



# Maine Alliance to Prevent Substance Abuse

Quarterly Newsletter

Volume 2, Issue 2

Spring 2009

## Teen Drinking Rates Decrease As Environmental Prevention Efforts Gain Strength Across the State

It may be no coincidence that since 2006, when the Maine Office of Substance Abuse began requiring new grantees to include environmental change strategies in their work plans we have seen some big changes.

Teen drinking in Maine has decreased by 12%, with 25.3 percent of students in grades 6-12 reporting 30-day alcohol use in the 2008 MYDAUS, compared 28.9 percent in 2006.

Teen binge drinking in Maine has decreased by 14%, with 12.5 percent of students in grades 6-12 reporting having 5 or more drinks in a row within the last two weeks in the 2008 MYDAUS, compared to 14.6 percent in 2006.

At the same time, the 2008 MYDAUS saw promising changes in community-level risk and protective factors.

**Lower Availability:** More youth report that alcohol is "hard" or "very hard" to get.

**Higher Enforcement:** More youth report that they would be caught by police if they drank alcohol in their neighborhood.

**Stronger Community Norms:** More youth report that adults in their neighborhood think underage drinking is "very wrong."

**Stronger Family Management:** More youth report that their parents think underage drinking is "very wrong," and more youth report that they would be caught by their par-

ents for drinking alcohol without permission.

Environmental strategies, which focus on changing community-level policies, practices, and norms to reduce availability, are a vital component of any substance abuse prevention effort. MESAP, Maine's Environmental Substance Abuse Prevention Center, provides training and technical assistance for communities to implement the latest evidence-based practices.

For more information, please contact Erica Schmitz, MESAP Director, at [eschmitz@mcd.org](mailto:eschmitz@mcd.org) or (207) 773-7737. For more information about the Maine Youth Drug and Alcohol Use Survey visit [www.maineosa.org](http://www.maineosa.org).

## New Drug Czar Nominee Praised for Pragmatism

Obama administration drug-czar nominee Gil Kerlikowske has both a family and professional history with drugs and addiction and has often steered a middle path in tackling the issues on a community level, the [Washington Post](#) reported March 24.

Kerlikowske, most recently chief of police in Seattle, worked as an undercover narcotics officer in his first law-enforcement job in Florida and has an adopted son who has struggled with addiction. In Seattle, he won praise for seeking compro-

mise rather than confrontation in striking a balance between enforcing drug laws and accommodating medical-marijuana patients.

Kerlikowske wasn't a groundbreaker in calling for alternatives to arresting drug users, but has embraced the concept, including drug courts. Those who know him expect Kerlikowske to support a shift in national drug-control policy away from enforcement and towards treatment and prevention.

Called a thoughtful pragmatist, Kerlikowske is not a

drug-policy expert; his expertise lies in community policing. In Seattle, he was known for attending community meetings personally rather than sending delegates.

"Without a lot of fanfare or hoopla, Gil has made clear that, as far as the police are concerned, they are really to give attention to the prevention-rehabilitation side of things, as well as the enforcement side of things," said retired University of Washington professor of public affairs Hubert Locke.

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# Save the Date!

**Dr. Embry is coming to Maine!**

May 21, 2008  
7:00-8:30 p.m.

South Portland HS Auditorium

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## Governor Proclaims April as Alcohol Awareness Month

Augusta, ME – An issue that was highlighted in the final episode of the celebrated NBC drama ER on April 2nd was a timely one, the consequences of underage and high risk drinking. This is an issue that touches nearly every family and every community.

In an effort to increase awareness of this issue in Maine and the need for community wide prevention efforts, Governor John E. Baldacci proclaimed April as Alcohol Awareness Month in the State of Maine.

The Maine Alliance to Prevent Substance Abuse called on the Governor to make this proclamation to draw attention to the fact that even though we have seen a decline in the percent of students in grades 6-12 reporting 30-day alcohol use, alcohol remains the leading drug of choice in Maine amongst both young and old alike. Alcohol abuse costs us hundreds of millions of dollars a year in lost lives, productivity, medical costs and other impacts.

The proclamation was presented to the Maine Alliance to Prevent Substance Abuse during a short ceremony in the Hall of Flags on Thursday, April 6, 2008.

This proclamation is also part of a campaign by community coalitions statewide, with activities being held throughout the state and throughout the month geared to raise awareness of the many facets of this issue.

The month of April campaign on alcohol awareness:

**Week One** - Underage and high risk drinking prevention is a public health issue. Parent and community modeling is a key component to change,

**Week Two** - Responsible Retailing is needed (i.e., server training, mandatory ID carding, ad and alcohol placement awareness in stores).

**Week Three** - Workplace Prevention is needed.

**Week Four** - Kick off for spring prom and graduation awareness activities. Keep our youth safe.



**Watch for an activity coming to your neighborhood!!**



## State of Maine PROCLAMATION

**WHEREAS**, since 1987, the National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence (NCADD) has designated April as national "Alcohol Awareness Month"; and

**WHEREAS**, alcohol abuse and addiction impacts our communities on many levels, from the workplace, to school and the home, and the total cost for substance abuse in Maine is estimated to be nearly \$900 million annually, with the majority of this due to alcohol abuse; and

**WHEREAS**, the 2009 Alcohol Awareness campaign points out that alcohol abuse is a public health problem needing to be addressed in our communities through joint efforts between parents, schools, community organizations, religious communities, business leaders, government agencies and young people; and

**WHEREAS**, this aforementioned partnership is necessary to change our communities and to create comprehensive education, prevention, intervention and treatment resources; and

**WHEREAS**, during this year's Alcohol Awareness campaign, the important issues of preventing underage drinking, parent modeling, responsible retailing and workplace prevention will be highlighted in activities across Maine; and

**WHEREAS**, in Maine, due to prevention efforts the overall lifetime alcohol use rate among Maine's 6<sup>th</sup> to 12<sup>th</sup> grade students has dropped consistently over the past 13 years – from 70.7% in 1995 to 44.3% in 2008 according to the Maine Youth Drug and Alcohol Use Survey (MYDAUS); and

**WHEREAS**, even though we have seen this steady decline in alcohol use among our youth, alcohol continues to be the number one drug of choice for Maine's young people with devastating consequences, and is associated with traffic fatalities, violence, alcohol poisoning, unsafe sex, suicide, unintentional injuries, educational failure; and

**WHEREAS**, in 2008, one in fifteen eighth graders and nearly one in four 12<sup>th</sup> grade students reported having 5 or more alcoholic drinks in a row (considered binge drinking) in the two weeks before taking the MYDAUS; and

**WHEREAS**, proclaiming the month of April 2009 as Alcohol Awareness month in Maine offers advocates of substance abuse prevention the opportunity to educate the public and policymakers about the effectiveness of prevention and intervention;

**NOW, THEREFORE, I, JOHN E. BALDACC**, Governor of the State of Maine, do hereby proclaim April 2009 as

### ALCOHOL AWARENESS MONTH

and because I care about the health and wellbeing of our youth, urge all citizens to recognize, encourage, and support the benefits of prevention of alcohol addiction and abuse.



## MAPSA Member Highlights

### The Landing Post-Release Re-Entry Project

The Landing Center currently operates as a continuation of mentoring pre-release services that jail residents receive while they have been incarcerated in the Hancock County Jail. The Landing Center is an organization that has more than 20 volunteer mentors to assist post release men and women with reintegration into the community.

The Landing Center's goal is to work with post release clients so they can utilize their assets in trying to make positive changes in their lives. By working with the community, the Landing Center hopes to create more positive opportunities for post release men and women so they will have a more positive transition back into the community.

Facts about corrections from the national to local level according to the 2008 Pew Center on the States report:

- One in 100 are behind bars in America.
- In 2007, 49 billion dollars was spent on corrections in the United States .
- Maine's inmate population is growing.
- Maine spends 49 cents for corrections for every one dollar spent on higher education.
- The cost to house one person in the Hancock County jail for one day is approximately \$100. This figure increases if there is a need for medication.
- The cost to house one inmate for approximately six months is minimally \$18,000.
- More than two-thirds (67%) of today's jail inmates have been in jail before.

If former jail residents are able to utilize more mentoring and other prevention services, then there is a more positive outlook for the future of these individual and for their families. When there is a lower recidivism rate, there is a lower cost to the city, county, and state in taxes and services.

## MAPSA CHANGES

Malory Shaughnessy, current Statewide Coordinator will be leaving this position effective mid April. She will be moving to a new position as the Executive Director of the Maine Citizens for Clean Elections. She wishes to say that it has been a great pleasure working with all of the great coalitions and wonderful people over these past two years.



## Communities Against Substance Abuse (CASA)

Mid Coast Hospital's Substance Abuse Prevention Project, a partner in the ACCESS Health Coalition, works with communities in Sagadahoc County as well as Brunswick and Harpswell to prevent and reduce substance abuse. Priorities for 2008 include preventing underage drinking, reducing high risk drinking among young adults, and decreasing prescription drug misuse and abuse.

Sticker Shock was a successful campaign this past winter due to the students and police departments of Bath and Brunswick, Brunswick Rite Aid and 7-Eleven, Bath Shaw's, and the Cooks Corner Big Apple.

Due to their efforts, the community is learning more about the financial consequences of providing alcohol to minors.





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### Maine Alliance to Prevent Substance Abuse

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*Building a unified statewide voice for substance abuse prevention.*

**MAPSA** is a statewide grassroots network created in 1999 to provide an advocacy voice for substance abuse prevention in Maine.

**MAPSA** represents service providers, agencies, coalitions and others who have an interest in and a commitment to substance abuse prevention.

**MAPSA** is an affiliate program of the Maine Association of Substance Abuse Programs



[www.masap.org/site/prevention.asp](http://www.masap.org/site/prevention.asp)

**Anyone interested in or working in substance abuse prevention may join MAPSA**

## Save the Date!



**Dr. Embry is coming to Maine!**

Thursday, May 21, 2008  
7:00-8:30 p.m.

South Portland HS Auditorium

Presenter Dr. Dennis Embry will outline how many of our current policies and practices can be harmful to youth, and how we can use just four simple, scientifically proven strategies to better the futures of all children.

Dr. Embry is a nationally acclaimed child psychologist whose work has taken him from Sesame Street to the Secretary of Defense with stops in between. He is a National Research Advisory Council Senior Fellow and a scientist at the Johns Hopkins Center for Prevention and Intervention and the national Center on Early Adolescence, an author of evidence-based prevention programs, and an advocate raising healthy kids using community-wide support.

For pre-registration, details on childcare, and information on contact hours, check the website for 21 Reasons in Portland, [www.21reasons.org](http://www.21reasons.org)

## Higher Alcohol Taxes Equals Less Drinking

According to a recent report, higher taxes on alcohol can do more than add cash to ailing government budgets. The evidence is "statistically overwhelming" that communities can reduce alcohol consumption by raising alcohol taxes, according to a report from University of Florida researcher Alexander C. Wagenaar and colleagues.

The report concluded that the reduction in drinking had been found throughout the population, among social drinkers and problem drinkers alike. The analysis, reported in the February 2009 issue of the journal Addiction, is a review of more than 110 studies on the subject.

He disagreed with critics of alcohol taxes who say alcohol taxes are unfair to people who drink reasonably. Nondrinkers and light drinkers, he said, in effect subsidize heavier drinkers because costs related to alcohol use are reflected in various things, like car insurance and health care.

Reductions in alcohol consumption can benefit communities and individuals by reducing injuries, chronic health problems, and deaths -- along with related expenses like healthcare and car insurance premiums -- said Wagenaar.