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News Release

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Concho Valley CARES Celebrates a Victory in the War on Drugs – DEA Exercises Emergency Scheduling of Synthetic Marijuana

Drug trends never seem to cease and the Concho Valley is not immune. The **Concho Valley CARES Coalition** and its broad membership continue to stay united in our effort to eliminate substance abuse in our community. Nationally, over the past couple of years, smokeable herbal products marketed as being "legal" and as providing a marijuana-like high, have become increasingly popular, particularly among teens and young adults. These products consist of plant material that has been coated with research chemicals that claim to mimic THC, the active ingredient in marijuana, and are sold at a variety of retail outlets, in head shops, and over the Internet. These chemicals, however, have not been approved by the FDA for human consumption, and there is no oversight of the manufacturing process. Brands such as "Spice," "K2," "Blaze," and "Red X Dawn" are labeled as herbal incense to mask their intended purpose. Locally, in the last year we have had a growing concern over rising reports of these substances being used and causing harm to young people.

The **San Angelo Police Department**, a member of CARES, has been diligently working with **San Angelo City Council** since **September 2010** to pass a local ordinance banning the use and sell of these products as we await for a comprehensive state and national ban. In **November 2010**, recognizing the "high potential for abuse," the **United States Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA)** began working on an emergency scheduling of the most common of these chemical compounds.

We are happy to report that as of **March 1, 2011**, the DEA "exercised its emergency scheduling authority to control five chemicals (JWH-018, JWH-073, JWH-200, CP-47,497, and cannabicyclohexanol) used to make so-called "fake pot" products. Except when authorized by law, this action makes possessing and selling these chemicals or the products that contain them illegal in the United States. This emergency action was necessary to prevent an imminent threat to public health and safety. The temporary scheduling action will remain in effect for at least one year, while the DEA and the **United States Department of Health and Human Services (DHHS)** further study whether these chemicals should be permanently controlled."

"The Final Order was published (March 1, 2011) in the Federal Register (see attachment) to alert the public to this action. These chemicals will be controlled for at least 12 months, with the possibility of a six month extension. They are designated as Schedule I substances, the most restrictive category under the Controlled Substances Act. Schedule I



substances are reserved for those substances with a high potential for abuse, no accepted medical use for treatment in the United States and a lack of accepted safety for use of the drug under medical supervision.”

Even though these harmful substances are now illegal, unfortunately that doesn't mean that use will end. Therefore, it is extremely important for parents to be aware of such substances and the growing product line of “legal” substances designed to mimic illegal substances (such as bath salts that immitate cocaine).

The Concho Valley CARES coalition wants to remind parents that their disapproval of substance use is the #1 reason teens choose not to use drugs. Be clear and consistent with teens; talk to them often about risks and consequences. For more information on drug trends and other substances or to get involved in our effort to eliminate substance abuse – check out our website: www.cvcares.org.

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