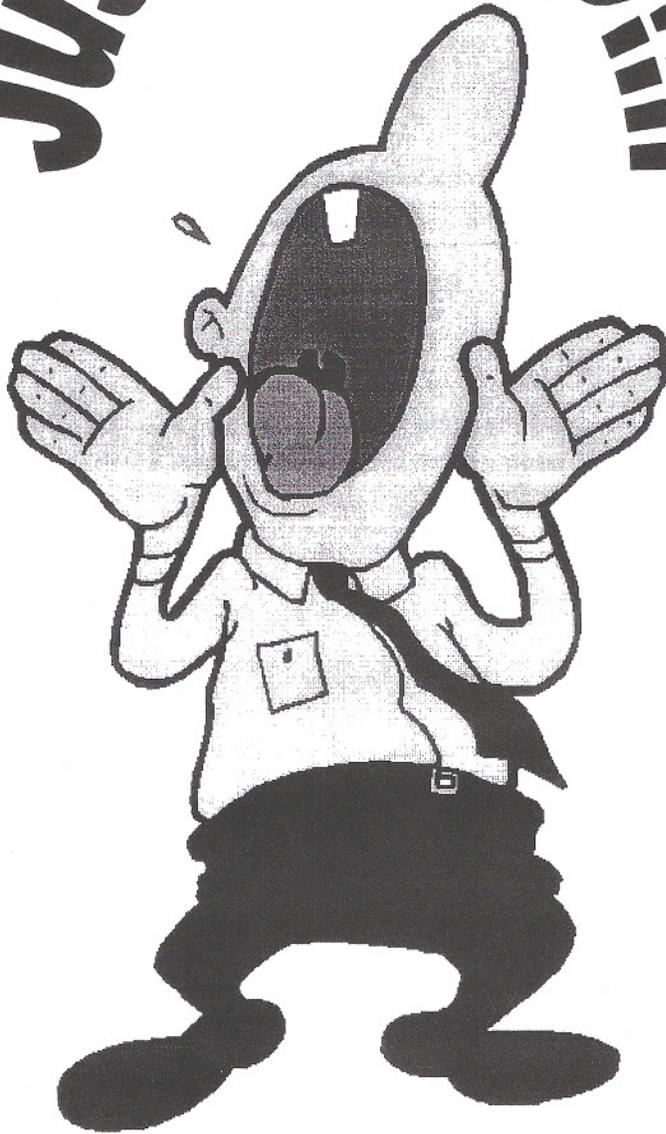


Just Say NO!!!



Getting the Word Out!

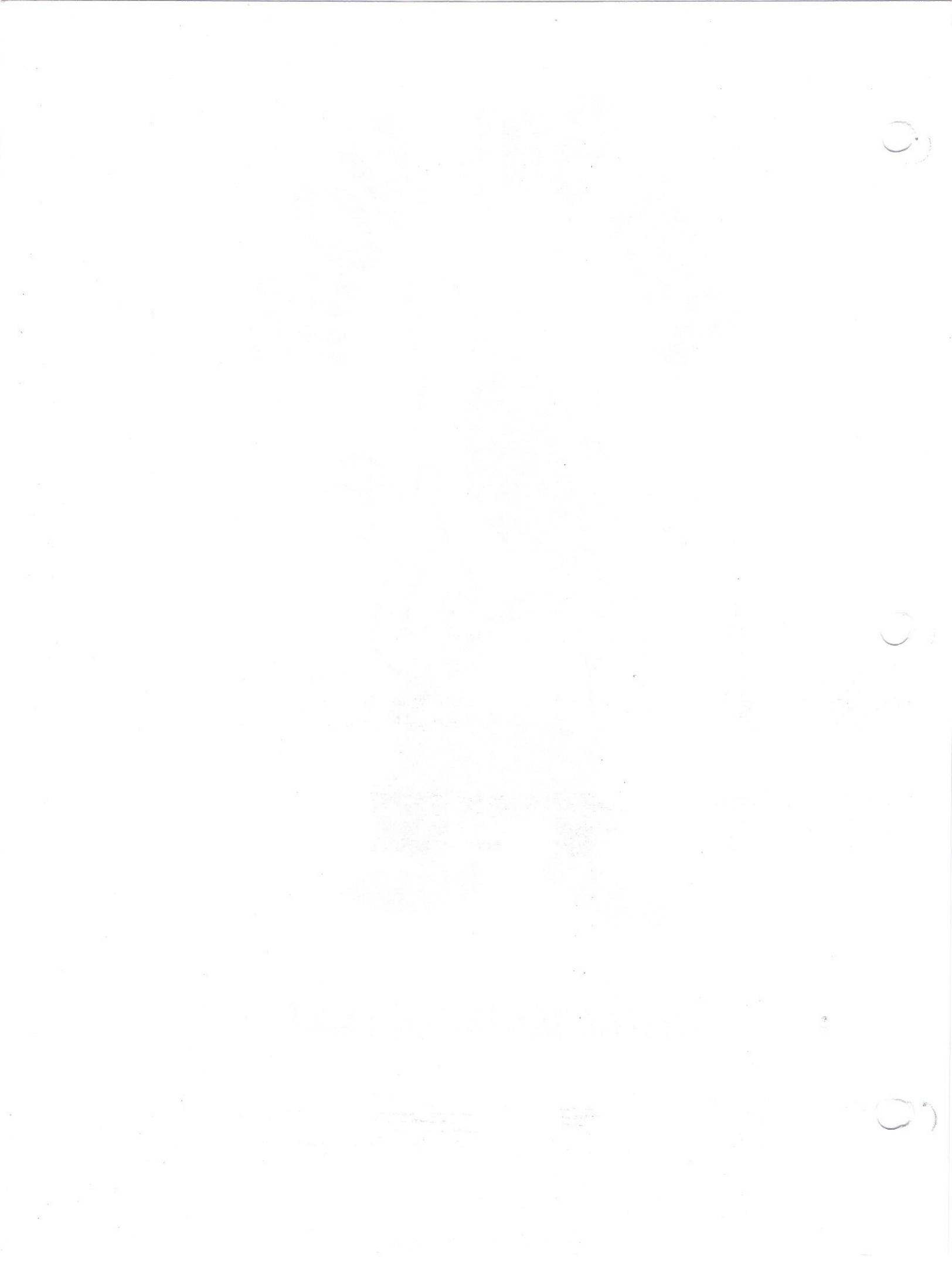


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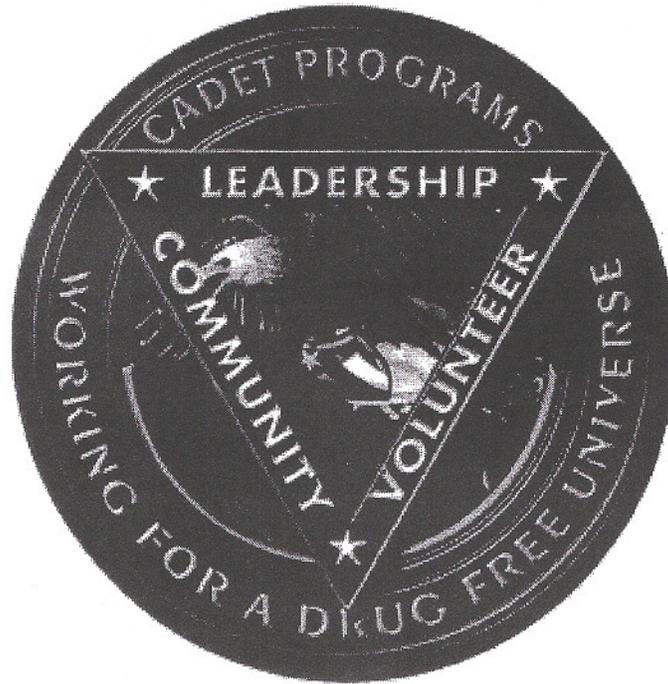
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HONOR GUARD



FOR A

DRUG - FREE

UNIVERSE

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Saying No To Drugs

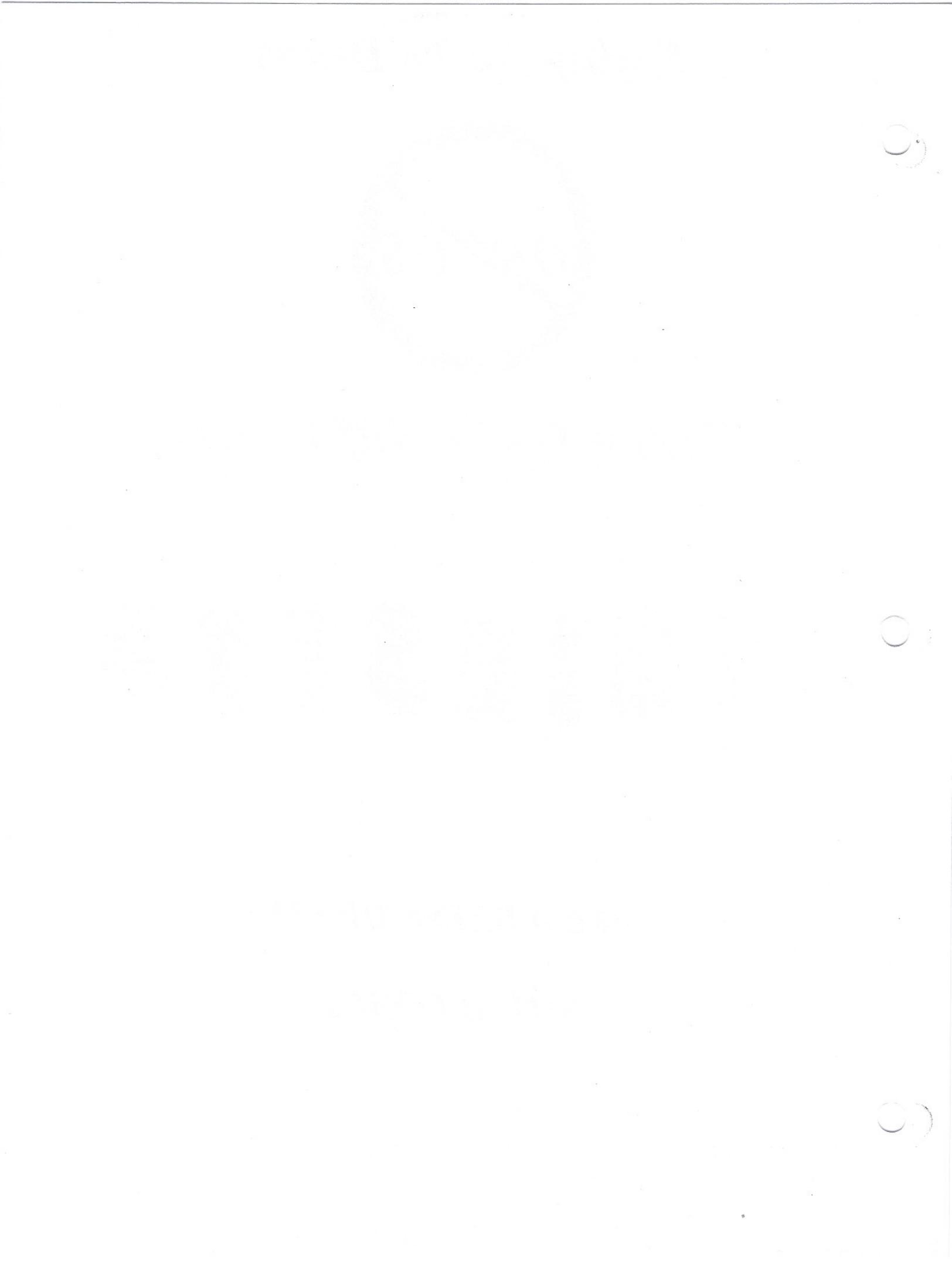


Saying Yes To Self Esteem

THIRSTY?

TAKE A DRINK OF LIFE

NOT ALCOHOL!



To help your squadron to get more involved in your community and assist in making a difference, here are some guidelines to help you get started. One of the most visible means of delivering your prevention message at a special event is to stage your own "info-mance" – that is information and performance. The following examples are mini-events that prevention groups around the country have created within larger community events:

Create a mini-health fair – complete with exhibits, discussion groups, health screening and literature, and souvenir giveaways. Contact your local MADD, insurance companies, health departments, local law enforcement and schools.

Develop your own performance group – negotiate with event organizers to include your own health performance group as part of the staged presentations of the festival. Have fun with it! Your performance can include dancers, Honor Guards, Drill Teams, Bands, theater groups and even rappers.

Create your own street performance group – this group may not yet be ready for the main stage, but they can have fun and deliver an important message. Ask event organizers to allow your performance group to work as "street performers," entertaining at curbside or in walkways. Street performers can be especially effective using colorful costumes, aerobics, singing, roller blading, and so forth.

Creating Your Own Exhibit and/or Materials

As you know Civil Air Patrol hand out literature and sign up volunteers at special events, This activity is not interesting. In order to attract a crowd; be creative, colorful and noisy. Here are some ideas that may be of help:

Create your own exhibit area by hanging colorful prohealth and safety posters and blowup photos or by creating murals.

Use life-size cutouts (and of course your cadets) wearing your prevention message hats, T-shirts and so on.

Use a small public address system and play some popular music

Give out lots of colorful posters, pamphlets, and flyers. Stickers etc. with your message. (With the computer age upon us this would be a great way to get your cadets and seniors involved in being creative). Example: button or stickers for Dd (Designated Driver) Say No To Alcohol say yes to self-esteem.

Have interactive games, puzzles, banners, questionnaires, or pledge cards for use by event attendees. (This would also be a could way to send out information on your squadron)

Work with event organizers to hang your own large, colorful banner in a highly visible location at the festival. Example: HUGE BANNER CAP emblem in top left corner (large of course) than the sign could read like the title above **Thirsty? Take a drink of life!!** **Pledge with us to be alcohol free** have a lot of felt tip pens all colors available and have people come and sign the board

Work with event organizers to have periodic public address announcements declaring the event alcohol safe for minors; create your own prohealth and safety slogans for the announcer's use as well

POINTS TO REMEMBER WHEN MEETING WITH EVENT ORGANIZERS

- Do your homework before the meeting. Understand the system of message delivery at the event. Know whom the event sponsors are and what they want to achieve.
- Have a clear set of objectives you wish to accomplish by working with the event. Be prepared to explain what you hope to achieve and how.
- Help those people associated with the event better understand the teen drinking crisis, its causes, and what they can do about it. If increased awareness is the only benefit of your meeting, it will be worthwhile!
- Invite event organizers and sponsors to become involved with your squadron in making your community aware of the alcohol crisis.
- If your research has revealed an underage-drinking problem at the event, share your observations with the organizers. Offer your group's assistance in solving this problem. Offer *cooperation NOT confrontation!*
- If you want to deliver prohealth and safety messages at the event, share that interest with the organizers and ask for their suggestions on how to most effectively deliver those messages.
- Develop a plan of action in connection with the event manager. Establish clear responsibilities, tasks, and a timetable.
- Be patient, flexible, and willing to adjust your plans.
- Evaluate your work after the event takes place. Let the event organizers know of your interest in being part of the next year's event as well, and apply what you learned in the evaluation to the next year's activity.

The above information has been part of the Teen Drinking Prevention Program from the Center of Substance Abuse Prevention Organization and the Civil Air Patrol Maryland Wing Honor Guard.

Skits and Props

America has a problem. That problem is drugs. The country is fighting for its youth in the war against drugs. How can Civil Air Patrol Honor Guards help in this fight? With so much information available, the material for building a skit around is easily attained. One of the best ways is just talking with the cadets, which we will cover in this lesson. But first, let's look at how to develop a skit.

One of the elements of an Honor Guard is the Drama Element. This is the unit that will be the primary source of skits and props. However, that does not mean that members of other elements cannot be used in a skit, on stage or behind the stage. Putting on a skit takes the whole team working together. If you have some cadets on the Honor Guard who are involved in drama in school, use them. They will be a huge help and asset to the Drama Element.

Before you start with the words, you must know your subject and audience. The skit must relate to the audience and show how drugs can affect teenagers. It is sad to say, but children in elementary school today are using drugs as well. Target your skit to the age of the audience. Have a different skit for each age group you plan to present the skit to. Do not try to write a skit for an audience of all ages unless it is one that reflects a universal problem such as smoking or drinking. Remember the KISS principle: Keep It Short and Simple. The length is not as important as the impact on the audience.

One good source might be a poem that you have read or heard about on the topic of drunk driving, getting high, or being alone and fighting depression. You might even find an advertisement that can be used. Check the various drug education web sites for possible material. You may even have a talented cadet that will come up with an idea or even the entire script. Look for items that express the effects of drug use and how it makes those around the user feel.

Once you have the idea and the scenes for the skit, it will be time to fill out the words that make the skit take shape. Remember that the skit will change as you start to act it out. You do not have to be an experienced director; you just have to believe in the message.

You now have some ideas on finding written material for a skit. Another way to generate materials is by talking to cadets for ideas of what they face each and every day.

Getting the cadets to talk to you openly and honestly is one of the hardest things to accomplish. Cadets normally do not talk to adults about their problems or things that bother them in their everyday life. Once you have the cadets gathered around, ask some questions and then just let them talk. You listen (this is the most important thing you can do).

What questions? That's is hard. Here are a few ideas to get you started.

1. What are you faced with at home, neighborhood, or family regarding drugs?

2. What is the big deal on selling drugs in school? What's hot now?
3. How do you feel when a friend is "hooked"?
4. Do you look the other way or try to help a friend break a habit?
5. If one of your friends dies from an overdose, do you ever think about what you could have done to prevent the death? How do you feel about this friend dying?
6. Have you ever thought about suicide? Why? What stopped you? How can you use that to help someone else?

Again, listen to the cadets; take notes, and then you can format the skit. The best received skits come from real life.

Now that you have the idea, let's put it into action. Put your ideas on paper, write the script, and put the skit together. How can you make it better visually? Props! You aren't a professional artist or a prop builder? Let's find out what you can use to aid in getting the message across.

Have you ever seen a play where they use a few props that suggest more? This is how many stage plays handle props because of cost, ease of setting up and moving them, as well as the confines of the space on the stage. You can do the same thing. You can use sounds off stage to suggest police or ambulance or any other activity that does not have to be shown to understand what is going on. A simple wreath and cardboard headstone for a grave will get the message across. Use your imagination. Costumes are props also. Try for everyday clothes that you can borrow that are easily obtained or found in someone's closet.

Some props will have to be made for that particular skit. If this is the case, then keep in mind that you will have to transport all the props, including costumes, along with the members to the location. Parents can become an invaluable asset to the Drama Element by helping with the building of the needed props, the transportation, sewing, etc. Recruit them!

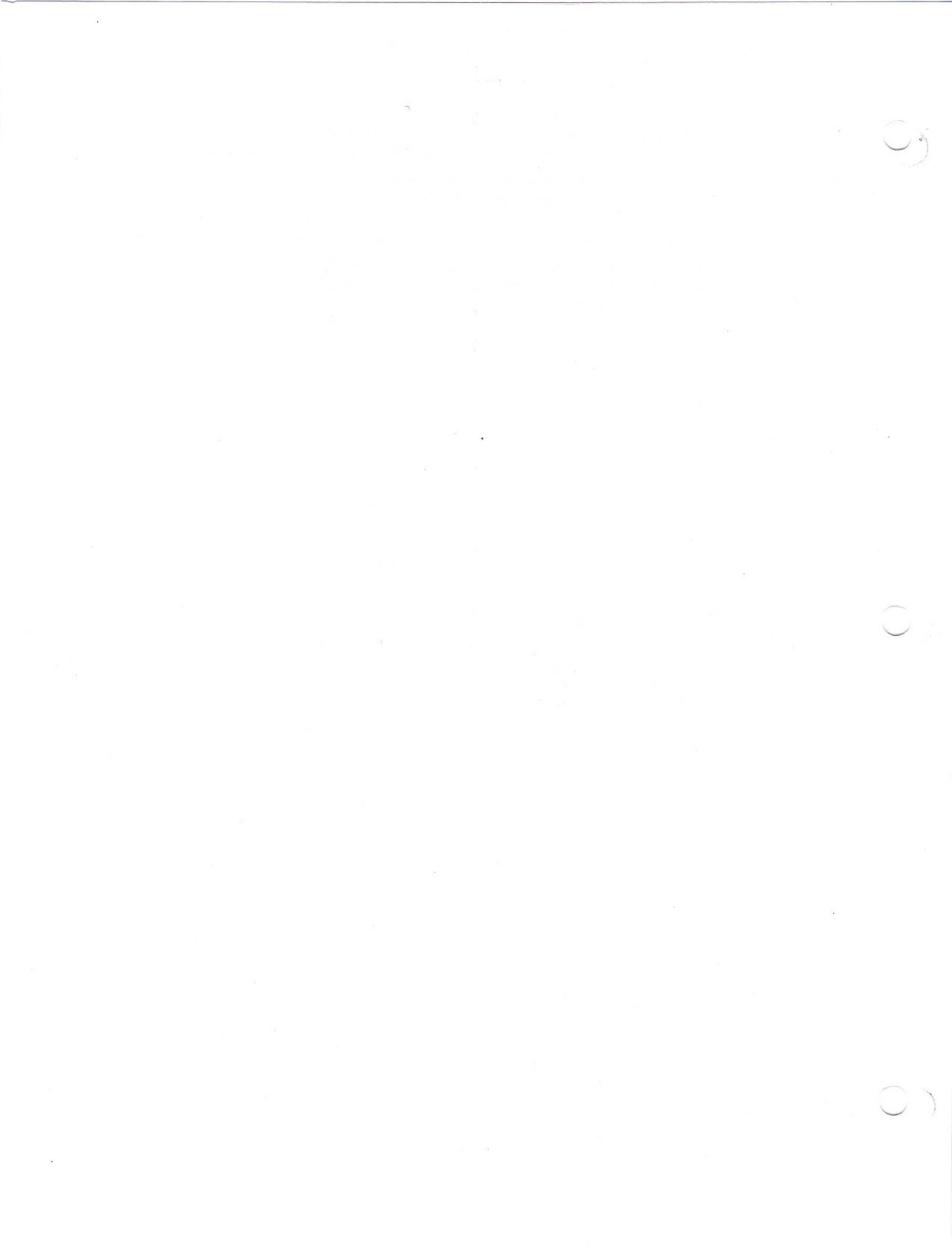
Putting it all together can be the hardest part of the entire process, or it can be the easiest. How's that, you ask? Let's take a look at the process of putting the skit together.

First is the idea. Once you have decided on one particular idea, you must decide what age audience you will present this skit to. Once you decide on the audience, the script must be written with the audience's level of comprehension in mind. If you are writing for an elementary school audience, you would not write it the same way as you would for a high school audience.

While you are writing the script, make notes in the margin concerning props, costumes, sounds, etc. that you think might be appropriate. While you are writing the script, don't forget to keep a tally of the number of characters that will be needed. You will also need to note any actions that need to be taking place.

Once the script is to your liking, have the various characters “walk through” the script. They do not have to memorize their lines at this point. Some very successful skits use a narrator off stage rather than character lines. While conducting the “walk through,” make sure you note any changes or words to the script. There will be changes, so don't get upset if it seems that the script needs a lot of changes. This is a natural process of fine tuning the skit.

Once you are satisfied with the script and the characters, it is time to discuss the costumes, props, and sounds using the notes you have made. When that is agreed on and everything seems to work together the way you want, start with the practices until the skit flows smoothly from start to finish. See; you can do it! Good luck!



Are you a true friend?

The Story of Jim, my friend

Author - Capt. Clyde Grimes, Maryland Wing Honor Guard

We were both born the same day, in the same hospital. We were placed in bassinets, side by side. Little did we know at that time, that this was a prelude to our lives. Even then Jim, that was his name, was a handful. Crying and fussing, Jim kept the nursery in an uproar. His mother used to say that he wasn't 3 hours old when he was trying to climb out of the bassinet and explore the world he was in. He was to be my friend, Jim.

Our homes were back to back, our backyards joined. There were no fences so we just naturally became friends. We played on our swing together, we explored the block together, that is as much as our mothers would let 3 year olds explore. Jim was the curious one, he always wanted to see what made things tick, how fast he could run, how high he could climb. I was the quiet one but whatever Jim did I would be there with him. He was Jim, my friend.

Jim and I were 6 when he wanted to see how high he could climb up in the old apple tree in our back yard. I said NO, because I didn't like to climb. But I didn't say "NO Jim, Don't" when he started up. He fell when a rotten branch broke and he broke his leg. I visited him every day in the hospital and when he came home I would fetch things for him, 'cause he was my friend, Jim.

In elementary school, he stole a pack of cigarettes from his dad and we hid in the basement and smoked one. I didn't like them, they burned my throat, but Jim said if we did it enough we would get used to them. I said "NO" but I didn't say "No, Jim Don't". By the time we got to Middle school Jim was using his lunch money to buy a pack a day and I didn't say a word. Why, 'cause he was Jim, my friend.

In Middle school one of our classmates started selling Tokes, Tijuana Gold he called them. Of course Jim, curious as ever, had to try one. I said "NO". By the time we were out of Middle school Jim was smoking 4 or 5 joints a day and maybe even dealing, he always had money for tokes. I would set with him and we would talk while he "Mellowed Out" as he said. But, I never said "No, Jim Don't," 'cause he was my friend, Jim.

In High School Jim started using crack, where he would get it, I don't know, but he always seemed to have a couple chunks around. I know he was dealing 'cause he had money for whatever he wanted. He wanted me to try it, said the feeling you got from it was awesome. I said NO. We would set in his room in the evenings and listen to tapes and do our homework while he smoked his crack pipe. He would drift off to sleep and I would throw a blanket over him before I left, BUT I NEVER said, "NO, JIM DON'T" 'cause he was Jim, my friend.

We graduated that spring, how Jim made it I don't know, but we did. By now Jim was into Heroin. He had a \$150.00 a day monkey on his back. He was dealing big time now. He kept after me to try it. He said the high you got from a shot was something you would never forget, you owned the world riding on that jolt. I said NO. I would go with him to help him home when he

got high, which was just about every night now. But the funny thing was, I never said "NO JIM, DON'T" 'cause he was my friend, Jim.

I rode to the hospital in the ambulance with him the night he collapsed, watched while he shivered and shook, wiped the sweat from his face while that miserable needle was still stuck in his arm. The Cop wouldn't let me pull it out, said it was evidence. That was the longest ride I'll ever take and I'll remember it the rest of my life. Jim died two hours later, the doctor said it was a "hot shot", almost pure Heroin, enough to put an elephant down they said. I had watched him take the needle and never said, "NO JIM DON'T" 'cause he was Jim, my friend.

We buried him today, it's a cold day, or maybe it's just me. His parents are mad at me, they say I should have told them. But you don't tell on a friend. I'm standing here looking at this mound of brown earth and thinking about my friend Jim, so cold underneath that mound. Suddenly the thought hits me. All the times I missed saying "NO, JIM DON'T". Was I REALLY HIS FRIEND?

Drunk Driving Penalties Around the World

Since everything is relative here is a list of penalties for those convicted of drunk driving in other countries, with the information being supplied by the Minnesota Licensed Beverage Association Inc. Compared to those laws, ours are obviously extremely mild. Maybe this will make people STOP AND THINK before they take those last few DRINKS.

Australia: The names of the drivers are sent to the local newspaper and are printed under the heading "He's a drunk and in jail."

Malaya: the driver is jailed; if he's married, his wife is jailed too.

South Africa: A 10 year prison sentence and the equivalent of a \$10,000 fine or both.

Turkey: Drunk drivers are taken 20 miles from town by the police and forced to walk back under escort.

Norway: Three weeks in jail at hard labor, one year loss of license. Second offense within five years, license revoked for life.

Finland & Sweden: Automatic jail for one year and hard labor.

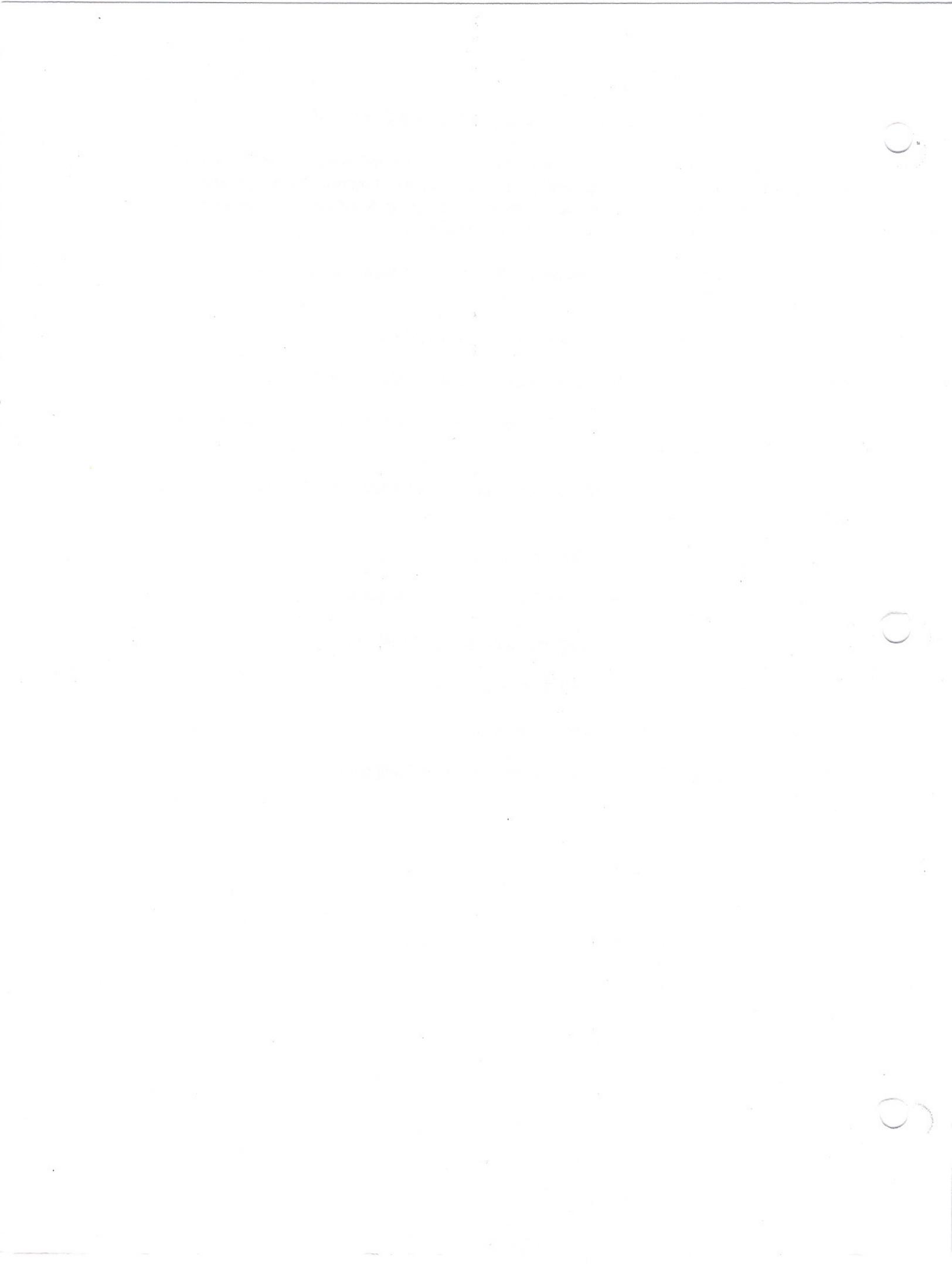
England: One year suspension and \$250 fine, and jail and for one year.

France: Three year loss of license, one year in jail and a \$1,000 fine.

Poland: Jail and fine and forced to attend political lectures.

Bulgaria: A second conviction results in execution.

El Salvador: Your first offense is your last. Execution by firing squad.



Drug Demand Reduction Skit **Performed by the Maryland Wing Honor Guard**

The Maryland Wing Honor Guard put together a skit to act out a very popular and meaningful poem that informs your audience that the Teen Alcohol problem is very close to home. We would like to share this with other members in Civil Air Patrol and to those that visit our web site. When performed it is very dramatic and, if done properly, will make your audience want to help you in making your community aware of the alcohol crisis.

Cast List

Girl who won't drink
Girl's voice
Drunk Driver
Party people
2 Paramedics
2 Policeman
Tape of car crash and sirens
Cadets to carry casket
Cadet to carry reef-saying DADDY'S GIRL
Cadet or family member to speak about girl

Props List

Sound System
Tape Recorder
Sound Effects/party music
Backboard and various medical items
Policemen outfits
Casket
Flowers (wreath for casket) with sash printed DADDY'S GIRL on it
Cooler (with brown bottles root beer, for the actors to drink onstage)
Balloon
Handcuffs
Emergency Lights (Blue for Police and Red for Paramedics)

"A Daughter's Final Words"

Have another girl read the following poem offstage with sincerity.

"I went to a party, Mom.

"I remember what you said.

"You told me not to drink, Mom,

"So I drank soda instead. "

Open the scene with a party drinking dancing trying to get GIRL to drink
but she keeps saying "No"

"I felt really proud inside, Mom,

"The way you said I would.

"I didn't drink and drive, Mom,

"Even though the others said I should.

"I know I did the right thing, Mom.

"I know you're always right.

"Now, the party's finally ending, Mom."

Everyone drives out of sight. Everyone starts to leave the GIRL is helping
to clean up than leaves.

Lights fade

"As I got into my car, Mom,

"I knew I'd get home in one piece,

"Because of the way you raised me, Mom,

"So responsible and so sweet.

"I started to drive away, Mom,

"A Daughter's Final Words"

"But as I pulled down onto the road

"The other car didn't see me, Mom,

"And it hit me like a load."

GIRL's Voice Stops Reading

Sound of a GIRL screaming and cars crashing along with the image of the GIRL crashing with the other driver, voices of paramedics and a policeman, then sirens. TWO PARAMEDICS appear and find the GIRL lying on the ground in a puddle of blood. On the other side of the stage POLICEMAN enters finding the DRUNK DRIVER that hit the GIRL.

GIRL's Voice Continues Reading

"As I lie here on the pavement, Mom,

"I hear the policeman say

"The other guy is drunk, Mom,

"And now I'm the one who'll pay."

The POLICEMAN has the DRUNK DRIVER

GIRL's voice sounds angry

"I'm lying here dying, Mom.

"I wish you could get here soon.

"How come this happened to me, Mom?

"My life burst like a balloon."

POLICEMAN has DRUNK walking straight line and then blowing up a balloon then putting on handcuffs.

"There's blood all around me, Mom,

"Most of it's mine.

"I hear the paramedics say, Mom,

"A Daughter's Final Words"

"I'll be dead in a short time."

GIRL starts to sound weak. PARAMEDICS look sad and shake their heads in a slow motion.

"I just wanted to tell you, Mom,

"I swear I didn't drink.

"It was the others, Mom.

"The others didn't think."

GIRL sounding weaker

"He didn't know where he was going, Mom.

"He was probably at the same party as I.

"The only difference is, Mom,

"He drank and I will die.

"Why do people drink, Mom?"

"It can ruin your whole life.

"I'm feeling sharp pains now, Mom,

"Pains just like a knife."

GIRL sounds in pain. POLICEMAN and DRUNK DRIVER slowly cross the stage, POLICEMAN on each side. DRUNK looks at GIRL.

"The guy who hit me is walking, Mom.

"I don't think it's fair, (pause)

(Insert a line here)

"While all he can do is stare."

POLICEMAN and DRUNK DRIVER exit

"I'm lying here dying, Mom.

"A Daughter's Final Words"

"Tell Daddy to be brave

"And when I get to heaven, Mom,

"Write "Daddy's Girl" on my grave."

PARAMAEDICS cover the GIRL with a sheet, lift her on a backboard and exit carrying her out the same way as police.

"Somebody should have told him, Mom,

"Not to drink and drive.

"If only they had taken the time, Mom,

"I would still be alive."

The rest of the poem from here forward should be read SLOW and the GIRL is getting very weak now and it is getting hard to breathe.

"My breath is getting shorter, Mom.

"I'm becoming very scared.

"Please don't cry for me, Mom,

"Caused when I needed you, you were always there.

"I have one last question, Mom,

"Before I say goodbye.

"I didn't ever drink, Mom,

"So why am I to die?

"This is the end, Mom.

"I wish I could look you in the eye

"To say these final words, Mom.

"I Love You.....Goodbye...."

"A Daughter's Final Words"

The lights fade and then are slowly brought up again.

From the back of the room, through the audience if possible, the HONOR GUARD enters carrying a coffin with a cadet carrying a wreath behind the coffin with a sash on it saying "Daddy's Girl."

Bring it to the front of the room or up onto the stage. The HONOR GUARD lowers the coffin to the floor. HONOR GUARD salutes very slow, and steps to each side of coffin.

Cadet carrying the wreath then places the wreath in front of the coffin so the audience can see "Daddy's Girl."

The cadets then form up and march out very slowly.

Afterward, a teenager or cadet stand and give a brief speech about what this girl is going to miss in life because of a drunken driver (i.e. prom dances, graduation, college, marriage, children, etc.) then continue on as to what the parents are going to miss (i.e. loud music, coming home late, messy room, wedding, grandchildren etc.)

“How the Ball Bounces”

Produced by

The Maryland Wing Honor Guard

Directed by

CAST:

Father:	(Charlie) Dan Shealy
Son:	(Hoops) John Moran, Alternate Sam Tressler
Mother:	(Amanda) Kathleen McLellan
Friend:	(Ike) Shaun Curry
Daughter:	(Sarah) Sarah Stauffer
War Buddy:	(Kevin Shealy) Kevin Pelletier
Two Doctors:	(Dr. Robertson and Dr. Phares) Abe and Bekah Phares
Nurse:	(Nurse Mills) Chris Robertson
Chaplain:	(Chaplain) Scott Taylor
E.M.T.s:	Terrelle Hall, Brendon Terry,
Cheerleaders:	Nichole Pelletier, Sharon Wall Brendon Terry, Scott Taylor
Basketball Players:	Prince George's Squadron plus others to be announced.
Pallbearers:	6
Extras:	2
School Counselor:	(Mr. Hall) Terrelle Hall
Casey:	Ryan Curry
Coaches (2):	Marion and Kevin Pelletier

Act I

Scene 1: Daddy Dearest

Props:

TV, recliner, coffee table, remote, crack stuff, recording of some sport event, basketball, recording of breaking glass sounds, couch, t.v. Table, doll, apron, wooden spoon, beer can, doll clothes

Opens with Father sitting in living room watching television and drinking beer. Daughter sits in the corner, playing with a doll. The son walks in bouncing a basketball and asks his dad to come out and shoot some 'one on one'. At first, Dad is reluctant to play basketball with the son and when the dad tries he can't even bounce the ball. Father gets angry and throws the ball into kitchen. Everyone hears the sound of glass breaking. The mother storms into the living room, furious. She begins to yell at the father (a) for doing drugs again in front of the children and (b) for breaking her good glassware her mother had left her. Father continues to do the drugs while mother stands over him yelling. Daughter sits in corner, watching the turmoil, crying.

Sarah Daddy, do you like my new doll Mommy got me? Her name is Emily.

Charlie Yeah, whatever (continues to watch game and do drugs).

Hoops Hey Dad, come on outside and shoot some 'one on one' with me.

Charlie (Angry, drunk and drugged) **GO AWAY HOOPS, I DON'T FEEL LIKE PLAYING!**

Hoops Ah, come on Dad, its really nice outside today.

Charlie (Stands up still angry) **FINE, GIVE ME THE DAMN BALL!**

Hoops Cool (bounces the ball to Charlie).

Charlie (Tries to bounce ball and can't. Gets angry picks up ball and throws it towards kitchen).
FINE, I DIDN'T WANT TO PLAY ANYWAY!

Ball bounces into kitchen, sound of breaking glass.

Hoops But Dad!!

Amanda (Storms into the living room screaming) **Charlie, what do you think your doing? You just broke my good glassware handed down from my mother!**

Charlie Big Deal.

Amanda How dare you! You lazy no good, you promised that you would not do drugs again in front of the kids... **DAMN YOU!!!**
What good can possibly come from this? (Facing the audience head down)

(Lights Fade End of Scene One)

Scene Two: Ike's House

Props:

Bed, sheets, pillow, boom box with drugs, dresser, basketball, shoe box.

Friends in bedroom, just hanging out (extra friends); Ike offers stash to Hoops. Hoops doesn't take the drugs and tries to stop Ike from taking the drugs. Ike takes the drugs anyway then puts the shoe box away.

First extra (Goes to dresser and turns on the boom box) Hey, any of you have a date yet for the dance next weekend?

Second extra Not me, man, all the good girls are already taken. (Starts passing the basketball back and forth to Hoops)

Ike (Pulls shoe box from under bed) Hey, anyone need a picker upper? Come on Hoops, give it a try. You'll like it! Come on man, it won't hurt you, just make you lovin' life.

Hoops No way, guy, I don't want to be like my old man.

Ike Have it your way. (Ike takes drugs, than closes shoe box and puts back under the bed)

Scene Three: The Funeral

Props:

Casket, Black Robe, Christian Sash, 6 Pallbearers, Trumpet Music of Taps, Flag for Casket (Military Funeral), horses for casket, green carpet, rose

Do the funeral (outdoors) for father. Ex-military funeral. Air Force war buddy does eulogy. Minister and mourners. Six pallbearers carrying coffin with American flag. Place on stand for coffin. While folding American flag, taps is being played. Folded flag is then presented to the mother. Upon leaving, daughter places a single rose on coffin then leaves.

(Lights fade, scene ends)

Scene Four: The Wake

Props

TV, remote, TV table, coffee table, couch, mellow music playing in background, party platters, punch bowl, table set up with food.

Daughter is just sitting in the corner with doll and Daddy's picture. Mellow music is playing softly in background. Have people enter with covered dishes. Mother in other corner with relatives. Hoops has basketball in hands, twirling, while staring out the window. Sarah's friend, Casey asks Sarah to go upstairs and play. Casey has a plate of food in her hands. Sarah explodes at Casey and knocks the plate of food out of her hands. Mother comes over and tries to console Sarah. Hoops can't take it, and walks out. (Lights dim, and then come back up again.)

Hoops runs into Ike outside. Ike is smoking a joint and Ike offers Hoops drugs.

SARAH AND CASEY HAVE A RIFT

Casey (Walks over to Sarah with a plate of food. Giggling, laughing.) Hey, Sarah, let's go upstairs to your room and go play! (Tries to pull her arm and get her to go upstairs to play.) Come on Sarah, let's go upstairs and play!

Sarah: (Pushes her arm away, jumps up out of chair, crying hysterically. Knocks Casey's plate of food out of her hands). Leave me alone!!!

Amanda: (Charges over to Sarah) What's wrong, honey!?! It will be okay. Mommy's here.

Lights fade on Amanda and Sarah

Lights come up on Hoops looking at Amanda and Sarah

Hoops: (Looking at Amanda and Sarah) I can't deal with this anymore!!! (Slams basketball on floor and goes outside).

Lights fade

Lights come back up on Hoops

Hoops runs into Ike. Ike is smoking a joint.

Ike: Hey, buddy, what's up?

Hoops: I can't stand this, man... As screwed up as Pop was, I still love him. Damn relatives come out of the woodworks at funerals and weddings. Where were they when we needed them? They didn't even know we existed.

Ike: Hey, man, you need to chill out, you need to relax. You need to take a drag.

Hoops: No, I think I'll pass.

Ike: C'mon man, one drag ain't gonna hurt ya.

Hoops: Nah, I don't think so, not today.

Ike: Look, I'm your best friend, do you think I'd really give ya something that wasn't good for ya? You can either take a hit, or go back in with those damn relatives of yours. I'm not gonna *make* you take it.

Hoops: You're right, man. (Takes a joint, lights fade.)

End of Scene Four

Act II

Scene One: School

Props: lockers, books, book bags,

At school, counselor approaches Hoops and pulls him aside. Counselor tells Hoops that Ike is dead. That Ike overdosed on drugs.

Lights fade

Hoops: (Putting books in locker, running late)

Mr. Hall: Hey, Hoops, do you have a minute? I really need to talk to you.

Hoops: Not really. I'm running late for basketball practice. Coach is gonna kill me if I miss practice one more time. Can't you just tell me later?

Mr. Hall: No, Hoops, you don't understand... It's about Ike.

Hoops: (Smiling) What did he do this time? Moon the teacher's lounge!?!)

Mr. Hall: No, Hoops, I don't know how to tell you this, but...

Hoops: (More serious now) What?

Mr. Hall: (Tries to put his arm around Hoops) Ike O.D. on drugs last night. This morning he was found dead.

Hoops: (punches his locker) **Damn!** I knew it! (Starts to cry) Why is this happening to me!?!

Scene Two: The Shoebox

Props: Ike's room, shoebox, bed, basketball, dresser, sheets, picture of Ike and Hoops.

Lights turn up on Hoops in Ike's room, sitting on his bed, looking at a picture of the two of them together.

Hoops: (As he is holding the picture) Why? First Dad, now you.

(Hoops puts the picture face down on the dresser. Bends down and pulls the shoebox out from under the Ike's bed. Holds the shoebox for a moment as he looks at it hesitantly. Lights fade as he opens the box up and looks inside.)

End of Scene Two.

Scene Three: The Game

Props: basketball, basketball net, pom-poms, stretcher, other medical supplies, score board

Scene opens at school basketball game. Cheerleaders are cheering in the background. Sarah is cheering with the cheerleaders. Mom is cheering in the stands. School basketball team is playing against another team. Hoops is not playing as well as usual. Hoops is sweating a lot. He also can't seem to keep his concentration. Coach calls 'time out'.

(While the time out is taking place, the cheerleaders are cheering for their team, Hoops especially.)

Coach Kevin: (making 't' sign with his hands, team goes over to coach.) Hoops! What are you doing!?! Get your act together! We're down ten points already. The team is counting on you!

Hoops: Okay coach, okay, okay, okay. I've got it under control.

(Buzzer rings, team goes back on court). They all start playing, the ball is passed to Hoops and he fumbles the ball while attempting to make a shot. Silence comes over the crowd. Hoops collapses. Coach runs to Hoops' side, team surrounds him. Hoops is having severe twitches. The EMTs rush to his side with a stretcher and puts him on the stretcher. The mother and Sarah are in hysterics, confused as to what is going on.)

(Lights fade and Scene ends).

Scene Four: The Hospital

Props: hospital bed, medical supplies, tombstones, doll, basketball, lab coats (2), stethoscope, nurse scrubs

Opens with Hoops in a hospital bed, hooked up to machines galore. Mother and Sarah are standing at the Hoop's bedside crying. One doctor is examining Hoops, and the other is looking at his chart. Nurse is taking his blood pressure, and working with the machines. Doctors go to the side to confer with one another. Mother strokes Hoop's forehead, while Sarah tries to hold Hoop's hand. Basketball is sitting at the corner of the bed.

Dr. Robertson: (call Amanda over) Amanda, I would like you to met Dr. Phares. He is a specialist in cases such as this.

Dr. Phares: Amanda, I am very sorry to inform you. All the tests that have been taken on your son have been very conclusive. Your son has brain damage.

Amanda: What are you saying? (Sarah reaches over to hold mother's hand.)

Dr. Phares: Amanda, there is no easy way to say this, your son is brain dead. He's basically a vegetable. He will not be able to do for himself. You will have to do everything for him. (Sarah turns to hug Mom, crying),

Dr. Robertson: I'm sorry, Amanda, I wish there was more we could do for him. I wish there was hope.

Amanda: Thank you, doctors, I know you did all you could.

Dr. Robertson: I wish we could have done more.

(The doctors exit off stage, mother and Sarah walk over to Hoops and Sarah puts the doll in Hoops arms, while mother tries to put basketball in Hoops hands, but it just bounces out of his hands and off stage).

Then lights are centered on tombstones stage left. There are three, with names of Charlie (dad), Ike (friend), and "your son".

THE END

How to Plan a Funeral for Your 12-Year-Old

You don't remember much about that afternoon. The knock at the door, the police officer's face. The screams. You don't remember if the day was sunny or overcast and you barely remember your child barreling down the stairs, off to ride his bike and play with his friends. You don't remember if you said you loved him, but you've got to believe you did. Because it was the last time you saw your child alive.

- WHEN A DEATH *is unexpected, it is proper to postpone the burial to allow ample time for family members to gather.*

You rushed to the hospital, but when the doctor met you outside the emergency room, you knew it was too late. It was there, 30 feet from your child's body, you first heard the term "sniffing." It's slang for inhaling ordinary household products to get high, you were told. Kids are sniffing anything they can get their hands on, you were told. Spray paint, correction fluid, gasoline. It's called sniffing, you were told again. It's what killed your child.

- CHILDREN ARE OFTEN *buried in an outfit most befitting their personality, such as a baseball uniform, etc.*

When you finally entered his room, it was well past midnight. Inhalants? Your child was getting high? What could you have missed? You looked around, slowly. The cassette player he inherited from his brother. The baseball glove, on the floor as usual. Your eyes teared up before you could see anything else. But what were you looking for? The paraphernalia for sniffing isn't the same as for other drugs. Common paraphernalia includes ordinary items like socks, soda cans, even empty lunch bags. You couldn't have noticed things like that. Could you? You closed the door behind you. It will be two years before you go in again.

Your child's school held a memorial. You went, reluctantly. His classmates hugged you in an endless procession. Some you recognized. Most you didn't. They spoke of starting a scholarship in your child's name. Of putting a plaque above his locker. You tried to listen, but your mind kept wandering. Was the person who supplied the inhalants to your child present? No one came forth, but the truth is, they could've been found at home. The average home has over 100 household products that can be used as inhalants. They can damage the heart, liver, kidneys, even the brain. Your child's memorial ended without any mention of the cause of death. It seemed to no longer need mentioning.

- IF REQUESTED, *arrangements can be made for the funeral procession to pass by the child's playground or school.*

For four days, the phone never stopped ringing. The relatives called. The clergy called. One of the kids who was with our child when he died called. Said he was real sorry. Said it was the first time he saw your child sniff *anything*. Sniffing really can kill the first time, but you didn't believe him. You didn't know what to believe. All you knew

was that you'd heard enough about what happened that day. And that your child's funeral was in an hour.

- TROPHIES, PICTURES, *teddy bears*, and *other personal items* may be included in the casket at the end of the service.

Could this be your child? Most parents would prefer to not even think about it. But you should. Because one in five eighth graders has sniffed a household product to get high. Please find out more about inhalant abuse. Between knowledge and communication, this story will never be your own.

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