

Teen summit to be bigger

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Dozens of teenagers are expected to turn out Saturday for the second annual Teen Summit, sponsored by the ALIVE Center.

This year's theme is Bring Em Out, and anyone between the ages of 12 and 17 can take part in sessions with panelists on the topics of teen suicide, alcohol and sex. The event will begin at 9 a.m. Saturday on Western's South Lawn.

Last year this was a huge success, so we're excited to have a better event this year, said Leah Tibbs, a psychology coordinator at the ALIVE Center.

Panelists on the topic of teen suicide will include one parent who has lost a child to suicide and another who has attempted it. The purpose of the teen summit is to allow teenagers to talk to panelists in a free and open environment.

Kathryn Steward, health services coordinator at Western, will help conduct the session on teen sex. Participants will be broken up into four groups according to age and gender in an effort to make them as comfortable as possible.

We're going to look at sexual health issues, STDs and defining sex, Steward said. We'll talk about the benefits of abstinence, the consequences of intercourse and emotional issues, not just pregnancy and STDs. We'll also discuss media influences and how it's been played out to not be a big deal, but it still is.

Hundreds of dollars worth of door prizes will be given out and participants will be able to play games and listen to live music between sessions. Breakfast, lunch and dinner will be served, and all participants will go home with a free T-shirt and tote bag.

The summit ends at 6:30 p.m., but a talent show will be held from 7 p.m. to 9 p.m. with cash awards for the top three winners. All talent acts have been screened by the ALIVE Center to make sure they're appropriate, Tibbs said.

We had five acts audition the other night, and we'll probably have a few more sometime this week, she said.

The event is free, but Tibbs encourages people to preregister at the ALIVE Center this week. Teens are free to show up Saturday without preregistering, but they must have a parent with them to sign a permission slip.

Last year, the teen summit was held at Girls Inc. and drew between 80 and 100 young people. Tibbs said she hopes moving the event to Western will have some positive effects on the audience, as they won't be able to walk home whenever they feel like it.

The neat thing about the summit this year is that we had young people involved in the planning process, Tibbs said. They picked the food and the topics. It was an interesting and positive process to have young people involved in the decision making.

For more information, call the ALIVE Center at 782-0082 or visit the center at 1818 31-W By-Pass. Daily News · 813 College St. · PO Box 90012 · Bowling Green, KY · 42102 · 270-781-1700