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WHAT IS "SETT"?

SETT stands for Self-Expression Teen Theater, a troupe of teen actors who also function as peer educators and counselors. On-stage and off, SETT members help focus on the problems and pressures faced by teens as they confront the challenges that lead to adulthood.

SETT offers a holistic approach to family life education. Rather than merely urging young **Say NO!** to premature sexual activity, drug and alcohol abuse and other destructive choices, members help their peers explore a vast range of positive choices---to activities, attitudes and adventures that invite a hearty and promising **"YES!"** response.

Effective and continuing communication is what SETT seeks to foster in all young people, inviting them to get involved---with their families, in church and school, with each other. Organized in 1986, SETT draws its members from Toledo-area schools through open auditions that are publicized throughout the area. Actors, ages 11-17, represent a wide range of backgrounds.

Training for troupe members is intensive, covering not only the performing arts but also human biology, psychology, self-defense, community resources, green and recycling concepts, community gardening, goal-setting and general development of the types of knowledge and skills that change behavior and allow teens to take charge of their lives creatively.

A SETT performance lasts about 45 minutes; it consists of approximately ten skits that depict real-life situations teens face frequently, such as teen pregnancy, pressures to have sex, internet safety, depression, drug and alcohol abuse, difficulties in communicating with parents, teachers, and peers, intimate partner violence, bullying, acquaintance rape, isolation and alienation and suicide. Most skits were written by the teen actors themselves. Some are humorous; others depict pain, fear or confusion. All are designed to generate thoughtful talk about needs and feelings.

SETT provides ongoing educational resources to help adults and teens use the program as a catalyst for ongoing communication. Both consulting services and an operations manual are available to those who would like to establish their own SETT troupes.

self expression teen theater institute

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