



Home Improvement

2010 Safety Kids Calendar Contest is Always a Winner

*By Sherri Bevan Walsh
Summit County Prosecutor*

Each year since 2001, I have sponsored a calendar contest for middle school students on the "12 Rules for Staying Safe." Of all the community education events I do, this contest is by far one of my favorites. The students (and teachers) put so much effort into the contest and it is always interesting to see how young minds interpret safety in their posters.

We started this contest as a way of trying to reach students before they get into trouble. Approximately 7,000 cases a year come through my Juvenile Division for prosecution, and anything we can do to educate kids is certainly worth the effort. We encourage the students to learn the rules and to help us spread the word about these every day dangers that are on the rise in our county and nationwide.

This year, 1,486 posters were submitted from 24 different Summit County schools. Of those posters, 48 were chosen by a panel of community leaders as winners, four in each safety category. Thirteen winners – including the grand prize winner – will be

featured in our 2010 calendar. Joseph Misleh, of Hyre Middle School was this year's grand prize winner. His poster will be on the cover of the 2010 calendar, and was on the message about peer pressure; "Sing your own song! Don't give in to Peer Pressure!" The remaining 12 winning posters will be used for each month in the calendar.

One of my favorite parts of the contest is the awards ceremony, held every year at the Sheraton Suites in Cuyahoga Falls. The students are invited to attend, but do not know if they are first, second, third, or honorable mention winners. The ceremony has two VIP Masters of Ceremony, who have done this with me since the beginning, 97.5 WONE Tim Daugherty and Ali from WBNX CW-TV55. The room is always packed with students, parents, teachers and other family members to see who is going to win a spot on the calendar.

We were very excited about this year's participation and the winners. It was a very competitive year and all of these students deserved a big congratulation for their hard work!

Look for the winning posters around

town on billboards thanks to a donation from ClearChannel Outdoor. The students and their posters are also featured over the holiday season in short vignettes, along with Ali and me, on WBNX CW-TV55. Ohio Photo Design donates the photos of the posters for the calendar. I want to be sure to thank everyone who makes this wonderful and fun poster contest a success!

A list of the first place winners follows:

- Rule 1:** Trust yourself! Don't give in to peer pressure.
1st Place: Hanna Thornton, 8th Grade, Hyre Middle School
- Rule 2:** Don't do drugs!
1st Place: Brianna Rowe, 8th Grade, Hyre Middle School
- Rule 3:** Don't use alcohol!
1st Place: Mary Stetzk, 6th Grade, Hyre Middle School
- Rule 4:** Never play with guns!
1st Place: Mackenzie Puzakulics, 7th Grade, Hyre Middle School
- Rule 5:** Don't smoke!
1st Place: Tristan Phillips, 6th Grade, Schrop Intermediate School

Rule 6: Never give out personal information in chat rooms.

1st Place: Robert Quade, 8th Grade, Summit Academy Middle School

Rule 7: Don't talk to or go with anyone you don't know.

1st Place: David Smethers, 8th Grade, Hyre Middle School

Rule 8: Say NO to unwanted touch!

1st Place: Linda Tran, 8th Grade, Hyre Middle School

Rule 9: Never tell anyone you are home alone.

1st Place: Tricia Cunningham, 8th Grade, St. Barnabas

Rule 10: Say NO to gangs!

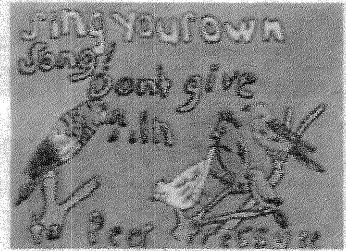
1st Place: Gabriel Weyand, 8th Grade, Hyre Middle School

Rule 11: Stop bullies in their tracks. Always tell an adult.

1st Place: Cheyenne Miller, 7th Grade, Hyre Middle School

Rule 12: Violence at home is never OK. Your home should be a safe place.

1st Place: Alyssa Ferguson, 6th Grade, Hyre Middle School



Grand Prize winner Joseph Misleh, of Hyre Middle School

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Learn more about the poster contest at: <http://www.co.summit.oh.us/prosecutor/safetykidspgm.htm>