

Confederation of Schools Supporting and informing parents – Drug and Alcohol Awareness seminars



Organisation

Surrey Heath Confederation of Schools in partnership with Surrey Police

Target Group(s)

Any parent or carer residing in Surrey Heath or with a child at a Surrey Heath school

Context

Drug and alcohol misuse can destroy lives and affect whole communities therefore the aim has been to work collaboratively with other agencies to educate parents as well as pupils. Parents with children at all stages of schooling were encouraged to attend the free sessions in order that we can support parents as much as possible by preparing and helping them to understand this difficult subject.

Action planned

Series of repeated evening seminars at various venues across the Confederation aiming to reach as wide an audience as possible. Events were promoted through schools, using the SH Confederation website, partners and through SNAP events.

The seminars aimed to raise parents' awareness in key areas of drug and alcohol use by looking at a variety of different issues such as the physical, psychological, social and lawful side of these substances. The talks considered the supply market, product knowledge, user profile, detection and treatment agencies available as well as looking at the negative impact of alcohol culture. One of the other areas of interest was that of the use of solvents.

The speaker for all 6 events was Mr Lindsay Smith, who provides drug and alcohol advice, support and training. He works with a number of enforcement agencies, treatment providers, councils and communities including Surrey Police. Schools hosted the evening events free of charge and Surrey Police provided funding for the presenter. No charge was made to parents.

Outcomes and Impact

In excess of 80 parents and school staff attended the seminars and anecdotal feedback from the evenings indicated that the subject matter was extremely thought provoking. Parents reported that the speaker had a depth of experience in this field and was able to convey this in a very accessible way, also that the subject was handled very sensitively. PC Julian Crabbe, Youth Intervention Officer for Surrey Heath, was on hand to offer practical local support and guidance for parents as well as a wealth of literature that parents could take away with them.

Next Steps

Several school zones are considering further seminars for parents as recommendations are spreading between family and friends.

A number of the Surrey Heath secondary schools are looking at a coordinated venture timed to coincide with National Drug Awareness week (w/c 18th May 09). This may take the form of workshops for young people, talks from local Police officers and seminars for parents.

After hosting a seminar evening, one school is now considering a follow up training event for staff and possibly an evening event targeted at yr6 parents as part of an overall transition programme.