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Church of Scientology Pasadena Hosts Forum to Tackle Teen Drug Abuse

Pasadena leaders at the Truth About Drugs Prevention Forum at the Church of Scientology of Pasadena April 20 joined forces in fight against drug epidemic

More than 80 civic, community and religious leaders representing over a dozen groups and associations attended a Truth About Drugs Prevention Forum April 20 at the Church of Scientology of Pasadena. The purpose: to tackle rising teen drug abuse in the Pasadena area.

Speakers included Los Angeles County Sheriff Lee Baca; Sergeant Mark Cripe and Jesse Mendoza of the Sheriff's VIDA program for at-risk youth; Gary Moody, President of Pasadena NAACP; Tarik Ross of the Amer-I-Can program; Jessica Ruiz and Porfirio Frausto of the Flintridge Foundation; Dr. Nicholas Benson, Vice President of the Ecumenical Council Pasadena Area Congregations; and Bob Adams of the Church of Scientology International.

Teen drug abuse in Pasadena—Cause for alarm

According to the most recent California Healthy Kids Survey for the Pasadena Unified School District, 19 percent of 7th graders and 33 percent of 11th graders surveyed are “current AOD (alcohol and other drugs) users”—they have used alcohol or illicit drugs in the past 30 days.

Concerted effort needed

“Our community’s greatest wealth is our ability and willingness to truly help one another,” said Eden Stein, President of the Church of Scientology of Pasadena. “Working together, we can save the lives and futures of our youth.”

Results from Truth About Drugs

The Truth About Drugs is a drug education and prevention program supported by the Church of Scientology. Because of the effectiveness of its educational materials, many Los Angeles County groups and organizations have adopted the program, several of whom shared their experience with forum attendees.

Sergeant Mark Cripe, county-wide director of the Los Angeles County Sheriff’s Department VIDA program (Vital Intervention and Directional Alternatives), spoke of the results he and his deputies have achieved using the Truth About Drugs curriculum with at-risk youth and youth who have turned to drugs and crime. He said he uses the Truth About Drugs program because it is “the best.”

Jesse Mendoza, Director of Victory Outreach Youth Activities for South Los Angeles, told attendees why he uses the Truth About Drugs in his work. He particularly values the public service announcements and feature-length documentary, *The Truth About Drugs: Real People, Real Stories*.

Over the past 10 years, Dr. Nicholas Benson has graduated 5,000 inmates from the halfway house he runs. He learned of the Truth About Drugs program and put it to use in weekly drug education classes. Drug and alcohol problems were significant factors in what went wrong in the lives of most of his residents and the curriculum helps them examine their own circumstances and make important decisions for the future.

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

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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.



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