

# Presentation answers kids' age-old question

## AHEC program explains dangers of drug abuse

LEWISBURG — Have you ever said to a child, "Don't do that!"? Many times they will answer back, "Why not?"

Health profession students from the Southeastern Area Health Education Center (AHEC) discussed this common response from young people as it relates to substance abuse.

During a May 26-27 presentation at Western Greenbrier Junior High School in Crawley, the AHEC team,

dressed in their "Why Not?" T-shirts, gave students some examples of the consequences associated with using alcohol and narcotics. At the end of the second day presentation, an AHEC team member asked the students if the program had made a difference. A ninth grade student commented, "It sure makes me think."

Some members of the AHEC Team presented the "Why Not?" program June 10 at the Greenbrier County Youth Camp to 4-H members. In addition, WV-SOM graduate and Greenbrier Valley Medical Center intern Waid McMillion, D.O., is scheduled to present a program for parents in August during the new

parents' orientation at Western Greenbrier Junior High School. The Southeastern AHEC also anticipates that Dr. McMillion will present the project at the annual West Virginia Rural Health Conference in October 2004 at the Stonewall Resort.

Southeastern AHEC officials and team members hope the "Why Not?" program will become the foundation of an awareness and prevention campaign that will benefit groups of people throughout the community and improve public health by decreasing substance abuse.

The project was designed primarily to impact the growing incidence of clinical

substance abuse cases in Greenbrier County, especially among teens. The AHEC team researched and developed a comprehensive educational awareness and prevention program on substance abuse, mainly targeting adolescents, but also including an educational component for parents.

The AHEC Team responsible for the "Why Not?" program consists of: Dr. McMillion; WVSOM medical students Roseann Freundel, Todd Durham, Kris Van Wagner, Brian Dickens, and J. Mike Jarrett; WVU pharmacy students Paton Smith and Chanda Saucerman; and WVU physical therapy student Stacy Buchanan.