

Students don T-shirts in war against drugs

By Casey Hans
staff writer

A DIFFERENT kind of peer pressure was in vogue Friday. Instead of being pushed to use drugs, students in Farmington-area schools were pressuring friends to don white T-shirts with a red "say yes to life, say no to drugs" emblem.

Friday was Anti-Drug T-Shirt Day in the schools, with 13,000 T-shirts provided to students and staff members through Farmington Families in Action, which received donations of \$30,000 for the project. The two cities, businesses, civic groups, individuals and community organizations all donated.

"I THINK it's really good — it's one way to say we care," said Jennifer Kahn, a freshman at North Farmington High School.

It took a while for shirts were slipped on in the traditional manner, or wrapped around heads or waists. Some were hidden under sweaters.

Still others were carried from class to class. By lunch time, about half the school wore them — one way or another.

NORTH SOPHOMORE Nicole Theodore said she was the only one in her first-hour class wearing the T-shirt. She was concerned with what she believed was slow progress.

"It's growing," she said, looking at classmates at lunch. "I went to first hour and people weren't wearing their shirts. People said it's ugly. They're weren't even worried about the drugs."

"If they say that about the shirts, how are they going to handle drugs?"

BUT THERE was obvious interest. Students such as Laura Levine, who missed first hour, stopped into the front office to get their shirts.

North principal Don Cowan said the school's football team is planning a day next week when they'll wear their shirts.

The school will also consider having a T-shirt day during Homecoming week. School clubs are cutting

ribbons for Red Ribbon Week Oct. 22-28, when it's hoped students will wear ribbons and put them on their Homecoming floats Oct. 28. The red ribbons popping up around town are another reminder of the "no drugs" message.

AT EAST Middle School, T-shirt-clad principal William Martin surveyed the halls and classrooms with pride. "We've had a good response from the kids," he said.

Martin and the rest of the East staff had gotten into the spirit, with many people color-coordinating their outfits to the red and white shirts.

Eight graders at East, one of four Farmington-area middle schools, had mixed reactions to the shirts, though they all wore them. "It's good that the community is spending money on it," said Alex Dryngel. "It's a good idea," Lamar Jones agreed.

But student Jayson Miller did not believe the shirt effort would help the overall drug problem. "People that use drugs aren't going to look at a shirt and change," he said. "I don't think it's going to change much." Martin said students would be encouraged to wear the shirts again each Friday in October.

AT GILL Elementary, students were lining up to sign a large school-wide board, pledging to be drug-free. Assemblies with anti-drug video messages were held through the morning in the media center. Farmington Hills police were expected to have another assembly in the afternoon.

Even some lesson plans were based on the anti-drug theme, said Beth Baillie, resource room teacher.

Before signing their names on the pledge board, Evelyn Kaplan's second graders composed some poetry, which they wore on headbands. Said one: "Be smart like me, be drug free."

October is Substance Abuse Awareness Month in Farmington and Farmington Hills as well as nationally. Several local events are planned to help fight drug and alcohol abuse and misuse.



East Middle School eighth grader Jenni Rande was one of many students wearing her "say no to drugs" T-shirt Friday. About 13,000 students and staff in Farmington-area schools were given the shirts.



North Farmington freshman Russ Milne (center) makes a fashion statement with his "anti-drug" T-shirt and tie Friday. Also pictured are junior Mark Zornickas (left) and seniors Jenny Weh and Andi McCann.



Gill Elementary kindergarten Peter Knepley and Lauren D'Agostino add their names to a school-wide pledge to be drug-free. Gill also held several assemblies Friday, and did writing projects around the anti-drug theme.

Hills eyes road impact fee, wants highway fund OK'd

By Susan Buck
staff writer

Traffic in Farmington Hills is the price the city pays for growth in the community and neighboring areas.

Councilman Aldo Vagnozzi believes developers should pay a road impact fee to local communities to cover the cost of road improvements needed to handle increased traffic.

No requirement now exists for developers to contribute any money. "Traffic is a universal concern in Farmington Hills," Vagnozzi said.

Only new developments could be targeted, said Steve Brock, assistant to City Manager William Costick. Farmington Hills is about 85 percent developed. Vagnozzi is calling for a council resolution calling for state legislative support.

Also, Vagnozzi wants the council to call on the federal government to unfreeze the highway trust fund so it can once again be used for its intended purpose: construction and improvement of roads.

He's asking that the resolution — on this week's council agenda — if approved, be sent to U.S. William Broomfield, R-Birmingham, Gov. James Blanchard, state Sen. Jack Faron, D-Farmington Hills, and state Rep. Jan Dolan, R-Farmington Hills.

FARMINGTON HILLS' growth has outstripped the city's ability to keep pace with traffic and road needs because of inadequate funding, Vagnozzi said. The city has sought and obtained state and county funds that are earmarked for road improvements, Vagnozzi said, adding that taxpayers have demonstrated concern by supporting a \$7-million bond issue for road improvements.

Developer road impact fees seem to be at a stalemate

right now, following defeat of a bill sponsored by state Rep. Maxine Berman, D-Southfield, in 1987.

The state House voted against enabling legislation that would have given counties with high economic growth the power to levy impact fees on developers of commercial, industrial and apartment projects. The vote was 65-4.

Pressure from home builders, politics and lack of enthusiasm from the governor's office seemed to be the reasons why.

Among those opposing the bill were the Michigan Association of Homebuilders and many residential real estate firms. They said impact fees would add 1-2 percent to the price of a house.

Groups backing the bill included the Michigan Municipal League and many commercial-industrial developers.

IN AN earlier interview with the Observer, John Grubba, Oakland County Road Commission managing director and a proponent of the idea, said a similar bill had to be introduced six times in South Carolina.

Two years ago, Farmington Hills assistant city manager David Call, with representatives from Troy, Southfield and the Oakland County Road Commission, among others, served on a committee to study the impact fee issue. "We all have our own ordinances and requirements," Call said.

There was a feeling by some committee members that some developers would say, "Fine, I won't build in your city, if there was a requirement to pay a fee."

"It takes enabling legislation at the state level," Call said. It's Call's opinion that different formulas could be imposed according to factors like density, size and type of development.

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Dispatcher pact OK'd Non-union hiring sparks picketing

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MCCARTHY AND Smith, a Redford construction management firm handling the project, is keeping a 24-hour surveillance on the site, on 11 Mile, just east of Halsted, Nutter said.

"I think it's unfortunate, but it's something that's certainly legal," said Susan Renella, school board trustee and one of two members to vote against the Long Mechanical bid because of the non-union status.

The majority of the board ultimately selected the low bidder, she said.

Board member Helen DiStasio also voted against the awarding of

the bid. Trustee Jack Inch, who had voiced concern about non-union bid awards earlier this year, was not present when the board voted in mid-June.

IN HIS statement as outgoing board president in June, Jack Cotton had suggested the board address the non-union contractor issue.

The board decided earlier in the year to consider each contract on its own merits, not to formulate an overall policy involving the non-union contracts. The issue has not been reconsidered.

Several union contractors spoke at a June school board meeting, voicing their displeasure with several non-union awards.

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