

## Why Use *The Sex & Drug Show*

The student at the party was obviously drunk. After a round of drinking games he was loud and overbearing. He was pushing his younger companion to drink to the point of passing out. Others present called him out on his behavior. Harsh words were thrown in his direction, which he deflected with attempts at charm and humor. The chorus of accusing voices grew until one student stood up and said, "Wait a minute. You all are so quick to jump on him. I'm not going to defend him, but I want to know how many of you were in the group I heard outside my window last night saying, 'let's go get faded.'"

The above events really happened, but they didn't happen at a party. That scenario played out during a performance of *The Sex & Drugs Show*. When it comes to dealing with issues of alcohol and sexual assault, students often take a "been there, done that" attitude. They've already heard it all before. They already know all the answers. They can repeat the catch-phrases – "No means No." But do they really believe them? Do they apply them in real life? What's needed is a mirror and a crowbar to reflect their own behavior back at them and pry open their minds so that they can recognize it.

*The Sex & Drug Show* uses theatre and discussion to do just that. Scenes and talk-back material shine a provocative light on behaviors that often go unchallenged. Students may get angry with the characters, or they may see their own experience reflected back at them. Whichever it is, they are drawn into a discussion in which they express their own views and hear those of their peers. Long-held beliefs are challenged as students listen to the often unspoken experiences of others. Whether minds are changed is hard to say, but students definitely leave with a better understanding of the issues that remain and a sense that resolving those issues is their personal responsibility.