

The

# HiTOPS Guardian

20 years of helping adolescents make responsible decisions for brighter futures

Winter 2008

## iQuit! HiTOPS Smoking Cessation Program

**H**iTOPS is launching a comprehensive, technology-based smoking cessation program in January 2008. The program targets 18- to 24-year-old smokers who are interested in quitting.

The program consists of podcasts, as well as text messages and email access to HiTOPS' nurse-practitioner Ivy Pearlstein, a tobacco dependence treatment specialist. Each podcast presents one of six smoking cessation topics: preparation for quitting; medications (including nicotine replacement therapy); avoiding smoking triggers; managing cravings; strategies for stress management; and preventing relapse. All of the podcasts will be available in English and in Spanish. Clients using the program can opt to receive a text message a day for thirty days as added support; if they have additional questions, they will be able to email Ivy for personalized counseling.

HiTOPS' goal is for 300 clients to use the program online, and for thirty clients to come in for face-to-face counseling and carbon monoxide readings which validate smoking cessation with an objective measurement. The thirty clients coming



to the HiTOPS Health Center for face-to-face visits will receive an ipod as an incentive to continue. Online participants who complete the program will be eligible for a random drawing to receive an ipod.

Interested young people, their parents and health professionals can learn more about *iQuit!* on our website, [www.hitops.org](http://www.hitops.org), or email Ivy Pearlstein, *iQuit!* Coordinator at [ivy@hitops.org](mailto:ivy@hitops.org).

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HiTOPS, Inc., Teen Health and Education Center

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Tel: 609-683-5155 Fax: 609-683-9507 Email: [hitops@hitops.org](mailto:hitops@hitops.org)

See a copy of our annual report on our website, [www.hitops.org](http://www.hitops.org), or call HiTOPS for a printed copy

# Parent Place

## Party Time

*Q: My 17-year old son has just started going to parties and his younger sister is asking to go too. Should I let them go? What can I do to prevent them from getting involved in unsupervised parties or parties where alcohol and drugs are used?*

A: We all want our children to have happy social lives and opportunities to spend time with their friends. Most parents have concerns about the safety of parties. There *are* teens who are able to navigate social situations without getting lured into high risk behavior, but for many, risky experimentation seems inevitable. There are some things parents can do to help minimize risk.

### When your child attends a party in someone else's home:

- Be clear about your expectations regarding the use of drugs and alcohol and be sure your child is aware of the consequences if she/he does not meet these expectations. Talk about your feelings and fears.
- For younger teens, call ahead and find out if adults will be there to supervise. Talk with the host parents about their party rules.
- Give your child a check-in time and agree on a code word so that she/he can escape the party without losing face with her/his friends. Let your child know that

you will pick her/him up without question, at any hour.

- Do not allow your child to attend parties with people who are significantly older. The pressures to fit in are much harder on younger, less experienced teens and can really put them at risk for poor decision-making.

### When the party is at your house:

- Make sure your child knows the beginning time and the end time of the party.

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# Teen Spot

## Answered by HiTOPS Education Staff

*Q: I am worried that my friend is being abused by her boyfriend. Is there anything I can do to help her see that the situation is not good and help her get out of the relationship?*

A: Unfortunately, partner violence is not unusual. Approximately one-in-five female high school students report being physically or sexually abused by a dating partner. Females age 16-24 are more vulnerable to intimate partner violence than any other age group.\*

The first step is to help your friend recognize what an abusive relationship involves.

Signs of physical or emotional abuse include:

- Obvious injuries, bruises, cuts, etc.;
- Clothing that hides most of the body;
- Changes in attitude and behaviors including isolation from friends and avoiding public events;
- An unusual number of phone calls, text messages and emails from partner and distress following those communications;
- Frequent arguments, break-ups and reconciliations between the couple.

To begin the conversation about the abuse, start slowly and listen carefully. Let her know that you are concerned

and ask how you can help. Even if she is reluctant to talk, acknowledge that the abuse is not her fault and she is not alone—no one deserves to be abused. Encourage your friend to talk to an adult who can provide help and guidance and offer to go with her. As much as you may want to, do not confront the abuser. It could be dangerous for you and your friend.

If your friend is not willing to speak with an adult, tell her that you cannot keep this secret and talk to your parents or guidance counselor. Getting out of an abusive relationship is hard. Be patient and supportive. There are many great resources online as well as 24-hour hotlines. The National Teen Dating Abuse Helpline number is 1-866-331-9474. •

*\* Intimate partner violence is not limited to males abusing females. Many males are abused by their female partners. In addition, youth involved in same-sex relationships are just as likely to experience abuse.*

# HiTOPS Happenings

## Meeting the Needs of Underserved Youth

**R**esearch indicates that adolescents, by virtue of their youth and inexperience, are at-risk for many health-threatening issues including substance abuse, violence and unprotected sex. Adolescents involved in the criminal justice system and incarcerated youth are at particularly high risk.

HiTOPS began providing pro-

grams to incarcerated youth in Juvenile Justice Commission (JJC) sites six years ago when the Teen Council began visiting both male and female facilities in Bordentown. This program provides workshops on pregnancy prevention, STIs, HIV/AIDS, date rape, and homophobia reduction for a group of 10-12 incarcerated youth.

As part of our New Jersey Department of Health and Senior Services grant, we have expanded our program to include classes in five separate JJC locations taught by HiTOPS staff. Each location receives a series of five classes including reproductive anatomy, birth control, STIs and HIV, dating violence and date rape, and homophobia reduction. ☼

## Save the Date: April 11, 2008 HiTOPS Guardian Award Gala

**P**lease save the date and join us at the HiTOPS Guardian Award Gala on April 11, 2008 at the Trenton Country Club. We are proud to honor: **Governor Jon Corzine** — HiTOPS 2008 Policy Guardian Award; **Jim Craigie**, Chairman and C.E.O of Church & Dwight — HiTOPS 2008 Corporate Guardian Award; **Chris Floor** — HiTOPS 2008 Service-to-Youth Guardian Award; **Megan Thompson** — HiTOPS 2008 Youth Guardian Award.

Our honorees are strong embodiments of this year's theme, "Bridge to Tomorrow," as they have been tirelessly working to build a 'bridge to

tomorrow' for our youth.

The Guardian Award Gala is being planned and co-chaired by HiTOPS board members Molly Vernon and Jenner Beck (pictured).

The gala is being totally underwritten thanks to the generous support of an anonymous donor and HiTOPS' Board of Directors. Every penny raised by the Gala will go directly to HiTOPS and not to event expenses. We encourage you to join us at the event and donate generously.



*Molly Vernon and Jenner Beck, Gala Co-chairs*

For sponsorship opportunities, tickets to the Gala, or to learn more about HiTOPS, please call us at 609-683-5155 x216 or email [julie@hitops.org](mailto:julie@hitops.org) ☼

### TEEN HEALTH CENTER

Hours for appointments:

Mon, Tue, Wed, Fri 9-Noon & 1-5 pm

Thurs 10 am -Noon & 1-7pm

Two Sats/month 9 am-Noon

Closed Sunday

Tel: 609-683-5155 x 211

### CENTRO DE SALUD

Horarios para las citas:

Lunes, Martes, Miercoles, Viernes 9-5pm cerrado 12-1pm

Jueves 10am-12pm y 1-7 pm

Sabado- Dos por mes 9am-12pm

Domingo-Cerrado

Tel: 609-683-5155 x211

Hablamos Español

### A Call to former Teen Council Members!

If you are a former Teen Council member or know someone who is, please contact HiTOPS at 609-683-5155 x216 to give us current contact information. We'd love to hear from you!

# Meet Our Staff

## Diana Miranda: Welcoming Youth In Two Languages

**W**hen Diana Miranda joined the HiTOPS staff in August of 2007, she was rapidly introduced to the hustle and bustle of our Health Center; summer, especially August, is the Health Center's busiest time of the year. Concurrent with her orientation, Diana began to help our Health Center clients in a professional and friendly way due to her experience in banking as a customer service representative and teller. Multitasking is her forte; Spanish speaking is her asset.

Diana arrived in the United States from her native Colombia seven years ago. In Colombia, she studied two years in preparation for a degree in language. She is fluent in both English and Spanish. Presently, she works full-

time as the HiTOPS Health Center Administrator and attends Mercer County Community College in the evening. Her career goal is to be a social worker and continue her pas-



*Diana Miranda, HiTOPS Health Center Administrator*

sion for working with youth.

She is responsible for the smooth client flow of the HiTOPS Health Center which had approximately 2800 young people walk through its doors last year. In addition, she is responsible for coordinating the schedules of the five healthcare providers. She actively assists in the new *iQuit!* program, funded by the American Legacy Foundation.

When asked about her experience at HiTOPS, Diana noted, "We do not exist alone in this world. There are people around us to help in one way or another. HiTOPS gives me the opportunity to work with teenagers and also to learn from them. HiTOPS is the best place I have ever worked because the Education and Health departments work as a team." ❁

## In My Own Words

**I** tried to stop smoking every day for five years. I only smoked for five and a half, but quitting was very difficult. I am a singer so I knew I had to stop. I found the hold that the drug had on me was stronger than I had anticipated and, yes, the first step to quitting is admitting that cigarettes are a drug. When it came down to it, I wanted to live, and even more, I wanted to sing again.

I started going to HiTOPS and saw Ivy Pearlstein. I never felt that I was being judged or admonished. I was able to talk to her about the things that I felt as the drugs left my system. It was okay to want a cigarette, which made it easier to choose not to have one. I started gaining control. I also couldn't lie about having one because there is a wonderful and sometimes evil machine that you

breathe into, and it will tell the truth for you.

With the help of my addiction counselor, I have not had a cigarette in over a year. Take it from me, you don't have to stop wanting cigarettes, just stop having them. And to do that, you may need the help of someone who will listen.



*-- Joshua Talley  
Smoking Cessation Client*

# Support Youth Through HiTOPS

**HiTOPS envisions a world where youth have the resources they need to live healthy and responsible lives.**

## **Donating to HiTOPS is easier than ever!**

At GoodSearch (www.goodsearch.com) a penny is donated to HiTOPS every time you search the internet with HiTOPS as your designated charity. Now, not only can you GoodSearch, but you can also GoodShop! Every time you shop through www.goodshop.com and list HiTOPS as your charity, a portion (up to 38 %!) of the total sale will be donated to HiTOPS. With over 400 well-known retailers, and no additional fee for shopping through the site, shopping online has never felt this good!

## **Grant HiTOPS a wish**

Over the holiday season, HiTOPS was fortunate to have a wish list published in "Town Topics." Our list includes what HiTOPS needs in order to be successful in the coming year. We would love your support in helping to make all of our wishes come true! If you'd like a copy of the list and/or have ideas about helping us distribute it, please contact us at 609-683-5155 x216 or email [julie@hitops.org](mailto:julie@hitops.org).

## **Extra! Extra!**

HiTOPS is always excited to learn about any newspapers, radio stations, etc., which publicize our

services or even mention our name. If you see or hear about us, please let us know.

## **Volunteerism**

*"Volunteers are the only human beings on the face of the earth who reflect this nation's compassion, unselfish caring, patience, and just plain loving one another."*

— Erma Bombeck

We realize we could not be where we are today without the help of our amazing volunteers. We LOVE having them at HiTOPS. If you are interested in volunteering, we have a wide range of opportunities available so please give us a call!



*HiTOPS is pleased to welcome new staff member Anita Gooding as our Development Associate. We are thrilled to have her on board!*

## **HiTOPS Staff**

Lori Heninger, PhD  
Elizabeth M. Casparian, PhD  
Sandra Zordan-Friedman,  
CNM, MSN  
Julie Meyers, MA  
Karen Avila  
Lindsey Fraser  
Anita Gooding  
Diana Miranda  
Corrine O'Hara, RN  
Ivy Pearlstein, RN, MS, APNC  
Steve Pitts  
Connie Poor, RN  
Carolyn Santoro, CHES  
Elizabeth Walters, CNM, MS  
Janet Weber-McCarthy

## **HiTOPS Board**

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Andrew R. Koontz  
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Laurie Smaldone-Alsup, MD  
Gary R. Snyder  
Molly Vernon

Many thanks to Diana Quick for designing the newsletter. Thank you to Church & Dwight for their support of the newsletter.

# Calendar

## January 2008

- 11 “Battle of the Bands” to launch *iQuit!* at the Princeton Public Library 7-11 pm
- 16 Parent program on Bullying at HiTOPS 7-9 pm

## February 2008

- 27 Teen Council Family Night: “Talk to Me,” a workshop for parents/guardians at Princeton High School cafeteria, 6:30-9:30 pm

## March 2008

- 19 Tips for Raising Boys Parent Workshop at HiTOPS 7-9 pm

## April 2008

- 11 Guardian Award Gala: at the Trenton Country Club 7 pm\*
- 16 Teens on the Rocks: Parent Workshop on Substance Use and Teens at HiTOPS 7-9 pm

\* *For more information on the Gala please call Julie at 609-683-5155 x216 or email [julie@hitops.org](mailto:julie@hitops.org).*

## Parent Place

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- ☼ Ask your teen to invite specific people rather than making it an open party.
- ☼ Be at home during the entire party and make your presence known. Check in several times to see if the kids are okay.
- ☼ Have coats and backpacks checked at the door to prevent people from bringing in drugs and alcohol.
- ☼ **DO NOT SERVE OR ALLOW ALCOHOL TO BE CONSUMED** – this is illegal and dangerous.

For more information, attend HiTOPS’ Parent Program “Teens on the Rocks” on April 16, 2008 from 7-9pm at HiTOPS which will feature guest presenters from Corner House and the Princeton Police. ☼

HiTOPS, Inc.  
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