



Naval Base Kitsap Prevents Drug, Alcohol Abuse

By Mass Communication Specialist 3rd Class Angela Grube, Northwest Region Fleet Public Affairs

SILVERDALE, Wash. (Aug 25, 2006) -- Naval Base Kitsap (NBK) geared up its drug and alcohol abuse prevention program when the Save a Life Tour drunk driving simulator visited NBK Bangor, Aug. 16 and 17.

The Save a Life Tour has been in the area as part of the Right Spirit Campaign. Started in 1996, the Right Spirit Campaign is designed to prevent alcohol abuse, to change Sailors' perspectives of drinking and also provide off-duty activities that do not involve alcoholic beverages.

"The program has made an incredible impact," said Electronics Technician 2nd Class Ryan Flores, NBK Save a Life Tour assistant director. "It's helped not only those who've had DUIs, but Sailors in general. It gives Sailors the confidence to drink responsibly and to take the keys of those who don't."

Brian Beldyga has been working with "Save a Life Tour" for the past six years. He presents high impact alcohol awareness driving simulations to Sailors at various Navy installations.

"The challenges of driving require complete concentration," said Beldyga. "If you can't control a vehicle sober with me coaching you, how are you going to be able to do it drunk?"

Machinist's Mate 2nd Class (SS) Jonathan Goff, USS Louisiana (SSBN 743), participated in the simulator. Goff does not drink and enjoys being the designated driver.

"Driving after drinking is unacceptable," said Goff. "This stimulator reinforces why it is our duty to police our shipmates."

While the "Right Spirit Campaign" targets alcohol problems, education and testing is used as prevention tool for drugs.

"Education is key," said Chief Religious Program Specialist (SW/AW/FMF) Craig Tilley, Navy Region Northwest drug and alcohol contact officer. "The favorite part of my job is to educate and help the Sailors. We want to make sure they can find any information they may need."

Chief Boatswain's Mate (SW/AW) Ray Johnson, NBK Drug and Alcohol Program Advisor (DAPA), said information about drug abuse is presented to the commands for Sailors and their leaders, and includes videotapes, general military training and Navy Knowledge Online courses. Important topics discussed are dispelling myths about beating the system and understanding the consequences of testing positive for drug use.

"A strong prevention program lets everyone know we still have the zero tolerance policy for drugs," said Johnson. "If they are found using drugs, they go home."

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