



Lisette Estrella-Henderson, Superintendent of Schools
Golden Hills Education Center
2460 Clay Bank Road, Fairfield, CA 94533
Youth Development ★ 707.646.7601 ★ www.solanocoe.net

NEWS - FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Organization: Solano County Office of Education
Contact: Johanna Nowak-Palmer, Program Manager of Youth Development
Telephone: (707) 646-7608
E-Mail: jnowak@solanocoe.net

Solano County Celebrates Youth-led Community Change During California Friday Night Live Month

Solano County, CA — Throughout April, Solano County Office of Education's (SCOE) Friday Night Live (FNL) program is raising awareness of the work they are doing to create positive change and influence issues facing young people.

Youth in Solano's FNL program have opportunities to build life skills, experience physically and emotionally safe environments, engage with the community, further leadership and advocacy, as well as opportunities to build meaningful relationships with peers and adults. FNL also builds community partnerships that support youth, helping youth foster a sense of autonomy, empowerment and a belief in a their capacity to contribute positively to their communities. The program is driven by youth-adult partnerships that create powerful community actions.

"The program's ability to build resilience and leadership skills in young people is evident during the COVID emergency. Despite the closures of schools and public places for our youth to meet, Friday Night Live clubs across the county and the state have come together online to continue their work and find new and exciting ways to positively impact their communities. I am so proud and inspired by our young people and their passion for helping others." Lisette Estrella-Henderson, Solano County Superintendent of Schools.

The Friday Night Live program was established in 1984 to specifically address the issue of underage impaired driving by promoting youth lifestyles free of alcohol and other drugs. Since its inception, the program has evolved to address community and youth issues through evidence-based youth development principles and practices. Today, Friday Night Live programs are implemented in 47 counties in California, with nearly 600 chapters in schools, community centers, juvenile halls, and housing projects. Since 1984, the program has progressed with the development of age-appropriate

programs for elementary-aged youth, Friday Night Live Kids (FNLK), middle-school-aged youth, Club Live (CL), peer-to-peer mentoring between high-school-aged youth and middle-school-aged youth, Friday Night Live Mentoring (FNLM), and the California Youth Council (CYC), a statewide cabinet of FNL leaders.

Solano Friday Night Live would not be successful without the support from our community partners and funders; Solano County Office of Education, Solano County Public Health, Travis Credit Union, Solano Family Justice Center, local school districts, local law enforcement, and chapter advisors.

This year, local chapter efforts currently being implemented across Solano County include:

- Public service announcements focusing on the dangers of tobacco products, including the adverse health effects of vaping
- Social media campaigns during social distancing on tobacco use prevention, drunk and dangerous driving prevention, teen mental health education, and teen dating violence and domestic violence awareness
- Speaking with local merchants about tobacco policies, placement of tobacco products in the store and importance of checking IDs
- Speaking at City Council meetings in support of Tobacco Retail License ordinances
- Meeting local coalitions and law enforcement on youth alcohol use and drunk driving prevention
- Partnering with Impact Teen Drivers to host a town hall meeting for high school students to promote safe teen driving
- Hosting workshops for middle and high school students, school staff and community leaders around tobacco trends, youth tobacco use, teen mental health and healthy relationship and the prevalence of teen dating violence.

For more information about Solano Friday Night Live contact Johanna Nowak-Palmer at 707-646-7608 or jnowak@solanocoe.net.

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Solano County Office of Education (SCOE) provides leadership, support, and fiscal oversight for Benicia, Dixon, Fairfield-Suisun, Travis, Vacaville, and Vallejo school districts which serve approximately 64,000 students. Solano County Superintendent of Schools, Lisette Estrella-Henderson is elected by voters of Solano County. The Superintendent is a state constitutional officer who serves as the chief executive officer of SCOE and as a liaison between local school districts and the state.