

The Battalion

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New group aims for parent knowledge of drugs

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Reporter

There are plenty of drug and alcohol abuse programs in the Bryan-College Station area for children, but nothing is offered to the parent who just wants to be informed.

Parents who would rather talk to a professional than read about drugs and alcohol may be settling up paying for it — depending on how long they want to be involved.

So, a group of local residents have formed a task force against drug and alcohol abuse in the family to help adults become informed about drugs before their children were consented to.

Citizens Against Substance Abuse is a task force of about 20 local citizens. The group was organized last fall after the showing of the film, "The Chemical People." The two-part show, hosted by Nancy Reagan, fo-

ocused on several communities that were successful in decreasing alcohol and drug problems through similar task force organizations.

Jo Ann Carroll, senior officer for Brazos Residents Against Drug Abuse, coordinated the task force's initial meeting.

"Our main goal is informing the parents about how harmful drugs are," she said. "Kid's know more than the parents do."

One of the main goals of the group is to clear up the misconceptions some parents have about drugs. The group also wants to educate parents who might not have ever been exposed to the drug environment as they were growing up.

She said parents who do know a little about drugs such as marijuana got their information during their youth in the 1960s. She said that marijuana has become more addictive and more harmful over the years.

"In the late 1960s the potency of the drug was not as bad," she said. "But now the chemical content is extremely high and very addictive."

Carroll said one of the goals of CASA is to increase parent's awareness of the reality of drug abuse. She said the group wants to alert parents of the symptoms of drug and alcohol abuse. "We want to educate parents of children not yet involved," Carroll said.

She said many adults take on the attitude that it won't happen in Bryan-College Station because it only happens in big cities. She said parents also like to believe they know their children well enough and think their child knows better than to get mixed up with drugs.

Many of the children are educated about drugs and alcohol abuse in schools through their health classes or by programs put on by the police depart-

ments of Bryan and College Station. CASA wants to develop a program for adults that informs the parents of the symptoms, gives them alternatives on how to handle the problem, and gives them a list of referrals.

"We can't deal with the prob-

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lem itself," Carroll said. "We can refer the parents to someone who is equipped to handle the problem. What we mainly want to do is to prevent drug and alcohol abuse through parent awareness."

CASA also is discussing the possibility of having a hotline that parents can call if they ever need any information about drugs or drug abuse. Someone would be paid to answer the phone and give out the phone

number of a CASA member who has volunteered his name or take the number of the caller and have a CASA member call him back.

Although CASA's membership is open to any resident of Brazos County, the group is

fairly small at only 20. Carroll said many people feel that if they get involved it will mean their children have a drug problem. She said there is a certain stigma attached to the group and people would rather not have their name involved. She also said many people are waiting to see if CASA will take off as a recognized organization.

"People don't want to volunteer their time or money to a

group that might go down the drain," she said. "People want to wait and see if we are serious about what we say we are going to do. They want to be sure that we will do what we promise."

Lane Allen, resource chairman for CASA, said he feels that people have a complacent attitude about drugs. He said people think that it doesn't affect them so there is no reason to become involved.

Allen said the programs the group wants to develop will have drug paraphernalia to show parents what it looks like, a film which illustrates the problem, and a brochure giving more detailed information. Allen said there will be people the parents can talk to to give their own personal experiences. The program will answer any questions and give suggestions on how to talk to the child.

"We want to give the parents all the information possible before their kid's get involved," Allen said. "What they do with the information is their decision."

Funding is a big problem the group is facing right now. Carroll said the group will have to depend on fund raising projects, membership dues, donations and some state grants. CASA is in the process of trying to make donations tax deductible and see what state grants they might be eligible for.

Allen said many people in the group have been using money out of their own pocket to help with the costs.

Publicity is the next biggest problem the group is facing.

"People have to know who we are and that we exist before they can help us," Allen said. Carroll said there was a lot of publicity for "The Chemical People" because it was shown nationwide. She said many of the local service organizations in the area paid the publicity costs for the film. Carroll said that since the group is so small and just starting out there just isn't enough money to pay for publicity and all of the things needed for the programs.

Certain things inevitable on Mother's Day presents

United Press International

Based on experiences, observations and reports from other women mothers, the following variations of same will happen this Mother's Day:

— Somewhere a mother will cry "It's perfect" when trying on a too-large or too-small baseball cap picked out by her little slugger. And a mother who is given a football will lie, "It's just what was wishing for."

— Countless mothers, unaccustomed as they are, will be served breakfast in bed. Some will have breakfast served at the due moment when the pint-sized waitress trips over a sleeping dog, slipper or shoelace.

— One mother-to-be (for the time) will get a homemade

Mother's Day card because hubby couldn't find one in the store to fit their situation. It will start out: "Mother's Day Greetings to an almost Mother."

— A mother told to stay out of the kitchen while dad and the kids prepare a festive dinner will be a study in self-control as she sits quietly in the family room, watching a baseball game on television. She will ignore sounds and odors of major or minor disasters in the kitchen.

— When presented with burned cookies made by her pint-sized baker, a mom will next bite into what seems like a charcoal chip lump. She will speak the truth when she says, "Honey, I don't know how you


did it. I've never quite tasted anything quite like this."

— A super conscientious mother worries about homage at Mother's Day making the kids feel guilty over being born. She'll give the kids presents, saying, "If it weren't for you, I wouldn't be a mother."

— Many mothers will get promises wrapped in hugs and kisses. The kids will promise I-Remember gifts. Fixing a broken chair. Cleaning up messy rooms once a week instead of twice a year. A few promises will be delivered later. Many won't. By intuition, moms know kids get carried away when they make promises on Mother's Day. Being mothers, they understand.

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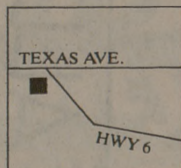
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