



# PreventionWORKS!

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG DEPENDENCE OF MIDDLESEX COUNTY, INC.

PROVIDING SUBSTANCE ABUSE PREVENTION, EDUCATION AND ADVOCACY

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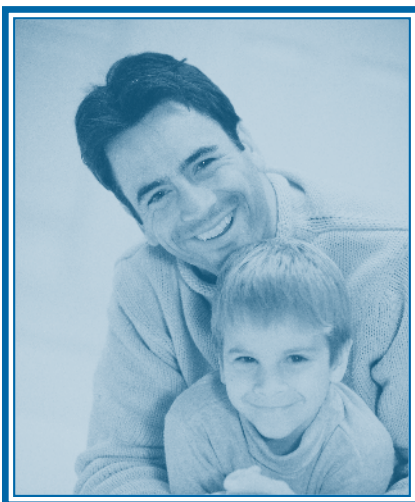
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**CASA Report: Governments Spend More on Substance Abuse and Addiction. Little on Prevention and Treatment**

## **CASA Report: Governments Spend Half a Trillion Dollars Yearly on Substance Abuse and Addiction. Only 2 Cents Goes to Prevention and Treatment.**

Substance abuse and addiction cost federal, state and local governments at least \$467.7 billion in 2005, according to *Shoveling Up II: The Impact of Substance Abuse on Federal, State and Local Budgets*, a new report recently released by The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University.

What the report found is that of \$373.9 billion in federal and state spending, 95.6 percent (\$357.4 billion) went to shovel up the consequences and human wreckage of substance abuse and addiction; only 1.9 percent went to prevention and treatment, 0.4 percent to research, 1.4 percent to taxation and regulation, and 0.7 percent to interdiction.

Using the most conservative assumptions, the study concluded that the federal government spent \$238.2 billion; states, \$135.8 billion; and local governments, \$93.8 billion, in 2005 (the most recent year for which data were available over the course of the study).

The report found that the largest amount of federal and state government spending on the burden of substance abuse and addiction--\$207.2 billion, or 58 percent--was for health care (74.1 percent of the federal burden). The second largest amount--\$47 billion, or 13.1 percent--was spent on justice systems, including incarceration, probation, parole, criminal, juvenile and family courts (32.5 percent of the state burden).

### **Key Findings**

Of the \$3.3 trillion total federal and state government spending, \$373.9 billion--11.2 percent, more than one of every ten dollars--was spent on tobacco, alcohol

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## Dear Friends,

As students all over the country went back to school this fall, so did I – and I mean all over the country!

First stop was joining over 10,000 people in New York City to march across the Brooklyn Bridge in support of Addiction recovery. The event was sponsored by the A&E Network, NCADD (National), and the Partnership for a Drug-free America. I met people with anywhere from 31 days to 37 years in recovery representing every state in the nation. I am not sure of the highlight: walking across the bridge, listening to a special mini-concert by Smoky Robinson as he shared about his own recovery, or listening to the heart-felt message from New York's Governor Patterson, who was there to support us all.

From the Recovery walk, I went straight to Newark Airport to catch a flight to Anaheim California (and no, I am not a Disneyland fan) for the National Prevention Network's Annual Research Conference. I was there to accept an award on behalf of the New Jersey Prevention Network (NJPN) for our healthy aging program called WISE (Wellness Initiative for Senior Education). WISE is one of the only programs for the older adult population in the country that has been rigorously evaluated and proven to show positive change in participants' knowledge, attitudes AND behavior. I have been working with our independent evaluation team from Rutgers for more than five years on this project. It was tremendously gratifying to see a program designed for the opposite end of the age continuum than what most people think of when it comes to substance abuse prevention given its due on the national stage.

Next is a trip to Washington, DC for the national NCADD conference, where delegates from local chapters like ours from all over the country will converge to learn, share, and meet with our legislators. Our agenda is to ensure that addiction treatment and prevention are included in any version of health care reform that makes it to the President's desk.

Finally, it is off to Alaska in November (great timing for someone who HATES the cold!) to train a prevention organization in Anchorage on the WISE program. Whew!

What is my message in all of this? Simply this: quality prevention requires us to get out from behind our desks or off our couches; we must work in collaboration with like-minded individuals wherever we find them, because none of us can do this alone; we must be able to prove that what we do is having the proper impact; and as members of the "sandwich generation", we must not only look to the welfare of our children, but to that of our parents, as well.



Steven G. Liga, CEO/Executive Director

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and illegal and prescription drug abuse and addiction and its consequences.

The federal government spent \$238.2 billion (9.6 percent of its budget) on substance abuse and addiction. State governments spent \$135.8 billion (15.7 percent of their budgets) to deal with substance abuse and addiction, up from 13.3 percent in 1998.

For every \$100 spent by state governments on substance abuse and addiction, the average spent on prevention, treatment and research was \$2.38. For every dollar the federal and state governments spent on prevention and treatment, they spent \$59.83 shoveling up the consequences, despite a growing body of scientific evidence confirming the efficacy and cost savings of science-based interventions.

With respect to children, for every dollar federal and state governments spent on prevention or treatment, they spent \$60.25 shoveling up the consequences of substance abuse and addiction.

For each dollar in alcohol and tobacco taxes and liquor store revenues that federal and state governments collect, they spend \$8.95 shoveling up the consequences of substance abuse and addiction.



So, despite a significant and growing body of knowledge documenting that addiction is a preventable, treatable and manageable disease, and despite the proven efficacy of prevention and treatment techniques, our nation still looks the other way while substance abuse and addiction cause illness, injury, death and crime, savage our children, overwhelm social service systems, impede education- and slap a heavy and growing tax on our citizens.

Spending more than 95 percent of taxpayer dollars on the consequences of tobacco, alcohol and other drug abuse and addiction and less than two percent to relieve individuals and taxpayers of this burden should be considered a reckless misallocation of public funds. In these economic times, such upside-down-cake public policy is unconscionable.

In the face of evidence that prevention programs aimed at smoking, illegal and

prescription drug abuse and underage and excessive adult drinking can be effective, and that many treatment programs have outcomes more favorable than many cancer treatments, our current spending patterns are misguided.

They drain urgently needed funds from government budgets and permit the savaging of millions of lives through preventable accidents, homicides, suicides, domestic violence, child abuse, sexual assaults, unplanned pregnancies, homelessness, forgone educations, STDs, birth defects and more than 70 illnesses requiring hospitalization.

It is past time for this fiscal and human waste to end.

*SOURCE: The National Center on Addiction and Substance Abuse (CASA) at Columbia University at [www.casacolumbia.org](http://www.casacolumbia.org)*

# Online Resources Become Crucial Step in Recovery Process

by Gina Tzodikov

Recovery from addiction is a matter of reality for many Americans.

In fact, more than 672,000 individuals and families contact NCADD chapters each year looking for help for themselves or a family member<sup>1</sup>.

Fortunately, addiction is a treatable disease, just like diabetes and asthma. Over the years, recognition that addiction is a disease and not a character flaw has helped diminish the stigma associated with substance abuse disorders<sup>2</sup>.

However, for some battling addiction, stigma still poses an obstacle when seeking assistance. It is no surprise that further education and outreach is crucial in removing the stigma associated with addiction<sup>3</sup>. This mindset is key to the philosophy of the National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month<sup>4</sup>.

Recovery Month comes around every September and this year's theme, "Join the Voices for Recovery:

Together We Learn, Together We Heal" emphasizes the use of the Internet as an educational tool for locating substance abuse resources and treatment options for addicts and families or friends living with addicts.



Recovery Month is a way to celebrate those in recovery and provide additional support for those with substance abuse disorders<sup>5</sup>.

Stigma, as mentioned earlier, creates a barrier that prevents many from seeking information and treatment for substance abuse. However, with the Internet many can begin their initial steps to recovery without fear of social stigma.

The following list highlights some questions to ask yourself when using the

Internet to begin seeking addiction recovery. (Note: List provided by Recovery Month Kit at <http://www.recoverymonth.gov/Recovery-Month-Kit/Targeted-Outreach/The-Internets-Role-In-Substance-Use-Disorder-and-Recovery-Support.aspx>).

Smart Steps in Searching the Internet for Assistance

- What personal information is needed to join the online community? Make sure to read a Web site's privacy policy.

You do not want your information distributed to third parties.

- Do I see my loved one or myself fitting into this community? Before joining, review the types of responses and support provided by current group members.
- Does the group have professional oversight? Look to see if licensed treatment and recovery counselors actively oversee and participate in group discussions.
- Does the website

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*Sober Summer Fun- Continued from Page 4*

provide other supportive online resources? Check to see if the site offers helplines or opportunities to interact online with people dealing with similar problems.



It has been reported that three quarters of American adults use the Internet and that 75% of these adults search for health information online<sup>6</sup>. With the ever increasing use of the Internet as a health resource tool, there is no doubt that the Internet should play a larger role in the addiction recovery process. To begin the recovery process, take a look at these resources and take action to help yourself or a friend's addiction.

There isn't a better time to start than right now during September 2009's Recovery Month, "Together We Learn, Together We Heal."

**Online Treatment and Recovery Resources**

- SAMHSA's "Find Substance Abuse and Mental Health Treatment" Web site – [www.samhsa.gov](http://www.samhsa.gov) - Lists a range of resources about mental health, substance abuse, and treatment
- SAMHSA's "Accessing Prevention, Treatment, and Recovery Online" Webcast – [www.recoverymonth.gov](http://www.recoverymonth.gov) - Examines how technology has revamped the field of substance use disorder prevention and addiction treatment
- The Sober Recovery Community –

[www.soberrecovery.com](http://www.soberrecovery.com) - Offers support forums for people in recovery, as well as family and friends

- Sober.com – [www.sober.com](http://www.sober.com) - Provides message boards for people in recovery and also provides recovery coaching from professional counselors
- Cyber Recovery Fellowship – [www.cyberrecovery.net](http://www.cyberrecovery.net) - Offers faith-based forums for people in recovery
- eGetGoing – [www.egetgoing.com](http://www.egetgoing.com) - Helps people new to recovery through online support groups led by certified counselors
- Shouting Inside – [www.shoutinginside.com](http://www.shoutinginside.com) - Helps young adults who misuse substances share their stories and their struggles with like-minded people

These resources are available at [www.recoverymonth.gov](http://www.recoverymonth.gov)

*Sources:*

<sup>1</sup>The National Council on Alcohol and Drug Dependence, "Hope, Help and Healing: Personal Stories of Recovery," <http://www.ncadd.org/index.html> (accessed July 16, 2009)

<sup>2</sup>September 2009 National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month, "Recovery Month Kit, Overview: Together We Learn, Together We Heal," <http://www.recoverymonth.gov/Recovery-Month-Kit/Targeted-Outreach/Overview-Two-Page.aspx> (accessed July 22, 2009)

<sup>3</sup>Transitions Recovery Program, "Treatment Philosophy," [http://drug-rehabcenter.com/drug\\_treatment.htm](http://drug-rehabcenter.com/drug_treatment.htm) (accessed July 21, 2009).

<sup>4</sup>September 2009 National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month, "About Recovery Month: What is Recovery Month?" <http://www.recoverymonth.gov/About-Recovery-Month.aspx> (accessed July 21, 2009).

<sup>5</sup>September 2009 National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month, "Recovery Month Kit: The Internet's Role In Substance Use Disorders and Recovery Support," <http://www.recoverymonth.gov/Recovery-Month-Kit/Targeted-Outreach/The-Internets-Role-In-Substance-Use-Disorder-and-Recovery-Support.aspx> (accessed June 23, 2009)

<sup>6</sup>"Recovery Month Kit, Overview: Together We Learn, Together We Heal,"

# Taking Action Against Teen Addiction

Many families battle with substance abuse regardless of whether it's a problem among parents or among their children. Although substance abuse can affect family members throughout their lives, there are preventative measures that can be taken to help foster healthy outcomes.

## The Adolescent's Point of View

In an interview with an 18 year old high school senior and his mother, multiple perspectives are provided that can help a family prevent substance abuse. Each had a different story about why things worked; together, they demonstrate what success can look like.

In the interview, several factors were identified that he believes are the most important for teenagers who are trying to steer clear of drugs and alcohol.

1. Staying in touch with a parent. It is important for teens and parents to stay in touch during the day and in the evening. That means teens should know how to reach their parents, and parents need to know where to find their teenagers.
2. Dealing with peer pressure. Some adolescents see themselves as leaders in their peer group. They don't really worry about what other people think of them. They have a pretty strong will, and can say no when friends are doing something they don't want to do. They choose their good friends carefully.
3. The importance of neighborhood. The neighborhood is important in reinforcing values about drugs and alcohol. "When I have kids, I'll make sure I live in a good neighborhood. If your kids are around people who are derelict, or abusers, they tend to think that's normal," says our high school student.

4. Summer jobs for older teens living at home. It helps teenagers to have a job for the long summer months. That way they have to act responsibly. If they want to get paid, they have to get regular sleep, get up early, and show up on time to the job, ready to put in a hard day's work. "Making your kids get a job is a good way to keep your kids from getting into trouble," he says.
5. Staying involved with sports. Our high schooler believes the best thing he does to keep away from drugs and alcohol is his active participation in sports. "Sports are good protection against peer pressure - but only if you really like and are committed to the sport. I do cross-country and track - I like to run. Teams are good, too, because you can make good friends and get support."

Our adolescent's frank assessment of the risks he faces and the approaches that work for him and his friends can help parents understand what teenagers need in a risky world where teens are exposed to drugs and alcohol at earlier and earlier ages.

## The Mother's Story

Interestingly, our adolescent's mother reiterated almost all of the points he made. She talked about the importance of sports and solid friendships. But she also commented on the roles that various adults play in her children's lives, and how important these authority figures are.

Favorite teachers who comment positively on her son's work have made a critical difference in his life, she thinks. Relatives and adult friends who are willing to help the boys with work or projects make them feel cared for and valued.

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But most important of all is this mother's approach to communicating with her sons. She communicates unconditional love, accepts their mistakes, and talks openly and frequently with them about everything from drugs and sex to their changing bodies and the stresses of what they have faced together as a family. She talks a great deal, and listens a great deal as well. She doesn't hesitate to point out to them when she feels they are making poor choices. She also makes sure they have counselors to talk to when they need them. And when she needs help for herself, she asks for it.

### **The Case for Making a Close Family Even Closer**

In addition to the excellent communication present in this family, dinners spent together may help tie this unit even closer. Studies have highlighted the importance of eating meals together as a family. A 2006 study by the National Center for Addiction and Substance Abuse at Columbia University suggests that teens who have five or more dinners a week with their families are less likely to try marijuana, smoke cigarettes, or drink alcohol. In other words, connection, caring and even cooking count.

Perhaps one of the strongest messages from this mother and son duo is that to prevent teen substance abuse we have to make sure that happiness, pleasure, and purpose are available in safer forms. Their stories demonstrate that physical activity, unconditional love, communication, and family support can deter teens from substance abuse.

#### *References:*

- "Addiction: Why Can't They Just Stop?: New Knowledge. New Treatments. New Hope" Hoffman, John, and Susan Froemke, eds. 2007. New York: Rodale Inc.
- "Addictions and Risky Behaviors" Rebman, Renee. 2006. Berkeley: Enslow Publishers, Inc.
- <http://www.drugrehabtreatment.com/preventing-teen-addictions.html>

## **Jason Surks Memorial Prevention Resource Center**

We have thousands of videos, brochures and other pieces of literature to choose from at our Resource Center. We'd like to highlight a few items that might be useful for you on the topics of recovery and addiction.

### **Videos**

- ✦ **Prescription Drug Abuse**— This video provides a hard look at a widespread problem and explains why drugs of any type should never be used recreationally.
- ✦ **Over-The-Counter Drug Abuse**— Just because a medicine is sold over-the-counter doesn't mean that it is safe for everyone to use. Learn about the dangers of using and abusing over-the-counter drugs. Discover the side effects they can have on your mind and body.

### **Pamphlets**

- ✦ **Hope, Help & Healing**— A series of three brochures that highlight personal stories of recovery by youth and various family members. Brochures are titled "I ran out of people to blame", "We realized it was beyond out control", and, "I wasn't having fun anymore".
- ✦ **Roads 2 Recovery**— A guide to the *Roads 2 Recovery* program which provides a connection between people with disabilities, addiction treatment counselors, recovery programs and disability advocates.

NCADD of Middlesex County, Inc. is a private, non-profit community-based health organization serving Middlesex County. Our mission is to promote the health and well-being of individuals and communities of Middlesex County through the reduction or elimination of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use problems.

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Thank you for your support!

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