

An Example of an Action Plan by Warren Mott SLS at Conference

Push for excellence, be excellent. Schools have gotten used to the concept of mediocrity. But we want to push for excellence.

There are three main steps we need to approach this:

- Academic - students should go to teachers after class or after school to get help if they don't understand concepts.
- Extra-curricular - by going and participating in extra-curricular activities you will build up your college resume and relationships.
- Relationships - by getting extra help from teachers you can build stronger relationships with them, and by teaching those concepts to your peers in need, you can build connections with them too.

We are implementing this by asking our SLS chapter members to participate and then encourage peers to do the same. We will also be asking our teachers to ask for excellence.

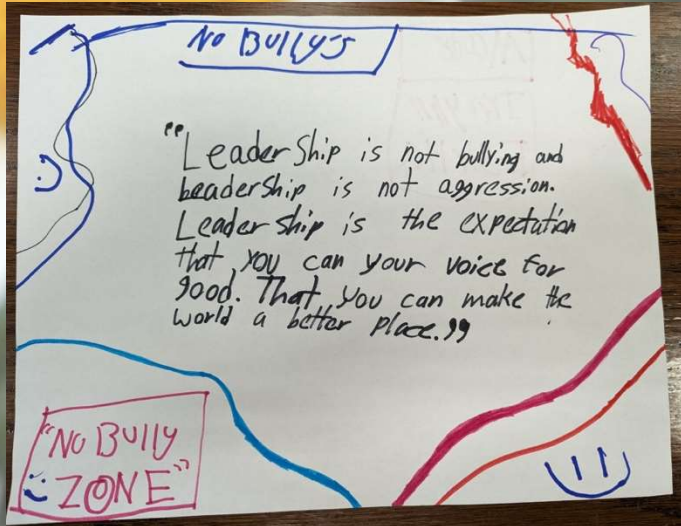


Spring 2024, Volume 37, Number 1

Attention!!

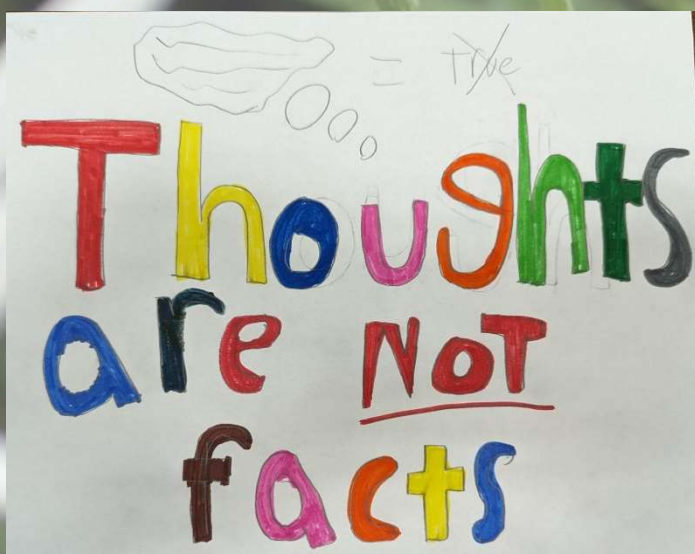
Please share this newsletter with student leaders within your school!

Thank you!



These pictures were created by 7th graders at Mason Middle School during the Botvin Lifeskills classes. The students were instructed to create messages regarding standing up to bullying or anti-bullying.

Anti-bullying was defined to them as proactively being a positive influence and looking out for others to prevent bullying.



7th Grade SLS LifeSkills Students share thoughts on bullying:

"Stop the pain, stop the fights,
If you wanna win, make it bright.

Take a stand, help each other,
With the community, make it better.

But if you don't, it gets bad,
And if no one helps, it gets sad.

But you can make a change,
So do it and cast the chains!"

"You know my work; you know my name. So stop surrounding me with the shame. For if you don't, you won't get the fame. Others will look at you with disgrace and they will surround you with shade. And at the end, you will feel replaced. But there's hope, if you change. They will see that you are different and forgive for what you have done. They will be friends with you, and you will feel found."

"Ever since I came here, I've been hurting and bursting into tears. I get stressed and I don't know how to confess my head is a mess due to tears. I deal with so much pain in the rain wishing I had fame but instead, I get bullied. It hurts that I burst into tears with fears that are fierce, my whole life at school. Can you help me face my fears at school?"

Note from SLS:
"Please don't feel ashamed.
Please do speak up and let someone
know how frightened, angry,
or hopeless you are feeling."

A Lesson from Legos

By: Marcia Partin, SLS Prevention Specialist

As a SLS Prevention Specialist in middle schools, I frequently teach lessons on communication. For part of those lessons, I get to bring out Legos! Our Lego challenge is a fun and effective tool in practicing good communication. The students are challenged to teach each other to build a Lego set without getting to see the build while they sit back-to-back. While I watch the students, it is so fun to think about challenges and successes in this game that match up with how we try to communicate and work together in real life. There is a lot that could be unpacked but I am going to share one concept with you today that would be a great asset to chapter meetings as we work to build something great together! Manage the Noise!

I always ask the students at the end of the exercise, "What got in the way? What kept you from building what you hoped to build?" The main complaint is that it was hard to hear! To be fair, this activity can get noisy as many students are trying to build at the same time. And I know that for some of your chapters, noise in the room does reduce our ability to build effectively together. I want to suggest, however, that an even greater barrier for effective building is the noise we don't see. The noise we bring with us to the meeting – both advisors and students! What is this noise? It is all kinds of noise inside of us that can distract us from hearing each other well! It can be great noise – something exciting going on with our kids, anticipating the activity right after group, a pending vacation! It can also be tough stuff – a relationship challenge, looming tasks, tiredness, and worries! All of us bring a little noise with us to meetings and it can get in the way of hearing each other so we can build something great.

How do we manage this noise? First, I would suggest that we do all we can to turn down the volume before meeting. Talk with a friend, write down a task list or a worry, take a short walk, and if possible, prepare in a way that helps you reduce the noise with a good snack and good rest the night before. Next, think about how to help your students turn down the volume. What could this look like? Maybe it is starting your meetings with a chance to share something going on – exciting or tough! This can help the student get something off their minds and can also help others be aware that there is "noise" for that friend even if they can't see it – this can help with patience and empathy for each other as we build together. This could be sharing with the whole group or in a smaller group or partner to help with time. Finally, we can look for ways to adapt. When I have a noisy activity, I see some students really struggle – they just remain in a noisy place. But I am super happy when I see students that adapt! They move to a less noisy place, they position themselves closer to each other, they speak up and patiently ask each other to say it again. Sometimes we can't get rid of the noise but when we acknowledge it is there, we can adjust. We can be patient with each other when someone seems distracted, we can take a moment to let a student share and support whatever is going on. When we are honest with the students about the "noise" we bring that day, it can also be a great modeling for how to acknowledge the noise but understand that we are going to build anyway...and have fun!

When I do the Lego challenge, it is so fun to see the smiles and pride in the simplest builds that were done together despite the noise! In your chapters you are doing so much more – lasting change in the lives of your students and in the schools they are leading. Our ability to manage the noise will help us build the smiles and pride of a job well done!

Students Leading Students, a program of Student Leadership Services, Inc. (SLS), is an assets-based school and community-based program implemented throughout Michigan. SLS aims to increase skills that protect students from anxiety, stress and self-defeating behaviors. SLS trains students in skills that decrease alcohol, tobacco and other drug use (ATOD) among middle and high-school students. SLS strategies empower and equip youth leaders with knowledge, life skills, and resources to design and implement youth development, mental health, and drug prevention programming. SLS supports local chapters by training adult advisors, training student chapter members/leaders, hosting student-led conferences, providing materials that correlate activities with research, providing grants, and disseminating evidence-based research and strategies about preventing teen ATOD use and other self-destructive pressures through participatory experiences for youth.



To the left:
The Bear
Award
recipient was
Tawas High
School. Good
job, team!

To the right:
Atherton
High School.
Atherton
won
Conference
Action Plan
of \$500.



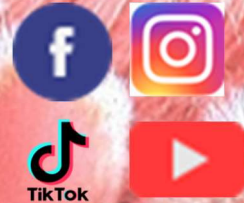
SLS features
"student ideas,
student art,
student creative
writing,
campaigns, and
awards" that are
relevant to their
peers. Noone
else does it
better!

Below: Advisors present
at conference. Thank you!

2024 SLS Conference



To the right:
Tricia DeVries,
SLS Alumna &
2002 SAB,
presenting at
conference '24.
Yeah! Tricia!



Above: Advisor of the Year Award went to
Stephanie Lichota Tawas High School.
Thank you!



Above: Volunteer of the Year Award
went to Kristine Peterson, Marion High
School. Thank you!



Above: Student of the Year Award went
to Jesse Hartman, Tawas High School.
Thank you!



Left: Best Door Decoration Award to Clarenceville High School.



Alert!!
Please sign up with our Google Classroom. Contact dmf@SLStoday.org to sign up.



Thank you Student Advisory Board for planning a life-changing conference!

Marvin Mills, Marion Jr/Sr High School
Cameron Ingersoll, Taylor High School
Alizae Millbauer, Clarenceville High School



To the right: Happy, our SLS Mascot, goes home with Hudson High School for 2024!

To the left: Freeland High School received the Biggest Bubble Award! Super!



Ward Bartlett remembering Brad Simmons, 30-year SLS President. Brad was extraordinary in everything he accomplished and an exemplary role model for Michigan youth. We will miss Brad forever.



Above: Deb Kowalczyk presenting: Have Fun While Getting the Budget Done. Yes! Deb!



SLS is the only Michigan-developed, student-led program with proven outcomes and national validation.

988 is the new Suicide and Crisis Lifeline. It is now active! You can text and/or call to 988 and chat to 988lifeline.org.



Above: Marvin Mills playing the tuba in memory of Brad Simmons. Thank you, Marvin.



Above: Madison Academy received the Most Improved Chapter Award. Keep up the great work!

For education, information, and inspiration, stay connected with SLS.
www.SLStoday.org
1150 Scott Lake Rd
Waterford, MI 48328
248-706-0757

SLS is an inclusive organization that supports all student-led groups that support the SLS mission.

Hillman High School SLS Chapter Ideas and Completed Activities

Describe your winter chapter activities:

We had six SLS students visit the local radio station and record PSA's on vaping and distracted driving. We have been actively involved in the S4SD Campaign and paid a visit to the Hillman Elementary, where we went into classrooms and spoke to the students about distracted driving and held a coloring contest with the students. Our SLS slogan is: "Check Yourself Before You Wreck Yourself" in which we held an assembly on March 8th where we simulated a crash and funeral for our S4SD Campaign. Throughout the week of our campaign and assembly, we made announcements over the intercom giving facts about the consequences of distracted driving. Our students have distributed signs around our town and banded together with our local Farm Bureau agent and passed out Lifesavers with a band that said, "Be a Lifesaver: Don't Text and Drive!" We visited our local assisted living homes: Medi Lodge of Hillman and Hillman's Haven, where we made Easter cards, Easter bags filled with goodies, spent time with residents, and played games with them, spreading kindness and love to those who are the patriarchs of our community. We have flyers to hand out during softball and baseball games spreading awareness. We will do more PSA's on the local radio stations along with bringing in the driving simulator the week of prom. *Hillman is dedicated to saving lives!*



Did you know SLS offers trainings and workshops over the summer?! You can reach out to dmf@SLStoday.org to schedule a training or workshop for your chapter. This is a great way to regroup and stay connected over the summer.

To the left: Another anti-bullying picture from the 7th graders at Mason Middle School during the Botvin Lifeskills classes. Good work, everyone!



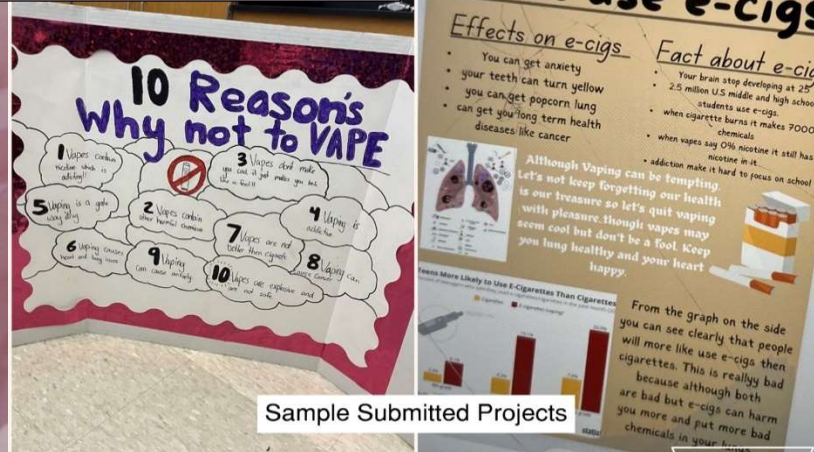
Thank you!

Stacey Anklam, Alum Dan Peace Jet Heat Voss Steel Edelyn Westwood Photography Glantz WSP Seniors Dianne Bostic Robinson Ward Bartlett Sign Fabricators Sue White Toni Lauretano, Alum Dean Petitpren, SLS Co-Founder Larry Rotta, SLS Co-Founder Tricia Devries, Alum Laura Dodd, Alum Brad Petitpren Robert Moore, Alum Boys and Girls Club Troy Brad Simmons David Simmons Trust Pam Voss-Page Zane and Sandra Hatahet Wolf-Chandler Agency Dawn Flood T-shirt Plus Nikki and Allan Motes, Alum Advanced Endodontics United Way of Southeast Michigan Jim Page Jim Lalonde, Alum Robert Beard Foundation Mike Talamonti Deb Kowalczyk Rose Sargol Rocky Byington, Alum Steve Wroblewski OMPT Specialists, Inc. Pete and Teresa Lauretano Bill Brown Ford

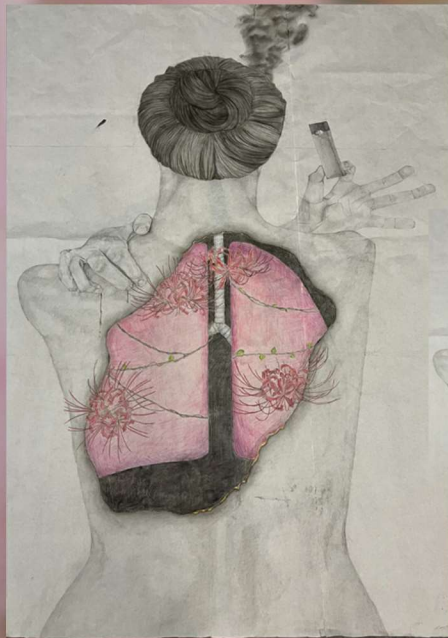
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These pictures are from the Drop the Vapes and Kick the Butts project funded by the Tobacco-Free Michigan Mini grant. The schools that participated were 8th graders from Mason Middle School, 10th graders from Waterford Kettering High School, and 6th-8th graders from the Boys and Girls Club of Troy. Excellent job, everyone! *Wonderful winner: Amanda Garcia with poster and essay! Great!*



Sample Submitted Projects



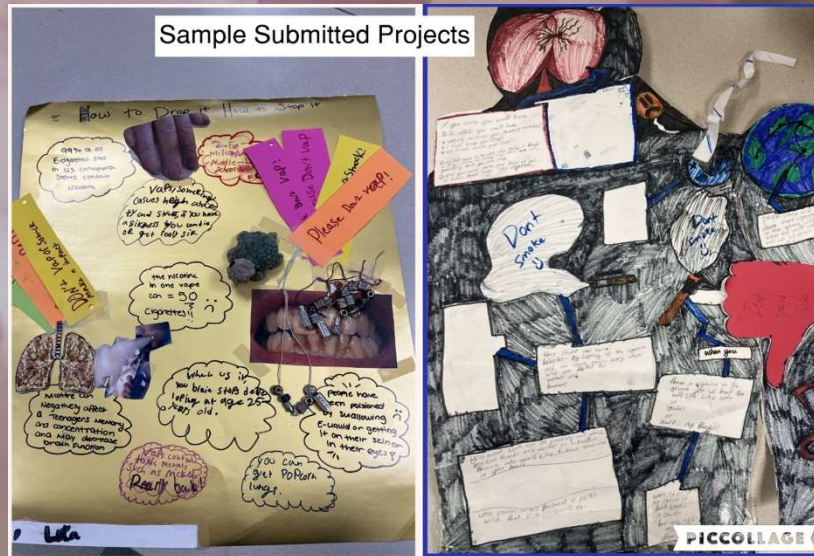
Amanda Garcia - Kettering High School

This drawing was made to display and spread awareness on the problem of vaping. Within the drawing you can see flowers known as spider lilies sprouting from the lungs. Spider lilies are an asian flower that represents death as used in this picture, the lilies display the lungs dying as a result of vaping.

If you look at the hand on the left you will notice blood running down the girl's back from her nails digging in her skin. This is supposed to represent the stress that may have caused someone to vape but also the stress that using a vape causes. Nicotine causes your heart rate and blood pressure to spike making you more stressed. Along with this nicotine interrupts the cerebral dopamine pathway leading to an increase in depression symptoms. In the girl's other hand she is holding a vape and a puff of smoke is being released in the air.

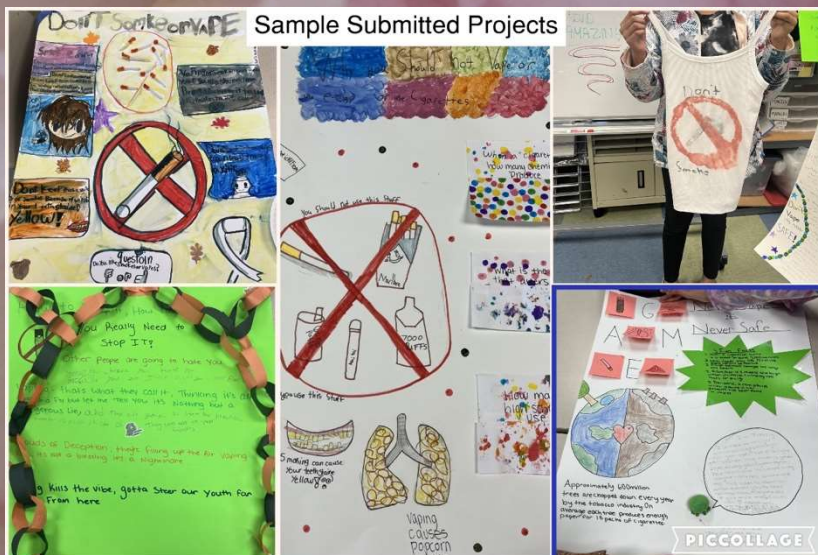
I chose to use flowers as a way to represent the lungs slowly dying because it also represents how the people selling vapes benefit and gain money/grow off of the depression and pain of people who use vapes.

Companies specifically target young people to get them addicted to vaping. 2.5 million middle and high school students vape in the United states. Vaping as a teen can affect brain development and vaping starts causing lung damage in less then a year. Encourage this message and help stop vaping in your school!



Sample Submitted Projects

PICCOLLAGE



Sample Submitted Projects

PICCOLLAGE

SLS Staff

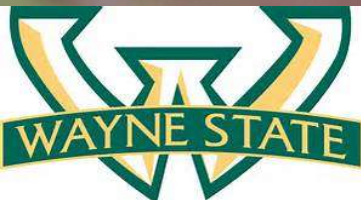
Dawn Flood, Executive Director/ Master Trainer
Pamela Voss-Page, Research Director
Marcia Partin, SLS Prevention Specialist
Morgan Kauffman, SLS Program Intern
Allison Davis, Newsletter Editor
Pastor Benjamin Goss, Youth Pastor
Volunteer Alumni throughout the world!
Student Advisory Board Members 1986-2023



Petitpren



JCT Foundation



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