

“PROTECT Against Substance Abuse” Host Guide

PURPOSE:

The “PROTECT Against Substance Abuse” program features local parents, young adults, and professionals sharing personal stories about the consequences of substance abuse so that parents and students can discover the signs and symptoms of teenage drug abuse, what actions to take, and where to find supportive resources. Middle and high school students and their parents are encouraged to attend.

The program is led by the Parents Reaching Out To Educate Communities Together (PROTECT) work group of the Unified Prevention Coalition of Fairfax County (UPC). This work group continues the educational effort initiated in 2009 by a group of parents and community leaders in response to a heroin ring in western Fairfax County and the death of 19-year-old Alicia Lannes. With the rise in illicit use of prescription and over-the-counter medicines and use of heroin by teens and young adults, the program continues to be needed in our community.

SCHOOL YEAR:

Each school year UPC plans and coordinates four community PROTECT programs, arranging for the facilitator and panelists. The program is open to the community. Often parent groups such as PTA/SA/O/SO or local coalitions wish to host the program. Requests to host this program should be sent to executivedirector@upcfairfax.org or by calling UPC’s office at 703 938-8723.

PROGRAM FEE:

As a 501 (c) (3) nonprofit organizations and the developer and coordinator of the PROTECT program, UPC charges a \$200 fee set up the facilitator and panel. Once your school program has been scheduled with UPC, checks should be made out to: Unified Prevention Coalition of Fairfax County or UPC and mailed to same at 2970-B Chain Bridge Road, Oakton VA 22124.

NEEDED:

Facilitator/Panel: UPC will take care of lining up the moderator and panel for this event.

Audience: Parents of 6th – 12th graders are encouraged to attend with their students.

Date: Weekday evening 7-8:30 p.m. (No conflicts with band, chorus, drama, games, etc.)

Place: Cafeteria, library, lecture study, community center (probably better to have it in a smaller setting instead of a large auditorium)

Equipment: Seating for parents, tables for panel, podium for moderator, microphone for panel and facilitator



Food: Water for panel (NOTE: PTA/SA/O/SO or another organization may want to provide snacks/desserts for parents attending, though this is optional.)

UPC Information Table: pamphlets, brochures, latest information, fact cards, prevention meeting calendar, etc.

Sign-in Sheet: UPC generally has its own sign-in sheet for those interested in joining the UPC mailing list. Some schools also provide community service hours or extra credit to students who attend this program, and UPC can coordinate with the hosting group to provide names of students who sign in.

Volunteers: To help with sign-in of attendees; distribution of agendas, evaluation forms, index cards for questions; and collection of evaluation forms at the end of the program.

EVENT PUBLICITY:

- A school or hosting group will want to advertise the event in school newsletter, school calendar, through the PTA/SA/O/SO websites, Facebook page, emails, KIT messages, meetings, flyers, post info on school marquee, also share with feeder middle schools and consider putting a flyer/invite in the 6th grade weekly take-home folder. Begin early to get the word out.
- The UPC can assist in developing a flyer (see attached sample) that your group can copy or distribute electronically. UPC will place this event on its website at www.unifiedpreventioncoalition.org and publicize your event to its own email list and via social media (www.facebook.com/unifiedpreventioncoalition and www.twitter.com/keepyouthsafe) as UPC recognizes this is a community event that is open to the public.
- A month before the event, send a notice to local and community newspapers, media, etc. to get your event posted on community calendars etc. Closer to event, UPC can contact media representatives about attending your event to cover it.

EVENT DETAILS:

- Start on time (7 p.m.).
- The principal, designated administrator or hosting group kicks things off with a welcome. Remember that some of those parents in attendance may not be from your school since this is a community event. There may also be families in the audience who have lost children to drug use or who have teens in treatment and recovery.
- After panelists share, those in attendance may ask questions of panelists (or write questions on index cards forwarded to facilitator).
- End event on time (8:30 p.m.). Facilitator will ask audience to complete evaluation form.

PROTECT Coordinator: For further information or questions about this program, please contact executivedirector@upcfairfax.org or call the UPC office at 703-966-8304

Updated Feb. 19, 2015