

PAL® Quarterly



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County Superintendent of Schools

PAL® PEER ASSISTANCE LEADERSHIP
ORANGE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

September 2007 Volume 1, Issue 1

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PAL Newsletter Kickoff

The PAL newsletter is back! The PAL staff at the Orange County Department of Education (OCDE) is excited to bring you the first of four newsletters this school year. Our goal is to promote successful peer helping strategies that meet the National Peer Helping Association's Standards of Practice. In addition, it will help keep our community partners informed about the positive activities young people are engaged in. Each

issue will have a theme; the first being Red Ribbon Week. Future issues will cover topics such as recruiting and training PAL students, new student transition/outreach and service learning. In each issue we will highlight successful PAL program activities at the elementary, middle, and high school grade levels. Special thanks to the PAL advisors and students at Baden-Powell Elementary School, Sycamore Junior High School, Valencia High School, and Esperanza High School for their contributions to this first issue. We hope you enjoy the PAL Quarterly!

"PAL has paved the foundation for me to be a leader in college and I will take the lessons I have learned from PAL with me throughout my life."

Kathryn Hayes
Brea Olinda High School graduate
Brea Olinda Unified School District

Red Ribbon Week, October 23-31, 2007

Red Ribbon Week is the oldest and largest drug prevention campaign in the nation. It began in 1985 as a tribute to Enrique "Kiki" Camarena, an agent with the national Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA). Today the Red Ribbon Week campaign works to reduce alcohol and other drug use through prevention, education, and awareness.



The Orange County Prevention Coalition's 2007 Red Ribbon Week theme is *Speak Out! Take a Stand for Healthy Choices*. The theme supports the idea of getting involved, taking action and speaking out during Red Ribbon Week and emphasizing the importance of prevention and healthy choices. This includes not only avoiding the use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs, but also being more vigilant about what we eat, how much we exercise and engaging in other positive behaviors that contribute to our wellness.¹

The PAL program was started in 1980 as a way to reduce alcohol and other drug use among young people, by engaging students in meaningful activities in their school and community. You will find successful Red Ribbon Week activities organized by PAL peer leaders on the opposite page. PAL chose to highlight these schools because their activities engage the entire student-body and they focus on the positive things young people are doing. In addition, the activities provide the opportunity for students to speak out against alcohol and other drugs, and most important, they are fun.

There are numerous resources (tool-kit, activity ideas, presentations, pamphlets, etc.) available to help you with your Red Ribbon Week campaign. These resources can be found on the County of Orange Health Care Agency - Alcohol and Drug Education and Prevention team's website at www.ochealthinfo/adept.

Remember one week is not enough to reduce alcohol and other drug use. Use your Red Ribbon Week campaign as a kick-off for year-long prevention activities and long-term strategies.

¹ 2007 Red Ribbon Community Toolkit, Orange County Prevention Coalition, and County of Orange Health Care Agency—Alcohol and Other Drug Education & Prevention Team (ADEPT)

Visit the PAL website (<http://pal.ocde.us>) for a list of the 2007 Outstanding PAL Programs. Special thanks to the organizations that supported this year's Recognition Event: Orange County Teachers Federal Credit Union, Orange County Register, Carol Geisbauer Grantwriting, LLC, and Disneyland Resorts.

Orange County Alcohol & Other Drug Data*

- 98% of 5th graders think smoking cigarettes is bad for a person's health.
- 12% of 7th graders have tried inhalants.
- 1/4 of 9th graders had been offered, sold or given an illegal drug on school property in the past year.
- 14% of 11th graders had used marijuana, and 35% drank alcohol in the previous 30 days.

*Source—An Orange County Healthy Kids Update: What Are Our Kids Saying? 2007-2006 California Healthy Kids Survey report.



Chalk Art Contest

PAL® PEER ASSISTANCE LEADERSHIP ORANGE COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

Corina Harnett, PAL Advisor, Valencia H.S.
Theresa Maeder, PAL Advisor, Esperanza H.S.
Placentia-Yorba Linda Unified School District

Every year during Red Ribbon Week, PAL students at Valencia and Esperanza High Schools, PYLUSD host an Alcohol, Tobacco, and Other Drug Prevention Chalk Art Contest. Two to three weeks prior to Red Ribbon Week, PAL students promote the contest in the morning announcements and with banners placed around campus. Interested students form teams of 2-4 members, and sign up in the PAL advisor's classroom. The team must submit a rough sketch of their artwork, which must include an alcohol, tobacco, or other drug free message. The sketches are screened for inappropriate messages or images which are not permitted. The morning of the contest, 5' x 5' squares are plotted out with white chalk in an area on campus. The entire area is blocked off so the artists are not disturbed while they are working. The teams begin at 8:00 a.m. and they have until noon



to finish. The students are excused from their morning classes, and are provided with chalk in a variety of colors. Breakfast is also provided. The artwork is judged by teachers during lunch. Winners are provided with gift cards and a photo of the winning artwork is placed on a plaque that can be viewed in the administration building. Typically about ten teams participate. PAL students decorate the contest area with balloons, have health pamphlets available for students to take, and invite a school newspaper reporter to cover the event. PAL students recommend hosting the contest on Monday or Tuesday during Red Ribbon Week, so the artwork can be viewed all week long. It usually takes a week to fade.

Bookmark Contest



PAL students at Sycamore Junior High School, AUHSD hold an annual bookmark design contest during Red Ribbon Week. Using themes such as "Be Healthy and Drug Free" or "Follow Me-Drug and Violence Free," students design bookmarks that present a positive, drug-free lifestyle. The theme must be included on the bookmark and no drug, alcohol, or tobacco paraphernalia can be drawn or written on the bookmark. Students design them during their Silent and Sustained Reading (SSR) period about 1 1/2 weeks before Red Ribbon Week. They are collected on the first Tuesday during Red Ribbon Week. The bookmarks are judged by PAL students. PAL students are broken down into groups and given a group of bookmarks. They disqualify any bookmarks that don't represent a drug free, positive lifestyle, and then vote for their favorites. The top winners in each group are then put together and students vote again. 1st place receives \$25.00, 2nd place \$15.00, and 3rd place \$10.00. The bookmarks are sent to the district's graphic arts department for printing so every student receives one to use for SSR.

Nancy Curtis, PAL Advisor
Sycamore Junior High School
Anaheim Union High School District

Evaluation Idea:

Have PAL students design and conduct a survey to get feedback from participants after the event. Summarize your event and the results of the survey and present it to administration, PTA etc. The information will also be useful as you plan next year's activities.



PAL students at Baden-Powell Elementary School sponsor an annual essay contest during Red Ribbon Week. A theme such as "What Does Red Ribbon Week Mean To Me?" is chosen. PAL students promote the contest on the intercom to get the students excited about it. Two-weeks prior to Red Ribbon Week, guidelines are sent home which explain how long the essay needs to be, when it is due, and helpful hints for writing the essay. The essay is a homework assignment for all upper grade students. The top two essays from each class will be chosen by the teacher, and then the PAL advisors and the principal will choose one top winner from each grade level. The top two essays from each class along with the winners will have their essays displayed on the PAL board in the multi-purpose room. The winners will get to read their essays over the morning announcements during Red Ribbon Week. Winners will also receive a certificate and a small prize.

Essay Contest

Stacy Bugaren, Kristin Sauter, and
Debbie Varon, PAL Advisors
Baden-Powell Elementary School
Magnolia School District

- Do you want to start a PAL Program at your school?
- Are you a PAL Advisor who is retiring this year?
- Need help to improve your program?
- Do you know of a former PAL student that we could feature in a future issues of the newsletter?

Call OCDE PAL today! (714) 966-4358

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