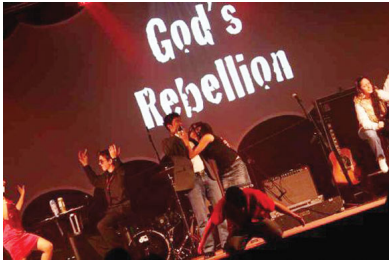


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By ROBERT PIERCE

• Leader & Times

There's a hidden epidemic in America's youth, and it concerns such things as pain and suffering, pornography, abortion, sexting, drug and alcohol addiction, bullying, sexual abuse, suicide and despair.

An event coming in March to Liberal High School's Maskus Auditorium is hoping to recapture local youth's passion, hope, adventure, dreams, love and purpose.

Pure Rebellion is a dynamic two-and-a-half hour event that takes an honest, radical and transparent look at the challenges of this generation.

The Liberal event is being sponsored by the group Liberal Youth Fully Empowered, and coordinator Joanne Metcalf said this fast-paced, high tech, interactive program is part rock

concert, part reality TV show, part live dance and drama, part undiluted health class and all unforgettable.



“It’s a one-night event for young people, and really for anyone,” she said. “They bring a band. They do skits. They have speakers. They do a text Q and A so people can ask questions.”

Metcalfe said Pure Rebellion is not just a purity message.

“They talk about sex, relationships, abortion, alcohol, drug use, pornography, every type of addiction anybody might have, and they just kind of go after that with a holistic message about keeping ourselves pure, not just sexually, but in all those areas, and how to deal with them and how to break free from them,” she said. “They have people who speak who have experienced those kinds of things and been able to break away from them.”

Metcalfe said what makes Pure Rebellion different from similar youth events is that it covers a wide variety of topics.

“This is all that they do,” she said. “Pure Rebellion, they travel all over the country putting on these conference. It’s not like one speaker that goes around and has this one particular message. They cover all those different areas as an event.”

Metcalfe said the event will be both interactive and engaging.

"It's this big production, lights and sound," she said. "It's really geared towards young people and the things that they like."

For many years, Seward County has had the highest teen pregnancy rate in Kansas, and Metcalfe said she and other church officials across the community felt this was something that was just not OK.

"LYFE was formed of all the local youth pastors," she said. "Pure Rebellion, in addition to the Saturday Night LYFE events that we did in the park, we're really just trying to reach out to the youth of the community and let them understand that there are people here."

Metcalfe said another purpose of LYFE is to let local youth know that no matter what they may be going through, there are answers.

"They do have choices," she said. "They can come to us. They're not alone. There are people in the community that are there to help them. The goal of the event is to get the youth of our community thinking more in these terms in a pure manner rather than having to succumb to drugs, alcohol, gangs, pornography. There are other choices."

Metcalfe said in addition to her church, Church For All Nations, eight other local churches, along with LHS' Stand Out youth group, are involved in LYFE.

The local Pure Rebellion event will take place from 7 to 9:30 p.m. March 8 in Maskus Auditorium. The group will begin setting up starting at 1 p.m. March 7, with rehearsals scheduled to take place all day March 8.

On the day of the event, doors will open at 6 p.m., and Metcalfe said she is hoping for packed crowd.

"There's 1,200 seats in the auditorium, and we're believing to fill it," she said.

Metcalf added LYFE is also looking for any individuals or businesses who can contribute to the cost of the event.

"It's free to the attendees," she said. "We still have some more funds to raise to pay for the whole event."

The Pure Rebellion event is not just for Liberal youth, and Metcalf said posters have been sent out to churches in many of the area communities as well.

"We're mailing to them to Perryton, Guymon, Meade, Sublette, up to Garden and everywhere in between," she said.

The LYFE group was started about a year ago, and Metcalf said she has already seen some of the benefits of the group.

"The youth of our community are more united," she said. "With the youth pastors, it's nice that we're all able to connect with each other. If one has a situation going on or they need somebody to cover for them, we've been able to cover those things as well. Just more of a unifying of the youth in our community and the youth groups."

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