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FRATERNAL BENEFITS  
AND FINANCIAL SERVICES  
FOR LUTHERANS

*AAL and affiliated companies*  
4321 North Ballard Road, Appleton, WI 54919-0001

# NEWS RELEASE

Appleton, WI--AAL, the nation's leading fraternal benefit society, is launching a nationwide program for parents to help fight abuse of alcohol and other drugs among our country's youth.

A new AAL program, called "Get Involved Before Your Kids Do," has been introduced to all of AAL's 6,600 branches. It was developed, in part, in response to a personal request by President Reagan that AAL become involved in the fight against drugs. AAL Branch in , has committed itself to the project and will sponsor the activity locally sometime soon.

It is expected that a majority of AAL's branches will sponsor this program in their local communities within the next year, educating thousands of parents about how to combat the problem of alcohol and other drug abuse among youth. Parents of children ages 9 to 14 are being invited to participate.

According to Judy Stadler, AAL co-developer of the program, "Research shows the age children begin experimenting with alcohol and other drugs is younger every year. The sooner parents become involved in helping their kids, the more likely they'll be to stop problems before they start. Our program helps parents do this in an effective manner."

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The "Get Involved" branch program includes a two-and-a-half hour workshop which combines a videotape presentation, group discussion and take-home activities for parents to use with their children. The videotape, "Drug Free Kids," is hosted by actor Ken Howard and features some of television's most popular actors and actresses role-playing family scenes. Each scene demonstrates parenting techniques necessary to help children stay away from alcohol and other drugs.

"Branches are being encouraged to sponsor other community activities addressing these themes and will receive funding from the AAL home office in Appleton, Wisconsin, to accomplish this goal," noted Marsha Nelson of AAL who also helped develop the program.

The "Get Involved" branch program is part of a larger five-program AAL emphasis called "Heart to Heart: Connecting Parents and Kids." All programs are designed to help parents of school-aged children with the difficult and challenging job of positively influencing their children.

Four other educational branch programs under this "Heart to Heart" theme include "I'm in Charge...When I'm Home Alone," providing self-care ideas for kids who spend time at home alone; "Career Connections," helping parents learn how to coach their teenagers and preteens with career selection; "Families Celebrate!," emphasizing the value of celebrations as a family-strengthening device; and "Talking Money," helping parents teach their children about money.

AAL, a not-for-profit organization, provides its 1.4 million members in 6,600 nationwide branches with fraternal benefits, while its affiliated companies offer members other financial services. In addition, members are offered the volunteer opportunities to help others in their own communities. AAL, based in Appleton, Wisconsin, is the nation's largest fraternal benefit society in terms of assets and ordinary life insurance in force.



# *Get Involved Before Your Kids Do* A National Program of AAL

Get Involved Before Your Kids Do is a new alcohol and drug abuse prevention program specially developed for members of AAL's 6,600 branches. The program has two parts: AAL branch-sponsored Get Involved workshops and community outreach events.

Current research indicates parents are the first and best protection against substance abuse. That's why this AAL branch workshop is designed for parents of late elementary and junior high-school age children. Get Involved workshops seek to help parents develop such skills as:

- Talking with their children about alcohol and drugs.
- Setting family rules about alcohol and drugs.
- Assessing their own behaviors with respect to alcohol and drugs.
- Networking with other parents to help all children through the high-risk years.

Locally chosen facilitators lead the workshops which can be designed to accommodate varying numbers of participants. The format combines a videotape presentation, group discussion and a parent take-home booklet with exercises for parents and children. AAL also has developed a detailed planning guide to help members organize a Get Involved workshop.

The second part of the Get Involved program is aimed at increasing prevention efforts in the community as a whole. After conducting the educational workshop, branches are eligible for a \$300 community outreach grant. The grant is to be applied to prevention projects aimed at a larger community audience, including children. Complete guidelines and criteria for the community outreach portion of the program are provided by AAL. Some suggested events include:

- Get Involved workshops for local parent groups.
- Alcohol-free special event parties for high school students.
- Sponsorship of knowledgeable speakers on the topic of alcohol and drug abuse prevention.
- Provision of funding for a local Students Against Driving Drunk (SADD) project.
- Demonstrations of alcohol-free beverages and party ideas for high school students and the community, with accompanying educational materials.

This packet includes the Get Involved parent take-home booklet and samples of other Get Involved program materials.

## Ten Communication Skills for Parents

The following are 10 easy steps parents can take to prevent the use of alcohol and other drugs by their children. These recommendations are included in AAL's new branch program, "Get Involved Before Your Kids Do."

- \*Talk to your child about alcohol and other drugs.
- \*Learn to really listen to your child.
- \*Help your child feel good about himself or herself.
- \*Help your child develop strong values.
- \*Be a good role model or example in your own use of alcohol.
- \*Help your preteen deal with peer pressure.
- \*Set firm rules about drinking and other drug use.
- \*Encourage healthy, creative activities.
- \*Talk with other parents.
- \*Know what to do if you suspect a problem.

These 10 steps were prepared by the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism for the Office of Substance Abuse Prevention in Rockville, Maryland.