

# Suburban Life

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## Fighting drugs on an elementary level

By Lorraine McClellan  
staff writer

**O**CTOBER IS DRUG Awareness Month. Betty Nickolay, in the forefront of Farmington Families in Action since its inception, will represent the sister cities in the National Federation of Parents for Drug-Free Youth when the network convenes next week in Washington, D.C.

Tina Jensen, incoming president of the local chapter which works to stem the use of drugs and alcohol here, will be on the homefront overseeing an educational program that goes into effect with the 1986-87 school year.

"The goal is to see that BABES (Beginning Alcohol Basic Educational Studies) is part of every third grader's curriculum," Jensen said. "We have trained some volunteers for this already to go into the classrooms from now until January, and will continue to train volunteers as we find them for the program to continue in the spring. We are going to reach every third grader in each of the public schools as well as in Our Lady of Sorrows."

BABES was originated by National Council of Alcoholism, and utilizes animal puppets, play-acting and drawing. The thrust is to discuss self-image, coping skills for various situations, decision making, peer pressure, being healthy and becoming able to seek help for problems.

And while it originated for youngsters who were living with alcohol-dependent adults, the many

groups who have borrowed the BABES concept have expanded on it to include coping education concerning drugs, physical and sexual abuse.

"THE BABES program works. We know it works," Nickolay said, referring to the BABES pilot program here. "We have had youngsters who as a direct result of these sessions finally got up the courage to ask their teacher for help. We do know children are saying no. We do know of cases where the child knew that something was wrong — something was different in his or her house — but honestly didn't know what it was."

"We also know that if there is something wrong, most kids think this is their fault, so there is a lot of guilt we can help erase, and give them back a good self image. This is very similar to the abused wife who thinks if she were a better wife, a better woman, her husband wouldn't beat her."

What the two women also know is that one out of every five children in the nation are growing up in a house where some kind of abuse is taking place.

"We are no different than any other community in the nation," Nickolay said. "We're right in there in the national average. That means if you have a classroom of 20 children, five of them need help now."

The BABES program runs for 45 minutes one day a week for seven weeks. The program is in effect



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with the full cooperation of the Farmington Board of Education, the elementary school principals and third-grade teachers.

Jensen cited Farmington Hills Police Chief William Dwyer as "our biggest supporter for anything we've ever done or attempted to do," speaking of Families in Action's programs and projects to combat the use of alcohol and drugs here.

JENSEN WILL oversee two other major programs on Families in Action's 1986-87 agenda.

She hopes to expand the program for parents and fifth grade students, held at only a few elementary schools now, into more of the elementary schools. The program is given just prior to graduation into

middle school. And she is arranging for another "Are You Concerned" series in the spring.

"If you don't educate before 11-12 years old, it's too late," Jensen said. "If you haven't made some headway by then, parent pressure palls before the peer pressure and 'saying no' becomes a much more difficult thing to do."

"We realize this program is only a one-shot deal, but both the parents and the students have to be made aware of what is going on, what the statistics are," she said.

"We are definitely not into scare tactics, but we do know drugs have been sold on a school bus and at the bus stops here," Nickolay said. "We want to educate the parents to what's going on. They have the most to gain by that education, and



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THE "ARE YOU CONCERNED?" series, sponsored by Farmington Families in Action in cooperation with Maple Grove Alcoholism Treatment Center, is the educational program given for the entire community.

"We ask a minimal admission, but nobody is turned away. We had a lot of children from Sarah Fisher in our audience last spring. We had more than 100 at each of the sessions, but we'd talk to two of them if only two showed up," Jensen said. "We're in the business of sharing everything we know on these problems."

Families in Action brings what it knows through its affiliation with

Michigan Communities in Action and PRIDE (Parents Resource Institute on Drug Education).

This month Nickolay will bring back whatever comes out of the National Federation of Parents for Drug-Free Youth conference.

She will be updated on trends, law enforcement, new and pending legislation, education, fund raising, and will be part of an idea exchange while she's in Washington, D.C. Then in November, as vice president of Michigan Communities in Action, she will attend its conference in Lansing.

The immediate priority here is to train volunteers for the BABES program this fall.

Nickolay can be reached at 851-8565, Jensen at 478-7017.

## Program provides day care for older adults

People over the age of 60 are now spending anywhere from one to five days a week in Farmington Nursing Home as part of the facility's Adult Day Program.

Visitors who stopped in during open house hours met the staff and some of their clients, then saw a slide show of them together baking bread, blowing up balloons, putting a jigsaw puzzle together, eating their own home-made ice cream, joining

in a sing-a-long.

"Initiating a day program was a natural for us, because we have a built-in program we can tap into," said Ruth Farrell, executive director of Farmington Nursing Home. "The day care program has its own planned activities for the day, but anyone who is here can join into anything else we have planned for the residents."

Participants attend on a scheduled

basis and can indulge in group or individual activities, eat alone or in the residents' dining hall, choose their own entertainment or share in the parties and get-togethers planned for the residents.

"Exercise is a part of every day's program and so is anything mentally stimulating," Farrell said. "Whatever is of interest to the individual, we stimulate that interest. We can prepare special meals for a special diet,

we do it here every day. We're set up with showers to accommodate those confined to wheel chairs. We have doctors and nurses on staff, and because we're affiliated with Botsford Hospital we can even arrange to have ambulance transportation."

FARMINGTON Adult Day Program is administered by Carolyn Darling who works with two assistants in the home's living room, who in turn work with families so that special needs may be met.

Some clients choose to have their

hair and nails done at the home's beauty shop. A client could arrange to have physical therapy in Botsford Hospital in the morning, for example, then have transportation provided to complete the day's program in the home.

"Socialization is the big thing. So are the field trips. They went to Franklin Cider Mill last week. Being involved with others is therapeutic all by itself for the client. Meanwhile, the 24-hour caregiver is getting some time off," Farrell said.

The program is open to adults

over the age of 60 able to communicate their needs, capable of following instructions, not potentially harmful to others or actively psychotic, and have control of bowel and bladder.

The program runs from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. Monday through Friday and participants are scheduled one to five days a week on a regular basis.

Farmington Nursing Home is located at 30405 Folsom Road in a wooded setting and is a unit of Botsford Continuing Care Corporation.

Darling will take calls of inquiry at 477-7400.



Reading to Kay Farquharson (left), is one of the ways Mary Stoffanina helps out participants in the Farmington Adult Day Program.



Walking on a crisp autumn afternoon are (left) Carolyn Darling, director of the Farm-

ington Adult Day Program, and Betty Gold. Here, they pause on the patio.

Staff photos by Randy Borst