

Varsity Athletes Against Substance Abuse

Peer Leadership Program

VAASA is a peer leadership program in which high school varsity athletes pledge to remain alcohol and drug free. The athletes are trained to address younger students as positive role models.

VAASA members speak to elementary and middle school students, explaining that it is not necessary to drink in order to be popular or cool. In addition, they explain that choosing not to drink is a wise choice for many reasons. They dispel the myths that “*all athletes drink*”, and talk about how they have fun without using substances.

Goals

- ◆ *Encourage high school athletes to commit to remain alcohol and drug-free.*
- ◆ *Provide information about the negative effects of alcohol and other drugs.*
- ◆ *Dispel the “all athletes drink” myth.*
- ◆ *Provide teaching tools and strategies for making presentations to younger students.*

Athlete Qualifications

High school athletes must be:

- *Drug and alcohol free.*
- *Able to miss a few classes throughout the year without affecting academic standing.*
- *Outgoing and able to speak in front of a group of younger students.*
- *Able to attend a six-hour training on making presentations, communication skills and drug and alcohol education.*

Program Criteria

- Each **VAASA** group will be 15 - 20 students.
- **VAASA** members may be chosen by a committee and asked to write an essay explaining their interest in the program.
- Training for the program will be provided by the **Student Assistance Counselor** in the high school.
- A coach or other faculty member will co-advise the athletes.
- The **SAC** will arrange for small groups of athletes to present in middle school classes.

sponsored by:

Rhode Island Student Assistance Services

300 Centerville Road, Suite 301 South ~ Warwick, RI 02886

401-732-8680