

World Woman's Christian Temperance Union

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Dear White Ribbon Sisters,

Self-discipline, restraint and self-motivation are key words that stand out daily for front-liners who promote *Temperance* and *Abstinence*. WCTU's continued determination to work for and in the interest of youth is in effect pushing forward the frontier of service. Guiding the footsteps of youth will sustain the world's future as the upcoming leaders of the next generation need to be provided enduring hope and a sense of worth.

Interestingly young minds are readily prone to exploring and experimenting. More amazing is their eagerness to step into the world of excitement and "fun" without weighing the consequences. As adults we forever wonder why there's never a pause before the leap.

Today's aggressive advertising technology is far-reaching and mind-captivating. Through its various techniques, continuous and inviting promotions are given to the use of tobacco, alcohol, and other drugs through such ensnaring phrases as "responsible use" or "positive use."

WCTU's mode of promotion through abstinence is not less efficient or effective. We are ready to provide information on how and why abstinence is the key that can prevent the first timer, convince non-users, as well as stop the regular abusers. Through the WCTU Youth web page and various planned programs for Youth across the world, the WCTU intends to promote and highlight the risks and disadvantages of use of using tobacco, alcohol and other drugs as well as point out the advantages of abstaining.

My hope is that as part of the WCTU team you will be ready to work with young people with the mind set that there is one young mind who:

- The messages of abstinence will touch,
- Will develop an inner control of the mind over the body,
- Will live a balanced healthy life and participate in decision making for self and society.

For effective outreach the WCTU youth website will soon undergo a major overhaul to make it responsive and interactive as well as to engage all youth so the message will reach the door step of everyone we intend to reach.

Anyone who sets his/her hand to the plough of compassionate work does not look back, let us forge ahead Sisters.

In His Service,

Yetunde Odeyemi

Materials included for the Youth Department

4 pages of Suggested Programs/Projects

Suggested Programs/Projects for Youth

Background and Justification

As evidenced at the 38th World Convention in Stavanger, Norway, May 2010, WCTU around the world is committed to making the lives of individuals, homes, and society at large free of the use and effects of Tobacco, Alcohol and Drugs (TAD). The broad distribution of members around the globe supported by our sheer faith in the ability to serve makes this an achievable goal. WCTU is not just serving people but is focused on a special group for caring and helping, and this is the youth group. The benefit of working with youths is mind-boggling as it is actually a good way of putting our tomorrow on a sure footing. But in spite of being the future they are a huge part of the present especially as they are very active and adaptive. WCTU aims at anchoring them for the future as well as the present.

Exploring and experimenting is a way of life for youths and this helps them to readily step into the world of any form of excitement and 'fun' without weighing the short or long-term consequences. This does not mean that the young mind cannot take concrete decisions. But rather to say that youth are known to consider their explorations into every unknown situation or new situation as normal behavior. This is due to reasons such as:

- Want to show the adults around them their ability to make independent decisions,
- Affiliate and connect with peers,
- Cope with feelings of inadequacy,
- Relieve boredom,
- Improve self-image and;
- Numb the pain of abuse and neglect.

When viewed from the perspective of the many forms of information media bombarding the world of youth today, they hardly could be blamed for whatever they fall into. Rather we adults and members of focused and visionary groups like WCTU should take the bold step of surrounding youth with wholesome information the way autumn leaves are scattered far and near.

WCTU is poised for actively providing service to youths in the form of sharing information, caring and helping among others. This is going to be achieved through planned programs organized at the local, national and if possible regional levels. The programs are designed to help youth obtain a sense of commitment toward their peers, family and community at large.

Intended programs/projects

- 1. School workshops and outreaches organized for High Schools and Universities**
- 2. Neighborhood watch and or Brothers' keepers club**

Educational institutions are appropriate avenues for promoting messages on;

Temperance and Abstinence,

Disadvantages of use of TAD,

Advantages of non-use of TAD,

Create awareness on the gravity of use of TAD.

At school programs, depending on the environment, we may need to identify peer/team/class/gang leaders who can be used to create the basis for the Neighborhood watch and or brothers' keepers to consolidate the message.

At school programs try very much not to use persons of high-level authority as speakers as this corrodes confidentiality.

For University and high schools, bring in a resource person (along side WCTU Speaker) such as a reformed past abuser (if the person is from that same school it makes it all the better for the students to listen), or a facilitator from the National Drug Control Unit of the Country who could be helpful with information sharing. On the other hand WCTU members can partner with the National Drug Control Units of the country for campaign activities, relevant brochures, and leaflets.

Starting off with a health message is a good opening wedge in any location and with every category of people.

Always include an introduction message on WCTU especially if the program is coming up at a venue(s) for the first time. Tying in the purpose of WCTU to the presentation enables the promotion of the pledge cards, which ensures a firm commitment and serves as a reminder for subsequent visits. By the way a revisit to an educational institution previously visited ensures continuity, as a one-time visit does not make room for establishing a firm presence.

3. Church Youth Outreach

Virtually every church group has a youth wing/club/organization, which can be used at school vacation periods to organize programs such as:

- Religious/Biblical reinforcement of the principles of abstinence.
- Organize talks to create awareness within the groups' outreach programs either during camping or Vacation Bible School programs.
- Organize Youth Biblical competitions in graphic art and written forms, which can be rewarded.
- Organize nail them to the cross-prayer and putting them on the cross ceremony.
- At your church youth programs, incorporate a session for counseling and praying with youth members. At such session be a good listener and create a 'friend-true-friend ' atmosphere for the young ones who participate. This type of session can be incorporated into the church youth week of prayer.

4. Designated celebrated days

The various designated UN days for celebration can be used to advantage for promoting temperance and abstinence among youth groups especially youth professional groups. Also other celebrated days other than those of the UN can be used as well. It is all about knowing when it comes up and keeping a tag on it.

Here are a few designated internationally celebrated days:

International Women's Day (March 8)

World Water Day (March 22)

World Health Day (April 7)

International Day of Families (May 15)

World Information Society Day (formerly World Telecommunication Day) (May 17)

World No-Tobacco Day (May 31)

International Day of Innocent Children Victims of Aggression (June 4)

World Environment Day (June 5)

International Day Against Drug Abuse and Illicit Trafficking (June 26)

International Youth Day (August 12)

International Literacy Day (September 8)

FAS Day (September 9)

International Day of Peace Day (September 21)

World no Alcohol Day (October 2)

World Mental Health Day (October 10)

World's Orphans Day (November 8)

Universal Children's day (November 20)

International Day for the Elimination of Violence against Women (November 25)

World AIDS Day (December 1)

5. Diverse Activities

Engage youth in small peer group activities that leave their mark in the community. Such activities may include:

- Wear the HIV/AIDS ribbon and walk/jog around the community (advertise such community walks).
- Clean-up orphanages, visit hospitals, prisons, old peoples' home and hospitals to offer help and care.
- Provide house parties or tea parties for youth for discussion and promotion of WCTU themes on temperance and abstinence.
- Organize counseling/health outreach programs for street children.
- Hire function halls or appropriate space for competition on drama, art exhibition, choreography etc. The activities are to be based on WCTU themes of the dangers of use of TAD, teenage pregnancies etc.
- Form support youth groups for parents and children with addicts or abusers in the home.

WCTU pamphlets/ brochures on TAD/health can be distributed or placed for free reading from the reception points of offices of WCTU member and from the offices of our friends who reach young people such as hair dressing /barbing saloon/eateries frequently visited by youths etc.

6. Rehabilitation/Counseling Centers

Co-operate with rehabilitation or counseling centers in the area so the WCTU can work to help youth who are abused.

Partnering with rehabilitation centres would also help build a release of valuable information to encourage a self-reform regime that is community based.

7. Radio Station

Some University campuses own FM radio stations, which WCTU members can use by asking for a quarterly or weekly slot, which can be used for promoting programs for youth. Time slots can be requested for radio drama, talk back discussion, and dialogue sessions among youth in the form of community squares/centers.

8. Television Station

Prime time on television can be obtained for temperance and abstinence messages designed for youth. If this is achieved it will give everyone within the community to listen.

9. Slum Dwellers

The slum environment is a rich fertile place for finding youth who need our help. In the slum environment there is the need to organize programs that:

- Create awareness on the gravity of the use of TAD.
- Create/Encourage alternative means of entertainment for youth residing in slums
- Create/Encourage alternative means of livelihood for those involved directly with distribution and production of TAD

10. Rural Youths

Location of residence should not be a reason for exemption from the WCTU wholesome messages.

For the rural environment organize:

- Full Awareness Program describing the effects of use of TAD and addiction effects
- Alternative means of entertainment and livelihood can be discussed with the rural youths so they can suggest solutions that is appropriate for them

11. WCTU Youth web page - www.drug-freeyouth.org

The WCTU Youth web page will soon be overhauled to reflect the dynamic and interactive nature of youths. With the new proposed additions the Youth web page will serve as a forum for promoting a drug-free lifestyle and Christian values, family life, social virtues and much, much more. With the inclusion of the proposed interactive resources, WCTU members will be able to generate within the page their own discussions and globally related issues.

Conclusion

The ultimate for WCTU is to be able to lobby for laws and enactments that prohibit the sale of TAD rather than promote. It is my hope that the suggested programs/projects will help WCTU participating youth have an enduring hope and sense of worth.