

OPERATION RIGHT CHOICE YOUTH IMPACTING THEIR COMMUNITY

Tim White, Andrea Gilman

Students enrolled in Operation Right Choice have been very active in making their schools, neighborhoods and community drug, alcohol, tobacco and violence free. Over the past three months they have been involved in the following activities.

CABELL PRIDE

ORC students organized the first Cabell County PRIDE Team with over 20 local teens gathering for the initial meeting and training. PRIDE Teams from all across the USA and around the world will gather in Cincinnati, Ohio next April for the International PRIDE Drug Prevention Conference and Cabell County will be well represented with our teens.



Cabell PRIDE students will be learning skits, dances, games and songs to take to area schools, community centers, neighborhoods and parks to share their message of living a drug free life.



For more information on how to join Cabell PRIDE contact Tim White or Andrea Gilman at 522-0576.

ANNUAL HALLOWEEN PARTY

ORC/RAZE students hosted a "Scared Straight" tobacco walk-through haunted house at the Sports Center during the Annual HHA Halloween Party on Friday, Oct. 26th. People were brought through the "Room of Doom" and tried to shock them with the reality of what tobacco can do to your body. The students made a life size coffin made out of cigarette cartons, and explained how cigarettes can lead you from one box to another. One student pretended she died from lung cancer and real pig lungs were removed from her chest showing the effects of smoking.

MIDDLE SCHOOL TEEN INSTITUTE

ORC students began meeting in August to plan the fall 2007 Region II Middle School Teen Institute which was held Nov. 1-3. Over 85 middle school students from Cabell and Wayne Counties attended this two-night, three-day student leadership conference.

The theme for this event was "YOUth Make A Difference" -



"What You Do Defines Who You Are." ORC students

served as event planners, youth staff, and workshop leaders.



The next MSTI will take place April 10-12, 2008.

Huntington Housing Authority's Tim White honored for his community work

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By BILL ROSENBERGER
The Herald-Dispatch

Huntington Housing Authority's Tim White honored for his work

HUNTINGTON -- Tim White didn't start Operation Right for his own benefit. But on Thursday, White's peers made it his program deserves attention for its success, being awarded Making A Difference in Prevention Award at the 15th annual Vision Substance Abuse Prevention Conference in



community

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known that
the 2007
Share The
Charleston.

Since 1998, Operation Right Choice, which White started a year after he joined the Huntington Housing Authority, has been helping kids ages 11-17 plan for the future and make the decisions that will help them reach their goals. More than 200 kids have completed the program, and many have gone on to go to college, start families and get good jobs.

The Huntington Housing Authority also recognized three teens Friday who went through the very first program as 11 year olds and now are Marshall University freshmen.

The program was started with a small grant to help kids in and around public housing see the long-term consequences of their choices, White said of the 12-week program.

"It's not about saying no to anything," said White, the resident support services supervisor for HHA. "It's about making good decisions and making long-term goals. We try to give them opportunities for the future."

The kids who participate in the program, White said, are most susceptible to poor planning because of their surrounding circumstances. He said 98 percent are coming from families where there is substance abuse. Ninety percent are in broken homes living with one parent or a relative. And many are living in low-income housing.

"We tell them these things are barriers but not excuses," White said.

Since the program's inception, it has gained regional and national attention. White said they've even presented the program's outline to many other groups.

"Every minute I can keep a kid engaged in an activity, it's one minute they aren't on the street being pressured to smoke or do drugs," he said. "I wish I could tell you I have 100 percent success, but that's not the story."

HHA Executive Director William Dotson said that's okay, because White's heart is in the right place.

"I'm extremely proud of the accomplishment," Dotson said. "It's hard to find things to stop kids from getting into trouble. This is just another example of what good programs do."