



LET'S TALK ABOUT ~~SEX~~ DRUGS

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A NEWSPAPER FOR TEENS BY TEENS

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CLC Teens Tell it Like it Is

Seven students from four area public high schools - Perry, Oliver, Brashear, and Langley - worked together on a project about drugs. This was part of the ARGUE Project at the Community Literacy Center, which brings teen writers together to exercise their minds and learn about useful information.

The project was an interesting topic because it came from the teens' point of view. The CLC teens wanted to tell their side of the story about drugs after reading some drug brochures they felt were unrealistic. The teens used a "rivaling technique" - they looked at different drug situations to express many different points of view teens might have. The group decided to put these situations in a newspaper form.

These teens took time out from their daily activities and helped tell other teens about their opinions on drugs and the true facts which they got from a head nurse, a police officer and a former addict. They worked from 3-5 p.m. every Monday and Wednesday from June 1-24. These CLC journalists agreed, "All teens need to know more about drugs."

Problems in the Family

by Chiante Pryor

Drugs today are bad for young and old. They destroy speech and make it hard to play sports, physically and mentally.

I had a cousin that did drugs. His name was Donny and he started off by watching his dad and friends do drugs. One day I was tired of watching him smoke CRACK and BLUNTS among others, so I walked over and confronted him, I said, Donny today this world is bad and the drugs are much badder, the drugs can seriously mess you up, they make you drop out of school to smoke 'em or either sell 'em. They make you say bad things and make your mother and others sad.

DONNY: Drugs can't hurt me. I don't do them all the time and it makes me feel better when I have had a hard day.

CHIANTE: Well, drugs can kill you, you can't get a steady girl friend or have a steady job doing drugs.

DONNY: My father does drugs all the time and it hasn't killed him yet, so it won't kill me. The only thing my father has ever done is sell some things in the house and I am not about to do that.

CHIANTE: Well, you will, you just wait and see, I'm not just going to go away that easily. You're going to stop with drugs little by little.

[Inside my mind: I knew he was going to try and shut me out so I tried as hard as I could to try and convince him he was doing wrong, because I knew his mother was behind the curtain on this - she didn't know that he was doing drugs. I thought it up and decided to slip a couple of sentences to his mother and try to get his bad friends away from him and keep him closer to me.)

CHIANTE: Well, hi, Mrs. Black, is Donny here?

MRS. BLACK: No.

CHIANTE: Mrs. Black, well, how would you feel if you saw Donny doing drugs?

MRS. BLACK: Donny wouldn't do drugs because he is a good little boy and I raised him to be better than a drug user on the street.

CHIANTE: Well, have you ever seen him do drugs before?

MRS. BLACK: No.

CHIANTE: Well, I have and he has been using them for quite some time now, but just don't jump off the gun and holler at him. You have to be calm and talk to him and learn how he feels about the situation. You have to key in on the problems that he is having with peer pressure and drugs. I'll talk to you later.

MRS. BLACK: OK, see ya.

CHIANTE: (Inside my mind: So I am walking and I meet Donny and I am thinking to myself, I must be getting on his nerves because he doesn't want to listen to me at all. I might have to drop a little medical history that I learned from Mrs. Hogan. I started talking to him about all the different things that happen when you smoke and do drugs.)

Donny, did you know that one joint equals one pack of cigarettes, and from all the smoking it makes your lungs black and dark. Even a little bit slows you up and makes you weaker and less intelligent. You won't be able to think straight, if you go to school you will be in a daze, your eyes



Chiante Pryor, Reporter

get big, you'll be sleepy and tired and act silly—always laughing at everything dumb, even when people thought it wasn't funny. You start to stutter and walk like you just woke up. Whenever you would come in the house, you get hollered at and told off by your parents because smoking sets a bad example.

DONNY: My parents don't really care what I do because they go to work and don't worry about me and my school work or anything else. So my Mom or Dad wouldn't really care what I do when I am out on the street, whether it is smoking or drinking.

CHIANTE: Smoking and drinking is like a disease. So if you get the disease, you could be hooked on it for a long time and it takes a lot of hard work to get rid of it. For instance, people who have been smoking crack go into comas and need treatment badly. Sometimes they even have tubes tied into their veins for de-tox. But if they go back to the street they risk going back to the danger with their friends and doing the same thing over again.

DONNY: But that's them, not me. That's never going to happen to me. I'm only 14 and still have a lot of things I want to do, like be a famous drug dealer like my friends and have big cars and fancy houses.

CHIANTE: How would you know that's never going to happen to you, because you don't know what could happen in the future? Cause fancy cars and big houses are all in the mind and you can get them from getting a steady job and staying in school and trying to make something of yourself, besides being a drug dealer.

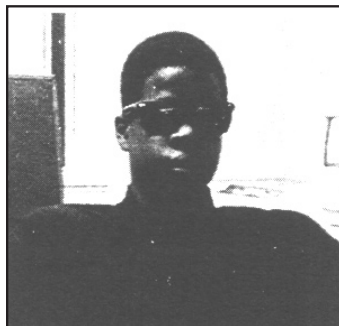
Well, your Mom said she would try to be there for you when you needed it most in tight situations.

DONNY: Well, I'll go talk to my Mom about it and we'll try to work something out. How would you like to come?

CHIANTE: That would be good.

MRS. BLACK: I'm sorry that I wasn't there for you at times when you were in trouble, but now I'll try to be a helpful parent instead of a working parent all the time.

A Teenager That Needs Help but Don't Know How to Face It by Raymond Musgrove



Raymond Musgrove, Playwright

JOHN a boy who uses crack that he thinks that the problem in his life would be solved.

RAY a teenager who cares about other people like John.

(Boy named John Kennedy in a locker-room sitting on a wooden bench then out in the open John pulls out a bag of white powder which we know as cocaine.)

As soon as John was about to snort the cocaine, one of the school football coaches comes in, and when the coach saw what was about to happen, he quickly jumps at John saying stop and stared at John. Well, as for John, he was kind of in a shock at the moment. As the coach gave him the facts about drugs, John just turned his back. And when the coach got done preaching as we teenagers may say he whip this on John, "If you don't get no help for your drug problem you'll be off the team faster than you got on it." As John coach goes toward the exit John sits on the bench speechless.)

Scene I

(Ray, one of John friends, well, he not just his friend he is best-friend who likes to help others who's overhears the shouting down the hall of John's football coach so he decides to give John a little visit.)

Ray: A, John. What this I overhear about you using drugs

John: What is it to you? What do you care.

Ray: Well you are my best friend and I concern about you and if have you had a problem I should know about it.

John: Why are you so concern about me? We're not related or anything and plus where do you get off saying that I have a problem (laughing)?

Ray: Yes I think you have a problem. If you don't know what your problem is I shall state some examples.

John: Yeah, name one if you can.

Ray: Do you remember the time when you were at my house I think it was just last week when you pulled out some white powder called cocaine?

John: So you think you're so hot let me tell you about yourself well I really don't like people telling me what to do and trying to run my life and I don't need none of your pep talk about you trying to help me because all you doing is putting more pressure on me. So if you really want to help me why don't you back off. (Ray walks off as John tells him to butt out. I guess John doesn't want any help, don't you think.)

Scene II

(Two hours later John is now at home in bedroom he begin to get very tired so he decides to stretch out on his bed a few

minutes later John is fully sleep as John begins to dream he begin to dream about when Ray was trying to help him with his problem in the locker-room.)

[DREAM]

Ray: A, John. What this I overhear about you using drugs. Well, you are my best-friend and I concern about you. And if you have a problem I should know about it.

(John would like to say something but can't talk All he could do is move around. In the moment of time John begins:) I don't need any help. I don't need any help.

(Then Ray begins to say:) Get up out the bed and look at yourself in the mirror. Look at yourself. Your body is starting to get wrinkled and your muscle tone is starting to get very saggy and look at this catch. (Ray throws John a football and John tries to catch the football, but his reflexes were not 100%, and plus I don't think he had the muscle to catch the ball.) John, guess you didn't take your rock today. Here have one.

(Soon as John tries to reach out to get the rock he begins to fall forward and he starts to tumble on the floor. Then he wakes up from his mysterious dream saying to himself:) I need help.

Scene III

The next morning John sees Ray at his locker so he goes over to Ray.

John: A, Ray, look here for a minute. I was thinking about what you had said to me about me having a problem. I finally realize that I had a problem, and you know what. I want to thank you for pointing out my problem before it got worst than it already is.

Ray: Since now you are before me, do want some help???

John: I would be glad to get some help because you know what? Yesterday I had this strangest dream and it showed me what I was going to look like in the future if I didn't get off drugs right away. (John begins to finish telling his story about his dream.)

What do you think as the reader of this play: What's going to happen to John after the weeks of treatment? Which one do you think will happen to John in the future?

Will John forget all about Ray before school out and start to use drugs all over again?

Will John go to some of his helping classes, then after a short period of time will he decide to think that these classes are not for him?

Will John go head and try to get some help so he won't look like what he would look like in his dream, and will he try to listen to other people who's trying to help him instead of ignoring them?

If you were wonder what happen to John, well, John finished his classes of his drug problem. Now he is going to the twelfth grade. He is now the capt. of the football team and he is helping others who is having the same problem that John had.

A Reflection on “Let’s Talk About Drugs”...

by Wayne C. Peck, Executive Director

When Raymond finished his piece (p. 3) he was proud of his efforts to write something creative that furthered the rhetorical goals of the larger document. He was more than a little surprised to find that his writing teacher in school did not share his enthusiasm for what he had produced. The teacher was not angry with Raymond, but with the decision to publish his work, which to her mind reflected poorly upon him. She saw his use of everyday language, his lack of attention to grammatical correctness and his unconventional use of parentheses as potentially sending Raymond the wrong message – that he could write “that way” in school.

Raymond’s teacher has a point. There are differences in the ways texts are read and used in school and beyond its walls. It’s important that Raymond realize the difference between street and school talk. What his teacher didn’t realize, perhaps, was that Raymond made some conscious choices to express himself the way he did. Because of an internship opportunity, Raymond had only three writing sessions to express the ideas that emerged from his planning and the group discussion. Raymond chose to put his efforts into developing relevant examples and real life conversations that teens might participate in. Writing in school is valuable in that it helps writers join academic communities. Writing in a Community Literacy Center fulfills a valuable purpose as well by letting students engage in high levels of critical thinking, making their own choices about how they express themselves.

*Note: For more about the composition of this Newsletter, see Learning to Rival, Flower, Long and Higgins, Chapters 8-10.
See Community Literacy Bibliography.*