

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:
THE SOUTHEAST MICHIGAN COMMUNITY ALLIANCE HOSTS PROACTIVE
POW-WOW – Nov. 12

Taylor, MI November 5, 2004 – Celebrating a new circle of life is what law enforcement and substance abuse prevention will do during a Proactive Pow-Wow hosted by the Southeast Michigan Community Alliance (SEMCA) on Nov. 12 from 9 a.m. – noon at SEMCA, located at 25363 Eureka Road in Taylor.

Panelists representing the Southeastern Criminal Investigation Division, a branch of the Michigan Department of State Police, the Office of Drug Control Policy, and local drug court representatives will be on-hand to share information, new trends and problems the community faces.

Jack O'Reilly, executive director of SEMCA, believes this is just the beginning to create substantial community coalitions to confront the battle against substance abuse. "We don't want to see our communities suffer from this disease," said O'Reilly.

Theresa Webster, prevention administrator of SEMCA said the Pow-Wow arose because we have resources that law enforcement aren't aware of that can assist them in doing their job effectively.

"Substance abuse affects the whole community and this is the first step in developing community coalitions in every city that will work towards the solution," said Webster.

Webster said specifically they want to address substance-abuse trends that enforcement is seeing through arrests and decide how they align with substance-abuse and treatment services and programs," said Theresa Webster, prevention administrator of SEMCA.

In addition, this interactive Pow-Wow will identify methods to prevent commonly abused substances and develop a plan of action for those who need help.

"Because the police are the front line, they can give us insight as to what providers can do collaboratively to address the issues that they are seeing on the streets," said Webster.

"We are establishing open communication lines between law enforcement and substance abuse agencies to paint an accurate picture of the issues that need to be addressed in our community," said Lt. Darwin Scott of the Downriver Area Narcotics Organization.

Nancy Becker Bennett, administrator of the Office of Drug Control Policy, said the forum is valuable because it will increase awareness and education to the drug problems we are facing, especially regarding the abuse of methamphetamines.

"This will enable us to stay current and on top of what is going on," Lt. Scott added.

The Southeast Michigan Community Alliance (SEMCA) administers human service programs throughout Wayne and Monroe counties excluding the city of Detroit. For more information, please visit www.semcaprevention.org.

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