

**Addiction  
Resource  
Council, Inc.**

# The Advocate

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An Affiliate of the National  
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Drug Dependence since 1971

## **NIDA Study Shows School-Based Prevention Program Reduces Problem Behaviors in Fifth Graders By Half**

From CADCA's June 25, 2009 [Coalitions Online](#)

<http://www.cadca.org/CoalitionsOnline/article.asp?id=2229>

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A study suggests that school-based prevention programs begun in elementary school can significantly reduce problem behaviors in students. Fifth graders who previously participated in a comprehensive interactive school prevention program for one to four years were about half as likely to engage in substance abuse, violent behavior, or sexual activity as those who did not take part in the program. The study, supported by the National Institute on Drug Abuse (NIDA), a component of the National Institutes of Health, will appear in the August 2009 print issue of the American Journal of Public Health. The online version of the article is viewable today.

"This study provides compelling evidence that intervening with young children is a promising approach to preventing drug use and other problem behaviors," said NIDA Director Dr. Nora Volkow. "The fact that an intervention beginning in the first grade produced a significant effect on children's behavior in the fifth grade strengthens the case for initiating prevention programs in elementary school, before most children have begun to engage in problem behaviors."

The study was conducted in 20 public elementary schools in Hawaii. Participating schools had below-average standardized test scores and diverse student populations with an average of 55 percent of students receiving free or reduced-price lunches.

The intervention tested was Positive Action (PA), a comprehensive K-12 social and emotional development program for enhancing behavior and academic achievement. Schools were randomly assigned from matched pairs to implement PA or not. The program consists of daily 15-20 minute interactive lessons focusing on such topics as responsible self-management, getting along with others, and self-improvement. At schools implementing the intervention, these lessons occupied a total of about one hour a week beginning in the first or second grade.

In fifth grade, 976 students (most aged 10 or 11) responded to a written questionnaire that asked about their use of substances, including tobacco, alcohol, and illicit drugs; involvement in violent behaviors, such as carrying a knife or threatening someone; and voluntary sexual activity. The total number of students reporting that they had engaged in any of these behaviors was small. Strikingly, however, students exposed to the PA program were about half as likely to report engaging in any of these behaviors as students not exposed to PA. Among students who were exposed to PA, those who had received the lessons for three or more years reported the lowest rates of experience with any of these problem behaviors.

"This study demonstrates that a comprehensive, school wide social and character development program can have a substantial impact on reducing problem behaviors of public health importance in elementary-school-age youth," said Dr. Brian Flay of Oregon State University, the study's principal investigator.

PA is an interactive program that integrates teacher/student contact and opportunities for the exchange of ideas as well as feedback and constructive criticism. The program is school wide and involves teachers and parents as well as students. It takes a positive, holistic approach to social and emotional development rather than focusing on the negative aspects of engaging in substance abuse and violence. Finally, at one hour a week, students' exposure to the program was intensive. "These features likely account for the large effect observed," concluded Dr. Flay.

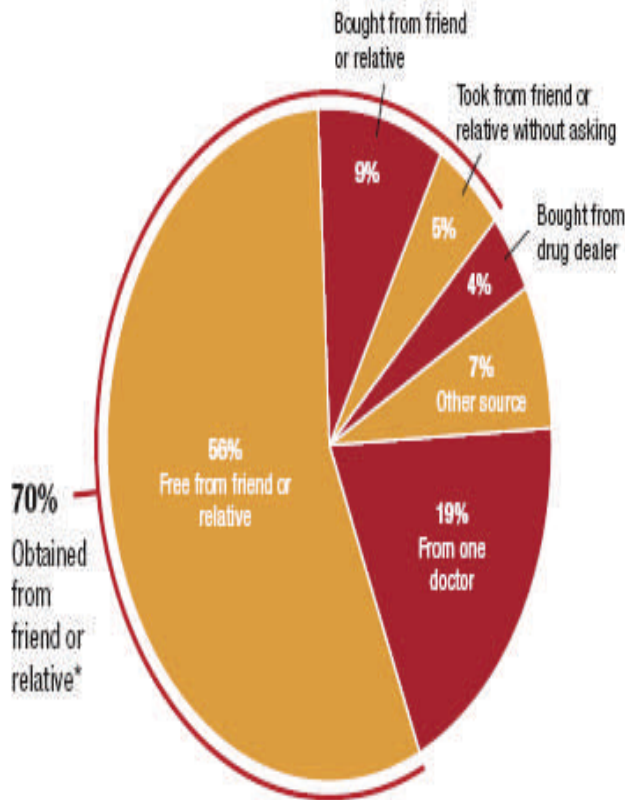
Dr. Flay plans to conduct a follow-up study to determine whether the beneficial effects of the PA program on fifth graders are sustained, as the children grow older.



*"This study provides compelling evidence that intervening with young children is a promising approach to preventing drug use and other problem behaviors," said NIDA Director Dr. Nora Volkow.*

# Waukesha County Responds to the Recent Increase of Prescription Drug Abuse by Teens

## Source of Pain Relievers for Most Recent Nonmedical Use Among Past Year Users 12 and Older



Past Year Nonmedical Users of Pain Relievers: 12.6 million

\*Percentage from friend or relative is derived before rounding of individual sources.  
Source: SAMHSA, 2006 National Survey on Drug Use and Health (September 2007).

Prescription drug abuse among teens is on the rise. In 2006, 2.1 million teens abused prescription drugs (NSDUH, 2007). Specifically in Waukesha County, Lawrence Center admissions for opioid dependence increased from 19% in 2002 to 40% in May of 2008. But where are teens in Waukesha County getting prescription drugs to abuse? Not from the streets as many may think. Studies show us that 70% of kids 12 and up get prescription drugs from their friends and relatives. They are taking unused prescriptions from their unsuspecting parent's or friend's medicine cabinets. This problem seems to be increasing at a very rapid rate, so a Waukesha County parents group has taken matters into their own hands.

The Elmbrook Parent Network will be having a Drug Collection Drive to get unused prescription drugs out of the house where teens can not abuse them. The Drug Collection will be on Saturday, October 3 from 9 am to 12:00 pm at Pilgrim Park Middle School, 1500 Pilgrim Parkway, Elm Grove. Community members are encouraged to bring all unused prescription medications to the drive, not just controlled medications that have the possibility of abuse.

The Parent Network will also host a panel of experts on October 7th from 7pm-9pm at Pilgrim Park Middle School. Law enforcement officers will speak about the changes they have seen in Southeastern Wisconsin with the recent rise in prescription drug abuse and addiction professionals will talk about the effects on adolescents who abuse prescription drugs and what are some red flags for parents.

For more information, please contact Heather Butkiewicz of the Elmbrook Parent Network at 262-754-1455.

## Month of Smoking Abstinence Reduces Post-Op Complications

Article from [Join Together](#) and was originally published September 26, 2008

A Swedish researcher has found that quitting smoking at least four weeks prior to surgery can decrease surgical complications, Science Daily reported on September 24th.

Researcher David Lindstrom studies 117 pre-operative patients at the Stockholm South General Hospital. A smoking-cessation program was provided to 50 percent of the patients four weeks before surgery. The number of complications after surgery was nearly cut in half for patients who quit smoking, compared to those who were not offered the cessation program.

Prior research has shown that smokers are more likely to suffer surgical complication like infection and slow healing. Lindstrom's study found that quitting smoking as late as four weeks before surgery can decrease the likelihood of post-operative problems.

Lindstrom, a surgeon, also discovered that surgery itself seemed to be a motivation factor for quitting: 58% of those offered cessation tools to quit smoking prior to surgery, and a third of these patients remained abstinent for at least a year after surgery.

# Excessive Drinking, Not Alcoholism, May Lead To Most Alcohol-related Problems

Article taken from ScienceDaily (Jan. 26, 2007) <http://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2007/01/070125185936.htm>

Most people realize that too much alcohol can lead to multiple health problems, injuries and violence. Numerous statistics support the accuracy of this perception. Many people also assume that a substantial proportion of people who drink to excess are probably alcoholics. This may not be accurate. A recent study of the general population in New Mexico reveals that, in fact, most alcohol-related problems may be due to excessive drinking -- especially binge drinking -- among persons who are not alcoholics.

Results are published in the February issue of *Alcoholism: Clinical & Experimental Research*.

"In the period following prohibition, most researchers, policy makers, and the general public tended to define excessive drinking in terms of alcohol dependence or alcoholism," explained Jim Roeber, an alcohol epidemiologist with the New Mexico Department of Health and corresponding author for the study. "This was likely related to cultural norms that sanctioned all but the most obviously problematic drinking such as alcoholism. More recently, researchers and policy makers have ... extended the definition of excessive drinking to encompass other behaviors such as binge drinking (consuming five or more drinks at one time) and impaired driving, and to address other problems such as alcohol-related injuries and social harm."

"The reality," added Tim Naimi, a physician with the Alcohol Team at the Centers for Disease Control & Prevention, "is that drinking to the point of intoxication or drinking above national guidelines with respect to average consumption also carries significant risks, and is unfortunately quite common. Although there are many effective policy and clinical interventions to address excessive drinking, many of them have not been implemented or are underutilized."

For this study, researchers examined data from the 2002 Behavioral Risk Factor Surveillance System in New Mexico, an annual telephone survey that provides state-level estimates of the prevalence of various health-related risk behaviors and outcomes. Study authors assessed the prevalence of "excessive drinking," defined to include: binge drinking, heavy drinking, alcohol-impaired driving, and alcohol dependence.

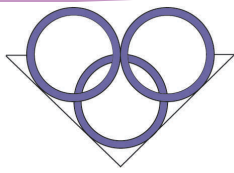
"We found that in New Mexico, most excessive drinkers are not alcohol dependent," said Roeber, "and that binge drinking is the most prevalent form of excessive drinking." More specifically, 16.5 percent of 4,761 New Mexico adults were considered "excessive drinkers," but only 1.8 percent of them met criteria for alcohol dependence.

"The downside of the assumption that alcohol dependence is the predominant form of excessive drinking is that prevention resources have tended to be directed toward treatment of alcohol dependence," said Roeber, "rather than prevention of more prevalent forms that are responsible for a large proportion of alcohol-related problems." He added that, at least in New Mexico, "alcohol-related prevention efforts should be broadened to focus on other forms of excessive drinking in addition to alcohol dependence, especially binge drinking."

Naimi wholeheartedly concurs. "In order to prevent most alcohol-related problems, including alcoholism itself, we need to focus on excessive drinking, not just alcoholism," he said. "Focusing exclusively on alcoholism will identify only a small percentage of those at risk of causing or incurring alcohol-related harms, precludes the possibility of prevention, and is very costly, at least on a per-person basis."

*Alcoholism: Clinical & Experimental Research (ACER)* is the official journal of the Research Society on Alcoholism and the International Society for Biomedical Research on Alcoholism. Co-authors of the ACER paper, "The Prevalence of Alcohol Dependence among Excessive Drinkers in New Mexico," were Sandra Woerle of the National Institute of Justice; and Michael G. Landen of the New Mexico Department of Health.

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



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## ADDICTION RESOURCE COUNCIL, INC.

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## Upcoming Council Events

### WALK FOR RECOVERY

The Addiction Resource Council's 2009 Walk for Recovery will take place at Minooka Park on **Saturday, September 26th** from 12:00-2:30 pm.

Come and enjoy an autumn afternoon of scenic 1 or 2 mile walking paths, a picnic lunch (cost included in the entry donation) as well as a raffle, music and other activities.

Contact Brianna Duffy at [bduffy@arcouncil.net](mailto:bduffy@arcouncil.net) or 262-524-7921 to receive registration forms and information.

### Get Your Loved One Sober: Alternatives to Nagging, Pleading & Threatening

A seven week program based on the book by Robert J. Meyers, Ph.D and Brenda L. Wolfe, Ph.D.

**Monday Evenings 5:30-7:30**  
**August 3rd - Sept. 14th**

Addiction Resource Council  
W228 N683 Westmound Drive  
Waukesha, WI 53186

There is no fee to attend but please call 262-524-7921 to register and with questions.