



Raising Healthy Teens

Promoting the Health & Safety
of Newport County Teens

April 2019

April is Alcohol Awareness Month for Newport County Coalitions

Alcoholism, or alcohol use disorder, is a chronic, progressive disease, genetically predisposed and fatal if untreated. However, people can and do recover.

The Newport County communities of Little Compton, Middletown, Newport, Portsmouth and Tiverton, along with their Prevention Coalitions, will participate in Alcohol Awareness Month. Each town council will make a proclamation to mark their participation and libraries and other community buildings, will have information available for those interested in seeking local information regarding treatment for substance abuse and mental health.

A Brief History

Founded and sponsored by the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (now *Facing Addiction with NCADD*), Alcohol Awareness Month was established in 1987 to help reduce the stigma so often associated with alcoholism by encouraging communities to reach out to the American public each April with information about alcohol, alcoholism and recovery. Alcoholism,

or alcohol use disorder, is a chronic, progressive disease, genetically predisposed and fatal if untreated. However, people can and do recover. It is estimated that as many as 20 million individuals and family members are living in recovery!

An integral part of Alcohol Awareness Month is Alcohol-Free Weekend, which took place on the first weekend of April, to



raise public awareness about the use of alcohol and how it may be affecting individuals, families, businesses and our communities. During Alcohol-Free Weekend, Facing Addiction with NCADD extends an open invitation to all Americans to engage in three alcohol-free days. Those individuals or families who experience difficulty or discomfort in this 72-hour experiment

are urged to contact local Facing Addiction with NCADD Affiliates, Alcoholics Anonymous (AA) or AlAnon to learn more about alcoholism and its early symptoms.

About the Theme

The 2019 theme, "Help for Today, Hope for Tomorrow," is designed to draw attention to the pervasive impact that alcohol, alcoholism and alcohol-related problems have on young people, their friends, families and communities — and to highlight the reality that help is available and recovery is possible. Facing Addiction with NCADD is often the first call people make when difficulties with alcoholism and drug dependence strike. Uniquely positioned in communities across the country, Facing Addiction with NCADD and its network of local affiliates provide direct help and assistance

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Youth Mental Health First Aid

In January 2019, the Portsmouth School Department partnered with Newport County Mental Health to offer Portsmouth families the opportunity to participate in this free course series.



In an email to parents of Portsmouth schools, Dr. Lisa Colwell, Director of Pupil Personnel Services writes, “As our schools and resources have become more focused on the mental health needs of our students, Youth Mental Health First Aid aligns to our district focus.”

**YOUTH
MENTAL
HEALTH
FIRST AID®**

“This 8 hour training is designed to....introduce participants to the unique risk factors and warning signs of mental health problems in adolescents, builds understanding of the importance of early intervention, and teaches individuals how to help an adolescent in crisis or experiencing a mental health challenge.

Mental Health First Aid uses role-playing and simulations to demonstrate how to assess a mental health crisis; select interventions and provide initial help; and connect young people to professional, peer, social, and self-help care.”

Dr. Colwell, explains, “We have offered this course to our staff and will continue to do so through the remainder of the school year. As a result of attending the course, participants become certified Youth Mental Health First-Aiders.” There have already been over 30+ teachers who have taken the course, and all the Administration have been trained. There are plans to continue to make the course available for Portsmouth parents starting for fall 2019.

The course is a series of four, 2-hour sessions that parents attend.

Here are some thoughts of those who attended the course:

“Mental Health First Aid taught me several key words and phrases to use when encountering a Teen who may be in distress. The discussions and role playing in class allowed me to become more comfortable with different scenarios and different outcomes. “

“It takes a community of concerned, aware and ready to act adults to keep our youth safe! Mental Health First Aid is a great resource for parents with children of any age, but especially the Middle School & High School years.”

“I feel more comfortable approaching someone who may need assistance. Anyone who works with children and teens should consider taking this course”

LYNDA WEST, TENTH GATE YOGA

“I think this training is a great way to learn how to start conversations with young people about mental health and wellness. Plus hopefully, as a result of the training, we are now better able to recognize signs of someone who may be in distress, so that we can help them get help.” EMILY COPELAND, PORTSMOUTH SCHOOL COMMITTEE CHAIR

“As the parent of a tween I thought this would be a great opportunity to be able to help my daughter and myself through the teens. By the last class I was confident in handling situations that before attending I had not even imagined I may have to deal with. I loved the program, I cannot say enough good things about the class. I hope the class will be offered again so other parents will have an opportunity to attend.” JENNIFER COLLINS, PRESIDENT, PORTSMOUTH MIDDLE SCHOOL PARENT TEACHER ORGANIZATION

Making Prom Season Memorable



Many parents work hard make their teen’s prom memorable. Statistics show that approximately one-third of alcohol-related teen traffic fatalities occur during prom season. Here are a few tips that can help parents create a safe and enjoyable experience for all.

Prom and graduation time are an excellent opportunity for parents to reinforce expectations around alcohol and drug use. It’s important to help teens successfully navigate prom-related temptations and peer pressures.

Communicate curfews and meet your child when they arrive home. Discourage large unaccountable time frames that can lead to dangerous situations. If there is a private family-hosted after-party, connect with the host parents on supervision and confirm alcohol won’t be available.

Encourage safe driving arrangements of a limo or older sibling to reduce the possibility of distracted driving.

Consider hosting a pre-prom reception where no alcohol is served. Don’t approve after-prom plans at the beach or distant location. Late night driving exponentially increases the likelihood of accidents.

Schools that host after-prom parties have dramatically decreased post-prom accidents and issues. Consider providing transportation to the prom and back to after-prom as another key to a safe and fun night.

Tiverton Coalition Café at CADCA in DC

by Ava Erickson



I recently went on a school trip to the CADCA Leadership Conference with the Tiverton Prevention Coalition. I have been a member of my coalition for around 4 years and have loved every minute of the experience. Eleven students from Tiverton High School were selected to go on the trip by submitting personal essays on the topic of what leadership meant to them. In early February, we flew to Washington D.C. to the Gaylord Resort at the National Harbor. We had a total of five boys and six girls, and of course three incredibly patient chaperones who all work for the Coalition. We were greeted by an enormous resort filled with many friendly and welcoming individuals. Many attending were students just like us — 500 in all staying at the resort. On the first day of training we discovered there were coalition groups from every single state in the country and even from U.S. territories, like Puerto Rico.

One of my favorite things about this trip was the variety of people and the unity and power we could all form by coming together about many issues we all seemed to have in common. CADCA offered many different forums and seminars for adults and students. I really enjoyed this because it offered the chance of variety. After a full day of trainings we were all ready for the trip to Capitol Hill. This was the experience we were all waiting for throughout the whole trip. Our coalition came up with the idea to have custom t-shirts. Local artist and one of the art teachers at THS, Adam Tracy came up with a logo that showed state pride and had artistic flare that caught attention from many others. Thursday afternoon we had two very important meetings, the first being meeting with our district representative, David Cicilline's legislative assistant, Ross Brennan. He was very open to our ideas and growing concerns about the recreational marijuana dispensary that borders out town.

Our next meeting was with Senators Reed and Whitehouse. As we walked into the gigantic board room, we were complimented for our matching t-shirts by Senator Reed. The senators were very supportive and eager to hear us speak and share our stories. This meeting was a lot larger than our meeting with Cicilline's staff but we were fortunate to have our voices heard. Nicotine addiction in teenagers was a topic that many of us felt personally affected by. Seeing that many other students from RI had the same problems as us made us feel connected in a big way. Voicing these opinions to senators that can help us make changes, felt extremely empowering and hopeful.

Alcohol Awareness Month

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to millions of individuals and families through education, prevention, intervention, information/referral, treatment and recovery support services.

Facing Addiction with NCADD's Network of Affiliates and other organizations across the country supporting Alcohol Awareness Month, will use this theme as a way of addressing the Nation's #1 public health problem through a broad range of media strategies, awareness campaigns, programs and events in their local communities. Please refer to the back of the newsletter for the list of the local Prevention Coalitions for Newport County. Either call/text or email your local Prevention Coalition for some specific resources available locally to get help and support for those who are dealing with addictions.

Trending Lingo: Getting Lit

'Lit' has been a slang term meaning "intoxicated" for over a century. More recently, it has acquired the meaning "exciting," as well as a broader meaning along the lines of "excellent."

It still shows up in very informal settings, like speech and rap lyrics. In fact, the "intoxicated" sense of lit has had a resurgence of use among a new generation of youth thanks in no small part to rap music artists.

When adults hear this term from teens, perhaps it's a good idea to ask what they mean by "getting lit". This would be a great way to start a conversation with your teen which we all know can be challenging at times.

Some College students report that this term could also mean smoking to get high. High school students report that this term is generally used for getting high.

Social Host: Know the Law & Consequences

Rhode Island's Social Host Law is very clear: there are penalties for adults that allow underage drinking.

April, May and June mean that Prom and Graduation parties are being scheduled. Please remember that hosting a party with minors needs some careful planning to ensure that everyone at the party is adhering to the law.

Make it clear to your guests that only adults are allowed the consumption of alcohol. Remember, as adults, you are constantly 'on show'. Whether you have kids or have kids in your life, they are always noticing the choices you as an adult are making with regards to EVERYTHING! It is very important to make sure the kids in your life understand that you value the traditions of Prom and Graduation; but they value the health and safety of the youth in their lives the most.



State of RI Social Host Laws

Rhode Island is one of a majority of states that maintain social host laws (i.e. laws about providing alcohol to underage persons.)

- It is against the law for a host to “permit” an underage person to consume alcohol or to charge others for drinking without a liquor license.
- “Permit” is defined as “to give permission for, or approval of, the possession or consumption of a alcoholic beverage by any form of conduct, that would cause a reasonable person to believe that permission or approval has been given.”

Social Host Law Consequences

- First offense is a misdemeanor punishable by a minimum fine of \$350 and a maximum fine of \$1,000, and/or a prison sentence not to exceed six months.
- Second offense is a misdemeanor punishable by a minimum fine of \$750 and maximum fine of \$1,000 and/or a prison sentence not to exceed one year.
- Third and subsequent offenses are a felony punishable by minimum fine of \$1,000 and maximum fine of \$2,500 and/or a prison sentence not to exceed 3 years.
- For 18 to 21 year-olds, there may be a civil penalty of not more than \$500 and required attendance at an educational program approved by the Department of Health designed to recognize the dangers of underage drinking as well as completion of up to 30 hours of community service.

Coalition Meetings

The Newport County Prevention Coalition is comprised of the Little Compton, Middletown, Newport, Portsmouth & Tiverton Coalitions.

Newport County Meetings

May 21, June 18, July 16, August 20
10am – Middletown Town Hall
Director: Rebecca Elwell
elwell@riprevention.org

Little Compton Meetings

May 7, June 11, July 9, August 13
1pm – Little Compton Town Hall
Coordinator: Polly Allen
littlecompton@riprevention.org

Middletown Meetings

May 23, June 27, July 25, August 22
6pm – Middletown Town Hall
Director: Lori Verderosa
mpc@middletownri.com

Newport Meetings

May 20, June 17, July – No Meeting, August 19
1pm – Newport Police Station
Coordinator: James Day
newportpreventioncoalition@gmail.com

Portsmouth Meetings

May 8, June 12, July 10, August 14
8:30am – The Brown House, 121 Linden Lane, Portsmouth
Coordinator: Corey Silvia
portsmouth@riprevention.org

Tiverton Meetings

May 6, June 10, July – No Meeting, August – No Meeting,
10am – Holy Trinity Parish Hall, 1956 Main Road, Tiverton
Coordinator: Jenni McNamee
tiverton@riprevention.org



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For more information contact NCPC Director Rebecca Elwell at 401-835-5311 or elwell@riprevention.org. www.riprevention.org