

Time



TEENS

Peer to Peer

Livingston Youth & Community Services

Teen Conference Special 2009

INAUGURAL PEER TO PEER TEEN CONFERENCE



Peer to Peer 2008-2009

It was truly a wonderful experience to attend the Inaugural Teen Conference sponsored by the Peer to Peer members. This is an outstanding group of Livingston students dedicated to living an Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drugs (ATOD) free lifestyle. They are positive role models and a credit to their parents, their community and the Livingston Youth and Community Services (LYCS) program. Some of these Leaders have been with our program since elementary school.

The Conference had main topics which were presented with powerpoint computer presentations, essays and question and answer segments. The topics included Sports and Drugs, Betrayal, Self-Image and Self Confidence, Being Grateful, Depression, Social Responsibility/Community Service, Global Warming, Learning from Mistakes and the Effect of Music (on moods).

The dedication of these students was evident by the enthusiasm in which they presented their topics. There were signs of commitment and cooperation among the Peer to Peer members. It was also obvious that the students had a lot of fun preparing for the event.

One lesson that wasn't on the formal agenda but was so interesting to watch was the coping skills that showed up when some of the computer presentations refused to cooperate or even work at all. The students never lost their cool, did not get stressed-out but moved forward. What a great asset that is. As we all know, life doesn't always follow the script as we planned, and adjustments to bumps in the road are very useful and important parts in moving forward in a positive direction as illustrated by these Teens.

Kudos to the Peer to Peer students and to the LYCS directors who organized this program. I highly recommend attending next year's Conference!

Have a wonderful summer.

Bunnie Ratner

Chairperson of LYCS Board of Directors

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Livingston Youth & Community Services



Celebrating A Drug Free Life
Through Leadership



CONGRATULATIONS GRADUATING SENIORS

Wishing you all the best in your future endeavors. Don't forget to come back on Alumni Night in December to share your College experiences and see old friends!

Board Members:

Debanjan Pain
Shelby Block
Alice Tang

Peer to Peer Members:

Will Brasil
Heather Freireich
Salvatore Spaltro
Mackenzie Sullivan
Gregory Tilly

The next issue of Time 4 Teens out at the end of October. Feel free to send in articles you would like in the newsletter. If you have any questions or comments, please email: lycs@livingston.org, or write to: Time 4 Teens - LYCS,

PO Box 822, Livingston, NJ 07039.

Please feel free to comment and enjoy the newsletter!

Sincerely,
The Editor

ALUMNI PERSPECTIVE

It really does feel like just yesterday that I was at a Peer to Peer meeting during my senior year at Livingston High School. That year, I was proud to serve as a board member and was so happy throughout the year as I saw all the work I did on our weekend retreat, meetings and other activities come to fruition and make a difference for all the members. During my three years in Peer to Peer, both as a board member my senior year and as a general member, I was always thankful for being part of that great group and to have fun with like-minded individuals in a safe environment.

Entering my senior year of college, I'm proud to say that I am still ATOD-free, and I know that I'm probably one of only a very few college students who can say that. I've known since high school and Peer to Peer that an ATOD-free lifestyle is what I want, and that has never changed during my past three college years at Villanova University. In addition, being a part of Peer to Peer and gaining the extra skills and confidence necessary to maintain that lifestyle was extremely valuable.

That in mind, I was thrilled at the opportunity to attend Peer to Peer's first teen conference. It has been a while since I've visited the high school or the club, but it was a great experience to be back. It's exciting to see that the group is continuing to grow and has a strong backing. Similarly, it's also great to see that, while healthy ATOD-free lifestyles are still at the group's core values, there are so many other issues to focus on as well. Everything from relationships, academics, stress, drugs, and all the topics addressed at the conference are things that students deal with both now and probably even more so in college.

As I said above, Peer to Peer gave me a lot of extra skills to be confident about the lifestyle I've chosen for myself. Now, I see Peer to Peer helping to develop even more skills that will help students in so many valuable areas.

That said, congratulations to all the Peer to Peer members involved in the conference! I was both impressed and happy to see real, meaningful thought and commitment to making this new effort come to life. It makes me even more proud to know that just a few years ago I was also doing my part in laying the foundations for things like this to be possible.

Great job! Most importantly, remember to keep thinking about all of these things and living the lifestyle you want. These skills that you are developing now will be of great use always.

Jeffrey Eisenberg
Villanova University 2010
Livingston High School 2006

SPORTS AND DRUGS

BY CHIRAG PATEL, TOM ALBANO, ADAM FRIEDMAN,
ZAC BROWER, RYAN SACCOMAN, ESTHER LIN

With an exciting mix of powerpoint and video, this presentation explores the myths and facts surrounding Steroid use in sports and how using drugs can tarnish a career and ruin lives.

Several sport stars were noted as using steroids:

Chris Benoit "The Canadian Crippler" was a professional wrestler who strangled his wife and suffocated his 7 year old son on June 24, 2007,

before hanging himself with the pulley of a weight machine. Prescription anabolic steroids were found in the house, and it was believed that he was unhinged by the bodybuilding drugs which can cause paranoia, depression and explosive outbursts known as "roid rage." Chris Benoit was a pro-wrestler for 22 years and star of the World Wrestling Entertainment.

Controversy continues to swirl around Alex Rodriguez that he may have bulked up with steroids as early as high school (where he was a standout at Miami) and was suspected of juicing, a combination of HGH (Human Growth Hormones) and Steroids, while playing for the Yankees.

Barry Bonds, once known as the Home-run King, will now only be remembered as a Steroid Junkie. It is alleged that beginning in 1998 with injections of Winstrol, a powerful steroid. Bonds took a wide array of performance-enhancing drugs over at least five seasons in a massive doping regimen that has tarnished his record-breaking achievements in baseball.

On May 8, 2009, it was reported that Manny Ramirez (Los Angeles Dodgers) was suspended for 50 games for violating Major League Baseball's Drug Policy. In addition to artificial testosterone, Ramirez was identified as using the female fertility drug human chorionic gonadotropin, or hCG. The drug is typically used by steroid users to restart their bodies' natural testosterone production as they come off a steroid cycle.

Sports and drugs are a temptation for those desperate to succeed, but they hold a deadly consequence. The presentation included a video skit on what to do if you are offered drugs. The video can be seen on the LYCS website at www.livingstonLYCS.org



CONGRATULATIONS ON LMAC AWARD

The prestigious LMAC scholarship Awards were presented to

Peer to Peer Board Members:

Debanjan Pain and Alice Tang



With an outstanding achievement award presented to

Peer to Peer member Gregory Tilly

at the Senior Awards Ceremony on June 3, 2009



BETRAYAL

BY JESSE KLEINMAN, ROCHELLE FELDMAN,
BRETT WAGNER, JOE ABOUD

This presentation detailed what it means to be betrayed in different areas of life including romantic relationships, in friendships and within the family. It offers advice on how to deal with betrayal and a video of a skit about betraying a friendship. The presentation ends with advice on what to do, including being honest, expressing facts and feelings having both parties taking personal responsibility for their part in the betrayal.

***“When you betray someone else,
you also betray yourself.”***

Issac Bashevis, Singer

HAPPY



SELF IMAGE - SELF CONFIDENCE

BY KRISTY CHAN, GABBY KIM,
JASPER HUANG

These presenters discussed what it means to be confident and also to lack self-confidence. Too much pressure and impossible high standards, as well as self-judgment and negativity are causes that undermine our feelings of well-being. Ways to increase self-confidence are explored, including setting realistic goals and having a positive attitude.

Included in the presentation was a short animation film entitled “Happy” by Michael Lewicki, a Vancouver Film School student (2007) which illustrates the value of laughter and that sometimes the unexpected is just the right medicine, especially when you’re feeling sad.

View these Peer to Peer Teen Conference videos online at www.livingstonLYCS.org

BEING GRATEFUL

BY JASON LIAO

Being grateful was a passionate speech about the ingratitude of those who live in abundance while 40,000 people die everyday from starvation. The imbalance of wealth, pettiness and greed is explored in contrast to the three billion people who live in poverty and live on less than two dollars a day. Gratitude for a parent’s love is expressed as well as sorrow for those less fortunate who live in a world without hope, because they have lost their parents to disease, war and abandonment. The fortunate are sheltered from the ugliness in the world and are kept ignorant of what it is like for those who are suffering.

The presentation concludes with asking one thing from humanity; to live humbly. Humility is the ultimate wisdom. Indulging in life’s pleasures is not discouraged, but ignorance of the suffering in the world is a moral blunder. The presenter urges us to live life appreciating what we have, rather than what we do not have; to be grateful for everything because we are sheltered while others are not.



DEPRESSION

BY RENEE EDWARDS, RACHEL KLEIN



When times get ruff
And things get tuff,
Keep your head held up high
And talk to someone.

'Cause these days its harder
To keep passing by,
Talk to someone
And don't stand by.

'Cause depression can hurt everyone,
And depression can break you down.
No need to turn to violence, or drugs.

When times get ruff
And days get tuff,
Just keep your head held high!

The presenters sang a song about Depression and urged the audience to seek help if they felt depressed. They also handed out an information card donated by the Livingston Municipal Alliance (LMAC) which details symptoms of depression in children. They also highlighted the Charity Walk to raise awareness about Depression (June 14, 2009), and the Got Blue Campaign which offers assistance and a help line (1-866-202-4357) for those in need. To hear the song, log onto www.livingston.LYCS.org



When **Blue** is Your Primary Color

Help is Available

www.GotBlue.org

For Immediate Assistance

Call **1-866-202-HELP (4357)**

The Got Blue Collaborative is Funded by the generous support of the Russell Scott Atkind Memorial Philanthropic Fund of the Jewish Community Foundation of Metro West.

It is a collaborative effort by the Jewish Family Service of Metro West, and the Mental Health Association of Essex County, Inc

SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY AND COMMUNITY SERVICE

BY ARI ROSENSTRAUCH



Social responsibility was a passionate speech about doing something that benefits society as opposed to just benefiting yourself. Living in a Capitalist society leads to an imbalance between those who have millions of dollars and those who have next to nothing.

The government's intention to tax the rich to give to the poor is not an effective way to redress this imbalance. It would be better to promote social responsibility and spending the time to volunteer to help those in need. The presenter urges us to turn off the TV and help out at a soup kitchen or with the elderly and frail. Although monetary help is important, doing community service puts a face to those you are trying to help. It provides hope for a better future to those less fortunate and helps us all to feel connected to each other.

TECHNOLOGY VS GLOBAL WARMING

BY TALIA ROSENSTRAUCH, DARREN COHEN



Do the benefits of technological advances outweigh the negative impact on our environment? Although global warming is a natural, man-made event, technologies have helped speed up the process. Global warming will have a devastating effect on all forms of life on Earth if we continue on this path; from disease, rising sea levels, and extinction for those who are unable to adapt to these changes.

The presenters make an impassioned appeal to reduce pollution and energy waste, and to increase conservation efforts as our only hope in creating a future for all of us. We must all do our part to save our planet before its too late!

View these Peer to Peer Teen Conference videos online at www.livingstonLYCS.org

LEARNING FROM MISTAKES

BY DAVID BRUMMER, MARKIANA JULCEUS
FRANK LUO



Have you ever made a mistake? The best answer is that there are no such things as mistakes!

Mistakes are opportunities in disguise. Some of the greatest discoveries and inventions were the result of unintended reactions or consequences. Think of penicillin, chocolate chip cookies, coca cola, post it notes, and more...

Mistakes are an essential part of creativity and growth, because through them, we see past our pre-conceptions to infinite possibilities.

"The important thing is to view our mistakes as a useful stepping stone to a higher reality and better outlook on life."

James Joyce

EFFECTS OF MUSIC

BY SAVANNA BALDWIN, JADE YEE,
NICOLLE LUFTMAN, JUSTIN YU, STACEY SU



Music is a universal language that crosses all ages and cultural barriers. It has the power to educate, to soothe and to heal. It is the one thing that can unite us or divide us. Music has been used to voice discontentment, to define a generation or as a theme for destruction.

Whatever your style: Classical, Techo, World, Rap, Country, Boy Bands, Alternative, or Educational, life would not be the same without it.

The presenters urge you to keep those feet tapping or hips swinging, turn up the volume and let the tensions and stress of the day disappear into the melody of music and song.

“SCHOOLING” MYSELF @ THE COMMUNITY CENTER

BY MELLISA COHEN

Upon attending the Peer to Peer Teen Conference, I was unaware that I was about to get “schooled” by my own students. As a Livingston teacher, as well as a Peer to Peer parent, I felt that what unfolded was a youthful perspective on the many concerns of kids (and parents!) today. From Depression to Global Warming, the range of topics covered by these teens was appropriate and chock full of facts as well as entertaining, while supplying the audience with information that everyone could use.

We enjoyed two enthusiastic student produced videos. One pointed out the evils of steroids to enhance athletic performance, while the other presented a scenario of betrayal among good friends. Both segments not only defining the subject, but also demonstrating the negative consequences of these scenarios.

The presentation about self-image and depression, laid out the characteristics found in a person in a depressive state, as well as one with low self esteem. I found this particularly important, as a teacher, for use in identifying students in need of intervention.

Most entertaining was the “Learning from Mistakes” segment, which clearly had a healthy twist on the very concept of what a mistake is defined as. In it, this entertaining group presented the many scientific and other mistakes that brought about so many important research results to the present. Presenting the “mistake” as a learning tool rather than a self esteem crusher, in the many scenarios presented, a mistake actually turns out to be a character builder meant to wield only better future results in all things human.

Also informative was the segments on the bad and good facts of Global Warming and Technology, which offered many energy saving tips. The “Effects of Music” segment made us all think as we participated in a variety of music listening and evaluated our moods. As a music professional myself, I couldn’t agree more that music can make a tremendous difference in our lives every day.

As one of my favorite presentations stated, “Being Grateful” is what is important in life. We should never take for granted that what we have will always be there, or that others in need do not exist. We must live each day knowing how lucky we are, and be brave enough to share what we have with others. I am grateful to have been in attendance at this year’s Peer to Peer Teen Conference and commend all participants as well as their leaders on a job well done. I consider myself officially “SCHOOLED” by this charming group of eloquent teenagers, and I thank you for it!

PARENT’S CORNER



TEEN CONFERENCE

BY DONNA BROWER

This year I attended the Peer to Peer Teen Conference. I went to see the video my teen and his peers created about the damaging effects of steroids in sports. As we watched my son and his group, I was thrilled to see that this lesson was self taught by the research he had done. I did not need to be the “heavy parent” who droned on about the dangerous effects of steroids, because through this project, it was my son who shared this very important information with us. Although he was the student, he was able to teach himself, as well as others.

I think when someone works to learn something on their own, to research and share, to create a medium to teach others and to speak at a conference that this is the best learning opportunity!

At the conference, he was also able to hear the research his peers did on other subjects such as depression, being grateful, music and helping the environment. Learning from peers is an awesome prospect as each group presented their information in a different way. All the groups were passionate about their subjects and shared their information enthusiastically!

I look forward to seeing future Peer to Peer Teen Conferences as this first one was such a nice beginning and seems to have a big future in the LYCS program.

Livingston Youth & Community Services



Celebrating A Drug Free Life
Through Leadership

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WE'RE ON THE WEB!

WWW.LIVINGSTONLYCS.ORG

The Livingston Youth and Community Services program (LYCS) is a collaborative community organization sponsored by the Township of Livingston, the Livingston Municipal Alliance Committee (LMAC) and the Mental Health Association of Essex County (MHAEC).

LYCS is a drug prevention program that teaches healthy life choices to Grades 3 to 12 after-school in the Livingston school district. The primary goal of LYCS is to be a community based mental health resource that identifies and implements Wellness programs.

Our program is designed to:

- To reduce the incidence of substance abuse among the adolescent population and to have Livingston's youth make healthier life choices
- Train Leaders and provide opportunities to practice leadership by participating in community service activities
- Empower parents with tools they need to communicate effectively with their children
- Provide opportunities for Livingston youth to engage in healthy social interactions

Peer to Peer

Peer to Peer is a special group of Livingston High School students who are dedicated to leading an ATOD-free (alcohol/tobacco/other drugs) lifestyle. A Peer to Peer member reaches out to fellow students, and engages in community service for the betterment of others.

Goals of Peer to Peer:

- To promote and maintain an ATOD-free lifestyle.
- To give students an opportunity to make a positive contribution to their schools and their community by engaging in service to others.
- To provide personal growth experiences and opportunities for social bonding.
- To provide assistance to programs which support the Peer Leadership mission.

Peer to Peer is one element within a larger program that falls under the Livingston Youth and Community Services program (LYCS). As a Peer to Peer member, students take the initiative designing the program; from educational topics, community service, and other projects that they would like to take part in during the school year. There are two over-night programs that the students participate in, Rejuvenation and Camp Bernie. In addition, students can serve as a Peer to Peer Board Member and take a leadership role in developing program activities.

For further information about Peer to Peer, and other LYCS programs, please visit our website: www.livingstonLYCS.org, or call us on 987-535-2646, or email: lycs@livingston.org.