

Community safety awareness confabs Saturday

October 13, 2008 6:00 AM

A "Community Safety Awareness" presentation on youth crime and gang activity will be held Saturday at two locations and at different times: Technology and Learning Center (old ESE building) from 9 to 10:30 a.m. and in the East Stroudsburg High School North auditorium from 1 to 2:30 p.m. This is a free presentation sponsored by the East Stroudsburg Area School District.

The presentation is open to the public and will be especially informative for community leaders, community associations, parents, teachers and students of East Stroudsburg. The featured speaker will be Michael Leonard Sr., a criminal justice consultant, author and gang expert. Leonard, a member of the East Coast Gang Investigators Association, is a certified trainer with extensive New York City experience dealing with adult and juvenile offenders. He is knowledgeable about gang identifiers, gang characteristics, nation sets, group symbols (e.g., graffiti and hand signs), gang allies/enemies, and inception behaviors. He teaches people how to distinguish between youth involved in gangs and youth who just are making fashion statements.

The Rallying Youth Organized Together Against Rape from Safe Haven Inc. will also present a socio-drama on the dangers of gang-related activity. A socio-drama is an interactive theatrical portrayal of real-life situations facing the youth of today. Funding is provided by a Community Revitalization Program for an Anti-Gang Initiative from the Department of Community & Economic Development.