This award winning live production “Swallow This!”, established in 1995 uses drama, humor and music in a creative, powerful and efficient way to educate students about Alcohol, Tobacco & Other Drugs (ATOD). While raising awareness of vital information, a strong connection is forged with the emotions behind substance use. The performance is written and performed by students and is developed from actual student stories relating their own experience with AOD.

A short discussion follows the performance allowing for immediate attention to student questions, concerns, feelings or misperceptions.

_We hope this program gives a voice to the voiceless and that it helps the audience to make healthy choices when it comes to Alcohol and Other Drugs._

**Nature of Program:**

Our project combines many effective educational programming tools including current health education theory, real student experiences, peer education and theatre. Health Education research clearly shows that **information alone is not enough to effect behavior change.** Efficacious programs need to address all three education domains, i.e., 1) knowledge 2) feelings, beliefs and attitudes, and 3) skill building.

This Drama Workshop:

* draws from student's own AOD experiences
* dramatizes situations in order to raise feelings quickly
* helps identify students with AOD concerns

All information is submitted anonymously or confidentially. We have found students who write the stories have been touch by this program as well as the audience members who see the stories come to life.

Our program uses peer education: students educating fellow students. Students develop both the script and perform the show. Theatre was chosen as a medium for learning because it allows an audience to respond on a “feeling” level. Students take the AOD stories and develop a theatrical piece that the audience can feel and learn from.

**Student comments:**

"Intense and chilling can sum up the presentation of "Swallow This!"

"In the production "Swallow This!" drug use and abuse was discussed in a rather fun fashion rather than in lecture form"

“In the bitterly funny comic scenes, we might laugh out loud, but still feel an underlying sober sense of seriousness.”

Of students evaluated:

* 90% felt the program would help to increase discussion of AOD issues.
* 41% indicated they are thinking about changing their AOD use.
* 32% indicated an increase in knowledge of AOD consequences