

**Addiction
Resource
Council, Inc.**

An Affiliate of the National
Council on Alcoholism and
Drug Dependence since 1971

The Advocate

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April is Alcohol Awareness Month

April is National Alcohol Awareness Month. Alcohol Awareness Month, sponsored by the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD) since 1987, encourages local communities to focus on alcoholism and alcohol-related issues. Organizations like the Addiction Resource Council have the opportunity to work together with other community outlets to raise awareness, especially about the dangerous and negative consequences of underage drinking.

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“Alcohol is a drug – a powerful, mood-altering drug – and alcoholism is a real disease.”

-Dr. Robert Morse, Board member of the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc. (NCADD)

Getting the Facts about Alcohol Dependence

According to SAMHSA’s 2004 National Survey on Drug Use and Health, more than *half* of all Americans age 12 and older are current drinkers of alcohol. That is *119 million people*.

Alcohol misuse and abuse can be dangerous. Binge drinking, constituted as five or more drinks on the same occasion, puts users of alcohol at risk of injury, vomiting, loss of control, blackouts, and even alcohol poisoning. Heavy use, constituted as binge drinking on at least 5 of every 30 days, puts users at risk for serious long term health effects such as liver and kidney disease, cancers, vitamin deficiencies, stroke, heart problems, and dependence on alcohol.

Alcoholism, or alcohol dependence, is a disease. More than 14 million Americans fit the criteria for alcohol abuse or alcoholism. The symptoms of alcohol dependence include:

- Craving: a strong compulsion to drink
- Loss of Control: inability to limit one’s drinking
- Physical dependence: withdrawal symptoms such as nausea, sweating and anxiety when alcohol use is stopped
- Tolerance: need to drink greater amounts of alcohol

Alcohol abuse or dependence not only has a negative impact on the health and well being of those that drink, but also affects the lives of those around them. 1 in 4 children under 18 live in a home where someone abuses alcohol or is an alcoholic. And more than half of American adults have a family member who has or has had a problem with alcohol.

Facts about Underage Alcohol Use

- * In 2004, 28.7 percent of youth ages 12-20 reported drinking alcohol in the last month. 19.6 percent were binge drinkers, and 6.3 percent, or almost 2.5 million teens and young adults were heavy drinkers.
- * A 16 year old is more likely to die from a drinking related problem than any other cause.
- * The average age of a child’s first drink is 12.
- * Alcohol can seriously damage brain growth processes. The brain matures until age 20, and damage from alcohol at this time can be long term and irreversible.
- * Adolescent drinkers score worse on tests of vocabulary, general information, and memory. They also perform worse in school and at a higher risk for social problems, depression, and violence.
- * People who drink before age 15 are *four times more likely* to develop alcohol dependence than those who wait until age 21.
- * 65 percent of underage youth who drink get alcohol from family and friends.
- * Nearly two thirds of teenagers who drink report they can walk into a store and buy their own alcoholic beverages.
- * About *one in four* parents say they have allowed their teens to drink alcohol.

Choice of Drug Czar Indicates Focus on Treatment, Not Jail

Adapted from the article by Carrie Johnson and Amy Goldstein Washington Post Staff Writers
Thursday, March 12, 2009

The White House said yesterday that it will push for treatment, rather than incarceration, of people arrested for drug-related crimes as it announced the nomination of Seattle Police Chief R. Gil Kerlikowske to oversee the nation's effort to control illegal drugs.

The choice of drug czar and the emphasis on alternative drug courts, announced by Vice President Biden, signal a sharp departure from Bush administration policies, gravitating away from cutting the supply of illicit drugs from foreign countries and toward curbing drug use in communities across the United States.

Biden, who helped shape the Office of National Drug Control Policy as a U.S. senator in the 1980s, said the Obama administration would continue to focus on the southwest border, where Mexican authorities are facing thousands of drug-related slayings and unchecked violence from drug cartels moving cocaine, heroin and methamphetamine into American markets. But it remained unclear how the new administration would engineer its budget to tackle the problem.

Since President Richard Nixon first declared a war on drugs nearly four decades ago, the government has spent billions of dollars with mixed results, according to independent studies and drug policy scholars. In recent years, the number of high-school-age children abusing illegal substances has dipped, but marijuana use has inched upward, and drug offenders continue to flood the nation's courts.

"The success of our efforts to reduce the flow of drugs is largely dependent on our ability to reduce demand for them," Kerlikowske said yesterday at a ceremony attended by his former law enforcement colleagues. "Our nation's drug problem is one of human suffering, and as a police officer but also in my own family, I have experienced the effects that drugs can have."

Kerlikowske's top deputy is expected to be A. Thomas McLellan, a professor at the University of Pennsylvania medical college and the chief executive of the Treatment Research Institute in Philadelphia, according to two sources in the drug control community, who said the selection underscored the administration's philosophy of rehabilitation and outreach.

On the campaign trail, Obama and Biden promised to offer first-time, nonviolent offenders a chance to serve their sentences in a drug rehabilitation center rather than in federal prison. In promoting wider use of drug courts, the administration is embracing an idea that has broad support in theory but has never been a main path for people with drug addictions who are charged with crimes.

The nation's first drug court originated in Miami in the late 1980s at the urging of Janet Reno, who went on to become President Bill Clinton's attorney general. By the mid-1990s, the federal government was providing money for communities to plan and set up such courts -- although not to help operate them in the long term.

John Roman, an Urban Institute researcher who has studied drug courts, said they now exist in most of the nation's medium and large counties, but they are used for only about 55,000 of the 1.5 million Americans with drug addictions who are arrested each year on criminal charges. The Obama administration has not said how much money it wants to devote to the courts' expansion.

Yesterday, Bennett called on Kerlikowske to "get the public's attention, get the president's attention, get the attorney general's attention and put this issue back on the front burner."

John Carnevale, an economist who worked at the Office of Drug Control Policy under three presidents, predicted that the Obama administration would concentrate on reducing demand for drugs through high-impact law enforcement and prevention efforts targeted at communities at risk.

Under Bush, money to international programs doubled, while funding for prevention and treatment fell by one-quarter, he said. The Bush White House devoted much of its attention to developing the 2008 Merida Initiative with Mexico and Central American countries to support law enforcement training and equipment there. In recent weeks, Mexico's attorney general traveled to the U.S. to discuss ongoing cooperation with Homeland Security Secretary Janet Napolitano and Attorney General Eric H. Holder Jr.

"There was a complete mismatch between the rhetoric of the strategy, which emphasized treatment, and the budget," Carnevale added, referring to the Bush administration. "The long-run answer is for the U.S. to curb its demand or appetite for illicit drugs. . . . The national drug problem is a series of local ones, and they're not all identical."

Raise Taxes, Lower Alcohol Consumption

The following article is from the Miller-McCune website www.miller-mccune.com/news/raise-taxes-lower-alcohol-consumption-934 and was written by Tom Jacobs, January 15, 2009.

Policymakers have experimented with various ways of reducing excess alcohol consumption, but the most effective tool may be the simplest: Use targeted taxes to increase the price.

A meta analysis of 112 studies, just published in the journal *Addiction*, concludes "without a doubt that alcohol taxes and prices affect drinking," according to lead author Alexander Wagenaar, a professor of epidemiology and health policy research at the University of Florida College of Medicine. "When prices go down, people drink more, and when prices go up, people drink less."

This dynamic applies "to not only overall consumption, but also measures of heavy drinking," University of Chicago economist Frank Chaloupka notes in an accompanying commentary. "These findings provide a strong rationale for using increases in alcoholic beverage taxes to promote public health by reducing drinking."

The analysis, which examined studies from a variety of nations conducted over more than 30 years, finds the correlation between cost and consumption applies to all alcoholic beverages, although beer drinkers are less responsive to price changes than those who consume wine or hard liquor.

The report will provide ammunition for government officials, including California Gov. Arnold Schwarzenegger, who have proposed increases in alcohol taxes. Chaloupka notes that such taxes have not kept pace with inflation over the past few decades.

The reluctance on the part of legislators to raise the rates has contributed to "a sharp reduction in inflation-adjusted beer, wine and spirits prices," he writes. "These falling prices have led to more drinking than would have been the case had taxes and prices kept pace with inflation and, as a result, greater consequences from alcohol abuse."

His summary of those consequences is, well, sobering. The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention estimate that 79,000 Americans deaths are linked to excessive drinking each year. The economic cost of alcohol abuse in the U.S. is estimated at nearly \$200 billion.

The report points to many examples of the positive effects of higher alcohol prices. Studies have found raising the cost of alcohol reduces violence, including spousal abuse, child abuse and suicide, as well as fatal traffic crashes and even teenage pregnancy.

On the other hand, a second newly released report suggests it might be unwise to price alcohol beyond the reach of seniors on fixed incomes. A report in the *American Journal of Epidemiology* finds that light to moderate drinking among seniors who are in good health reduces their odds of developing physical disabilities.

The report is based on three sets of data from the National Health and Nutrition Examination Survey's Epidemiological Follow-up Study. Over five years, 15 percent of the seniors surveyed developed a disability that impaired their ability to perform everyday tasks such as dressing or walking. Another 5 percent died during that time frame.

The researchers found that, among survivors, the risk of developing a disability was 12.5 percent for light-to-moderate drinkers, compared with 20 percent for those who abstained and 15.6 percent for those who drank heavily.

"If you start out in good health, alcohol consumption at light-to-moderate levels can be beneficial," said lead author Dr. Arun Karlamagla, an associate professor of medicine at the University of California, Los Angeles. "But if you don't start out healthy, alcohol will not give you a benefit."

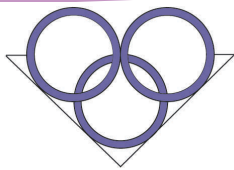


The Addiction Resource Council along with Drug Free Communities, the New Berlin, Menomonee Falls, and Waukesha Police Departments have joined forces to prevent adult hosted drinking parties in Waukesha County using the Parents Who Host Lose the Most: Don't Be a Party to Underage Drinking campaign.

Parents Who Host Lose the Most is a community effort that alerts parents to the legal and health related consequences of purchasing, providing or pouring alcohol for anyone under age 21, other than their own child. As part of the campaign, ARC will be providing information about the dangers of underage drinking, the legal consequences of hosting underage drinking in your home and how parents and other family members can host safe and fun alcohol free events for youth.

In addition to the planned public information effort and media campaign, local law enforcement will be conducting a greater amount of alcohol age compliance checks in the area to confirm that local vendors comply with laws prohibiting the sales of alcohol to anyone under age 21.

If you would like more information about the initiative, would like promotional materials to place in the area, or would like a representative to give a presentation at your parent group/community event, please contact, Brianna Duffy bduffy@arcouncil.net or 262-524-7921 Ext. 110.



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ADDICTION RESOURCE COUNCIL, INC.

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We're on the Web!
www.arcouncil.net

The ARC can earn a donation every time you search the Internet and shop online!!!

GoodSearch & GoodShop



Search the web with Yahoo-powered **GoodSearch.com** and they'll donate a penny to the ARC each time you search!

Shop at more than 600 **GoodShop.com** merchants including Amazon, Best Buy, Toys R Us, and others, and a percentage of each purchase will go to the **ARC!**

• Since 1971, the Addiction Resource Council, Inc. has been providing affordable, cost-effective solutions to help address substance abuse and dependence problems.

Upcoming Recovery-Friendly Events

Pass It On Club-Milwaukee:

3rd Annual Holy Toledo Conference Spaghetti Dinner & Fundraiser

Saturday, April 4th

5:30-6:30 Dinner 7:00 Speaker

Visit www.passitonclub.com for more info

Springfest

April 11, 2009

5:30 Hospitality 6:30 Dinner 8:00 Speakers

Visit www.passitonclub.com for more info

Upcoming Council Events

Drive Safe Drive Sober

Sponsored by the
PARC Task Force

Saturday, April 25th

Contact Sue Sevenz at the PARC Task Force at 262-548-7341, email parc1@att.net to register a Waukesha County student.

Under Age & Under the Influence: Help Our Teens "Drive Safe, Drive Sober"

Presented By: Brad Schimel
Waukesha County District Attorney

**Thursday, April 30th
7-8:30 pm at Butler Middle School Auditorium**

Call Kathy Lamb at 262-970-1129 with questions.

Addiction: Why Can't They Just Stop?

A community education series based on the HBO documentary, *Addiction*.



**Tuesday, April 7, 14, 21 & 28
6:00-8:00pm**

Wheaton Franciscan Healthcare- Elmbrook Memorial Hospital

3rd Floor Main Lobby Conference Room

1933 W. North Ave.
Brookfield, WI 53045

Call 262-524-7921 with questions.
No registration is required.