



LAKE COUNTY NARCOTICS AGENCY

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P.L.U.S. Parent's Guide Lesson 14 High School Role Models

This week's lesson is on *Positive High School Student Role Models*. The two goals of this lesson are to: 1) have the P.L.U.S. students hear how someone else "made it" without using drugs and 2) give the P.L.U.S. students ideas about positive activities that he/she can become involved in that will help them avoid the use of drugs. Research indicates that students will hear and remember more of what is said when it is said by someone closer to his/her own age. Our hope is the P.L.U.S. students will listen to more of what is said and apply it to themselves when hearing from positive, drug-free high school students.

Last week the students were asked to write down two questions to ask the high school role models. The P.L.U.S. students can ask any questions that are appropriate about how the role model(s) have *survived* without using drugs. Most students in elementary school DO NOT want to use drugs nor do they want to grow up and use drugs, *BUT* they also hear that "everyone does it." One of the ways to help the P.L.U.S. students achieve this NO USE goal and dispel rumors about *everyone using* is through relating to the role models and how they have avoided drug use, and by learning about the role models' drug-free activities and interests. Some of the questions most frequently asked by the P.L.U.S. students are:

- What do you think about drug use?
- Have you ever been offered drugs?
- Have you ever taken drugs?
- Has anyone ever tried to force you to take drugs?
- What happens when you say NO? Was it hard to say NO?
- Who offered you drugs?
- Do you have any friends who use drugs? Do you do anything to try to help them?
- Do you go to parties where kids use drugs? Are there any drug-free parties?
- Do you get teased for not using drugs? Do you fit in at school?
- Do you lose friends because you don't take drugs?

The above are just a few examples of questions that are asked during this class. Some of the additional questions relate to: what is it like in the middle school; how do you join clubs or activities; do you get a lot of homework; are teachers nice; and where do you like to go to hang out with friends? All of these questions generate advice on "how to survive without using drugs."

Most of the P.L.U.S. role models are selected from the high school's drug-free clubs or organizations. Some of the drug-free clubs are Teen Institute for the Prevention of Alcohol and Other Drug Abuse (T.I.), Teens Against Chemical Abuse/Students Against Drunk Drivers (T.A.C.A./S.A.D.D., pronounced tack-a-sad), S.A.D.D., and America's P.R.I.D.E. All of these organizations are part of what is nationally known as Youth Led Prevention (YLP).

Dedicated to Protecting a Great Way of Life

The final selection of P.L.U.S. role models is made during a meeting held at each high school with the prospective role models and Officer Willis, P.L.U.S. supervisor. At this meeting Officer Willis explains what is expected of the role models during the P.L.U.S. class. These expectations include, but are not limited to: a **Drug-free student** (a one or two time experimentation with tobacco or alcohol is permitted provided it happened over a year prior), **Honesty** (the role model must be willing to answer all questions honestly and without avoiding the question), a **Positive Attitude** (the role model is genuine and proud of being drug-free as well as involved in activities at school and/or community), and **Motivated** (have a goal and direction in mind with regard to his/her future goals). Officer Willis discusses with the role models the importance of answering the students' questions with an *explanation* and not just a "yes" or "no" response. Four to six (4-6) high school role models are used in each elementary school. After the role models understand what is expected of them they must sign a "Participation Agreement" form which states that they meet the *drug-free* status requirement and that he/she can be denied participation at the discretion of Officer Willis without cause.

The high school role models realize the importance of their role in the P.L.U.S. class and are dedicated to serving as positive examples for the younger students. P.L.U.S. officers find this lesson to be one of the most rewarding P.L.U.S. classes. Hearing the role models talk about how easy it is to say "No" and that "*having a drug-free reputation gets easier and easier with time*" is a great message for the P.L.U.S. students. The P.L.U.S. students learn that they can establish a reputation as being drug-free and their friends will respect that decision. Even if a role model has a friend who uses drugs, that friend will usually not do so in front of them. The P.L.U.S. students see there are people like themselves who have chosen not to use drugs and that there are many ways to have fun while maintaining control of their own decisions and actions. It is a positive and rewarding experience for all, and the officers are especially proud of our **P.L.U.S. Role Models** for the decisions they have made!!!

<u>School</u>	<u>P.L.U.S. Graduations</u>	<u>Date</u>
	<u>Location</u>	
St. Mary - Mentor	St. Mary	Monday, May 20 @ 7:00PM
Kirtland	Kirtland Elementary	Tuesday, May 21 @ 7:00PM
Andrews Osborne Academy	Andrews Osborne	Wednesday, May 29 @ 7:00PM