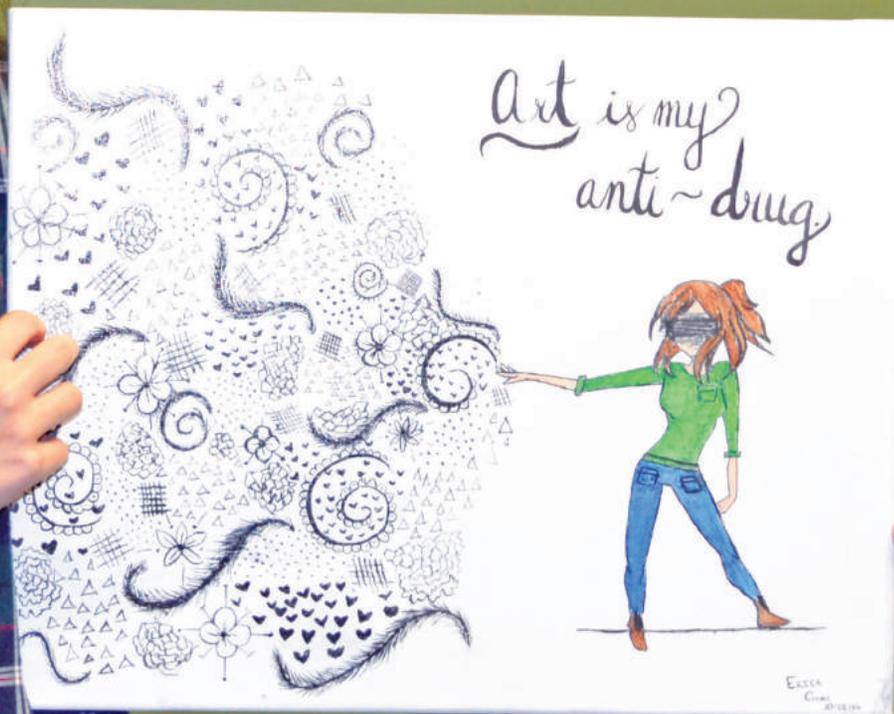


Monday, November 7, 2016

What's Your Anti-Drug?



Erica Gyori - Glen Meadow Middle School, Vernon



Majority Rules ... Most kids don't use drugs.

Most of us have something in our lives that's important enough to stand between us and drugs.

As these pages show, we are making good choices — great choices — for ourselves.

Featured here are many of the personal "anti-drugs" that we really care about and that we want to share with each other.

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This is the 16th "What's Your Anti-Drug" (WYAD) supplement that the New Jersey Herald and the Coalition for Healthy and Safe Communities, a program of The Center, have partnered on. This year over 1,000 Sussex County students in grades K-12th submitted an entry to the annual WYAD Contest.

The "What's Your Anti-Drug" message and the opportunity to share something important to them really appeals to youth. The message's simplicity is deceiving, because "anti-drugs" are powerful motivators. Whether the "anti-drug" is an internal factor, like a desire to succeed, or external, like family support, it both generates and is supported by feelings of confidence, success and self-respect that drive the student to take care of her or himself emotionally and physically. The contest is an opportunity to strengthen an important bond, activity or belief in an adolescent's life that helps him or her stay free of alcohol and other drugs.

We are thrilled to be able to give Sussex County youth an opportunity to share their "anti-drug" with others through this amazing supplement!

Be sure to pick up the New Jersey Herald regularly as entries will be featured throughout the year on the Schools pages of the paper.

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Thank you!

The Sussex County Coalition for Healthy & Safe Families would like to thank our sponsors:

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The percentage of Sussex County students who have ever tried alcohol has decreased in almost every grade since 2006.

Past 12-month use of marijuana among 8th to 12th grade Sussex County student decreased 17.3% since 2012!

— Center for Prevention and Counseling
2015 countywide PRIDE survey for the 2015-2016 school year.

Celebrating A Drug-Free Majority

This section is a special tribute to young people right here where we live, neighbors, friends, and classmates. Kids who, like most young people in America, don't use drugs because they know that drugs can only get in their way of where they want to go, what they want to do, who they want to be. They have something more important in their lives than doing drugs, and they're proud of it.

It's cool, it's healthy, and it's an important part of who they are.

Maybe you'll see someone you know in these pages. Maybe you won't. It doesn't matter. What does matter is that we continue to make our community the kind of place where young people speak openly and honestly with their families, teachers, coaches, religious leaders and with each other. The kind of community where someday it may be unnecessary to ask "What's Your Anti-Drug?"



MAJORITY RULES What's Your Anti-Drug?

THE STORY OF LINK

Link keeps me away from drugs. He makes me appreciate the way I am and makes me happy to be alive. This is the story of how we met.

People say that dogs are just animals. They think they don't matter and they don't help with anything. Link is living proof of why this is not true. On August 1st, 2014, my 11th Birthday, I got a One Direction concert ticket. I remember I didn't think my birthday could be any better. That is where I was wrong. I loved the concert, but it was really late and I was tired. I went to sleep and skipped summer camp the next day. My dad drove me to my mom's house where I was home alone for most of the day. I remember saying on the car home to my dad, "I really want a dog." My dreams came true at about 1:30 in the afternoon. My mom texted me a picture of a really, REALLY cute dog. I remember saying out loud, "Awww!" I had no idea this was my dog.

Two months earlier, my previous dog Laya passed away. It was a tragedy for our family and especially my little brother and me. My mom said that we probably couldn't get a dog until we owned the house we are currently renting. I got really upset because that could be up to 5 years from then. I felt really lonely without a dog, and my mom obviously knew that. Because two months later, Linky came to his new home.

I remember like yesterday the look on my face when I scrolled down the text that read: Like your new dog? That one text caused tears of joy and a LOT of excited screaming. I hugged my cat and told him the great news. I called my mom, still crying and asked her if it was true. Now confident that it was, I still didn't believe it. I quickly dialed my best friend's number and she was almost as excited as me. Although, I think my shock was hard to beat.

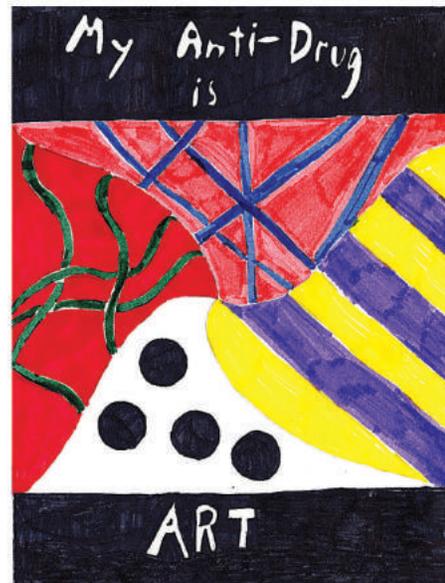
Link lived in the shelter for 9 months of his life. He got surrendered when he was only 5 months old because his previous owner couldn't afford him. He went to fosters a few times, and met a lot of other dogs. He ended up in 11th Hour Rescue, where we came along.

Finally, the dog of my dreams, MY dog, walked through the front door. I laughed as my cat zoomed across the room, his tail poofed. Link had his tail between his legs and ran into my mom's room. I understood, but I was still kind of sad when my mom said to leave him alone. The same week, he adapted to his new life. I got so happy when he licked me for the first time.

Then we had a party. He stayed in my mom's room most of the time, but he came out to look for scraps in the kitchen. That night he jumped on my lap. I kissed him on the head and he let me pet him. I love him so much and I will never let him go. I avoid all drugs because of Link.



MY PET Maddie Fischer
Byram Intermediate School



ART Ilira-Marsena Mecaj
Halsted Middle School



ART Samantha Kemp
Cedar Mountain School

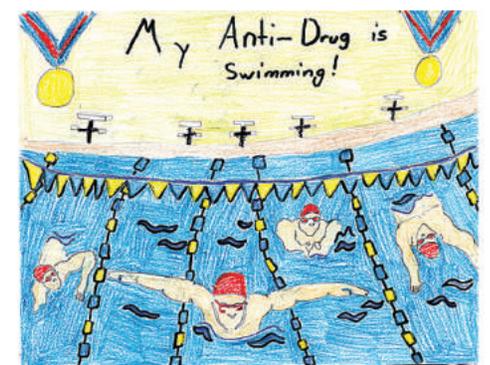


PHOTOGRAPHY Zachary Duzich
High Point Regional High School

WHAT'S MY ANTI-DRUG
CINQUAIN, POEM

School
Busy, Occupied
Studying, Pondering, Working
Staying away from drugs and keeping safe.
Knowledge.

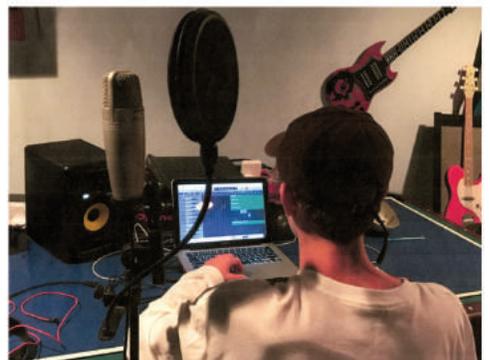
POETRY Holly Costanza
Valley Road School



SWIMMING Douglas Staley
Lonsberry Hollow Middle School



POETRY Taylor Kobis
Frankford Township School



MAKING MUSIC Chad Frisbie
High Point Regional High School

There have been significant decreases in past 12-month use of alcohol in every grade surveyed since 2006. Reported past year use of alcohol among 6th to 12th grade students in the last ten years have decreased 47.6%!

— Center for Prevention and Counseling
2015 countywide PRIDE survey for the 2015-2016 school year.

MAJORITY RULES What's Your Anti-Drug?



BASKETBALL Morgan Straway
Kittatinny Regional High School

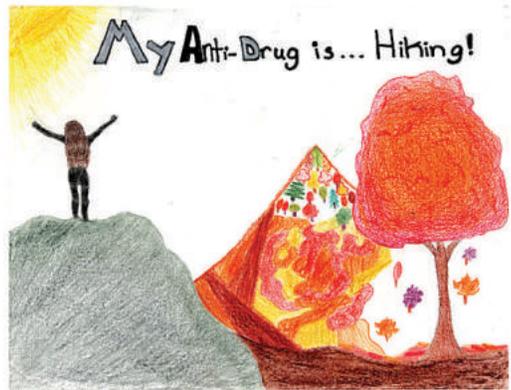


THE MILITARY Brian Heiden
Lawrence School

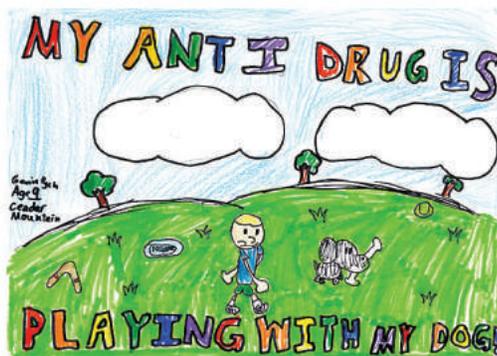


My anti-drug is community service. I love to help other people and animals. I went to Disney and won the title of 2015 USA National Role model. I also have an organization called Everyone's Helping Hands with my friends! I complete well over 150 hours of community service a year. I've helped Ginnie's House, St. Joe's food pantry, Sussex County Food Pantry, P.S.S. and so many more. I also hold the record for the 2nd largest donation EVER to the Wantage Animal Pound. I am the current reigning Miss America N.J. Preteen.

COMMUNITY SERVICE Mackenzie Genung
Halsted Middle School



HIKING Chelsea Rilliet
Glen Meadow Middle School



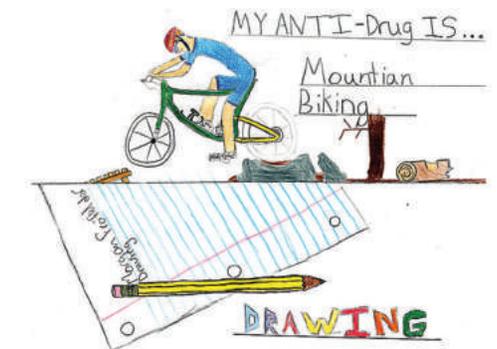
MY DOG Gavin Pych
Cedar Mountain School



MY TEAM Kira Alemy
Franklin Elementary School



FAMILY Nora Jamison
Glen Meadow Middle School



MOUNTAIN BIKING Morgan Freifelder
Lounsberry Hollow Middle School



RUNNING Hailey White
Sussex/Wantage School



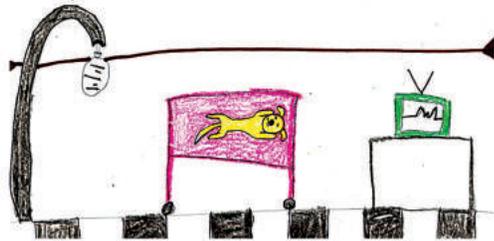
WHAT'S YOUR ANTI-DRUG?

What keeps me anti-drug is taking pictures of areas of beautiful scenery; this picture I took on a trip to Ellis Island caught my eye with the clouds, blue skies, and the port alongside the water. The reflections through the water with the sun beaming. Being occupied with many different things can keep you away from drugs, also it is the strength and will power to believe in yourself and not to follow others and knowing what's wrong and right. Some may say different things to one to try drugs, like if you don't do it you're not cool, or oh if you don't try you don't know if you will like it. We learn from everyday life that it just can take one time for something to happen and I choose not to go that route and stay drug free life. It's far more important and many lives are lost due to overdose because most drugs are being mixed with different types and like I stated above, it only takes one time for something to happen, so please, don't let anyone pressure you into doing anything you don't want to because your life matters.

PHOTOGRAPHY Anthony DaSilva
Hardyston Middle School

MAJORITY RULES What's Your Anti-Drug?

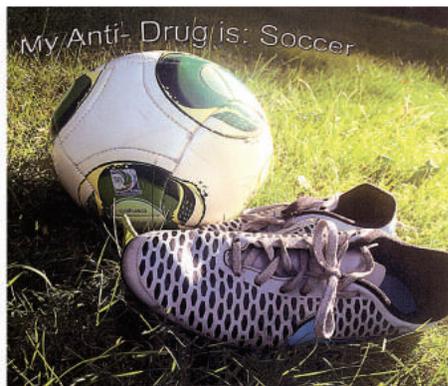
My Anti-Drug is
to become a
Veterinarian



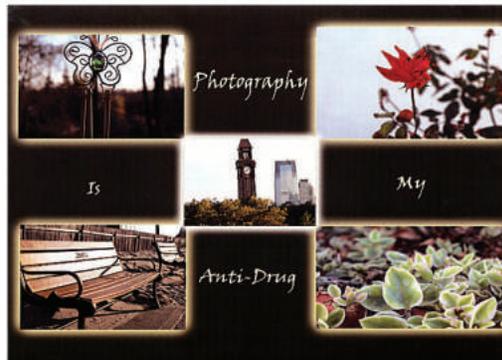
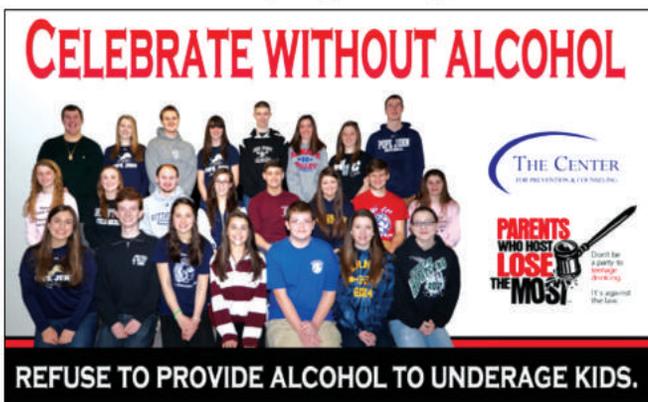
BECOMING A VET Samantha Sutton
Merriam Avenue School



BASEBALL Evan Amato
Glen Meadow Middle School



SOCCER Sarah Calderon
Kittatinny Regional High School

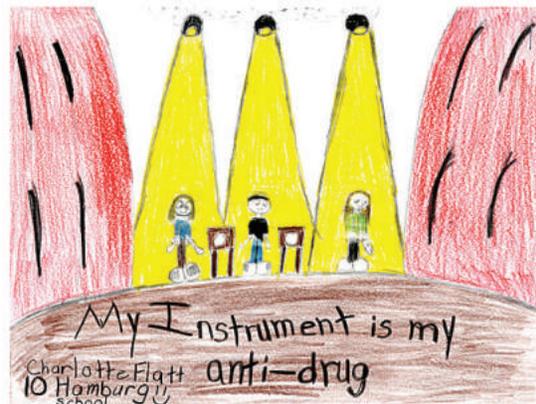


PHOTOGRAPHY Atlantia Polyak
Kittatinny Regional High School

My Anti-Drug
is Harambe.



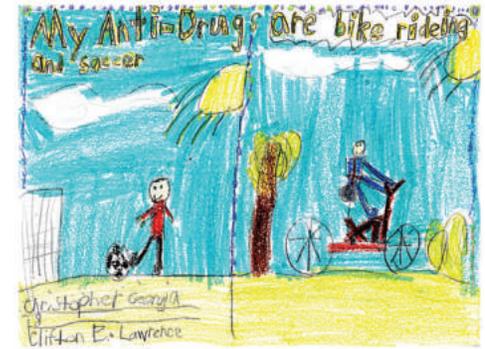
HARAMBE Cortney Headley
High Point Regional High School



MY INSTRUMENT Charlotte Flatt
Hamburg School



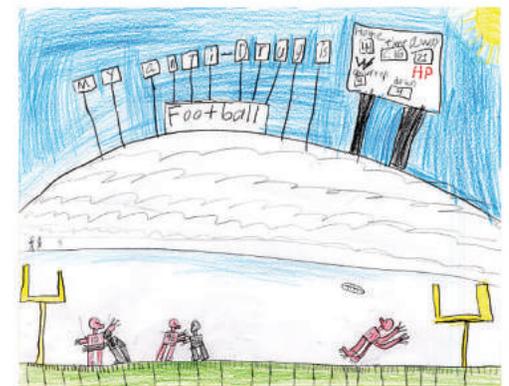
ART Crystina Kievit
Lounsberry Hollow Middle School



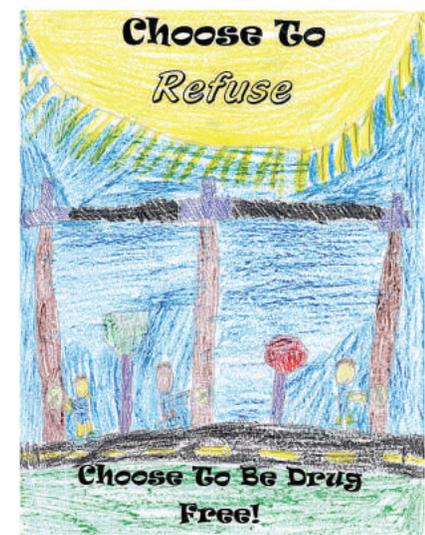
BIKE RIDING/SOCCER Christopher Georgia
Lawrence School



ART Rihab Hassan
Montague School

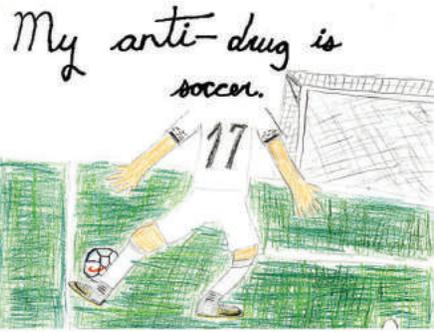


FOOTBALL Joseph Mendez
Wantage Elementary School



DON'T DO DRUGS Zachary Doyle
Sandyston-Walpack School

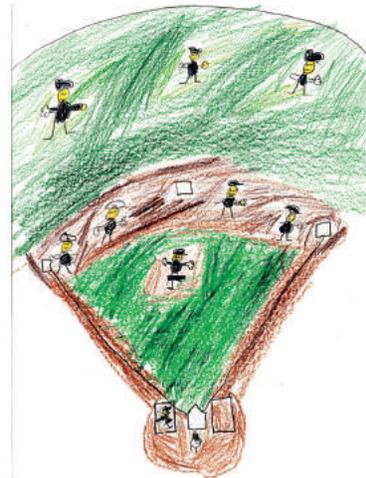
MAJORITY RULES What's Your Anti-Drug?



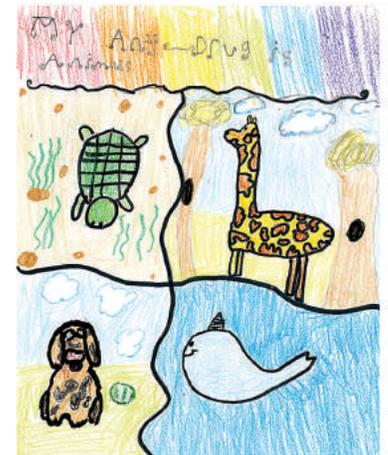
SOCCER Andrew Antunes
Hilltop Country Day School



FAMILY Jada Hess
Long Pond School



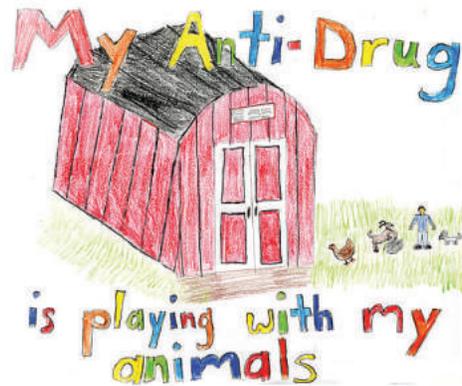
BASEBALL James Bruning
Lafayette School



ANIMALS Hannah Ellicott
Fredon Elementary School



ART Abigail Hoffman
Merriam Avenue School



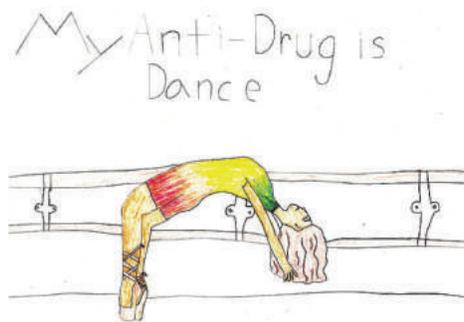
ANIMALS Logan Slate
Sussex Middle School



FIGURE SKATING Hannah Gallagher
Sussex County Charter School for Technology



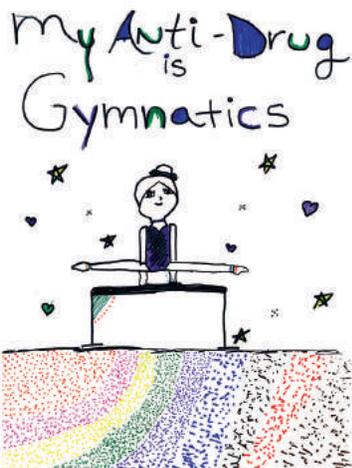
VIOLIN/SPORTS Anna Yerofeyer
Helen Morgan School



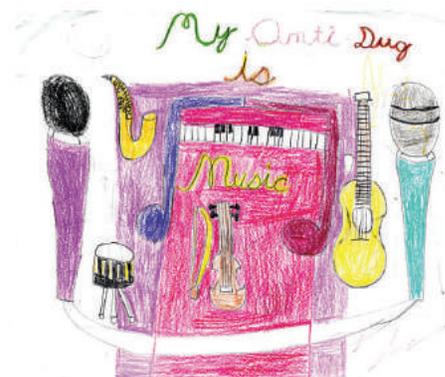
DANCE Gianna Sears
Ogdensburg Elementary School



GARDENING Kamaryn LaNoce
Montague School



GYMNASTICS Draydon Charman
Ogdensburg Elementary School

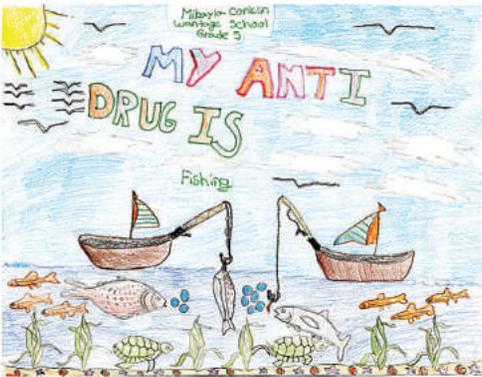


MUSIC Kaymenia O'Brien
Cedar Mountain School



ANIMALS Mason Sadowski
Lawrence School

MAJORITY RULES What's Your Anti-Drug?



FISHING Mikayla Conklin
Wantage School



MY BROTHER Charles Romash
CE Lawrence School



MY SISTER Alexa Mercer
Alpine Elementary School

TALK. THEY HEAR YOU.

As parents, we all want what is best for our children. And we don't just wish for it; we put a lot of time and energy into making sure they develop into happy and healthy adults. It's always nice to find that something simple can make a big difference – like having short, frequent discussions about alcohol with your child. Brief conversations during everyday activities – dinner, trips in the car, etc. - have many benefits: they help to build trust and open lines of communication, they help to instill your expectations, they educate your child about the risks of underage drinking, they are opportunities to practice refusal skills, and there's less pressure on both of you than "THE talk".

Research shows that parents, more than any other person or thing, influence their child's decision not to use alcohol. Children ARE listening. But you have to be direct in communicating your expectations to your child, because not saying anything may send a very different message.

For more information, check out "Talk. They Hear You.", a new national campaign from SAMHSA directed to parents of children ages 9-15. To find local presentations and other resources that can help you talk with your child about the risks of underage drinking and teach him or her refusals skills, call the Center for Prevention and Counseling in Newton at 973-383-4787.



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