

The Solution



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Drug Free Coalition
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Message From the Chair

At the beginning of the new school year for youth and families we should take a moment to pause and reflect upon what we have learned. A lot has happened since the last edition of *The Solution*. We have completed a number of grants and we have a tremendous amount of new data to help us move forward to reduce the problems of alcohol and substance abuse in our community.

It is always difficult to demonstrate the actual effectiveness of prevention activities, but data from the Substance Abuse Prevention Services Youth Drug Survey show substantial progress in reducing the use of cigarettes, alcohol, binge drinking, and marijuana. At the same time, students are using/experimenting with drugs and alcohol at later ages and they are seeing greater risk in substance use behavior. These differences are not by chance alone. Neither, too, is the fact that fewer students are seeing the risk of using marijuana while the proportion of ninth and twelfth grade students who used marijuana the last thirty days actually increased. We now face significant challenges to the gains we have been making in reducing underage drinking and to the challenge of increasing use and acceptance of marijuana.

Progress in reducing underage drinking is challenged by a subsection of the population supporting a lower drinking age for youth despite the medical evidence of the negative effect of alcohol on the developing brain until age 23. One fourth of Mecklenburg County adults surveyed approve of youth under 21 drinking alcohol under parental supervision. Our alcohol purchase studies reveal that county-wide underage looking youth can purchase alcohol without being checked for identification 30% of the time; in some sections of the county, they can buy 47% of the time. While sales in the university area are made 21% of the time, 10 of 26 bars/restaurants (38.5%) in the same area sold drinks without checking identification. As a Coalition, we have some more work to do.

As we begin the 2009/2010 academic year we must also address the acceptance and use of marijuana. Last year we established a new illicit drug initiative, but we need ideas from the entire coalition as to how to address the fact that proportionately more 8th and 12th grade students in Charlotte admit using marijuana in the last 30 days than students report nationally or state-wide. The first use of marijuana is, on average, 14 years of age and those who admit use are, significantly, 16-17 year old female students and male students in grades 11 and 12. The prevalence and impact of marijuana are also seen in the most recent ADAM (Arrestee Drug Abuse Monitoring) project which showed that 45% of all persons arrested in our last jail study tested positive for marijuana: 56% of African American and 23% of Caucasian arrestees. Fifty-nine percent of arrestees under 21 and 67% of arrestees between 21 and 25 years of age tested positive for marijuana. The marijuana trends are of particular concern since there is a developing "grassroots" effort to legalize the drug. We need to be prepared to address this.

It is unfortunate that our state and federal budget leaders are so myopic in their views that when times are tight, they cut the very programs that in the long term are the most effective – prevention programs. The Safe and Drug Free Schools Programs have been eliminated from the next Federal Budget, the State is cutting funds that would provide a complete range of services in the areas of mental health and substance abuse, so we will face a more difficult challenge to sustain the positive gains we have made.

Our Coalition is a viable force thanks to all of your efforts. I am confident that we can continue our efforts and protect the fragile gains we have made.



Dr. Paul Friday

Join the Solution...

Operation Medicine Drop



CMPD officers at a drop off site
Photo: Charlotte Mecklenburg
Police Department

The Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department, the State Bureau of Investigation, the Drug Enforcement Administration, and Harris Teeter Stores have partnered to provide a venue to dispose of unused prescription medications. The first Operation Medicine Drop was conducted in Charlotte-Mecklenburg in March of this year at 6 sites. The operation collected an estimated 10,000 to 16,000 doses at each site. Proper disposal of unused medications can help keep you and your family safe.

According to the National Center on Addiction and Drug Use at Columbia University, nearly nine million 12-17 year olds in the United States report that they can get prescription drugs illicitly within one day and 5 million say that they can get them within one hour.

Access to prescription drugs plays a role in unintentional poisonings from overdosing in children and adults and can also contribute to suicide attempts. In 2005, unintentional poisoning was second only to motor vehicle crashes as the cause of unintentional injury and death among all Americans. And, according to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, among people 35 to 54 years old, unintentional poisoning caused more deaths than motor vehicle crashes.

The home is the primary place prescription drugs are accessed by children and teenagers. In fact, according to the Center on Addiction and Drug Use's latest 2009 national poll of teenagers, 1/3 of teenagers who use prescription drugs without proper authorization get the drugs in their own home and another third from friends who get them from their home.

Are you interested in safely disposing of your unused medications? It's convenient and confidential. Simply visit any of the locations listed below. There will be no forms to fill out and no questions to answer. Just drop and go!

Your help in spreading the word is appreciated. A flyer can be obtained by contacting coalition member Janice Williams, the Director of Carolinas Center for Injury Prevention at janice.williams@carolinashealthcare.org.

Next Drop Off Event: Saturday, October 17th from 10-3

You can drop off unused medication at the following Harris Teeter Sites:

- Southpark: Morrocroft Village, 6701 Morrison Blvd.
- Mt. Island Marketplace: 3540 Mt. Holly-Huntersville Rd.
- Quail Corners Shopping Center: 8538 Park Road
- Old Towne Mall: 4100 Carmel Road

Union County Drop Off events will be held Saturday, October 3rd from 11-3 at the Wal-Mart in Monroe or Indian Trail.



A sample of just some of the unused medicines collected at a previous Operation Medicine Drop event.

Photo: Charlotte Mecklenburg Police Department

See what we've been up to!

Spanish-language Parent-Centered Prevention Committee

Spreading the "0-1-2" Message

Guidelines for Responsible Alcohol Use



0 - No alcohol for people who are:

- Under 21.
- Pregnant, trying to become pregnant or breastfeeding.
- Operating any type of vehicle or machinery.
- Recovering alcoholics or drug dependent.
- Using certain medications.



1 - No more than one standard drink* per day for women.

*1 standard drink = 12 ounces of beer,
5 ounces of wine or
1.5 ounces of 80-proof spirits



2 - No more than two standard drinks per day for men.

Some Choices Are Forever!

www.ChooseWiselyNow.org

Charlotte Mecklenburg Drug Free Coalition

dominostrategy.org

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The Charlotte-Mecklenburg Drug Free Coalition's Parent Centered Prevention Committee (PCPC) now has an English language PCPC to deliver programming in English and a Spanish language PCPC to deliver programming in Spanish. The two committees worked together in the planning and delivery of the Underage Drinking Town Hall meeting in Charlotte's Hidden Valley community in April of this year. The Spanish language PCPC is now working with immigrant



Spanish Language PCPC: *Standing:* Jorge Ivan Bedoya, Carlos Martinez, Steve Newman. *Seated:* Angelica Castaneda-Noorbakhsh, Carolina Cruz, Zorana Valdes, Sara Garcia, Alba Lake

Photo: Mi Gente

Latino families in the community and other human services providers to deliver a town hall meeting on child and adolescent development among youth of immigrant Latino families. The event is scheduled to be held on Thursday evening November 12 from 6-8 at the Freedom Regional Branch Library on Allegheny Street.

For more information and/or to become involved in the planning of the November 12 event call Angelica Castaneda at 704-376-7447.

Angelica Castaneda-Noorbakhsh of Anuvia (left) talks with Ines Castro (right), and her husband Felix Guzman (not pictured) and children Esmeralda and Rodrigo Guzman (not pictured) to plan the Spanish Language Parent Centered Prevention Committee's November 12th event about child development among immigrant Latino children

Photo: Ronnie Devine



What's your story?

Do you have any upcoming events or story ideas? Send your event information, pitch ideas, or share some pictures for the next edition of The Solution. Contact Kerry Burch at kerry.burch@carolinashealthcare.org

SAAM

Substance Abuse Awareness Month



Substance Abuse Awareness Month (SAAM) has been observed in Mecklenburg County every October since 1989. The mission of SAAM is to heighten public awareness of substance abuse and promote healthy living. Substance Abuse Prevention Services (SAPS) is leading and coordinating efforts in recognition SAAM. The theme this year is “YES WE CAN, TOGETHER WE WILL”

The SAAM schedule includes a variety of events and activities throughout our community including:

SAAM Kick off Breakfast: Substance Abuse Prevention Services kicks off Substance Abuse Awareness Month with its annual SAAM Breakfast held on October 2nd. The event will take place from 7:30am - 9:30 am at Hope Haven located at 3815 North Tryon Street, Charlotte, NC. Phil Mooring, Executive Director of Families In Action and Chairman of the Board of Directors of the NC Substance Abuse Prevention Providers Association, will provide the keynote address. The breakfast is sponsored by Addiction Professionals of North Carolina and Hope Haven.

SAPS Annual Luncheon: This event will recognize outstanding individuals in the field of substance abuse. During the luncheon, the Jonnie H. McLeod Award for Excellence in Prevention, the Stephen H. Newman Award for Excellence in Volunteering and the SAAM Star Awards will be presented. The luncheon will take place on October 15th from 11:30am - 1:30pm at Maggiano's Restaurant in Southpark. Join SAPS and other community partners for a celebration that highlights the significant efforts of substance abuse professionals in the community and recognizes and honors the many dedicated professionals.

The SAAM Family Festival: Come enjoy events for the whole family on Saturday October 24th, 2009, from 11:00am - 2:00pm at Sugaw Creek Recreation Center. This event will celebrate positive living among communities, families and youth .

For a calendar of SAAM events visit:
www.preventionservices.org



NCSAPPA Annual Meeting

Save the Date

NCSAPPA Annual Meeting
Tuesday, October 20, 2009
Courtyard Carolina Beach by Marriott
2:00PM - 5:00PM

Reception immediately
following the meeting.



On Tuesday, October 20, 2009, the North Carolina Substance Abuse Prevention Providers Association will host its Annual Meeting. The NCSAPPA is pleased to host this event at the same location as the Addiction Professionals of North Carolina conference October 21-23, 2009. APNC is offering NCSAPPA members the opportunity to attend the APNC conference at a discount.

If you wish to attend the NCSAPPA Annual Meeting or have any questions, please contact Candace Jackson:
By email: candace.jackson@governorsinstitute.org
By phone: 919-990-9559 x 4110.

PREVENTION IS THE ANSWER
NORTH CAROLINA SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION PROVIDERS ASSOCIATION