



“Anything that makes me less than me is not for me ... especially substance use”

The TST BOCES Youth Development Program, in partnership with the Tompkins County Community Coalition for Healthy Youth, has been selected to be one of twenty communities in the nation to be a part of a new, localized approach that supports the message of Above the Influence National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign. The Campaign is managed by the Office of National Drug Control Policy (ONDCP). Grounded in research and implemented in collaboration with the Partnership for a Drug-Free America, the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign delivers anti-drug messages to America’s youth, their parents and other caregivers, and community organizations that are important influences in the lives of teens. The Media Campaign has developed two primary brands to reach out to these audiences: Parents. The Anti-Drug is the Campaign’s brand aimed at parents, other caregivers, and community organizations. Above the Influence is the Campaign’s teen brand.

Above the Influence, the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign’s teen brand since November 2005, speaks with a message and voice relevant to today’s teens. The advertising and online campaign [www.AbovethelInfluence.com] aimed at teens ages 12 to 17 encourages them to live “above the influence” and reject the use of illicit drugs. The brand supports a teen’s ability to “make the right decisions” and resist drug use, and it provides a realistic and resonant reflection of teen lives. *Above the Influence*, manifested in teen advertising, takes into account differing sensibilities and attitudes that address a variety of pressures teens face beyond drugs.

Locally, **TST BOCES Youth Development Program** staff will engage area youth in three projects:

The Influence Map - - asks teens to list the top positive and negative influences in their life on a virtual Map of the country to see what teens around the country are experiencing

- The community with the highest number of entries will receive a special promotional event from the “Above the Influence” team

Teen Expressions Art Project - - asks teens to create their own visual expression of the *Above the Influence* symbol

- Artwork collected could be featured on the *Above the Influence* website and Facebook page or in future advertising.

Tag It --“tag it” asks teens to literally tag the influences in their lives with a large post-it note and capture then share that image with the world.

- The activity builds influence literacy and gets teens to recognize the power of influence.
- It also hints at empowerment —providing a tangible way to say “I see it and I’m above it.”

Contact the TST BOCES Youth Development Office, 257-1551, if you would like to get involved in this exciting opportunity!