

May 2005

Volume 3, Issue 5

Special points of interest:

- Community Awareness
- Education
- Prevention
- Intervention
- Treatment
- Recovery

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SAFE PROM & GRADUATION CELEBRATIONS

While spring is a time for joyous occasions — proms and graduation celebrations — it is too often marred by the often fatal consequences of illegal underage drinking. In light of this real danger during prom and graduation season, SCCRACC highlights a number of efforts to educate parents and teens about the dangers of underage drinking through public awareness outreach. Too often one bad decision results in a tragedy for not only a young person, but their family, friends and an entire community. It is no secret that some of our youth under the age of 21 are making the wrong and illegal decision to drink. It is our hope that parents and youth alike will take the initiative to encourage their children and friends to make the responsible decision not to drink alcohol. Last year during Prom and Graduation Season (April, May, June 2005), 713 youths under the age of 21 died in alcohol-related traffic fatalities nation-

wide according to the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) — stark evidence that Prom and Graduation season is a particularly dangerous time for our nation’s youth. While there has been a 15% reduction in the number of alcohol-related traffic fatalities among our youth during the Prom and Graduation season, much more must be done to address this problem. While alcohol consumption among our nation’s youth has declined over the past 20 years, underage drinking remains unacceptably high. According to the 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, about 10.8 million Americans between the ages of 12-20 report current consumption. While the prevalence of current alcohol consumption

increased with increasing age, the alarming fact is first use of alcohol typically begins around age 12. By 16, 29 percent report current use of alcohol. The key to stopping underage drinking is the involvement of parents. SCCRACC encourages parents to talk with their teens about the dangers of underage drinking early and often and invites parents to visit www.promtips.org for tips on how to make your teen’s prom night safe and alcohol-free.



Alcohol and Other Drug-Related Birth Defects Awareness Week

Mother's Day kicks off Alcohol and Other Drug-Related Birth Defects Awareness Week. During this week, women of childbearing age are asked to think about their drinking habits, especially if they are pregnant or could get pregnant. Learning about problem drinking early can help a woman work towards eliminating alcohol use during pregnancy. This will reduce the chances of having a baby with fetal alcohol syndrome or other prenatal alcohol-related conditions. The U.S. Surgeon General advises not to drink alcohol if you are pregnant, planning to be pregnant, or could become pregnant. Just as sub-

stance abuse has negative affects on the user's brain and body, it can have the same affects on a developing fetus. A pregnant woman's overall health is directly related to the health of her unborn child and if she uses alcohol, tobacco or other drugs the child is exposed to serious health risks. Infants exposed to alcohol, tobacco, and other drugs in utero are more likely to be born prematurely, of low birth weight, and have an increased chance of stunted growth. It is important

for expectant parents to know the facts about alcohol-and other drug-related birth defects and the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD) has designated this week to raise awareness about these issues.

For more information visit www.ncadd.org/programs/awareness/ or SAMHSA's Substance Abuse Treatment Facility locator at www.findtreatment.samhsa.gov to help you find drug and alcohol treatment programs in your area.



National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month



The goal of National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month (NTPPM) is to increase public awareness of teen pregnancy so that communities will commit to teen pregnancy prevention. It is designed to help communities recognize that the effects of unintended teen pregnancy and early childbearing are far reaching. It requires educating teens, parents, teachers, policy makers, health professionals, business

people, and others about responsible behavior to avoid parenting too soon.

May has been designated National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month because the highest percentage of adolescent pregnancies occur in that month.

National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month empha-

sizes the importance of a strong partnership between the community and the families in helping young people develop responsible, positive attitudes and behaviors about sexuality.

For more information or to get involved in the campaign go to www.teenpregnancy.org

A Prescription for Danger: Kids Popping Pills

On Thursday, May 18, 2006 from 8:30 a.m.– 2:30 p.m. The Governor's Prevention Partnership will be sponsoring a workshop titled "A Prescription for Danger: Kids Popping Pills" at the CT Valley Hospital, Page Hall, Room 212, Middletown, CT.

Participants will:

- Learn about prescription and over-the-counter drug use among youth;
- Learn more about incorrect use of prescription drugs and the risks associated with this;



- Learn where and how kids are getting these prescriptions drugs without a prescription;
- Learn ways to talk with children about the dangers and ways to prevent prescription drug use.

Surveys show more teens are using prescription and over-the-counter drugs to get high. The latest threat in teen drug use may be lurking in your medicine cabinet. Young people's abuse of prescription drugs has surged compared to their use of illegal drugs such as marijuana and ecstasy.

"2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health revealed that the second most common type of illegal drug use after marijuana is the non-medical use of prescriptions drugs."

Prevention professionals, law enforcement, school professionals, adults and/or parents interested in learning more should attend this workshop. There is no fee for this session, but registration is required.

For more information contact Connecticut Clearing House at 800.232.4424



NAACP 17th Annual Health & Science Career Expo

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On May 20, 2006 The Greater New Haven NAACP will host their 15th Annual NAACP Health and Science Career Expo at the City Wide New Haven Field House located at 480 Sherman Ave from 10 a.m. - 3:30 p.m.

The goal of this year's initiative is:

- To provide a comprehensive health education and awareness [programs to the Greater New Haven Community.
- To Expose the youth to

the full array of health and science opportunities in the Southern Connecticut Region.

- To assure the youth get the best opportunity to engage and understand the requirements for on the job training health careers and health programs.

The focus of the program will continue to promote health lifestyle changes with physical fitness programs, nutritional workshops, healthy cooking demonstrations and overall health and wellness re-

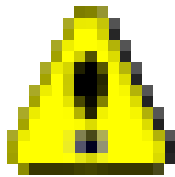
sources for the community.

There will be over 300 health and career information booths, 25 free health screenings, amber alert, children activities, fire safety, ATOD prevention education booths, live entertainment, great door prizes, mini health workshops, mobile health care vans, and much more.

For more information visit www.naacpct.org.



ALERT! Starter Heroin



New heroin-laced powder known as "cheese" is popping up in middle and

high schools in Texas, where dozens of youths have been caught with the drug, federal and local officials say.

So far the problem has been focused on schools in Dallas, where police first reported kids snorting the mixture of ground-up cold medicines and heroin at the start of this school year. However, the Drug Enforcement Administration, which calls the addictive concoction "starter heroin," is concerned enough about the drug's appearance in Dallas that it

has alerted agents nationwide to watch for it.

Cheese is a tan powder made mostly from acetaminophen and diphenhydramine HCL — the ingredients in Tylenol PM — with a little heroin mixed in. Liebe says samples confiscated in Dallas have been up to 8% heroin. The drugs are crushed together and typically folded into notebook paper. A quarter-gram sells for \$5, Liebe says, and a single hit usually sells for \$2.

Users feel euphoric and then sleepy, lethargic and hungry, he says. Cheese has been a nickname for heroin, Liebe says.

The powder has been sold

by 18- and 19-year-olds near school campuses and by older students in those schools, Liebe says. The heroin has been brought from Mexico and then has been mixed with other drugs in the USA, he says.

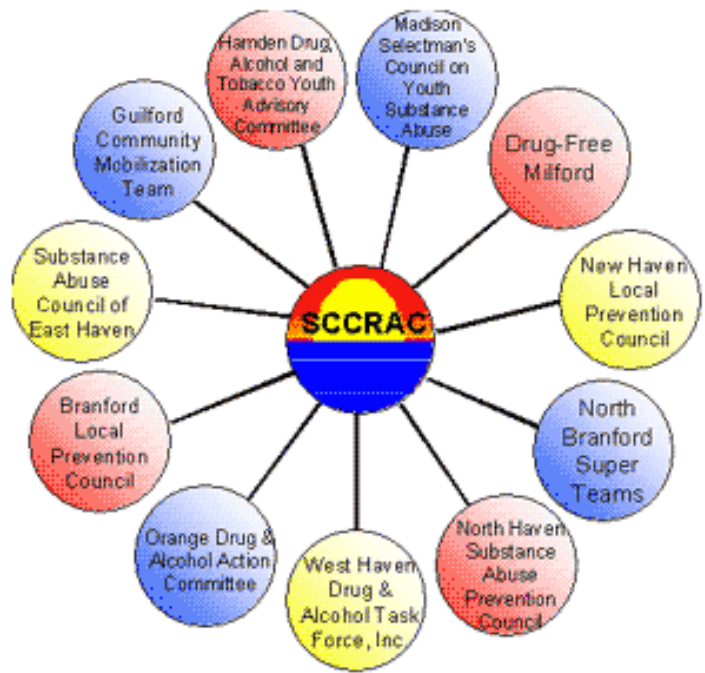
Six teens in drug treatment at the Phoenix Academy in Dallas used cheese, director Michelle Hemm says. One boy was 12 when he started using it, she says.

Hemm expects to see more youths hooked on cheese, which is so affordable "little kids can purchase it. Kids in here, they all know lots of other kids using cheese. This is the tip of the iceberg."

"It's an emerging problem," said DEA spokesman Steve Robertson. "It's something we're tracking to see if we can spread the word before it becomes a huge problem."

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Shining a light on prevention that works

May is Mental Health Month

Mental Health Month is an annual observance sponsored by the National Mental Health Association (NMHA) and the National Council for Community Behavioral Healthcare (NCCBH). It is designed to increase awareness about mental health and mental illness. This year's theme, "MIND Your Health," is intended to focus awareness on the connection between the mind and body. It draws on the growing body of research that shows that mental and physical well-

being go hand in hand. Good mental health is fundamental to overall health and is essential to personal well-being and the ability to lead a healthy, balanced, and productive life. Mental health problems can impair a person's thinking, feelings, and behavior and can be serious and disabling. According to the U.S. Surgeon General's report on mental health, more than half of all Americans with a severe mental illness fail to seek treatment. Many

people do not receive treatment for mental health problems due to a lack of awareness of the problem, fear of stigma, or lack of access to appropriate services. Yet, overall quality of life is greatly improved when a person with a mental health problem gets an early diagnosis and receives appropriate treatment. For more information on mental health or this year's Mental Health Month theme visit the web site at www.nmha.org.