



Parents: News You Can Use

KC STAAR Project (Keokuk County Schools Tactics for Alcohol Abuse Reduction)

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**KC STAAR Website
Active Soon!!!**

www.kcstaar.org

**Lots of teen and parent info,
pictures of our latest events
and local and national
resources**

HELP WANTED!!!

**We need parents to be a part
of our action team, to help
with student projects, to talk
with other parents and to help
spread the word.**

**Please consider becoming a
volunteer today!!!! Contact
Lynne at the number below!!!**

KC STAAR Grant Has Successful First Year

Keokuk County received grant funding through the U.S. Department of Education for a period of three years and is part of the Safe and Drug-Free Schools Program's Grants to Reduce Alcohol Abuse. As a result it has expanded to enhance services and programming for secondary students, grades 6 to 12, as well as for the community. This grant includes all four school districts—Keota, Pekin, Sigourney and Tri-County Schools—working collaboratively.

KC STAAR provides the county and school districts an opportunity to explore avenues to reduce alcohol abuse amongst our youth. The grant has incorporated three school-based curriculums—Project Northland, Reconnecting Youth, and Decision Education.

The KC STAAR Action Team, consisting of school representatives, parents, evaluators, and youth from the county meet monthly. They work together to spread the message about non-use. They have put monthly newsletters in the bathrooms, adhered messages to popcorn and candy wrappers, visited our state representatives at the capitol, did a project called "Sticker Shock," participated in local parades and fairs and encouraged everyone to be especially safe during prom and graduation seasons.

Since the start of the grant survey results show there has been a 3.3 point drop, from 14.3 % to 11.0 % of Keokuk County kids binge drinking alcohol on a regular basis. It showed an increase in the perception of harm alcohol can have on a young person. The results also indicated a decrease in the acceptance of teen alcohol abuse. This survey was conducted with all 6th–12th grade students at Keota, Pekin, Sigourney, and Tri-County Schools in September 2008 and March 2009.

We anticipate these numbers to continue to improve through the continued use of the curriculum in the schools as well as the actions taken by youth, parents and community members. As the saying goes, "It takes a village to raise a child," and in this case, the whole county.

(Pictured: The KC STAAR Action Team)



"MOM/DAD: I NEED YOU!!"

It's not often you hear those words from your teen. As they gain more independence, they rely on you less and less.

They still need you for lots of guidance, however (whether *they* think so or not). New research has shown that a child's brain is still growing, even into their early 20's. The final section of the brain to develop is the part that controls reasoning skills. This often leads

teens to make impulsive and risky decisions.

Sharing your values and telling them your expectations will help them be better equipped for decisions they face in the moment.

So, take a minute and talk with your child about drugs and alcohol. They may not thank you now, but they *are* still watching and listening to you.

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