

Spring 2009

## DRUG RESISTANCE STRATEGIES PROJECT

### kiR investigators

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*From kids,  
 To kids,  
 Through kids*

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Welcome to the Drug Resistance Strategies Project, featuring the *keepin' it REAL* curriculum (kiR) for rural middle schools.

This curriculum teaches 7th grade youth to assess risk, make healthy decisions, and communicate effectively with their peers to resist drug offers.

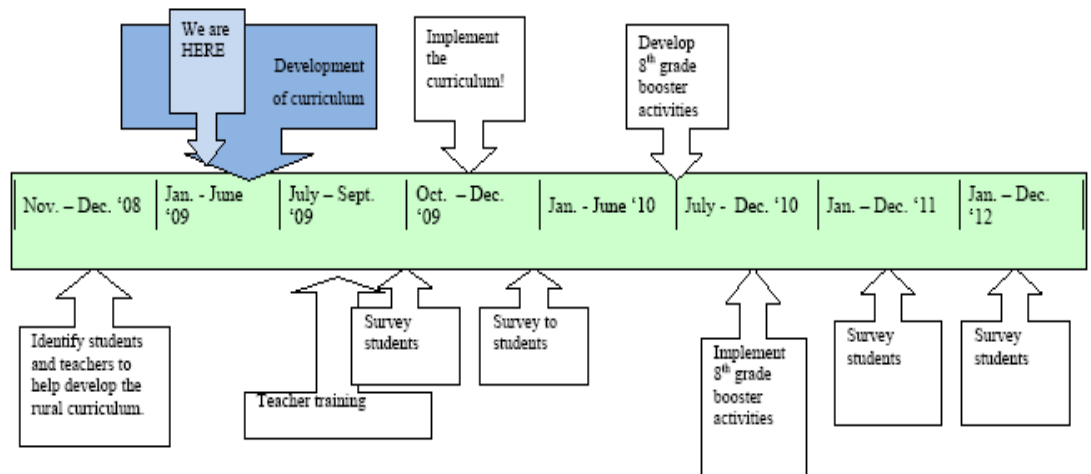
Your school liaison and our project coordinator, Magi Colby, will be working with you to make this a successful experience. Feel free to contact your liaison if you have any questions.

Using the federally recognized "*keepin' it REAL*" program as a model, we will be working with you to develop a drug prevention program for our rural youth.

An updated timeline of events is included below. As you can see, we are in the midst of developing the rural curriculum, **will be training your teachers this summer**, and **will be in your school next Fall!**

In this newsletter you will find updated information about the *keepin' it REAL* (kiR) project. If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call one of the members of our team. We have enjoyed working with you and appreciate your participation in helping our rural youth lead healthy and productive lives.

### Timeline





refuse · explain · avoid · leave

## VIDEO PRODUCTION

The curriculum uses a series of five videos produced by youth and based on students' actual stories as a key learning tool.



Pictured is the **Tyrone High School** group that participated in the video production process. Other schools that are involved in making the videos are **Bellefonte Area High School**, **Penns Valley High School**, and **Bellwood-Antis High School**. An important philosophy behind the *kiR* videos is that student production teams make the videos more "relatable" to their peers.

## PRODUCER PROFILE



AARON MATTHEWS

Aaron Matthews is an award-winning documentary filmmaker whose films have appeared on national and international television and in numerous film festivals around the world. His films include *The Paper*, *A Panther in Africa*, *My American Girls*, *Taddo* and *The Art of the Moment*. In addition to his film work, Matthews has worked as a writer and producer for A&E, The History Channel, and The Sundance Channel, and as an English as a Second Language teacher in New York City. His films have been hailed by critics and audiences for their insightfulness, honesty and humor. We are excited to have Aaron working with us on the production of the *keepin' it REAL* videos.

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## STUDENT ADVISORY GROUP



Students from Clearfield, Penns Valley, Philipsburg-Osceola, and Dallas middle schools spent a day at Penn State sharing their experiences and having fun. Activities included bowling, eating lunch and dinner, watching the kiR videos and providing feedback about their effectiveness. They also talked about their personal experiences, friends, and if and how drug use has impacted their lives. In individual interviews, students expressed how much fun they had at Penn State and how important they think it is to try to keep students their age off drugs. The group also set up a Facebook page and text messaging in order for them to keep in touch. Overall, the students provided helpful feedback for how the kiR curriculum can be more effective in preventing drug use.

### STUDENT ADVISORY GROUP

#### Ian Brown (Penns Valley, 7<sup>th</sup> grade)

Kris Glunt asked me to participate. I thought it sounded fun. Assemblies don't work because they're boring and everyone falls asleep. A better way to help kids stay off drugs is to meet and talk to someone in person who has had actual experiences with drugs, and bad things have happened to them. Also, it's nice to be asked about my personal experiences and to hear similar experiences from other kids my age. This kind of group activity could help us avoid bad things that could happen if we use drugs.

#### Jamie Wise (Dallas Middle, 8<sup>th</sup> grade)

My friend asked me to come. I really like Penn State and it sounded like fun. Hearing others' personal experiences is good and effective in helping us stay off drugs. Stories from real people about the bad stuff that has happened because they did drugs could really make a difference. It's also helpful to get students from different schools together like today. Programs and assemblies and outdated videos don't work. Real people and stories are better.



#### Luke Weaver (Penns Valley, 7<sup>th</sup> grade)

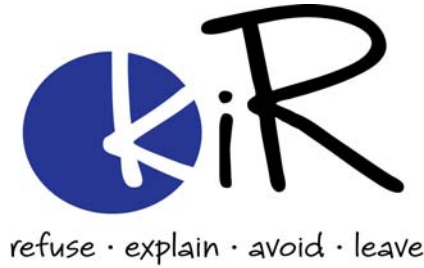
I've had negative experiences that I want to share. It helps to be in a group with other students and everyone shares their experiences. It's important for us to feel like we can talk about this stuff and helps us stay off drugs.

#### Jarret Forcey (Clearfield Middle, 8<sup>th</sup> grade)

My teacher asked if I wanted to come today. I wanted to because I'm really against drugs. I feel really strongly against drug use. It's important to come and do stuff like this. My friends and older kids have offered me drugs before and I have always resisted. I think updated videos could work, but it's better to have face to face stories from real people about their experiences.

#### Katie Rosselli (Philipsburg-Osceola, 7<sup>th</sup> grade)

My health teacher asked me if I wanted to come. I think it's interesting and important and I really want to help with the drug problem. I have been offered alcohol and said no. I don't think pictures and hearing about consequences is enough to keep us off drugs. Real people make a difference.



## SPOTLIGHT ON TIM TANNER



Tim is currently serving as County Director and 4-H Youth Development Educator for Ohio State University Extension in Harrison County. Harrison is a small Appalachian Ohio county with a diminishing population and economic outlook, yet a strong community appeal and vibrant nature scene. Tim's role is that of administrator and volunteer developer, as well as empowering youth leaders in the county. Before this role began in August, Tim worked for 5 years in non-profit youth settings in the Lancaster, PA region. Tim completed his M.Ed. in Adult Education in 2007 at Penn State.

### KNOW YOUR LIASONS:

Ohio

*Mr. Tim Tanner*

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### Check out the new kiR website:

<http://www.kir.psu.edu/rural/>

### KNOW YOUR LIASONS:

Central and Western PA:

*Mr. Kris Glunt*

[kglunt@pennsvalley.org](mailto:kglunt@pennsvalley.org)

## INHALANT USE AND DEPRESSION

- In 2004 to 2006, 1.1 million youth aged 12 to 17 (4.5 percent) used inhalants and 2.1 million (8.5 percent) had experienced major depressive episode (MDE) in the past year.
- The rate of past year inhalant use was higher among youth aged 12 to 17 who had MDE in the past year than among those who did not (10.2 vs. 4.0 percent); an estimated 218,000 youths had used inhalants and experienced a MDE in the past year.
- Among the youth aged 12 to 17 who had used inhalants and experienced a MDE in their lifetime, 43.1 percent had their first episode of MDE before initiating inhalant use, 28.3 percent used inhalants before they had their first episode of MDE, and 28.5 percent started using inhalants and had their first episode of MDE at about the same time.

Statistics reported from <http://oas.samhsa.gov/2k8/inhalantsDepress/inhalantsDepress.htm>

### KNOW YOUR LIASONS:

Northeastern PA:

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