



What's New For Schools

NATIONAL COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM AND DRUG DEPENDENCE OF MIDDLESEX COUNTY, INC.

AN INFORMATIVE MONTHLY NEWSLETTER FOR MIDDLESEX COUNTY EDUCATORS

Vol.III, No. 6, June 2008

Staff

Steven G. Liga, MSW, LSW, LCADC, CPS
CEO & Executive Director

Ezra Helfand, BA
Public Information Coordinator

Jacqueline Jackson, MBA
Financial Manager

East Brunswick Office

Alexandra Lopez, MA, LCADC, SAC
Program Director

Mara Carlin, BS
Education Coordinator

Dena Charbonneau, MSW, LSW, CPS
Prevention Educator

Padma Desai, MA
KIV Facilitator

Joseph Nelan
Administrative Assistant

Christina Rak-Samson, BA
Prevention Educator

Jackie Randazzo, BS
REBEL Coordinator

Jennifer Smith, MPH, CPS
Public Health Educator

Linda Surks, BS, CPS
Coalition Coordinator

Jane W. White, BS
KIV Facilitator

Carteret Office

Lauren Balkan, MSW, LCSW
Program Director

Dara Ann Jarosz, BA
Administrative Coordinator

Joel Levy, M.Ed.
Youth Development Specialist

Lindsay Rich, MSW, LSW
Youth Development Specialist

Board of Trustees

President

Katherine Fallon

Treasurer

Susan Neshin, M.D.

Vice President

Vacant

Secretary

Marjorie Talbot

Members

Sharon Campbell

Alexis Eventoff

Mark Anderko

Steven Polinsk

George Rusuloji

Summer Internet Safety

By Ezra Helfand, BA

As summer vacation approaches, many of your students will likely spend countless hours on the Internet. We all know that the Internet is a great resource and can be a useful tool for learning or play. You can:

- Have access to various forms of entertainment.
- Get to know other parts of the world, its peoples, and customs without leaving home
- Get "late breaking news" as it happens
- Do research

The Internet also provides a new way to communicate that can help individuals and children who normally find it hard to form friendships. Unfortunately, the Internet also can be a threat to your student's safety and well-being.



Did you know that teenagers and young adults spend an average of 16.7 hours online weekly—more than they do watching TV.

The Internet is now a main source of information for what's "cool" and current in their world. From music, fashion, entertainment, sports, homework, and instant communication with friends, the Internet is the most popular way among youth

Continued on Page 2

Continued from Page 1

to “get connected.” With this much time devoted to online or Web access, it’s safer that parents have some idea of what their kids are doing when they are on the Internet. Online tools to keep children from checking out adult material may not be enough. Other activities on the Internet require direct adult supervision and constant awareness by caring adults to avoid possible harm coming to a child.

Some adults try to get children to meet them face to face, and engage them in unsafe acts that may cause lifelong trauma or even loss of life. Others believe strongly in drug use and everything associated with the drug culture and use the Web to promote this lifestyle.

So what can you do to help parents so that their child uses the Internet safely?

- Make rules and set limits for Internet use, and tell parents to be firm with their child about keeping them.
- If possible, the computer should be kept in an area of the home where everyone can see it and it is used by the entire family. A child may be less likely to disobey the rules if he is likely to be caught.
- Know the Web sites a child is visiting and what they are about—are they for play, music, or homework? Parents should regularly check the history tab on their web browser to see which sites their children have been visiting.
- Is the child using chat rooms? This activity may not be a good idea, unless the

parent knows the topic and the people are who they say they are. Tell parents to get involved, and keep an eye on the discussion over time.

- Some popular online activity among youth may be illegal—like downloading music and movies. Make sure parents are on top of the laws and that the child knows them, too.
- Parents should make children aware of the dangers of giving personal information on the Internet—this shouldn’t be allowed, except with a parent’s specific approval. This means no last name, where one lives (not even the city), and especially no phone number should ever be given out.
- Very young children should always have an adult or older sibling with them when using the computer.



This article was developed based on information made available by Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) www.samhsa.gov.

References:

- *Middle Schoolers, Letting Their Fingers Do the Talking*, *Washingtonpost.com*, May 14, 2003.
- *Teens Now Spend More Time Online Than Watching TV: New Study Details Media Usage Patterns of First Internet Generation*, *AdAge.com*, July 28, 2003,
- *Connected to the Future: A Report on Children’s Internet Use from the Corporation for Public Broadcasting*, October 24, 2003.

NCADD of Middlesex County, Inc. is a private, non-profit community-based health organization serving Middlesex County. Our mission is to promote the health and well-being of individuals and communities of Middlesex County through the reduction or elimination of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use problems.

NCADD of Middlesex County, Inc.
 152 Tices Lane
 East Brunswick, NJ 08816
 Phone: 732-254-3344
www.ncadd-middlesex.org

About *We're Not Buying It!*

By Dena Charbonneau, MSW, LSW, CPS

Before experimenting with any other substances, young people normally first try alcohol and tobacco.

Research shows that preventing or delaying the first use of these two substances can have a tremendous effect on the likelihood that a person will move on to other drugs. Because alcohol and tobacco are legal for adults, young people are bombarded by conflicting messages regarding their use. *"We're Not Buying It: The Tobacco and Alcohol Connection"* provides research-based information without resorting to scare tactics, so that youth can make well-informed decisions about alcohol and tobacco use.

This program is an important step in turning around the current trend of high alcohol, tobacco, and other drug use among our youth.



"We're Not Buying It: The Tobacco and Alcohol Connection" is based on the Minnesota Smoking Prevention Program (MSPP) and focuses on social and psychological influences on youth to use alcohol and tobacco. The MSPP has demonstrated consistent success in delaying the onset of smoking among twelve to fourteen year olds. This corresponding booster program utilizes effective prevention strategies which can enhance any on-going school or

community-based alcohol and tobacco education program for youth.

These sessions are not intended to replace existing programs, but to serve as an intensive supplement to tobacco and alcohol educational components already in place in most middle school health classes.

As in any content area, review, practice, and reinforcement are essential to the successful learning of complicated skills. The use of this curriculum with students in grades six and seven is an effective and age appropriate method to reinforce an existing curriculum in a positive and enjoyable way. The program is broken down into four lessons, which take place over a four week period. The students meet once a week, usually in a health class period.

Lesson One: Tobacco

During this lesson, students will:

- Identify reasons why people use tobacco
- Analyze advertising influences to use tobacco
- Examine the cost of tobacco use for society and the individual
- Examine the health risks associated with tobacco
- Review the negative consequences of using tobacco using research, statistics, and visuals

Lesson Two: Alcohol

During this lesson, students will:

- Identify the reasons why people drink alcohol
- Analyze similarities and differences between influences to use alcohol and tobacco
- Examine the health risks of drinking alcohol

Continued on Page 4

Meet The Educator - Padma Sonti Desai

Padma Sonti Desai is a prevention educator at NCADD. Padma facilitates the Keys to Innervisions (KIV) program, an interactive educational curriculum about change, specifically changing beliefs and behaviors that help teens and their parents cope with life stressors and strengthen their internal locus of control. The KIV program includes goal setting, learning new ways of thinking and practicing new skills in various situations.



Padma is currently enrolled in the Masters in Counseling program at Seton Hall University. She also holds a BA and an MA in Political

Science and International Affairs from the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA).

In addition to her work at NCADD, Padma conducts workshops at holistic healing centers in New Jersey for personal transformation and self-healing through energy healing modalities. Padma is a Certified Instructor and Practitioner of Quantum-Touch® and a TAT® Professional and Trainer. She continues to study natural healing methods by attending workshops, lectures and reading.

Prior to joining NCADD, Padma worked in the commercial banking industry for almost ten years before transitioning to the human services sector after a deeply transformative personal experience. Padma considers it a privilege and an honor to work with teens and their parents, teaching them how their thinking affects their behavior and how they can make positive changes in their life.

Padma currently resides in Plainsboro with her husband and her two daughters ages 13 and 9. In her spare time, Padma enjoys nature walks, travel, reading and listening to music.

Continued from Page 3

- Discuss reasons why it may be hard to say “No”

During the first two lessons, students are encouraged to voice their thoughts and opinions on the topics openly. They also participate in interactive group activities, such as analyzing and discussing tobacco advertisements and using our fatal vision goggles.

Lesson Three: Peer Pressure

During this lesson, students will:

- Identify strategies for refusing or saying “no” to alcohol or tobacco
- Analyze the effectiveness of various strategies
- Practice effective refusal techniques
- Identify sources of support for not using alcohol or tobacco

Lesson Four:

Review & True Advertising Project

During this lesson, students will:

- Identify the key points discussed in previous lessons
- Review and tie together all of the material covered from all three lessons
- Use the knowledge gained to produce their own PSA (Public Service Announcement) or truthful advertisement for alcohol and tobacco products

In the last two lessons, students are given the opportunity to express themselves through various role plays and peer pressure scenarios. They also get to creatively display and produce their work by designing their own PSA or tobacco or alcohol advertisement, depicting the truth about the negative effects of tobacco and alcohol.

As you plan for next year’s curriculum consider calling NCADD to learn more about *We’re Not Buying It* and how we can help you bring it to your school.

