



For Immediate Release
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DE Children's Department Launches 'Alcohol & Drugs Drag You Down' Campaign
Agency using social media & partnerships with Frightland and Eagle 97 radio to engage teens

Wilmington – You can be anything you want in life – but not if you're using drugs or alcohol. That's the message that the Delaware Children's Department and its Division of Prevention and Behavioral Health Services (PBHS) is sending with the launch of its new campaign 'Alcohol and Drugs Drag You Down' or DDUD. The campaign, which kicked off this week to coincide with most schools' Homecoming season, is heavily aimed at middle and high school students and is using a multi-pronged approach to get their attention.

Delaware youth have among the highest self-reported rates of marijuana and alcohol use in the country, compared to other 42 states participating in the National Youth Risk Behavior Survey. They also rank in the second quarter of states whose youth have ever: smoked cigarettes, used ecstasy, heroin, methamphetamines or engaged in binge drinking. Research consistently shows that underage alcohol and drug use: impairs memory, learning, and concentration and is linked to higher drop-out rates.

"We really want the message that 'substance use and abuse poses a real threat to your future' to connect with students so we designed the graphics to resonate with them, picked activities to engage them, and selected venues to promote the message that really take into consideration where they spend their time," says PBHS Director Susan Cycyk.

The Halloween-themed campaign graphic shows a hand with long nails being dragged down over the words "Alcohol & Drugs Drag you Down", into the ground of a cemetery. The graphics are featured on billboards movie theatre ads statewide, as well as on posters.

Posters are being distributed at high school homecoming dances and through the middle school Behavioral Health Consultants, along with neon glow in the dark wristbands with the campaign hashtag, #DDUD. Students are being encouraged to share the message and post pictures of themselves with the wristbands through social media sites Instagram and Twitter.

The Children's Department and PBHS are also partnering with the popular Middletown Halloween time attraction, Frightland, to hold a special 'Drugs Drag U Down' night **on October 18th**, where teens will receive the neon wristbands and can take selfies with the #DDUD Zombie.

Students in Kent and Sussex counties can take advantage of the campaign's partnership with Milford radio station Eagle 97 and participate in the 'Alcohol & Drugs Drag You Down contest'. Students from Kent and Sussex High Schools can go to the radio station site <http://eagle977.com/contest.php> until October 3rd and pledge to stay drug and alcohol free. The school with the most students pledging will win a visit from Eagle 97 DJs to pump students up as they enter the Homecoming dance. The winning school will be announced Oct. 6th.

Lastly PBHS will be participating in the Newark Halloween parade with agency youth, carrying the #DDUD banner and passing out candy along the parade route. If you would like more information about available substance abuse services available to children and their families please visit www.kids.delaware.gov and click on Prevention and Behavioral Health Services.

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The Children's Department provides services to children who have been abused, neglected, are dependent, have mental health or substance problems, have been adjudicated delinquent by the Courts, as well as prevention services targeted toward all youth. For more information, please visit www.kids.delaware.gov.

Delaware Youth and Family Center
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