

# Summit focuses on drugs, sex, peer pressure

BY PAUL COLLINS  
THE CHRONICLE

About a dozen young people attended a teen summit on peer pressure, teenage pregnancy, and drug and alcohol abuse Saturday afternoon at Winston Lake YMCA.

Johnny Duckett, one of the organizers, said that if the effort helped even one person it was worth it. Duckett has a show on CAT-TV called "Cool Readers."

In the session on peer pressure, young people learned about positive and negative peer pressure. And they were asked to give recent examples of how they have had to deal with peer pressure. For example, one young person said a girl tried to get her to drink, but she said no. Another young person said a young man tried to get him to smoke.

One way to deal with negative peer pressure is to just say no and walk away, Duckett said.

Libby Stoy, project coordinator of the Teen Initiative Project, and Shayla Nesbitt, parent-teen educator, both of the Forsyth County Department of Public Health, conducted the session on teenage pregnancy. Stoy said: "We talked about what respect means with regard to special choices. We talked about some of the risks involved with sexual intercourse, the three types of sex, vaginal, rectal and oral, some of the risks involved in that. We talked about protecting themselves...respect for yourself...and abstinence as the No. 1 method (of preventing pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases).



Teens discuss important issues of the day.

Photo by Paul Collins

In the third session, Murray Miller, a youth and drug counselor, talked about how drugs and alcohol can damage the brain and alcohol can damage the liver.

He said heroine is the most addictive drug and that morphine is the most powerful pain killer. He said marijuana does the same thing as crack cocaine but is a little slower. He said these problems may occur with crack cocaine: crack cocaine stimulates the body's pleasure center; produces a rush by blocking the body's transmitters; causes the body to think it needs more crack cocaine; some people will steal or kill to get it; the heart rate and blood pressure increase; some people contract sexually transmitted diseases; brain damage occurs; the user

becomes more anxious without cocaine; cocaine keeps damaging the brain more; depression sets in; the cocaine addict loses weight, has trouble sleeping, has heart and lung problems and may have a lot of infections.

He said the drug ecstasy was originally developed as a weight loss pill. "If you see it, stay away from it," he said.

He said alcohol can destroy your liver and damage your brain.

"Drugs and alcohol hinder your education: You can't focus," he said.

He concluded, "When a person gets caught up in drugs, apathy sets in."

What did some of the teen participants learn from the summit?

One girl said, "Abstinence

is the best protection (from pregnancy)."

Brittany Hardy said, "There can be positive peer pressure as well as negative."

Sasha Dunlap said: "I learned that you shouldn't have sex. I learned that... if you do have sex, you should wrap up (use protection). And when you have peer pressure, you should say the right things, follow the right crowd. Don't think you're not cool if you don't smoke and drink. ...You shouldn't drink because it will mess up your insides. When you go to college, you can't drink because you're trying to get a scholarship...."

Brandon Nance said: "No birth control is 100 percent effective. There is no guarantee of not having a baby, except for abstinence."

side effects of her grandfather's disease. Even at her age, Faison said she sees her peers picking up the habit. But seeing what cigarettes have done to her grandfather, she says, is much more powerful than any kind of peer pressure.

"I would never do it," she said with a look of disgust. "I don't want to end up like him because I don't want to die at an early age."

the spots. Don Cole said he wished such commercials were around when he was growing up. Cole smoked for 31 years, but it was 10 years after he kicked the habit that he developed lung cancer. Doctors removed one of his lungs and today he is cancer free. Cole said he did not know that smoking was dangerous when he first picked up the habit.

But Cole says he does not fault the cigarette manufacturers for his ignorance about tobacco.

"I blame nobody but myself because I was not informed," he said. "That's why it is necessary for me to get to these kids to inform them."

TRU, as well as dozens of other anti-smoking initiatives across the state, is funded by the N.C. Health and Wellness Trust Fund, which was created by the General Assembly in 2000 with money from a massive settlement between states and tobacco companies. Money from the fund has primarily been used on preventive health programs.

Erin Carnahan, a spokesperson for TRU, said TRU believes that its efforts are working to reach young people. But the group is planning a series of study groups to evaluate if the anti-smoking message that is being driven home in the television spots and education initiatives are effective.

While adults like Hall and Cole will continue to play a part in getting out the message, Carnahan said adding the voices of young people is the best way to reach their peers.

"The testimonials of other teens are very important because they relate to their peers," she said.

In between all the fun and games, 11-year-old Tinisha Faison took time out to record a testimonial. Faison, who lives in Clinton, talked about her grandfather, who has developed lung disease after smoking for decades.

"He is sick all the time. He can't do things. He has seizures," she said, relating the



Dr. H. Rembert Malloy lived to be 90 years old.

# Effort is afoot to save house of the trailblazing doctor

CHRONICLE STAFF REPORT

State Rep. Larry Womble is leading an effort to save the stately old white house on New Walkertown Road that trailblazing doctor H. Rembert Malloy called home. The house and its contents were scheduled for auction even before Malloy passed away in May. Many contents from the house were auctioned last week, but the house, Womble said, is being taken off the auction block while Malloy's family and supporters look for ways to preserve the home.

Womble said plans will include asking local individuals to contribute money to save the house, which Womble believes can be used as a cultural and educational center similar to Reynolda House.

"We want to save the house because of the contributions Dr. Malloy has made to this community," Womble said.

Malloy was not only the city's first black surgeon but the first black surgeon in the region with his own practice. He was known for his

great skill in the operating room and for his generosity. Stories abound of Malloy performing painstaking procedures on people who had no means to pay him. His doors were always open, those who knew say, even to those without means.

Womble said Malloy's stature is so great that some of those who bought items from his home during the auction returned the items so that they can be included in whatever plans pan out for the house.

Malloy's house was one of the first along New Walkertown. It sits on a hill and to this day is admired by those who pass it. Malloy lived in the house for more than half a century. But he spent his last days in hospice care. He was 90 when he passed away.

Shortly before his death, the county renamed the library branch in East Winston in honor of Malloy, who along with three other black doctors in 1950 donated the land on which the library sits. Womble also led the effort to name the library for the surgeon.

## Smoking

from page A1

"Tobacco. Reality. Unfiltered." or TRU.

The group just kicked off a road tour that will take its anti-smoking message to young people in five other North Carolina cities in the next three months.

Friday's block party, which attracted hundreds of young people from across the state, was held in conjunction with the opening ceremonies of the State Games, which were held here over the weekend. The event featured music, dancing, food and an assortment of carnival-style games and activities. Participants were also given the opportunity to tell a video cameraperson how smoking has affected their lives. Selected interviews will be used in a series of TRU anti-smoking commercials that will air statewide in the fall.

Hall and other adults whose lives have been devastated by cigarette use will also appear in



Photo by Kevin Walker

Tinisha Faison tapes her testimonial for the commercial. Faison talked about her grandfather who has lung disease.

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