



PRESS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: SEPTEMBER 26, 2008

COUNTIES & TRIBES RECOGNIZED FOR RESPONDING TO NEEDS OF DRUG ENDANGERED CHILDREN

*Graebel Companies of Wausau and
SCOPE Program at Stanley Correctional Institution
Also Recognized*

Appleton, Wis. -- At its annual statewide conference in Appleton this week, the Wisconsin Alliance for Drug Endangered Children (DEC) recognized six counties and three Native American tribes for their efforts in organizing and developing community-wide programs to respond to the needs of drug endangered children. In addition, Graebel Companies and the SCOPE Program at the Stanley Correctional Institution were recognized for their efforts in supporting the Wisconsin Alliance.

Children living in residences where illegal drugs are manufactured, possessed, distributed, or used are at particular risk of abuse and neglect. In Wisconsin, a total of 21 DEC programs have been formed at the community and tribal level. The DEC programs recognized at the conference include Marathon, Marquette, Langlade, Lincoln, Pierce and St. Croix Counties, the Sokaogon Chippewa Tribe DEC Program, the St. Croix Chippewas of Wisconsin DEC Program and the Red Cliff Tribal DEC Program.

A representative of each DEC program was at the conference to receive a plaque recognizing the establishment of the program, as follows:

- | | | |
|------------------|---|---|
| Marquette County | - | Andrea Behnke, Marquette County Department of Human Services, and Marquette County Health Nurse Nicole Polk |
| Marathon County | - | Lt. Chad Billeb, Marathon County Sheriff's Department |
| Langlade County | - | Investigator Dan Bauknecht, Langlade County Sheriff's Department |
| Lincoln County | - | Michelle DeWerff, Lincoln County Social Services |

Pierce and St. Croix Counties - Cherise Nielsen, Probation/Parole Agent
St. Croix Tribal - St. Croix Tribal Police Chief Frank Taylor
Red Cliff Tribal - Red Cliff Tribal Police Chief Charles Bresette
Sokaogon Chippewa Tribe - Cheryl Marvin, Educator

Erik C. Peterson, United States Attorney for the Western District of Wisconsin; Corrections Secretary Rick Raemisch; Michael Myszewski of the Division of Criminal Investigation in the Wisconsin Department of Justice; Dennis Schuh of the Wisconsin Office of Justice Assistance; and Kim Eithun-Harshner of the Department of Health and Family Services presented the plaques to these representatives of the nine DEC programs.

Graebel Companies of Wausau and the SCOPES Program (Stanley Correctional Outreach Program Equals Success) at the Stanley Correctional Institution were recognized for their contributions to the Backpack Program sponsored by the Wisconsin Alliance. The Alliance provides backpacks to recognized DEC programs for children removed from a dangerous drug environment. The backpacks contain personal care products, school supplies, a blanket or sleeping bag, and a stuffed animal.

Participants in the SCOPES Program – inmates of the Stanley Correctional Institution in Stanley, Wis. – made the stuffed animals and blankets which are included in the backpacks. The SCOPES Program was represented by Elizabeth Gormley, a Recreation Leader at the Stanley Correctional Institution. Graebel Companies donated the school supplies for the backpacks.

A DEC program is a multi-disciplinary team commonly comprised of members from law enforcement, human services, prosecutors, the medical community, the health department, and probation and parole. Other participants may include schools, treatment centers, non-profit groups, faith-based organizations, and community members. Through the DEC program, organizations within a community or tribe work together to enhance their response to the immediate needs of drug-endangered children and to gather adequate evidence to substantiate prosecution of appropriate endangerment and other charges. Specific regional needs and available resources influence the type of DEC program each county or tribe implements.

The DEC initiative in Wisconsin began in November 2004, when a multi-disciplinary focus group met to discuss the national DEC program. A statewide steering committee was formed with approximately 20 members from various disciplines. In 2005, members of the national DEC alliance provided basic DEC training for approximately 600 people in Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Alliance provides guidance to communities in the development of their DEC programs, sponsors an annual statewide DEC conference, and has developed a website for use as a DEC resource. For further information about the Wisconsin DEC Alliance, visit www.wisconsindec.org.

###