



Congratulations to all of the MCSAAC Annual Award recipients!

Janna Moen (Valley) was named Youth Leader of the Year and members of Dragons in Action (Middletown) were recognized for their hard work on the asset posters project which was named Prevention Program of the Year.

November 2009

Tie One on for Safety Month

9th - 13th Chemical Health Week

18th Great American Smoke-out

23rd - 28th National Family Week

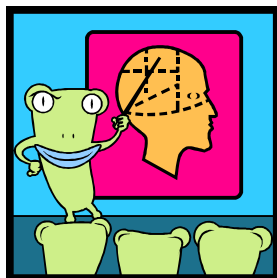
The Problem with Facebook

The creators of Facebook have a lot to brag about. Since its founding in 2004 membership has skyrocketed and Facebook now boasts over 300 million members and the site is the largest social networking site in the world. In its five year existence Facebook's original mission has changed as well. Instead of allowing only college students to join, anyone can create a page now and this means that there are young people with profiles. It is estimated that one-third of Facebook users are under the age of 21 and this poses a huge marketing problem in the eyes of the Marin Institute.

A study done by researcher Sarah Mart found that underage youth are exposed to alcohol marketing in the ads that run next to profiles on Facebook. Through the creation of two fake profiles (one for a user under 21, one for someone of legal drinking age) she and her team also discovered that listing interests such as "bars" and "alcohol" attracts marketers to profiles alongside which their ads are featured. It was also found that users under 21 could also access pages for liquor brands and applications that allow friends to send each other virtual alcoholic beverages. Overall, the researchers found 1.1 million fans of top-selling beer brands, 2,200 events for the top five beer brands and 58,000 groups related to the term "alcohol."

This is not something for the creators of Facebook to brag about. According to Mart, "Facebook's policies regarding alcohol ads and alcohol-related content in pages, applications, events and groups do not effectively protect its users from exposure." Not only is Facebook at fault, however. Mart and her team also call on the alcohol industry to reconsider its advertising relationship with Facebook since advertising to minors violates the industry's own guidelines. Facebook official did not take the Marin Institute's report lightly and said that they welcome the opportunity for collaboration in order to challenge everyone to set the advertising standards they've set.

You can learn more about this issue by reading Mart's "Alcohol Promotion and Facebook" report online. Also, urge your peers to avoid groups, events and applications that are alcohol-related.



"Factivate - for Your Life"

There are a multitude of great resources available to Youth Leadership Groups. The three listed below explain the medical consequences of drug abuse, such as increased risk of cancer and damage to the liver. Visit these sites for more info:

www.scholastic.com/headsup
www.teens.drugabuse.gov
www.drugabuse.gov



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Interested in becoming a youth tobacco compliance agent? Call Joseph Porto from the Dept. of Mental Health & Addiction Services at (860) 418-6757 to learn how!

NOTES & NEWS

November 2009



The Dangers of Drunk and Drugged Driving

Red ribbons are tied on to cars as a pledge of driving safe, sober and buckled up every November and December. Even though those 60 days are dedicated as Tie One on For Safety months, it is important to uphold the message behind the ribbons year-round. The efforts of national groups like MADD and SADD, along with grassroots organizations like yours, have caused a decrease in alcohol-related car crashes through education and raising awareness. However, drunk driving still exists as one of our nation's leading killers - it is the number one cause of death for 15 to 20 year olds. Drugged driving is just as dangerous and is a trend that is unfortunately on the rise.

Alcohol and drugs act on the brain and impair a number of abilities. They include: perception (what someone understands), cognition (knowledge gained through perception), judgment (the ability to make a decision) and reaction time (the time it takes to respond to a stimulus). This type of impairment has both long and short term consequences. In the short term, using drugs might cause someone to get a bad grade on a test or to think its okay to get behind the wheel of a car. The long term consequences of those actions could be not getting in to college or not getting a certain job, or causing injury or death in a car crash.

Drugged and drunk driving is not risky only for those doing it, but it also puts innocent people in harm's way. Research has concluded that one in three US citizens will be affected by an alcohol-related crash in their lifetime. Studies have also shown that marijuana is the illegal drug found most often in impaired drivers. The horrific crash in July 2009 that claimed eight lives was caused by a woman who had been drinking vodka and smoking pot. Not only was the driver killed, but so was her daughter, her three young nieces and the three men riding in the car that was hit. In the 2006 Monitoring the Future survey 10.6% of high school seniors self-reported that they had driven under the influence of marijuana and 12.4% reported driving under the influence of alcohol in the two weeks prior to the survey.

For more information about drugged driving, visit www.drugabuse.gov/infacts/driving.html. You can also talk to Lauren Iannucci, the Youth Coordinator for MADD CT, about doing a Tie One on For Safety event in your community. She can be reached at lauren.iannucci@madd.org or (203) 764-2569.

Decisions, Decisions

When you're faced with a tough decision, sometimes it seems easier to just make a quick choice. However, those fast decisions aren't always the best. Instead of jumping to action take a some time and follow these tips:

- Remember two simple words: stop and think
- Wait at least 20 minutes before making any decision. Take more time if needed.
- Identify all of your possible actions and the consequences related to them (think - "If I do this, this could happen...").
- Identify pros and cons of the situation.
- Consider what other factors could influence your decision.
- Talk to a trusted friend, teacher, parent, clergy or other adult for advice. [Members of Youth Leadership Groups might be the trusted party in a lot of people's decision-making. Focus the discussion at an upcoming meeting on skills for helping your peers make healthy decisions.]

Did you know...

CT is one of 16 states where more people died from drugs than car accidents in 2006. In that year, 39,000 people died in the US from drug-related causes - that's over 100 lives lost per day.

Looking ahead- December 2009

Tie One on for Safety Month
National Drugged and Drunk
Driving Prevention Month