

Ice Cream and ITAC Brings People Together in Town Hall Meeting

by Renea Lauck
Freelance Reporter

ITAC, It Takes a Community Drug and Alcohol Coalition, has a mission to increase awareness of substance use within the community and enhance communication between parents, youth, educators and residents while utilizing data to drive prevention efforts, promote education and provide access to resources.

ITAC held a town hall meeting on Tuesday, Aug. 3 at the Elma Village Green Park, aligning with its mission of providing prevention, education and communication. The event attracted over 200 people from surrounding communities. With generous donations from the community and ITAC fundraising efforts, many families were provided with free school supply bags and ice cream from The Pink Cow Ice Cream.

The evening included kid-friendly activities including a ropes course led by the National Guard and a "Drug Free Looks Like Me" picture contest. Presentations by John Bennett, the Kids Escaping Drugs Face2Face Program Director, shared current substance use trends. Mark Sterlace, President of ITAC, and Interim ITAC Program Director Bette Dehr shared focus group data.

A mini health fair with representatives from Women's Health General Physician P.C., Gateway Longview, Elma Fire Department, The Prevention Council, Erie County Department of Health, Grace in Community Church and others provided resources to support ITAC and the community.

This event was an opportunity for the community to come together and celebrate each person while embracing a healthy lifestyle. Along with a little scoop of ice cream to enhance the enjoyment.



Photo by Renea Lauck
National Guard counter-drug task force members Justin Chernogorec and Lamont Pugh pose for a photo.



Photo by Renea Lauck
The Pink Cow Ice Cream truck on hand, ready to give out free ice cream at the ITAC event last week.



Photo by Renea Lauck
Bette Dehr and Mark Sterlace continue the discussion during an ITAC event last week at the Elma Village Green Park.



Photo by Renea Lauck
Reese Kinal from the Elma Fire Department gives away information and gifts supporting the fire company at the ITAC event.



Photo by Renea Lauck
Face painting was one of several activities organized by members of the ITAC community group.



Photo by Renea Lauck
There were lots of games and contests for children and adults to participate in during the ITAC community meeting.



Photo by Renea Lauck
John Bennett, the director of the Face2Face program with Kids Escaping Drugs, on hand at the ITAC community meeting last week to give a presentation.



Photo by Renea Lauck
There were 98 bags with school supplies given out at the ITAC event.

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