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Abuse Prevention,  
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Recovery!



# Prevention WORKS!

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

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## FEATURE ARTICLE

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### An Average Day In The Life of American Adolescents



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## **An Average Day In The Life Of American Adolescents**

According to results of a survey sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA), 508,000 adolescents aged 12-17 in the United States drink alcohol on an average day; 641,000 use illicit drugs; and more than 1 million smoke cigarettes.

The report, which highlights the substance abuse behavior and addiction treatment activities that occur among adolescents on an average day, draws on national surveys conducted and analyzed by SAMHSA's Office of Applied Studies.

The study, titled *A Day in the Life of American Adolescents: Substance Use Facts Update*, presents a stark picture of the daily toll substance abuse takes on America's youth. Among the report's major findings is that on any given day during 2008, 563,000 adolescents used marijuana, nearly 37,000 used inhalants, 24,000 used hallucinogens, 16,000 used cocaine and 2,800 used heroin.

Essentially, this report is a wakeup call about the extent to which the nation's youth engage in risky behavior by using illegal and potentially dangerous substances everyday. It emphasizes that parents, families and people working in the public health and public safety professions can prevent substance abuse and promote emotional health. In the long run, efforts by these individuals can improve health status and lower costs to families, businesses and governments.

The report also sheds light on how many adolescents used illegal substances for the first time. On an average day in 2008, approximately:

- 7,500 adolescents drank alcohol for the first time;
- 4,360 adolescents used an illicit drug for the first time;

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### Staff

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Jason Victor, BA, CPS  
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## Dear Friends,

As I write to you today, the hot and humid weather has broken, a former student is meeting me for lunch, and my triathlon training is going very well – I may actually survive. This is a perfect frame of mind for me to write this quarter’s column. As you read through this issue, you will see a mix of seemingly very good and somewhat bad news. Yet, I am here to tell you that it is all good.

I’ll start with the cover article, which provides a daily snapshot of the drug use of our youth. While the numbers are disturbing, the fact that we actually have these numbers is very encouraging. We have always had the three data sources from which this report was drawn, but this is the first time the three data sets have been looked at together in the context of how our youth use in a single day – which is a powerful way to look at the data.

With the new focus on prevention highlighted in the 2010 National Drug Strategy, data like the above will not just be used to say, “How awful!” Now we can take comfort in the fact that we have both a very clear picture of need and the support to do something substantial about the problem. The first tangible evidence that we are really moving forward comes from the Center for Substance Abuse Prevention. In the last 15 years, it has reviewed and accepted less than 200 prevention programs for its National Registry of Effective Programs and Practices. This year, 64 new programs will be added to that list, demonstrating the rapid advance in the science of prevention. One of those new programs is our own Footprints for Life TM, which is the first program from New Jersey to make the list and the first program in the nation on the list designed specifically for second and third grade students. Parents and teachers of Generation Y have reason to be optimistic.

Speaking of milestones, be sure to read Part 1 of our two-part article on the 75th anniversary of Alcoholics Anonymous. Two men came together in Ohio – one alcoholic helping another – and a worldwide fellowship was born. If you can’t be there, we can provide the next best thing. Part two in our series will be a report from the 75th Anniversary World Conference in San Antonio, and we are also purchasing the entire program on CD for our Resource Center. Feel free to stop by, say hello and “borrow a meeting” this summer!



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.*

*Continued from Page 1*

- 3,900 adolescents smoked cigarettes for the first time;
- 3,700 adolescents used marijuana for the first time; and
- 2,460 used prescription pain relievers nonmedically for the first time;
- 1,400 used hallucinogens for the first time;
- 1,310 used inhalants for the first time;
- 650 used cocaine for the first time;
- 630 used licit or illicit stimulants nonmedically for the first time;
- 125 used methamphetamine for the first time; and
- 95 used heroin for the first time.

In addition, the report also highlights how many people under age 18 were receiving treatment for a substance abuse problem during an average day in 2008. These numbers included:

- Over 76,000 in outpatient treatment;
- More than 9,000 in non-hospital residential treatment; and
- Over 700 in hospital inpatient treatment.



The study showed that in 2008, there were about a quarter of a million drug-related emergency hospital visits among adolescents of which 170,000 visits involved the use of illicit drugs, alcohol or intentional misuse or abuse of pharmaceuticals. On an average day in 2008:

- 151 visits involved alcohol;
- 129 involved marijuana; and
- 86 involved prescription or nonprescription pain relievers.

Finally, the report notes that there were over 141,00 admissions for adolescents aged 12 to 17 to substance abuse treatment programs nationwide. That means that on an average day, over 370 youth were admitted for treatment, lead by over 260 cases presented with marijuana and 76 with alcohol.

This report was drawn from SAMHSA's National Survey on Drug Use and Health, Treatment Episode Data Set and the National Survey of Substance Abuse Treatment Services, and the Drug Abuse Warning Network. The report contains many other important facts about adolescent substance abuse, treatment and treatment admissions patterns.

The full report is available at:  
<http://www.oas.samhsa.gov>.

# Getting To Know “Generation Y”- Your Kids!

By Jason Victor, BA, CPS

There is a large generation gap between children and their adult counterparts. The Baby Boom generation was born between 1946 and 1964. Generation X was born between 1966 and 1980. The newest generation, known as the Millennials or Generation Y, was born between 1982 and 2002.

Generation Y is a generation that makes personal sacrifices in exchange for professional success. Their core values are based on a strong sense of civic duty. After all, this is the generation that elected the first African American president. They also have a desire to make a difference in the world. According to research, they tend to be team-oriented and interested in working with others. They want to make a difference in the world.

Millennials are completely surrounded by media and use it every day. According to Common Sense Media, “Media” refers to the messages and images that we use and create, as well as the technology used to consume and create these messages. This includes TV, movies, video games, books, magazines, the Internet, cell phones, and more.

Common Sense Media notes that the average 8- to 18-year-old spends more time watching TV and

movies, playing games, or playing online than they do in school or with parents – an average of 6.5 hours per day. That’s more than 45 hours each week!

Generation Y has access to the world at their fingertips from a variety of sources, like cell phones and computers. They can learn about things for school, or they can just explore topics that they’re curious about, which can open them up to learning about different cultures and ideas. This generation is connected to each other on a global level. Generation Y are now using media in the classrooms. Some districts are even incorporating video games to teach kids math and science skills.

As adults, many of us are overwhelmed by this new media environment, even if we have an understanding or use it for our own pleasure.

As an agency our mission is to promote the health and well-being of individuals and communities of Middlesex County. It is important to arm our community with information about the new generation. With new media coming out each year such as the iPad, it makes it easier for generation Y to access information that can be harmful to them. An example is finding information on the internet through websites

that give false information about using Alcohol, Tobacco, or other drugs. Many pro drug sites such as eriod, can lead teens to overdosing by giving them misleading or incorrect information. Parents, Teachers, Caregivers, etc. should talk to this new generation about the media they are using.

Those who have a Millennial in their life have to realize that using digital media is part of what it means to be a kid today. If one can show interest in this new media, the children are more likely to come to them for help using it.

Adults can learn how to make a Facebook page, figure out how to text, and check out what Play Station 3 can do besides play games. A great way to do this is to ask a child for help and then do these activities together. It’s important also important to help kids find age-appropriate media, and discuss which sites they can visit, etc. You cannot wait until this generation has been using a device for months before setting some guidelines. Awareness is key!

#### Sources

- Klein, Lori (2009). *From Generation to Generation: Changing Behavioral Perceptions and Expectations in Jewish Nonprofits*. *Journal of Jewish Communal Service*, 83, 325-333.
- *Common Sense Media*

## New Drug Control Strategy: A Focus on Prevention

The Obama administration's newly-released drug control strategy sets up five-year goals for reducing drug use and the problems associated with it. According to the plan, the scale of the problem and the suffering it causes are immense: More than 7.6 million Americans have a diagnosable drug abuse disorder; drug overdoses approach car crashes as a leading cause of accidental death; drug abuse contributes to more than one in eight new human immunodeficiency virus (HIV) infections; and substance abuse results in significant healthcare costs every year

The strategy focuses on prevention - to keep kids from developing drug problems. In fact, the added emphasis on prevention is reflected in the 2011 drug budget, which calls for an increase in Federal support for state and local prevention efforts. These funds, when allocated, will help young people from heading down the dangerous and destructive path of drug use.

This is a cost-effective, common-sense way to build safe and healthy communities. Thus, the strategy focuses on:

- Developing a community-oriented national prevention system focused on young people
- Collaborating with States to help communities implement evidence-based prevention initiatives
- Providing sound information about the dangers of drug use to young people, their parents, and other caring adults through the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign, at the workplace, and through schools, faith communities, and civic organizations

- Supporting mentoring initiatives, especially for youth who are at greater risk for initiating drug use
- Expanding research on drugs used by youth, including inhalants, pain killers, "study drugs" (e.g., Ritalin), and steroids
- Fostering collaboration between public health and public safety organizations to prevent drug use

This plan provides a collaborative and balanced approach that emphasizes community-based prevention, integration of evidence-

based treatment into the healthcare system, innovations in the criminal justice system, and international partnerships to disrupt drug trafficking organizations.

The plan also seeks early intervention opportunities in health care, since the healthcare system can avert enormous human and economic cost

if care providers consistently screen and intervene with early-stage substance abuse before it becomes acutely life threatening.

According to the plan, health care professionals will be encouraged to ask questions about patients' drug use to potentially intervene early. Databases will be improved and developed to track prescriptions and identify doctors that overprescribe, in order to reduce the number of people abusing prescription drugs.

The drug plan assembles a collaboration of prevention, education and treatment professionals, law enforcement, as well as international cooperation to help combat the drug problem. It will also boost community-based prevention techniques and expand treatment programs.

*"Each day almost 8,000 Americans illegally consume a drug for the first time. The risks posed by their drug use, like that of the other 20 million Americans who already use drugs illegally, will radiate to their families and to the communities in which they live"*

# AA Celebrates 75 Years Of Saving Lives - Part I

*By Anonymous*

Alcoholics Anonymous® (AA) is a fellowship of men and women who share their experience, strength and hope with each other that they may solve their common problem and help others to recover from alcoholism.

The only requirement for membership is a desire to stop drinking. There are no dues or fees for AA membership. They are self-supporting through their own contributions. AA is not allied with any sect, denomination, political party, organization or institution; does not wish to engage in any controversy, neither endorses nor opposes any causes. Their primary purpose is to stay sober and help other alcoholics to achieve sobriety. (AA Preamble)

Members of AA have been doing this for 75 years this June. Today, AA has a presence in more than 180 countries, with an estimated total of 113,168 groups and more than 2 million members worldwide (AA world services).

As an anonymous member of the fellowship, I can tell you from personal experience that the program and fellowship have saved my life. Through the fellowship, I met my sponsor, who took me on my journey through the twelve steps.

The twelve steps are a program that helps you to put the drink down for good and helps a person to make the necessary changes in their own lives to become a family member, productive citizen, worker, etc. The idea behind the steps is to admit you are no longer in charge of your drinking.

A person, who goes through the twelve steps of AA successfully, is said to “go through a complete physic change.” Their drinking problem is in remission as long as they continue to work the steps for the rest of their lives, “one day at a time.” I heard a member at a meeting say to a newcomer once, “Your disease is doing pushups, once you let up on the 12 steps, look out!”

AA has saved both my life and countless other lives since its first meeting in 1935. AA traces its beginnings back to Bill W.’s 1935 meeting with cofounder Dr. Bob S., who was a physician who also suffered from alcoholism. After Dr. Bob took his last drink on June 10 of that year, the two men’s primary purpose was to “help other alcoholics achieve sobriety.” The Fellowship had about 100 members by 1939, when they published “Alcoholics Anonymous,” the society’s basic text, which is now in its fourth edition and has been published in 58 languages.

On July Fourth weekend, the AA International Convention is being held in San Antonio Texas, where tens of thousands of AA members from around the world come together and mark the celebration of AA’s 75th Anniversary.

I am attending this event and look forward to reporting with more detail on my experience.

*Part II will be published in the next edition of Prevention WORKS!*

## Brief Update on Youth Risk Behavior

When the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention asked teenagers if they had ever used a prescription drug that wasn't prescribed to them, 23 percent said "Yes." That news comes from the CDC's new Youth Risk Behavior Survey, which polled high school students last year.

Teenage abuse of ADHD drugs, like Adderall, has risen 76 percent in the past eight years. And opioid drugs like OxyContin, usually prescribed to adults for pain relief, are the third-most-popular drugs of abuse for teenagers. Both ADHD medications and OxyContin are easy to find in medicine cabinets and teenagers figure most parents will never notice if one or two pills go missing.

But the biggest news the new survey delivered may be that illegal prescription drug use is the least of our worries. Of the high school respondents:

- 72 percent had used alcohol at least once in their lives.
- 37 percent had used marijuana.
- 8 percent had used hallucinogenic drugs, such as LSD or mescaline.
- 6.7 percent had used ecstasy.
- 6 percent had used cocaine.

Clearly, alcohol poses a greater risk to the greatest number of teens than does any other drug, even marijuana. Add in the fact that drinking alcohol is a major contributor to the number one cause of teenage deaths, motor vehicle crashes, and we should be most worried about what these children are drinking, and who's driving the car. The number one suggestion to parents and caregivers: Have a strict policy of no drinking, smoking, or drugs before age 21.

## Jason Surks Memorial Prevention Resource Center

NCADD is currently in the process of 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](mailto: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

- ✦ **How to Say No**— Using scenarios that dramatize the kinds of negative peer pressure common in their lives, this video helps students become comfortable saying no to undesirable behavior.

### Pamphlets

- ✦ **Facts & Conversations: Parents & Underage Access to Alcohol**— This brochure discusses why providing alcohol to teenagers is a problem; the facts regarding underage alcohol use and abuse; the impact of social hosting; and the role of parents in preventing underage access to alcohol.

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](mailto:mail@ncadd-middlesex.org)  
Web: [www.ncadd-middlesex.org](http://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 you celebrate your 30th anniversary.**

Donation enclosed: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ (Please make check payable to NCADD of Middlesex County, Inc.)

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Please detach and mail with your donation to: NCADD of Middlesex County, Inc., 152 Tices Lane, East Brunswick, NJ 08816.

You can also donate online on the NCADD website at [www.ncadd-middlesex.org/donate/](http://www.ncadd-middlesex.org/donate/)

Thank you for your support!

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