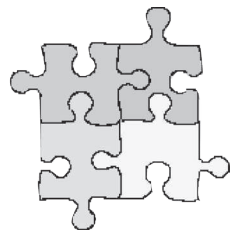


# Be a Piece of the Puzzle: Prevention is About Saying YES



In 1982, Nancy Reagan announced a new drug prevention program, "Just Say NO." Since then, prevention folk have found that effective and environment-changing prevention work is about shouting, "YES!" It is about making informed decisions based on up-to-date information that has a positive impact on your future. The vast majority of us want what is best for our community. In that, citizens have charged various governing bodies to create and approve ordinances, policies and procedures to help protect the majority.

At various times, rules are written, published and distributed with due diligence. Unfortunately, much like the children's game, Telephone, over time the interpretation is blurred; the application is sketchy and finally deemed not important. The party of accountability, to knowing the rules, is each and every one of us. On the bright side, these rules can be challenged and changed if deemed outdated or not comprehensive enough. This can be done by anyone at any time in due process.

Fortunately, some rules are always in the fore front of our minds. Background checks for volunteers and staff are one of those. The VSD 47J is an awesome example of that proactive practice. According to volunteer policy, [VSD 47J GCDA/GDDA], it requires back ground screening for volunteers before, during and after school. This should also include programs that are under the school programming umbrella. This policy and practice is one way to

help ensure the prevention of abuse of our children. While this is a widely acceptable practice in the education world, it is often overlooked in the private sectors that provide community programming.

There are many City of Vernonia (COV) Ordinances that impact prevention of injury, limit liability and help ensure safe space for community gathering. They also have a great impact on community program planning. For example, planning a large event that gathers more than 100 people? Refer to COV Ord. 767 on crowd control measures and additional sanitary facilities. How about evening programs? Refer to COV 313 for curfews and COV Ord. 761 outlining COV park rules and use of the parks for public events. All these ordinances can have impact on the sustainability of programs and events.

Oregon Administrative Rules, (OAR) are realized by the citizens of Oregon to be important to the health and welfare of us all. OAR 581-021-0110, Tobacco Free Schools, was established in 2004 to not allow the use of tobacco in any form at anytime on school property. Public Law 107-110, Safe and Drug Free School Act, is to support schools and communities to create safe, disciplined, and drug-free environments that support student academic achievement. This federal law speaks to not allowing ATOD [Alcohol, Tobacco and other Drug] on school campuses at anytime regardless of school hours, day or sessions.

Whether you agree or not, policies, OAR's and ordinances are ways for governing bodies to show their due dili-

gence for the greater good. These help ensure school, community partners and resources to foster a safe and drug-free learning and living environment. Mentors who are deemed safe by a background check can help build confidence in our children. City streets that are safe for our children to walk on help connect them to their community. Parks that are clean and safe allow our children to partake in positive physical activity without the threat of harm. ATOD Free events allow families to gather together and bond with a shared experience. All these ordinances, policies and administrative laws have one thing in common-- to protect the most vulnerable citizens of our community-- our children-- and our future.

So, prevention IS about saying YES. Yes, our streets are safe. Yes, our schools are safe. Yes, you can volunteer in a drug-free workplace. Yes, our children have lots of opportunities to

connect with valuable experiences both in and out of school. Why is this important? When a child lives in an environment that affords him or her opportunities to positively engage, they will more likely be productive citizens of society. Yes, Prevention is about saying YES.

*The Vernonia Prevention Coalition is about saying YES, too. Yes, you can be a member. Yes, we will support you in your efforts to make a difference. Yes, we want public input. In that effort to further ask for input, the VPC will have public meetings on 5<sup>th</sup> Tuesdays of the year. Look on this page for this year's schedule. For further questions or comments, contact DeAnna Pearl @ (503) 369-7370 or DeAnna@vernonia-or.gov.*

## National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

1-800-273-TALK (8255)  
suicidepreventionlifeline.org

Are you feeling desperate, alone or hopeless? Call the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline a free, 24-hour hotline available to anyone in suicidal crisis or emotional distress. Your call will be routed to the nearest crisis center to you.

Veterans Suicide Prevention Hotline  
1-800-273-TALK (8255) Press 1

## VERNONIA PREVENTION COALITION

5<sup>th</sup> Tuesday Community Coalition Meeting at the VCLC 6:30-8:00 PM

March 29<sup>th</sup>

May 31<sup>st</sup>

August 30<sup>th</sup>

November 29<sup>th</sup>

For more information contact:  
DeAnna Pearl, VPC Director  
503-369-7370  
DeAnna@vernonia-or.gov



### What Can Students and Youth Do to "Lend a Hand?"

Bullying happens when someone hurts or scares another person on purpose. The person being bullied has a hard time defending himself or herself. Usually, bullying happens over and over.

Sometimes bullying is easy to notice, such as with hitting or name-calling, and other times it's hard to see, such as with leaving a person out or saying mean things behind someone's back. Both boys and girls bully, and both boys and girls get bullied. Bullying is not fair, and it hurts.

#### What do YOU do when you see someone being bullied at school?

• Ask yourself, "Is it my job to help?"

Think about how YOU might feel if the bullying was happening to you. You and other kids can lend a hand, even when you aren't close friends with the kids who are bullied. Your school will be a better place if you help stop bullying. And making your school a better place is EVERYONE'S job!

#### What can I do?

- Lots of things! Think about what may work for you:
  - Don't just stand there. . . SAY SOMETHING!
  - Kids who bully may think they're being funny or "cool." If you feel safe, tell the person to STOP the bullying behavior. Say you don't like it and that it isn't funny.
  - DON'T BULLY BACK! It won't help if you use mean names or actions, and it could make things worse.

#### What if I don't feel safe telling a bully to stop?

- That's okay.
  - No one should put themselves in an unsafe situation. How ELSE can you lend a hand when bullying happens?

- Say kind words to the child who is being bullied, such as "I'm sorry about what happened," and "I don't like it!" Help them understand that it's not his or her fault. Be a friend. Invite that student to do things with you, such as sit together at lunch or work together on a project. EVERYONE NEEDS A FRIEND!

- Tell the student who is being bullied to talk to someone about what happened. Offer to help by going along.
- Pay attention to the other kids who see the bullying. (These people are called "bystanders.") Are any of them laughing or joining in with the bullying? If yes, these kids are part of the problem. Let those students know that they're not helping! DON'T be one of them!

#### • Tell an adult. (This is IMPORTANT!!)

- Chances are, the kid who is being bullied needs help from an adult. The kid who is doing the bullying probably does, too. Often, the bullying does not get reported. But, who should you tell? Think about who you could tell in your school:
  - Teacher (which one would you talk to?),
  - School counselor,
  - Cafeteria or Playground Aid,
  - School nurse,
  - Principal,
  - Bus driver, or
  - Other adults you feel comfortable telling.

If you need help telling, take a friend along.



## Look familiar? We can help...

Getting picked on and pushed around is scary and embarrassing, but it's not hopeless. There are things you can do about it, and people who can help. To find out more, get your parents' permission and log on to [www.StopBullyingNow.hrsa.gov](http://www.StopBullyingNow.hrsa.gov)

