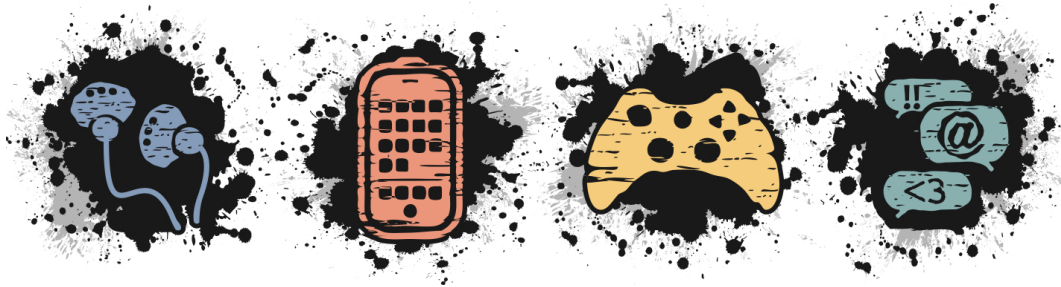


# The Media Straight Up!

Critical Thinking Skills for Pennsylvania's Youth



## Drug Free Pennsylvania Media Literacy High School Initiative

Competitive Grant Program  
Information and Application Package

**Release Date:**  
January 24, 2012

**Sponsored by:**  
Drug Free Pennsylvania, Inc.

**Funding Provided by:**  
Pennsylvania Department of Health



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## Program Timeline

- Grant Release Date January 24, 2012
- Application Due Date February 21, 2012
- Grantee Selection February 24, 2012
- Program Begins March 1, 2012
- Program Ends June 1, 2012
- Videos Presented (Pittsburgh, PA) September 2012

## Executive Summary

Drug Free Pennsylvania will partner with three (3) selected high schools to execute a peer-to-peer media literacy initiative during the spring semester of 2012. This program will consist of:

- A dedicated student media literacy group
- An assigned faculty or staff coordinator will also serve as instructor/advisor
- Exercises and observations designed to encourage student participants to learn how to identify and understand manipulative messages about drugs and alcohol in the traditional, online and mobile media environment.
- Active student and coordinator participation in a statewide blog during the semester.
- Each group will conclude by producing a video project that will communicate information about media literacy in a peer-to-peer manner and style
- The videos and other components will be collected, packaged and distributed by Drug Free Pennsylvania to demonstrate the students' achievements and the value of the peer-to-peer, experience-based model on a statewide basis.

The schools selected to participate will receive a \$1,000 technical assistance grant to defray costs and support successful execution of the program.

## Introduction & Overview

Drug Free Pennsylvania, Inc. is the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's statewide 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation dedicated to reducing substance abuse through anti-drug public service campaigns, media literacy programs in schools, and drug-free workplace projects in businesses.

In cooperation with the Pennsylvania Department of Health, Bureau of Drug & Alcohol Programs and media literacy experts Renee Hobbs, PhD and Brian Primack, M.D., Drug Free Pennsylvania produces and distributes the Pennsylvania Media Literacy Curriculum Guide for use in middle school classrooms. This comprehensive curriculum provides a series of twelve lessons designed to introduce middle school-aged youth to media literacy concepts and issues, and provide them with a framework for developing their own Public Service Announcement (PSA) addressing media literacy.

Media literacy is defined generally as the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and communicate messages in a wide variety of forms, emphasizes the skills of analyzing, evaluating and creating media and technology messages that make use of language, moving images, music, sound effects and other techniques.

Now, Drug Free Pennsylvania is seeking to partner with select high schools to present a unique media literacy initiative to high school-aged youth during the spring semester of 2012.

For high school-aged youth in the United States, this largely focuses on the ability to identify and respond to targeted or manipulative messages in today's diverse media environment. From popular music and television programs to video games, social media and mobile communication, high school-aged youth in Pennsylvania are subject to a virtually constant deluge or onslaught of dangerous and destructive messages.

The purpose of the Media Literacy High School initiative is to provide selected schools with the tools and support necessary to deploy a highly participatory model of media literacy education. The objectives of this initiative are to:

- Provide students with essential information and ideas so that they can form a clear understanding of media literacy and how it influences youth behavior and risk-taking, especially in areas such as alcohol and drug abuse.
- Empower students to identify examples of targeted and manipulative drug and alcohol promotion -- whether through traditional advertising; embedding of messages or behaviors in a set of lyrics, a script or other narrative; or through peer-to-peer interactions staged and produced on behalf of advertisers.
- Support students as they develop video messages in their own words to address these issues in ways that they feel will create a positive impact with their peers.

## Program Components

The Media Literacy High School Program will seek to partner with three (3) selected high schools during the spring semester to execute the following program of work.

- Each selected high school will form a student media literacy group within approximately two (2) weeks of their selection. This group may be a curricular, co-curricular or extra curricular organization (i.e. a group of students required to participate as part of a class, a group of students who volunteer to participate from multiple classes, or a club or other organization). The group should have a minimum of 8-10 student participants.
- The media literacy group will have a dedicated adult coordinator who will also serve as the high school's liaison to Drug Free Pennsylvania for the duration of the program. This adult coordinator must be a formal employee but may be a full-time or part-time faculty member, administrator, instructor, coordinator or guidance counselor.
- The media literacy group should dedicate a minimum of one 45-minute formal meeting/session, once per week during the spring semester to this project, plus outside (personal) time on the part of student participants.
- The coordinator will participate in two 60- to 90-minute online (web-based) workshop sessions with the project manager from Drug Free Pennsylvania, and will receive additional information and technical support throughout the project.
- The coordinator will serve as the advisor/instructor to the group and must actively form, schedule, attend and guide each meeting of the group, and ensure that all outcomes are achieved.
- During the months of March and April, students will work on observing and documenting examples of media literacy, message manipulation, ethically questionable marketing practices and other forms of targeting designed to encourage, promote or imply acceptance of alcohol and/or drug use among high school-aged youth.
- These examples will be shared online via a blog hosted and moderated by Drug Free Pennsylvania that will serve to document and share information among and between participants in the initiative.
- Students will then work collaboratively to develop a single video project during the remainder of the spring semester.
- Each of the three school groups will choose one selected **medium** (i.e. film & television, music, video games, social media, mobile media, etc.) and one selected risk behavior **message** (i.e. alcohol abuse, street drug abuse, prescription drug abuse, etc.) to focus on in their video project deliverable.

- In order to ensure that the three groups work on different aspects of media literacy, Drug Free Pennsylvania will require the groups to select different media and different messages (i.e. each group will choose areas to focus on different from those of the other two groups).
- The students will then work together, with support and advisory/technical assistance from their adult coordinator, to produce a video. The video may be scripted, formatted and produced in any number of formats, including:
  - Traditional prevention message or PSA
  - Peer-to-peer presentation or discussion
  - Experiential video
  - Collage or video journal
  - Student experiences or observations
- Formal parameters for the video will be provided to each participating high school during the semester by Drug Free Pennsylvania, but in summary videos must be tasteful, appropriate for high school-aged audiences, focused on addressing the topic, and not engaged in advocacy or humor that implies or expresses support for inappropriate or illegal behavior.
- The videos and blog submissions will be collected throughout and at the end of the semester by Drug Free Pennsylvania, and all components will be prepared and published online. Videos will be formatted and used on the web and in educational outcome presentations, as well as to promote the peer-to-peer high school media literacy program model for future expansion across Pennsylvania.
- Students will be asked to provide feedback on the project at its conclusion, including participation in an online survey and providing ideas or insights to their adult coordinator.
- The designated adult coordinator will also be required to perform the following administrative actions during the course of the project:
  - Administer the project in accordance with grant parameters
  - Prepare a summary document presenting expenses and costs associated with the project necessary for grant funding disbursement
  - Answer questions, execute actions and remain available to Drug Free Pennsylvania project personnel throughout the project
  - Fill out an end-of-program survey and provide student and adult feedback on the program experience as a whole
- Grantee schools will receive reimbursement for grant-reportable expenses during the course of the project up to, and not to exceed, the \$1,000 grant award amount. Drug Free Pennsylvania reserves the right to withhold partial or final payments in order to audit, verify or ensure completion of all program components.

## Applicant Requirements

The following are applicant requirements necessary for participation in this program:

- Qualified applicants include public, private, career/technical and charter high schools in the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania.
- Applicant schools must be recognized and in good standing with the Pennsylvania Department of Education or (for private schools) with their appropriate regional accrediting body.
- The application may be prepared and submitted by a full-time or part-time administrative, faculty or staff employee but must also be signed and approved by the principal (public and charter schools), head of school (private schools) or administrative director (career/technical schools).
- Applicants must agree to take responsibility for ensuring that the project is executed fully and in accordance with the program guidelines. Failure to complete the project (e.g. premature dissolution of the student group, lack of completed or submitted student video, etc.) will result in forfeiture of the grant.
- Applicant schools must designate and provide appropriate support for the adult coordinator. It is the responsibility of each school's administration to ensure that adequate space, time, technical resources and assistance is made available to the group in order to ensure a successful outcome.
- All submitted content (feedback, student observations, blog entries, videos) must be reviewed and moderated by the adult coordinator on behalf of the participating school's student group.
- The video production portion of the project may be executed using any number of technologies including mobile phones, pocket video cameras (i.e. Flip® cameras), webcams, etc. and may be edited or prepared using online, free, low-cost or other editing software (such as iMovie). It may also be executed using school-provided or professional/semi-professional equipment where a school has available such resources. While the type, cost and capabilities of the tools to be used is not restricted, applicant schools will be responsible to ensure that students have access or an ability to participate whether through use of school or personal resources as appropriate.
- Applicant schools must be willing to agree to the timeline for this project set forth by Drug Free Pennsylvania, and will grant Drug Free Pennsylvania the right to edit, modify, adjust, produce and publish all work generated by the project for the purposes of online sharing, instruction for teachers and prevention educators, program development and grant reporting.
- Applicant schools must be willing to host on-site visits by the project coordination team as appropriate for observation or assessment.

## Application Instructions

Interested schools should prepare and submit a letter of application to Drug Free Pennsylvania on or before **February 21, 2012**. The letter may be submitted via any one of the following methods:

By postal mail:

Attn: Media Literacy High School Grant  
Drug Free Pennsylvania, Inc.  
300 North 2<sup>nd</sup> Street, Suite 1215  
Harrisburg, PA 17101

By facsimile:

717.232.5400

By email:

grant@medialiteracypa.org

Please note all that submissions must be received at the offices of Drug Free Pennsylvania on or before February 21, 2012 at 4:00 PM. Applicants choosing to send submissions by postal mail should send their packet in sufficient time and may want to use express or tracked delivery to ensure delivery. Drug Free Pennsylvania is not responsible for late, delayed, misplaced or lost submissions.

The letter of application should consist of the following components:

- Brief introduction to your school and why you are interested in participation
- Information on your intended designated adult coordinator (this person must be selected as part of the grant application process) and his/her qualifications or commitment to this project
- Narrative summary of how you intend to form and administer the media literacy group at your school
- Brief explanation of any resources you possess and/or intend to make available for the project (i.e. classrooms, technical personnel, equipment, services)
- Statement of support for the project by your principal, head of school or administrative director

Full professional contact information should be provided for the designated adult coordinator, so that Drug Free Pennsylvania may follow up with him/her to answer any questions.

**If you or your school has questions about this program or about the grant application process, please contact Drug Free Pennsylvania, Inc..**

## Grantee Selection

After applications have been received and processed, three schools will be selected to become designated grantees based upon the following criteria:

- Thoroughness of grant response
- Nature and strategy for forming and administering the media literacy group
- Qualifications and commitment of adult coordinator
- Resources and support from school administration

In addition, if applicable Drug Free Pennsylvania reserves the right to consider other factors including geographic location, socioeconomic diversity and the nature and types of schools in order to come to final selections.

## About Drug Free Pennsylvania

Drug Free Pennsylvania, Inc. is the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania's statewide 501(c)(3) non-profit corporation dedicated to reducing substance abuse through anti-drug public service campaigns, media literacy programs in schools, and drug-free workplace projects in businesses.

Drug Free Pennsylvania achieves its stated mission through a wide variety of programs, including:

- The Media Straight Up! Critical Thinking Skills for Pennsylvania's Youth
- Connect & Protect PA: Addressing the Dangers of Prescription Drug Abuse
- Straight Talk for Parents
- Pennsylvania Medication Clean-Up Campaign
- Drug-Free WorkPlace Solutions™

For more information on Drug Free Pennsylvania, visit [www.drugfreepa.org](http://www.drugfreepa.org).

## About the Pennsylvania Department of Health

The Pennsylvania Department of Health is the Commonwealth's official state agency dedicated to promoting healthy lifestyles, preventing injury and disease, and assuring the safe delivery of quality health care for all Commonwealth citizens. As active partners in the pursuit of good health, the Department of Health strives to:

- Monitor the health status of the population;
- Identify and eliminate preventable illness and accidents;
- Reduce the severity of illness and disability;
- Promote healthy behaviors;
- Improve health care quality, access, continuity and accountability; and
- Lead the development of sound health policy and planning.

The Department is responsible for planning and coordinating health resources throughout the Commonwealth. It licenses and regulates a variety of health facilities, such as hospitals, nursing homes, ambulatory surgical facilities and other in-patient and out-patient facilities. In addition, the Department supports outreach, education, prevention and treatment services across a variety of program areas. Grants and subsidies to community-based groups are used to provide essential services to the Commonwealth's citizens including programs for women and children, nutrition, immunization, diagnosis and treatment of certain blood and communicable diseases, cancer control and prevention, and the prevention and treatment of substance abuse.

For more on the Pennsylvania Department of Health, visit [www.health.state.pa.us](http://www.health.state.pa.us).

## About Renee Hobbs, PhD

Professor Renee Hobbs, PhD is one of the leading authorities on media literacy education in the United States. Through community and global service and as a researcher, teacher, advocate and media professional, Hobbs has worked to advance the quality of digital and media literacy education and has developed several comprehensive programs for children, staff development program, hands-on mentoring and curriculum development, Professor Hobbs has worked in Italy, the Netherlands, Brazil, Argentina, France and China to help bring media literacy education to students and teachers worldwide.

In addition, Dr. Hobbs is the Founding Director of the Harrington School of Communication and Media at the University of Rhode Island.

## About Brian Primack, M.D.

Dr. Brian Primack combines his expertise in education, technology, human development and medicine in his research on the effect of mass media messages on health. Specifically, he focuses on the use of media literacy education to prevent adolescent smoking, underage drinking and other harmful adolescent behaviors.

An assistant professor of medicine at the University of Pittsburgh School of Medicine, Dr. Primack has authored studies on topics such as racial disparities in tobacco advertising, the portrayal of substance use in popular music and the relationship between “media literacy” and adolescent smoking. He has been quoted in the *New York Times*, ABC News, CBS News and *Forbes* magazine.

## Contact Information

The following are the project lead contacts for this program on behalf of Drug Free Pennsylvania, Inc.:

Richard Miller  
Educational Programs Director  
Tel 717.232.0300  
Email miller@drugfreepa.org

Douglas Wendt  
Program Coordinator  
Tel 717.766.0696  
Email doug@wendtpartners.com

The program website is **[www.medialiteracy.org/highschool](http://www.medialiteracy.org/highschool)**

**NOTE:** All grant application submissions must be made via postal, fax or email transmission in accordance with the grant guidelines and may not be submitted directly to the project lead contact individuals.