

## Telling It Like It Is

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*Max S. Hayes Vocational High School  
Cleveland, Ohio*

**M**ax S. Hayes Vocational High School held a one-day symposium to prepare its students for life after graduation. The Action Team for Partnerships (ATP) brought in outside speakers to discuss everything from career preparation and interview techniques to health concerns, and even how to express oneself through the language of hip hop and poetry.

The symposium lasted the entire school day. Students attended their homerooms and presenters received a schedule of rooms and times when they would present. The presenters came from community-based organizations such as Young Scholars, the East Cleveland Neighborhood Center, Bryant & Stratton, the school nurse's office, the Free Clinic, Alcoholics Anonymous, and Westside Industrial Retention & Expansion Network (WIRE-Net). Workshops included College Preparation, Hip Hop: Express Yourself, Interview Jeopardy, Attitude and Communication, Financial Independence, HIV/AIDS, Teen Health Concerns, and Career Preparation. At the end of each workshop, students filled out a questionnaire explaining what they had learned and what else they would like to know about the topic.

The ATP organized the event and put the community partnerships in place. Parents attended organizational meetings, informed other parents of the workshops, and ensured that the symposium was publicized through the school's PA system, newsletter, and fliers. The administration ensured that the classrooms had the necessary supplies and maintained school

security procedures. The family liaison handled the evaluation of the symposium and kept the parents informed of what was going on while overseeing the event. The teachers urged student participation.

Based on feedback from the evaluations, the ATP plans to continue the Telling It Like It Is symposium in the future. Thanks to the community support, the day-long event served as an inexpensive way for students to learn important life skills. Students benefited from exposure to community resources and information on how to make better choices. Most important, they learned more about themselves.

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