

The Solution



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Message From The Chair

A coalition is a unique entity. By definition it is: "An organized group of people in a community working toward a common goal in which members cooperate in joint action, *each in their own self-interest.*" It isn't often that individual and collective interests can be pursued simultaneously. But, we've done it!

As a coalition we adopted three primary goals: strengthen the Coalition, address the issues of youth and alcohol, and address the problems of illegal drug use. This edition of *The Solution* will highlight the achievements we have made in achieving our goals.

The Coalition has been a vibrant force this past year in both the recruitment and participation of a larger and even more active membership. We have been joined by a number of new members, armed with enthusiasm, energy and new ideas. Welcome! We have accomplished much as a result of the timeless energy of members.

We have managed to improve our sustainability through individual and corporate donations, through successful grant writing and in increased community visibility. Our data-driven efforts have increased our public credibility bringing not only local media attention to our cause but also national attention through participation in the A&E "Intervention" series.

Our youth and underage drinking focus has been at the forefront of our accomplishments. The alcohol purchase study results have drawn attention to the issue. The success of SPIDA and the Parent Centered and Underage Drinking Committee initiatives and Town Hall meetings have broadened our organizational visibility and have also enabled us to get our message to the public in meaningful and focused ways. Presentations have been made to both City Council and the County Commission with nearly monthly mention in newscasts and/or featured interviews on both radio and television programs.

A center piece of the Coalition's public impact was once again the production and release of the Indicators Report. This year we were able to include long-term trends and conclusions. The data results continue to find their way into the media since they put current events into context. The Coalition thanks each of our partners who continue to share their data with us for this report.

But data only define the problems; as a coalition we must work together to make individual and population-level (environmental) change. Fortunately, we have started moving in that direction through our more extensive and professional media initiatives and our new "Choose Wisely" campaign; which defines responsible drinking.

This past year we have "made a mark" in the community. Our vision is noble, our energy is strong and our goals for the community are obtainable. We must maintain and continue the successes we have had; but, also move forward to address the problems of illegal drug use.

Thank you all for a productive and successful year.

Paul Friday, Ph. D.
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Join the Solution...



Pictured above is the beer purchased throughout Mecklenburg County by study participants who were at least 21 years of age but who were not asked for identification. From left: Sarah Turk (study coordinator), Laetitia Katabi (study participant), and Dr. Paul Friday (lead researcher).

Alcohol Purchase Study

The Coalition, with grant support from the Preventing Underage Drinking Initiative in Raleigh, has conducted a series of research projects since 2006 to determine how easy it is for youth under the age of 21 to purchase beer without being checked for identification. The study used UNC Charlotte Criminal Justice majors who **were** 21 years of age but tended to look under 21. We found:

- **Overall, 36% of the time, a young person was able to purchase beer without being required to show identification.**
- **The chance is 2 in 3 (62.4%) in zip code 28212**
- **They could buy beer 50% of the time in 28206, 28272, 28269, and 28078.**
- **No establishments in zip codes 28207, 28209, 28211 and 28031 sold without an ID.**

There is only one conclusion: checking identification for the sale of alcohol is lax. While it is not required by law that sellers of alcohol check for identification under NC §18B-302 (a), it is a defense under sections d(1) and d(2). This suggests that the checking of identification should be considered a “best practice” for retailers to follow. (The complete report can be found on our website)

Join the Solution...

See what we've been up to!

Training

- Maintains a quarterly calendar
- Presented a four day clinical supervisor's training with David Powell
- Working with the Providers Services Organization to arrange an intervention training by Bettie Ann Weinstein

Public Policy

- Exploring ways to address the State Underage Drinking issue concerning the availability of "Alco-Pops" in grocery stores and other places where beer and wine are sold.
- Investigating ways to support the development of treatment professionals so that there is a sufficient work force to deliver appropriate treatment services to meet demand.

SPIDA

On March 6th, 2008 SPIDA "Students Preventing and Informing on Drugs and Alcohol" youth planned and implemented a Take It Back Town Hall meeting for Mecklenburg County. With approximately 40 adults and youths present, the teens discussed the direct and indirect effects underage drinking has on our community.

Two SPIDA youth were also given the opportunity to speak to City Council on May 12th at the Government Center. With Dr. Paul Friday by their side, each youth spoke eloquently on the positive benefits of SPIDA on the community as well as in their lives.

Best Practices

- Identified the need for developing two integrated dual disorder programs; one being gender specific.
- Developed guidelines for the sharing of assessments between providers
- Developed an assessment protocol and methodology that all treatment providers will follow
- Identified community needs and gaps in substance abuse prevention and treatment services

Parent-Centered Prevention Committee

The Committee ended the year with a merger of the "Underage Drinking Committee". The merger eliminated duplication of efforts and resulted in a strengthened committee. The merged committee organized and facilitated a Town Hall meeting on underage drinking in Huntersville. The meeting drew elected officials, local law enforcement, and concerned citizens who received information about how to begin addressing the issue in their community.

- Distributed information to parents at CMS high school football games
- Wrote an article on underage drinking that was published in Charlotte Weekly magazine
- Facilitated eight parent education workshops on underage drinking in CMS high schools
- Held an anti-DWI poster contest for middle and high school students with the winner being published in Pride magazine

Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders Prevention Committee

In January, 2008, the Committee brought Dr. Kathy Sulik from UNC Chapel Hill to present to medical personnel at Presbyterian Hospital on alcohol and the developing brain of an unborn child. Dr. Sulik is a respected researcher in the field of fetal development. The Committee also made presentations to Charlotte Pregnancy Center, Substance Abuse Prevention Services, and Florence Crittenton Services. Using the television channel at Peak Fitness Centers, the Committee spread the messages, "If you drink, don't get pregnant." and "If you're pregnant, don't drink".

Future activities include continued targeted public education and awareness of the importance of the dangers of using alcohol during pregnancy through print, radio, and television media.

Join the Solution...

Executive Committee

Chairperson

Dr. Paul Friday

Vice Chairperson

Bob Ward

Treasurer

Captain Bruce Bellamy

Immediate Past

Dr. Mary Howerton

Members

Tony Beatty

John Basilice

Winona Chestnut

Sandy DuPuy

Dennis Knasel

Susan Long-Marin

Cindy Murphy

Steve Newman

Charles Odell

Kristi Roe

Karen Simon

Patrick Vaca

Newsletter Committee

Chair: Tonda Wilde

Andrea Anselmi

Mary Ward

Mary Howerton

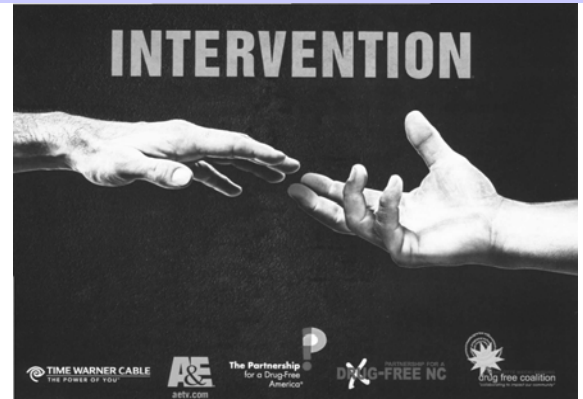
Patrick Vaca

Leslie Dill

Terrence Elliott

Media and Marketing Committees

- Launching new website portal: www.ChooseWiselyNow.org
- Coordinated media for town hall meetings, alcohol purchase study, Indicators Report, and A&E's Intervention Program
- Arranged radio interviews and presentations to government officials



ADAPAA Committee

ADAPAA (Alcohol and Drug Abuse Program Administrators Association) completed the Substance Abuse Workforce survey looking at the number of vacancies in agencies and the average length of time required to fill the vacancy.

ADAPAA applied and was accepted as a member of the NC Substance Abuse Federation. The Federation provides input to the state in reference to pending legislation, budget priorities, etc. ADAPAA membership is important in that it represents and gives another voice to Mecklenburg County substance abuse issues.

Evaluation Committee

- Developed a calendar of research activities
- Fleshed out the evaluation plan for the Drug Free Communities grant and other coalition activities
- Writing a statement of our theoretical model
- Reviewing documentation needs
- Building time lines for activities
- Determining the need for and developing a budget for additional research activities

Thanks for your support . . .

- NC Coalition Initiative
- Drug Free Communities
- Stop Alcohol Abuse-SAMHSA
- NC Prevent Underage Drinking Initiative
- Mecklenburg County ABC Board
- Harris Foundation
- Mecklenburg County

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Fundraising

Led by Gary Harris, this committee continues to identify potential donors and grant opportunities such as those listed to the left. To be a part of the solution please contact Andie Anselmi, Coalition Coordinator, by calling (704)375-3784 ext. 12 or by e-mail at anselmi@drugfreecharlotte.org