

Caring Magazine logo

Youth substance abuse awareness program launches

Workshops to take place at corps across the territory.

By Derek Linsell

Over the past 18 months, The Salvation Army Western Territory has worked to create closer relationships between Adult Rehabilitation Centers and corps. As a result, Southern California Divisional Commander Lt. Colonel Doug Riley and Apricot Consulting Group partnered to create a youth education program at the College for Officer Training at Crestmont to teach teenagers about the dangers of drugs and alcohol.

The goal is to provide workshops at corps across the territory to bridge any gaps in school education by providing an open forum for young people to discuss alcohol and drug-related issues.

“As Christians, we must never be naive about equipping our children to face the evils of our world,” said Major Isobel Robinson, former corps officer at Tustin Ranch Corps (Calif.), after attending one of the workshops. “This teaching tool is an excellent means for helping teens present a defense to the drug culture that saturates every level of today’s society.”

The workshops will arm teens with the latest, most up-to-date and accurate information about current drugs and alcohol available on the market, and statistics related to their use.

The content for 10-13 year olds addresses peer pressure and long-term consequences of substance abuse through interactive games and activities. Content for 14-18 year olds is similar, but pushes them to consider the impact of drugs and alcohol on society and decision-making as well.

“Kids at school think that drinking is something that everyone should try eventually,” said a teenage participant. “There is a lot of pressure to try it at least once.”

Teenagers actively engaged in group discussion and activities as many were comfortable with the open conversation methods adopted to address sensitive material.

The hope is that these workshops will continue to equip youth with the resources to make healthy decisions so that they stand against the normalization of certain substances and behaviors.

<https://caringmagazine.org>

