

SAFE SIDE

NEWS

Issue No. 7 March 2005

Living Kwanzaa Principles Year Round

The *Be On The Safe Side* Community Action Team (CAT) members were so impressed at a workshop on Kwanzaa last December, they committed themselves to putting its seven principles into action throughout 2005. Using what they learned during the training, CAT members convened at a recent Youth Advisory Council Meeting to create plans for special campaign events. The teens divided into groups and selected a principle around

Umoja
Kujichagulia
Ujima

which to develop an activity for this year. The Kuumba (creativity) group decided to organize a talent show hosted by Howard University, encompassing songs, skits, dance and a fashion show relating to teen pregnancy prevention. "In a talent show you get a lot of creative ideas from different people," said CAT member Doneisha Falwell. Other ideas proposed by the teens included hosting a debate on how adults view youth, reflecting Kujichagulia (self-determination); planning a workshop on safe sex and abstinence for Ujima (the principle for collective work

...continued on Page 2

Learning Goes Both Ways

When working with young people, it's not always the youth who walk away having learned something. For adults looking to relate well to young people, this two-way learning may be the secret to greater success, according to *Safe Side* Advisory Council member Vicky Rayfield. Rayfield is the Family Services Manager for the United Planning Organization (UPO), a non-profit organization aimed at providing services to improve the lives of DC community residents. Daily, she helps families recognize and reach their goals of attaining housing, education and other support by providing information and referrals to local service providers. But it's the children in these families that receive the bulk of her attention and passion. "[These] youth have experienced a lot more than I did when I was their age. By listening to them, I understand the way they view the world," she says.



Rayfield brings this understanding and her willingness to listen into the work she does with the *Be On The Safe Side* Campaign. In fact, she says, having the opportunity to work with and listen to teens has kept her closely involved with the campaign over the last two years. "I take what I learn from these teens [CAT youth] and use it to benefit the other young people I work with," she says. In her work, she comes across young people who are sexually active and although her moral and religious beliefs make her a strong proponent of abstinence, she supports the Campaign message that even if a young person has had sex before, "it's not too late to go back." Despite their difficult circumstances, she reminds the youth she counsels of how special they are, and tells them that they should try to keep themselves [celibate] until marriage.

Rayfield uses and promotes the Campaign video and Audio CD to help her families effectively communicate with their teens. She finds that some parents are not aware of or are not willing to accept the realities of teen sex. She lets them know, she says, that *Be On The Safe Side* resources can help them begin the dialogue with their children about choices, responsibility and decision making. For adults, it should be less about the idea that "because I'm the adult, I'm right," she says, and more about being open to the youth perspective. Rayfield says that's what it takes in order to build better understanding and stronger relationships.

SSN



Government of the District of Columbia



Anthony A. Williams, Mayor



This newsletter is produced by MEE for the *Be On The Safe Side* Campaign and supported by the DC Department of Human Services, Income Maintenance Administration. For more information about the Campaign call 1-866-DC-YOUTH.

BE ON THE SAFE SIDE
SAFE SEX = NO SEX



Living Kwanzaa Principles Year Round (cont'd)

and responsibility); a community carnival to build unity or Umoja; and a traveling teen health fair targeting middle schools for Nia (purpose). CAT members now understand



how Kwanzaa principles could actually relate to their everyday activities. Be on the look out for how these and other *Be On The Safe Side* activities reflect a commitment to keep Kwanzaa alive in 2005!

SSN

Upcoming Events



Saturday, April 2nd
Outreach Session for CAT Members
Eastern Market*, 11 a.m.

Wednesday, April 6th
CAT Orientation Session
MEE Office, 4-5 p.m.

Wednesday, April 13th
Adult-to-Youth Mentoring Session
MEE Office, 4 p.m.

Thursday, April 14th
Outreach Session for CAT Members
MEE Office, 4 – 6 p.m.

Saturday, April 16th
Outreach Session for CAT Members
Rhode Island Avenue*, 11 a.m.

Tuesday, April 19th
Adult Advisory Council Meeting
MEE Office, 11 a.m.

* Outreach Sessions will take place near the Metro Stations of each location.

New Faces of the Campaign

The *Be On The Safe Side* project team has expanded with two new members. Consultants Janice Ferebee and Mazi Mutafa will now be leading the peer-to-peer communications component of the campaign by overseeing day-to-day management of the CAT and Peer Group Leadership Network (PGLN). Ferebee and Mutafa will coordinate youth outreach and presentations across DC.



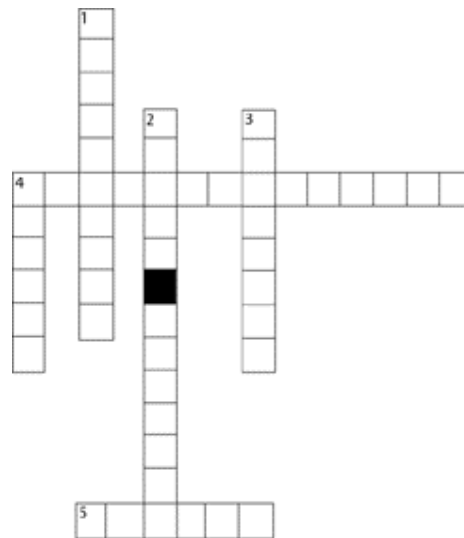
Ferebee

Ferebee, a 2003 *Essence* Award recipient, is a motivational speaker and author of a self-esteem series for girls. Mutafa (see SSN #6), who also edits the *Words, Beats & Life* Journal on hip-hop culture, is adept at grassroots outreach and is a vibrant group facilitator. Both are committed to making even greater things happen for the young people who are part of the Campaign this year.

SSN

Word Play

Members of the Adult and Youth Advisory Councils created this crossword puzzle during a recent mentoring session. Mentoring sessions offer an opportunity for youth and adults to talk about various topics and collaborate on special projects. Test your knowledge of teen pregnancy prevention and sexuality terms by completing the puzzle below.



Across

- 4. Condoms and birth control pills are examples of _____.
- 5. Strong moral and family _____ can help delay pregnancy among teens.

Down

- 1. What is the only 100% way of protecting yourself from pregnancy, STDs and HIV/AIDS?
- 2. _____ pills do not prevent the transmission of sexually transmitted diseases.
- 3. Peer _____ can cause teens to have sex before they are ready.
- 4. A protective barrier that can prevent pregnancy.

Answers to the crossword puzzle will be featured in the next issue of *Safe Side News*.

