



Unified Prevention Coalition Recognizes Fairfax County Public Schools

OAKTON, VA, Nov. 30, 2011 – The Unified Prevention Coalition of Fairfax County (UPC) recognized the Fairfax County Public Schools (FCPS) on Nov. 28 for spearheading the creation of school-community coalitions working for alcohol, drug and violence prevention and supporting the transition of the umbrella organization into an independent countywide coalition.

FCPS first created 23 school-community coalitions in 1984. In 2001, 25 coalitions formed an umbrella organization known as the Unified Prevention Coalition of Fairfax County Public Schools and received a multi-year Drug Free Communities Support Program federal grant from the Office of National Drug Control Policy. In summer 2011, UPC took the major step of becoming an incorporated non-profit organization based on its successful track record as a local, state, and nationally recognized coalition. With the support of FCPS, the coalition became independent of the school system on September 30, 2011, and changed its name to the Unified Prevention Coalition of Fairfax County.

“We are grateful for FCPS’ continued support and recognition that a community coalition is only successful if its members and partners work together to advocate for change,” said UPC Executive Director Diane Eckert. “Our hallmark will continue to be collaboration for community change because we know that by mobilizing an entire community to identify problems, root causes and local actions, all of us – parents, school staff, elected officials, youth, police, health care providers, faith communities, business and civic leaders – can make a difference.”

UPC President Lisa Adler presented a plaque to FCPS during UPC’s general meeting. Accepting for the school system were Dr. Mary Ann Panarelli, director of Intervention of Prevention Services, and Clarence Jones, coordinator of Student Safety and Wellness.

UPC has more than 50 partners. A key initiative has been its Countywide Initiative to Reduce Underage Drinking, formed to address community concern with the high levels of underage alcohol use and binge drinking. UPC, under the direction of a new board of directors and officers, will continue to implement recognized evidence-based strategies to address current youth trends in Fairfax County and support the violence and drug prevention efforts of its partners. Visit www.unifiedpreventioncoalition.org for more information about the organization.

Note: For more information, contact UPC Communications Director Becky York at communications@unifiedpreventioncoalition.org.

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