



July 2011

Volume 4, Issue 7

SPOTLIGHT

A RESOURCE TOOL FOR THE PREVENTION OF
UNDERAGE DRINKING

Social Host Law Takes Effect!

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Congratulations to the state of Mississippi! As of July 1st, we now have a social host law. Thanks to fantastic legislators, dedicated prevention professionals, and concerned parents, it is now illegal for an adult to knowingly allow an underage drinking party to take place on their private property. Consequences include a maximum fine of \$1000 and/or 90 days of jail time. This is a major feat for underage drinking prevention in our state!

Screening Teens for Substance Abuse

Health care professionals are not screening enough for teen substance abuse, according to a new report that finds nine out of 10 Americans who meet the medical criteria for addiction start using addictive substances before age 18.

The report, *Adolescent Substance Use: America's #1 Public Health Problem*, finds that one in four Americans who began using any addictive substance before 18 are addicted, compared with one in 25 Americans who started using at age 21 or older. The report was released by The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University in New York.

The CASA report found that 10 million high school students –75 percent of the total— have used addictive substances including tobacco, alcohol, marijuana or cocaine; 20 percent of them meet the medical criteria for addiction.

Although three-quarters of teens have used tobacco, alcohol or other drugs, the use of teen-focused substance abuse screening is not typically part of routine health care practice, the report notes. Of teens who smoke, only 21.4 percent said a health professional told them to stop smoking, even though studies have shown that interventions by health care professionals can have a major impact on student smokers.

“Addiction is a disease affecting one in eight adolescents and causing more than 70 other diseases requiring hospitalization, yet only six percent of teens who need treatment get it,” said Susan E. Foster, Vice President and Director of the Division of Policy Research and Analysis at CASA, who was the principal investigator and director of the study. “It is critical for doctors to counsel their adolescent patients and their families about the health risks of teen substance use, be sure teens are screened for signs of trouble using available and easy-to-use tools, and intervene to prevent or treat the disease as they would for any other health condition.”

The CASA report recommends the following steps health care professionals should take to tackle teen substance abuse:

- Routinely discuss the dangers of adolescent substance use with patients and their parents.
- Conduct routine substance use screenings of adolescent patients in primary care.

- Screen teen patients who seek urgent or emergency medical care for substance use and substance use disorders, especially those who have injuries from accidents or violent incidents, mental health problems or who show other potential signs of substance use.
- Conduct brief interventions using established protocols—short counseling sessions directed at changing a teen’s attitudes and behavior related to substance abuse.
- Treat or refer to specialty care. For adolescents, it is critical that the treatment provided be tailored to their age and circumstances, and that it addresses any co-occurring conditions such as anxiety or depression, ADHD or conduct disorders.
- Expand treatment capacity in the medical system.
- Require education and training in addiction services.
- Press government and private health care insurers to reimburse for adolescent substance use prevention and treatment.

Emergency departments (ED) can play an important role in teen screening, the report notes. About eight percent of substance-related ED visits are made by adolescents. Health care providers who treat teens with emotional or behavioral disorders can also play a critical role in identifying substance use problems, since substance use frequently occurs along with such disorders, the study notes.

Primary care providers say that they don’t screen for substance abuse in adolescents for a variety of reasons. The number one reason was a lack of time, followed by lack of training in how to manage a positive screen, the need to triage competing problems, parents who do not allow their teens privacy for confidential discussions and unfamiliarity with available screening tools.

Health care practitioners not only don’t screen teens for signs of substance abuse, most do not have a plan in place for engaging teenage patients in interventions or treatment services, according to the report. Only 6.4 percent of high school students who meet clinical criteria for a substance use disorder involving alcohol, controlled prescription drugs or illicit drugs received formal treatment in the past year, CASA found.

The report states that 6.1 million high school students — 46 percent — currently use addictive substances; one in three of them meet the medical criteria for addiction. Alcohol is by far the most popular substance of choice, the report found; 72.5 percent of students report having drunk alcohol, compared with 46.3 percent for cigarettes, 36.8 percent for marijuana and 14.8 percent for misuse of controlled prescription drugs.

The study included online surveys of 1,000 high school students, 1,000 parents of high school students and 500 school personnel; in-depth analyses of seven national data sets; interviews with 50 leading experts in a broad range of fields; five focus groups with students, parents and school personnel; and a review of 2,000 scientific articles and reports.

Source: <http://www.drugfree.org/join-together/addiction/health-care-professionals-need-to-screen-teens-for-substance-abuse-report-finds>

Campus-based Recovery

College students who are lucky enough to realize they need treatment for substance-use disorders are faced not only with the daunting task of recovery but also with reintegration into college life -- otherwise known as the land of pills and booze.

A new program, however, may begin cropping up on U.S. campuses to assist young people who are trying to recover and aid those who wish to achieve sobriety.

The Collegiate Recovery Communities emerged from a program at Texas Tech University and now has spin-offs at several U.S. universities. The program is a peer-based, on-campus model that aims to promote a culture of recovery. Little is known about how these programs can help students, but data so far suggest students benefit from the support. After six months, students reported feeling strong levels of support for their recovery and satisfaction with their lives, according to the first study to assess collegiate recovery programs.

There is growing interest in how to help both high school and college students resume their education after substance-abuse treatment, said Alexandre B. Laudet, director of the National Development and Research Institutes in New York, who is conducting the research on collegiate recovery.

"It's believed that a lot of young people may be forgoing their education because they are afraid it will jeopardize their sobriety," Laudet said. "There is a shocking lack of recovery support. And, in the absence of symptom management, the problem is going to start again.

"If we can show collegiate recovery programs work to keep kids in college and sober, everybody wins," she added. "They are going to be role models in society, and they are going to give back to their colleges."

It's too soon to assess whether the programs can curb relapse rates, which are typically high in college-age students. Laudet's study showed many of the students in the programs had a history of serious substance abuse and emotional problems. But more than half of the students said they would not have enrolled in their particular college if it had not had a recovery program.

Source: <http://articles.latimes.com/2011/jun/20/news/la-heb-addiction-college-06202011>

What Now?

Burger King, Sonic and Starbucks are among the fast food chains experimenting with selling alcohol, according to USA Today.

Two Sonic restaurants in South Florida will soon be selling beer and wine along with burgers, the newspaper reports. Burger King “Whopper Bars” that sell beer have opened in Miami, Kansas City and Los Angeles. Several Seattle Starbucks are now selling local wine and beer. These chains are adding alcohol to the menu in an attempt to boost sales during evening hours, the article notes.

Not everyone is enamored of the idea of serving alcohol alongside fast food. Michele Simon, Research and Policy Director at the Marin Institute, an alcohol industry watch group, told the newspaper, “Fast food plus fast alcohol equals fast drunks.” Christopher Muller, Dean of Boston University’s School of Hospitality Administration, said adding alcohol to the menu could increase the risk of more people drinking and driving.

Sonic says it will not sell wine and beer to drive-through customers, according to the article.

Source: [http://www.drugfree.org/join-together/alcohol/several-fast-food-chains-try-selling-alcohol?](http://www.drugfree.org/join-together/alcohol/several-fast-food-chains-try-selling-alcohol?utm_source=Join+Together+Daily&utm_campaign=6b5cfd3396-JT+Daily+News:+Drivers+High+on+Marijuana+Are...&utm_medium=email)

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One of Us

Name: Gini Tucker

Title: Prevention Education Training Specialist

Location: DREAM, Inc.



The thing you love most about prevention: I get tremendous personal satisfaction in seeing a participant's "light" go off when they hear or see something new during a training that they know they can use to work more effectively in the field.

My best days are when I gain new knowledge and insight from participants in the class. My favorite quote is from Dr. Maya Angelou: "*When you know better, you do better.*" Therefore, each day I hope I do better. My goal is to learn something new everyday whether it's from my research for class or listening to workshop participants discuss a wide variety of topics.

Favorite place to vacation: The Outer Banks of North Carolina (off season in the fall when it's cool) when you can climb the vast array of lighthouses, watch the ponies and other gorgeous wildlife or just collect sea shells barefoot on the spectacular dunes. It's a magical place with lots of peace and quiet! However, I still hope to visit Ireland in the not too distant future!

On a rainy day, I love to: Sit on a porch and savor the smell and sounds of the rain- does it get any better than that?

When I have spare time, I: cherish the time with our three young grandchildren (Hunter (3), Kara (2 ½) and Tanner (2)) and our dog Zoey as much as possible. I enjoy sewing and scrapbooking for them as well. They are hyacinths for my soul.

Local Coalition News

- The MS Southern Coalition will host a Teen Conference, "All Up In Your CoolAid," on Saturday, August 20, at the Lake Terrace Convention Center in Hattiesburg. Cost is \$20.00 per student. Contact Anne Nelson at annenelson@dreamofhattiesburg.org for more information or for a registration form!
- MUDPC of Madison & Rankin Counties will host Rally at the Park at the Mississippi Braves Stadium on Saturday, August 27th. The game starts at 6:00. Come out and play!
- The Smarter Choices Community Coalition of Leake County will be having a fun filled day called "Face the Light Night 2.0" on September 10th, at Sasser Park. There will food, games, music, and entertainment from the popular music group Stars Go Dim.
- Central Mississippi Residential Center will host a Mental Health Day for area 8th and 10th graders in September. Dates TBA. If you are interested in taking part, contact Frankie Johnson at fjohnson@cmrc.state.ms.us for more information!
- Weems Mental Health will host a professional development conference on September 20th, entitled "Motivating Youth to Make Healthy Decisions for a Brighter Future: Preventing and Reducing Underage Drinking and At-Risk Behavior." It will be held at MSU-Meridian Campus, 8AM—4PM. Free to SPF SIG subgrantees and CEUs will be available!

