

Youth conference lets teens dissect important issues

By Kimberly Horg

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Who says that you have to be over 18 to be responsible? Turlock teens organized the third annual Mayor's Youth Conference, titled "Break Down the Barriers," scheduled for next Friday at the Salvation Army Center.

The conference, for students between seventh and 12th grades, allows 200 youths the chance to talk about decision making, cultural diversity, communication and health.

The Teen Advisory Council runs the conference. The teen council members are in grades eight through 12. They are big supporters of the skate park and they organize dances throughout the year.

"It is fabulous working with the teens. They are so fun and have so much positive energy, they keep you young at heart," said Karen Packwood, advisor to the council. Each teen attending the event will be given a free tee-shirts to wear throughout the day. With everyone wearing the same clothes, there should be a feeling of equality among the youths, Packwood said.

Teens will be assigned to groups and discuss topics like cultural diversity or

health. Guest speakers will talk to the teens about various topics concerning them. Turlock Mayor Curt Andre will address the teens and answer any questions they might have.

The keynote speaker, Rex Osborn, will follow the mayor's speech. Osborn, the public relations officer for the Manteca Police Department, has been a law enforcement officer for 24 years. He hosts a weekly television program, "Streetbeat," and is the host of a radio program called "Behind the Badge."

His company, Osborn & Associates, is involved in research, problem solving and much more. He is scheduled to talk about diversity and sensitivity in the real world.

"The information that is discussed will be tackled by TAC. They will go to various groups that they need to talk to in order to try and solve the issues that were brought up," Packwood said.

The event is free to the students and will provide refreshments and lunch made possible by the sponsors. It will be held from 8:30 a.m. until 2 p.m. For information, call Packwood at 668-5550, ext. 6728.

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