

Library will host drug talks

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The youngsters who gather in the Land O'Lakes library to hear bedtime stories certainly are more likely to tote teddy bears than smoke marijuana.

But for their parents, library branch manager Gene Coppola reasons, it's never too soon to learn how to keep children on the straight and narrow.

"Some parents don't want to deal with it right now, but maybe they should," Coppola said.

At 6:45 p.m. Monday, before the regularly scheduled bedtime story session begins, the library will host a drug awareness program by people who have been involved with the Orlando-based Substance Abuse Family Education.

Tom Carrow, a Tampa man who refused to believe his son was abusing drugs, will join an unidentified Tampa woman and her 18-year-old son, who recently completed the eight-month detoxification program.

"We like to talk to parents because it gives them something to do about the problem," Carrow said. "Our target audience is parents of teenage kids, but you don't necessarily want to wait until they're in their teens to prepare for this."

He recommended that parents with children of all ages plan to attend the meeting, to learn from people who know what it is like to be a drug abuser and a parent of a child in trouble.

"These are people who have gone through the trials of teenage drug addiction, speaking from firsthand knowledge," Coppola said.

The program will provide information about the SAFE program, which places child addicts in host homes for the duration of detoxification.

The library is at 2818 Collier Parkway, just north of Weeks Boulevard

- Caption: COLOR PHOTO Librarian Gene Coppola

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