



987 Airway Court, Ste. 16
 Santa Rosa, CA 95403
 www.free-to-be.net
 email: info@free-to-be.net
 Phone: 707.526.3819

The Free to Be Connection

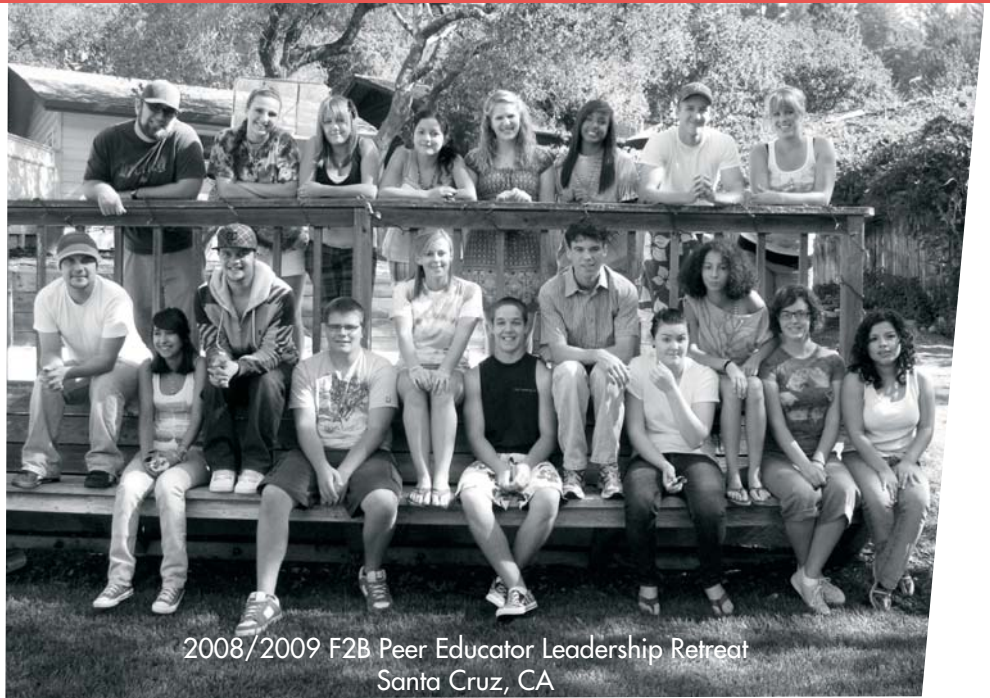
2008/2009 Peer Educator Leadership Retreat

by Christy Wohlert,
 Peer Program Supervisor

In late September, we took sixteen of our Peer Educators to Santa Cruz for our annual Free to Be Leadership Retreat. New and returning PEs came together for an incredible time of learning and getting to know the other youth volunteers within F2B. It was important for us to get away to a place where the PEs were removed from their every day environments. By doing this they were encouraged to get to know the PEs from other high schools. This retreat also provided F2B staff the opportunity to train the PEs in the latest research and information they need to know when speaking to their peers about sexual abstinence in schools.

We were extremely fortunate to have our lodging donated to us by Ken and Renee Whiting. They opened their beautiful home to sixteen teenagers and five F2B employees.

**"MY PARENTS TOLD ME THE 'WHAT'
 - THAT I SHOULD NOT HAVE SEX,
 BUT F2B SHOWED ME THE 'HOW'
 - THE SKILLS, THE STEPS AND THE
 TECHNIQUES TO REMAIN ABSTINENT."
 F2B PEER EDUCATOR**



2008/2009 F2B Peer Educator Leadership Retreat
 Santa Cruz, CA

The students also spent time at the Santa Cruz Beach Boardwalk, interviewing other teens and asking questions regarding abstinence. The PEs were bold and confident when approaching complete strangers and promoting F2B's message.

Some of the topics covered during our workshops were: how to deal with challenging questions, recognizing the influence of the media, how guys and girls communicate, and how to handle pressure. The PEs split up into two groups, guys and girls mixed, and had an opportunity to ask each other questions about dating and relationships.

This trip was a huge success! The PEs enjoyed the opportunity to spend time with new friends who have similar values and goals. Many of the PEs have hinted that they would appreciate doing this again next year!

Who's new at F2B?
 pg2



F2B is on the move
 pg3



Upcoming Events
 pg4



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MEET THE NEW "KIDS" ON THE BLOCK!



KYLEE is a sophomore in high school and joined F2B as a Peer Educator in October. Kylee plays basketball, softball and is on the cheer team. She has a very contagious laugh and great energy. An interesting thing about Kylee is she has been a vegetarian since the age of nine. "I am excited to have the opportunity to speak at different schools about my decision to be abstinent."



CORINNE is a sophomore in high school and joined F2B as a Peer Educator in October. Corinne plays basketball, softball, and is a member of the Hate Free club at her school. "I enjoy being a part of F2B because it has really made me think about why I am choosing abstinence. I am excited to share with my peers why I think it is so important to make a clear decision about sex."



ROSE is following in the footsteps of her three younger brothers, who have all worked or volunteered for F2B. "Being a Curriculum Educator for F2B provides me the opportunity to share my own decision to remain abstinent until marriage - a decision which has given me the freedom to pursue my education, goals, and hobbies." Rose works as a Registered Nurse in Sonoma County and also travels to third-world countries on medical mission trips.



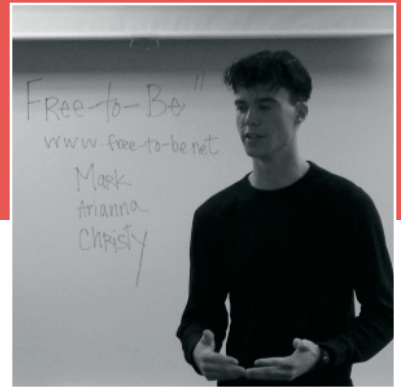
VICKY joined the F2B team as our bilingual Family Education Coordinator in October. She is coordinating F2B's parent education in our community! "Being a mother of five grown children, I understand what parents are up against when it comes to helping their children choose healthy lifestyles." Vicky is passionate about helping parents build loving and healthy relationships with their children.



KATHERINE joined the F2B team as Program Assistant in October. She is currently a student at SRJC. Katherine really enjoys working with teens, encouraging them in their decision for abstinence as well as equipping them to share that decision with others. "My own decision for abstinence until marriage has brought me so many freedoms. My passion and desire is to spread those freedoms in our culture!"



YESENIA wears two hats at F2B! In September she joined F2B as our bilingual Program Assistant. In November, she joined our outreach team as bilingual Community Outreach Assistant. "I can relate to the obstacles teens are facing when choosing abstinence. I believe that teens can hold off on sex until they are married even though it's challenging." Yesenia is proud to offer positive choices to teens who sometimes don't know abstinence is an option.



GIVE A HELPING HAND

BY LUCY AVALOS, OFFICE MANAGER

On November 3rd, the 2008/09 Booster Orientation was held at the F2B office. We welcomed our newest Booster to the team, Kathleen Garrett. We currently have six wonderful women who serve on our team of Boosters: Jeanne Funk, Joanne Landen, Linda Zepponi-Hervey, Mary Wilson and Barbara Barnes. Several have been with us for 10 years! It's great to have their continued support. Booster meetings are held on a regular basis to discuss upcoming events and volunteer opportunities. If you have the time, energy and a passion for supporting the youth in your community, I would like to encourage you to join us in giving F2B a helping hand. Our next Booster meeting will be on March 9th at 10:30 am. Please contact Laretta at (707) 526-3819 x114 or laretta@free-to-be.net. There are many ways that you can help out!



SWING



DANCE



SOCIAL



FREE TO BE IS ON THE MOVE... BY SUE BISBEE, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

As we plan our long term future, we want to share our vision with you, our friends and supporters.

Q: What is F2B's vision for the future?

To reverse peer pressure among teens so abstaining until marriage will become the new norm.

Q: What is our long term goal?

To increase the number of teens who choose to live an abstinent life-style.

Q: What strategy will we use to reach this goal?

Launch Free to Be Projects in other communities by training community-based organizations to implement the Teen Panel model with their youth.

Q: Where is F2B in the process of making our training available?

We have completed our 5-year strategic plan, which includes our Replication Plan. We have important pieces in place, such as materials and staff trainers. We are developing guidelines for potential partners.

Q: What is still needed to complete the Replication Plan?

We are currently gathering positive evaluation data. Additional funding to create outreach materials and an implementation guide is needed.

Q: What is the target date for launching a successful replication strategy?

Fall of 2009 is our planned target date.

Q: How can supporters help to create a new norm for abstinence?

Funds are needed and donations can be specified for "F2B Replication." And/or email us with contacts in other communities who might be interested in hearing about this opportunity: sue@free-to-be.net.



PEER EDUCATORS
LISA, ARIANNA AND
DAKOTA ON THE
SANTA CRUZ BEACH
BOARDWALK.



PROGRAM ASSISTANT
ERIK, PEER EDUCATOR
KELLY AND F2B
INTERN KELSEY.



PROGRAM DIRECTOR
CASEY WITH PEER
EDUCATORS CHLOE
AND LUCELY ENJOYING
THE BOARDWALK VIEW.

PEER EDUCATORS
MARK, TOMMY,
ARIANNA AND LUCELY
INTERVIEWING A
SANTA CRUZ LOCAL
ABOUT ABSTINENCE.



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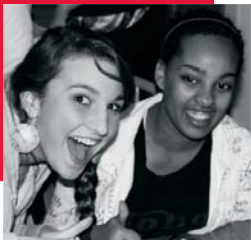
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Help save a tree! E-mail lauretta@free-to-be.net to receive your copy of the Free to Be newsletter by email.

Help Sonoma



County youth!



Make an impact.



Donate today!



SAVE THE DATE!

4TH ANNUAL STARS BANQUET

"DANCING WITH THE STARS"

APRIL 20, 2009

MARY AGATHA FURTH CENTER

WINDSOR, CA

6:00 - 9:00 PM



2009 WINTER EVENTS

Dec. 11th
 Jan. 9th
 Jan. 15th
 Jan. 21st
 Jan. 23rd
 Jan. 25th
 Feb. 20th

PE Holiday Social
 Parent Ed @ St. Joseph's Catholic Church
 Parent Ed @ Holy Spirit Church
 F2B @ Roseland Parent Conference
 PE Social @ ATA Martial Arts
 Parent Ed @ St. Helena Catholic Church
 PE Social



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