15 MINUTE

A FORMAT FOR

STRAIGHT

AWARENESS PROGRAMS

(PARENT PRESENTER)

4th or Phase

Adapted from a Work

by

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STRAIGHT AWARENESS PROGRAMS

STRAIGHT, INC. presents two basic types of awareness programs. The first type is the short program for service clubs and other organizations. This type involves a presenter, who is usually an Executive Staff member or parent, and two STRAIGHT kids, usually one male and one female. The brief presentation is from twenty to forty minutes, depending on time available. It usually includes:

A) The Presenter Introduction

B) Kids' Introductions

C) Questions to the Kids

D) Questions to the Parent

E) Questions from the Audience

G) New Life

H) The Conclusion -- "We are here to help".

The Presenter must carefully guage the time alloted and use only crucial questions to the kids in order to conform to the time limit involved.

The second pattern is for the hour to two-hour program, which is exclusively a STRAIGHT presentation. For the longer presentation, we usually take Executive Staff, four STRAIGHT kids and two to four STRAIGHT parents. In addition to the usual format, outlined above, we break up into small groups after Questions from the Audience. We usually include one kid and one adult with each small group.

The purpose of the awareness engagement is to help the adults present as parents and/or others who work with adolescents to 1) understand the current patterns of teenage drug-use, 2) recognize kids' verbal and action behaviors which indicate the presence of drug-use, and 3) discover that something can be done about drug-use -- the STRAIGHT program.

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The presentation begins with the kids and their drug-using past and concludes with the kids' testimony about their current rehabilitated life and a description of STRAIGHT as the way the change occurred in the lives of the kids.

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A. Presenter Introduction. This should be a brief, two-to-three minute statement that STRAIGHT, INC. is a private, not-for-profit drug-use renabilitation program for adolescents thirteen to twenty-one years of age.

STRAIGHT was founded by a group of families who had kids in a former program, out of concern for an effective drug-use rehabilitation program, for kids in the St. Petersburg, Florida area.

STRAIGHT has five branches, one in St. Petersburg with approximately 260 youngsters, one in Sarasota with 130, one in Atlanta with 190, one in Cincinnati with 160, and our Greater Washington Area program with ~~150~~ 200.

In its six-year history, some two thousand youngsters have come through its doors. This program today is intended to share what we know about kids, drug-use and "the street." It is not a pretty picture, but we are going to "tell it like it is."

B. The Kids' Introductions. The kids introduce themselves with first names only, age, the drugs they have done, how long they have done the drugs, and how long they have been on the Program. This simply is to establish their drug-using identity and background.

C. Questions to Kids. We next begin with questions to the kids. This sect is intended to establish 1) their family background, 2) their drug-use, and 3) th related behavioral and emotional deterioration in their lives.

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FAMILY *What was your family life like before you got into drugs?
*What was your family life like when you were into drugs?

SCHOOL *What was school like for you before you got into drugs?
*What was school like after you got into drugs?

LAW *Did you ever have a problem with the law?

CHANGES *How has your life changed since you've been at Straight?
(How has your family, school/work, etc. changed?)

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The presenter should tell the audience that STRAIGHT's experience shows that between 48% and 65% of high school kids get high in school during the school week on a consistent basis. Is it any wonder that Achievement and S.A.T. test scores are declining? Kids who get high in school are in at least the Third Stage of Drug Use. This would mean that a higher percentage of youngsters are using drugs on the weekends or outside of school hours. This particular line of reasoning forces parents of adolescents to take a look at their kids. If this many kids are using, there is a reasonable chance that their child has been exposed or is involved.

--"If I gave you $50 and dropped you right here, how long would it take you to get drugs, and what drugs could you get?"

--"How much money did you spend on drugs the week before you came into the Program?"

3. Life deterioration. Ask two questions to show the point to which the child's life had deteriorated as a result of drug use.

--"What was your life like just before you came into the Program?"

--"Think for a minute about one of those times when you were alone, you were coming down from drugs, and you really felt bad." "Will you share it with us?"

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D. Questions to Parents.

--"What was going on with you as a parent while all of this was going on with your child?"

--"What kind of feelings were you going through while this was going on in your family, and what was your family life like?"

E. Questions from the Audience. At this point, open up the floor for questions from the audience. Let the kids, one or several, answer each appropriate question. Limit the time for questions to ten to fifteen minutes in short engagements and no longer than thirty minutes in the large hour to two-hour engagements.

Response to technical questions about the program: (treatment modality, phases, structure, rationale) -- "I can tell you about my experience as a parent, but STRAIGHT is a program run by professional therapists and they would have to answer those kinds of questions. I am well qualified to talk as a parent about my own disease and the changes I've gone through, but I am not a qualified treatment professional and I can't respond to that."

G. New Life. This section is designed to show that change can occur on the part of kids and families. We offer the audience hope that kids can recover from drug use. Next, proceed from that hope into how it's done. (That is, a presentation on STRAIGHT as a Program.)

1) Questions to Kids. Ask the kids a single question: "Share with us what your life is like now." Allow each one of the kids to share. The parent should also share what their family life is like now, as a result of their participation in the Program.

2) Program Description. "The way these changes occurred is in the STRAIGHT program which seeks to improve the entire life of the child through their working first, on themselves; second, on their family relationships; third, on achievement

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at school and work; fourth, on building quality friendships and the constructive use of leisure time, and finally, on service to others."

N. "We are here to help." This is simply a concluding statement that, "We are available if you have a problem with your child, or you have a friend with a problem. We're here to help. Please feel free to call upon us at any time and come see us at an Open Meeting."

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