Something to Consider ~ Social Host:

News stories of underage drinking parties have raised some questions recently. Many underage drinking parties go unreported until something bad happens. Maybe someone got hurt, or in the case of the North Buffalo family, someone’s house gets trashed. Questions arise such as: Who should be held responsible? Should the teens hosting the party be held liable? Are the schools where the teens attend able to evoke punishment? Should the parents have any responsibility in the matter? What if they knew the party was taking place? What if they willingly allowed the party to happen in their home? All these issues and more need to be addressed.

Underage drinking is still a very serious issue in our community, with almost 40% of high school students using alcohol in the past 30 days. Research has shown that underage drinking parties provide high-risk settings for binge drinking as well as other negative consequences that go along with excessive alcohol consumption.

Several counties, towns, and villages throughout New York State have implemented Social Host Ordinances. The Ordinance’s purpose is to impose sanctions on adults who knowingly allow underage drinking to occur on their property. Social Host Ordinances vary depending on location. Some impose criminal penalties and others are civil in nature, where only fines are given.

Many parents who host underage drinking parties don’t realize how much they are harming youth. They think it is OK to host such parties because they believe it is safer to have their child and friends drink in their home under parental supervision. However, there are still many risks associated with underage drinking, even if done with adult supervision. Alcohol affects a young person’s body in a different and more harmful way than it does an adult’s. Unanticipated consequences can include overdose (alcohol poisoning), assault, unintentional injuries, and many others.

So again, the question is raised: Who should be held responsible? Is a Social Host Ordinance something Erie County should consider implementing?

Help for Today, Hope for Tomorrow

For more information about Alcohol Awareness Month or for tips on how to celebrate, visit www.NCADD.org.
Letter from the Executive Director
Andrea J. Wanat, MA, CPP

Although it has been over four years since I lost my friend to an alcohol-related car crash, the shock, dismay, and sadness still linger in my heart as though it was just yesterday. Each year, approximately 2.5 million people worldwide lose their lives to alcohol. The costs to society are equivalent to over $223 billion. Those are just a few of the reasons why April is such an important month. April is Alcohol Awareness Month, has been sponsored by the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. (NCADD) since 1987. During the month of April, communities are encouraged to focus on alcoholism and alcohol-related issues. NCADD’s Alcohol Awareness Month began as a way of reaching out to the American public with information about the disease of alcoholism and to let the public know that it is a treatable disease, not a moral weakness, and that alcoholics can and do recover.

As an affiliate of NCADD, we are committed to working diligently to spread the word about all of the ramifications of alcohol abuse and to provide referrals to those in need of assistance. We are teaming up with local colleges to provide programming to help change their students’ attitudes about risky drinking behavior. In this issue of AwareNews, we are focusing on alcohol-related issues, from a potential new law for those who host or allow underage drinking parties on their property, to the ramifications of binge drinking. I hope you can help us in our mission to spread the word that alcoholism is a disease and one that is treatable. After you read this edition of AwareNews, “pay it forward” and pass it along to a friend so they too can learn a few things. Have a safe and sunny spring!

Andrea

PREPARE TO BE RAD AGAIN!

Use promo code: BUFFALO when registering

June 21, 2014
Darien Lake Theme Park

ECCPASA is happy that we will once again be a sponsored charity by Color Me Rad Buffalo!

Resources and Contacts:

- Adult Children of Alcoholics - c/o ECCPASA 716.831.2298
- Al-Anon & Alateen - 716.856.2520 www.aiswny.org
- Alcoholics Anonymous - 716.853.0388 www.aa.org
- Crisis Services - 716.834.3131 www.crisisservices.org Kids Helpline - 716.834.1144
- Erie County Sheriff’s Office Underage Drinking Hotline - 1.800.851.1932
- Gamblers Anonymous & Gam-Anon - 716.879.0555 www.gamblersanonymous.org
- Narcotics Anonymous - 716.878.2316 www.na.org
- National Association for Children of Alcoholics - www.nacoa.org
- NYS OASAS Help Line - 877.846.7369 www.oasas.state.ny.us
- Save Our Selves - Non-religious support for twelve-step recovery www.cfiwest.org/sos/index.htm
- Western New York 211 Health and Human Services - 211 www.211wny.org
ECCPASA Calendar of Events

SPECIAL EVENT!

Registration will begin at 12-noon. Training will begin promptly at 12:30 pm.
Training held at the Harlem Road Community Center
4255 Harlem Rd. ~ Amherst ~ NY ~ 14226
12:30 PM - 3:30 PM

- CASAC/CPP/CPS credits available
- Light refreshments served

Thursday, May 22nd - 12:30 - 3:30 pm - Gender Differences in Communication

By: Michael Nerney, Nationally Renowned Speaker

Class cost: $40

Adolescent males and females are often difficult to communicate with under the best of circumstances. When an adolescent is in crisis, the need for clear communication rises to a critical level. Differences in the ways males and females view the world, interpret events and feelings, and communicate are generated and reinforced by biological, psychological and social factors. Social settings and expectations, cultural experiences, as well as the chemistry, function and structure of the brain, all impact on the communication styles of males and females. Improving our ability to communicate with adolescents of both genders is critical to helping them navigate through developmental changes, and minimize the risk for harm they do to themselves and others.

To Register Contact: Shirley Liddle
ECCPASA
(716) 831-2298
Shirley@eccpasa.org
Or visit us online at www.eccpasa.org

FANA Donation

ECCPASA would like to thank Families of FANA, WNY for their generous donation. FANA, which is the Spanish acronym for the Foundation for the Assistance of Abandoned Children, is located in Bogota, Colombia. The organization provides social and educational activities for members and their children. We received a donation from FANA as a result of the work ECCPASA staff completed with some of the FANA families. The donated funds will be put towards providing services to students in schools where our agency currently is not funded to provide our Student Assistance Prevention Counseling program. We are looking forward to continuing to work with and support FANA and similar organizations!
Binge drinking on college campuses continues to be a serious problem. Many students see drinking in excess as the norm, or even as a rite of passage. What many students don’t realize is this is a very dangerous behavior. Binge drinking is the practice of drinking five or more drinks in one sitting for a male or four or more drinks in one sitting for a female. It is estimated that nearly half of all college students participate in binge drinking.

ECCPASA has been given the opportunity to work with some local colleges to curb binge drinking among students. We will work with the college’s staff and students to clear up common misperceptions students have about how much and how often their fellow students drink. College students tend to grossly overestimate both the amount and frequency in which their peers drink. Because college students also like to keep up with what they think their fellow peers are doing, they then drink in excess and this leads to alcohol overconsumption.

Our agency is partnering with three local colleges to implement social norms campaigns to clarify any misperceptions many students have. Campaign materials such as posters, lawn signs, and media displays provide accurate information about fellow student’s drinking habits collected through student surveys. In addition to clarifying misperceptions, the campaign materials also provide resources on where students can receive help if they believe they have a problem with alcohol.

We are excited to have the opportunity to further our prevention efforts in the local colleges and help curb dangerous college drinking habits!

- Binge drinking is most prevalent in U.S. adults aged 18 to 25.
- Forty-five percent of college students reported binge drinking within the past 30 days.
- Students who binge drink are 7-10 times more likely to:
  - practice unsafe sex
  - suffer or cause physical injury
  - drive while intoxicated
- College students who frequently binge drink are more likely to use/abuse other substances including cigarettes, marijuana, and cocaine.
- Males tend to binge drink more often than females.
- Students attending 4-year institutions tend to binge drink more than students attending a 2-year school.

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- practice unsafe sex
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- drive while intoxicated

College students who frequently binge drink are more likely to use/abuse other substances including cigarettes, marijuana, and cocaine.
There are so many conflicting messages out there about marijuana. Is it good? Is it bad? Is it medicine? President Obama recently commented that marijuana is no more dangerous than alcohol and doctors in many states are prescribing it for just about any ailment. It’s no surprise that our kids are confused and marijuana use is on the rise according to the National Institute on Drug Abuse. A recent CESAR FAX publication indicates that youth’s perception of physical or other harm from using marijuana has decreased significantly from the early 1990’s when about 80% of 12th graders felt marijuana was harmful versus just 40% of 12th graders in 2013. So, what are the facts? We’ve put together a quick list of the most recent research pertaining to marijuana:

- Marijuana affects adolescent brain development.
- The brain isn’t fully developed until age 25. When a substance of any kind is introduced during brain development, the brain’s growth is hindered.
- Marijuana affects the parts of the brain that control memory, critical thinking, and problem solving.
- Teens who smoke marijuana frequently “had abnormal changes in their brain structure related to working memory.” This affects academic performance and impairs everyday functioning.
- The earlier an adolescent starts using marijuana, the worse the effects on the brain.
- Daily marijuana use is being linked to Schizophrenia – “a chronic, disabling brain disorder.”
- Scientists have found that marijuana has long-term effects on the brain. Negative effects were found even two years after the user had quit.

One of the scientists conducting the study at Northwestern University’s Feinberg School of Medicine, Hans Breiter, says, “Marijuana is the ideal compound to screw up everything for a kid. If you’re an athlete, a chess player, a debater or an artist, you need working memory, and marijuana hurts the brain circuitry.”

For more information on marijuana or for help talking with your child contact ECCPASA at 716-831-2298 or visit www.eccpasa.org.

Source: Randye Hoder, Time, 2014

Marijuana Use During Pregnancy

We know that using drugs while pregnant is dangerous. It is understood that drinking alcohol during pregnancy harms the fetus. But, what about marijuana? With recently passed legislation in Colorado and Washington making recreational use of marijuana legal, plus the many states that have legalized medical marijuana, smoking dope has become the thing to do. Although it seems that marijuana use is growing in popularity by the day, is it safe? More importantly, is it safe for a woman to use while pregnant? New research is saying NO.

CADCA states, “An increasing number of children suffer from the consequences of maternal drug exposure during pregnancy, and Cannabis is one of the most frequently used substances.” A study was conducted recently and the results were published in EMBO Journal. The findings were alarming. According to the published findings in Medical News Today, “The study found that consuming marijuana during pregnancy results in defective development of nerve cells of the cerebral cortex, the part of the brain that orchestrates higher cognitive functions and drives memory formation.”

A Professor at the Medical University Vienna in Austria states this could have life-long modifications to brain function. Professor Harkany goes on to say, this pertains “also [to] the medical use of Cannabis, which should be avoided during pregnancy.”

Source: CADCA.org
Welcome New Staff

Lauren Lysiak

Ms. Lysiak is a recent graduate from SUNY Buffalo State College where she earned her Bachelors of Science degree in Health and Wellness with a minor in Athletic Coaching. During her studies, her main focus was on community health and health behaviors. In the fall of 2013, she became a teaching assistant in an undergraduate Service Learning Health and Wellness Program course at SUNY Buffalo State College. From there, she began working as a Project Assistant for the Center for Health & Social Research at SUNY Buffalo State where she assisted in the implementation and monitoring of the goals, objectives, and requirements of the Drug Free Communities grant. Ms. Lysiak assisted in the development of parent-specific messages on pro-social parenting norms, developed and implemented a community forum on prescription drugs, and created a substance abuse community toolkit. Most recently, she has worked with local schools and undergraduate health and wellness students in the planning, implementation, and evaluation of health promotion programs. She also currently teaches a Community Health course in the Health Education Department of Niagara County Community College. Ms. Lysiak is excited to put her skills to work here at ECCPASA!

Linda Morgan

Mrs. Morgan holds a Master’s Degree in counseling education and is a NYS Certified School Counselor. She comes to us after having spent her last eight years as the school counselor at Enterprise Charter School. Mrs. Morgan began her prevention career as a case manager and student assistance counselor at Catholic Charities’ Monsignor Carr Clinic. Mrs. Morgan then joined ECCPASA’s counseling team in 1998 before leaving to pursue her career as a school counselor. She has rejoined the ECCPASA team as a counselor with the Student Assistance and Prevention Counseling program where she will work with students in several Erie County schools. She is excited once again to be a part of ECCPASA and to be back in the prevention field!

Lauren Nitecki

Ms. Nitecki graduated with a Bachelor’s Degree in psychology from the University at Buffalo (UB). She is currently enrolled in Masters of Public Health program with a concentration in community health and health behaviors at UB and is expected to graduate in the spring. Her previous employment experience includes work as a Project Coordinator for a research team studying the effect of friends and parents on adolescents’ food intake and food purchasing. She also has experience in various community organizations such as the Food Bank of WNY where she is the co-director of the children nutrition games at the annual Walk Off Hunger event. Ms. Nitecki was hired as a Prevention Specialist at ECCPASA in January 2014, and has been involved with the Strengthening Families Program since August 2013 as an intern. Ms. Nitecki grew up in the Buffalo area and is dedicated to promoting health and wellness in her home town.
Under contract with the Erie County Department of Mental Health. Funded by the New York State Office of Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Services, school districts and municipalities throughout Erie County, individuals, corporations and community service organizations. Member agency of the United Way of Buffalo and Erie County.