



**Community
Prevention
Council**

of La Cañada Flintridge, California

Teen Summit Report

La Cañada Flintridge, California

Prepared by the Community Prevention Council
Compiled by Will Moffitt, Chairman

October 22, 2007

Teen Summit Report
October 22, 2007

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of La Cañada Flintridge, California

Teen Summit Report

Introduction

On April 29, 2006 more than 35 dedicated community leaders gathered together for a Teen Summit at the La Cañada Flintridge City Hall to address underage drinking and substance abuse in the community.

Several organizations and individuals have been busy addressing the issues discussed at the Teen Summit. Some have developed new programs and strategies. Others have re-visited and re-tooled existing programs. Still others are currently creating and reviewing action plans.

The Community Prevention Council has prepared this summary report of actions, programs and results and hopes that it can help us all deal more effectively with drug and alcohol issues, especially with our community's youth.

Teen Summit Attendees

School Board:

Scott Tracy, President

Jinny Dalbeck

Susan Boyd

Cindy Wilcox

City Council:

Greg Brown, Mayor

Laura Olhasso

Steve del Guercio

Community Prevention Council:

Will Moffitt, Chair

Paula Denny, PR

(Other CPC members are listed with their group affiliations.)

Mental Health Professionals:
Paul Royer

Student participant (anonymous for the purpose of report)

Sheriff's Department:
Captain Tim Peters
Deputy Chris Deacon
Deputy Jim Rodela

District Attorney's Office:
Sandra Harris, Deputy-In-Charge, Bureau of Specialized Prosecutions, Pasadena Juvenile
Division

Public Safety Commission:
Faye Therrien, Chair

La Cañada High School Administrator:
Joanne Davidson, Assistant Principal

9-12 PTSA President:
Karen Mathison

7/8 PTA:
Kathy Hernandez

Elementary PTA Representative: Sharon Otsuka

Private School Representative:
Brenda Franklin, Sacred Heart

Korean-American Outreach Representatives:
Sharon Otsuka
Lucy Park

C-C Family YMCA:
Ken Gorvetzian, Chair
Gregory Yu, MD, Past Chair

Community Center of LCF:
Diane Moldowsky

Parents and Community Members:
Frances Black
Bob Burlison, Attorney
Linda Burlison, Nurse

Tina Cooper
Teresa Deutsch
Tom Hurlbutt
Suzanne MacDonald, Glendale Schools, works with at-risk Students
Janice MacGlashan
Ed Mateus

Press:
Robert Perkins, Outlook
Bianca Gallegos, Valley Sun
Vince Lovato, Foothill Leader

Current alcohol use and abuse among teens in LCF

Alcohol and drug use is prevalent in LCF among youth and adults. Acts of violence, automobile accidents and vandalism are often accompanied by alcohol and drug use in our community. No family, organization or school escapes the effects of substance use and abuse.

Every two years a Drug and Alcohol survey is conducted by LCHS of its students. The survey is voluntary, but has given the community a clear indication each time given of the current level of alcohol and drug use and the drugs of choice among our local youth.

What we have seen is that LCF is no different than any other community in the United States when it comes to alcohol and drug use and abuse. In general LCF follows the national trends. The reasons include available discretionary funds among youth, easy access, media glorification, peer pressure and others.

As several youth have reported, alcohol and drug use has destroyed lives and shattered families in LCF. And it appears that youth are beginning to experiment at younger ages each year.

Problems associated with teen alcohol use

Though laws regarding alcohol have been present in the United States almost since the nation's inception, many of our nation's social concerns still stem from alcohol use.

Of these sociological concerns, one modern issue revolves around the topic of teenage drinking or the consumption of alcohol by those under the legal age to purchase the substance (21). It has been alleged by some that teenage alcohol consumption may lead to an increase in the frequency of risky behaviors, such as dangerous driving, and promiscuous, unprotected sexual activity.

According to the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism, nearly one million high school students across the United States are "binge drinkers," meaning that on each occasion, the teen(s) labeled as such consume more than four alcoholic beverages. Furthermore, three-quarters of high school seniors have consumed alcohol, as well as two-thirds of tenth graders, and two-fifths of eighth graders. Perhaps most tragic of all, 5,000 young people die every year as a result of alcohol consumption, whether from automobile crashes, miscellaneous accidents, or homicide.

Psychological effects as a result of teenage drinking have also been reported. Long-term memory impairment, depression, anxiety without alcohol, and the development of Oppositional Defiant Disorder have all been considered possible results of drinking before age 21. Furthermore, Antisocial Personality Disorder has been reported, resulting in yet another additional possible ramification of alcohol consumption. Even more disturbing, there have been claims that alcohol use among adolescents has also been associated with considering, planning, attempting, and completing suicide.

Legal efforts to reduce teen drinking have met with some success. Compared to European nations, which have more relaxed laws on alcoholic beverages, the United States has considerably lesser rates of monthly drinking, binge drinking, and intoxication than the countries of Portugal, the United Kingdom, Italy, Hungary, Greece, and Denmark. Legally, in the United States, road construction and maintenance assistance by the federal government may be withheld if a state does not maintain a drinking age of 21 years; thus, in the United States, all fifty states have a drinking age of 21 years, and many laws governing the consumption, distribution, sale, and serving of alcoholic beverages.

Perhaps just as important to controlling teenage drinking as the court system are non-profit organizations that promote a message of abstinence from intoxication. Such organizations include well-known names like M.A.D.D. (Mothers Against Drunk Driving) and D.A.R.E. (Drug Abuse Resistance Education), whose slogan is "To resist drugs and violence." Concerning both alcohol and violence, teenage incidents of both types are often related; it has been suggested that teenagers and people in general, are more likely to commit crimes, including those of hatred, while under the influence of alcohol.

In La Cañada Flintridge our active local churches and non-profit organizations like the Community Prevention Council, C-C YMCA, Girl and Boy Scouts, The Community Center of LCF, AYSO, Gladiators and others spread the message of abstinence. At local schools is the student organization S.A.D.D., an acronym standing for Students Against Destructive Decisions.

But as constantly large numbers of individuals shift into adolescence and others exit, teenage drinking will continue to be an issue on the minds of the citizens of La Cañada Flintridge.

Dangers of Teen Drinking

Teens don't just drink. They drink to excess.

- More than 10 percent of eighth graders, 21 percent of sophomores, and 28 percent of seniors report recent binge drinking.
- Statistics show that the majority of current teen drinkers got drunk in the previous month. That includes 53 percent of the high school sophomores who drink and 67 percent of the high school seniors who drink.
- Asked "how high do you usually get," over half of high school seniors who drink report that they get either moderately—or very—high.

Underage drinking is linked to injury and risky behavior.

- Reducing underage drinking can reduce drinking-related harm.

Brain Development and Alcohol Abuse

- Research indicates that the human brain continues to develop into a person's early 20's, and that exposure of the developing brain to alcohol may have long-lasting effects on intellectual capabilities and may increase the likelihood of alcohol addiction.
- The age when drinking starts affects future drinking problems. For each year that the start of drinking is delayed, the risk of later alcohol dependence is reduced by 14 percent.

Drinking and Driving

- Car crashes are the leading cause of death among people ages 15 to 20. About 1,900 people under 21 die every year from car crashes involving underage drinking.
- Young people are more susceptible to alcohol-induced impairment of their driving skills. Drinking drivers aged 16 to 20 are twice as likely to be involved in a fatal crash as drinking drivers who are 21 or older.

Suicide

- Alcohol use interacts with conditions like depression and stress, and contributes to an estimated 300 teen suicides a year.
- In a 1992 study by researchers at the University of Buffalo, 37 percent of eighth grade girls who drank heavily reported attempting suicide; 11 percent of eighth grade girls who did not drink reported attempting suicide.

Sexual Behavior

- Current teen drinkers are more than twice as likely to have had sexual intercourse within the past three months as teens who don't drink.
- Higher drinking levels increase the likelihood of sexual activity.
- Adolescents who drink are more likely to engage in risky sexual activities, like having sex with someone they don't know or failing to use birth control.

Other Risks

- Teens that drink alcohol are more likely than nondrinkers to smoke marijuana, use inhalants, or carry a weapon.
- Binge drinking substantially increases the likelihood of these activities.

Teen Summit Group Responses and Action Plans

Those attending the Teen Summit agreed that a combined effort was needed to attain results in our community. They also agreed that renewed attention and commitment by each individual and organization was the only way to make a significant difference in the lives of local youth and their families.

Each group represented at the Teen Summit went away with the task of identifying and revisiting their existing programs dealing with underage alcohol and drug use or develop new strategies and action plans. They would then prepare a report to become part of the “living” document compiled and distributed by the Community Prevention Council. On the following pages are the reports that have been submitted to date.

Our goal is to focus and advance our current understanding of underage drinking and drug use in La Cañada Flintridge; and promote strategies and actions that protect our children from their tragic consequences.

It is the hope of the Community Prevention Council that this information will not be put on a shelf and forgotten but instead is used to help change the culture of acceptance of underage drinking and drug use that is currently prevalent in La Cañada Flintridge. We all want to keep our families healthy and safe.



LEROY D. BACA, SHERIFF

May 2, 2007

County of Los Angeles
Sheriff's Department Headquarters
4700 Ramona Boulevard
Monterey Park, California 91754-2169



Will Moffitt, Chairman
Community Prevention Council
785 New York Drive
Altadena, California 91001

Dear Chairman Moffitt:

I appreciate and commend you for your efforts and dedication in regards to the issue of underage drinking and substance abuse. I truly believe your efforts to organize the leaders of our community has had a substantial impact.

The personnel at Crescenta Valley Sheriff's Station have redoubled their commitment to reduce the number of teens using alcohol and illicit drugs, through education and enforcement. We worked with the staff of La Canada High School and Rosemont Middle School, presentations were made in English and Korean regarding substance abuse. We have worked to cut the available supply of alcoholic beverages through sting operations by having our law enforcement explorers attempt to purchase alcohol at establishments where they are sold.

We realized that we must continue to educate the teens and parents within our communities regarding the consequences of using alcohol and illicit drugs, as well as enforcement of the applicable laws. I assure you that we are committed to meet this challenge.

If you would like to discuss this matter in further detail, please do not hesitate to contact me at 818-248-3464.

Sincerely,

LEROY D. BACA, SHERIFF

Timothy W. Peters, Captain
Crescenta Valley Station

A Tradition of Service

May 29, 2007

Will Moffitt, Chairman
Community Prevention Council
785 New York Drive
Altadena, California 91001

Dear Chairman Moffitt,

Currently there is a strong partnership between the City of La Cañada Flintridge, the La Cañada School District, and the Sheriff's Department in the area of prevention. The STAR (Success Through Awareness & Resistance) Program is provided under City and School District contract to students in the 4th through 8th grades. Individual classroom visits are made 8 times during the school year covering topics such as alcohol, tobacco, and drug abuse, as well as life skills lessons (communication, decision making, goals, consequences, coping skills, personal responsibility, peer pressure, conflict resolution). Students receive a total of 40 lessons over a five year period from their STAR Deputy.

I have been assigned to provide the STAR Program to the La Canada School District for the last five years and have been an active member of the Community Prevention Council. I look forward to continuing my dedicated efforts to the City of La Canada Flintridge and its youth. After my attendance at the Youth Summit Meeting, I am committed to helping the community in its on going efforts to combat underage drinking and substance abuse. I look forward to our continued partnership in the challenge we face in educating our youth about the daily dangers they face.

Sincerely,

Jim Rodela, Deputy Sheriff
Los Angeles County Sheriff's Department
STAR Unit

Governing Board

Scott Tracy
Susan Boyd
Joel Peterson
Jinny Dalbeck
Cindy Wilcox

La Cañada Unified School District
...a learning community committed to personal growth
and academic excellence



February 22, 2007

Dear Mr. Moffitt and Members of the Community Prevention Council,

Members of the School Board of the La Cañada Unified School District attended the Summit Meeting on Saturday, April 29, 2006. The Board held a concurrent workshop so that the four available board members could attend. The Board appreciated the opportunity to participate with the many groups represented at the Summit Meeting.

On June 6, 2006, the School Board held a workshop on substance abuse. The District Director of Assessment, Research and Consolidated Programs, Mrs. Lindi Dreibelbis Arthur presented information on State and Federal funding sources used to assist with the cost of prevention education. Mrs. Arthur also gave a summary of survey data from our students on substance abuse. Assistant Principal of La Cañada High School, Joanne Davidson, reported on proactive approaches to preventing substance abuse and efforts to help students in recovery. Several students and their parents shared their perspectives on substance abuse in the community and the High School. 7/8 Principal, Wendy Sinnette, and 9-12 Principal, Damon Dragos, discussed their approaches to substance abuse on the combined campus. Ms. Sinnette then presented a research-based system designed to improve social/emotional and academic outcomes for students. Developed by the Search Institute, this system is called The Asset Approach: 40 elements of healthy development. The school board unanimously endorsed this new method of working with students to help students make better choices and to prevent substance abuse. Since then, the District has committed an in-service day to train the teaching staff in the Assets approach. (Complete minutes are available on the District web site at www.lcusd.net, click on School Board, click on 2005-2006 minutes. For more information on Developmental Assets, go to www.search-institute.org)

Thank you for inviting the School Board to participate in the Summit Meeting.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Cindy Wilcox".

Cindy Wilcox
Member of School Board
Liaison to the Community Prevention Council
(818) 952-0345, home phone
thewilcoxfamily@earthlink.net

4490 Cornishon Avenue, La Cañada Flintridge, California 91011 Phone: (818) 952-8381

La Cañada High School
Community Prevention Council Update
April 2007

La Cañada High School continues to take a proactive approach in dealing with issues of teen substance abuse and overall student behavior. Since the Community Prevention Council Forum on Drug Abuse in April 2006, new approaches and interventions have been implemented at LCHS to support students' academic, emotional and social needs. A number of continuing programs and supports are also in place.

The 7-12 High School had a goal to work on character education and to help students to develop the resiliency needed to overcome the many challenges they may encounter. After an in-depth review of the issues, staff recognized that many High School students would not be receptive to a canned curriculum. The staff decided to implement the Developmental Assets philosophy. Developmental Assets is a research-based approach to making deliberate connections with students and helping students improve their own outcomes. The 40 Developmental Assets emphasizes the kinds of positive experiences and characteristics young people need to thrive and make constructive life choices. The entire LCHS 7-12 staff has been trained in the Developmental Assets approach and as a result, more positive relationships between staff and students have been formed. In addition, the 9-12 counselors currently visit all 9th grade SSR classes to do lessons with the students that focus on the various assets. Some of the lessons have focused on friendship, organization, goal setting, and integrity.

Another program that has been implemented to support students is the PAL Mentor program. The PAL Mentor program was developed to provide selected 9th grade students with adult mentors who will assist and support these students throughout their high school careers at La Cañada High School. Students were selected based on their academic and leadership potential. The selected students represent the various social groups in the 9th grade to provide students with the opportunity to interact with a diverse group. The mentors include teachers and administrators with several students acting as big sisters to other students.

Many La Cañada High School teachers and support staff members have volunteered to be mentors. The list of mentors includes: Dennis Ballard, Sharon Barker, Kevin Buchanan, Sun Choe, Allison Dalbeck, Joanne Davidson, Hillary Gregg, Virginia Gurrola, Jim Harvey, Cynthia Hayes, Suzanne Healy, Josh Landerer, Barbara Leach, David Nachman, Lori Marie Rios, Lia Roberts, Nancy Shannon, Wendy Sinnette, Cole Spitler, Melanie Sos, Sally Spangler, Karen Stattler, Erin Thomas, Sandra Toms, Laura Wheeler, and Tanya Wilson. Superintendent Jim Stratton, Assistant Superintendent Mike Leininger, and Director of Special Education Dr. Tammy Jackson have also volunteered to be mentors. La Cañada High School seniors Emily Arkfeld, Molly Gray, and Joy Lelo will also be involved in the PAL Mentor program. They have been selected to be "Big Sisters" to several of the students.

Learning Contracts are now being developed to assist students who need additional academic support. The counselor, the student, the parent, and the assistant principal meet to discuss the academic concerns and develop a game plan to address the students' needs and difficulties. Teachers provide written feedback or attend the meetings as well. Once a Learning Contract is developed, the counselor and the assistant principal monitor the student's progress. Follow up meetings are scheduled to insure the concerns of the contract have been addressed.

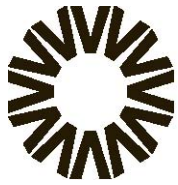
Irregular attendance patterns often turn out to be a strong indicator of other concerns such as school anxiety, depression, substance abuse, and eating disorders. The student may need additional emotional and or academic support. Several different attendance interventions are already in place. Attendance meetings are held regularly with the student, the counselor, the parent and the assistant principal. The attendance meetings provide the opportunity for school personnel to support the student and family. Once specific concerns are discovered, school personnel are able to assist the student and family in addressing these difficult issues.

In partnership with the City of La Cañada Flintridge, a Deputy Sheriff continues to meet with 4-8th grade classes on a regular basis to discuss the importance of making good choices and preventing substance abuse. In even number years, the City provides the 9-12 students with a program called Every 15 Minutes, a vivid lesson on the serious risks of driving while under the influence. This program is usually staged prior to Prom.

The La Cañada Flintridge Educational Foundation and the State of California continue to provide additional funding for High School Counselors. The Counselors provide services to all students. Students in 7/8 can sign up for special support groups that meet with Counselors and are organized around topics of interest.

The main goal of all these programs and interventions is to identify students as individuals, to help them find creative ways to connect with adults and other students, and to give them the tools to thrive in the social and academic environment at the High School and beyond.

Respectfully submitted by,
Joanne Davidson
Assistant Principal
La Cañada High School



Verdugo Hills
HOSPITAL

August 30, 2007

William Moffitt, Chairman
Community Prevention Council
785 New York Drive Altadena,
CA 91001

Dear Chairman Moffitt:

As a vital community resource, Verdugo Hills Hospital is continuously offering support to members of the La Cañada Flintridge community through educational and outreach programs.

Protecting our youth is an important part of what we do as healthcare professionals, caregivers and parents. In an effort to help combat underage drinking and substance abuse in our community, Verdugo Hills Hospital can provide nurse educators to various community organizations, including schools and community clubs, to address the consequences of using alcohol and illicit drugs. As a community, we should work together to educate and put an end to substance abuse and alcohol among our teens.

Please feel free to contact me at 818.952.2213 to discuss this further.

Sincerely,

Celine Petrossian Marketing and Public
Relations Specialist

1812 Verdugo Boulevard • Glendale, California 91208-1409
Marketing & Public Relations • tel 818.952.2213 • fax 818.952.4616
www.vhhospital.org

Crescenta-Cañada YMCA

1930 Foothill Blvd., La Cañada Flintridge, CA 91011
(818) 790-0123 Fax: (818) 952-3359

October 10, 2007

Will Moffitt, Chairman
Community Prevention Council
785 New York Drive
Altadena, CA 91001

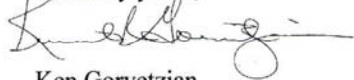
Dear Chairman Moffitt,

On behalf of the Crescenta Cañada YMCA Association and the Board of Directors, I want to commend you and the Council for its efforts and dedication in regards to the important issues of underage drinking and substance abuse in our community.

The YMCA agrees that a combined effort with local organizations and non-profits is needed to address and attain positive results in our community. The YMCA has a long history of providing programming that promotes and enhances the personal growth and social skills of our young people so that they can develop into leaders and concerned citizens who will be a force in their communities. Through programs such as Youth & Government, Model United Nations, Junior High Y and PILOTS we continue the process of developing spirit, mind and body through activities that meet the developmental needs of the participants, developing healthy relationships, and incorporating fitness into their busy lives. And it is through their involvement in our programs that we hope they will find the path to a safe and healthy life.

We look forward to our continued partnership with the Community Prevention Council as together we seek to "*build strong kids, strong families, strong communities*".

Sincerely yours,



Ken Gorvetzian
Past Chairman
Crescenta-Cañada YMCA



We build strong kids, strong families,

Conclusion

It is the ultimate goal of the Community Prevention Council and all those who participated in the La Cañada Flintridge Teen Summit to prevent teen alcohol and drug use and promote healthy alternatives and support for our community's families.

Last year one hundred thousand elementary school children got drunk at least once a week. One out of ten 12 - 13 year olds currently drinks alcoholic beverages. As early as fourth grade, one out of three children reports pressure from classmates to try wine coolers and other specialty alcoholic beverages.

As students get older, the reported use of alcohol increases dramatically. Fifty-four percent of eighth graders consumed alcohol during the year. Thirteen percent of eighth graders binge drink. Seven out of ten high school seniors report drinking.

What can we do?

Parents can play a major role in preventing teenage alcohol use. There are a number of things adults can do at home and in the community to prevent or reduce teen alcohol and drug use.

At home, be available when your teen needs you for support and information. Express an interest in all your teen's school and extra-curricular activities. Encourage your teen to participate in extra-curricular activities, religious and other youth groups, and other opportunities for using free time constructively. Support your teen's academic progress and accomplishments; help set goals for their future. In general, keep track of where your kids are, who they are with, and how they spend their time.

It is important to involve your teen in discussions to establish rules with regard to curfews, social activities, and dating. Don't assume kids know what is on your mind. Use "I messages" to communicate your feelings, opinions and concerns without blaming, preaching or putting them down. Be prepared to listen to their viewpoints as well.

In the community, get to know other teens, and find out whether there's a way to get involved in local efforts to provide adult support for teens that need it. Get to know your teen's friends, and volunteer when adults are needed to help with school, religious and other community youth events. Support other parents' efforts to monitor peer group activities; alert other parents when you have reason to believe their kids are engaging in unacceptable behavior. Let other parents know you do not condone underage drinking or drug use at parties, call parents to see if they will be present when parties are hosted in their homes, and support social and community activities that provide alternatives to

drinking. Join the Community Prevention Council's SafeHomes program
(www.wmadigital.com/SafeHomes)

Finally, look for opportunities to meet with parents for support as well as to keep informed about youth issues, community norms and standards, and other parenting concerns. Work with one another to set standards for what is acceptable teen behavior in the community, as well as to encourage community-wide efforts aimed at preventing teenage alcohol and drugs use and abuse.

A special thanks to all who have contributed to make this document valuable to our community. Together we do make a difference.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'W. Moffitt', enclosed within a blue circular scribble.

William Moffitt
Chairman
Community Prevention Council