

**From:** [Sunset Advisory Commission](#)  
**To:** [Janet Wood](#)  
**Subject:** FW: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)  
**Date:** Friday, June 20, 2014 8:28:05 AM

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-----Original Message-----

From: sundrupal@capitol.local [<mailto:sundrupal@capitol.local>]  
Sent: Thursday, June 19, 2014 8:42 PM  
To: Sunset Advisory Commission  
Subject: Form submission from: Public Input Form for Agencies Under Review (Public/After Publication)

Submitted on Thursday, June 19, 2014 - 20:42

Agency: DEPARTMENT STATE HEALTH SERVICES DSHS

First Name: Donna

Last Name: Aiken

Title: Wife of AEPM and YTAP Instructor James Aiken

Organization you are affiliated with: Tarrant-Johnson County Youth Outreach

City: Burleson

State: Texas

Your Comments About the Staff Report, Including Recommendations Supported or  
Opposed:

My husband began teaching the AEPM and Tobacco Awareness Programs for Minors thirteen years ago. In the past two years, we have seen a steady decline in the number of students in the classes due to courts allowing them to take the online DADAP Driving Course which the legislature approved in the last session.

During these years, I've had the opportunity to see first hand how the classroom course has benefitted many students and their families. Many times there have been students who really want to talk to someone about their problems and do so in the one on one exit interview. Many were given information for additional help. Some parents and grandparents call to register their child and talk for half an hour or more about the problems they are experiencing and need someone to give them encouragement as well. We run into former students at stores and restaurants and they always want to say Hello and tell us how they are doing and how the class impacted their lives. I've seen my husband give back half the class fee several times so the kids could have lunch and gas money. He has called numerous judges on behalf of students who needed extra help. Last night, he finished a class and came home particularly worried about one student who he felt wanted to talk to him. He called and left a message and the 15 year old boy called back immediately. He spent 40 minutes listening to his problems and dreams and giving him encouragement. The boy expressed that he wanted to play football and basketball. My husband told him we would love to come see him play. They ended the conversation with the boy asking if he could call every week or two to give him an update. His answer, of course, was yes.

Since the decline in classes, I have seen my husband teach classes with only 2 or 3 students even though he knew it would cost more to rent the room than it would bring in. He would always say, "They need to get their certificates right away." He has not increased the fee for the classes in the entire 13 years because he didn't want to cause additional hardship for the families, even though his expenses went up.

The classroom course offers something that can never be replicated online.  
That being,another human that genuinely wants you to succeed and with a caring heart.

I have a feeling we will be going to a 15 year old's game this Fall!

Thank you for your consideration.

Donna Aiken

Any Alternative or New Recommendations on This Agency:

1. All Offender Education Classes continue.
2. All Offender Education Classes be conducted in a classroom setting only..

NO online courses allowed so that you are sure who is actually taking the class..there is one on one interaction...chance to recognize who might need additional help...

My Comment Will Be Made Public: I agree