

“Words to be Heard” Scholarship

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My program, "Choose No Booze" (CNB) will focus on educating teens about the dangers of drinking while providing them with activities to do on weekends so they have a less likely chance to being put in a situation where they may encounter alcohol. CNB will have two components: a mandatory class to be taken freshman or sophomore year and a voluntary after-school club.

The mandatory class will be fun and educational with the after school program being fun.

There is never too young an age to start teaching teenagers the dangers of alcohol. The earlier an impression is made, the more affected by that impression a person will be. My program will require students to take an alcohol prevention class freshman or sophomore year to educate them on the dangers of alcohol. Instead of being taught by teachers, this class will be taught by seniors and juniors who are in CNB's after-school club. I feel this is a good design because freshman and sophomores look up to older students more than they look up to teachers; they aspire to be those students. The class will have an adult proctor, most likely a teacher, whose job will be to discipline any unruly students and make sure the class stays on task. The curriculum will change from year to year with the student teachers deciding what is most pertinent to that year.

The main goal of the class will be to encourage students not to drink and get them interested in the after-school component of the program. The class will be fun with daily or weekly discussions on the dangers of drinking. In the class, students can share drinking stories without fear of repercussion. Students will have to write a paper about

how alcohol affects their lives and the lives of loved one to be counted as a major portion of their grade.

Another factor of the class will be the use of scare tactics. Students will see graphic pictures and videos that will disgust them and encourage them not to drink. Guest speakers will come in and share stories of loved ones who have suffered due to drunk driving or loved ones who are now in prison because of alcohol-related crimes. This will hopefully show students the horrors alcohol can inflict on lives.

At the conclusion of the class, students will be invited to join CNB and attend weekend activities. Thus begins the second component of my proposal. CNB will offer activities as often as possible with the goal of having students attend activities instead of going to a party with alcohol. The activities will not be mandatory, but students will have to attend a certain percentage of activities in order to keep their CNB member status active.

CNB members will have certain benefits in order to encourage membership. One benefit might be free t-shirts, hats, etc., depending on the funding of the program. Another will be the opportunity to teach a CNB class during the students' junior or senior years. Teaching the class will count as a credit and it will be easy with no homework involved, a perk no slacking senior can turn their nose up at. Other benefits may include priority parking, in which CNB members can park in a special section of the parking lot for school events and for school itself; quarterly lunches, in which members all eat a lunch catered by a local pizzeria, dinner, etc., and hold intelligent discussions about school and CNB events; or discount prices to school events. The benefits will encourage more students to join, thus making them attend more activities and keeping them out of trouble.

Most of the weekend activities hosted by CMB will be free to members with a small charge to non-members. The activities can include but are not limited to dances, lock-ins, movie nights, dinner, and towards the end and beginning of the school year, beach parties. CNB will try and have activities as much as possible with as much

diversity as necessary. The CNB events will also have a bring-a-friend component to encourage new membership.

Depending on the amount of members, activity locations will vary. The school in which CNB is based may have to host many of the activities if CNB is popular and contains many members. If membership is smaller, activities can be held at older students' houses with adult supervision. During good weather activities can also be held at community beaches or parks.

In order to make CNB work, it will need a group of dedicated adults and money. The CNB supervisors can be teachers, parents, and responsible adults in the community. The supervisors' main jobs will be to promote membership, supervise activities, and act as a mentor for members to talk about any issues involving drinking that may occur.

As for the money issue, that can be partially solved with fundraising and donations. Participants in certain CNB activities will pay a small fee that will go towards paying its costs. Also, local businesses might be willing to sponsor activities, such as a bowling alley sponsoring a lock-in or a night of bowling. In order to pay for the rest of the costs CNB will incur, some money should be put aside in the school budget, or the state might fund the program. CNB members will also participate in a fundraiser. One such fundraiser could be a community carnival with booths made by the members. Members can also do the usual fundraisers, selling chocolates, donuts, candles, etc., to raise money throughout the year.

In order to stay organized, CNB members will meet during the summer to organize, plan, and prepare for the next year. There will be multiple meetings, with one meeting being between upperclassmen and supervisors to plan the curriculum for the class component of CNB. Another meeting will involve all members and will just be a briefing of the upcoming year's activities. Members will also receive newsletters and notifications to remind them of activities throughout the year.