



# SCOTTS VALLEY UNIFIED SCHOOL DISTRICT

4444 Scotts Valley Drive, Suite 5B

Scotts Valley, CA 95066-4529

(831) 438-1820 • FAX: (831)438-2314 • [svusd@santacruz.k12.ca.us](mailto:svusd@santacruz.k12.ca.us)

SUPERINTENDENT  
(831) 438-1820

EDUCATIONAL SERVICES  
(831) 438-2055

BUSINESS SERVICES  
(831) 438-2312

PERSONNEL  
(831) 438-1822

September 28, 2009

## Response to the Santa Cruz County Grand Jury Report 2009

Scotts Valley Unified School District  
Scotts Valley Unified School District Board of Trustees  
Scotts Valley High School

In the summary of the Grand Jury Report, the Grand Jury cites the following: alcohol is the number one drug of choice among the nation's youth; local and county statistics mirror the national trend; and Santa Cruz County ranked sixth highest in the state for student use of alcohol in 2003.

The Scotts Valley Unified School District (SVUSD) does not dispute that student use of alcohol and other drugs is of major concern; it is a nationwide problem, a state problem, and a local problem. We do, however, dispute the statement in the summary of the Grand Jury Report that "statistics related to SVUSD indicated that teen alcohol use is among the highest in the County." In fact, the opposite is true: teen alcohol rates in Scotts Valley are among the lowest in Santa Cruz County. The Report also states that "the district currently has limited intervention and prevention resources for students." While the district's resources are indeed limited, the district does provide intervention/prevention education K-12, supported by a research based curriculum (*Too Good for Drugs*) and community partnerships.

The Report further states that the district "uses suspension and expulsion to deter teen drinking" and as "punitive measures after the fact." While students are suspended and very occasionally expelled, these consequences occur only after other remedies---including education, counseling and other interventions---have been used, and when the safety of other students on campus must be considered. Data cited in our response show that Scotts Valley Unified's rate of suspensions and expulsions is far lower than that of other districts with high schools in Santa Cruz County. In its 2001-2002 Report, the Santa Cruz County Grand Jury recommended that "Santa Cruz County high school administrations should explore more effective and realistic ways to enforce the state-mandated 'zero-tolerance' policy regarding drugs on campus." SVUSD has accomplished this, while maintaining critical prevention and intervention services during a time of unprecedented budget cutbacks.

The Grand Jury Report calls for SVUSD to "join forces with students, parents, city leaders, and county and local agencies to become aware of the problem, own the problem, and develop tools to resolve the problem of teen drinking." The district and its community partners are already well aware of the problem. SVUSD takes responsibility for educating students about the dangers of drug use, providing counseling resources, and collaborating with other agencies to address the problem at a community level. In spite of limited resources, the district is committed to maintaining a leadership role in a coordinated, community-wide response to teen drinking and its associated problems.

Attached is our required response to the individual findings and recommendations of the 2008 – 2009 Santa Cruz County Grand Jury Final Report.

Sincerely,

Susan Silver, Ed.D.  
Superintendent

Sue Roth, President  
Board of Trustees

Gregg Gunkel, Principal  
Scotts Valley High School

## FINDINGS

5. Administrators at the high school review the CHKS findings. However the administration does not make the information available to staff members who work closest to students. These staff members were not involved in prevention and intervention planning.

**DISAGREE:** On March 5, 2008, a training in recognizing symptoms of teen drug use was provided to the staff of Scotts Valley High School, with participation required of all personnel. The training included trends in teen drug use and a presentation and discussion of the findings from the 2007 *California Healthy Kids Survey*. In addition, the results of the CHKS are discussed and considered at all school sites, including the high school, in the development of the sites' School Safety Plan and the Single Plan for Student Achievement.

6. District and site administrators were asked if they thought the CHKS information was a reliable assessment of student alcohol use. All site administrators agreed that alcohol usage is a problem and that the statistics were important in identifying student perceptions and trends. However district administration did not believe the CHKS results were relevant and should not be used to determine if an issue is important or not. District officials felt the data was unreliable because the children taking the survey did not need the results for grades or for themselves; therefore they were not honest in their answers. Further, district administration believes teen alcohol use is a "community problem" which needs to be resolved by the community rather than the district.

**DISAGREE:** This summary by the Grand Jury does not accurately reflect the opinion of district administration or the comments district administrators made to Grand Jury members. The administration does recognize that students use alcohol, that it is a community problem, and that schools are an essential partner in the community response to the problem.

The administration recognizes the importance of data provided by the CHKS, and makes use of survey findings in assessing needs and developing student services. Research shows that in anonymous, confidential surveys (like the CHKS) there is a high degree of validity in student answers—even with sensitive questions (O'Malley, Johnston, Bachman & Schulenberg, 2002). A few students may under-report any given behavior, but there are also those who will over-report instead, resulting in a balancing out. However, the introduction of WestEd's *Technical Report* of the CHKS data stresses the need to utilize multiple sources of information: "It is important to interpret these results with caution. Results can be significantly impacted by response rates, the type of parental consent used (passive or active), gender differences, regional variations and other issues.... The CHKS is only one of many data sources." Other data include information from law enforcement, counseling and intervention professionals, parents and students. District personnel analyze CHKS data, discuss it with staff, and provide instruction and appropriate interventions to lessen risky student behaviors, including use of alcohol, based in part on CHKS responses.

7. SVUSD Board Policy 5030 (a-e) Student Wellness was adopted on April 22, 2008. As required by law, a Health and Wellness Committee was formed to create the policy and present it to the board for approval. Agendas and attendance documents were provided but minutes of the

meeting were not available. The wellness policy focuses primarily on nutrition and physical activity. Other factors such as alcohol and drug intervention and prevention are not mentioned in the policy.

**AGREE:** “Other factors such as alcohol and drug intervention and prevention” are addressed in Board Policy 5131.6 (a-d), provided to the Grand Jury during their investigation and acknowledged by the Grand Jury in Finding # 8, immediately below.

8. SVUSD Board Policy 5131.6 (a-d) and Administrative Regulation 5131.6 (a-b) clearly define a comprehensive process for developing district programs related to alcohol and other drugs, but the Jury found no evidence that substantiates the existence of a district-developed comprehensive program to comply with Board Policy 5131.6.

**DISAGREE:** The Policy is as described. Information and documentation were provided to the Grand Jury in November, 2008, at both the district and site levels to show the existence of a comprehensive program to comply with Board Policy. The heart of the program is a research-based program, *Too Good For Drugs* (TGFD), taught to all students in kindergarten through ninth grade. This program is supplemented by resiliency-themed lessons in literature in all grades and supported in science and physical education classes at all sites, where students learn the physiological consequences of drug and alcohol abuse. Mandatory assemblies for all students and staff at the secondary sites center around the dangers of drug and alcohol use; presenters include students and staff, community members, and officers from the Scotts Valley Police Department and the California Highway Patrol. Additional interventions and supports for individual students and groups are provided by counselors at all levels and by a Youth Services Counselor at the secondary level funded jointly by the district and the Scotts Valley Rotary Club. The Scotts Valley Police Department provides DARE training for fifth grade students. City and county agencies provide regular assemblies to make students aware of the consequences of risky behaviors.

9. SVUSD introduced revised Board Policy 5144.1 (a-d) Suspension and Expulsion/Due Process in April 2007. The policy has a zero-tolerance clause that was intended to help eliminate the lax attitude toward alcohol and drug usage by students. Under this policy first-time alcohol or drug offenders are suspended for five days. Students who violate the policy twice are recommended for expulsion. Parents are contacted and the police may be involved depending upon the circumstances. When a suspended student returns to school, at least one counseling session is mandatory. A voluntary eight-week after-school program is available. Some school personnel voiced the opinion that the zero-tolerance approach was very punitive and that the school district did not have many alternatives to suspension/expulsion.

**PARTIALLY DISAGREE:** The zero tolerance approach as defined in BP 5144.1 applies explicitly to “serious offenses in accordance with state and federal law. This approach makes the removal of potentially dangerous students from the classroom a top priority....” The district has a zero-tolerance policy with regard to drug use only in that students found using drugs on campus are suspended. It is the philosophy of the district that drug-free campuses are critical to students’ safety and learning. Participation in the eight-week counseling program is not voluntary; this program is a requirement for students suspended

for drug use. The program is also available on a volunteer basis for students who self-refer or who are referred by their parents to participate in drug use counseling. It should also be noted that the California Education Code requires the recommendation of expulsion and/or allows suspension/expulsion for a number of drug and alcohol related offenses. As noted in the *Scotts Valley High School Student Handbook*, all students are made aware of these offenses and the consequences for committing them.

11. Scotts Valley Police Department no longer provides a School Resource Officer (SRO) on the high school campus. The role of the SRO is to deter crime activity on campus and be accessible to students to create a positive relationship as well as act as a mentor. District and site officials stated that they would like to have a law enforcement officer return to the high school campus.

**PARTIALLY AGREE:** The school district remains firmly supportive of returning an SRO at the high school campus. This important position was funded by the district through use of categorical and grant funds. The SRO was eliminated due to understaffing at the Police Department, and school district resources for the position were redirected to pay for campus supervisors. The district is in ongoing communication with the Police Department and will work to reestablish the SRO position as soon as police staffing allows.

12. SVHS school officials indicated that the lack of surveillance cameras at the high school limits the ability to detect student alcohol use on campus. Instead, the school uses the following methods to curtail the use of alcohol and drugs on campus:

- Three aides supervise the campus and parking lots.
- The principal and assistant principal assist with supervision.
- The campus is closed during school to prevent students from leaving campus.
- Students have no lockers.
- Five breathalyzers are used to monitor students at special events such as dances.

**PARTIALLY AGREE:** While the methods currently in place to curtail alcohol use on campus may not be as effective as surveillance cameras, they nevertheless demonstrate the district's commitment to make the best use of existing resources. The most recent data from the CHKS show that although 25% of Scotts Valley 9<sup>th</sup> graders and 36% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders have used alcohol in the past month, only 5% of 9<sup>th</sup> graders and 1% of 11<sup>th</sup> graders report using alcohol on school property during that time. The district intends to continue to aggressively monitor and deter student alcohol and other drug use on campus.

13. County of Santa Cruz Health Services Agency Alcohol and Drug Services personnel indicated that when high-risk youth who use alcohol are suspended or expelled they receive minimal prevention services. Therefore the County has implemented alternatives to suspension and expulsion that have reaped more favorable results. For example, the Seven Challenges program introduced in Santa Cruz City Schools is a reduction-of-suspension option that allows students an early return to the classroom by participation in the program. The program keeps students attending school and engaged in academic work. In addition, the district can claim average daily attendance funding for those students rather than lose the funding when students are suspended.

**PARTIALLY DISAGREE:** As stated in the response to Findings #8 and #9 above, Scotts Valley High does have a program that provides prevention services to reduce at-risk behaviors that might lead to suspensions and expulsions, as well as an intervention program for students suspended for alcohol or other drug use. This program, *Assessment Information Management (AIM)*, is provided by Youth Services. *AIM* is an eight-week program similar to the Seven Challenges program mentioned above that teaches student about abuse, addiction and dependence, and increases their awareness of the physical, emotional and social risks and consequences of using alcohol and drugs. Additional information about the program is attached (Attachment A).

SVUSD does not provide an “in-house suspension” option similar to that provided by the County to the Santa Cruz School District due to lack of resources and the low rate of student suspensions compared to other districts in the county. The high school has instituted other county programs, however, including Teen Peer Court and Real DUI Court in School (including an evening Town Hall Community meeting). Students have participated individually or as an entire student body, as appropriate to the activity.

14. SVHS students who have been suspended for alcohol or drug use can meet with a certified counselor two days a week for individual sessions and after-school group sessions. The counselor is only required to see students who have been suspended. All other counseling is voluntary on the student’s part. The Scotts Valley Rotary Club sponsors the counseling program.

**DISAGREE:** Students who have been suspended on drug-related charges **MUST** attend the Rotary Club sponsored sessions offered by the Youth Services counselor. Other students **MAY** attend the sessions through parents, staff or self referral.

15. The elementary schools no longer have a district-hired counselor. The position was eliminated as part of a budget reduction during the 2007-2008 school year. Administrators and staff have assumed many of the duties of the counselor and each elementary school has an intern counselor from John F. Kennedy University to provide counseling for twelve students each week. Site administrators believe having a counselor is important because it is easier for students to speak honestly to a third party, rather than to teachers or the principal.

**PARTIALLY AGREE:** Counselors provide important services to students and are provided and funded by the district as described above. Site administrators believe having a counselor is important not necessarily “because it is easier for students to speak honestly to a third party” but because counselors have specialized training to meet severe social/emotional needs and have more time to spend with the students in a counseling capacity than do administrators or classroom teachers.

16. SVHS administrators stated that they have not implemented peer counseling and conflict resolution programs that engage students in problem solving and decision making.

**PARTIALLY AGREE:** Instruction on strategies for positive social relationships and conflict resolution are part of the curriculum throughout the grade levels; specific lessons

are part of the *Too Good For Drugs* curriculum. Additional peer counseling training has not been provided at the secondary sites in part because of limited resources.

17. The SVUSD leaves the implementation of alcohol and drug programs primarily to site administration and as a result, programs offered vary widely throughout the district. The suspension/expulsion policy is one of the few district-wide strategies to address alcohol and drug use among students. Per district officials, other priorities such as student achievement, special education, and budgetary challenges take precedence over the development of prevention and intervention programs.

**DISAGREE:** SVUSD provides a district-wide alcohol and drug abuse prevention program, as described above. Suspension and expulsion are a necessary component to ensure the safety of all students and promote a campus environment conducive to learning. The district recognizes that preventing alcohol and drug use is itself a critical element in advancing student achievement. While the district does face unprecedented budgetary challenges, it continues to demonstrate its commitment to alcohol and other drug prevention and intervention.

19. The high school offers a ninth -grade health class that addresses drug and alcohol issues. The course incorporates the *Too Good for Drugs* curriculum and other resources provided by the teacher. *Too Good for Drugs* has three core components: one curriculum for ninth and tenth-grade students, another for eleventh and twelfth-grade students, and staff development for educators.

### **AGREE**

24. At the time of the interviews, high school administrators and staff members were unfamiliar with programs and services within the County that assist with prevention and intervention of alcohol and drug use among students. Since the Grand Jury's interview with the administration at Scotts Valley High School (SVHS), two DUI sentencing hearings were held on campus.

**PARTIALLY AGREE:** The staff were not fully aware of all programs available through county agencies; however, staff are familiar with, and make use of, many programs available through outside agencies. Staff have contacted agencies noted in the Grand Jury report to request information about resources available to the district. In addition to the two DUI sentencing hearings, which were scheduled prior to the Grand Jury interview, a Town Hall meeting was held for parents on the subject of teen alcohol abuse in cooperation with law enforcement and other non-profit agencies. Students participate in Peer Court and Friday Night Live activities.

### **RECOMMENDATIONS**

1. SVUSD officials should provide leadership, direction, and support to schools, parents, students, and community to launch a united effort aimed at reducing the life-threatening behaviors associated with teen drinking.

**Has been implemented:** As demonstrated in the responses above, the district has taken the lead in coordinating support from law enforcement, non-profit agencies and the business community to respond to this community-wide problem.

2. SVUSD should develop a better understanding of the reliability and relevance of CHKS information. In addition, an analysis of the county, state, and national trends would add a broader perspective from which to view the magnitude of the teen drinking problem in the district. CHKS results from county organizations should be available for review by teachers, counselors, parents, and students.

**Has been implemented:** The district disagrees that it lacks “understanding of the reliability and relevance of the CHKS information.” District personnel have worked with the County Office of Education to implement the survey and plan for county-wide analysis and press conferences to increase public awareness of the key findings. Administrators review district-level CHKS data, discuss it with staff, use the data when developing the site safety plans, and provide instruction and appropriate interventions to lessen risky student behaviors, including use of alcohol. This includes a comparison to county and state data, as provided in the reports received from WestEd, Inc. SVUSD was the first school district in Santa Cruz County to share the CHKS results in public with the Board of Trustees. CHKS results continue to be presented to the public at a regularly scheduled meeting of the Board following the receipt of the aggregated data. Data are presented by principals to their site staffs and are a basis for development of each site’s school safety plan and, as such, are reviewed by each site’s School Site Council made up of parents, staff and students.

3. The student wellness policy in SVUSD should be expanded to include other health-related issues such as intervention and prevention of alcohol and drug use among Scotts Valley students.

**Will not be implemented:** “The intervention and prevention of alcohol and drug use among Scotts Valley students” is already thoroughly addressed in Board Policy 5131.6 (a-d) Alcohol and Other Drugs and accompanying Administrative Regulations. The Student Wellness Policy BP 5030 specifically cites BP 5131.6 as an essential component. The district follows the policy recommendations of the California School Boards Association by adopting the two policies separately, as do most school districts in the state.

4. The SVUSD Board of Education should acknowledge the alcohol problem among teens and prioritize the development of a comprehensive plan as stipulated in Board Policy and Regulations 5131 (a-d) Alcohol and Other Drugs. The plan should incorporate proven evidence-based strategies that provide assistance to students with alcohol and drug problems. A coalition of school staff, parents, students, and outside agencies should be organized to develop and monitor the comprehensive plan.

**Has been implemented:** The district has repeatedly acknowledged that alcohol use among teens is a serious problem, that it is the role of the district to have a district-wide program to address this, and that data on effectiveness of programs and interventions should be regularly reviewed. The district maintains a comprehensive array of coordinated, evidence-

based services and involves the entire school community in planning and review. As directed in BP 5131.6, the district uses a scientifically based prevention curriculum, *Too Good for Drugs*, which has been recognized as a model program by the U.S. Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration. This program is supplemented by instruction throughout the grades in decision making and resiliency skills. Students are made aware of district and school site expectations for students' healthful behaviors through such means as student handbooks and rules, discussions in classrooms at the beginning of each school year, and assemblies throughout the year. Discussion by parents, staff, students and community members occur in various ways at each school site, including by groups of staff and community members in development of annual improvement goals for site safety plans and Single Plans for Student Achievement. Intervention is provided at each site through district counseling programs, supplemented by more intensive counseling when necessary by a Youth Service counselor.

Comparison of the 2007 CHKS data with 2009 CHKS data (percent of Scotts Valley High students compared to national percentages) suggest that the district programs are effective in some areas, although not in all, in reducing risky student alcohol behaviors.

	9 <sup>th</sup> Grade 2007		9 <sup>th</sup> Grade 2009		11 <sup>th</sup> Grade 2007		11 <sup>th</sup> Grade 2009	
	SVHS	Nation	SVHS	Nation	SVHS	Nation	SVHS	Nation
Ever drink alcohol?	36%	67%	45%	67%	65%	76%	56%	79%
Drink alcohol in past 30 days?	22%	36%	25%	37%	38%	46%	36%	53%
Ever been drunk?	22%	-	29%	-	50%	-	37%	-
Ever drunk/high at school?	13%	-	17%	-	22%	-	24%	-
Believe frequent use of alcohol is harmful?	95%	-	90%	-	91%	-	97%	-

Interestingly, the outcomes of the survey are generally positive in most alcohol-related areas surveyed for students who are currently in Grade 11 at Scotts Valley High; they are less positive for incoming 9<sup>th</sup> graders, indicating that perhaps more attention needs to be paid at the middle school level rather than at the high school level, as suggested by the Grand Jury.

- SVUSD should work with Scotts Valley Police Department to reinstate the School Resource Officer to the high school campus when budgetary restrictions allow.

**Will be implemented in the future:** The School Resource Officer is vacant not because of “budgetary restrictions,” but because the Scotts Valley Police Department (SVPD) is temporarily understaffed. It is the intent of the district and the SVPD to reinstate the position when conditions allow. The district continues to enjoy an excellent partnership with the SVPD. The officers provide a regular positive presence on district campuses, are always available to site personnel and students when needed, provide Drug Abuse

Resistance Education (DARE) programs at school sites, support drug abuse resistance assemblies, and support Red Ribbon Week on district campuses.

6. SVUSD should have a suspension reduction policy linked to intervention programs to reduce the number of students suspended for alcohol use and to engage students in a common-sense approach to addressing alcohol and drug issues.

**Has been implemented:** In its 2001-02 Report, the Santa Cruz County Grand Jury found that “Despite the state-mandated ‘zero-tolerance’ policy, school officials have not been able to provide a drug-free environment for students” (2001-2002 Santa Cruz County Grand Jury Final Report, “Substance Abuse in Santa Cruz County High Schools: Consequences and Responsibility,” Conclusion 2). The Grand Jury recommended that “Santa Cruz County high school administrations should explore more effective and realistic ways to enforce the state-mandated ‘zero-tolerance’ policy regarding drugs on campus” (“Substance Abuse,” Recommendation 2). While the district lacks the internal and external resources to provide a suspension alternatives program, its existing counseling intervention program is specifically designed to decrease continued and accelerated alcohol and other drug use by students that would result in additional suspensions and expulsions. Current district policy accomplishes the goal of ensuring campus safety without resulting in a disproportionately high rate of student suspensions and expulsions. According to 2004-2008 data from the California Department of Education Safe and Healthy Kids Program Office, Scotts Valley students represented approximately 7.2% of the total county enrollment, but make up only 3.1% of the total number of suspensions for violence and drug-related offenses and 0.6% of expulsions for violence and drug-related offenses.

SVUSD as a percentage of the County	Enrollment	Violence/Drug		Total	
		Expulsion	Suspension	Expulsion	Suspension
2007-08	6.9%	6.7%	.8%	5.6%	0.4%
2006-07	7.1%	.9%	1.0%	0.6%	0.8%
2005-06	7.3%	4.4%	0.5%	3.0%	0.6%
2004-05	7.4%	.5%	0.1%	0.3%	0.4%
<b>Four Year Average</b>	<b>7.2%</b>	<b>3.1%</b>	<b>0.6%</b>	<b>2.3%</b>	<b>0.5%</b>

The district has taken a proactive stance to prevent drug use and abuse, and to intervene quickly and positively. As the data above indicate, suspensions and expulsions are low relative to other districts in the county in part because of the district’s prevention and intervention programs.

7. SVUSD should find innovative ways to expand counseling services at the elementary level.

**Has been partially implemented:** When funding was cut back last year, the district developed a partnership with JFK University to provide district-funded counseling interns

for the elementary schools. The district continues to investigate options, and is severely restricted by the lack of resources.

8. SVUSD and SVHS should utilize county and outside agency resources that assist students with alcohol and other drug prevention and intervention.

**Has been partially implemented.** The district has taken advantage of resources such as Youth Services counseling, the DUI Court in School program, and Friday Night Live student activities. In addition, the district has worked with the City of Scotts Valley, which adopted a Social Host Ordinance in November, 2008, and the Scotts Valley Police Department to support prevention and intervention services. In addition to district-supported counseling services, the Scotts Valley Rotary Club provides funding to maintain intervention counseling for students at risk of drug use and abuse. The district has taken steps to learn more about county resources and to implement them when possible and appropriate to meet identified needs. The district is currently participating in a North County initiative called Reduction of Alcohol Abuse Program (RAAP), the purpose of which is to obtain grant funding for additional counseling services to reduce youth alcohol abuse through effective prevention and early intervention programs.

9. All staff members who teach or counsel students regarding alcohol prevention should be part of the planning team that addresses prevention and intervention solutions. The many resources provided through county agencies should be available for use by staff.

**Requires further analysis.** The district agrees with the recommendation. Reduced staffing and funding have limited additions we can make to curriculum and services at this time. The district and high school administration are in the process of investigating county agency resources to see what would be reasonable for our schools to use.

10. SVHS should incorporate the Too Good for Drugs program into the core curriculum for tenth, eleventh, and twelfth grade students.

**Will not be implemented.** While this might be an appropriate recommendation if time were available, the need to focus on State Standards in all the core courses and to meet the mandates of the International Baccalaureate curriculum leave little or no time to teach additional lessons or programs. Instead, teachers incorporate the tenets of drug abuse prevention curriculum when appropriate in physical education classes, science, history and English.

11. SVHS should consider offering more health classes especially for eleventh and twelfth grade students to bridge learning with life experiences.

**Will not be implemented.** Because of severe budget restrictions, many current courses at the high school level are averaging between 35 and 40 students. To provide additional elective courses in this financial climate would raise class sizes in required courses and is neither realistic nor advisable.

12. SVHS should involve students in self-help strategies such as peer counseling and conflict resolution, as well as countywide programs such as Friday Night Live and the Together for Youth collaborative.

**Requires further analysis.** Staff is currently investigating the availability of community resources and will implement those that are available and appropriate.

## Attachment A



### **EMPOWERING TEENS & FAMILIES TO SUCCEED**

709 Mission St. Santa Cruz, CA 95060

Business Phone: (831) 429-8350

24 Hr. Crisis Line: (831) 425-0771

241 E. Lake Ave. Watsonville, CA 95076

Business Phone: (831) 688-8856

24 Hr. Crisis Line: (831) 728-2226

# *AIM*

## **Assessment. Information. Management**

### **SV HIGH SCHOOL DRUG & ALCOHOL GROUP PROGRAM CURRICULUM**

In an effort to serve and support our students and families, a drug & alcohol intervention program was established at SV High School in 2007. This program was suggested and available, and is now required for students caught using or in possession of drugs or alcohol on campus or at school functions. Additionally, the group is open to students for self-referral or on juvenile probation with Santa Cruz or Scotts Valley drug and alcohol diversion programs. Moreover, any SV High School parents who want their child to learn about addiction and relationship to drugs and alcohol are welcome as well.

The program format consists of eight one-hour group education/ process series in addition to an individualized substance abuse assessment and individual educational goal planning for each adolescent. Groups meet once a week. Learning objectives are the following: (1) understanding the fundamental concepts of abuse, addiction, and dependence (2) awareness of the physical, emotional and social risks and consequences of using alcohol and drugs. The curriculum is designed to increase teens' ability to accurately self-assess their patterns of substance usage and the life problems they cause.

Additionally, counselor meets with parents prior to group beginning as well as each student *individually* for two meetings as follows:

1<sup>st</sup> session – (1) substance abuse assessment (2) individual educational goal planning to define student's goals towards making positive life changes/harm reduction

2<sup>nd</sup> session – Upon completion of group to (1) identify progress towards individual goals (2) identify further need for services and/or support.

### **Week 1:**

Introductions ~ Introduce classmate: Confidentiality. Goals. Rules. Structure. “How did you get here?” Hand – outs: Group activity – “Continuum of Use” -- designed to identify/define addiction and phases of drug/alcohol use. Choose goal for 8-week group. WHAT IS ADDICTION? /IDENTIFYING HIGH RISK FACTORS. **Pre test survey.**

### **Week 2:**

Check-in’s: Handouts. “What’s good to you about D & A”? List individually on hand-out; members list positives etc. Education / hand out’s Presentation – (1) Alcohol’s effects on the body and mind (2) Statistics and facts Counselor led group discussion designed to identify negative experiences when using alcohol regarding alcohol in body/ effects-how it works. Video #1, #2. Discussion.

### **Week 3:**

Check –in’s. Handouts. “What’s bad about D & A?” Educational / hand –out’s regarding **M/J** in body/ effects-how it works. Differences between nicotine and marijuana. Students share personal experiences & points of view regarding addiction. Discussion. Video #3. Group discussion – identifying consequences (legal, social, health, academic) of marijuana and nicotine use

### **Week 4:**

Check-in’s. “What is “Cycle of Addiction?” Handout’s – intoxication, abuse, dependence/ tolerance – withdrawal. Video #4. Coping mechanisms. Alternative ways of coping. Presentation – Identifying increased risk of STD infection and drug/alcohol use. STD facts. Q & A Educational forum allowing students to ask specific topic related questions. Discussion.

### **Week 5:**

Check-in’s. Handout’s – thinking about where life is heading scale– honest with self / others. Video #5. Impact on family/ friends/ school etc. Presentation – risk factors (genetic, age, social, environmental)

### **Week 6:**

Check-in’s. Guest speaker or Video #6, #7, Brain imaging- chemistry – how D/A work in brain/ reward center activity in adolescents. Discussion/ questions.

### **Week 7:**

Check-in’s. Drug “Jeopardy” psychoeducation game to assess knowledge and make connections from previous group education/ experience. Discussion. All D/A handout. Discussion/ questions.

### **Week 8:**

Check-in’s. 20 Questions handout, Discussion. What did the group do/ not do for you? Address initial goals. Video #8 – denial, discussion. Check-in with focus on progress and/or awareness gained as result of group. Re-examine continuum of use. Group discussion – maintaining positive goals after completing group series. Summary for each member. Closing. **Post test survey.**