

Youth Empowerment and Policy Project (YEPP)

Summary of 2001 Findings and Recommendations: SCHOOL SUBSTANCE ABUSE POLICY

For the full document, visit <http://www.neias.org/pdf/FindingsRecomm2001.pdf>

Hallmark A: Collectively Identified Core Values are the corner stone of all school and community efforts to create and sustain an ethical and responsible school culture.

- Gather representative community members and come to agreement on core values regarding underage alcohol use.
- Use a facilitator, moderator or and/or counselor to guide the process of determining core values.
- Plan the annual event in combination with another draw. For example: pot luck dinner, open house, conference night, etc.

Hallmark B: Entire community is welcomed and meaningfully involved in the process of value identification, standard setting and the enforcement of standards.

- Facilitate a discussion within the community about value identification, and its relation to drug and alcohol policy that is inclusive of diverse views.
- Use a trained facilitator, moderator or school counselor to aid in discussion.
- Community members involved should be diverse in age and background.
- Discussion should include acknowledgment of the four identified populations: users, nonusers, undecided and affected persons.

Hallmark C: Students are welcomed and involved in the process of value identification, standard setting and the enforcement of standards.

- Youth need a legitimate voice in the process of creating drug and alcohol policy.
- Enforcement of policy should not only lead to punishments or negative sanctions, but also to options for treatment.
- Create an ongoing group of youth that will stay informed of drug and alcohol issues.
- Use this group each year to help educate other students about the steps involved in creating and implementing drug and alcohol policies.
- Allow the group, on a continual basis, to act as a liaison between students and administration regarding drug and alcohol policy.

Hallmark D: There is an active partnership between schools and parents.

- Each year, parents need to be welcomed and included in the discussion of drug and alcohol issues and their relation to school policy.
- Use public events such as open house, parent nights, and assemblies as forums for students to plan and participate in discussions about core values, community substance abuse norms, and conflicting messages about alcohol use and non-use with other students and parents on yearly basis.
- The student population and the parent population should have time to discuss drug and alcohol issues separately and then come together to listen to both perspectives.

Hallmark E: All adults who interact with students, in and out of school, strive to model and reinforce ethical and responsible behavior.

- If all community members are involved in the conversation about core values using the previous recommendations and suggestions, the outcome will be more ethical adult behavior.

Hallmark F: Teachers are authorized and expected to teach, model and enforce ethical and responsible behavior.

- Youth need to have a legitimate voice in the discussion of the ethical behavior of teachers and in standard setting for teacher behavior.
- Include students in a discussion of the identification of ethical behavior of teachers and in the development of a teacher Code of Conduct.
- Provide a yearly forum for teacher discussion or feedback regarding the conflict that they may feel as "role models" and their use of alcohol or other substances.

- Provide training for teachers so that they know the warning signs for alcohol and drug abuse and the appropriate steps to follow in reporting such abuse.

Hallmark G: Efforts to promote ethical and responsible behavior are an integrated part of the school's curriculum and culture and are not viewed as “extra.”

- Implement drug and alcohol curriculum that is more consistent throughout the year and includes discussion of policy making from core value identification through enforcement of policies and laws.
- Collaborate yearly with local law enforcement to improve the understanding of drug and alcohol laws within the school and community.
- Drug and alcohol related educational presentations need to be included in school life regularly for all ages
- Use substance abuse counselors, peers, and recovering youth to educate the school community about drugs and alcohol.

Hallmark H: Ethical and responsible student behavior is actively promoted and recognized.

- Provide reward system for students who demonstrate ethical behavior.
- Publicly present awards that recognize ethical and responsible behavior in school and in the community
- Create a system that allows students to nominate and present awards to their peers in recognition of ethical behavior.

Hallmark I: Teaching and learning ethical and responsible behavior in relation to drugs and alcohol begins in early childhood.

- Use an ongoing reward system for ethical behaviors for grade school children.
- Use identified high school student leaders to help educate junior high and elementary students on ethics and drug and alcohol related topics.
- Publicly present awards for ethical behavior in school or in the community to junior high and elementary students.

Hallmark J: Ethical behavior is exhibited in the classroom and beyond the classroom.

- Ethical behavior will be an outcome of the previously listed recommendations.

Hallmark K: The drug and alcohol policy disciplinary process is interventionist*, inclusive, impartial, consistent and educational.

- Review the drug and alcohol policy disciplinary process with the community identified core values and the youth recommendations in mind so that it can become more interventionist, inclusive, impartial, consistent and educational.
- Write procedures into policy that support rather than simply punish students who are willing to accept help for drug and alcohol related problems.
- Hold awareness meetings to inform students of treatment options.
- Provide a drug counselor in the school.
- Develop or refine a system of referral so that a student can inform the appropriate people that a friend may need help without fear of persecution.

* Interventionist refers to a procedure other than punishment.

Hallmark L: Outcomes of the drug and alcohol policy are well-defined and assessed regularly.

- Create and utilize a system that legitimately involves students in the regular assessment of drug and alcohol policy.
- Monitor students who have sought out help for a drug or alcohol problem and are in recovery or in transition.
- Involve the student drug and alcohol advisory committee** yearly in collecting and analyzing feedback from youth population regarding the success of the drug and alcohol policy.

**Same as the group of youth discussed in Hallmark C.