

Renz center helps locally with Illinois Teen Institute camp

Renz Addiction Counseling Center is once again coordinating local involvement in this year's 34th Annual Illinois Teen Institute substance abuse prevention and leadership camp July 13-17 at Monmouth College in Monmouth.

Incoming freshmen through grade 12 are invited to participate and have the opportunity to develop their leadership skills, boost self-esteem, build healthy personal and family relationships, achieve school success and learn alcohol and drug prevention skills.

Last year, more than 500 teens statewide participated in the camp and attended workshops, discussion groups and activities.

"This year we've had an increase of participants, with 27 local teens registered to attend," said Renz Center Executive Director Jerry Skogmo, "and we're hoping another 20 will join them. School administrators, teachers, community leaders and parents are supportive of the camp because they see firsthand its value in our schools, community and homes."

Camp days are tightly scheduled with activities, including interactive special presentations by Mawi, Mykee Fowlin, Javier Sanchez, Milton Creagh, Ty Sells, Colin Perkins and Angela Cornelius.

Teens also break down into their local group's Community Action Team and develop an action plan for their community to help prevent alcohol and drug abuse.

"Last year, our group's CAT plan was to stencil alcohol and drug prevention messages on the ground outside Streamwood High School," said Renz Center Prevention Assistant and camp volunteer Ande Suddeth. "It was a low-cost, innovative way to catch someone's attention and get our prevention message across. We received many positive responses from students and teachers."

While sponsored in part by the Illinois Alcoholism and Drug Dependence Association, local sponsors also support the ITI camp. The Illinois Sheriff Association donates money for individual sponsorships; a Renz Center prevention coordinator organizes

camp participation locally and assists teens throughout camp; and School District U46 donated a bus.

"Transportation is sometimes difficult for working parents," Suddeth said. "So the bus was an easy answer to get local teen participants to and from the camp."

The weeklong camp fee is \$315 and covers housing, meals, speakers, programming and camp T-shirt. Scholarships are available. All applications are due July 3, and can be obtained from the Illinois Alcoholism and Drug Dependence Association office at (217) 528-7335, ext. 52, or online at www.os-iti.org under the ITI link.

For details on ITI and local involvement, call (847) 742-3545.

Renz Center provides a continuum of care dedicated to the prevention, intervention and treatment of addictive behaviors and disorders often associated with addiction.

To find out more about Renz Center's programs, call (847) 742-3545 or visit www.renzcenter.com.

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