

October 26, 2009

To Whom It May Concern:

I am writing this letter in reference to the "Shoeboogieman" presentation at Apex Secondary last week. As a family support worker that has spent 12+ years working with at-risk Youth, you get to see your share of presentations. I found Joe Roberts to be a polished yet honest and real presenter.

Joe, as he promised to the group, did not "preach" or use scare tactics on the group. The use of the truths and lies about drug use were insightful and to the point. Many of our staff was able to initiate conversations with our students regarding their chronic drug use. I think it hit home as Joe spoke at their level – but did not have to use negative or inappropriate language to make his points. The power point presentation was powerful and I thought it helped reinforce how devastating a life revolving around the drug culture can be.

I would not hesitate to recommend Joe "Shoeboogieman" to speak with any group of middle school or high school students. His message is very clear and I was pleasantly surprised to see our entire school population sit still for an hour and many kids had insightful and appropriate questions. Many of the kids stayed around after his presentation was finished to say thank you to him or to share their stories of loss or struggle with addictions. I would also like to thank Joe again for his time and his wonderful sense of humour and energy he brought to our school.

Sincerely,

Leanne Williamson