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Barrington High School Group Receives National Accolade

Rhode Island Students Against Destructive Decisions Chapter Honored for Promoting Safe and Healthy Decision-Making Among Teens

MARLBOROUGH, Mass. – The Barrington High School SADD (Students Against Destructive Decisions) chapter in Barrington, Rhode Island, has been chosen to receive the 2007 SADD National Activity of the Year award for its efforts to curb teen alcohol and drug use. With the help of the Barrington Substance Abuse Task Force, the SADD students created a campaign called “*Borrington?*” to challenge the idea that the town is boring – an excuse many students give for drinking on the weekends.

“Teenagers here blame high rates of underage drinking on a lack of activities for people their age,” said Joanne Royley, the SADD advisor. “Our idea was to teach teens that the town is really not boring at all and with a little creativity and imagination, they can find many fun, interesting, and substance-free activities here.”

So this past October, the SADD students created a “buzz” in the community by dressing in orange *Borrington?* T-shirts and secretly blanketed the town with *Borrington?* signs. Two days later, they went out again and added a Web site address to the signs, www.borrington.org, and ran an ad in the local newspaper to pique interest. The Web site helps teens by offering and promoting substance-free activities. Students can even share ideas in a forum and post pictures and videos. As part of the campaign, a series of open-mike nights have also been organized at different venues each month, giving teens a safe alternative on the weekends.

“The innovation, creativity, and dedication of these SADD students is truly inspiring,” said SADD President and Executive Director Penny Wells. “They deserve to be recognized for their tireless efforts promoting SADD’s message and empowering their friends to make safe, healthy decisions.”

The chapter will be formally honored at an awards banquet at the SADD National Conference in New Orleans, Louisiana, this July. The chapter will receive a \$500 cash prize and one youth and adult chaperone will receive a free trip to the conference.

“This campaign has had a positive impact on the community and has gotten students really involved in thinking about the town in a different way,” said SADD student Kaitlyn Annunziata. “We challenge anyone to call it *Borrington* anymore!”

Founded as Students Against Driving Drunk in 1981 in Wayland, Massachusetts, SADD has grown to become the nation’s premier peer-to-peer youth education and prevention organization, with more than 10,000 chapters in middle schools, high schools, and colleges. In 1997, in response to requests from SADD students themselves, SADD expanded its mission and now sponsors chapters called Students Against Destructive Decisions. SADD continues to endorse a firm "No Use" message related to use of alcohol and other drugs. SADD now highlights prevention of destructive behaviors and attitudes that are harmful to young people, including SADD’s key issues of underage drinking, other drug use, impaired driving, and teen violence and suicide. More information about SADD is available at www.sadd.org.

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