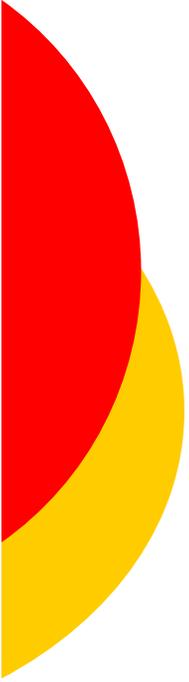


Substance Abuse Prevention in Dare County A Public Health Approach



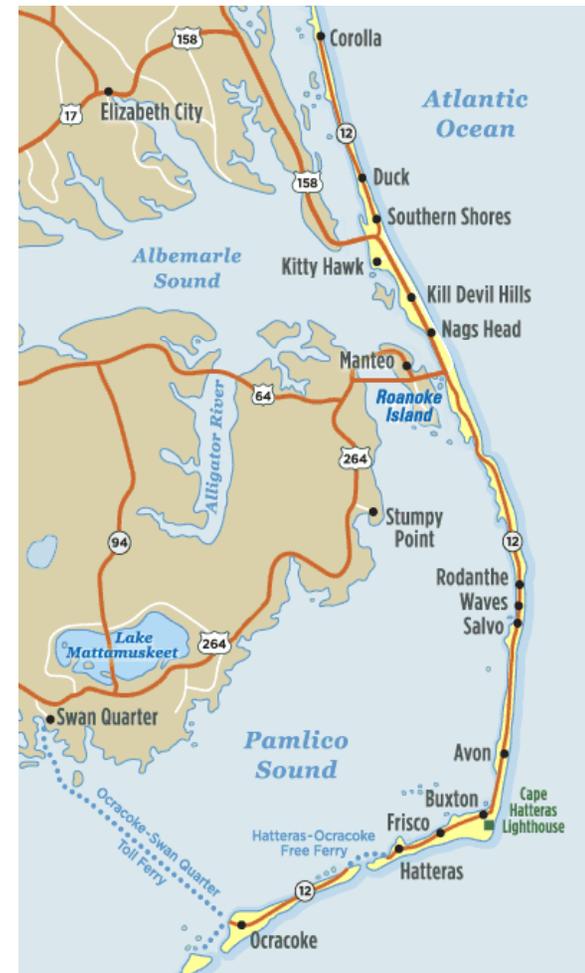
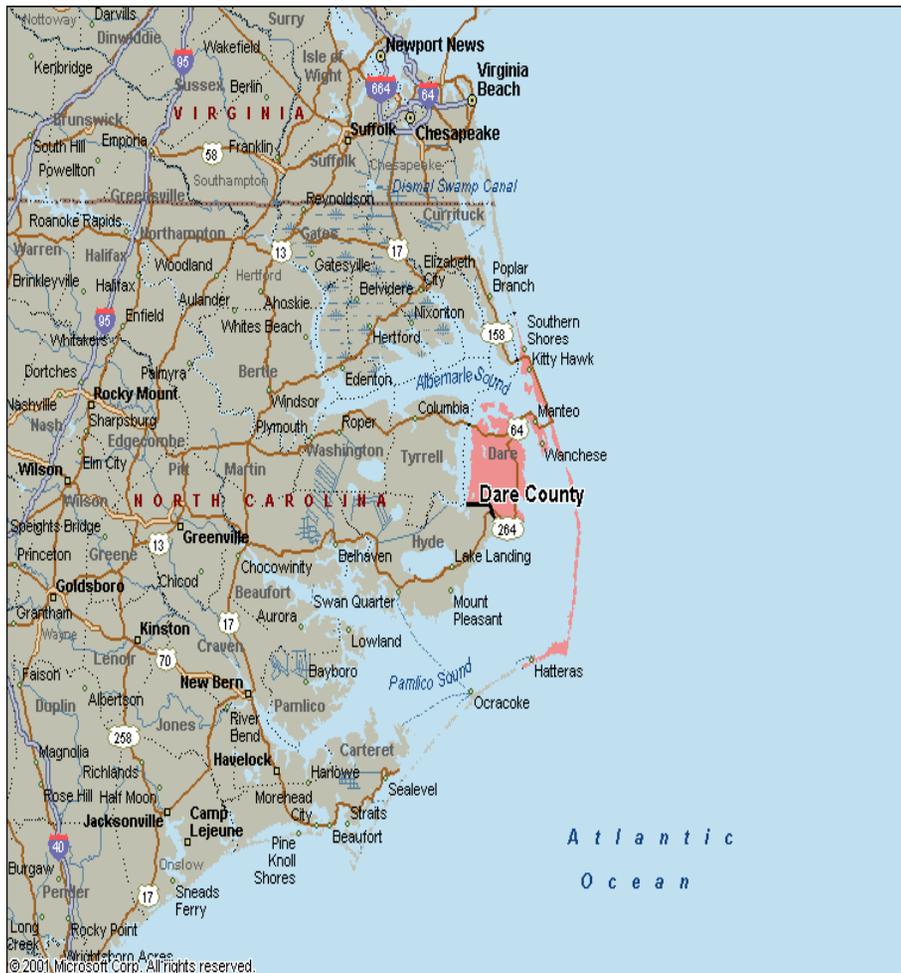
Anne Thomas, Public Health Director
Dare County Department of Public Health

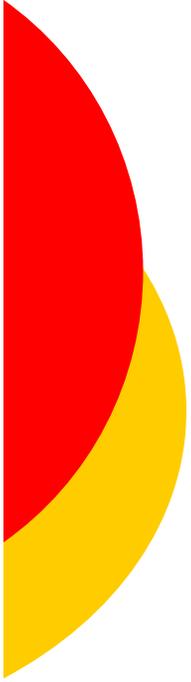


Presentation Overview

- Background/History
- Dare County Demonstration Project
- School Based Prevention
- Positive Action
- Keys for Successful Implementation
- Recommendations

Dare County





Our Community's Call for Action

- The 2002 Healthy Carolinians Community Health Assessment listed substance abuse as the number one health issue in Dare County
- Creation of the Dare County Substance Abuse Task Force
- Shh...Let's Talk About It Conference - 2004
- Formed the Dare Coalition Against Substance Abuse
- April 6, 2006 Community Meeting

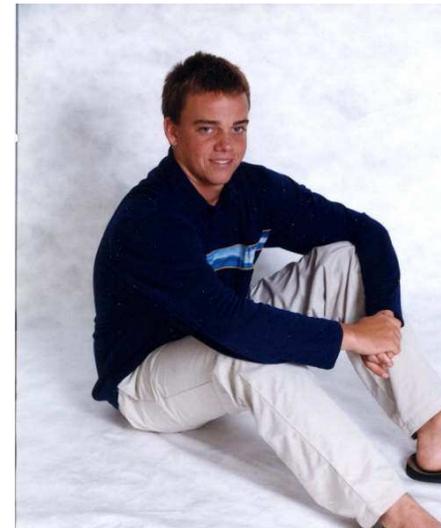
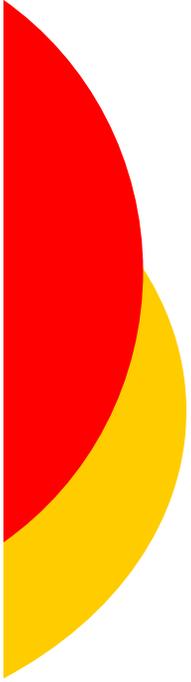
Testimonial

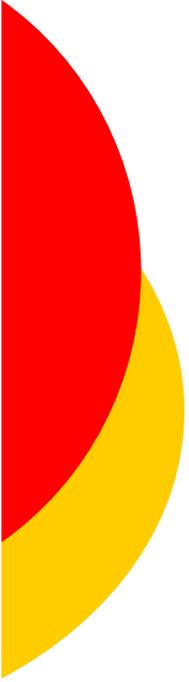
Bonnie



Testimonial

Jackie (speaking), mother of Chaps (pictured)



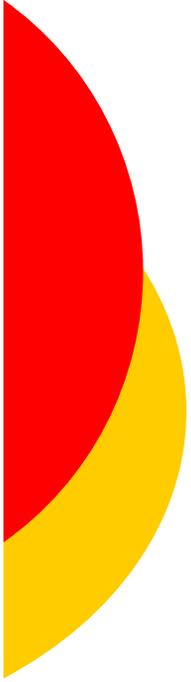


Dare County Substance Abuse Demonstration Project

- In response to the April 2006 public meeting, the Dare County Department of Public Health was asked to take the lead in developing a comprehensive continuum of services including prevention, intervention, and treatment.
- The needs assessment showed that adequate prevention and treatment services were not available or non-existent



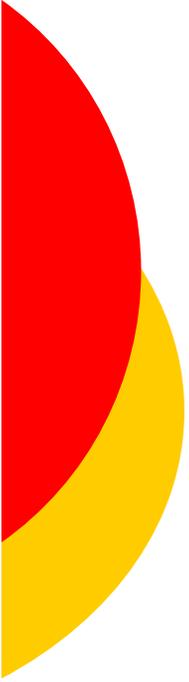
- The result was the creation of the Dare County Substance Abuse Demonstration Project to determine how best to deliver substance abuse service in a rural area
- The project is funded by State and local dollars



New Horizons

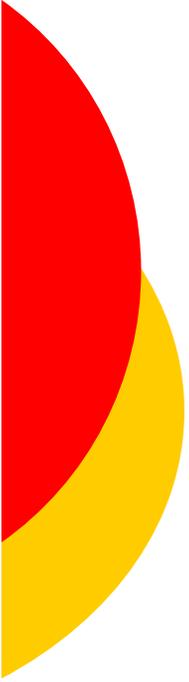


... A Dare County Initiative



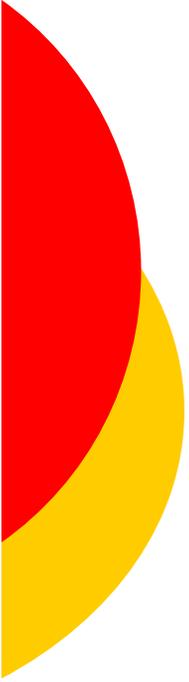
Dare County's Need for Prevention Adolescent Substance Abuse Issues

- In the 2005, there were 1040 total arrests for young people ages 16-20 for alcohol and other drug offenses in Dare County.
- According to the 2005-2006 School Violence Report, Dare County Schools had a higher rate (4.8 per 1000 students) of substance abuse violations than 70% of schools in the state.
- Additionally, Dare County Schools averages a 6.1% positive result rate on their random drug testing screens, which is nearly double the 2-3% rate reported by most school systems with similar drug testing policies



Dare County's Need for Prevention Adolescent Substance Abuse Issues (Continued)

- The Search Institute 2005 Profile of Student Life Surveys
 - 23% of 8th graders reported alcohol use (17% national average)
 - 63% of 12th graders reported having used marijuana (45% national average)
 - Average age when local 12th graders reported first getting drunk was 13 or 14
 - The average age for middle school students who reported having gotten drunk was 11.5
 - 29% of 12th grade students reported that their parents would not be upset at all or only a little upset to learn that he or she was drinking (18% of 11th graders, 15% of 10th graders)



Prevention – Why School Based

- Captive audience
- Ability to reach a large number of youth, including the underserved
- Adolescent drug use linked with physical and cognitive health problems in early adulthood
- Strong Public Health and school relationship
 - Peer Power
 - School Nurses

Selection of Prevention Program

- Public Health and School officials met to evaluate evidence based model programs
- Desired elements
 - Universal program instead of selective or indicated
 - Teach every grade level annually
 - Community prevention component



Positive Action



Positive Action is a nationally recognized evidence based program that strengthens the intrinsic motivation to make positive choices for a lifetime.

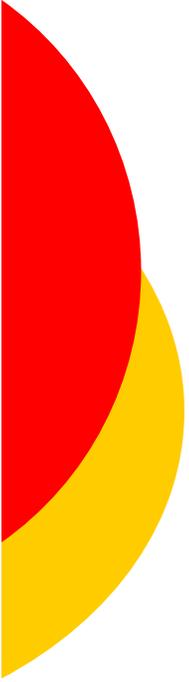
Positive Action has proven outcomes in three domains: character development, behavior modification, and academic achievement

Why Positive Action? Win-Win

In 2006, the U.S. Dept. of Education's What Works Clearinghouse (WWC) rated the Positive Action program as the **only** evidence based character education in the nation to achieve the top rating of "positive effects" in **both** domains:

- Behavior (average of + 19 percentile points) and;
- Academic outcomes (average of + 15 percentile points).





Why Positive Action?

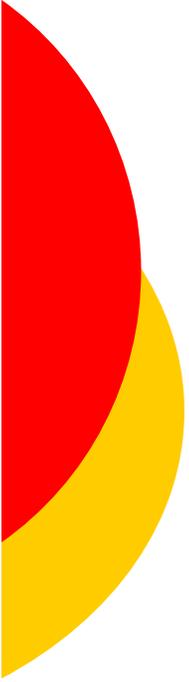
Positive Action studies have shown verifiable improvements as highlighted by:

- Drug, alcohol, and tobacco use reduced by up to 71%
- Violence reduced by up to 85%
- Criminal bookings reduced by up to 94%
- Academic achievement improved by up to 75%(reading, math, and combined scores)
- General discipline problems reduced by up to 90%
- Truancy reduced by up to 13%
- Suspensions reduced by up to 80%
- Absenteeism reduced by up to 45%
- Self-concept improved by up to 43%

Positive Action

This multi level program is based on the founding principle that positive thoughts lead to positive actions, positive actions lead to positive feelings, and positive feelings lead to positive thoughts.





Positive Action Units

- 1) ***Self Concept***
- 2) ***Healthy Body and Mind***
- 3) ***Managing Yourself Responsibly***
- 4) ***Getting Along with Others***
- 5) ***Being Honest with Yourself***
- 6) ***Improving Yourself Continually***

Implementation of Positive Action

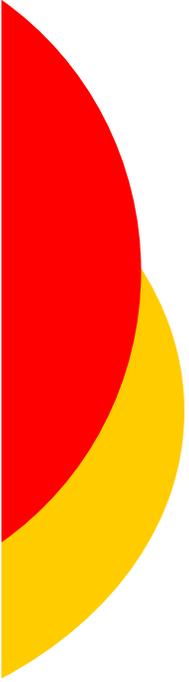
- Hired 2 public health education specialists
- Conducted training on Positive Action for health educators, school nurses, school resource officers, and middle school PE teachers
- Health educators deliver the program in elementary and high schools and the health and physical education teachers deliver the program in middle schools
- 2007-2008 School Year
 - Taught 731 lessons to nearly 2000 students in grades 5-9
 - Received excellent feedback from teachers and students
- Summer 2008 taught lessons at 4H camps, and the YMCA's summer day camp



Expansion of the Program

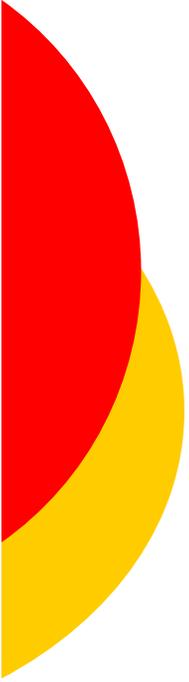
- Our goal is to teach Positive Action annually in all classrooms, grades K-12, within the next three years
- Beginning family components of Positive Action in collaboration with local churches
- Ongoing implementation of the community component
 - Includes community presentations, media messaging, messages in church bulletins, advertisements and articles in local papers, etc.





Evaluation

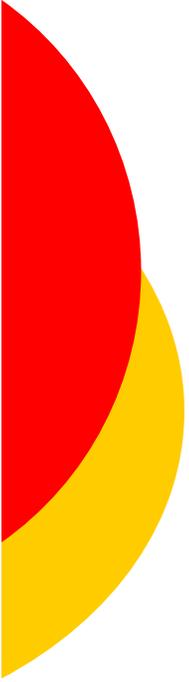
- Evaluations for:
 - Program effectiveness
 - Program improvements
- Student surveys
 - Provided pre-test surveys to all students grades k-12
 - Will conduct post-tests at end of this school year
- Ongoing Teacher feedback
- Student feedback



Success Story

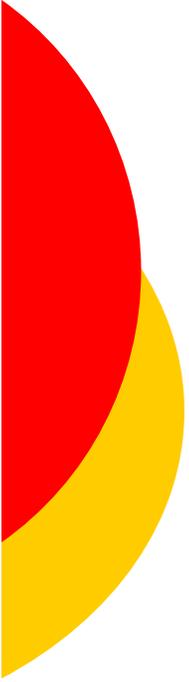
“I have made several changes in my life while going through the positive action program. One of my main changes is to pay more attention in school and to bring all of my grades up. The reason for that is to pass my grade and make my dad proud. The other change I have made is to get rid of the stress and drama in my life. I used to be really bad but then I realized when we did this lesson that I need to do something with my life and do right. It feels good to make good changes in my life”.

Excerpt from letter from a 9th grade student at the
Dare County Alternative School



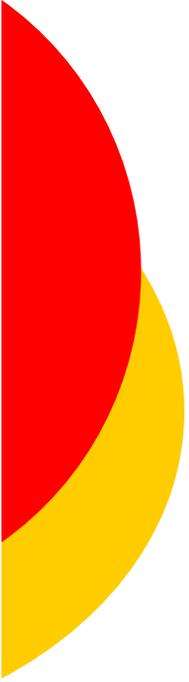
Keys to Successful Implementation of Prevention Programs

- Ensure community support
- Develop strong relationship with school system
- Select an evidence based program that benefits the school system
- Hire trained, qualified health education staff to deliver the program
- Strong political support



Key Recommendations

- Garner community and political support for prevention
- Mandate that all schools implement evidence based programs for all students, K-12
- Competent, trained, qualified staff
- Appropriate time and effort dedicated to prevention education
- Schools need to be held accountable for the effective delivery of prevention programs
- Adequate funding must be allocated for implementation and ongoing delivery



Closing Remarks

“Every child deserves to be given the opportunity and tools to succeed, and prevention is the key that opens the door to a promising future!”