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Scientology: How We Help—Countering Pro-Drug Propaganda in Holland

Merel Remmerswaal is determined that all Dutch youth learn the truth about drugs.

Although it is only February, Merel Remmerswaal, Public Affairs Officer of the Church of Scientology of Amsterdam, is already planning this summer's annual Truth About Drugs Marathon. She and her team of runners are working over the route to make sure they make the greatest possible impact. Last August, the team met with 19 aldermen and mayors on the two-week, 350 km (224 mile) annual Drug-Free Holland Marathon to introduce them to the Truth About Drugs drug prevention program.

"Two of the aldermen and one of the mayors thought so highly of what we were doing, they ran along with us for several kilometers," says Remmerswaal. "And everyone was very appreciative of our program. The runners are all former

addicts and they shared their stories with officials, media and youth in every town we visited—that drugs destroy lives and that drug education is vital to help young people make informed decisions to live drug free.”

Remmerswaal is a drug prevention advocate year round. She and her team of volunteers distribute copies of *The Truth About Drugs* to shops, libraries, police stations, government offices, and at neighborhood parties and events.

“Two Truth About Drugs volunteers and I decided to bring the issue of drug abuse and prevention to the attention of Dutch lawmakers,” says Remmerswaal. “We read many scientific reports, compiled the facts and figures about drug abuse in the Netherlands and presented a concise report on the drug situation to all members of parliament. A group of us, including a former addict, met with an MP. She really appreciated gaining insight into the problem.”

Since 2006, when she first became a Scientologist, Remmerswaal has been working with the Truth About Drugs program, which is supported by the Church of Scientology. A Scout Leader at that time, responsible for a group of 36 children age 7 - 11, she was already looking for an effective drug education and prevention program. She began working in drug prevention when she found out that 11-year-old children were being offered drugs and children as young as 12 were addicts.

“What I like most about the Truth About Drugs is it completely based on reason,” says Remmerswaal. “Why on Earth would someone take drugs after hearing the stories of the former addicts that are presented in these booklets and videos?”

The Church of Scientology has published *Scientology: How We Help—The Truth About Drugs, Creating a Drug-Free World*, a brochure to meet requests for more information about the drug education and prevention initiative it supports. To learn more or to read a copy of the brochure, visit www.Scientology.org/antidrug.

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Scientology Founder L. Ron Hubbard wrote, "The planet has hit a barrier which prevents any widespread social progress—drugs and other biochemical substances. These can put people into a condition which not only prohibits and destroys physical health but which can prevent any stable advancement in mental or spiritual well-being."

The Church of Scientology supports the Truth About Drugs, one of the world's largest nongovernmental drug education and prevention campaigns. It has been conclusively proven that when young people are provided with the truth about drugs—factual information on what drugs are and what they do—usage rates drop commensurately.



Merel Remmerswaal (right) describes the Truth About Drugs program on a radio program.



On the annual Truth About Drugs Marathon, Merel Remmerswaal presents a local mayor with information on the drug prevention program supported by the Church of Scientology.



Merel Remmerswaal (right) and runners on the annual Truth About Drugs Marathon present a local mayor (left) with information on the drug prevention program supported by the Church of Scientology.