

## DIVE INTO SADD AT GREAT WOLF LODGE

The 2019 SADD Youth Empowerment Conference is just around the corner, and chapters are busy organizing and raising funds to attend. Our conference will be at the Great Wolf Lodge Water Park in Concord, NC, near Charlotte. The conference will run from Friday afternoon, November 22, through Sunday morning, November 24. The conference is open to SADD chapters and other youth empowerment, health, and safety organizations. The conference is primarily for students in high school and above, but middle school students may attend if they are at least 13 years old. The fee schedule can be found [here](#). The conference registration portal will open October 1, 2019. Prior to registering, you will need to complete and submit the [Advisor Form](#). The sooner this is done, the better. You will not be able to access the portal until the Dept. of Information Technology has received the form and logged you into the system.

At the conference, students will participate in interactive workshops on highway safety (vehicle crashes are still the #1 cause of fatalities for youth aged 16-24), leadership, substance use/misuse prevention, teen pregnancy/STI prevention and other important topics. Students and advisors will have the opportunity to meet and interact with other youth health and safety workers from across the state. The conference is the place to share ideas, successes and challenges, and get the help you need to build stronger chapters. There will also be plenty of time for fun in the water park.

## welcome NEW ADVISORS

Join us in welcoming our new advisors and chapters to the SADD family. We are overjoyed to have **William Alexander**, Roanoke Rapids High School in Halifax County, [alexanderw.rrhs@rrgsd.org](mailto:alexanderw.rrhs@rrgsd.org); **Virgil Flint**, Southwest High School in Onslow County, [virgil.flint@onslow.k12.nc.us](mailto:virgil.flint@onslow.k12.nc.us); **Officer Duwayne Gibbs**, Manteo High School in Dare County, [gibbsdu@daretolearn.org](mailto:gibbsdu@daretolearn.org), and **Jessica Woodson**, Enfield Middle School in Halifax County, [woodsonj@in.halifax.k12.nc.us](mailto:woodsonj@in.halifax.k12.nc.us). Please take the time to extend your welcome, support, and encouragement to these newest members. We appreciate the sacrifice and commitment of these caring adults, and we thank them for their dedication to the health and wellbeing of our students. We look forward to their help in keeping North Carolina **SADDSTRONG**.

## INVOLVING THE FAMILY IN PITT COUNTY

In July, **Pitt County SADD** hosted a Teen Safety Summit to educate parents and teens on some of the important decisions that teens must make during the summer. Topics included safe driving, water safety, and sun safety. The Summit was a collaborative effort of community partners that included the Vidant Medical Center Volunteer Program, Vidant Medical Center Cancer Services, the Greenville Police Department, and Rum Runner Dive Shop. Speakers included parent advocate

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### Ideas? Questions? Concerns?

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John Mercial, founder of Don't Fight the RIP, an educational campaign about rip current safety. Mercial lost his daughter Paige one week after she was pulled from the ocean in Emerald Isle, NC in April, 2019.

The event reached 125 middle and high school students and parents from Pitt, Lenoir, Chowan, Pasquotank and Edgecombe Counties. See the WNCT News coverage of the summit here:

<https://www.wnct.com/news/teen-safety-summit-provides-safety-tools-for-teens/>

## REPRESENTING SADD ACROSS THE GLOBE



Rebecca Chemmanam with students in India.

Rebecca Chemmanam is a senior SADD student leader at J.H. Rose High School in Greenville. In partnership with the Jamie Kimble Foundation for Courage and the Center for Family Violence Prevention, Rebecca created a week-long, interactive curriculum focused on domestic violence education for both male and female students. Over the summer, she visited her home country of India and provided three presentations reaching 280 teens on topics including stress, dating violence and bullying, and alcohol and drug use. She also presented on a data collection component to identify the top stressors for teens. Rebecca plans to conduct several youth presentations this year, and she has received support from the Pitt County Schools administration to implement her curriculum in all six Pitt County high schools in the spring of 2020.

Way to go Pitt County! We're proud of you!



Rebecca teaches a class.

## HELPING TEENS LIVE

*Some brutal facts:* Teen suicides are increasing and threatening to replace traffic crashes as the primary killer of teens. Teens in rural areas are at the greatest risk with suicide rates that are 80% higher than in metropolitan areas. However, there are solutions to teen suicide if we can get beyond the myths and faulty beliefs.

*Some myths and faulty beliefs about suicidal teens:* Once a teenager decides to commit suicide, nothing can stop him or her. Asking teens if they are thinking about killing themselves may give them the idea of suicide. Teens talk about suicide mostly to get attention, therefore the best thing to do is to ignore the teenager.

*What you can do:* If an adolescent says, "I want to kill myself," or "I'm going to commit suicide," always take the statement seriously and immediately seek assistance from a qualified mental health professional. Find out if the teen has suicide ideation (thoughts), a plan, and means, and if so, what it entails. The more specific the plan, the higher the degree of risk for the teen. Take it seriously and seek help.



Tell the teenager that you will do whatever you can to prevent them from committing suicide. Remove or securely lock guns, pills, medications and other potential lethal means, and make sure they're out of reach of the teen.

*What you should not do:* Don't debate the merits of living or dying with an actively suicidal teen. Don't ask why the teenager would like to commit suicide. They may not know why. Don't belittle the teen for having suicidal thoughts. Don't stay passive or ignore the threat of a suicidal teenager. Seek mental health help. Don't leave the teen alone if you think there is immediate danger.

Don't offer cliched speeches, give false reassurances, or try to talk them out of it. Try to understand where the teen is coming from and what they're feeling.

If you are feeling suicidal, thinking about hurting yourself, or are concerned that someone you know may be in danger of hurting themselves, call 911 or the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline at 1-800-273-TALK (1-800-273-8255).

*(Sources: Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration; Centers for Disease Control and Prevention)*

## REMEMBER TO REGISTER YOUR CHAPTER

All chapters must register or reregister at the beginning of each school year. Each year's registration is only for the current school term. The only way we can know how many SADD chapters we have each year is if all chapters register. The advisor will register themselves and each member. The membership fee is \$5.00 per person. Your registration entitles you to SADD scholarships and other benefits not available to unregistered chapters. You will need to register on the [SADD Portal](#). If you have questions or you need help registering, contact the state coordinator at [hsoutherland@ncsadd.org](mailto:hsoutherland@ncsadd.org) or 919-807-4408.

Thanks to all the chapters that have already registered this year. Thanks for keeping NC **SADDSTRONG.**



# Have a Wonderful School year!