

TEENS TAME RIVER

Two weeks before the start of another school year, ten youth and two adults took a trip of a lifetime. Members of Operation Right Choice and T.A.C.S. - Teens Against Cigarettes and Snuff earned a free one night, two-day trip to the mountains of WV. They were awarded this trip based on their accomplishments and hard work over the past twelve months.

From July 2003 to August 2004, these youth and several others conducted over 200 tobacco education/prevention workshops throughout the region, provided leadership and assistance for two middle school teen institutes, successfully completed three ArtWork projects, planned and hosted a tobacco education/prevention training conference in Gilbert, WV, served as youth staff at the WV Teen Institute, and wrote and starred in an underage drinking commercial.



The first stop on this adventure took the group to the New River Gorge Scenic Overlook before rolling into Rivers Whitewater Rafting campground.

There the group camped, hiked, played games and sat around a campfire and roasted marshmallows and told ghost stories.

The highlight of the evening was when Tim White, Program Coordinator and Erin Perdue, staff counselor took the group on their first Snip hunt.

Although no Snips were caught, the group promised someday to catch one.

After the Snip hunt, the group was off to bed to rest and get ready for a full day of whitewater rafting on the lower New River.

For eight, of the ten youth attending, this was their first time whitewater rafting. The group was ready to go and anxious to wet their pants on the New River.





At 9AM the group launched their rafts into the New River and spent the entire day, laughing, screaming, crying, and celebrating their accomplishment of taming the river.

With guide Jeremy, were KaiRon White, Paul Bailey and Josh Clark.

With guide Steve, were Tim White, Erin Perdue, Randy Pleasant, Russell Bailey, Whitney Hodges, Jaytese Westmoreland, Teresa Canada, Ja'leeza Canady, and Rosetta Tillet.



The last leg of the trip was a casual float down the river towards the New River Gorge Bridge.

It has been and continues to be a thrill to work with these fine young adults. They are to be commended for all their hard work.

