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The Education / Law Enforcement Partnership  
National Conference

September 27 - 30, 1989  
Chicago, Illinois

Chicago Hilton and Towers  
(312) 922-4400  
Contact: Dan Bolin

Co-sponsored by Eastern Illinois University's  
Office of Safety Programs and the U.S.  
Department of Education Drug-Free Schools  
and Communities Program

**MEDIA RELEASE**

89-630

September 29, 1989 ✓

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE:

PARTNERSHIP IS CONFERENCE THEME

CHICAGO, IL.--Schools, communities and law enforcement must work together to effectively address the problem of drug and alcohol abuse among young people is the message prevention authorities are bringing to a national drug conference here this week.

The conference at the Chicago Hilton and Towers, titled "The Education/Law Enforcement Partnership," has brought together more than 300 educators, law enforcement officials and prevention professionals to share ideas, problems and issues related to alcohol and substance abuse prevention. It is being co-sponsored by Eastern Illinois University and the U.S. Department of Education.

Alicia Coro, Director of the U.S. Department of Education School Improvement Programs, best summarized the reoccurring theme of the conference today when she said, "It is necessary to have cooperation between schools, juvenile courts, families, community agencies and businesses to carry out any kind of community-wide strategy, particularly to carry out consistent intervention with others who use, possess, or distribute drugs."

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She added, "If our schools are not safe, our children cannot learn. A strong education/law enforcement partnership is essential if we are to create and maintain a healthy environment for teaching and learning."

Coro told educators and law enforcement representatives, "We, at the federal level, are working hard to coordinate federal drug efforts and assist you in the development and implementation of these programs. In providing consistent leadership, we can help to support your efforts and create a national strategy that will be both responsive to state and local needs and, ultimately effective in creating a drug-free society."

William Atkins, Director of the Illinois Department of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse, also stressed the need to form a partnership of prevention professionals from the education and law enforcement fields.

"Whether we are focusing on reducing the supply or demand of illegal drugs, it must be done in a coordinated and cooperative effort with the help of everyone," Atkins said.

Dr. David Hawkins, co-author of Preparing for the Drug (Free) Years, introduced the idea of using a risk-focused approach to drug abuse prevention.

Atkins said, "If we are going to be effective in preventing drug abuse, we have got to take a risk-focused approach, which is based on the simple premise that if you want to prevent a problem from happening in the first place, you have to identify the factors that increase the risk of that problem and then address those factors."

The Honorable Reggie B. Walton, Associate Director of the Office of National Drug Control Policy, said the solution to the nation's drug problem does not rest in the legalization of drugs, but rather in a national drug control policy that emphasizes strong law enforcement, treatment, education and prevention.

He ended today's sessions on a positive note. "If we have the will of the American people to say this is something that must stop, because if it doesn't it's going to lead us straight to hell, then I am convinced that one day...we will put this behind us and continue to go on to be a great nation. "