



Positive Social Norms Campaign

August, 2011

Dear Faribault Middle School staff,

Welcome back! We hope you had a restful summer and are looking forward to the new school year.

We wanted to take a moment to provide you with some information about the *MOST Faribault Students* social norms campaign that will be implemented again this year. The goal of this initiative is to correct student misperceptions regarding their peers' drug and alcohol use. This initiative attempts to change students' perceptions. Students often believe that more of their peers use alcohol or drugs than actually do. By correcting these beliefs, students experience more support for choosing to not use alcohol or drugs. Similar campaigns have been initiated all over the state of Minnesota and have been received extremely well. We are excited to be working again with the Faribault Middle School during 2011-2012!

The plan is to run a high-energy, thought-provoking campaign that will appeal to the students. Every 3 to 4 weeks, there will be a new "message" introduced at the middle school. This message will take shape through posters, t-shirts, promotional items and/or activities. **We will be sure to put a copy of each poster in your mailbox, in hopes that you will hang it in your classroom.**

The overall theme of the campaign is *MOST*. That is, we will take information from recent student surveys to highlight areas where the perceived student norm differs from the reported student behaviors. For example, surveys of Faribault students have shown that while 94% of 6th graders and 88% of 8th graders in Faribault report not using alcohol in the past 30 days, 49% of 8th graders believe that about ½ or more of their peers drink alcohol. Correcting this misperception can have a preventative effect as students are faced with decisions regarding their own use or experimentation with drugs and alcohol.

Only about a third of the messages will be specifically aimed at correcting misperceptions about drug and alcohol use. The rest will be used to provide credibility to the campaign and positively influence those "protective factors" that are so vital to healthy attitudes and choices among students. The campaign is designed to be fun and to celebrate the positive aspects of student behavior.

As exciting as this opportunity is, please remember that this campaign is by no means "the end of the story." This initiative is meant to be used as a tool in the overall strategy to address alcohol and drug abuse in our community. **We need your help to reinforce these messages and have provided a series of brief lesson guides for you to use with your students. They are available online at <http://ricecountyhc.com/most-students-campaign/>.** We hope you will find this useful.

If you have any questions or concerns, please don't hesitate to contact your building administrators or one of the planning group's representatives.

Thanks in advance for your support of this campaign!

Sincerely,

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MOST Faribault Students Planning Group Members

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