

Changing the Face of Drug Prevention
Onderko Motorsports: **Fueling a Drug Free Future** at Pocono

Twenty years strong this year, [NCPRS](#) and the [RAD Racing Team](#) (formerly Race Against Drugs) have been changing the face of drug prevention through American Motorsports--one child, one parent, and one event at a time.

This weekend at the 2010 Pocono Raceway Festival in Stroudsburg, Pennsylvania, RAD's newest Spokesperson, Justin Onderko of [Onderko Motorsports](#) teamed up with SSG Jeff Bergamasco, National Guard Drug Demand Reduction Specialist. SSG Bergamasco is an instructor of [Stay on Track](#), a motorsports themed drug prevention curriculum, also developed by NCPRS and taught to middle school students throughout the country.

Onderko was invited to the Pocono Festival to show his #58 racecar and sign autographs, but while he was there he took the opportunity to spread his message of resisting alcohol and drugs. Justin spoke with young fans and asked them to pledge to set their goals high, make good decisions, and above all, lead a drug-free, healthy life. He left with 258 new signatures in his pledge book. Justin also talked to each one about how his commitment to live drug-free allows him to reach his goals, both on and off the track.

Mike Onderko, team owner and father of Justin said, "We had a great day, it was non-stop!"

He went on to explain, "One of the things that had struck us the most was the number of grandmothers with grandkids that stopped by to talk with us. These were grandmothers who had custody of their grandkids because of drug issues. They could not thank us enough for doing what we were doing--as one grandmother put it, "if someone would have done this for their parents these kids wouldn't be in the position they are in now." With that, she gave me a kiss on the cheek and said "God bless you."

"That's when you know you're a part of something special," Onderko said.

"For anyone who had the opportunity to talk with the team, it would have become apparent that they all truly believe in what it takes to be a RAD Racing Team Spokesperson. The number of young people that were willing to sign the pledge book is a testimony to the sincerity of the Onderko Motorsport team," SSG Bergamasco commented.

SSG Bergamasco also told of one parent who said, "I have been watching you all talk to the people that come around and you make each one feel special. You're not selling anything or doing anything for them, but you make children feel like they are important. What is it that you all do?" Justin was able to get his message across to him in such a way that the gentleman was very pleased to know that there was a group of people promoting and encouraging youth to live a drug free lifestyle."

It is Spokespersons like Justin, as well as over 75 others across the country, that are out in their communities and making an impression on the children they meet. They are able to deliver their message to an audience of young people who look up to them, admire them, and dream of becoming like them. What a unique opportunity.

This truly is a "one child at a time" mindset, and one that will likely go without fanfare. This is why choosing individuals to represent RAD and *Stay on Track* is so important. These prevention programs live in the moment, and rely on the words of the Spokespersons to deliver the message to parents and children. Getting the message across is at the root of it all, and we must seize the moment.

SSG Bergamasco summed it up best by saying, "There were a lot of bands that played the festival, but the Onderko Motorsport Team rocked."

Join forces with RAD and apply to become a Spokesperson today. To Help Fuel a Drug Free Future, contact Sharon Clarke (sclarke@ncprs.org) today!