

The Life Education Center

The Life Education Center (LEC) program teaches students in kindergarten through high school the benefits of making sound, healthy choices for their bodies and minds.

Two mobile units travel to 60 public and private schools in Kankakee and Iroquois counties -- reaching approximately 14,000 students annually.

The LEC's curriculum aligns with Illinois State Standards. Instructors use hands-on materials, visuals, discussion and role playing to teach students about the human body, the dangers of its abuse and about the different skills needed to deal with peer pressure. TAM, a transparent anatomical mannequin, teaches the younger students about their bodies and provides older students with an inside view of how chemical substances harm the body. LEC mascot, Harold the Giraffe and his friend, Jocko the Monkey, are favorites with the younger students who learn the importance of exercise and eating good foods.

The LEC also provides a forum for older students. A three-part research-based curriculum proven to delay the onset of alcohol use is taught to 6th, 7th and 8th grade students at participating schools and "Class Action" is being used with high school students. Junior and senior high school students, along with their parents, are encouraged to make a pledge to follow and support laws prohibiting underage alcohol use in the Partnership's annual "**Make a Pledge - Make It Stick**" social marketing campaign.

LEC program parent guides were paid for in part by the Illinois Department Human Services.



Life Education Centers
Pledge for Life Partnership
Iroquois-Kankakee Regional Office of Education
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Visit our website at: www.i-kan.org

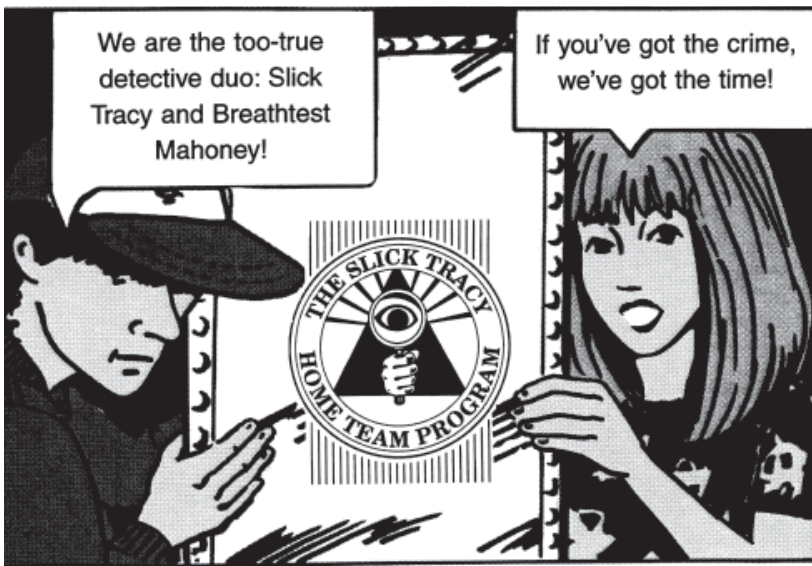
Parents of Sixth Graders

In the Life Education Center, sixth graders learn to choose **Wise Highs**, choices for a happy, healthy body and mind... **Choices You Can Live With!**

You and your sixth grader will be involved in an exciting program entitled **The Slick Tracy Home Team Project**. This program is part of Project Northland, an effective research curriculum proven to delay the onset of alcohol use and reduce alcohol-related problems among young people.

During the course of a few weeks, your child will receive a Slick Tracy comic book in school to bring home. Each comic book includes interesting and fun activities about alcohol-related issues facing young people today. These activities have been designed to capture the interest of sixth graders and to make both parents and their children feel more comfortable talking about the serious subject of kids drinking alcohol. Each comic book is a lesson in itself and contains:

- **The Slick Tracy Comic:** A comic strip about two teenagers – Slick Tracy and Breathtest Mahoney – and the characters they encounter.
- **Activities:** For you and your child to do at home as a family team. If you are unable to work on the project with your child, another adult may participate in your place.
- **Score card:** To be signed by all home team members once the activities have been completed.
- **Project Northland Notes for Parents:** Tips and suggestions about what you can do about alcohol-related issues that may face your child.



Slick Tracy and Breathtest Mahoney are just two of the characters your sixth grader will encounter in the Slick Tracy Home Team Project. Others include Lotta Fun, Marty “the Party” Jones, Like Me Larry, Groan-Up Gertie, Too-Loose LaTrek, Stressed Tess and Niagara False.

Specific directions for all activities are included in each comic book. When you have completed the activities, please sign the scorecard and have your child return it to school.

The problems that result from drinking and the role alcohol plays as a “rite of passage” in the lives of our children, signify the importance of such prevention efforts and stresses the importance of communicating to our children the serious – if not deadly – consequences that may result from its use. Alcohol-related automobile accidents, for example, are the leading cause of death for young people ages 15 to 24.

It isn't always easy for parents to broach the subject of alcohol with their children, but research has proven that good communication makes a difference! Kids who know their parents disapprove of teen drinking are less likely to start drinking. Reducing the onset of alcohol use *by as little as one year* – greatly reduces the chances of developing a substance abuse problem later in life.

The Slick Tracy Home Team Project was created to help parents by giving them a starting place for talking about alcohol with their children.

Topics covered include:

- What's true about alcohol and what isn't.
- Advertising and how it is used to try to get kids to drink.
- Different kinds of peer pressure and how it's used to pressure kids to do things they really don't want to do.
- Consequences of drinking and alternatives to drinking.

Additional resources

For a listing of local resources or additional tips to keep your child alcohol and drug free contact:
The KAN-I HELP Information Network
815.936.4606 or **www.i-kan.org**

A parent brochure entitled “*Keeping Your Kids Drug-Free*” also is available from the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign. To obtain a copy, call **1.800.788.2800**. Or, visit the website at **www.theantidrug.com** for additional tips and advice.

This is just one way that we can teach our children how special they are and how important it is for them to take care of their bodies and minds. These discussions will help them to choose *Wise Highs...Choices You Can Live With!* To visit the LEC or to learn more, call Brenda Wetzel, LEC coordinator, at 937-2950.