



OPERATION SAVE TEENS

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PROJECT OVERVIEW

In January of 2001, Lt. Mike Reese and Lt. Andy Hardy of the Alabama ABC Board, along with Lt. Richard Smith of the Calhoun Cleburne Drug and Violent Crime Task Force began a campaign dubbed "**Operation Save Teens**". In the past several years, we, as law enforcement officers have seen a steady and chilling increase in the number of teenagers that we have encountered as part of our law enforcement duty. The increased usage of not only the more common drugs such as Marijuana and alcohol, but of prescription pills and substances such as *GHB* and *Extacy* have been overwhelming. *The biggest area of concern has been the willingness of these teenagers to use drugs such as GHB and Oxycontin that have debilitating or deadly results from the first use.* **Operation Save Teens** was created and is presented in order to educate the public to the dangers of these drugs and try to reduce the problem. **We believe strongly that in order to resolve the drug problem and the resulting drug related crime in our area, law enforcement and the public will have to work hand in hand.** Our efforts should include enforcement, rehabilitative and educational efforts. This effort is a three pronged attack on the problem including increased enforcement efforts, educating the public to the dangers and existence of the problem and rehabilitation of those effected by the drugs. It began on March 15, 2001 as a one time City Wide Meeting held at the City of Anniston City Meeting Center to make the citizens in our area aware of the new trends in drugs and try to prevent our area from the devastation others had suffered. We had no idea at that time that the program would grow and become as successful as it has. What was started as an off-duty attempt to better our community has now grown into a program that is continually requested on a state-wide basis. We have incorporated the program as a non profit 501-C3 Organization on file with the Internal Revenue Service. **To date, hundreds of school presentations, town meetings and meetings for Law Enforcement Officers / Probation Workers and Teachers have reached over 200,000 teenagers and parents.**

The educational portion of Operation Save Teens is a 90 minute multi-media presentation in which Investigators show through actual video footage the result of teenagers using drugs and alcohol. It is a faith-based program designed to educate preteens, teens, parents, teachers, school administrators and law enforcement officials in the dangers associated with the illicit use of drugs and alcohol. Agents describe the most prevalent drugs in the area in which they are speaking, behavior patterns of persons abusing these drugs and the overall effect drug abuse is inflicting on our society as a whole. We also have various types of paraphernalia for parents to look at so they can identify potential problems. We provide current statistical information as to the drug and alcohol problem in the area we are speaking and what steps are being taken to eliminate these problems. At the end of the program, a question and answer session is held at which time attendees may ask specific questions concerning drugs, alcohol and related issues. This program is continually evaluated for effectiveness with necessary adjustments being made as needed. Our program is highlighted by a presentation by Educator Carol Hudson, mother of Anthony Hudson. We are very proud and honored that she has chosen our program to reach out to parents and students in hopes of preventing others from suffering the tragedy of losing a child to illegal drug use. It is the desire of all those involved in this program that programs such as this would become a normal part of law enforcement.

In summation, since it's inception, **Operation Save Teens** has been a tremendous success. Everyone involved in the program has witnessed first hand the impact it has had on those in attendance. We have seen teenagers come forward at just about every program we have presented either requesting help with a drug problem or reporting those in their school that are distributing the drugs. **We can not put a dollar value on the possibility of turning one child's life around or helping parents to avoid the tragedy of losing a child to drugs.** Any doubts people may have had about the number of hours involved have been eliminated and each has arrived at the same conclusion - "**It's simply the right thing to do**".

Biography Information on Operation Save Teens Speakers

G. Michael Reese

Lt. G. Michael "Mike" Reese is a Lieutenant with the Alabama ABC Board. He lives in Anniston, Alabama, and is currently the District Supervisor for District 2 in Northeast Alabama.. He has been employed with the ABC Board since 1987 and had 5 years law enforcement experience with the Anniston Police Department prior to his employment with ABC. Lt. Reese began his career with ABC as an Undercover Narcotics Agent. He worked in this capacity for 7 years during which time he participated in over one thousand undercover cases all over the State of Alabama. Lt. Reese is past Vice-President of the Alabama Narcotics Officers Association. Lt. Reese has instructed basic Narcotics for the Patrol Officer at the Northeast Alabama Police Academy and the Alabama ABC Academy in Selma, Alabama. He has had extensive training and field experience in the area of Narcotics law enforcement. Lt. Reese has in excess of 3500 hours training in narcotics enforcement and has recently focused on the newest threat to the youth of our country, rave drugs.

Carol Hudson

Carol Hudson is a native of Pittsburgh, PA.. She moved to Gadsden, AL when she was five years old and has lived there since that time. She is married to Kenneth Hudson and they had one son, Anthony, who died in December of 2000.

Mrs. Hudson is a graduate of Gadsden High School and Jacksonville State University. She earned a degree in Secondary Education. Mrs Hudson taught at Mountain Academy Private School for two years and West End public school for twenty seven years. While at West End she served as Chairperson of the English Department for twenty six years. She was voted as Teacher of the Year, named to several committees and had the School Annual dedicated to her at various times during her career. She retired from teaching in June of 2002.

Mrs. Hudson is a member of St. James Church where she is a former member of the Parish Council. She has worked with several community and professional organizations such as the Boy Scouts of America, Jayceettes, Alpha Delta Kappa, Altursa, National Teachers of English and the American Red Cross. She is currently working with Operation Save Teens.