TOWN HALL MEETINGS

The Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse’s (ECCPASA) Parent Program Coordinator, Sally Yageric, has been extremely busy over the past few months coordinating and speaking at various Town Hall Meetings throughout Western New York. Ms. Yageric has participated in three of these meetings, all focusing on underage drinking and prescription drug abuse in the community.

The first meeting was held in East Aurora on March 27th. It was organized by Mr. William Kane, Federal Investigator of the Drug Enforcement Administration, who wanted to hold a Parent Drug Awareness Forum in his community. The forum was held to educate the public on how to get involved in keeping children healthy, safe, and free of substance use and abuse, with a focus on prescription drugs and underage drinking. Several community members spoke about the issues in the small town.

Another town hall meeting was held on April 24th at the Grand Island Town Hall. ECCPASA obtained a grant from the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) to host this meeting. Our agency, along with The Grand Island Coalition, One Island, One Team, hosted the meeting to educate the community on underage drinking. Mr. Luke Moretti, Investigative Reporter at WIVB Channel 4 and Grand Island resident, moderated a panel of speakers including Town Supervisor Mary Cook, Town Judge Sybil Kennedy, Sheriff Timothy B. Howard, One Island, One Team Coalition Coordinator Dan Stinson, ECCPASA Parent Program Coordinator Sally Yageric, Mid-Erie Treatment Center Counselor Christie Lesser, Grand Island High School teacher Mr. Bob Simpson and Grand Island High School Resource Officer Trooper Chris Pyc, as well as Grand Island High School students Korey Kostek and Nigel Michki. Each guest addressed ways in which to increase awareness of the problem of underage drinking and suggested strategies that the community can adapt to continue building a healthy environment for youth. The Grand Island Coalition is already planning a follow-up meeting to be held sometime this fall.

The last of the Town Hall Meetings was held on May 31st at the Amherst Youth Foundation by the Amherst Task Force for Healthy Community, Healthy Youth. The focus was once again on underage drinking and Sally Yageric took the stage to speak about strategies that can and should be used in the community to reduce the risk of underage drinking. She spoke about responsible beverage server training, sobriety and traffic safety checkpoints, Social Host liability laws, and increased taxes on the sales of alcohol. Many members of the community attended including police officers, judges, parents, students and Town Board members.

We would like to congratulate all three communities involved for taking a proactive approach to reducing underage drinking and prescription drug abuse. For more information or for questions on how to organize your own town hall meeting contact Sally Yageric at 716.831.2298 or Sally@eccpasa.org.

ECCPASA Has Been Working Hard on Becoming More Visible on the Web!
Visit our newly updated website at www.eccpasa.org. From there you can find links to our social media sites. “Like” us on FaceBook, “follow” us on Twitter, and check out our new blog @ eccpasa.wordpress.com!
Letter from the Executive Director

Andrea J. Wanat, MA, CPP

Throughout the spring, ECCPASA staff was involved in several local efforts to prevent underage drinking. We partnered with various schools and community members to tackle the problem and promote awareness throughout the county. This issue of the newsletter focuses primarily on the various activities that ECCPASA staff have been involved with targeting substance abuse issues.

We highlight our summer camp, new research on alcoholism, and community-based trainings facilitated by staff. On page three you will find an article that focuses on Helen Weinstein and Erica J. Boyce, who were chosen to speak at the national SAMHSA conference! This summer we also launched a new blog you may want to check out at eccpasa.wordpress.com.

The ECCPASA Board of Directors and staff want to thank the supporters of our Tomorrow’s Leaders Camp, which include The Rupp Foundation who provided a generous grant, TOPS Friendly Markets, Crystal Rock Water, and the Eastern Hills Mall who gave donations. Without their assistance and dedication our work would not be possible.

In the fall, we will be celebrating National FASD Awareness Day, Family Day, and National Recovery Month, so keep your eyes open as we send out details on these upcoming events. Please also be sure to mark your calendar for our upcoming Annual Meeting to be held at Templeton Landing on Thursday, October 25, 2012! Keep cool the rest of the summer and enjoy this edition of AwareNews!

Andrea

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
Nar-Anon - 716.875.0548 www.nar-anon.org
Narcotics Anonymous - 716.878.2316 www.nawny.org
National Association for Children of Alcoholics - www.nacoa.org
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
FASD Conference

In May, our Fetal Alcohol and Drug Effects educators, Helen Weinstein and Erica Boyce, attended and presented at the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) FASD Center for Excellence’s “Building FASD State Systems National Conference.” The conference was held in Arlington, Virginia and was designed to facilitate the creation and enhancement of comprehensive statewide systems of care for FASD, or Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder.

The workshop that Mrs. Weinstein and Ms. Boyce taught was entitled “Teach the Children Well: A Comprehensive Education Project for FASD Prevention and Intervention.” It was a 90-minute session focused on motivating and engaging students and educators to teach and learn about FASD. It was a train-the-trainer of sorts, in which ECCPASA staff presented a workshop to the attendees that they would typically implement in schools throughout Erie County. This session provided those in attendance with the necessary knowledge and skills to successfully educate students in their own communities.

The workshop focused on three areas: middle school and high school students, the college level, and a section that was geared toward educational professionals. “I felt that the program was very well received from all who attended. We were lucky to have such a great opportunity to be chosen by SAMHSA to share our program that we do here in Erie County with the rest of the country,” stated Erica Boyce.

WNYCDC Legislative Breakfast

On April 16th, the Western New York Chemical Dependency Consortium (WNYCDC) held their Annual Legislative Breakfast at Meals on Wheels in Buffalo. The purpose was to educate community members, and most importantly, local legislators about the chemical dependency field and to garner future support and collaborations.

Ms. Tammy Kinan, Chair for the WNYCDC Public Policy Committee, was the event moderator and introduced speakers from each aspect of chemical dependency. Ms. Andrea Wanat, Executive Director of the Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse provided an overview of prevention science as well as a summary of prevention services that are available in the Western New York area. Ms. Ellen Breslin, Director of Adult Clinical Services at Alcohol and Drug Dependency Services spoke about the cost of treatment as well as the various treatment options that are available in the area, and the unmet needs of persons who require treatment but are unable to receive it.

Mr. Christopher Frigon, Village Director at Horizon Health Services, Inc., described the residential services that are available locally and why Western New York needs more beds to treat patients who are not yet able to receive the treatment they require. Lastly, Alfred Halley, Director of Housing & Operations at Cazenovia Recovery Systems, spoke about the benefits of permanent supportive housing and the cost savings of having more of these services available to those in recovery.

On behalf of the WNYCDC, we would like to thank all the Legislators and their representatives who attended the breakfast and learned more about what we do in the field of chemical dependency. We look forward to future support, collaborations and endeavors. We would like to extend a special thank you to Senator Timothy Kennedy who took a moment to speak about the issues of substance abuse in our community. He also encouraged people to take a stand to help pass the I-STOP legislation (which has since been passed!), which will hopefully curb the rapid influx of prescription drug abuse that is currently plaguing the entire country.

Members of the WNY Chemical Dependency Consortium

Left to right: Captain Mike Licata, Sheriff Timothy B. Howard, Patrick Morrison, Tammy Kinan, Pete Hill, Giselle Jackman, Mike Prutsman, Lucy Candelario, Eric Perry, Linda Flowers, Andrea Wanat
Tomorrow’s Leaders Camp 2012 was once again a huge success! The main focus of this year’s camp was health and wellness, concentrating on the theme “Building a Better Me.” The campers participated in activities that were both educational and fun, showing them that health and wellness directly leads to a better, happier, and healthier life.

Several guest speakers visited throughout the two weeks to add to the experience. Nancy Weil from Laugh Academy taught the entire group the importance and benefits of laughter. She shared that laughing just once a day, every day can add up to seven years onto one’s life! Vicki Ross from Interfaith Peace Network of WNY and WNY Peace Center and Vivian Waltz from the Sister Karen Klimczak Center for Nonviolence joined us to talk about conflict resolution and alternatives to violence. In addition, Joseph Chudoba from the Erie County Sheriff’s Office spoke to the campers about conflict resolution while Special Agent Ankit V. Patel from the FBI discussed Internet safety and cyber bullying. Carolyn Zimmerman from Drumming for Health also came to TLC one day to introduce the magic, fun, and healing power of drumming!

In addition to speakers, the campers also enjoyed several health and wellness activities that could easily be incorporated into their daily lives. Erica, an ECCPASA Staff member, led the group in daily yoga sessions to keep the campers strong, relaxed, and awake throughout the day. In addition to yoga, the campers learned other stress reducing skills to properly deal with life’s struggles. The campers learned about proper nutrition, and tried several different, healthy foods as their daily snack. They even made fruit sculptures! By doing these activities, campers learned that eating healthy can also be fun!

The TLC campers also learned about healthy relationships, how to sustain healthy friendships and when to avoid relationships that are potentially unhealthy or even dangerous. On some of the hot days, the campers participated in water games to cool off. They also took a trip to Beaver Island State Park where they played on the beach, enjoyed a picnic lunch, and explored the woods on a nature hike. Campers also attended a Wellness Carnival set up for them at Delaware Park, which included games like a throwing competition, jump rope and a balancing challenge.

On the last day of camp, our annual TLC Carnival took place. Here the campers played games, won prizes, had their faces painted, and enjoyed a hot dog lunch.

A fun learning experience was had by all!
Almost Alcoholic

An article was recently published in the Huffington Post entitled “Almost Alcoholic: Could Your Drinking Be A Problem?” It was written by Dr. Joseph Nowinski who is a clinical psychologist and the author of many books for both professionals and the general public. Dr. Nowinski’s article looked at several possible situations in which each of the hypothetical people he talks about are or could be “almost alcoholics.” He states that there are many cases of “almost alcoholics” in the world that never get recognized as having issues with alcohol, yet suffer the very real problems caused by drinking. Below are some realistic situations of people that may be “almost alcoholic”:

- A father who falls asleep on the couch after having several drinks three or four days a week, thereby missing out on time with his kids and wife.
- A sales executive who likes to “sip” scotch on the rocks from the time he finishes his dinner to the time he goes to bed.
- A college student who repeatedly has trouble making it to class because he was drunk the night before.
- A mother who looks forward to her daily double glass of wine to help her get through the day.
- An assisted living resident who finds that two or three glasses of brandy every day helps to relieve her boredom.

Dr. Nowinski states that most health care professionals are accustomed to looking at alcohol issues in either one of two ways: alcohol abuse or alcohol dependence. In order to fall under one of these two categories, “an individual has to suffer some fairly severe and obvious consequences directly related to drinking: a major health crisis, an arrest, loss of a job, etc.” If one doesn’t fall under either one of these categories, the person is considered “normal.” However, just because a person doesn’t fit under the category of alcohol abuse or dependence doesn’t necessarily mean there isn’t a problem present.

Dr. Nowinski recommends that “it is probably more productive to look at drinking in terms of a spectrum,” like the one below...

He recommends looking at your own drinking habits and the habits of loved ones to see if your or their drinking patterns fall in the gray area between “normal social drinking” and “almost alcoholism.” Dr. Nowinski suggests that there may be many people who fall in the middle and are on the verge of having an alcohol problem.

He notes that the following symptoms may be due to issues with alcohol: trouble sleeping soundly, mild depression, marital or family conflict, health problems that aren’t recognized as related to drinking, and/or declining work performance or attendance.

If you or someone you know is struggling with alcohol or may be an “almost alcoholic” it is not too late to get help. For more information and resources for help with alcohol or other substance contact ECCPASA at 716.831.2298 or eccpasa@eccpasa.org.
Elks Lodge of Amherst Collaboration

The Elks Lodge of Amherst recently generously donated substance abuse prevention and awareness materials to our Council. The Elks Lodges are “the largest volunteer drug awareness program in the United States.” They work to promote drug awareness and fight against youth substance abuse. They offer many free materials and handouts with great information for agencies, as well as the general public. The Elks also work hard year round to provide alternative activities for kids in hopes to curb substance use and abuse.

ECCPASA will be partnering with the Elks Lodge of Amherst on future projects in the Erie County area. The Elks mascot, none other than Elroy the Elk, recently attended our summer camp’s end-of-the-year carnival. He spent time with the campers and even showed off some of his dance moves in a dance-off with a few of the kids! We want to thank the Elks Lodge of Amherst again for their generous donations and we look forward to working with them soon!

We hope you will join us!

To be Held at Templeton Landing from 11:30 ~ 2:00

Keynote Speaker:

Dan Dubovsky, MSW, LSW, FASD Advocate and Expert

“Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders: Preventable...Treatable... Or Both?”

To register call 716.831.2298

Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse
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.

Thank you for supporting the ECCPASA community efforts!

Please mail your tax deductible contribution to: ECCPASA, 1625 Hertel Ave., Buffalo, N.Y. 14216

Support ECCPASA
As we continue to serve the community, please become an official “supporter” of our mission!

Your tax deductible contribution can be made at any time of the year:

☐ $ 10.00  ☐ $ 50.00  ☐ $100.00
☐ $ 25.00  ☐ $ 75.00  ☐ Other $__________________

Name:________________________________________________________
Address:_____________________________________________________
Phone:_______________________________________________________
Email:_______________________________________________________

ERIE COUNTY COUNCIL FOR THE PREVENTION OF ALCOHOL AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE, INC.
The Erie County Council for the Prevention of Alcohol and Substance Abuse will deliver research driven education, prevention, intervention programs and services to promote and support the health and wellness of individuals, families and communities by focusing on solutions to alcohol and other drug misuse, addiction and unhealthy behaviors.

ECCPASA will provide leadership to fight the stigma associated with addiction through public education, policy awareness, liaison with health professionals and recovering communities, by providing objective information, referral, and linkages to those in need.

Thank you for supporting the ECCPASA community efforts!

Please mail your tax deductible contribution to: ECCPASA, 1625 Hertel Ave., Buffalo, N.Y. 14216

or current resident