consumption of alcopops by teens and to the underage drinking crisis. Alcopops are frequently packaged in bright, hip, youthful graphics that - according to studies by the Center for Science in the Public Interest (CSPI) - appeal to teens. Alcopops are available in almost all convenience stores, and CPSI found that 24 percent of teens ages 14 to 18 were able to buy alcopops at convenience stores. Further, almost all teens, 84 percent, said that alcopops are "easy" to get.

Advocates are further upset by the prevalence of alcopops advertising. A 2003 study by the Center on Alcohol Marketing and Youth found that on a per capita basis, young people had been exposed to 92 percent more printed alcopop advertising than adults had. Although the Bureau of Alcohol, Tobacco and Firearms ruled in 1996 that alcopops should be classified as distilled spirits, the ruling has not been enforced. As a result, alcopops have been marketed under the less-stringent rules that apply to beer and wine. Led by the Illinois Alcoholism and Drug Dependence Association (IADDA), prevention and treatment professionals are calling on the Illinois legislature to ban the marketing of alcopops to underage youth. IADDA is an organization that works on policy issues on behalf of more than 50 prevention and treatment providers across the state.

Teens ages 12 to 20 comprise about 15 percent of the American population. The alcohol industry's own standards call for a ban on advertising on television shows and in magazines where 30 percent or more of the audience is under age 21. However, that 30 percent standard is double the representation of teens in the population, which means that teens are disproportionately exposed to alcohol advertising. IADDA is calling for a legislative ban on alcopops advertising in all markets with a youth audience, and for closer regulation to ensure that advertisers adhere to the ban.

Additionally, IADDA and its members are calling for a ban on selling alcopops in convenience stores. Currently, alcopops are available in most of Illinois' 4,378 neighborhood convenience stores. IADDA wants them restricted to liquor stores and similar outlets to reduce youth access.

The IADDA campaign kicked off with a press conference in Chicago in late January. State Senator Carol Ronen (D-Chicago) announced that she will sponsor legislation to ban the marketing of alcopops to teens. To stay up-to-date on this issue, visit the IADDA Web site at www.iadda.org.

By Christine . Netznik is Prevention First's Communications Manager. Reprinted with permission from the Winter 2007 Prevention Forum. More information is available at: www.prevention.org.

"Girly" Drinks Lead to Grown-Up Problems

Studies have shown that teenage girls are more likely than teenage boys to drink alcopops. These statistics are from a 2004 study by the American Medical Association, available at: www.ama-assn.org/ama/pub/category/14425.html.

✎ Nearly one in six teen girls who have drunk alcopops in the past six months have been sexually active after drinking.

✎ One out of four teen girls who have tried alcopops have driven after drinking or ridden in a car with a driver who had been drinking.

✎ One out of five teen girls who have tried alcopops have thrown up or passed out from drinking.

May 5, 2007

From the President...

Spring is the time of year when the weather turns warm, the leaves become green again, students prepare for summer and state legislators make frequent trips to their state capitol. What is that you say - you've never equated spring with politics, legislators and state capitols? As I travel the state of Illinois, I am consistently reminded that we have much more work to do as advocates for prevention. Teen Institutes have a responsibility to educate our youth, our communities AND our policymakers on the importance of keeping our youth and families healthy. Typically, our programs do a fantastic job of working with youth and families. What we often forget is that it is our policymakers and key stakeholders that hold the future of our program in their hands. If we are not telling them about what we do and are not showing them the fruits of our labor - then we have no one to blame but ourselves when our program funds are put in jeopardy. For the past few years, the Safe and Drug-Free Schools and Communities grant program has been zeroed out in the President's federal budget proposal. Each year, advocates have flooded their members of Congress with phone calls and letters hoping to restore a vital program. To date, they have been successful, but I cannot help but wonder - what if we flood our legislators with phone calls, letters, faxes and email routinely? What if we invite them to our events? What if we have TI alums write letters thanking them for supporting our programs? We train our youth to speak out in their communities about changing their environment. It is time we also train our youth to be advocates for prevention. Just imagine a spring day in the very near future when we meet a legislator who tells stories of their days at TI...

Sara Moscato, President
NATI Board of Directors

Personal Essay by a HUGS Student Leader

Almost any one thing can have a profound, lasting effect on someone. The most tremendously powerful influences, though, can often come from a cluster of sources. In the case of Human Understanding and Growth Seminars (HUGS), I was influenced deeply by a unified set of experiences. These consisted of the site of the seminar, the people there, and the activities in which I engaged. Gradual changes over a long period altered me, slowly but not imperceptibly, from a standoffish loner to the person I am now, whose social life has never been better.

HUGS seminars accept anyone willing to participate in the experience. Together with a few dozen other participants from area high schools, a handful of Student Leaders -whose ranks I ultimately joined- and several adult Group Facilitators, I spent 13 weekends throughout three years of high school exploring such issues as confidence, friendship, family, self-reliance, self-love, homosexuality, abuse, eating disorders, self-mutilation, suicide, and the use and abuse of drugs and alcohol. Far from being a tirade of overly-depressing lectures, the subjects were dealt with in a frank but compassionate manner. Most of my time there was spent in open-ended group sessions called Family Group, which, depending on the Group Facilitator and sometimes Student Leader, sometimes adhered to a schedule of educational activities, but most often followed an open-ended path of discussion. The groups ended in a personal exercise involving positive, supportive comments from each group member.

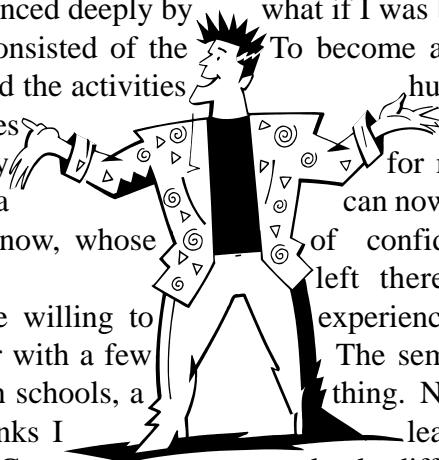
When I entered HUGS, I was greeted warmly but quickly retreated into myself, I was then a quiet, withdrawn person, although a good listener. At several early seminars I read while others socialized, keeping to myself as much as possible. I was nervous, afraid of everyone around me. I was not afraid that they would

hurt me - no, far from it. I was afraid that I would hurt them, somehow, somehow. For the longest time, I avoided social contact in the fear that I would become a burden. This had never been suggested at HUGS, but what if I was becoming a burden and no one mentioned it? To become a burden and have others suffer me by humoring me would be just as bad as being rejected. Self-esteem was such an issue for me when I first entered high school. I can now smile at this in retrospect. Yet that lack of confidence burrowed its way into my soul and left there a wrinkle that demanded counter-experience before it smoothed out.

The seminars' impact on me was not a sudden thing. No true healing is instantaneous. I did not leave HUGS at one point and return a completely different. Instead, every seminar I became more and more open to others, realizing that, perhaps, I wasn't a burden to people after all. I saw that people care for me, and that I could share with them in open, honest, positive ways. The ultimate result of my change was becoming a Student Leader, a role that I have filled at every seminar since.

I have grown since the first seminar. Slowly I stopped thinking that the warmth of others showed me at HUGS was pity, and I began to realize that it was, in fact, care. When others did not reject me, I realized that they would not humor me. I began to open my shell at HUGS. As I found more and more friends there, I gradually became more and more comfortable during activities and assemblies, and, most of all, during downtime, which I finally began to use for its intended purpose -socializing. And this confidence has allowed me to develop many new friendships outside of HUGS. I am not a different person from this experience. I am the same person, but now I am comfortable with that person. I am happier than I have ever been.

This essay was written by a HUGS Student Leader as part of his college application. He has asked to remain anonymous.



Georgia Teen Institute Receives Evaluation Enhancement Grant



In December, GUIDE, Inc. and the Georgia Teen Institute received word that they had been selected for a *Service to Science Evaluation Enhancement* mini-subcontract from SAMHSA. The grant will allow GUIDE to collaborate with the two consultants, Drs. Randy Black and Dan Coster, who have been working with NATI to move Teen Institute into being recognized as an evidence-based program. Work began in February and will continue for twelve months.

Youth Affairs Committee Update

Members of the Youth Affairs Committee - Adasha Wiltz, Chair, Alex Pirkle and Jaleesa Doucet - were busy during the Spring NATI Board of Directors' meeting. During an earlier committee conference call, they had discussed their concern about the eligibility criteria for Youth Affairs membership. Youth members were limited to those who were in high school - freshmen to seniors. They believed this should be expanded to include college-age youth in order to encourage committee members to stay involved for more than a year or so.

During the board meeting, the committee made a motion to revise NATI's policies and procedures to expand the eligibility criteria for Youth Affairs Committee members to allow youth members to be freshmen in high school to sophomores in college, at the time of selection. After full board discussion, the motion was passed.

Committee members spent most of their time during the Spring meeting revising the application and the application process for membership on the Youth Affairs Committee. New forms were developed, as well as new strategies for recruiting, interviewing and selecting new members during the annual conference. Be on the look-out for this information in the conference packets that will be going out in late summer/early fall.

The committee discussed ideas for youth-oriented workshops for the annual conference. Their selections were:

- ◆ Board 101 (how to serve on a board)
- ◆ Cultural Competence

Youth Affairs committee members will plan and conduct these workshops in October.

The committee wishes to encourage NATI members to consider youth leaders involved in their programs for membership in the Youth Affairs Committee. Plan ahead and discuss this with them and their parents, and bring them with you to the NATI conference. The experience of serving on a national organization's Board of Directors will increase their leadership skills and have a lasting influence on them. Applications will be available on the NATI website prior to the conference - www.teeninstitute.org.



Candied Meth - Latest Thing in Street Drugs

Warnings about sweetened and flavored forms of meth began landing in inboxes in April 2007. Unfortunately, they're true: candied meth is the latest thing in street drugs, first reported in western states in early 2007. The colored crystals have since spread across the nation. According to the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA), "Drug traffickers are trying to lure in new customers, no matter what their age, by making meth seem less dangerous." One form of the drug is called "Strawberry Quick", named after the powder used to make flavored milk drinks. That is but one of many flavors in circulation. In addition to strawberry, crystal meth also comes in chocolate, peanut butter, cola, cherry and orange versions. One DEA agent reported a red meth that had been "marketed" as a powdered form of an energy drink. While it's not clear whether flavors have been added for the express purpose of making the drug appeal to children (it seems more likely they were added as a way of combating the substance's bitter taste), it is expected that "candied" versions of meth will nonetheless have that effect. Flavored meth has been described as resembling rock candy or Pop Rocks (a kid-favored confection that fizzes in the mouth). Because it looks, smells and tastes like candy, flavored meth may fool children and teens into perceiving it as far less dangerous and addictive than it actually is. How can, after all, anything that looks that tasty and inviting be as evil as the grownups make it out to be? The new versions also present an increased risk that children who happen upon stashes of the drug will mistake their finds for candy. In April, legislation - the *Saving Kids from Dangerous Drugs Act* - was introduced to increasing criminal penalties for anyone marketing or making candy-flavored drugs.