Why Families Support the Merger of the National Institute on Drug Abuse and the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism

Sue Rusche
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Atlanta, Georgia
National Families in Action’s Programs

Addiction Studies Program
False Messengers
Original Parent Movement
Parent Corps Pilot Program
National Parents Corps Act of 2009
Addiction Studies Program
with Wake Forest University School of Medicine

• Journalists Program
  – Provide a basic understanding of the science that underlies drug abuse and addiction
    • Print, broadcast, & electronic journalists

• States Program
  – Help states strengthen their drug policies based on evidence-based programs
    • State legislators and executive branch leaders
Past month drug use, 1979-1992

Ages 12-17:
- 1979: 17.6%
- 1992: 6.1%

Ages 18-26:
- 1979: 37.1%
- 1992: 13%
Original Parent Movement

Past month drug use, 1979-2008

Ages 12-17:
- 1979: 17.6%
- 1992: 6.1%
- 2008: 9.3%

Ages 18-26:
- 1979: 37.1%
- 1992: 13%
- 2008: 19.6%
Parent Corps Pilot Program

Created Parent Corps

To institutionalize original parent movement

Modeled after Peace Corps (Peace Corps for parents)

$4.2 million grant 3-year pilot program (2003-2006)

19 middle schools or high schools in nine states:

California
Colorado
Connecticut
Georgia
Illinois
Kansas
North Carolina
South Carolina
Wisconsin

First Annual Parent Corps Conference, Atlanta, Georgia, June 2005
Parent Corps Pilot Program

**Parent Corps model**

One salaried Parent Leader per school
- Works with other parents in his/her child’s school

Nonprofit partners
- Recruit Parent Corps schools, Parent Leaders

National Families in Action
- Hires & trains Parent Leaders
- Manages & supervises Parent Leaders day-to-day
What do Parent Leaders do?

Recruit and educate parents
Disseminate information
Assess and address parents’ concerns
Host meetings, trainings, workshops
Mobilize parents

- To make homes, school, and surrounding community healthy and safe for adolescents
- Reduce commercial pressures that exploit teens
Parent Corps Pilot Program

Recruiting parents

Ana Gonzalez, Osborne Parent Leader, recruits parents into the Parent Corps as part of Osborne High School Parent Corps activities.
Parent Corps Pilot Program

Educating, training, and mobilizing parents

Sharing Best Practices at the First Annual Parent Corps Conference, Atlanta Georgia, June 2005
Parent Corps Pilot Program Results

Parent Corps parent membership
(19 schools in 9 states)
Parent Corps Pilot Program Unanticipated Results

Parent Corps school principals

• Positive communications from parents **doubled**
• Student attendance **increased**
• Grades **increased**
• Discipline problems **decreased**
• Drop-out rates **decreased**
Parent Corps Pilot Program Results

The Parent Corps builds

a delivery system that reaches into the heart of the family to protect adolescents from harm.

Dinner workshop for parents at Suzanne Middle School Parent Corps and Walnut High School Parent Corps, Walnut, California.
The National Parents Corps Act of 2009

- Sponsored by Congressman John Lewis
- H.R. 3075 will establish a national Parent Corps program for all states, based on results of Parent Corps pilot program
- For more information or to ask your Congress person to cosponsor H.R. 3075, contact: Jamila Thompson, 202-225-3801 or Jamila.thompson@mail.house.gov
Addiction begins in childhood. The earlier adolescents start, the more likely they will develop addiction.

Alcohol dependence or abuse in the past year among adults aged 21 or older, by age at first use of alcohol

2008 National Survey on Drug Use and Health
Their developing brains make them more vulnerable to making poor decisions and, possibly, to developing addiction.

Once adolescents initiate use, they don’t use just drugs **OR** just alcohol . . .

### NIDA Portfolio
- Marijuana
- Cocaine
- Other Illicit Drugs
- Prescription Drugs
- Nicotine
- Inhalants

### NIAAA Portfolio
- Wine
- Liquor
- Beer
They use everything!
There are many good reasons to merge NIDA and NIAAA.

• We think the most important reason is to end the artificial barrier between alcohol and other addictive drugs.
  – Journalists report on both alcohol and other drug problems
  – States cope with both alcohol and other drug problems
  – Families struggle with both alcohol and other drug problems

• It makes sense for a single institute to reflect what is going on in the real world. . .
for the sake of all our children.