

Celebrating 30
Years of Providing
Substance
Abuse Prevention,
Education,
and Support
for Personal
Recovery!



Prevention WORKS!

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

Vol. XXX, No. 3, Fall 2010

IN THIS ISSUE:

- ✦ The Glass is Half Full. Or Is It Half Empty?
- ✦ Marketers Reaching Youth Through New Media
- ✦ Prescription Drug Abuse is the Fastest-Growing Drug Problem
- ✦ Still Saving Lives in San Antonio
- ✦ Dear Friends - A Note From Our CEO

FEATURE ARTICLE

Page 1

“Am I Going Crazy?”: Talking About Teenage Anxiety



A Proud Affiliate of the



“Am I Going Crazy?” Talking About Teenage Anxiety

By Lindsay Rich, LCSW

Four and a half years ago, NCADD partnered with the Carteret Public Schools to create *PATHWAYS*, the district's School-based Youth Services program. This partnership created a safe, structured environment within the school providing mental health counseling and recreational activities, ensuring students are better able to graduate and lead healthy, drug-free lives. As part of *PATHWAYS*, students are invited to join a summer camp program, in which campers utilize the arts, sports, team building activities, community service projects and more to learn how to express themselves in a safe and healthy environment.

Every day students share how they are feeling, because expression of emotion improves overall mental health and reduces stress. One student shared that she is upset for her friend, Ann*. Ann worries all the time, and it's so bad that she actually worries about how much she worries. She says she can't stand going through another day feeling like she can't breathe, with constant pains in her stomach and without being able to sleep. She cries all the time because she feels like she is going crazy...she literally thinks she's crazy." From what this student was relaying, it seemed like Ann might be suffering from a condition that is very common among adolescents, and the *PATHWAYS* staff began to talk to the group about the subject of anxiety. Ann is not alone among her peers.

The Facts: Anxiety disorders are among the most common emotional and behavioral problems to occur during childhood and adolescence. About 13 of every 100 children and adolescents ages 9 to 17 experience some kind of anxiety disorder; girls are affected more than boys. About half of children and adolescents with anxiety disorders have a second anxiety disorder or other mental health disorder, such as depression. In addition, anxiety disorders may coexist with physical health conditions requiring treatment.

Research has shown that if left untreated, children with anxiety disorders are at higher risk to perform poorly in school, to have less developed social skills and to be more vulnerable to substance abuse. Further consequences include impaired relationships with peers, low self-esteem, academic deficiency and ultimately anxiety

Continued on Page 7

Staff

Steven G. Liga,
MSW, LSW, LCADC, CPS, CCS
CEO & Executive Director

Lizette Fallon, BS
Financial Manager

Ezra Helfand, BA
Public Information Specialist

East Brunswick Office

Lissette M. Bacharde
Administrative Assistant

Al-Karim Campbell, BA
Preventionist I

Padma Sonti Desai, MA
Preventionist I

Dara Jarosz, MA, SAC
Clinician I

Alexandra Lopez
MA, LCADC, SAC, CPS, DRCC
Course Development Specialist/Supervisor

Christina Rak-Samson, BA
Preventionist I

Linda Surks, BS, CPS
Preventionist II

Jason Victor, BA, CPS
Preventionist II

Heather Ward, MSW, LSW
Preventionist I

Carteret Office

Lauren Balkan, MSW, LCSW
Supervisor

Christine Hughes, MSW, LSW
Preventionist I

Anna Kirzner MSW, LCSW
Clinician II

Lindsay Rich, MSW, LCSW
Clinician II

Dana Tosk, BA
Administrative Assistant

Board of Trustees

President

Steven S. Polinsky

Treasurer

Rakesh Ganta

Vice President

Bill DeJianne

Secretary

Jeff Jannarone

Past President

Katherine Fallon

Members

Sharon Campbell

Agim Coma

Susan Neshin, M.D

George Rusuloj

Marjorie Talbot

Dear Friends,

By the time you read this, I will have survived my first triathlon (I hope). This crazy idea was all my younger brother's idea, and he fractured his ankle three weeks before the event. Families - What are we to do with them?

One thing is for certain: they are important. For better or for worse, the family impacts us to the core. When we look at how we organize ourselves, be it nation, community, congregation, or even team, we do so based on a family structure. In this issue, you will see the thread of family woven throughout.

The article on the family connection between alcoholism and mental illness should be news to most of you. For years, we have known about the strong connection between a father's alcoholism and the greatly increased risk that his son inherits to follow in his father's footsteps to the bar. Until very recently, the mother's alcoholism and its effect on her children has been mostly unexplored. There have been some studies that have linked a father's alcoholism to his daughter's future eating disorder, but what about Mom? The fact that her alcoholism increases her daughter's risk for mental illness is significant news.

In our cover story on teen anxiety issues, we see that there is a real difference between expected teen angst and an anxiety disorder. Perhaps this is something that should be explored regularly with female children of alcoholics. However, if parents are aware of the connection, which they should probably learn about in treatment programs going forward, they can keep an eye out for symptoms just as they look out for early use of alcohol in their children. If we wait until teachers notice the problem, it will likely be much more entrenched.

Finally, if you ask anyone in "The Fellowship," you will learn very quickly how much of a family the recovering community is for its members. For those who have burned bridges between their biological families, others in recovery serve as proxy for a very nurturing extended family – one which so many of us could benefit from in our own lives.

Who is family to you? What have you done for them lately? If you are wondering, allow me to offer a suggestion: before a big event, don't wish them to break a leg!



Steven G. Liga, CEO/Executive Director

PS We need your support now more than ever. Please see the back cover of this newsletter to see how you can help.

The Glass is Half Full. Or Is It Half Empty?

As a prevention agency, NCADD of Middlesex County, Inc. receives a plethora of reports and research results relating to drug and alcohol addiction and related issues. One such recent report is the New Jersey High School Youth Risk Behavior 2009 issued by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDCP.)

This particular survey covered a variety of topics including unintentional injuries and violence, tobacco use, alcohol and other drug use, sexual behaviors, dietary behaviors, physical activity and asthma.

The survey covered all ethnic groups and focused on students in grades nine through 12th.

Some of the more interesting findings include:

- Of all students surveyed, almost 43 percent had tried cigarette smoking. Girls outpaced boys by a margin of 46 percent to 40 percent. Almost 75 percent among the same group indicated that they had a least one drink of alcohol during their lifetime.
- Almost seven percent of respondents smoked a whole cigarette and a full 18 percent had drunk alcohol for the first time before age 13.

- Over 35 percent had used marijuana one or more times and four percent tried marijuana for the first time before age 13
- Almost six percent had used any form of cocaine one or more times and almost ten percent had sniffed glue or inhaled paints or sprays to get high, while less than two percent had used heroin one or more times.
- And, slightly more than 32 percent of respondents offered, sold, or were given an illegal drug by someone on school property.



Of course, these are disturbing numbers, but they are pretty much in line with results of the 2009 Monitoring the Future (MTF) Survey which revealed that in 2009, cigarette smoking continued at its lowest point in the history of the survey on all measures for 8th, 10th, and 12th graders.

Similarly, MTF noted that from 2004 to 2009, decreases were observed in lifetime, past year, past month, and binge use of alcohol across the same three grade levels. Attitudes toward substance abuse, often seen as harbingers of change in use, showed many favorable changes, as well.

Marketers Reaching Youth Through New Media

There has been a dramatic growth in popularity of social networks such as Facebook. Today's youth flock to these sites and spend an inordinate amount of time on them — an average of five hours and 12 minutes per day in July 2009. This is a dramatic increase over the average of 90 minutes per day spent on the same activities just a year prior.

And what do young people do while visiting social sites on the Web? They create detailed personal profiles, chat or send instant messages with friends, post status updates, upload images, play games (alone or with others), post videos, and more.

As a result of this increased use of the Internet by youth, marketers are developing exceedingly complex and effective viral marketing campaigns to actively market their products and “convert” these young Web users into their messengers of sort. Conversations about brands, products and services are increasingly woven into the interactions among users of social networks, and these conversations can have great influence on youth.

Therefore, it was not unexpected to read in a new report that adolescents are being bombarded with alcohol marketing online as firms exploit new-media tools and lax regulation to put their brand images and information in front of young drinkers.

This finding appears in a report titled “Alcohol Marketing in the Digital Age” issued by American University professor Kathryn Montgomery. The report states that alcohol is being sold through a multiplicity of platforms throughout the day and night that includes online, offline, mobile, digital, music, video — the whole range of different ways that young consumers interact with new digital marketing. What's also disturbing is the amount of money marketers spend on social media marketing efforts. According to the eMarketer newsletter, social media spending will grow from around \$2 billion in 2008 to \$3.49 billion in 2013 — an incredible 175 percent increase!

So what can be done? One place to start would be to ask the Federal Trade Commission to investigate advertising space where loose regulations, such as weak age-21 verification on websites, are contributing to youth exposure to alcohol marketing. Groups who represent alcohol and tobacco manufacturers need to be aware of their responsibilities and implored to be more responsible in how they market to our youth.

Sources:

- Abby Klaasen, “What Exodus? Facebook trumps 20 sites in time spent” Advertising Age, 9/7/2009
- eMarketer, March 2009. “Social Networking Worldwide: Ad Spending and Usage”

NCADD of Middlesex County, Inc. has always taken the lead in developing, implementing and advocating for programs designed to combat the effect of external influencers on our youth. Just as we developed and implemented *Footprints for Life™*, a prevention program that builds assets and teaches important life skills to students in grades two and three, we are currently in the process of updating and upgrading *We're Not Buying It!* (WNBI), a program designed for school-aged children between sixth and ninth grades.

WNBI is being modified to speak to 21st century students on the dangers of alcohol, tobacco, prescription and over-the-counter drugs, and marijuana. New modules also cover topics such as bullying, and gambling. Fully realizing the effect that new media has on today's youth, our new WNBI not only offers relevant and up-to-date information, but also uses the Web as a communications vehicle while exploring its effect on youth's decision-making processes, especially when it comes to drug use and abuse.

Prescription Drug Abuse is the Fastest-Growing Drug Problem in the United States

Because prescription drugs are legal, they are easily accessible, often from a home medicine cabinet. And because they are usually prescribed by a healthcare professional and sold from behind a counter at your local pharmacy, they are prone to misuse, especially by teens, who believe these substances are safer than illicit drugs.

According to SAMHSA's latest National Survey on Drug Use and Health, among people age 12 or older who reported using pain relievers non-medically in the past year, 56 percent got the drug they most recently used from a friend or relative for free. Another 18 percent reported getting the drug from a doctor. Only about 4 percent reported obtaining pain relievers from a drug dealer or a stranger, and less than half of one-percent bought the drugs on the Internet.

Among those who said they got the pain reliever from a friend or relative for free, 82 percent reported that the friend or relative had obtained the drugs from a doctor.

What these results highlight is the importance of properly safeguarding and disposing of prescription drugs to help reduce the instance of abuse.

This is why the recently released 2010 National Drug Control Strategy provides a specific blueprint for reducing prescription drug abuse. The Strategy calls for:

- Expanding prescription drug monitoring programs;
- Encouraging community prescription take-back initiatives;
- Informing the public of the risks of prescription drug abuse and overdose;
- Recommending disposal methods to remove unused medications from the home; and
- Working with physicians to achieve consensus standards on opiate painkiller prescribing.

So here are some things you can do to reduce the abuse of prescription drugs:

- Follow disposal guidelines: No matter who you are, you can help address this issue in your home. By following the guidelines you reduce the risk of unintentional harm.
- Talk to your kids: It's important that our children learn about the use and abuse of prescription drugs.
- Participate in American Medicine Chest Challenge scheduled for November 13, 2010. Check in with www.drugfreenj.org/amcc/ for additional details and to sign-up as a volunteer.

How to Dispose of Unused Medicines

Federal Guidelines for Drug Disposal

- Follow any specific disposal instructions on the drug label or patient information that accompanies the medication. Do not flush prescription drugs down the toilet unless this information specifically instructs you to do so.
- If no instructions are given, throw the drugs in the household trash, but first:
 - Take them out of their original containers and mix them with an undesirable substance, such as used coffee grounds or kitty litter. The medication will be less appealing to children and pets, and unrecognizable to people who may intentionally go through your trash.
 - Put them in a sealable bag, empty can, or other container to prevent the medication from leaking or breaking out of a garbage bag.

Still Saving Lives in San Antonio

By Anonymous

San Antonio hosted one of the biggest birthday parties ever this past July when 52,800 members of the Alcoholic Anonymous (AA) 13th International Convention descended on San Antonio, Texas.

Signs reading “Welcome Friends of Bill W.” greeted my wife and me when we landed in San Antonio. After checking in, we joined the on-going celebrations outside the Convention Center in HemisFair Park.

Waking up Friday morning, we were overwhelmed with joy when we noticed that the entire downtown area of San Antonio was taken over by Sober Alcoholics all in recovery.

That evening, everyone gathered in the Alamodome Stadium for the big Flag Ceremony and Opening A.A. Meeting. Approximately 90 countries were represented and representatives carried flags in the opening ceremonies. Representatives included Iran, Afghanistan and the United Arab Emirates, Denmark, Holland, Mexico, Finland, and many more — not to mention the thousands of members from the US and Canada.

In between the “big meetings,” in the stadium, attendees went to meetings, workshops, and panels, including those in other languages, such as Spanish, French, Japanese, and ASL (American Sign Language).

Saturday’s “Old-timers Meeting” featured members with 40 years or more of sober living. That was another amazing experience for me. The person with the longest

sobriety out of over 52,800 attendees was a gentleman who is 63 years sober.

The Convention concluded Sunday with a closing meeting where A.A. presented the 30 millionth copy of its “Big Book” to the American Medical Association (AMA). At every International Convention, a special edition of the “Big Book” is presented to an individual or organization that has supported the organization in some exceptional way.

During my journey that weekend, I met sober attendees from all over the world. How many other movements provide such international fellowship?

NCADD of Middlesex County, Inc. purchased various convention CDs, DVDs and print materials from the conference, including audio from every meeting and workshop. If you would like to view, listen or read any of these items, please call us at 732-254-3344.



Some of the over 52,800 attendees of the 75th anniversary at the Alamodome in downtown San Antonio, Texas.

Continued from Page 1

disorder in adulthood. Excessive low self esteem can also lead to greater promiscuity and higher risk for teenage pregnancy.

Warning signs to look for in an adolescent or child:

- Having a hard time relaxing or difficulty concentrating
- Trouble falling asleep or staying asleep
- Unexplained headaches or body aches, or other physical complaints such as muscle tension, rapid heartbeat, trembling, sweaty palms or feeling shaky
- Restlessness, fatigue, or unusual irritability
- Losing interest in things he/she normally enjoys doing

These symptoms may be normal for some children, and not of significant concern, but it is important for adults to notice repeated symptoms in children and to help them to receive treatment if appropriate. Ruling out any possible physical health problems must be primary. Afterwards, basic habits such as healthy eating, sleeping and exercise will improve a child's condition, and mental health professionals are available to work with adolescents, as the most important thing is to get help. Anxiety can be treated, and these affected children can feel better.

After discussing this issue with our student this summer the student who brought the subject up said she was going to bring Ann into PATHWAYS once school starts to get her the help she needs.

**Some facts in this story may have been changed to help illustrate the subject being addressed, and names have been changed to maintain confidentiality.*

1. U.S. Department of Health and Human Services. (1999). *Mental Health: A Report of the Surgeon General*. Rockville, MD: U.S. Department of Health and Human Services.
2. SAMHSA's National Mental Health Information Center
3. Blum, R.W., & Rinehart, P.M. (1997). *Reducing the Risk: Connection That Make a Difference in the Lives of Youth*. Minneapolis, MN: Division of General Pediatrics and Adolescent Health, University of Minnesota.
4. "Anxiety and Depression 101: What students need to know" *Journey Works Publishing* 2006. Reviewed 2009. www.journeyworks.com

Jason Surks Memorial Prevention Resource Center

NCADD is currently updating its Resource Center with new literature and DVDs. Check upcoming issues of *Prevention WORKS!* for more information. If you do not currently receive a copy of *Prevention WORKS!* via email, write to us at mail@ncadd-middlesex.org and ask to be added to our database. We have thousands of videos, DVDs, brochures and other pieces of literature to choose from at our Resource Center. We'd like to highlight a couple of items that might be useful to you on the topics of drug and alcohol abuse and the underage population.

Videos

- ✦ **Generation Rx**— An emotional video that explores the depths of addiction from the addict's eyes to the loved ones who have lost family members as a result.

Pamphlets

- ✦ **The buzz takes your breath away. Permanently.** Misuses of prescription pain relievers can kill you— This brochure outlines the dangers associated with the misuse of prescription pain relievers, what drugs to watch out for, the symptoms of overdose and what to do when someone is overdosing.

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.

NCADD of Middlesex County, Inc.
152 Tices Lane
East Brunswick, NJ 08816
Phone: 732-254-3344
Email: mail@ncadd-middlesex.org
Web: www.ncadd-middlesex.org

Help Us Celebrate our 30th Anniversary With a \$30 Donation!

NCADD is proud of our many achievements and the fact that we have been in the forefront of efforts to stamp out the stigma associated with addiction and to marshal the energy and resources to confront a public health problem that has maimed and killed more Americans than all of our wars, natural catastrophes, and traffic accidents combined. We fully expect that the next thirty years will continue to reflect our commitment to prevention, education and advocacy. We would like to count on your continued support. Such support helps to insure that quality programs and services will continue to be provided throughout the county for years to come.

YES! I want to support the mission of NCADD of Middlesex County, Inc. and help celebrate your 30th anniversary.

Donation enclosed: \$ _____ (Please make check payable to NCADD of Middlesex County, Inc.)
Name: _____ Title: _____
Company (if applicable): _____
Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____
Telephone: (_____) _____ Fax: (_____) _____
Email: _____

Please detach and mail with your donation to: NCADD of Middlesex County, Inc., 152 Tices Lane, East Brunswick, NJ 08816.
To make a donation using a credit card, please go to the NCADD website at /www.ncadd-middlesex.org/donate/
Thank you for your support!

30 Years of Preventing Substance Abuse and Supporting Personal Recovery
Building Healthy Communities

Non-Profit Org.
U.S. Postage Paid
New Brunswick, NJ
Permit #1

