

North Country Prevention Newsletter

Date: March 2009

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Welcome to another edition of the North Country Prevention Newsletter. This is a monthly electronic communication to and for the North Country Prevention Coalitions including the Juvenile Justice Project, Northern Grafton County Coalition and Task Force, Coos County Coalition, North Country Prevention Network, Woodsville Area Stakeholders and the Coos County Family Support Project, community partners, program participants, the community and interested stakeholders and is a project of North Country Health Consortium's Community Substance Abuse Prevention Program.

We invite items for the newsletter from our readers that relate to prevention, youth and parent programs, new developments, training and opportunities. The deadline for submissions to this monthly newsletter is the 26th of each month. Send items to vherres@nchcnh.org.

To remove your name from this email list hit reply and type "remove from list" in the subject box.



Prescription Drug Abuse Increasing Lisa Remick from DEA to Give Presentation March 23rd in Gorham

On **Monday, March 23rd** Lisa Remick from the Drug Enforcement Administration (DEA) will be giving a presentation on Prescription Drug Abuse in Gorham at North Country Educational Services. Sponsored by the North Country Substance Abuse Prevention Coalitions and the Coos County Juvenile Justice Project, Ms. Remick will learn about the most popularly abused prescription drugs, the signs and symptoms of their use and what can be done to prevent prescription drug abuse. The presentation will be **from 8:30 to 10:30** in the technology conference room at NCES in Gorham. This is a free presentation and everyone is invited. Please RSVP to Valerie Herres at 837-2519 or vherres@nchcnh.org by March 20th. Light refreshments will be available.

Recent reports indicate that prescription drug abuse is increasing throughout the country. It has also been a rising trend in the North Country. An article in the February 19th issue of the Coos County Democrat indicated that three cases to be

presented to the Coos Grand Jury involved prescription drug theft, possession or sales.

The Coos County Coalition and Littleton ATOD Task Force have been exploring ways to get the word out and to prevent youth abuse of prescription drugs.

In addition parents and others in the community need to be alerted to the reality and risks. One resource for parents is at http://www.theantidrug.com/drug_info/prescription_drugs.asp?from=home.

This web site has information on this fast growing threat that includes:

Rx Danger Zones: Where are teens and adults getting prescription drugs? Teens say they are readily available — in their own homes, from friends or relatives, and online pharmacies. Places where teens are getting prescription drugs include at home, from other teens, from medicine cabinets in bathrooms or on countertops, from the trashcan where expired prescriptions are tossed, from parents and relatives bedroom tables and bureaus, on kitchen counters and drawers where prescription bottles are stored, from other students' backpacks, from a parent's purse or pockets, from internet pharmacies and easy access points which are shared on networking sites on the internet, at grandparents' houses, at pharmacies and at school. Take a tour to see where prescription drugs can be found at

http://www.theantidrug.com/drug_info/prescription_dangerZones.asp

What are the Dangers of Prescription Drug Abuse?

Teens and adults are abusing some prescription and over-the-counter drugs to get high. This includes **painkillers**, such as those drugs prescribed after surgery; **depressants**, such as sleeping pills or anti-anxiety drugs; and **stimulants**, such as those drugs prescribed for attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD). Teens are also abusing over-the-counter drugs, such as cough and cold remedies.

Every day 2,500 youth age 12 to 17 abuse a pain reliever for the very first time. More teens abuse prescription drugs than any illicit drug except marijuana. In 2006, more than 2.1 million teens ages 12 to 17 reported abusing prescription drugs. Among 12- and 13-year-olds, prescription drugs are the drug of choice.

Because these drugs are so readily available, and many teens believe they are a safe way to get high, teens that wouldn't otherwise touch illicit drugs might abuse prescription drugs. And not many parents are talking to them about it, even though teens report that parental disapproval is a powerful way to keep them away from drugs.

There are serious health risks related to abuse of prescription drugs. A single large dose of prescription or over-the-counter painkillers or depressants can cause breathing difficulty that can lead to death. Stimulant abuse can lead to hostility or paranoia, or the potential for heart system failure or fatal seizures. Even in small doses, depressants and painkillers have subtle effects on motor skills, judgment, and ability to learn.

The abuse of OTC cough and cold remedies can cause blurred vision, nausea, vomiting, dizziness, coma, and even death. Many teens report mixing prescription drugs, OTC drugs, and alcohol. Using these drugs in combination can cause respiratory failure and death.

Tips for Parents and What to Do: Get educated. Have the talk. Be specific about your concerns. Don't make excuses. Remain calm and get help if needed. Check out this website for a parents guide on prescription drug abuse at <http://download.ncadi.samhsa.gov/ken/pdf/PHD1113/PHD1113.pdf>

How to talk to your Teen: Here are some suggested things to tell your son or daughter:

- You LOVE him/her, and you are worried that he/she might be using drugs or alcohol;

- You KNOW that drugs may seem like the thing to do, but doing drugs can have serious consequences;
- It makes you FEEL worried and concerned about him/her when he/she does drugs;
- You are there to LISTEN to him/her;
- You WANT him/her to be a part of the solution;
- You tell him/her what you WILL do to help him/her.
- Know that you will have this discussion many, many times. Talking to your kid about drugs and alcohol is not a one-time event.

Download this tips sheet for parents at http://www.theantidrug.com/pdfs/rxdrugs_otc.pdf

For more information on prescription drug abuse, to join with our local community coalition to work together to prevent prescription drug abuse contact Valerie Herres at 837-2519 or vherres@nchnh.org.

Collaboration – What does it really look like?

Just received from Drug Free Communities – Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration Project Director Mike Kosinzki is a definition of collaboration that is thought provoking that I wanted to share with everyone. Not sure you'll agree with it but it's definitely a conversation starter:

The Four Stages of Collaboration:

Stage One: Everyone comes to a meeting, brings their toys to the table and plays with all their toys but won't let others play with their toys.

State Two: Everyone comes to a meeting, puts all their toys – except their little red truck- into the center of the table and says you all can play with my toys – except my little red truck.

Stage Three: Everyone comes to a meeting and puts all their toys into the center of the table – including their little red truck – and says, you can play with all my toys including my little red truck.

State Four: Everyone comes to a meeting without any toys, they put their money in the center of the table and say, what toys should we buy?

Youth Grants Update



On January 30th around the region at three centers the North Country Substance Abuse Prevention Coalitions hosted a Bidder's Conference for the Youth Leadership Project's grant program. The program will provide grantees up to \$1000 to implement environmental strategies that target a drug (alcohol, tobacco or prescription drugs) and will give youth teams an opportunity to work within their own communities. North Country Educational Services provided assistance in the logistics of the Bidder's Conference which used video conferencing technology to allow all interested youth groups to participate. Site for the video conference were at Colebrook Academy, North Country Educational Services and at the Gregg Academy in Littleton. Other sites proposed for the Bidder's Conference were not utilized due to lack of registered teams.

North Country Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition staff members have worked together on the Project. They include Bob Thompson, North Country Substance Abuse Prevention Network Coordinator and Facilitator of the Littleton Area ATOD Task Force, Valerie Herres, Project Director of the Coos County Coalition and Program Director of North Country Health Consortium's Substance Abuse Prevention Program, Diana Gibbs, Tobacco and Youth and School Coordinator with the Coalitions, Drew Brown, Information Technologist with the Coalitions and Nicole LaPointe, the Coalition's evaluator.

The due date for submitted grants was February 17th and awards will be announced on March 2nd. The youth groups are expected to complete their projects by the end of the school year with a celebration planned for the fall.



Youth group members with ADAPT in Lincoln listen to presenters talk about environmental strategies at the Bidder's Conference.



Larry Barker and Ann Morin from 4-H, their Youth and others watch the video conference. Matt Tremer from NCES stands in the back Making sure everything was working properly.



Nicole LaPointe discusses environmental strategies to the youth teams.



Valerie Herres goes over the request for Proposals document as youth team members look on.

For more information on the Youth Leadership Project, contact Diana Gibbs at dgibbs@nchcnh.org or Valerie Herres at vherres@nchcnh.org or call either 837-2519.

LIP Teams to attend Teen Institute

Three teams from the North Country will be attending the Leaders' In Prevention Training this March at Teen Institute as part of the North Country Coalition's Youth Leadership Project. At a weekend retreat, LIP teams learn about team work and implementing activities in their local communities and schools. Teams sponsored this year are from the Gorham Middle School, Berlin-Gorham After School Program and Haverhill Middle School.

Teens Display Risky Behaviors on MySpace

The article from Join Together points out that too many youth are "displaying risky behaviors on MySpace, a social networking site. The question we have to ask ourselves is at what age do youth begin using MySpace and reporting risky behavior. We also need to consider whether this is perpetuating the social norm of adolescent risk taking on a national level. Obviously parents need to be aware of what their teens are doing but what responsibility do we have a society to put a cap to irresponsible hosting sites that continue to walk down the path of "anything goes" as long as they get their fees and make money on advertising? What place is there for policy changes and getting our law makers involved?

Join Together January 6, 2009 Issue

"Research Summary

Researchers say that half of teen MySpace sites include references to sex, drug use, or other high-risk behavior, with 41 percent of sites studied

featuring drug-related information, [Reuters](#) reported Jan. 6.

In one study, researcher Dimitri Christakis of Seattle Children's Research Institute and Megan Moreno of the University of Wisconsin looked at randomly chosen profiles of 18-year-olds on the social-networking site MySpace and found that 54 percent of profiles available to the public showed information regarding high risk behavior.

The researchers sent messages to 95 adults ages 18 to 20 whose profiles showed risky behavior, warning them of the risks of sharing such information on the internet and providing a link to a website with information about sexually transmitted diseases. A [second study](#) found that many of the subjects subsequently removed references to sex and substance abuse or limited viewing privileges on their profiles.

Such an intervention "really provides the opportunity to reach millions of potential at-risk teens and try to modify their behaviors or at least prevent them from disclosing them to the entire world," Christakis said, adding that teens should protect such information from potential sexual predators as well as future employers and universities.

The studies were published Jan. 1, 2009 in the [Archives of Pediatric & Adolescent Medicine](#).

Coos County Coalition

The Coos County Coalition meeting scheduled for February 19th was cancelled due to the prediction of "snowy" conditions since people were coming from all over the area and as it turned out weather in some locations was terrible and in others it was quite fine driving. The presentation on "Gangs" which was part of the agenda will be rescheduled at a later date.

The Coos County Coalition meets bi-monthly in Lancaster at UNH Cooperative Extension. These are breakfast meetings held from 8"—to 9:30 (sometimes with additional informational sessions held after). Dates for 2009 are: Coos County Coalition meetings will be on Thursdays, from 8:00 to 9:30 on the following dates:

April 16
June 18
August 20
October 15
December 17

Tobacco Prevention and Control News - Kick Butts Day is March 25

What event occurs each year which engages young people in over 1000 events? Kick Butts Day is an opportunity for youth to expose the Tobacco Industry and it's tactics to attract and "hook" young people who before they know it are addicted to cigarettes and other tobacco use.

Kick Butts this year is on March 25th and youth around the North Country have many activities planned. As usual, their energy, creativity and enthusiasm are boundless.

Some facts to ponder about tobacco use in this country:

- Each day about 3500 kids (under 18) try smoking for the first time and another 1000 become regular smokers.
- Adult male smokers lose an average of 13 years of life while adult female smokers lose an average of 14 years.
- Nicotine is addictive which is why it's hard to quit using tobacco products.
- The tobacco industry spends over \$13.3 billion a year, more than \$36 million a day on advertising and marketing to attract new customers.
- Cigarette and spit-tobacco companies continue to advertise heavily at retail outlets near schools and playgrounds with large ads and signs clearly visible from outside the stores.
- Spit tobacco is known by many names including chew, chewing tobacco and snuff. The tobacco companies would prefer it be called "smokeless" so that consumers will think "harmless."
- Spit tobacco users are more than 50 times more likely to get oral cancer than non-users and using it increases a person's risk of cancer of the lip, tongue, gums, floor of the mouth, throat, larynx and esophagus.
- Big Tobacco (companies) continue to expand globally. Tobacco use has killed one hundred million people in the 20th century and if current trends continue, will kill one billion people in the 21st century!

Armed with this information, young people are motivated to get the word out to their peers, families and communities.

What are some Kick Butts activities that young people have implemented? See if you can guess what some of these are all about.

- Kicking Butts on Film
- They put WHAT in a cigarette?
- Pledge or Graffiti Walls

- Take it to the streets.
- Kick the Can.
- Tobacco ingredient collection competition.
- Tombstones or body bags.
- Cups in a Fence.
- Living Billboards.
- Tobacco Free Merchant Awards.
- Text Chains.
- Social Networking.
- School or community Kick Butts Day Proclamations.

There are also opportunities for young people to work on or pass local ordinances, create tobacco free events, survey marketing strategies of Big Tobacco, and change norms in their local communities and schools.

For more information on Kick Butts Day Activities contact dgibbs@nchcnh.org.



Cigarette smoke can cause the body's immune system to attack lung tissue, causing damage that can lead to respiratory diseases, such as Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder (COPD), which is incurable and nearly medicinally untreatable.

Project Monitor:



Join with the efforts of others in your community to stop underage drinking and prevent underage drinking parties.

Project Monitor is an anonymous tip line that anyone can call if they become aware of a party being planned that may provide alcohol and/or drugs to youth. It is a prevention program of North Country Health Consortium, local coalitions and law enforcement from Northern Grafton County and Coos County have agreed to contact the potential hosts to alert them of the legal and libel consequences of providing alcohol to underage youth. Spread the word. If you would like flyers with tip line numbers call Valerie Herres at 837-2519 or email vherres@nchcnh.org.

New Futures – Statewide Advocacy and Leadership Training to Reduce Underage Drinking

New Futures, a nonprofit, nonpartisan advocacy organization working to reduce underage alcohol problems and increase access to treatment in New Hampshire identifies and recruits advocates, who then take action on public policy issues related to underage drinking and addiction treatment. This state-wide network of concerned advocates was key in defeating a bill in the last legislative session which would have allowed an enhanced alcohol content in “flavored malt beverages”. This session a bill to lower the drinking age from 21 to 18 will be a focus of their advocacy efforts.

You can join with other advocates in making a difference by participating in a New Futures’ one-day leadership retreat, designed to increase knowledge about the NH Legislature and enhance advocacy skills. While December seems far away – mark your calendars for December 9, 2009 when New Futures will host their next retreat in Concord. Visit www.new-futures.org and check out the Community Leadership Initiative page!

Project Monitor Tip Line Numbers in your area:

Berlin: 752-3131

Colebrook: 237-4487

Gorham – 466-2336 or email gpde@ncia.net

Groveton – 788-3232 or email

npd@northumberlandpolicenh.com

Lancaster – 788-3282

Littleton – 1-800-564-6911 or 603-787-2111

North Stratford - 922-3821

Pittsburg – 237-4487

Stewartstown – 237-4487

Whitefield – 837-5266 ext 50

NH Liquor Commission anonymous tip line for Buyer Beware and providing alcohol to underage youth – 1-888-8-OVER 21.

The NH Liquor Commission also has a line to call anonymously tied to their **Buyer Beware Program** which targets young adults who purchase alcohol to youth. The number to call is 1-888-8-OVER 21.

Project Monitor SafeHomes Pledges:

The North Country Substance Abuse Coalition now have printed Pledge cards that you can use at your events and to spread the word. Taking the **Project Monitor SafeHomes Pledge** is a positive step that parents and other caregivers can make in pledging not to provide alcohol to children in their home and to supervise parties closely. It is also a safe way for parents to connect with other parents and develop a system of working together to help their children. If you would like pledge cards for you or for an event contact Valerie Herres at vherres@nchcnh.org or call 837-2519.

A Project Monitor Display and materials are now available on loan for your event. Contact Valerie for more information.

Free Satellite and On-Line Training in Interesting Topics

The Distance Learning section of the Multijurisdictional Counterdrug Task Force Training Program offers more than a dozen telecasts and videos each year dealing with a variety of Counterdrug topics ranging from Raising Drug-Free Kids to Electronic Tattletales: Drug Evidence in Online Social Networking Groups. www.mctft.com/telecasts/upcoming_telecourses.shtml

Training Opportunities for Substance Abuse Prevention and Related Topics

Be sure to check out the New Hampshire Training Institute on Addictive Disorders website at <http://www.nhadaca.com/training.html> for information on upcoming offerings. It also includes news, resources, job listings, peer assistance and legislative updates related to training.

North Country Substance Abuse Prevention Coalitions

This news update is supported by funds from the NH Tobacco Prevention and Control Program and the Drug Free Communities Support Program.

Please send comments and news items to Valerie Herres at vherres@nchcnh.org.

If you would like to have your name removed from this newsletter send an email to vherres@nchcnh.org and type Remove from List in the email subject box.

If you have any comments on the content or would like to send information, news updates, important links and other information to be added to subsequent electronic updates send them to vherres@nchcnh.org.

It is a project of the North Country Health Consortium, a rural health network improving the health of North Country residents through innovative collaboration. Working together with businesses and other community organizations, the health and human service provider members of the Consortium are building a regional health care system to address the needs of Northern New Hampshire.

“North Country Health Consortium leads innovative
collaboration to improve the health status of the region.”

The vision of the North Country Substance Abuse Prevention Coalition is:

“Working together to create healthier communities for our children.”