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Substance abuse group launches 'Prevention Works' on Web

By **ANGEL ROY**
Staff Writer

SULLIVAN COUNTY — Communities United for Substance Abuse Prevention has both a new communications coordinator and Web site but its mission remains the same.

Keith Marsh, of Springfield, N.H., began as communications coordinator in mid-December and launched the "Prevention Works" Web site shortly thereafter to better provide Sullivan County parents, youth and community members with resources and tools to prevent substance abuse.

"I looked at what our really message is, what we are trying to do," Marsh said. "What we are trying to communicate is that prevention works."

As a father of six and having served as foster parent for 12 years, Marsh said sometimes while talking to teens parents wonder if they are really getting through to them.

Visit
www.preventionworksnh.org
for more information on
Communities United for Substance
Abuse Prevention.

"The statistics in Sullivan County are pretty dramatic as far as parents being engaged with their children when talking about drug and alcohol abuse and keeping the lines of communication open," Marsh said. "Most parents resign to the fact that children get involved with alcohol and drugs, when only 51 percent are actually involved."

The name of one tool Marsh has listed on the new Web site speaks for itself — "Mythbusters."

The Mythbusters, named after the hit TV show on the Discovery channel, will dispel myths such as "Kids drinking is the norm,

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right?" and "We're OK — We take their keys and host the party."

"As a dad, if it can be shown that what I sometimes believe is a myth, it will move me.... Part of the goal is to show that some myths that parents or community leaders believe really do not pan out in statistics," Marsh said.

Also on the new site is a series of nine blogs from CUFSAP members and other coalitions, including Turning Points Network and local law-enforcement agencies.

The blogs, Marsh said, allow the organizations to "give a voice" to the message CUFSAP is trying to convey.

"We do not want to be the bottleneck," Marsh said. "I wanted to create something so that a lot of people could get their message out."

Liz Hennig, coordinator of CUFSAP, called the site "a way to connect and inform, and a place for different parts of the community to find information they need or want to talk about."

"One of the main things we want to do is

reach out to the community and that was one of the missing pieces identified — getting out information that matters to parents, youth and community, and to create things that form the fabric of the success of our environment," Hennig said.

Marsh said that in his new position he likes the "challenge of changing the mindset in and around an important issue."

"I have a chance to make a difference," Marsh said. "I am kind of excited about that."

He said the best resource on the site is its "tool kit," featuring Web sites tailored for youth, parents and community members.

"The community tool kit will help people that ask what can be done as a community to say, 'This is a problem. We ought to face it and we can face it,'" Marsh said.

The Web site is: www.preventionworksnh.org.

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Angel Roy can be reached at (603) 504-3103, or by e-mail at aroy@eagletimes.com.

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