

Elks National Drug Awareness Program



Program News

March 30, 2012

Elks National Drug Awareness Program Announces

Over the years, the Elks have worked diligently to form partnerships with private and governmental organizations such as the DEA, ONDCP, Drug Free America, Teen Challenge, National Guard, S.O.S., just to name a few. State Drug Awareness Chairs from all across the nation have volunteered their time and energy to inform young people and parents about the dangers of substance abuse. This effort has helped establish the credibility of the Elks Drug Awareness Program.

The Directors of the Elks Drug Awareness Program are proud to announce a once in a lifetime opportunity. A newly formed association with Siemens Healthcare and our long-term relationship with Marvel Entertainment have allowed this to happen.

What follows is a Press Release that details this new and exciting venture. You are seeing this before its worldwide release. Elks everywhere can take pride in the work done by the Drug Awareness Program, the largest all-volunteer program of its kind.

Please take a moment to read the following. None of this would have been possible without your fine work and dedication. You have made it possible for this partnership to be formed. This is a great time to be an Elk!



**Healthcare Sector
Diagnostics Division****Siemens Teams Up With the Elks and Marvel Entertainment to Help Combat Underage Drinking**

Hard Choices comic book features public service announcement that encourages families affected by substance abuse to seek help.

Tarrytown, N.Y., April 2, 2012 - Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics has teamed up with the Elks and Marvel Entertainment, LLC to combat underage drinking and encourage families affected by substance abuse to seek help through *Hard Choices*. This comic book, developed by Marvel Entertainment for the Elks National Drug Awareness Program, features Spider-Man and the Fantastic Four saving young people from the consequences of alcohol abuse. This year, *Hard Choices* presents a public service announcement (PSA) from Siemens reminding people that "it takes the courage and strength of a warrior to ask for help."

Each year more than 10,000 young people in the United States are killed and 40,000 injured in alcohol-related automobile accidents. According to the National Institute of Health, nearly one-in-10 Americans over the age of 12 are classified with substance or dependence, with the economic toll of substance abuse and addiction alone estimated to exceed a half trillion dollars annually in the U.S. due to health care expenditures, lost productivity and crime.

"The Elks, Marvel and Siemens share a dedication to raising awareness about substance abuse. After 25 years of substance abuse education, the Elks understand how critical it is for young people to lead an alcohol-and drug-free lifestyle," said Kent Gade, Director of the Elks National Drug Awareness Program.

The Marvel Super Heroes in *Hard Choices*, which targets fourth through eighth-graders, encourages a dialogue between parents, teachers and children by addressing an often difficult topic in a fun, familiar format. In March 2012, more than 600,000 copies of *Hard Choices* will be distributed to elementary and middle schools across the nation.

"Substance abuse is a significant healthcare challenge facing society today," said Michael Reitermann, CEO, Siemens Healthcare Diagnostics. "Siemens is taking a proactive, multi-layered approach to this issue through programs such as *Hard Choices* that are designed to raise awareness and hopefully prevent substance abuse among young people, as well as by providing reliable drugs-of-abuse testing solutions to facilitate the recovery of affected individuals."

Marvel has worked with national public health experts to publicize the dangers of substance abuse for more than 30 years. In fact, Spider-Man was the first major comic book hero to deal with the issue of substance abuse with a series that was developed in the early 1970s at the request of the then-U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare. *Hard Choices*, which made its debut in 2006, is an annual custom comic book developed by Marvel for the Elks.

"We are proud to continue our work with the Elks to publicize the dangers of substance abuse, and are excited to have Siemens involved with the Elks project this year," said John Dokes, SVP, Integrated Sales and Marketing at Marvel Entertainment.

In addition to the comic book, the *Hard Choices* heroes and messages are being featured on an electronic super sign overlooking New York's Times Square for 15 days beginning on April 2. These initiatives are part of Siemens' ongoing efforts to de-stigmatize substance abuse and build on a campaign launched last year with the Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) in honor of Veterans Day, which also featured a public service announcement in New York's Times Square.

A digital version of *Hard Choices* is available at www.elkskidzone.org.

Elks National Drug Awareness Program funding is provided by the Elks National Foundation, Inc., the charitable arm of the Benevolent and Protective Order of the Elks of the USA. The Elks are committed to providing a healthy future for America's youth. In addition to educating young people about the dangers of drugs, the Elks provide positive alternatives such as the Hoop Shoot and Soccer Shoot athletic programs. The Foundation also annually awards nearly \$3.6 million in college scholarships. For more information, contact the Elks National Foundation at www.elks.org/enf.

Marvel Entertainment, LLC, a wholly-owned subsidiary of the Walt Disney Company, is one of the world's most prominent character-based entertainment companies, built on a proven library of over 8,000 characters featured in a variety of media over seventy years. Marvel utilizes its character franchises in entertainment, licensing and publishing. For more information visit www.marvel.com. Super Hero(es) is a co-owned registered trademark.

Launched in November 2011, **Agenda 2013** is a global initiative to further strengthen the innovative power and competitiveness of the Siemens Healthcare Sector. Specific measures will be implemented in four fields of action: Innovation, Competitiveness, Regional Footprint, and People Development.

The **Siemens Healthcare Sector** is one of the world's largest supplier to the healthcare industry and a trendsetter in medical imaging, laboratory diagnostics, medical information technology and hearing aids. Siemens offers its customers products and solutions for the entire range of patient care from a single source - from prevention and early detection to diagnosis, and on to treatment and aftercare. By optimizing clinical workflows for the most common diseases, Siemens also makes healthcare faster, better and more cost-effective. Siemens Healthcare employs some 51,000 employees worldwide and operates around the world. In fiscal year 2011 (to September 30), the Sector posted revenue of 12.5 billion euros and profit of around 1.3 billion euros. For further information please visit: www.siemens.com/healthcare.

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I want to personally thank you all for your hard work and dedication. As you know, that hard work pays off in ways that we may never know, but in this instance the potential is limitless.

Fraternally,

Kent Gade

Kent Gade
Director - Elks National Drug Awareness Program