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Keebler Company One Hollow Tree Lane Elmhurst, Illinois 60126 312/833-2900

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Contact:

David F. Mishur, Keebler Company
(312) 833-2900, or

Karin Lippert, DC Comics Inc.
(212) 484-2900

THE KEEBLER COMPANY AND DC COMICS INC. JOIN THE
PRESIDENT'S EDUCATION PROGRAM FOR DRUG AWARENESS

The White House/Private Sector Program to Combat Drug Abuse
Is Launched with a New Teen Titans Comic Book--titled, "Plague!"

Washington, D.C. (April 25, 1983)--A drug free future for America's youth is the goal of an innovative educational program introduced today at a White House press conference. "Thanks to the efforts of the Keebler Company and DC Comics Inc., we have a unique opportunity to eliminate drug abuse in future generations of Americans," said Dr. Carlton Turner, Special Assistant to the President for Drug Abuse Policy.

"All across the country, parents, teachers, and children themselves are looking for ways to remove drug abuse from our society," said Dr. Turner. "The New Teen Titans program, developed by Keebler and DC in cooperation with the White House, is an excellent program to help youngsters in fourth grade become aware of the problems associated with drug and alcohol abuse. Communicating the truth about drugs to user and potential user is one of the most effective weapons we have in the battle against drug abuse."

-More-

The New Teen Titans drug awareness program--a comic book dramatic story involving DC Super Heroes and the terrifying experiences of young drug users, a classroom poster, a teacher's guide and a certificate for students participating in the project--is introduced by a letter from the First Lady. Mrs. Reagan has repeatedly expressed her concern about the effect which America's drug epidemic has on the country's young people and, joining the President, has committed her time and leadership to help.

"Don't let anyone tell you that you can't be a hero," Mrs. Reagan wrote students. "You can--with the drug awareness comic book and educational materials--learn to be a hero. All of the activities in the program lead-in with the Keebler Elf, Ernie, expressing the key points of the activity and its goal. The theme of the poster with Ernie and the Protector--a new character created for the drug awareness program--is "Be A Hero... Stay Drug Free!"

"We are proud to be a part of this very important program," Mr. Thomas M. Garvin, President and Chief Executive Officer, said on behalf of the Keebler Company. "We are happy to lend our support to a program that is committed to solving a problem that has become epidemic among young people today."

The New Teen Titans are currently the best-selling comic book published by DC Comics. The Titans are seven teenagers who have fought against the forces of evil both on Earth and across the universe. "Because the characters are youths who possess remarkable abilities they inspire the young readers of their adventures and act as role models," said Jenette Kahn, President and Publisher of DC. "This story--the "Plague!"--was written by Marv Wolfman, with art by the talented George Perez," she said, "and I can't think of anyone who could have written a more serious and compelling story."

"I had no idea of the magnitude of the drug abuse problem until I began to hear the experiences of these tortured kids at a drug center meeting," Marv Wolfman recalls, "I was extremely moved by their stories and am glad to have the opportunity to

do something meaningful about this national tragedy."

"Keebler Company feels very strongly about young people; they are the future--the business and governmental leaders for the years ahead. It's only proper, therefore, that business and government should work together to combat this problem which has such grave implications for us both," stated Mr. Charles L. Shemely, Senior Vice-President, of the Keebler Company.

"These two companies have demonstrated that the private sector and the public sector can work together to better serve the needs of our country," said Dr. Turner. "I believe that the program can influence large numbers of youngsters away from drug use--and create an awareness that young people have a right to a drug-free environment which does not interfere with their learning and growth."

For further information, please contact: David F. Mishur, the Keebler Company, (312) 833-2900 or Karin Lippert, DC Comics Inc., (212) 484-2820.

Ernie the Elf is a Trademark of the Keebler Company 1983.
The New Teen Titans and The Protector are Trademarks of DC Comics Inc. 1983.

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THE WHITE HOUSE
Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

April 25, 1983

PRIVATE SECTOR DRUG ABUSE AWARENESS PROGRAM

Dr. Carlton Turner, Special Assistant to the President for Drug Abuse Policy, today announced the release of the first in a series of drug abuse awareness comic books. Joining Dr. Turner were representatives of DC Comics, a division of Warner Communications, and The Keebler Company.

DC Comics donated the talent and artwork for the comic books, and production was made possible by a grant from The Keebler Company. A million copies of the comic book package are being mailed this month to elementary schools across the nation for distribution to fourth grades. The Department of Education assumed mailing and distribution responsibilities.

The comic book project is part of a White House campaign to enlist the private sector in the national campaign against drug abuse. The Keebler Company and DC Comics sponsored the first comic book project for the fourth grade; a similar project for fifth and sixth graders is being developed. The fifth grade project is being sponsored by IBM, the National Federation of Parents for a Drug Free Youth, and DC Comics Inc. The sixth grade project is being made possible by the National Soft Drink Association and DC Comics.

The First Lady wrote a letter to the students which has been included in each comic book. She also sent a letter to the principals of each school encouraging their support of the program.

A related project for the development of a drug abuse awareness coloring book for kindergarten through third grades is also planned.

Also joining in the announcement was Dr. Terry Borton, Editor-in-Chief of the classroom publication The Weekly Reader. Dr. Borton released the findings of a readership poll from the fourth through twelfth grades. The poll, comprising responses from 500,000 school children, makes clear the case for early education in drug abuse awareness. The grade school children report peer pressure to try drugs and alcohol is evident as early as the fourth grade.

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

April 1983

Dear School Principal:

In the past several years I have visited drug rehabilitation centers and prevention programs across the country to talk with as many young people as possible. What I have seen and heard is enough to make the strongest heart break.

Never have I felt as compelled to do something about an issue as I feel now about the problem of drug use among our school-age children. The children who are using drugs are younger all the time. Drugs are taking away their hope, their promise, their spirit and, sometimes, even their lives.

I am writing to you because we need your help in solving this terrifying problem. No one can do it alone. All of us -- educators, parents and students -- need to work together.

Very soon you will receive a package of materials especially designed to help combat the drug problem. The package will contain clever comic books written on the subject, a classroom poster, a teacher's guide and awards for students participating in the project.

These materials are designed with fourth-graders in mind. More than a million of the books will be available, but unfortunately, even this quantity cannot reach all of the fourth-graders in the nation. With your encouragement, we hope the students will share these materials with their classmates this spring or in the fall.

I thank Secretary Bell, the Department of Education and the Association of Elementary and Secondary School Principals for their assistance and I commend the generous corporations which provided the financial resources for this project.

With educators, parents and students all working together, I am convinced we can make a difference and make possible a drug-free future for our youth.

Sincerely,

Nancy Reagan

NANCY REAGAN

THE WHITE HOUSE

Dear Friend:

Don't let anyone tell you that you can't be a hero. You can--and you are about to learn how.

Picture yourself in a battle. In fact, it is one of the most important battles our nation has ever fought. You are right in the center of combat. Sound incredible? It is all part of being a hero.

Is this an imaginary battle? Not at all. Many young people are already in it and they would do anything to be on the winning side. But they've learned about it too late.

The battle is against drug abuse. Declare that you will stay drug-free. At any cost. You're guaranteed to win. And you'll be a hero--to your mother and father, family and friends, but most of all, to yourself.

There's a lot more to it and you'll learn about it as you go along. The President feels as strongly as I do about winning this battle. His Drug Awareness Campaign put this material together and generous corporations paid for it. It was done especially for you. We hope you will give being a hero your very best effort.

Sincerely,

Ronald Reagan

WEEKLY READER

Editorial Offices: 245 Long Hill Road, Middletown, Connecticut 06457 Tel:(203)347-7251

For Release:

April 25, 1983

PRESSURE TO TRY DRUGS, ALCOHOL

STARTS IN EARLY GRADES, SURVEY SHOWS

MIDDLETOWN, Conn., April 25--Grade school children report substantial peer pressure to try drugs and alcohol as early as fourth grade, according to a survey of U.S. schoolchildren by the classroom publication Weekly Reader.

The readership poll, said to be the first major national survey of young children on the subject of drugs and alcohol, was distributed to 3.7 million students in grades four through twelve. Five hundred thousand children responded.

A random sample representing about 100,000 students was selected from the responses, analyzed, and then weighted to adjust for the U.S. population distribution.

The results show that in grades four and five children receive their education about the dangers of drugs and drinking about equally from family and movies/television. Not until grade six does school become an equal source of information, and not until grade seven does school become the major source.

And yet, as early as fourth grade about 25 percent say that children in their age-group feel "some" to "a lot" of peer pressure to try beer, wine, liquor, or marijuana. By the time they are in seventh grade, about 60 percent feel pressure to try alcohol; and about 50 percent, to try marijuana.

The motivation for trying drugs and liquor in the lower grades appeared to be a desire to "feel older"; and then as the children progressed through the middle grades, to "fit in with other kids"; and finally in grades nine through twelve, "to have a good time."

(More)

April 25, 1983

About 75 percent of children in fourth grade saw "some" or "great" risk posed to children their age who had one alcoholic drink or smoked one marijuana cigarette daily, while about 20 percent saw "no risk." The percentage seeing "some" or "great" risk for daily use of alcohol or marijuana rose slightly from fourth to seventh grade, and then dropped slightly in high school.

Another significant finding was the schoolchildren's beliefs concerning experiments with hard drugs by their peers. In grade four, about 50 percent of the students estimated that no "kids your age" in "your town or city" had tried cocaine, and about 60 percent said that no students had tried angel dust or LSD.

Dr. Terry Borton, editor in chief of Weekly Reader periodicals, stressed that "students are reporting on what they believe to be happening generally and not on their own behavior. Other studies have shown that actual use of these drugs is not this high, even among high school seniors. But the fact that young students think drug use is so common is in itself cause for concern, since our survey also shows that many kids use drugs to 'fit in.'"

The Weekly Reader survey was done in cooperation with:

The White House Office of Policy Development, Drug Abuse Policy Office;

The Alcohol, Drug Abuse, and Mental Health Administration;

The Johnson Institute;

The National Federation of Parents for Drug-Free Youth; and

The National Institute of Drug Abuse.

Weekly Reader periodicals are published by Xerox Education Publications, a unit of Xerox Corporation.

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For Further Information:

Dr. Terry Borton, Editor in Chief

Xerox Education Publications

Middletown, CT 06457

(203) 347-7251, Ext. 2211

comeback for
- Lou Harris

THE BULLETIN



By David Kaminer, Special to USA TODAY
Bond Dealers — Publishers have sometimes
not known how to sort it out in the streets.



By David Kaminer, Special to USA TODAY
IN CALIFORNIA: Reader
Linda Baggett of Del Norte
County says she can
pick it up, carry it around.

ER STORY

publishers,
readers both
bullish

KIDS, DRUGS & ALCOHOL

Pressure starts in 4th grade,
study of 500,000 says today

By Brenda Eady
USA TODAY

Children feel pressure to use drugs and drink alcohol as early as the fourth grade, says a survey of half a million students to be released today.

About 25 percent of fourth-graders who answered said they feel "some to a lot of peer pressure to try beer, wine, liquor or marijuana."

"We have to get the message out to the younger kids ... it looks like it's too late if you don't get to them by the fourth grade," said Pat McKelvey, White House Drug Abuse Policy Office spokesman.

Almost 500,000 students in grades 4 through 12 responded to the survey, conducted by the *Weekly Reader* with the White House drug abuse office.

Its findings:

■ Fourth and fifth graders learn about drug dangers mainly from parents, TV and movies. In sixth grade, children say they learn from school as well.

■ 75 percent of fourth graders saw "some or great risk" from one drink or one marijuana cigarette a day.

■ More than 25 percent of sixth graders said alcohol is a big problem with hometown peers. More than a third said marijuana is a big problem.

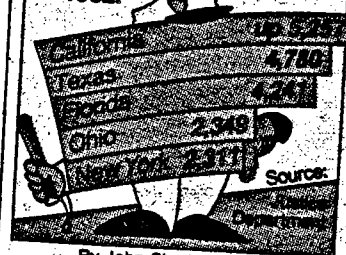
■ The motivation in lower grades to use drugs or drink was to feel older; in middle grades, to fit in; and in grades 9 to 12, to have a good time.

The Drug Abuse Policy Office will announce today a drug awareness campaign using comic-book characters that will reach a million fourth-graders in 35,000 schools.

Nevada bets on

Crowded prisons

The five largest state prison systems had the biggest gains in inmate population in 1982:



By John Sherlock, USA TODAY

USA prison population hits peak

By Peter Adams
USA TODAY

The number of people in prison in the USA reached a record 412,303 in 1982 — up 11.6 percent, the Justice Department said Sunday.

This has federal prisons bursting at the seams; nearly 24 percent over capacity.

But state prisons are a bigger problem with 382,680 inmates, up 12.1 percent from 1981.

Thirty-one states are under court order to remedy prison overcrowding.

Reasons for the increases:

■ A record number of people are between 20 and 29 years old; most crimes are committed by people in that age group.

■ Stricter laws: During the past three years, 37 states passed mandatory sentencing laws that keep criminals behind bars for a fixed period.

USA Today
4-25-83

Reversing children's attitudes about drugs

By Louise Sweeney

Staff correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

Washington

Among fourth graders surveyed by a national publication for schoolchildren, 50 percent believed that some, most, or all of their peers have tried marijuana. Forty percent believed that some or all have tried cocaine, and 75 percent believed that some or all have tried beer, wine, or liquor at least once. Most reported substantial "peer pressure" to try both alcohol and drugs.

The survey was conducted by Weekly Reader Publications, whose magazines reach 8 million children, from preschoolers through 12th grade. Its findings are based on responses from 500,000 schoolchildren nationwide, grades 4-12, who filled out survey questions in their classrooms. Of these, 100,000 were closely analyzed, focusing on the younger grades, for the final survey figures. Children reported drug and alcohol use among their peers, but were not asked to report if they drank or took drugs themselves.

"To our knowledge, this is the first large-scale study of young children's attitudes on drugs and alcohol," says Terry Borton, editor-in-chief of Weekly Reader Publications. The basic conclusion of the study, he says, is that "a fundamental shift of attitudes has to take place that makes drugs seem like a less necessary and glamorous part of growing up. Knowledge is not the problem. Attitudes are the problem."

The Weekly Reader findings are to be released today (April 25) at a White House press conference dealing with the pervasiveness of drug and alcohol use among young children. In conjunction with that, Carlton Turner, director of the White House Drug Abuse Policy Office, will announce a new, privately funded, "President's Drug Awareness Program" for grade schoolers.

The program will try to attack the attitude problems underscored by Dr. Borton. Youngsters will be urged to reconsider the idea that drugs are socially acceptable.

Already, one million copies of "The New Teen Titans," a drug-awareness kit based on a specially created comic book by DC Comics, have been sent by the Department of Education to fourth graders in 35,000 schools across the nation. The comic books are packaged along with student activity guides, posters, teacher guides, and a "certificate of heroism." A letter from First Lady Nancy Reagan inside the comic books

urges each child to be "a hero . . . in the battle against drug abuse and pledge to stay drug-free."

A cover letter to school principals, also signed by Mrs. Reagan, mentions her visits to drug rehabilitation centers, and urges administrators to help solve the drug problem. Eventually the comics are to reach all schoolchildren in Grades 3-6. They're funded by the Keebler Company, a maker of cookies and other baked goods, and Warner Communications Company, the publishers of DC Comics. A drug-awareness coloring book for kindergarten through third grade is on the drawing board as well, according to a White House spokesman.

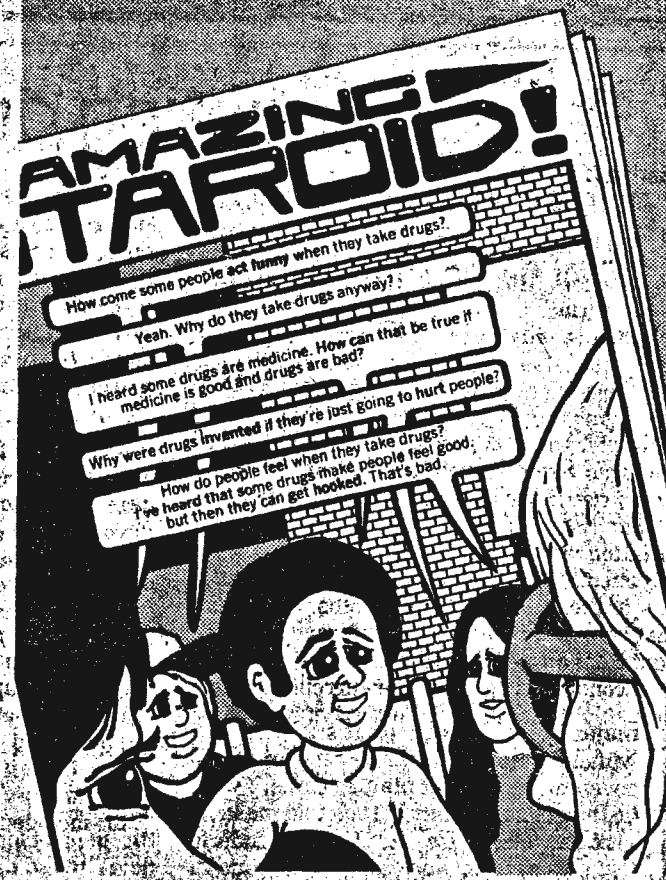
A similar effort is about to be launched by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), a branch of the government's Public Health Service. In May, the institute will launch a national "It's O.K. to Say No" campaign of television and radio public-service spots aimed at 11- to 13-year-olds. Other spots will target teen-agers, warning them of the dangers of mixing marijuana and driving. In all, NIDA is sending out 2,800 sets of radio spots and 800 sets of TV spots to state drug-abuse agencies across the country for distribution to broadcasters.

The spots will include information on where school officials, parents, and others can write to obtain printed materials put out by NIDA, including "Catching On," a drug-information comic book. This comic features a "staroid," an extraterrestrial being that looks like a cross between a TV and a computer, which tunes readers in to the dangers of drugs. Other items: "It's Okay to Say No," a flyer for combating peer pressure to use drugs, and "For Kids Only" and "Quiz Whizz," pamphlets for children. There are fliers aimed at parents as well.

In the "New Teen Titans" package and the NIDA material, the emphasis is on informing young people of the dangers of drugs and combating peer pressure to use them.

In the Weekly Reader survey, 25 percent of the fourth graders responding said children their own age encourage each other to try marijuana, and 33 percent said there is peer pressure to try beer, wine, and liquor.

The survey indicates that the figures rise with each elementary-school grade level. In fifth grade, 33 percent reported peer pressure to use marijuana, and 40 percent to use alcohol. By eighth grade, the pressure to use marijuana is up



National Institute on Drug Abuse
"Catching On" comic; an effort to stimulate rethinking

to 57 percent, according to the survey, and pressure to drink is up to 67 percent.

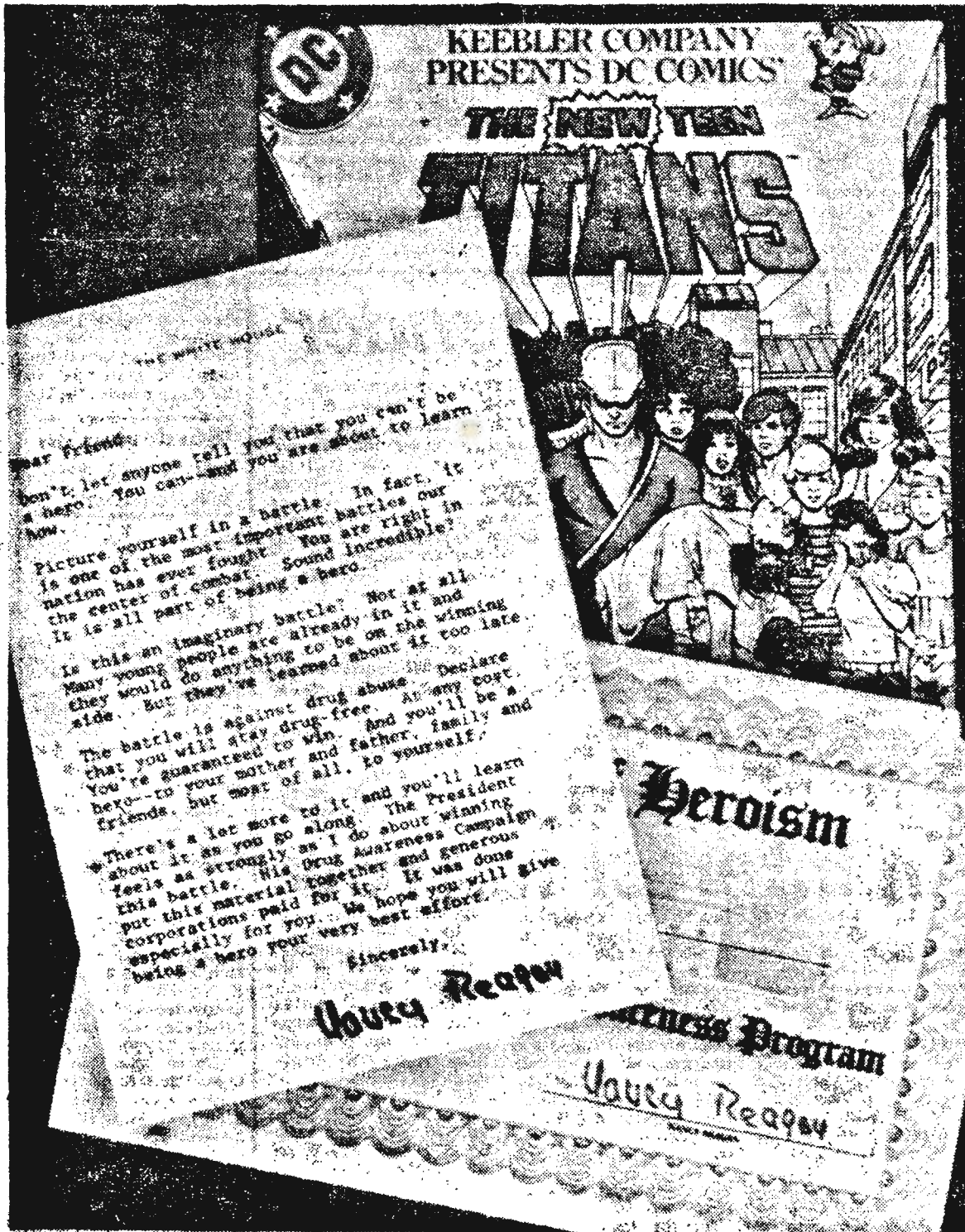
Weekly Reader editor Borton speaks of the impact of peer pressure to use drugs and alcohol on children surveyed. He says the survey revealed that "for young kids, the primary reasons [they start] are to feel older and to fit in with other kids. I had not expected to see so much evidence of the degree of pressure to use drugs and alcohol among kids this young." At present, he notes, most school programs designed to inform students about the danger of drug use don't start till sixth or seventh grade.

What the Trilateral Commission is

Rebel death adds fuel to charges that

ZAP! POW! U.S. UNLEASHES COMIC BOOK TO FIGHT DRUGS

NY POST 9/26/83 CENTER SPREAD



WASHINGTON (AP) — "Skree! Blam! Foom!" The White House presents a special issue of "The New Teen Titans," a comic book about super-heroes who vanquish drug abuse.

The comic book, produced by DC Comics of New York and underwritten by the Keebler Co., was unveiled yesterday as a new tool to help prevent drug use among fourth-graders.

In a cover letter, Nancy Reagan tells youngsters: "Don't let anyone tell you that you can't be a hero ... Declare that you will stay drug-free. At any cost. And you'll be a hero — to your mother and father, family and friends, but most of all, to yourself."

The comic book is built around the heroic exploits of "The New Teen Titans" characters. A new character called "The Protector," a troubled teenager trying to atone for his drug-ridden past, was created especially for this issue entitled "Plague."

"He died! That's not FAIR! Nobody should die that young!" cries the character Starfire after a young boy overdoses.

Though the Titans — seven teenagers who fight evil across the universe — never actually tell youngsters that drugs are bad, most eventually see the light for themselves after a great deal of turmoil.

The comic book is being distributed by the Education Dept. to an estimated one million fourth-graders in 35,000 schools. That amounts to about 40 per cent of the nation's fourth-graders.

The last page contains a pledge for students to sign: "I declare that I am aware of the dangerous effects of drugs. I am responsible for myself and will never use any unlawful drug."

First Lady Nancy Reagan's cover letter and certificate of heroism accompany new anti-drug comic book, being distributed to fourth graders.

Associated Press Photo

The Washington Post

STYLE



From the back cover of "The New Teen Titans" #99, DC Comics Inc., reprinted by permission.

PRESERVATION COPY

Tuesday, April 26, 1983

Pow to Drugs! Teen Titans To the Rescue!

Washington Ways

First Lady's Crusade Hits the Comic Books And the Classrooms

By Donnie Radcliffe

What's Nancy Reagan doing with a half-dozen characters who sound as if they're fugitives from a comic book? Names like The Changeling (Shape-Shifter Supreme), Cyborg (Half Man/Half Robot), Raven (Mysterious Empath), The Protector (Fighting Fury), Speedy (the Battling Bowman), Starfire (Alien Powerhouse) and Wonder Girl (the Amazing Amazon)?

What she's doing, as the White House announced yesterday, is taking her drug-abuse crusade to fourth-grade classrooms in 35,000 schools around the country. And what better way to do it than with that oft-scorned and sometimes violent chronicle of childhood fantasies, the comic book?

"Don't let anyone tell you that you can't be a hero," Mrs. Reagan writes in "The New Teen Titans," a DC Comics Inc. publication underwritten by Keebler Co. and unveiled yesterday by the White House. "You can—and you are about to learn how. Picture yourself in battle. In fact, it is one of the most important battles our nation has ever fought."

See WAYS, B13, Col. 3

WAYS, From B1

Protector, Speedy, Starfire and the others were only part of package introduced as The President's Drug Awareness Campaign by the White House Office of Drug Abuse Policy, the Department of Education and a half-dozen other groups and companies.

The other part was what some at the news conference yesterday hailed as the first national survey of school-age children on what they think and know about drugs and alcohol. Conducted this winter by the classroom publication Weekly Reader, the survey represents a random sample of about 100,000 students, out of 500,000 responding in Grades 4 through 12. The results were analyzed and weighted to adjust for U.S. population distribution. In addition to other findings, it revealed that among fourth graders:

- Some feel significant pressures to use drugs and alcohol (25 percent);
- Many perceive movies/TV (36 percent) and family (34 percent) as principal sources of information on alcohol and drugs;
- Most perceive a significant risk in using one or the other of the drugs (75 percent);
- Some think kids start using marijuana to "feel older" (25 percent) or "fit in" (31 percent) with other kids; about the same percentages say they think kids use alcohol for the same reasons.

"The survey breaks new ground for us about attitudes on drug abuse," said Carlton Turner, the president's adviser on drug abuse policy, whose office worked with Weekly Reader in developing the survey. "We knew drug education was necessary, but we didn't know at what age."

Terry Borton, editor in chief of Weekly Reader, said his own conviction, after studying the survey, was that "we need to go below the fourth grade" to ascertain attitudes of even younger children.

"Drugs and drug peddling are big business in America, a \$79 billion retail endeavor that exceeds [the annual income] of every U.S. company except Exxon," said Secretary of Education Terrel H. Bell. His office is involved in distributing the comic books, which went out yesterday to 35,000 schools.

The survey did not ask how many fourth-graders use drugs or alcohol because information was collected

through classroom teachers. "We did not feel we could ask them to tell their teachers," said Borton.

Turner said that other information, however, shows that the average age of a first-time user is 13, "but there are a lot below and a lot above."

Turner's office came up with the idea for the comic book last winter, then approached several publishers, including DC Comics. Although DC Comics had already started a similar commercial project, according to Turner, it expressed a desire to participate. He said Keebler agreed to underwrite the project. There will be other comic books coming out in the fall, with other corporate backers, Turner said.

"It will be the first time we will ever have had a mechanism where we can follow the trends from the fourth grade up," Turner said.

He said statistics show that each comic book is reread six times by the child before it is passed along and ultimately read by six other children.

Charles L. Shemely, Keebler's senior vice president, said cost had not been a consideration for getting into the program. And Nancy Reagan said later through her press secretary, Sheila Tate, that she was glad to see "a cooperative effort" between Keebler and her husband's Drug Policy office.

Mrs. Reagan also liked the comic book ("another good tool, like 'Diff'rent Strokes,'" a TV show in which she appeared). The book includes a "Declaration" for young readers to sign and tell why they want to be a "titan" in the drug war. Accompanying the book, in material for teachers, is a "certificate of heroism" superimposed over a drawing of the White House, with a facsimile of Mrs. Reagan's autograph.

Jenette Kahn, president and publisher of DC Comics, said the comic book was aimed at non-drug users in the fourth grade because "it would be naive of us to think that with a teacher and a comic book we could get heavy users off drugs."

When comedian Mark Russell and Nancy Reagan sat next to each other at the head table Saturday night at the White House Correspondents Dinner, what were they talking about?

Drugs, according to spokeswoman for both Russell and Mrs. Reagan. The first lady gave him a complete rundown on her anti-drug abuse efforts to date.

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RW

DRUG-COMIC

WASHINGTON (AP) -- IN AN EFFORT TO EDUCATE STUDENTS ABOUT DRUGS, THE WHITE HOUSE TODAY UNVEILED A COMIC BOOK ENTITLED "THE NEW TEEN TITANS" THAT WILL BE DISTRIBUTED TO FOURTH GRADERS AROUND THE NATION.

THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT IS SENDING COPIES OF THE COMIC BOOK TO 35,000 ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS. THE COMIC IS ACCOMPANIED BY A COVER LETTER FROM FIRST LADY NANCY REAGAN URGING STUDENTS TO BECOME HEROES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST DRUGS.

"DON'T LET ANYONE TELL YOU THAT YOU CAN'T BE A HERO," SHE WRITES IN THE LETTER. "DECLARE THAT YOU WILL STAY DRUG-FREE, AT ANY COST. YOU'RE GUARANTEED TO WIN. AND YOU'LL BE A HERO -- TO YOUR MOTHER AND FATHER, FAMILY AND FRIENDS, BUT MOST OF ALL, TO YOURSELF."

THE BOOK WAS DEVELOPED BY DC COMICS INC., OF NEW YORK, WITH THE COSTS PICKED UP BY THE KEEBLER CO. THE PROJECT WAS SUPERVISED BY CARLTON TURNER, SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO PRESIDENT REAGAN FOR DRUG ABUSE POLICY.

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AP-WX-04-25-83 1235EDT

Fighting the 'Plague' Through Truth, Justice And the American Way

By Richard Harrington

It may be a comic book, but the kids inside tell their stories Synanon-style: "Hi, I'm Anna Juarez, and I'm 12 years old. I've taken pot, hash, hash oil, Dilaudid, cocaine, downers and Quaaludes. I've been taking them for three years. My brother Juan, he was the one who started me using drugs. Now look at him—he's dead."

The name of the sole story in this comic book is "Plague." It pits the New Teen Titans against the drug underworld, with the health and sanity of America's children at stake. It is to be given away at some 35,000 American schools.

The major impetus for the comic is not the comic book industry, which has shied away from most mentions of drugs ever since 1954 hearings on how comic books warped America's youth into "juvenile delinquents." Instead, the driving force is the White House—in particular, First Lady Nancy Reagan and the work she sponsors under the name of The President's Drug Awareness Campaign.

Presidents have appeared as characters in many comics (the Reagans sit this one out), but "Plague!" represents the first official-commercial tie-in between Pennsylvania and Madison avenues. As a war, this time on drugs, it may rekindle the kind of camaraderie that was once strong between the comic industry and the political arena.

"During World War II, there were a lot of messages from and stories connected with the war effort and the White House," says Bob

See COMICS, B13, Col. 3

Comics Fight 'Plague'

COMICS, From B1

Overstreet, publisher of the influential Overstreet Price Guide for comic collectors. "That was a popular war. The whole comic industry was behind it and propagandized that war quite a bit."

Like the New Teen Titans themselves, antidrug stories have had a long in-and-out career in America's comic books. This is the third go-round for the Teen Titans, who first appeared in the mid-'60s spouting mod, with-it dialogue. After six years they were shelved, then were revived briefly in the late '70s and resuscitated by a crack new production team in 1980. Right now, the Teen Titans are as hot as can be, DC Comics Inc.'s number one seller—which may be why Mrs. Reagan has drafted them in her well-publicized war against drugs.

This teen club is, well, pretty powerful. There's a whole crowd of teen marvels, including street-smart black superhero Cyborg—half-man, half-robot—who grew up in mean panels and knows what drugs can do to kids. There's also Speedy, the Batling Bowman, protégé of the Green Lantern and, more than a decade ago, himself a kid heroin addict saved by a superhero's kindness.

And there's The Protector, prod-uct of a battle of corporate titans.

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"The attitude [in comics] has been and continues to be that drugs are bad, that they ruin young kids' lives," says comics historian and editor Catherine Yronwode.

The drugs most often mentioned in the old days were opium, marijuana and cocaine, but the list of ingredients in "Plague!" reads like a drug-store moved into the van parked in the alley.

Because it is directed at fourth-graders, most of the sad stories are told by young teen-agers like 14-year-old Joseph Cummings (who's "done pot, hash oil, uppers, downers, PCP, acid and glue . . . yeah, I'm a druggie") and 15-year-old Roger Levine, who's done everything Joseph has, plus mushrooms and alcohol.

Ironically, the last time that the federal government took this big an interest in comics it was to say that they were ruining the minds and morals of the young. The industry's response was the Comics Code, following the 1954 Kefauver Committee investigation into juvenile delinquency and the crusade led by Fred-eric Wertham, a child psychiatrist whose late-'40s campaign against comic books culminated in the controversial 1954 book, "Seduction of

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At about the same time, there was the Green Lantern issue that introduced Speedy's drug problems (Speedy's been around since the '40s, but comic characters seldom age), and the doors were open. Yet as recently as three years ago, the Code board refused approval of a Daredevil "Angel Dust" story. The book was held up for almost two years, and in the meantime, the board loosened up. When it finally came out, it was a big seller.

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Comic Book Against Drugs

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The comic book, produced by DC Comics of New York and underwritten by the Keebler Company, was unveiled today as a new tool to help prevent drug use among fourth graders.

In a cover letter, Nancy Reagan tells the youngsters: "Don't let anyone tell you that you can't be a hero. Declare that you will stay drug-free. And you'll be a hero — to your mother and father, family and friends, but most of all, to yourself."

The comic book tells of the exploits of "The New Teen Titans." Though the Titans, seven teenagers who fight evil across the universe, never tell youngsters that drugs are bad, most eventually see the light for themselves.

The comic book is being distributed by the Education Department to one million fourth graders in 35,000 schools.



©1983 DC Comics

Distribution starts of comic book to cut drug use by children

BY A WASHINGTON TIMES STAFF WRITER

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Copies of the comic book are being sent by the Education Department to 35,000 elementary schools around the nation with a "Dear Friend" cover letter signed by first lady Nancy Reagan, who has taken a leading interest in fighting drug abuse among young people.

"Don't let anyone tell you that you can't be a hero," Mrs. Reagan's letter says. "Declare that you will stay drug-free. At any cost. You're guaranteed to win. And you'll be a hero — to your mother and father, family and friends, but most of all, to yourself."

Also enclosed in the packet is a "Certificate of Heroism," signed by Mrs. Reagan, for those who take part in the president's drug awareness program.

The comic book was developed by Warner Communications' DC Comics, Inc., of New York, with costs paid by the Keebler Co. The artist was George Perez, and Marv Wolfman wrote the story, which depicts young people unhappily caught up in severe drug abuse.

Dr. Carlton Turner, special assistant to President Reagan for drug abuse policy, said at an Old Executive Office Building news conference announcing

the program that it is the first step in an administration drive to enlist the help of private corporations in mounting drug education projects in the classroom.

Future projects include one for fifth-grade pupils by IBM and another for children in the sixth grade by the National Soft Drink Bottlers Association, Turner said.

Also attending the news conference was Terry Borton, editor of the classroom publication, *Weekly Reader*, who reported a recent survey of elementary school students showing that fourth graders feel significant peer pressure to try alcohol and marijuana and believe they are bad for health.

The survey also found that, at the fourth grade level, students believe schools are not a major source of information about drugs because most drug education programs are targeted at older students. They said most of their information comes from movies and television and their families.

Motivation for trying drugs and liquor in lower grades apparently comes from a desire to feel older and to fit in with other children, the survey found. In the ninth grade, the main motivation was having a good time.

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"JOIN THE PRESIDENT'S
DRUG AWARENESS CAMPAIGN"



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TO BE A HERO...
STAY DRUG FREE!



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ATTORNEY AT LAW

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SAN FRANCISCO, CALIF. 94104

A Comic Book Tells 4th-Graders About Drug Abuse

Washington

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The comic book is built around the heroic exploits of the "The New Teen Titans" characters. A new character called "The Protector," a troubled teenager trying to atone for his drug-ridden past, was created especially for this issue entitled "Plague."

"He died! That's not FAIR! Nobody should die that young!" cries the character, Starfire, after a young boy overdoses. "These Earthlings! Don't they realize what they're doing?"

Although the Titans — seven teenagers who fight evil across the universe — never actually tell youngsters that drugs are bad, most eventually see the light for themselves after a great deal of turmoil.

The comic book is being distributed by the Education Department to an estimated 1 million fourth-graders in 35,000 schools. That amounts to about 40 percent of the nation's fourth-graders.

It comes with a color poster featuring the comic book characters saying: "We want you to be a hero . . . Stay drug free!"

The last page of the comic book contains a pledge for students to sign: "I declare that I am aware of the dangerous effects of drugs."

I am responsible for myself and will never use any unlawful drug."

At a briefing for reporters, a new survey of elementary school students was released. It showed that youngsters experience substantial peer pressure to experiment with alcohol and drugs as early as fourth grade.

The survey, conducted by the classroom publication Weekly Reader, also showed that most fourth-graders get information on alcohol and drugs from movies and television and their families — not from their classrooms. Most drug education programs apparently are targeted at older students.

"There's a lot of pressure to join in and fit in with the crowd, and little education" about drugs at the fourth-grade level, according to Terry Borton, the magazine's editor.

"If you want to get to kids where the pressure is least, you have to get to them early," he said.

Borton said the survey did not ask students whether they themselves used drugs, but asked for their perception of what their peers were doing.

Of 500,000 responses, a sample representing 100,000 students was selected, analyzed and weighted to adjust for U.S. population distribution.

The survey found that the motivation for trying drugs and liquor in lower grades apparently was a desire to feel older and to fit in with other children. In the ninth grade, the main motivation was having a good time.

As early as the fourth grade, about 25 percent said children their age felt peer pressure to try beer, wine, liquor or marijuana.

More than 70 percent of fourth-graders believed at least some kids their age had tried alcohol. Nearly 50 percent believed some kids their age had tried marijuana.

By the seventh grade, those

percentages increase dramatically. More than 90 percent say they believe at least some kids their age have tried alcohol and more than 80 percent say they believe some kids their age have tried marijuana.

Associated Press



Pow to Drugs! Teen Titans To the Rescue!

Washington Ways

First Lady's Crusade
Hits the Comic Books
And the Classrooms

By Donnie Radcliffe

274

What's Nancy Reagan doing with a half-dozen characters who sound as if they're fugitives from a comic book? Names like The Changeling (Shape-Shifter Supreme), Cyborg (Half Man/Half Robot), Raven (Mysterious Empath), The Protector (Fighting Fury), Speedy (the Battling Bowman), Starfire (Alien Powerhouse) and Wonder Girl (the Amazing Amazon)?

What she's doing, as the White House announced yesterday, is taking her drug-abuse crusade to fourth-grade classrooms in 35,000 schools around the country. And what better way to do it than with that oft-scorned and sometimes violent chronicle of childhood fantasies, the comic book?

"Don't let anyone tell you that you can't be a hero," Mrs. Reagan writes in "The New Teen Titans," a DC Comics Inc. publication underwritten by Keebler Co. and unveiled yesterday by the White House. "You can—and you are about to learn how. Picture yourself in battle. In fact, it is one of the most important battles our nation has ever fought."

Protector, Speedy, Starfire and the others were only part of package introduced as The President's Drug Awareness Campaign by the White House Office of Drug Abuse Policy, the Department of Education and a half-dozen other groups and companies.

The other part was what some at the news conference yesterday hailed as the first national survey of school-age children on what they think and know about drugs and alcohol. Conducted this winter by the classroom publication Weekly Reader, the survey represents a random sample of about 100,000 students, out of 500,000 responding in Grades 4 through 12. The results were analyzed and weighted to adjust for U.S. population distribution. In addition to other findings, it revealed that among fourth graders:

- Some feel significant pressures to use drugs and alcohol (25 percent);
- Many perceive movies/TV (36 percent) and family (34 percent) as principal sources of information on alcohol and drugs;
- Most perceive a significant risk in using one or the other of the drugs (75 percent);
- Some think kids start using marijuana to "feel older" (25 per-

cent) or "fit in" (31 percent) with other kids; about the same percentages say they think kids use alcohol for the same reasons.

"The survey breaks new ground for us about attitudes on drug abuse," said Carlton Turner, the president's adviser on drug abuse policy, whose office worked with Weekly Reader in developing the survey. "We knew drug education was necessary, but we didn't know at what age."

Terry Borton, editor in chief of Weekly Reader, said his own conviction, after studying the survey, was that "we need to go below the fourth grade" to ascertain attitudes of even younger children.

"Drugs and drug peddling are big business in America, a \$79 billion retail endeavor that exceeds [the annual income] of every U.S. company except Exxon," said Secretary of Education Terrel H. Bell. His office is involved in distributing the comic books, which went out yesterday to 35,000 schools.

The survey did not ask how many fourth-graders use drugs or alcohol because information was collected

through classroom teachers. "We did not feel we could ask them to tell their teachers," said Borton.

Turner said that other information, however, shows that the average age of a first-time user is 13, "but there are a lot below and a lot above."

Turner's office came up with the idea for the comic book last winter, then approached several publishers, including DC Comics. Although DC Comics had already started a similar commercial project, according to Turner, it expressed a desire to participate. He said Keebler agreed to underwrite the project. There will be other comic books coming out in the fall, with other corporate backers, Turner said.

"It will be the first time we will ever have had a mechanism where we can follow the trends from the fourth grade up," Turner said.

He said statistics show that each comic book is reread six times by the child before it is passed along and ultimately read by six other children.

Charles L. Shemely, Keebler's senior vice president, said cost had not been a consideration for getting

into the program. And Nancy Reagan said later through her press secretary, Sheila Tate, that she was glad to see "a cooperative effort" between Keebler and her husband's Drug Policy office.

Mrs. Reagan also liked the comic book ("another good tool, like 'Diffrent Strokes,' a TV show in which she appeared). The book includes a "Declaration" for young readers to sign and tell why they want to be a "titan" in the drug war. Accompanying the book, in material for teachers, is a "certificate of heroism" superimposed over a drawing of the White House, with a facsimile of Mrs. Reagan's autograph.

Jenette Kahn, president and publisher of DC Comics, said the comic book was aimed at non-drug users in the fourth grade because "it would be naive of us to think that with a teacher and a comic book we could get heavy users off drugs."

When comedian Mark Russell and Nancy Reagan sat next to each other at the head table Saturday night at the White House Correspondents Dinner, what were they talking about?

Drugs, according to spokeswomen for both Russell and Mrs. Reagan. The first lady gave him a complete rundown on her anti-drug abuse efforts to date.

Fighting the 'Plague' Through Truth, Justice And the American Way

By Richard Harrington

It may be a comic book, but the kids inside tell their stories Synanon-style. "Hi, I'm Anna Suarez, and I'm 12 years old. I've taken pot, hash, hash oil, Dilaudid, cocaine, downers and Quaaludes. I've been taking them for three years. My brother Juan, he was the one who started me using drugs. Now look at him—he's dead."

The name of the sole story in this comic book is "Plague." It pits the New Teen Titans against the drug underworld, with the health and sanity of America's children at stake. It is to be given away at some 35,000 American schools.

The major impetus for the comic is not the comic book industry, which has shied away from most mentions of drugs ever since 1954 hearings on how comic books warped America's youth into "juvenile delinquents." Instead, the driving force is the White

First Lady Nancy Reagan and the work she sponsors under the name of The President's Drug Awareness Campaign.

Presidents have appeared as characters in many comics (the Reagans sit this one out), but "Plague!" represents the first official-commercial tie-in between Pennsylvania and Madison avenues. As a war, this time on drugs, it may rekindle the kind of camaraderie that was once strong between the comic industry and the political arena.

"During World War II, there were a lot of messages from and stories connected with the war effort and the White House," says Bob

Comics Fight 'Plague'

COMICS, From B1

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DRUG-COMIC

WASHINGTON (AP) -- IN AN EFFORT TO EDUCATE STUDENTS ABOUT DRUGS, THE WHITE HOUSE TODAY UNVEILED A COMIC BOOK ENTITLED "THE NEW TEEN TITANS" THAT WILL BE DISTRIBUTED TO FOURTH GRADERS AROUND THE NATION. THE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT IS SENDING COPIES OF THE COMIC BOOK TO 35,000 ELEMENTARY SCHOOLS. THE COMIC IS ACCOMPANIED BY A COVER LETTER FROM FIRST LADY NANCY REAGAN URGING STUDENTS TO BECOME HEROES IN THE FIGHT AGAINST DRUGS.

"DON'T LET ANYONE TELL YOU THAT YOU CAN'T BE A HERO," SHE WRITES IN THE LETTER. "DECLARE THAT YOU WILL STAY DRUG-FREE. AT ANY COST. YOU'RE GUARANTEED TO WIN. AND YOU'LL BE A HERO -- TO YOUR MOTHER AND FATHER, FAMILY AND FRIENDS, BUT MOST OF ALL, TO YOURSELF."

THE BOOK WAS DEVELOPED BY DC COMICS INC., OF NEW YORK, WITH THE COSTS PICKED UP BY THE KEEBLER CO. THE PROJECT WAS SUPERVISED BY CARLTON TURNER, SPECIAL ASSISTANT TO PRESIDENT REAGAN FOR DRUG ABUSE POLICY.

AP-WX-04-25-83 1235EDT

comeback for
- Lou Harris

THE BULLETIN



Editorial Board — Publishers have something to say about how to fight it out in the streets.



BE CALIFORNIA — Harder to get away with it. You can't pick it up, carry it around.

ER STORY

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KIDS, DRUGS & ALCOHOL

Pressure starts in 4th grade,
study of 500,000 says today

By Brenda Eady
USA TODAY

Children feel pressure to use drugs and drink alcohol as early as the fourth grade, says a survey of half a million students to be released today.

About 25 percent of fourth-graders who answered said they feel "some to a lot of peer pressure to try beer, wine, liquor or marijuana."

"We have to get the message out to the younger kids ... it looks like it's too late if you don't get to them by the fourth grade," said Pat McKelvey, White House Drug Abuse Policy Office spokesman.

Almost 500,000 students in grades 4 through 12 responded to the survey, conducted by the *Weekly Reader* with the White House drug abuse office.

Its findings:

■ Fourth and fifth graders learn about drug dangers mainly from parents, TV and movies. In sixth grade, children say they learn from school as well.

■ 75 percent of fourth graders saw "some or great risk" from one drink or one marijuana cigarette a day.

■ More than 25 percent of sixth graders said alcohol is a big problem with hometown peers. More than a third said marijuana is a big problem.

■ The motivation in lower grades to use drugs or drink was to feel older; in middle grades, to fit in; and in grades 9 to 12, to have a good time.

The Drug Abuse Policy Office will announce today a drug awareness campaign using comic-book characters that will reach a million fourth-graders in 35,000 schools.

Nevada bets on

Crowded prisons

The five largest state prison systems had the biggest gains in inmate population in 1982:



By John Sherlock, USA TODAY

USA prison population hits peak

By Peter Adams
USA TODAY

The number of people in prison in the USA reached a record 412,303 in 1982 — up 11.6 percent, the Justice Department said Sunday.

This has federal prisons bursting at the seams: nearly 24 percent over capacity.

But state prisons are a bigger problem with 382,680 inmates, up 12.1 percent from 1981.

Thirty-one states are under court order to remedy prison overcrowding.

Reasons for the increases:

■ A record number of people are between 20 and 29 years old; most crimes are committed by people in that age group.

■ Stricter laws: During the past three years, 37 states passed mandatory sentencing laws that keep criminals behind bars for a fixed period

USA Today
4-25-83

Reversing children's attitudes about drugs

By Louise Sweeney

Staff correspondent of The Christian Science Monitor

Washington

Among fourth graders surveyed by a national publication for schoolchildren, 50 percent believed that some, most, or all of their peers have tried marijuana. Forty percent believed that some or all have tried cocaine, and 75 percent believed that some or all have tried beer, wine, or liquor at least once. Most reported substantial "peer pressure" to try both alcohol and drugs.

The survey was conducted by Weekly Reader Publications, whose magazines reach 8 million children, from preschoolers through 12th grade. Its findings are based on responses from 500,000 schoolchildren nationwide, grades 4-12, who filled out survey questions in their classrooms. Of these, 100,000 were closely analyzed, focusing on the younger grades, for the final survey figures. Children reported drug and alcohol use among their peers, but were not asked to report if they drank or took drugs themselves.

"To our knowledge, this is the first large-scale study of young children's attitudes on drugs and alcohol," says Terry Borton, editor-in-chief of Weekly Reader Publications. The basic conclusion of the study, he says, is that "a fundamental shift of attitudes has to take place that makes drugs seem like a less necessary and glamorous part of growing up. Knowledge is not the problem. Attitudes are the problem."

The Weekly Reader findings are to be released today (April 25) at a White House press conference dealing with the pervasiveness of drug and alcohol use among young children. In conjunction with that, Carlton Turner, director of the White House Drug Abuse Policy Office, will announce a new, privately funded, "President's Drug Awareness Program" for grade schoolers.

The program will try to attack the attitude problems underscored by Dr. Borton. Youngsters will be urged to reconsider the idea that drugs are socially acceptable.

Already, one million copies of "The New Teen Titans," a drug-awareness kit based on a specially created comic book by DC Comics, have been sent by the Department of Education to fourth graders in 35,000 schools across the nation. The comic books are packaged along with student activity guides, posters, teacher guides, and a "certificate of heroism." A letter from First Lady Nancy Reagan inside the comic books

urges each child to be "a hero . . . in the battle against drug abuse and pledge to stay drug-free."

A cover letter to school principals, also signed by Mrs. Reagan, mentions her visits to drug rehabilitation centers and urges administrators to help solve the drug problem. Eventually the comics are to reach all schoolchildren in Grades 3-6. They're funded by the Keebler Company, a maker of cookies and other baked goods, and Warner Communications Company, the publishers of DC Comics. A drug-awareness coloring book for kindergarten through third grade is on the drawing board as well, according to a White House spokesman.

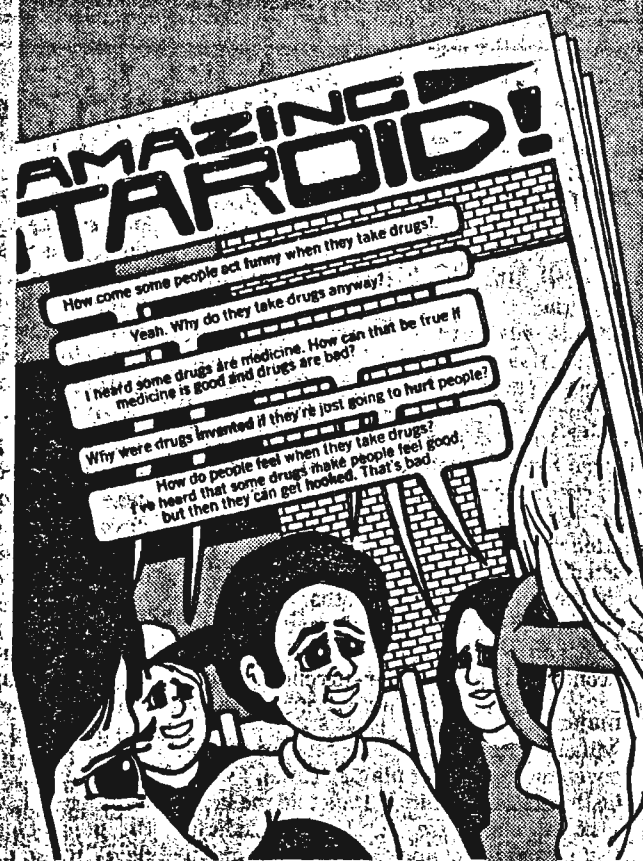
A similar effort is about to be launched by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), a branch of the government's Public Health Service. In May, the institute will launch a national "It's O.K. to Say No" campaign of television and radio public-service spots aimed at 11- to 13-year-olds. Other spots will target teen-agers, warning them of the dangers of mixing marijuana and driving. In all, NIDA is sending out 2,800 sets of radio spots and 800 sets of TV spots to state drug-abuse agencies across the country for distribution to broadcasters.

The spots will include information on where school officials, parents, and others can write to obtain printed materials put out by NIDA, including "Catching On," a drug-information comic book. This comic features a "staroid," an extraterrestrial being that looks like a cross between a TV and a computer, which tunes readers in to the dangers of drugs. Other items: "It's Okay to Say No," a flyer for combating peer pressure to use drugs, and "For Kids Only" and "Quiz Whizz," pamphlets for children. There are fliers aimed at parents as well.

In the "New Teen Titans" package and the NIDA material, the emphasis is on informing young people of the dangers of drugs and combating peer pressure to use them.

In the Weekly Reader survey, 25 percent of the fourth graders responding said children their own age encourage each other to try marijuana, and 33 percent said there is peer pressure to try beer, wine, and liquor.

The survey indicates that the figures rise with each elementary-school grade level. In fifth grade, 33 percent reported peer pressure to use marijuana, and 40 percent to use alcohol. By eighth grade, the pressure to use marijuana is up



National Institute on Drug Abuse
"Catching On" comic, an effort to stimulate rethinking,

to 57 percent, according to the survey, and pressure to drink is up to 67 percent.

Weekly Reader editor Borton speaks of the impact of peer pressure to use drugs and alcohol on children surveyed. He says the survey revealed that "for young kids, the primary reasons [they start] are to feel older and to fit in with other kids. . . . I had not expected to see so much evidence of the degree of pressure to use drugs and alcohol among kids this young." At present, he notes, most school programs designed to inform students about the danger of drug use don't start till sixth or seventh grade.

What the Trilateral Commission is

Rebel death adds fuel to charges that

May 10, 1983

CT FYI

Steve reports that Keebler plans to do a publicity blitz in southern California in August using the Teen Titans, muppet-like characters, etc. in mini-dramas in shopping malls. ~ Keebler will reprint half a million of the comic books and distribute them after the theater pieces.

file
CB

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 16, 1983

Dear Ms. Bates:

Thank you for your letter of May 12, 1983 requesting additional comic book packets for your students. I do appreciate the problem you are having with the quantity, however, I regret that copies of the comic book are no longer available. I have been in touch with DC Comics and they are forwarding to you, under separate cover, 30 additional certificates. The students could share the comic books and each could then be awarded the certificate.

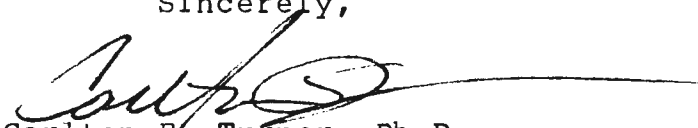
The development of the comic book by DC Comics was made possible through a grant from the Keebler Company. One million copies were printed and distributed through the Department of Education to 35,000 elementary schools. This office received several hundred copies to distribute, however, since the official release on April 25, 1983, we have depleted our supply.

The Keebler Company is now considering a reprint. If you are interested in the reprint, please contact Mr. Stephen Jacobs, care of the U.S. Customs Service, 1301 Constitution Avenue, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20229.

For your information, similar comic book packets are being developed by DC Comics, and funded by IBM and the National Federation of Parents for Drug Free Youth for the fifth grade and by the National Soft Drink Association for the sixth grade. These packages will be ready for distribution when school resumes in the fall.

Thanks again for your interest and please do not hesitate to contact this office if we may be of any assistance in the future.

Sincerely,



Carlton E. Turner, Ph.D.
Special Assistant to the President
for Drug Abuse Policy

Ms. Jane Bates
Castelar Elementary School
850 Yale Street
Los Angeles, CA 90012

file
CB

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 16, 1983

Dear Ms. Vitalis:

Thank you for your letter of May 12, 1983 referencing the Crime Control Digest article and the Teen Titans comic book.

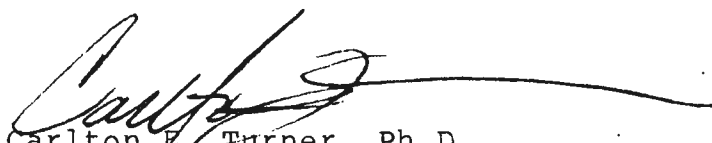
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Thanks again for your interest and please do not hesitate to contact this office if we may be of any assistance in the future.

Sincerely,



Carlton E. Turner, Ph.D.
Special Assistant to the President
for Drug Abuse Policy

Ms. Esther Vitalis
Secretary
British Columbia Police Commission
1550-409 Granville Street
Vancouver, British Columbia
V6C 1T2

THE WHITE HOUSE

WASHINGTON

May 17, 1983

file
C.B.

Dear Dr. Irons:

The First Lady's office has forwarded your request for additional copies of the Teen Titans comic book to me. We appreciate your interest and enthusiasm regarding the book. It has been very well received across the nation.

I regret that copies of the comic book are no longer available. The development of the comic book by DC Comics was made possible through a grant from the Keebler Company. One million copies were printed and distributed through the Department of Education to 35,000 elementary schools. This office received several hundred copies to distribute, however, since the official release on April 25, 1983, we have depleted our supply.

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Sincerely,



Carlton E. Turner, Ph.D.
Special Assistant to the President
for Drug Abuse Policy

Dr. Bruce Irons
Hidden Valley Junior High
5100 Snow White Lane
Charlotte, NC 28213

Carlton
can you
help - dw

Ann,

Is it possible to send 1,500 comic books to:

Dr. Bruce Irons
Hidden Valley Jr. High
5100 Snow White Lane
Charlotte, NC. 28213

(704) 596-6515

He received 135 & his students loved the book ----

Thanks,

BJC

THE WHITE HOUSE

Office of the Press Secretary

For Immediate Release

April 25, 1983

PRIVATE SECTOR DRUG ABUSE AWARENESS PROGRAM

Dr. Carlton Turner, Special Assistant to the President for Drug Abuse Policy, today announced the release of the first in a series of drug abuse awareness comic books. Joining Dr. Turner were representatives of DC Comics, a division of Warner Communications, and The Keebler Company.

DC Comics donated the talent and artwork for the comic books, and production was made possible by a grant from The Keebler Company. A million copies of the comic book package are being mailed this month to elementary schools across the nation for distribution to fourth grades. The Department of Education assumed mailing and distribution responsibilities.

The comic book project is part of a White House campaign to enlist the private sector in the national campaign against drug abuse. The Keebler Company and DC Comics sponsored the first comic book project for the fourth grade; a similar project for fifth and sixth graders is being developed. The fifth grade project is being sponsored by IBM, the National Federation of Parents for a Drug Free Youth, and DC Comics Inc. The sixth grade project is being made possible by the National Soft Drink Association and DC Comics.

The First Lady wrote a letter to the students which has been included in each comic book. She also sent a letter to the principals of each school encouraging their support of the program.

A related project for the development of a drug abuse awareness coloring book for kindergarten through third grades is also planned.

Also joining in the announcement was Dr. Terry Borton, Editor-in-Chief of the classroom publication The Weekly Reader. Dr. Borton released the findings of a readership poll from the fourth through twelfth grades. The poll, comprising responses from 500,000 school children, makes clear the case for early education in drug abuse awareness. The grade school children report peer pressure to try drugs and alcohol is evident as early as the fourth grade.

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