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Substance Abuse Workshop For Youth

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Santa Cruz County-Friday Night Live

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Author Note

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Abstract

Friday Night Live Substance Abuse Prevention program is part of the Behavioral Health Department in Santa Cruz County. In this agency the project implemented was based on educating Youth and adults on impaired driving including the consequences and contributions including substance abuse. The macro level problem related to this project is the lack of education to teens on substance abuse. The micro level problem in the project implemented is DUI's and impaired driving in Santa Cruz County. The purpose of this project is to provide a workshop included with activities for Youth and adults to participate in and be educated on the substance abuse consequences and how it affects the community. The most important findings included in this project were to share the statistics of teens affected by substances and adults affected by substances. Another contributing factor to this workshop is to educate the youth in research of DUI's and substance abuse in the community that they don't get to learn in public schools. The next steps the agency can take with addressing this problem is using this workshop presentation in continuing to share at chapter meetings and Youth Council meetings throughout the community in Santa Cruz County.

Keywords: Substance abuse in youth, youth drug abuse workshop, impaired driving, Friday Night Live-Youth workshop

Agency & Communities Served

The Santa Cruz County Friday Night Live Partnership is comprised of the Friday Night Live (FNL) and Club Live (CL) programs. These programs are multicultural, youth-driven and lead, designed to prevent alcohol, tobacco and other drug use among middle school and high school students. Friday Night Live builds partnerships for positive and healthy youth development which engage youth as active leaders and resources in their communities. Chapters which consist of an adult advisor and youth meet on high school, middle school or junior high campuses. The High School Chapter Program is called Friday Night Live and the Middle/Junior High Program is Club Live. Friday Night Live supports youth in making healthy lifestyle choices free of alcohol, tobacco and other drugs.

The Friday Night Live Partnership Programs have Standards of Practice that each chapter carries out. You can find more information about FNL on the webpage by the Human Services Agency of Santa Cruz County. It states, “Friday Night Live/ Club Live program participants will: Experience a safe environment; have opportunities for involvement and connection to community and school; Opportunities for leadership and advocacy; Opportunities for meaningful skill-building activities; and Opportunities for caring and meaningful relationships among youth and with adults. Chapter does this through Community Service Projects, skill development and leadership training, participating in governance and policy making, and attaining knowledge of the issues, resources in their community” The vision of the program is to work hand-in-hand with young people, so they are both problem- free and fully prepared to overcome future problems (Friday Night Live & Club Live, (n.d.)).

Problem Model Background and Literature Review

Problem Statement

In the United States there was a big increase in youth substance abuse. In 2023, there was a survey that this year was the most substance abuse in adolescents reported.(Monitoring the Future Survey 2023). From February in June 2022 until 2023 the Monitoring Future Survey investigators collected 31,438 surveys from students in public and private schools. In their results they were able to identify graphically everywhere that 75% of the population is youth. This shows that there are many youths in our country who are not given the right education needed when learning about the prevention of substances. Reported use for almost all substances decreased dramatically from 2020 to 2021 after the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic and related changes like school closures and social distancing. During this traumatic time in everyones lives the increase in substance abuse in youth increased dramatically. The use of common substances accessible for youth were: vapes, marijuana, edibles, alcohol, and wax pens. According to the Monitoring the Future Surveying program these top substances were common in the surveys youth completed that were used in the past 30 days or past 12 months. For example, Nicotine vaping remained stable for all three grades surveyed, with 12% of eighth graders, 20.5% of 10th graders, and 27.3% of 12th graders reporting vaping nicotine in the past year.(MTFS, 2022). With the help of research and adults interested in preventing substance abuse they can come together and educate youth who are interested in learning about prevention and can carry the knowledge they learn from professionals and teach those around them ,chain reaction.

In Santa Cruz County a common silent social killer is drugs. Stated by the Santa Cruz County Elevate Addiction Services, “In California 40,000 hospital visits are drug abuse related.” Although substance abuse is a nationwide problem it is very illicit in Santa Cruz County. The

problem identified is there is a percentage in California of substance abuse being 15% when in Santa Cruz county it is 22%. This identifies that not only is the state of California suffering a large population of drug abuse but the top county in the State suffering it the most is Santa Cruz County. And although these percentages may only identify adults, 18 years and older, how do we know how much our youth is suffering from the same illness? In 2015 there was a large number of deaths drug related to only adults under the age of 25 years old where they're substance abuse started at the age of 15. The common misconception is these adults where they started at such a young age. But why? Because the youth population suffers from education in schools and their homes of what drugs can do to you. Some deaths of substance abuse can be from just allergy medication (over the counter pills) to Xanax and methadone. Some medications can speed up the heart rate or slow it down and with the use of alcohol it adds a higher level of danger to any individual. According to the Santa Cruz Sentinel, part of the issue in Santa Cruz County is that many of these drugs have become more readily available. Young adults and adolescents who aren't aware of how harmful it can be to mix drugs with alcohol or other substances are the groups most likely to abuse drugs. Even though at any age drugs are crippling the brain in adolescents and they are struggling with addiction that carries on into their adulthood. The brain is still developing in the frontal lobe of adolescents and that is not understood by youth or parents. That leaves a problem of about 40 percent of Santa Cruz County students report using marijuana, inhalants, or prescription drugs in the past year.

Contributing Factors

The use of parents using substances in their homes doesn't do any better but show youth that it is "normal". This can be a risk factor to the youth population and affect them in school and in their communities. Parent substance abuse disorder can be effective to youth when present in the

same household because it shows failure in living activities like holding a job, having a normal sleep schedule, or a normal appetite, failing to obtain healthy relationships with family and friends, and be successful in school or work. Children having a parent with an SUD are at risk of experiencing direct effects, such as parental abuse or neglect, or indirect effects, such as fewer household resources. Previous research has shown that children of parents with an SUD were found to be of lower socioeconomic status and had more difficulties in academic, social, and family functioning when compared with children of parents who do not have an SUD. These children are also more likely to have higher rates of mental and behavioral disorders. Children who are exposed to a parent with SUDs are more likely to develop SUD symptoms themselves. (Rachel N. Lipari, Ph.D.)

Youth substance abuse is a high rate in Santa Cruz County. A contributing factor is because of the minimal education provided on substances to the youth population. Lack of drug use education is an issue among youth. According to Nurmala et al. (2021), more than half of the students did not know the examples of drugs that work by triggering the workings of the central nervous system, disrupting the central nervous system, and suppressing the central nervous system (66.5%). It is evident that education drug abuse is overlooked in schools and homes. One-third of parents say that they believe that attention-deficit/hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) medication can improve a child's academic or testing performance, even if that child does not have ADHD (SAMHSA, 2022). If there were more clubs or programs supported by the county there can be more access for youth to be provided with educational opportunities to learn about substance abuse. Although parents play a big role in being a role model for their children, teachers in schools also play that important role. Having more training for teachers nationwide can help teachers be able to identify students who suffer substance abuse disorder. Together,

educators and families can work to send strong and consistent messages to students about the use of alcohol and other drugs.

Peer pressure is a common factor in youth that can lead to substance abuse disorder and even addiction. It is common in the youth population that peer pressure is used in using non recreational drugs. Peer pressure can sometimes be indirect in most cases that many or all use drugs because all their peers do. This is an example of peer social norms. For example, when someone sees everyone around them are using substances they will be influenced into doing what others do like a “social trend”. It is most common for youth to deliberately use substances because they see others around them using substances.(Medical News Today). The early use of drugs increases the lifetime risk of developing a substance use disorder. This suggests that children and teens who face high levels of peer pressure and give in to that pressure may have a higher lifetime risk of addiction. Children and teens who do not know how to handle peer pressure should talk with a trusted adult or invest in relationships with friends who do not use drugs or alcohol.

Consequences

One of the main common factors of teens misusing substances is because of peer pressure. When teens are in the mix of the wrong people they tend to do things that they may not want to do or do things to fit in. Teens don't know that their brain is still growing and they are still learning new things at a certain age. teens are unaware of what substances can do to their normal brain functions in their daily living activities. The first main consequence is that teens will have to deal with long-term substance abuse in the future. This is a perfect example of one little mistake that can affect you forever because when a teen is using a substance they can become addicted or dependent on the substance to certain feelings or their mental illness contributions

and continue to use the substance as they grow older in age. This can also affect the brain function when it comes to school work and having friends or relationships with their parents. And when teens are at a young age that they start to lose friends or their parents respect they start to lean towards legal issues and get themselves in trouble in a school setting and that leads to home problems. The next consequence of Youth substance abuse is that there are legal problems they can get themselves into and one of the main things is DUIs. Some things to keep in mind when trying to recognize teen substance abuse are: Sudden or extreme change in friends, eating habits, sleeping patterns, physical appearance, requests for money, coordination or school performance, Irresponsible behavior, poor judgment and general lack of interest, Breaking rules or withdrawing from the family, and the presence of medicine containers, despite a lack of illness, or drug paraphernalia in a teens room. In addition to understanding what teens can turn into when abusing drugs it is something that teens think there are no consequences to doing adult actions. When teens are at a young age they develop personality traits and some of these personality traits end up being part of a mental illness that they can develop. In most cases parents aren't on top of exactly what is going on with their kids unless they notice something that is off the charts of their actions. Teens are very hard to predict because they are going through a phase where they are wanting to be rebellious and one way of being rebellious is trying drugs. In this case the drugs and the Brain growing at the same time can create mental disabilities for teens and these mental illnesses they have to deal with as they become adults and in the end not all but some teens grow up with a mental illness that they cannot cure.

Contributing Factors	Problem	Consequences
Minimal education on substance use in schools	High substance use rates among teenagers	Long-term substance abuse issues
Peer pressure		DUIs and other legal issues
Teens living with adults who suffer substance abuse		Ongoing mental health concerns

Project Description

Working Title: Friday Night Live- Leading Educational Youth Workshops

Project Description

The project is to give youth an educational presentation about a topic where the youth have no or little access to in public schools. The Project is focused on impaired driving that provides information in Santa Cruz county of DUI's and incidents of people losing their lives to others driving while impaired. The presentation is educational for youth 5th grade through 12th grade and can be shared to parents. The presentation is presented at a Youth Action Summit where youth involved in Friday Night Live can participate in other presentations like banking, self-motivation, and invincible youth program activities.

Project Justification

The purpose of this project is to educate youth in something they don't learn about in public schools. This project is to educate youth in the consequences of impaired driving and acknowledging the statistics just in Santa Cruz county of how driving behind the influence can

be a major factor to young people losing their lives. In addition the purpose is to give an understanding to youth what exactly can happen when being behind the wheel under the influence can create in the community. Also, the project is to give youth the availability to share what they learned to their parents and friends. In the presentation there is a section where there are tips shared to the youth on how to be responsible and how to avoid peer pressure and handle tough situations when people are impaired by alcohol, marijuana, drugs etc.

Once youth gain knowledge they will become active leaders in their community to prevent substance use among their peers. According to the Drug-Free Community program (2022), substance use declined among young people living in their communities and that they significantly increased the number of young people who choose not to use substances due to the youth education training. Additionally youth will also gain awareness on how to prevent the usage of substances and access the community resources that are available for support if needed. The activities contributing to the workshop will also educate the youth in the effect of vision from different substances while doing simple tasks like catching a ball, walking on a line and stacking cups. “Drunk goggles” are provided to the listeners after the workshop to engage in activities with a partner and experience the vision of 0.06% when being under the influence of substances.

Benefits

The benefit of having someone in Friday Night Live leading a workshop is being able to have a relationship with the youth during chapter and youth council meetings educate the youth in topics most common within their population. The communication with Friday Night Live youth members is a safe place for youth to be able to speak on different issues they see in schools that they want to learn more about. The leadership is important within the program and even

more important when being able to present the interest youth have when joining FNL Youth Action Summits and participating in their best interest of workshops. Benefits from these workshops for youth is that they will be provided resources within their country of where they can find these sources and statistics on their own and read more about their county substance issues. This being able to acknowledge the youth sharing the information they experience in the workshop with their parents and friends with the same information they learned and more. The Youth Action Summit provided not only workshops about impaired driving, but mental health resources, and even financial workshops where they received pamphlets, resources, and worksheets collaborating with partners and staff in different activities. Not only the youth gaining knowledge on a topic not shared in schools but may not even be shared by parents.

Implementation Process

The implementation of this project will include many tasks that will come together for a youth workshop. This will include developing a different curriculum (than public schools) delivering education to youth and staff during a youth action summit on impaired driving and different substances that can be involved. During the planning for this workshop, there will be a weekly meeting and simultaneously a separate meeting with a mentor to discuss following steps. The workshop topics are discussed with the youth, and at the end of the discussion the topic that the youth show more interest in will be focused on at the Youth Action Summit. In weekly meetings with staff for the Youth Action summit, a schedule of the times of workshops, lunch, and registration is implemented. During the staff meeting, each staff member is responsible to update everyone on where they stand in their projects and what they have planned. These meetings are planned to have an open space for everyone who needs help to seek help within the team and gain more knowledge and tips to input into their projects. During weekly meetings with

a mentor, resources are shared on what can be added to the workshop like other “Impaired Driving” training staff have attended. Friday Night Live also has resources in activities, videos, and agendas that can be used for a workshop to present to youth in all of Friday Night Live Santa Cruz County. In completing the workshop, staff and youth will complete a survey rating all workshops they attended, giving feedback as well as improving the knowledge and education they received outside of schools.

Project Implementation Plan

Task	Timeline	Parties Involved	Materials/ Services Needed	Deliverables
Meet with Staff planning team for Youth Action Summit	June 1st-August 4th 2023 (Tuesdays weekly 9am)	Mentor, Staff helping with event planning, youth wanting to help participate in helping facilitate a workshop/ activity	Meeting agenda, zoom link, workshop rough draft	Meeting minutes, task assignments
Meet with mentor weekly	June 1st-August 4th 2023 (Tuesdays 11am)	mentor . Student	Meeting agendas, teams meeting invite, materials for workshop and CSUMB task	Connect with mentor, meeting, professional communication
“Impaired Driving” workshop for youth	August 3rd 2023	Student, mentor, youth (expected 10), parents	Presentation slides, outline agenda, speaker notes, impaired goggles, tape, speaker, laptop	Personal development, task assignments, presentation creations
Share survey with youth for Youth Action summit	By July 1st 2023	mentor , student	Survey google forms of topics available for kids to chose	Survey, Results of workshop debrief

Assessment Plan & Expected Outcomes

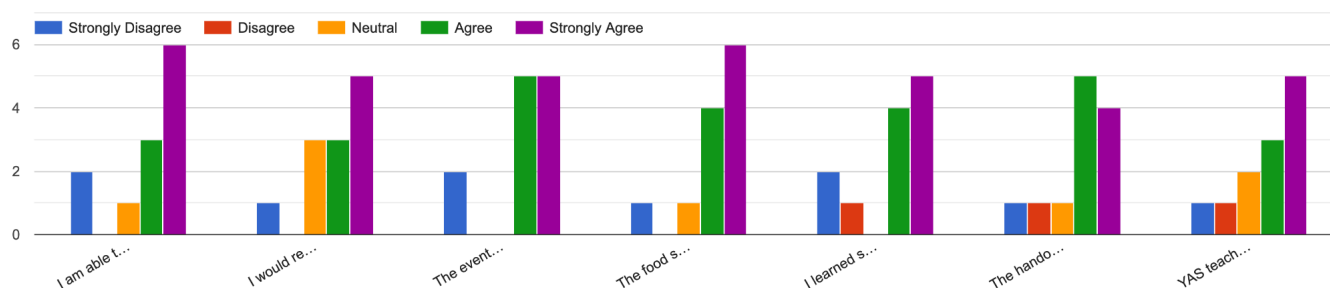
The expected outcome for this workshop is to provide the youth with extra information about the dangers and consequences of impaired driving, which is something that they may not have learned in a traditional school setting. The plan is to have at least 8-10 youth of 25 to attend the workshop. The goal is to obtain a good satisfaction with having all the youth participate in the activities involving the “drunk goggles” provided by the safety department in Santa Cruz County. The youth can participate in similar situations when under the influence, like walking in a straight line and doing simple tasks like grabbing a cup or trying to catch a ball. The more youth attend the educational workshops, the greater knowledge and awareness will be spread among the youth in their community.

Project Results

During my presentation workshop for the youth there was a positive outcome in terms of the participation from the youth engagement, and results of the final survey youth were satisfied with the presentation and enjoyed the activities provided for them. The purpose of this Workshop was to be Youth and adult friendly, throughout the presentation there are videos and fun facts that some people may know as adults but as youth it's something new to them. The research that was used was amongst articles online and the County website showing statistics of DUI's in Santa Cruz county. The focus was to present to the youth and adults at the workshop what goes on in the county they live in that is not presented every day on the news for adults or in schools today for the youth. During the presentation the youth were very much engaged and asking questions like why and how, adults were also impressed with learning new things about alcohol BMI percentages and how often there are DUI and deaths due to driving under the influence in the

County they live in. In the end the project was successful and the workshop is something that will be kept in the FNL files to be used again for staff activities and future youth summits. The youth were very engaged in the activities with the “drunk goggles” and were able to experience blurry vision at a certain alcohol blood percentage. The one thing that might have been not achieved during this presentation Workshop is that it could be made into a longer presentation and more videos of information can be shown.

Please read each statement and check the box that best describes your feeling.



Questions asked in a survey for youth.

1. I am able to be myself at YAS.
2. I would recommend YAS to other students.
3. The event and workshop leaders were good leaders and teachers.
4. The food served at YAS was good enough.
5. I learned something at YAS that I consider valuable.
6. The handouts looked good and are useful.
7. YAS teaches students things that will support them in high school and after graduation.

Conclusion & Recommendations

In conclusion the workshop presentation was successful with the time frame given to be completed. The presentation was very informative for the staff and youth at the youth action summit. The contributing factors being addressed in the project is being able to educate youth on

substance abuse and how it affects the community and their peers around them at their age. The overall issue identified is that there is not enough education for kids in public schools on substance abuse, including the consequences to affiliating with substances at such a young age. In addition to these consequences the project was created to educate the youth on numbers of different age groups of people affected by one substance in Santa Cruz County. In the end the youth were very intrigued with the information they received and were excited to be able to experience the vision of someone under the influence and not be able to do a simple task like catching a ball. In conclusion the workshop presentation can be used for future chapter meetings, Youth Council meetings and added to staff meetings. The presentation is very short and simple. It can have added activities like videos and maybe a kahoot because FNL is very remote at the moment and it would be hard for staff to commit to activities with the visionary goggles at home/ on zoom. Some things that should be recommended to the agency is to continue to use the presentation with the directions of each activity for youth in future events while engaging with youth at their schools or at community events. It is important for youth and adults to be educated on substances and their consequences because prevention is something we can never stop doing and advocating for the youth to better our future.

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