

Sacramento County Youth Commission

October 23, 2001



Background

- November 2000 – a Children’s Summit was held and representatives of the Youth Commission participated
- Summit participants identified issues of importance and created groups to strategize desired results
- The Youth Commission successfully advocated to include Youth Substance Abuse as one of 10 indicators and pledged to make a difference in this area as the Commission was already working on this issue

Partners

- Department of Health and Human Services, Alcohol and Drug Services Division
- Sacramento County Probation
- Sacramento County Office of Education
- Community Services Planning Council
- Project Help

Data Reviewed

National Data

- Youth Risk Behavior Survey 1999
- Monitoring the Future Survey 2000

State Data

- CA Student Substance Use Survey 1997-98

Sacramento Data

- California Healthy Kids Survey Spring 2000
- Juvenile Arrest Data
- Hospital Discharge Data
- Sacramento County Child Death Review Team 1999
Annual Report and 10 Year Review
- Changing the Landscape – A Study of Alcohol and
Other Drug Abuse in Sacramento County, January 2001

Key Findings

- Sacramento County follows the nation in its drug use trends among youth
- Alcohol is the most widely used drug
- Inhalants are preferred over marijuana for junior high students, but not for high school students
- Inhalant use has increased among all age groups steadily
- Marijuana use has increased

Key Findings (Continued)

- Sacramento County has a low occurrence of drunk driving and binge drinking compared to national statistics
- Youth at risk manage to overcome adversity because of resiliency
- Three major factors that help youth overcome adversity include: caring relationships, high expectations, and opportunities for participation and contribution

Key Findings (Continued)

- Relationships with adults other than parents is one building block of healthy development
- Recognized success of the the anti-tobacco campaign and education in recent years
- Acceptance of alcohol use/abuse and view as a “rite of passage”
- Substance abusers frequently reported 3rd grade that first use occurred

Recommendations

- Recognize that for youth (under age 21), alcohol is the most frequently used substance and creates the largest detrimental impact on the community; establish this issue as the County's highest priority
- Endorse a policy that data collection and tracking around this issue is an essential County function
- Support the expansion of mentoring programs that link adults with youth and encourage county employees to become involved in the lives of, not only their own children, but with the youth in their neighborhoods and communities

Recommendations

- Support efforts to secure funding and develop campaigns against use of and access to alcohol by youth
- Support and encourage opportunities for youth involvement in community activities and projects
- Encourage the expanded use of school and church facilities for after school and weekend activities for youth
- Encourage schools and communities to develop or support existing programs that work with youth exhibiting risk behaviors for substance abuse

Recommendations

- Recognize the importance of prevention, intervention and rehabilitation efforts for youth substance abuse
- As funding becomes available, fund programs that specifically target youth substance abuse
- Encourage boards, commissions and task forces dealing with youth issues to include youth participation in formulating policy and programs