

A Proposal for a Community Organization L O W L E V E L 4

A

A Proposal To Establish a Community Group

To Whom It May Concern,

Problem:

For many teens nowadays, peer pressure is a large problem. For some, it is a struggle, but for others, it is an excuse to abuse substances. Substance abuse among teens is a reality and it is the cause of many problems concerning these teenagers. One factor being affected by teen substance abuse is school habits. Many addicted teens choose not to strive in school and many go as far as not even attending school. The peer pressure accompanied by these substances is the main reason for all this because it is very important for teens to make and keep friends, even if this does mean having to risk their welfare with harmful substances. More importantly, one must look at the affects on teens' health when using drugs. The future of our society lies in the hands of today's teens and if many teens are addicted to drugs or alcohol, it is a grim future. That is why, with proper funding, we propose to establish a help group dedicated to the teenagers of our society who have fallen under the shroud of peer pressure. We plan to provide counselling for pressured teens and also currently addicted teens. We will look at each teen's case individually and provide them with resources they can use to contact larger help organizations. Because we will be only a community help center, we don't propose to solve teen's problems, but to lead them in the right direction. We will also hold demonstrations and assemblies at local high schools to inform teens of the dangers surrounding them. As you can see, we care deeply for the welfare and education of our young teens and this is why we propose a change for the good.

Contributing Forces to the Problem:

Sociological: The sociological forces contributing to the problem of teen substance abuse are mainly related to teen pressure. Teens nowadays have a strong belief that having friends is the most important part of life. One way to get these friends is to do things you wouldn't usually do, but do them to "fit in". This includes doing drugs and drinking for attention. This happens when other teens actually pressure someone into doing drugs or drinking alcohol by taunting them and alienating them if they refuse. This tactic is very similar to the belief of many teens that "everyone is doing it". If teens feel that they are different and the only way to fit in is to do drugs, they often will. This also works in the opposite way whereby teens who think they have no friends, turn to drugs. They feel that society is rejecting them and that drugs are their only friends. Our proposed local help center can help kids like this by giving them proper counselling (if needed) and the information required for a teen to make the right decisions. We will help them to think of their future and also to seek rehabilitation if necessary. If pressured, but not addicted teens come to us for assistance, we will direct them towards a bright future and suggest more involvement in social activities and family affairs.

Psychological: By looking at teens individually, one can also see that there are psychological contributing factors as well. Teens who have problems at home or at school will often look to drugs or alcohol for a retreat. They feel that when they are taking these substances, all of their problems go away. This gets worse when teens

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become addicted and the "solution" they turned to ends up making their problems worse, but they cannot stop because of addiction. Our organization proposes connections to effective drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers and also local counselling. We will provide all the information needed to inform teens of the dangers involving substance abuse, and make them feel wanted, thereby showing them that drugs are not the answer.

Anthropological: Over the years, drugs have gone down generation from generation and have become a common occurrence among people, more specifically, teens. One anthropological aspect that could be looked at is the dependence that occurs in teens who take drugs. When people begin experimenting with drugs at childhood, their body becomes dependent on the drug thereby making it crucial for their survival. The reason for this is also anthropological because when a person first uses drugs, it is because they see others doing it. This is because we have evolved to mimic the actions of others in everyday life. The other reason for this, looks at medicine, which is also anthropological because it deals with the human body. Some addicts start addictions when they are prescribed drugs and the person, again, feels dependent. By looking at these factors, we can see that anthropological contributors exist in this subject. In order to help this problem, our organization plans to direct addicted teens to the proper drug rehabilitation centers and also help them to seek proper counselling for their addiction. We will also inform them of these anthropological issues concerning their addiction and the harmfulness that it carries.

The Significance of Our Organization:

Keeping in mind that the youth of this generation will be the leaders of the next generation, we find it critical that our community addresses the problem of teen substance abuse. When teens are addicted to harmful substances, not only does it hurt their body but also their education. An addicted teens' school work ethic drops drastically, and often, so does their school attendance. Without a proper education, our future leaders will be unable to succeed in the workplace and everyone will be hurt. More importantly, a child's health is extremely important but is sacrificed when they use harmful substances. No one wants to see a child get sick from something that is preventable and this is our job, to prevent a danger that could occur to today's youth. It is not right to stand by while teens hurt their health and their future and that is why this organization is so important to the welfare of our youth and our future leaders.

Predictions for the Future of Our Organization:

Seeing how our organization is merely a gateway to larger help centers, we do not consider failure to be an option. Because we are merely a gateway, we don't have to hire any sort of professional psychologists or therapists, just people who wish to help. We believe that after we help a few teens, the word will get out and more teens will come to us, with the assurance that all is entirely confidential. We don't expect to totally eliminate teen substance abuse, but if we can deter one child, or help one addict, then all will be worth while.

We hope that we can count on your support.

LOW LEVEL 4

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Bibliography

1. Bain, Colin M.: Canadian Society: A Changing Tapestry Toronto: Oxford University Press, 1994.
2. Sproule, Wayne: People in Perspective Scarborough: Prentice-Hall Canada Inc., 1988.
3. Compiled Authors. Drugs and Teen Substance Abuse. Focus Adolescent Services. 2000
<www.focusas.com/Substanceabuse.html>

Teacher's Notes**Knowledge/Understanding**

- The student identifies the problem of substance abuse among teenagers and describes it with a high degree of accuracy, acknowledging the powerful influence of peer pressure and the serious effects of drugs on teenagers' health.
- The student describes the proposed organization with a high degree of clarity, specifying the nature of its relationship with other agencies (e.g., the help centre will be a "gateway to larger help centers") and detailing its planned functions (e.g., referring teens to "effective drug and alcohol rehabilitation centers and also local counselling" and providing information on the dangers of substance abuse).

Thinking/Inquiry

- Overall, the student assesses the influence of the social forces involved with considerable accuracy, as illustrated by the following:
 - a) The student assesses the influence of sociological forces that have contributed to the development of the problem with a high degree of accuracy, stating that they are "mainly related to teen pressure". Moreover, the student recognizes that such pressure can be applied both directly, "by taunting them [teens] and alienating them if they refuse", and indirectly in that "If teens feel that they are different and the only way to fit in is to do drugs, they often will".
 - b) The student is less successful when discussing the social forces involved from a psychological perspective. The student notes that "Teens who have problems at home or at school will often look to drugs or alcohol for a retreat." However, he or she does not specify what these problems are or how they are caused.
 - c) The student is also less successful when discussing the social forces involved from an anthropological perspective. He or she recognizes that drug use has "gone down generation from generation" and has become "a common occurrence among people, more specifically, teens". However,

the student does not present a coherent explanation as to how this state of affairs came about and what causes it to continue.

Communication

- The student justifies the formation of the new organization with a high degree of effectiveness. Its purpose is clearly defined and is appropriate to the type of organization being proposed (e.g., “Because we will be only a community help center, we don’t propose to solve teen’s problems, but to lead them in the right direction.”). In addition, the student forcefully uses moral arguments to persuade the reader to support the proposal (e.g., “It is not right to stand by while teens hurt their health and their future and that is why this organization is so important to the welfare of our youth and our future leaders.”).
- The student uses social science terminology with a high degree of accuracy and appropriateness (e.g., “peer pressure”, “counselling”, “alienating”, “rehabilitation”, “prescribed”, “preventable”, “therapists”).

Application

- The student makes predictions about the impact of the proposed community help centre that are realistically modest and highly appropriate. The student believes that “after we help a few teens, the word will get out and more teens will come to us”, but at the same time realizes that the help centre cannot “expect to totally eliminate teen substance abuse”.

Comments

This work is representative of a low level-4 performance. The student demonstrates a high degree of achievement of the expectations in the Knowledge/Understanding, Communication, and Application categories of knowledge and skills. However, in the Thinking/Inquiry category, the student demonstrates only a considerable degree of achievement – i.e., achievement that is more characteristic of level 3.

The result is a very effective and realistic proposal, which is presented clearly and thoughtfully.

Next Steps

In order to improve his or her performance the student needs to:

- review and reorganize the information provided in the anthropological section;
- proofread carefully to eliminate minor errors (e.g., “solve teen’s problems”).