

The Weather

Sunny skies and very pleasant today and Wednesday. Clear tonight. Highs mid-70s; overnight low, near 50 degrees. Details on Page 2.

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Stories of addicts move Mrs. Reagan

CINCINNATI (AP) — Nancy Reagan said she'd seen the STRAIGHT Inc. drug rehabilitation program before in Florida, but her visit to 160 recovering youngsters and their families here touched her in the same way.

The first lady on Monday visited the group's facility at Mount Repose, 25 miles east of Cincinnati. She alternately smiled broadly and wiped away tears as parents told of the agonies and breakdown of family life when one or more of their children became addicted to drugs.

"Like your children, I am proud of you," she said to the parents. "I know nothing can be as painful as the pain from a child."

She also congratulated the young people, ages 11-20, "because you are coping." There were 160 youths enrolled in the local program — 700 altogether in STRAIGHT's programs in Ohio, Virginia, Georgia and Florida.

World's fair woes mount

NEW ORLEANS (AP) — Plagued by low attendance, the world's fair has failed to make September's \$450,000 interest payment on a loan, and 138 private and corporate guarantors could be forced to come up with the \$40 million principal.

The banks had warned they would call in the guarantors' pledges if the fair failed to make the payment by Monday's deadline.

But Gov. Edwin Edwards said

"We need you," Mrs. Reagan told the children. "You are the people who are going to run the world some day, and we want you clear-eyed and clear-minded."

STRAIGHT Inc. spokeswoman Joan Humphrey said the children have taken "the whole gamut of drugs from smelling gasoline to cocaine."

She said the group holds open meetings on Mondays and Fridays. The children live in foster homes, and until deemed ready, they only can talk to their parents over the microphone.

"Our biggest problem is parental denial," Mrs. Humphrey said. "Some parents would rather see their children have mental problems or brain tumors than a drug problem."

She explained that children are vulnerable to drugs "because they haven't perfected a coping mechanism. Drugs is one of the things they do because of pressure."

During the open meeting, several youths related problems they've had in the past. Virtually all said they have tried to injure themselves and have been depressed. Some claimed to have tried suicide.

Tears welled in Mrs. Reagan's eyes when a father told of the desperate exasperation that led him to begin beating his stoned son.

"I wanted him to feel the hurt I felt," but the boy was beyond feeling, he said. He said he feared he might have killed the boy.

STRAIGHT Inc., based in St. Petersburg, Fla., operates a rehabilitation program that uses peer pressure and peer counseling to try to persuade youths to abandon drug habits.

Participants lose rights such as living at home, going to school, working, using the telephone or watching television. They must progress through the program to earn back those rights, under the ground rules. The program costs \$3,000 for each child, plus \$50 per month for food.

STRAIGHT Inc. officials claim that 60 percent of those who enter the 12-14 month program complete



Associated Press

First Lady Nancy Reagan wiped tears from her eyes as she sat in a crowd of concerned parents at a meeting of recovering addicts and their parents Monday at Mount Repose near Cincinnati. She found the stories of some of the 160 young people in the STRAIGHT Inc. drug rehabilitation program touching accounts of pain and learning to cope.

it, and that of those who do, 70 percent stay drug-free for at least a year. Ms. Humphrey claimed a 90 percent success rate in Cincinnati.

Mrs. Reagan's visit was part of her personal mission to promote awareness of drug abuse problems among America's young.

Her trip was billed as non-political, but White House spokesmen said the Reagan-Bush re-election campaign was paying for it.