

# FOCUS

## Media Release

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### **Drug Awareness Week November 15-21, 2009**

A unique resource developed by the North Bay Parry Sound District Health Unit is now available in Lanark County through collaboration between the Smiths Falls FOCUS Community Coalition and the Leeds, Grenville and Lanark District Health Unit. **The SAP bucket, as it is called, consists of 17 different activities, stored in a real sap bucket, which are used to teach about substance abuse prevention to students in grades 4 to 10.** The activities assist teachers to meet many curriculum requirements for substance abuse teaching through an interactive and comprehensive format, focusing not only on information but especially on critical thinking skills and behaviours.

“The Centre for Addiction and Mental Health Ontario Student Drug Use and Health Survey (OSDUHS) 2007 found that some students in grade 7 and 8 are already experimenting with the so called gateway drugs - alcohol, cigarettes and marijuana. We need to help young people develop resiliency skills at so that they can make healthy choices when they are older and faced with these kind of decisions”, says Lucia Taggart, co-coordinator of the Smiths Falls FOCUS Community Coalition. “Just like adults, youth have very diverse learning needs and styles.

The SAP bucket provides a variety of ways to convey the same information and is adaptable to many settings.” Games include Sticks and Stones, SAP Bucket Jeopardy, Nuts and Bolts, and What’s the Buzz. The buckets have been assembled with items easily found at department stores and around the home or school.

**The SAP buckets will be available for loan to area schools through the Public Health Nurse School consultants, and for youth centres through the FOCUS coalition.**

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