



CENTRE COUNTY PREVENTION COALITION
A SAMHSA Funded Drug-Free Community Coalition
Supported By Centre County Drug and Alcohol



March 2009 – Attorney General tells Shane’s Story

Tom Corbett is the Pennsylvania Attorney General. This weekly column, published on Wednesdays, is a collaboration of Centre County *Communities That Care* serving Bald Eagle, Bellefonte, Penns Valley, and Philipsburg-Osceola Area School Districts, and Care Partnership: Centre Region *Communities That Care* serving the State College Area School District.

As the top prosecutor in the state, I know that illegal drug use continues to pose a threat to our young people. Last year, the Attorney General’s Office, along with our drug task forces, arrested more than 5,000 drug dealers throughout Pennsylvania. I’ve seen first-hand the devastating effects drugs have on teenagers, adults and entire communities. Unfortunately, too many of these drug dealers fail to realize or simply do not care about the emotional, and often times financial impact their decision to sell drugs has on their families, friends and communities.

I’m sure that most of the drug dealers we arrest never intended to start using drugs, let alone sell drugs. But they did. While most teenagers are well aware of the dangerous health effects and legal consequences associated with drug and alcohol abuse, many students simply think “that will never be me.” The fact is that many teens struggle to fit in with their peers and will experiment with drugs and alcohol because their friends are doing it. My office works to inform the public about the consequences associated with drug use. We recently created an educational program that tells the true story of a Pennsylvania teenager named Shane. The program proves that even a regular kid from a middle-class family can find him or herself struggling with the stark realities of substance abuse.

Although Shane was a good student who lived in a suburban Harrisburg with his loving family, he became a teenage drug addict and dealer. Shane began drinking alcohol in high school and found himself surrounded by friends who were also experimenting with drugs. He first tried marijuana then moved on to LSD, ecstasy, and crystal meth. As Shane’s dependence on illegal substances increased, he began using cocaine and heroin. Shane became entirely consumed with the need to buy drugs, regardless of the impact it had on his family. Drug use turned Shane into a person that even he could not recognize and no longer wanted to be. He decided that committing suicide was the answer and he robbed a bank to buy enough drugs to overdose and end his life. Shane survived near death experiences and was sentenced to three years in a Pennsylvania State Prison for bank robbery. He is currently serving the remainder of his sentence. Shane thought that he could handle using drugs but realized that no one can.

Law enforcement will remain diligent in enforcing our drug laws; however, as a society we must do a better job educating our children about the dangers of illegal drug use. I created an Education and Outreach Unit to help teach our young people that there are consequences from the decisions they make. Our Education and Outreach Office offers educational programs for schools and other organization free of charge. Presentation topics include Operation Safe Surf, Truth & Choices: Drug & Alcohol Abuse, School Safety Project and Stop Gun Violence. For more information or to schedule a presentation please visit www.attorneygeneral.gov or call 1-800-525-7642.

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