



Director's Update, July 2011

"The practice of mixing alcohol with super-caffeinated energy drinks; the marketing of flavored malt beverages in 23.5-ounce cans, each containing a serious dose of alcohol; a shift in preference from beer to hard liquor; and the influence of social media, through which kids avidly share Jungle Juice recipes and tales of their exploits, have all raised the stakes."

The quote above provides a glimpse of a life-threatening trend that is taking place in today's youth culture. The quote comes from the June 12, 2011 edition of Parade magazine which featured the special report, *Teens and Extreme Drinking*. I highly recommend you read the story online by following this link <http://www.parade.com/health/2011/06/12-teen-drinking-epidemic.html> Basically, teens are now able to consume much more alcohol than ever before simply by mixing it with a high dose caffeine drink. In this form of binge drinking, caffeine forces the body to stay awake, it gives the teen a false sense of sobriety, and they continue drinking and partying. The result is a nationwide increase in teen alcohol-related hospitalizations, car accidents, arrests, and deaths. Ironically, passing out and going to sleep would be better.

This is just one facet of teen substance abuse. For every drug, household chemical, plant in the garden, etc. teens are coming up with new and creative ways to disengage from life. It can seem endless and without the hope of ever changing. But, I have found that there is hope! In my short time here I have seen God use the people and program of Safe Harbor to change lives. Last May, a teen who was out of control and at risk of not graduating was able to complete her studies and walk with her class. This was because her teen-mentor from Refuge, who had herself struggled with substance abuse, poured her life into helping her succeed. She even hosted a graduation party for her at the next Refuge meeting! Another young girl, who was at the point of aborting her pregnancy, changed her mind after an email prayer alert was sent out. People prayed for her, God moved in her life, and a life was saved.

I send a tremendous thank you to all of you who have been a part of Safe Harbor in the past. I also send you an even greater challenge to consider what more you can do to help. We need your partnership as we move forward. As a simple start, please review and return the reply card that is included in this mailing. By providing your email address we can update you quickly and in a cost effective way. Next, please prayerfully consider giving boldly. Your financial gift allows us to reach many more teens and families in need. Finally, the reply card lists many opportunities where you may be able to serve. By working with us you will see and be God's blessing in the lives of others.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Sean".

Sean B. Hannon

Feel free to contact me directly at (205) 568-2574, or Sean@thesafeharbor.org

A special thanks goes to Innovative Billing Solutions, www.innbill.com, in Birmingham for their help in processing this mailing.

