



### Local Government, Police, and the Community Coordinate Efforts in Santa Catarina Pinula, Guatemala, to Launch Campaign Against the Sale and Use of Alcohol, Tobacco, and Drugs to Minors

The Security and Violence Prevention Municipal Commission of Santa Catarina Pinula launched a campaign in April 2013, supported by Municipal Partnerships for Violence Prevention in Central America, AMUPREV, entitled – *‘Pilas Contra los*

*Vicios, Usted Vale!’* to combat the sale and use of alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs to minors. With funding from AMUPREV, the Commission created a practical guide—Alcohol and Drugs in School—to train and empower teachers to be able to confront and handle difficult situations with their students. Teachers are important role models for children and spend many hours of the day with them and the Commission felt that they would be the best conveyors of the message.

As part of the implementation of the campaign, a group of youth from the community center (*Centro de Alcance por mi Barrio*) put together and performed a play called “Alcohol Virus,” to raise awareness of the problems caused by alcohol, tobacco, and other illicit substances.

According to the president of the Security and Violence Prevention Commission, Mr. Pedro Peña, the idea for this campaign came from discussions held with Santa Ana Police and municipal officials during one of the CityLinks exchange visits promoted through AMUPREV. He indicated that exposure to and adaptation of experiences and models from other cities are useful and he reiterated the importance of prevention as a “democratic option which empowers the work of local government.”

The Municipal Transit Police (MTP) has been active in the campaign and has worked in collaboration with the municipal government. The officers drafted and provided the training to the teachers on the use of the practical guide. In total, 478 teachers from 21 primary schools and 12 elementary and high schools received the 3-day training. The training was so well received that teachers from neighboring municipalities such as San Jose Pinula are requesting similar training. The teachers, including the principal of the Escuela El Pajón, Clara de Iboy, who is a member of the Commission, indicated that part of the success of the campaign is due to the fact that the MTP has already engaged with youth through programs such as youth patrol and classes on obeying the rules of the road and they understand how to reach them and convey age-appropriate messages.





This campaign had also helped build the capacity of and bring awareness to different municipal departments. For example, the communications department has helped in the creation of designs for stickers, posters, and the Guide, which can be downloaded at <http://www.amuprev.org/publicacion.php?id=52> In all, 1000 buttons, 2000 posters and bumper stickers, 1000 guides for teachers, 350 t-shirts, 47 advertisements for bus stops and 5 banners were produced for the campaign, with support from AMUPREV.

