

Programs help to abate drug use

By Kathy Wright
Emerald Contributor

As the University community becomes increasingly aware of substance abuse, students faced with this problem are able to find help and support through a variety of campus organizations and programs.

These organizations and programs, many of which are free, are working to heighten the awareness of drug abuse and combat its problems.

The Student Health Center offers many resources for students concerned about substance abuse, whether they themselves are the abusers or someone they know has a problem with drugs or alcohol.

Dr. Jim Jackson, health center medical director, said the majority of students he sees do not come to the health center admitting they have a drug problem. Rather, it is often only after a frank conversation with Jackson the person will begin to seek help.

Students who do come in for treatment on their own usually do so because a roommate, girlfriend or boyfriend has shown concern, Jackson added.

Once the most important step of admitting the problem has been overcome, the health center then can provide its services to help the student.

Besides prescribing medication, which Jackson said is done only in extreme cases of substance abuse, he also will make referrals to George Buelow, health center substance abuse counselor.

Buelow is available for counseling, and he also will lead a support group this term called Adult Children of Alcoholics (ACOA), for people who were brought up by alcoholic parents. It will meet for about two hours each week and is free, as are all consultations with physicians and counselors.

"Regardless of what kinds of problems students have, they can call me anytime, at work or home," Buelow said.

The health center also houses a health education center where students can find current, easy-to-understand books and pamphlets on substance abuse. The books can be checked out for two weeks.

Dixie Whetsell, health center Lifestyle Planning Program coordinator, said students are welcome to drop in at Peer Health Advising, where advisers can provide information about substance abuse and offer counseling.

Whetsell describes Peer Health Advising as the in-

termediate step between admitting the problem and seeing a professional. The peer advisers are upper-division undergraduate and graduate students, and Whetsell said sometimes students with drug abuse problems find it less threatening to talk to a person their own age.

"The key is to create an environment where students feel comfortable admitting they have a problem," Whetsell emphasized.

Peer Health Advising also offers educational presentations on substance abuse that are available upon request by campus groups.

The Student Counseling Center is another resource on campus where students can find out about substance abuse and receive support. Besides individual counseling, it will sponsor two support groups this term: Students Concerned with Drug and Alcohol Issues, Mondays and Wednesdays at 4 p.m., and Relapse Prevention Group, Tuesdays at 2:30 p.m. Both are free, as are all counseling center services.

behavioral norms on campus.

Gregg Lobisser, assistant dean of students, said this means changing policies, looking at curriculum and providing a program of education and counseling support systems.

COSAFE includes a program that many students are already familiar with, the Impact Training Program. This program, conducted by Michael Leeds, focuses on substance use and abuse, examining how the lives of people close to a chemically dependent person are disrupted.

More than 4,000 students have participated in Impact since it began on campus about two years ago. Usually, about 80 students attend each Impact Training session, and sometimes certain groups, such as residence halls or fraternities and sororities, will attend together. The length of the sessions vary.

The next Impact session — Feb. 12, 13 and 14 — is open to anyone, and the cost is \$75 a person. Some scholarships are available, and undergraduate or graduate credit may be obtained

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— Dixie Whetsell

The center also offers ACOA groups, as well as outreach programs designed to teach any individual or department how to approach the problem of substance abuse.

"Anytime when students wonder if they should be concerned, they probably ought to be... if it is about themselves or someone else, they should not hesitate to come in," counselor Ediel Davenport said.

Davenport stresses the counseling center also is for students who do not have a drug problem but just may be curious about substance abuse.

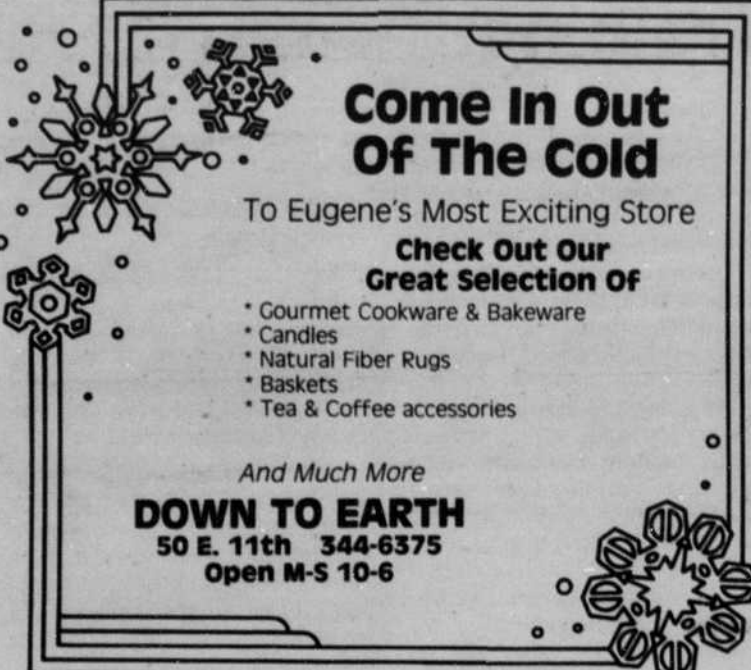
The Office of the Dean of Students plays a major role in developing resources for the substance abuse problem on campus. In February 1986, it implemented the University's Campus Organization for a Substance Abuse Free Environment (COSAFE), a comprehensive organization working toward changing attitudes and

by writing a three-to-five-page paper afterward. People should contact Lobisser at the dean of student's office for reservations or more information.

Bunny Nosler, Office of Academic Advising counselor and a group facilitator at previous Impacts, said her office often provides direct referrals to resources on and off campus. Academic advising counselors see many students, and are able to spot substance abuse problems.

"We're sensitive people and a good link to get help for the student," Nosler said, adding confidentiality is extremely important.

The Crisis Center and the ASUO are sponsoring a daylong crisis prevention conference on Jan. 16 entitled "Beatin' the Blues," in which two optional workshops will deal with chemical dependency. Contact the sponsors for more information.



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