



Health/Education

Lead poisoning awareness campaign launched

CONTRIBUTED STORY
FOR THE PORTLAND OBSERVER

Jefferson High school students took to the street, defying early morning rain in an effort to promote lead poisoning prevention in North/Northeast Portland communities.

This signaled the kickoff of the Lead Education for Africa American Families (LEEFA 2000) campaign launched by the Urban League's lead

poisoning prevention program.

Lead poisoning causes brain and nerve damage, difficulty paying

attention, learning, and behavioral problems and hyperactivity. It also causes aggression, slow growth, hearing loss and headaches.

This new outreach campaign initiative provides lead poisoning prevention training to students, community activists and housing advocates, so they in turn identify and educate families in their communities facing potential lead hazards.

"The campaign's activities and messages over the next twelve months would be targeted to reach families living in North/northeast Portland," explained King, the league's lead



Margaret Carter, interim president of the Urban League

poisoning prevention program coordinator and LEEFA 2000 campaign organizer Promise King explained.

"This campaign will work to ensure

that families in this part of Portland claim what is rightfully theirs—a lead-safe environment," King said. "Through this initiative we will strengthen this community's capacity to advocate for public policies that promote environmental justice for all Oregonians, to stand up against policies that have threatened current lead screening and testing efforts and demand medical providers yield to Medicaid's Blood testing mandate. Our children must not be poisoned out of opportunities in the next millennium." The campaign, sponsored by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and the Northwest Health Foundation, is seeking community partners to get involved in doing surveys of hold homes and door-to-door outreach.

For more information on the Campaign or to become a partner, please contact Promise King at 503/280-2662 or e-mail him at promiseking@hotmail.com.

Department of Human Services encourages a sober holiday

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This holiday season is a good time to consider celebrating without alcohol, advises the Oregon Department of Human Services. However, if you do plan to drink, the DHS Office of Alcohol and Drug Abuse Programs says there are steps to make your party safer.

"It's really easy to celebrate at parties and gatherings without alcohol," says Barbara Cimaglio, OADAP director. "It's the smart thing to do, given the problems caused by drinking, but people can also do several things to make parties safer if they do serve alcohol."

Alcohol is a key factor in traffic fatalities, domestic abuse, assaults, murders and other crimes. Cimaglio says being alcohol-free, at the holidays and other times, saves lives and sends the right message to children that drinking and celebrations don't necessarily go together.

If you decide to serve alcohol to friends or family, Cimaglio offers several simple tips to make this a safer holiday season:

- Serve snacks so guests don't drink on an empty stomach. Meats, cheeses, vegetable strips and dips all can help slow alcohol absorption.
- Avoid salty foods such as salted nuts that make people thirstier.
- Avoid carbonated mixers that speed alcohol absorption.
- Space out the drinks you serve, don't let guests serve themselves; monitor how much they drink.

- An hour or so before the party ends, stop serving alcohol and offer a snack with coffee, tea or other beverage to dilute the effects of the alcohol.

- Do whatever you have to do to prevent an inebriated guest from driving after the party. Don't let guests leave drunk!

Cimaglio says serving alcohol-free drinks is the best way to go. "Not only do people increase the risk of having auto accidents if they drink and drive, but hosts of parties also can be held liable if a guest becomes drunk and gets into an accident."

Many alcohol-free drink recipes are available. Here's one example:

Holiday punch

Mix equal portions of cranberry juice and apple juice. Add ginger ale or soda water for a sparkle. Float lemon and orange slices on top. For a spicy effect, add a cinnamon stick or a few cloves. Serve over plenty of ice.

Other recipes and party hints are available from the Oregon Prevention Resource Center in Salem by calling toll-free 1-800-822-6772. The center also has copies to loan of a 13-minute video, "Responsible Hosting."

Legacy Emanuel Hospital named one of the Nation's best

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Legacy Emanuel Hospital is one of twelve hospitals in the five-state Pacific region recognized by HCIA and the Health Network as a recipient of the 1999 Top Hospital regional Benchmarks for success award. Emanuel's recognition for clinical excellence and efficient delivery of

care was published in *Modern Healthcare* magazine, the leading health care industry publication.

HCIA and the Health Network conducted the study to identify hospitals that have demonstrated benchmark performance during the year. Results are based on objective. Among the measures considered are mortality and complication indexes, length-of-stay expenses, and

productivity.

"We are dedicated to providing the best quality care to our patients while keeping a close eye on medical expenses," said Jane Cummins, Legacy Health System Senior Vice President. "That means being compassionate, listening to our patients and keeping abreast of new therapies. It feels great to be recognized by experts for the success

of our efforts."

"The announcement of the Top Hospital awards is a timely response to President Clinton's concern about hospital outcomes," said Jean Chenoweth, senior vice president of HCIA.

"These hospitals are shining examples of hospitals that have built a culture around continuous quality improvement."

Portland chosen for health video project

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In February 2000, Portlanders will have the opportunity to "test-drive" an interactive health education video programs—and get paid \$40 for their time! And the time to sign up is now.

Participants in the federally funded Health Video Project will be scheduled for two appointments at their convenience. At the first appointment, which takes about an hour, participants will view the program answer a few questionnaires, and receive \$20. The second appointment will be a month later which takes about 15–30 minutes, and participants will receive another \$20. Past participants say that it's easy, informative and fun to do.

To sign up, or to get more information, call toll-free: 1-800-934-0626. All information given to Health Video Project will

be kept confidential, and there are no gimmicks, sales or mailing lists involved. Participant must be at least 18 years old and able to speak and read English (unfortunately, the program is not yet available in other languages).

"Maybe before you call, you'd like to know what's an interactive health education video program," according to programs creator Blair Irvine at the Oregon Center for Applied Science (ORCAS) in Eugene. "It's like a video, except the information is personalized to fit each person who views it, based on the answers they give to the questionnaires."

"When we were creating the program, we included ideas and opinions from many people including experts and people from all walks of life," says Dr. Irvine. Now that the program's done, it's time to see how it works, and what people think about it."

The Health Video Project is a research project of the

Portland youths speak out on education

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It's the student's turn to speak out about their who concerns from Portland Public Schools descended on the Nike campus in Beaverton. For 12 hours, they had a voice—a powerful, determined, questioning, and sometimes frustrated, voice—asking for change. On Wednesday, January 5 at 8PM, Oregon Public Broadcasting (OPB) will air a 60-minute documentary called Our

Voice, Our Future: A Youth Summit that reveals on overwhelming sentiment from teens—the desire for someone to listen. This isn't made for TV event; this is TV covering an event. Cameras capture the excitement of the summit as well as the spontaneity of individuals in interview done in hallways and on sidewalks. The dialogue that ensues is heartfelt, direct, and immediate. Teenagers speak in their own words about school funding, standardized testing and involvement from the

community in the school system.

The students present their concerns to a panel of decision-makers hosted by Jack McGowan, executive director of Stop Oregon Litter and Vandalism (SOLV). The panel members include education funding and youth issue specialist such as Dr. Ben Canada, superintendent of Portland Public Schools; Ron Saxon, chairman, Portland Board of Education; Bill Sizemore, executive director, Oregon Taxpayers United, and State Senator Tom Hartung.

Mercy Corps assessment team en route to Venezuela

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A MERCY Corps assessment team will travel to Venezuela to assist survivors of the devastating floods and landslides in Venezuela. Venezuelan and US military sources estimate that the death toll could reach 30,000. An estimated 500,000 have been impacted on what calls to be the worst natural disaster to hit Venezuela this century.

The assessment team includes Jim and Beverly Hinton, seasoned veterans of Mercy Corps' relief work in Honduras following Hurricane Mitch and other trouble spots. The team will carry medical supplies with them. Additional supplies are being airlifted from the US and Europe. These items will address the most immediate health problems among survivors, such as gastrointestinal disorders, respiratory infections skin diseases and trauma.

Medical supplies and equipment, enough to assist

30,000 people for one month, will be airlifted from Amsterdam this week. This shipment includes health care items such as antibiotics, bandages, pain relievers, analgesics anesthetics, IV solutions, and midwifery supplies for emergency childbirth situations. Additional first-aid supplies are being airlifted from California.

The assessment team will work with local organizations to identify the greatest needs and secure local suppliers with additional emergency relief items.

Donations are urgently needed to help the Venezuelan people recover from this disaster.

How to help By Mail: Mercy Corps International Venezuela Relief, Dept. NR PO Box 2669 Portland, OR 97208-2669. By phone 1-800-292-3355 x 250. Online. Visit www.mercycorps.org. or make a credit card gift via our secure server at any branch of US Bank Please specify that your gift is for Mercy Corps International Venezuela Relief Fund



Just think: Your son is bright, healthy and headed for college one day. You love the direction your

career has taken. You're doing a lot of the things you planned and even a few you didn't. Living life to the fullest is easy when you have family behind you. American Family Mutual Insurance. Call and talk to one of our helpful, friendly agents. You'll find out why we're consistently rated A+ (Superior) by A.M. Best, the insurance rating authority. Then, go on. Dream. Plan. What you do next is up to you and we'll be here to help you.

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