



City of Cottonwood Fire Department



For Immediate Release

Date: May 15, 2012
Contacts: Brandon Wacker - Firefighter/EMT, Program Coordinator 928-634-2741
Cottonwood Fire Department bwacker@cottonwoodaz.gov

“Every 15 Minutes” Program ***Mingus Union High School*** ***Cottonwood, Arizona***

The “Every 15 Minutes” Program is designed to show young adults the dangers associated with driving while impaired. The program has both real life experiences and scenarios, without the real life risks.

We have found the best place to present the program is at the local high school (Mingus Union High School). The program is held in the spring semester of the school year when prom and graduation take place. On day one, the morning will start off with 12 out of the 20 student participants acting as the “living dead”. This roll consists of the students acting as a victim that was killed in an alcohol related accident. The students are moulaged with a pale white face and a dead/dying triage tag around their neck. Every fifteen minutes a police officer, a firefighter, and a grim reaper will escort one of the “living dead” students to their classroom. The police officer and firefighter will enter the classroom and ask if it is the class that student is in (keep in mind the program is kept confidential between the participating students and high school staff). The teacher will state that they are absent that day and the officer will tell them that is why he is there, and explain that they were killed in a car accident due to a drunk driver. The officer will then read an obituary that the students parent(s) have written. The grim reaper will then walk the student into the class and sit them down at their desk. The student is not to talk to anybody for the remainder of the day. This will go on through the morning with all 12 students. Prior to lunch the remaining eight students are participating in a “mock” car accident that is staged outside on the campus. The entire student body and staff will see this part of the program. The accident is modeled after a “real life” motor vehicle collision. Participants in this section of the program includes: the fire department, police department, local ambulance company, local funeral home for the hearse, a medical helicopter (Angel 3), local newspaper and local radio station (news) personal and the film crew. The accident will be narrated by the fire chief explaining what is being done and why it is done. All radio traffic from the fire department is also heard by the spectators. During the accident one student will be arrested for drunk driving, one student is pronounced deceased on scene, and one student will be “flown” to a hospital. The remaining victims will be treated for minor injuries. The parents of these 3 students are present during the

“mock” accident. Later that afternoon the parent’s of the student that was flown are called to the hospital (VVMC) where there child is. While in the waiting room a doctor will meet the parents and explain that after all the efforts that their child did not make it. The parents are then brought into the room to see their child one last time. All the parents are aware of the program but not aware of the extent of what will be taking place (they will know this is not a true scenario). The night of day one, the 8 students that were in the “mock” accident are brought to a local hotel for a retreat. The student’s cell phones will be confiscated so they do not have contact with friends or family. This shows the “real life” experience if this was a true event. During this retreat the students will write a letter to their parents. The letter starts with, “Dear Mom and Dad, Every fifteen minutes in the United States someone dies from an alcohol related accident. Today I died. I never had the chance to tell you.....” and the students complete the rest. At the same time, their parents are at home writing the same letter to their child.

On day two the students will be transported back to the school to set up for the events taking place that day. Juniors and seniors will be in attendance for these events. The day will start off with a “mock” trial to sentence the drunk driver to prison. This event is done with participants in their respected career field. Those participants are a Judge and two attorneys from the local area. Once the trial is complete a police officer will talk to the students about statistics on underage drinking and laws pertained to drinking and driving. At this time the stage will be set up for a “mock” funeral for the two students killed in the mock accident the day before. When the officer completes his presentation the funeral will begin. A local pastor will be presenting the funeral. The stage is presented with 2 caskets with a large picture of the students next to each casket. Upon completion of the funeral the two students that played the roll of the deceased will come out and read the letter to their parents that they wrote the night before. Once the students have finished their letters, the parents will be brought up on the stage to read their letter to their child. After the letters are read, a guest speaker will be brought in to talk to the students about an actual event that affected him/her and their family from a true alcohol related accident. This will conclude the two day program.

The “Every 15 Minutes” Program is an excellent program for young adults. With that in mind it also is a great education opportunity for the parents that are present for the program. The goal of this program is to educate the students and their parents so they can share their experience from this program with their friends and family. The program reaches out beyond the high school. It reaches the entire community.

The Cottonwood Fire Department would like to extend their appreciation to you for your time and help in making this program possible as well as successful. Attached is the community members that participate in making this program happen.

Again, thank you for your participation and time.

Mingus High School Program Committee:

Brandon Wacker, Cottonwood Fire Department - Head Program Coordinator

Sean Chartier, Sedona Fire District - Assistant Program Coordinator

Tish Arwine, Verde Valley Medical Center – Administration Coordinator

Community Participants for 2012 program:

- Mingus Union High School
- Cottonwood Fire Department
- Cottonwood Police Department
- Sedona Fire District (Dispatch)
- Verde Valley Medical Center
- Verde Valley Fire District
- Verde Valley Ambulance Company
- Guardian Air Helicopter (Angel 3)
- Best Western Inn of Sedona
- Westcott Funeral Home
- Yavapai Broadcasting
- Verde Independent
- Vinnie's Pizza
- Cottonwood Journal
- Pastor Jack Smithson
- Guest Speaker – Jason Burns
- Attorney Scott Miskiel
- Attorney Lindsay Odell
- Judge Ron Ramsey
- ABC Autobody
- Red Rock Collison

Every 15 Minutes Schedule

Thursday May 17, 2012

Sophomores and Freshmen Follow Regular Bell Schedule

Period	Begin	End	Minutes	Seniors and Juniors Only
1	8:40	9:35	55	
2	9:40	10:35	55	Walking Dead Begins
3	10:40	11:35	55	Dismiss Seniors & Juniors for
4	11:40	12:40	60	Accident West Lot
Lunch	12:40	1:20	40	
5	1:20	2:15	55	Resume Schedule
6	2:20	3:20	60	Announcements

Every 15 Minutes Schedule

Friday May 18, 2012

Sophomores and Freshmen Follow Regular Bell Schedule

Period	Begin	End	Minutes	Seniors and Juniors Only
1	8:40	9:35	55	Trial Begins 9:30 – 10:00
2	9:40	10:35	55	Funeral 10:15 – 11:00
3	10:40	11:35	55	Video/Letters 11:05-11:50
4	11:40	12:40	60	Guest Speaker 11:50-12:30
Lunch	12:40	1:20	40	Wrap Up 12:30-12:40
5	1:20	2:15	55	Resume Schedule
6	2:20	3:20	60	Announcements