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ABSTRACT

This guide suggests that public awareness campaigns can be an important part of a community's strategy to fight substance abuse. They can call attention to problems, and they can be a mobilizing force to unite different groups. The numerous public awareness campaigns that other communities use can be models for local efforts. This Action Kit lists dozens of national campaigns to be held throughout 1999. For each, contact information, the Web site address, and a brief description are given, and some ideas are offered for using the campaign as a catalyst for local change. Campaigns are listed chronologically. These campaigns do not focus solely on substance abuse. Some deal with other health, safety, and wellness issues but can be used as part of a substance abuse prevention effort or to foster coalitions for civic improvement. Some of the campaigns provide opportunities for public education. Examples include Law Day, which could lead to a discussion of substance abuse and legal issues, and National Domestic Violence Month, which could lead to opportunities to discuss drug-free environments for women and children. (SLD)

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Special 1999 Issue

ACTION KIT

ED 426 164

National Public Awareness Campaigns: Part of your communitywide strategy to fight substance abuse



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PUBLIC AWARENESS CAMPAIGNS FOR 1999

Public awareness campaigns can be an important part of your community's strategy to fight substance abuse. These campaigns can help you call attention to the many problems facing residents that affect the quality of life, health and safety of neighborhoods. They can also serve as a mobilizing force to unite diverse groups and people to work together toward a common good. Throughout the year, there are numerous national public awareness campaigns that you can use as the starting point for your efforts. Rather than creating your own public awareness campaign from scratch, you can localize these to meet the needs of your community. This means you can take the campaign themes and tailor them with local information, statistics and examples that will help you reach your goals.

To help make this easier, Join Together has created this special Monthly Action Kit which lists dozens of national campaigns held throughout 1999. For each one, you will find the contact information, the web site address and a brief description. We have also offered you some ideas for ways to use each campaign as a catalyst for local change. For instance, you might use Alcohol Awareness Month, which is held in April, as a way to educate residents, the media and elected officials about the need for expanded treatment options in your community and to gather support for effective policies. During the Great American Smokeout, which is held in November, you could call on local smokers to quit – not only for the day, but also for good. Use this opportunity to educate residents about the dangers of second-hand smoke and generate support for local smoke-free policies.

It is important to note that the campaigns included in this Kit do not focus solely on substance abuse. We have also highlighted many that deal with other health, safety and wellness issues. These campaigns can serve to further your own interests, even if the connection is not initially apparent. For example, in May, Law Day provides you with the chance to look at how your community and state protect residents and provide them with the safety they deserve. If adequate treatment is not available for people in the criminal justice system who suffer from addictions, then use this opportunity to educate people about the need that exists. You can also use non-substance abuse campaigns as a way to forge new partnerships with other organizations with whom you might not otherwise have connected. During National Domestic Violence Awareness Month (October), you might reach out to women's shelters, support groups for batterers and victims, and other service-providing agencies, and find out how you can work together to create a safer, drug-free environment for local women and their children.

To help remind you of the importance of these public awareness campaigns throughout the year, we have created a colorful calendar you can hang on your wall, in the public library, community center or church. It highlights the dates and provides you with the phone numbers you can call to request campaign materials. We urge you to share this information with others in your community who may find it helpful. Additional copies of the calendar are available at your request on a first-come, first-serve basis.

Finally, we'd like to hear from you. Please take a few minutes to complete the faxback form on the back page and return it to us.

This Special Monthly Action Kit can also be accessed electronically through Join Together Online at www.jointogether.org. Past issues of Monthly Action Kits on different topics can also be found there. For more information on using this Kit, please call Lisa Falk at Join Together at (617) 437-1500.

January

Martin Luther King Day Events

Sponsor: Corporation for National Service

Contact: Rhonda Taylor at 202-606-5000 ext. 282

Website: www.cns.gov/index.html

Date: January 18, 1999

In 1994, President Clinton signed the King Holiday and Service Act designed to transform the observance of Martin Luther King's birthday into a day of service that reflects his life and teaching -- bringing people together around the common focus of service to others by breaking down the social and economic barriers that divide us as a nation. To commemorate this special day, on January 18th, Americans all across the country will stay home from school and work. But this is "a day on, not a day off." The Corporation for National Service encourages people to take the opportunity presented by this holiday -- and by King's philosophy of service -- to work together to solve a community problem.

What You Can Do Locally: You can use Martin Luther King Day as a way to launch new service projects that can continue throughout the year. This enables residents to contribute to their community and feel like they have a hand in keeping it healthy and safe. It can also engage young people in constructive activities that can help them to develop skills they need to resist using alcohol and drugs. You might work with other groups to plan a day-long service activity like refurbishing a public area or cleaning up a park. Ask participants (adults and young people) to sign a pledge card and commit to 100 hours of community service in 1999. Start a program where older students tutor younger ones in reading. Help convene churches and temples of different faiths and races to plan service projects in each other's communities. Suggest your local college and university students plan a day of service. One idea might be to pair older students with at-risk younger students for a day of college. This could develop into a valuable mentoring relationship. Partner with other organizations and plan a widespread day of employee volunteering for everyone.

National Birth Defects Prevention Month

Sponsor: March of Dimes

Contact: 1-888-MODIMES

Website: www.modimes.org/index.html

Date: January 1999

Birth defects are a leading cause of infant deaths. To alert people to this serious problem, January is designated as "Birth Defects Prevention Month." Throughout the month, special community outreach programs and press events are scheduled to help raise awareness about birth defects and to educate the public that more research is needed to find the causes of these conditions. Nearly 150,000 babies are born each year in the U.S. with birth defects -- about four percent of total births, especially heart defects, and respiratory and central nervous system conditions. Communities can contact local chapters for events and information about what is going on in their communities.

What You Can Do Locally: This month provides an opportune time to call communitywide attention to this serious issue and to see how it affects residents in your community. Pregnant women who drink and do drugs put themselves and their unborn children at risk for a host of health problems, including birth defects. Ask a reporter to visit a treatment program for pregnant women and educate readers about the importance of expectant mothers remaining substance-free. Provide statistics that show the cost savings of treating an addiction, versus treating a baby born with serious medical problems. Suggest the reporter visit the hospital to see babies with birth defects and get a real feel for the costs in terms of human suffering. Find a family whose child was born with a birth defect and see if they will be willing to share their story with others. Invite experts on this subject to come in and talk to your group about some of causes of birth defects and provide some advice for how to prevent these problems.

❖ February ❖

National Groundhog Job Shadow Day

Sponsor: America's Promise-The Alliance for Youth, ASAE, School to Work Opportunities and Junior Achievement

Contact: Your local School to Work or Junior Achievement Office

Website: www.jobshadow.org

Date: Feb. 2, 1999

On February 2, young people all across the country will get a first-hand look at what it is like to go to work. This is part of a campaign called National Groundhog Job Shadow Day. On this designated day, students from all across the country will have the chance to shadow public figures and individuals from corporations, government agencies and organizations. As a result, many new mentoring relationships will be born, giving youth some good role models to follow and some of the skills they need to grow up healthy and drug-free. More than 5,000 businesses and organizations throughout the United States participated in Groundhog Job Shadow Day last year. Even more are expected to take part this year. For help organizing local efforts, contact your local School-to-Work or Junior Achievement office.

What You Can Do Locally: When youth have adults they can look up to, they are more likely to resist peer pressure to experiment with alcohol and drugs. Call on local business leaders and elected officials to serve as mentors to youth on this special day. By following adults around at work, some youth will be inspired to work hard and stay in school. Also ask the adults to make a long-term commitment to continuing ongoing relationships. See if the media, corporations, stores, nonprofit organizations throughout your community will work with area schools to create internship opportunities for youth. Encourage your local newspaper to have youth write the stories and take the photographs about their shadowing experiences.

❖ March ❖

24 Straight: America's Day of Recovery

Sponsor: The Recovery Network and the National Partnership for Recovery & Prevention

Contact: 310-393-3979

Website: www.recoverynetwork.com

Date: March 24, 1999

This year marks the kick off of a unique 24-hour nationwide campaign to celebrate recovery from alcohol and drug addiction. Called "24 Straight: America's Day of Recovery," it strives to raise awareness about the issues, resources and solutions available for people with addictions and their families, friends and peers. This Day of Recovery will consist of three major components: community events, interactive media and television coverage. As part of this designated day, 24 Straight will help coordinate a variety of community-driven activities to call attention to the benefits of being alcohol, drug and tobacco-free. It will also involve young adults with interactive programs designed to reflect the voices, experiences and hopes of the future. Finally, the day will draw to a close with nationally-television special that will take a close look at substance abuse in cities and small towns, and will help celebrate the nation's unsung heroes who are working to reduce it.

What You Can Do Locally: This campaign provides a timely opportunity to bring your community together to discuss substance abuse issues, especially the effectiveness of treatment. Host a town meeting where residents can come and watch the television special together. Hold a discussion forum following the show to get an important dialogue started. Use this opportunity to recognize people in recovery who have put their lives back

together. Their experiences can provide hope and motivate others to follow their examples. Suggest your local newspaper, cable and radio shows do extensive media coverage during the week leading up to this day to explore the harms of substance abuse and the benefits of being alcohol, drug and tobacco free. Encourage people in recovery to write an Op-Ed piece for the newspaper about the importance of treatment. Use this Day of Recovery to hold an event at your statehouse and invite people in recovery to come and share their stories with legislators so they can understand the importance of having policies that support treatment.

Brain Awareness Week

Sponsor: The Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives

Contact: Liz Quinn at 301-951-9177

Website: www.dana.org/brainweek/

Date: March 15-21, 1999

Today, researchers are making great strides in understanding the actual functioning of the human brain. Technology has made it possible to do new "imaging" techniques, which allow scientists to study actual functioning brains; make advances in genetic-based research; and develop new drugs. With one out of every five Americans affected by a brain-related disease or disorder (including cocaine addiction, learning disabilities, Alzheimer's disease or spinal cord injuries) these medical advances are of critical importance. In an effort to help promote the public and personal benefits of brain research, the Dana Alliance for Brain Initiatives designates March 15th to 21st as Brain Awareness Week. Joining the Alliance in this effort are partners from the National Institutes of Health, academic research institutions; professional scientific organizations and volunteer agencies from across the country.

What You Can Do Locally: Brain Awareness Week provides an opportunity for you to raise community awareness about the nature of drug addictions and how drugs impact the brain. Host a communitywide forum to share some of the latest research findings from the National Institute for Drug Addiction that shows that addiction is a brain disease. Ask mental health agencies, treatment providers and social service workers to partner with you on this effort. Invite residents, public officials, the media, doctors and youth to attend. Follow up by asking local leaders and elected officials to make a commitment to support expanded treatment options for people with addictions in your community and state. Take the time to recognize people in your community who suffer from brain disease or disorders but are overcoming the odds to live productive lives.

National Inhalants & Poisons Awareness Week

Sponsor: National Inhalant Prevention Coalition

Contact: Harvey Weiss at 1-800-269-4237

Website: www.inhalants.org

Date: March 22-27, 1999

Common household products such as spray paint, glue and nail polish remover are actually killing kids. Young people are inhaling the vapors from these items in an attempt to get high; in the process, many are dying. It is important to get the message out that inhalants can kill. Parents, teachers and other adults also need to recognize the warning signs of kids who are at risk for inhalant abuse. To help raise awareness about this serious problem, communities can order special kits that include timely media pieces, print and radio ads, store displays and bag stuffers to help spread word that inhalants can be deadly. Call the number listed above for more information.

What You Can Do Locally: Use inhalant abuse as an issue around which you and other organizations may find common ground to work together. By partnering with others, you can help educate residents throughout the community about the danger of inhalant use. Circulate tips for parents on how to prevent inhalant abuse – or recognize a child who may be in trouble – by publishing the information in your organization's newsletter, on your web site, or through locally produced talk radio shows. Send a speaker out to youth groups and clubs to talk to young people about inhalant abuse. Youth who have overcome the problem may serve as especially powerful advocates to convince their peers not to experiment with this dangerous habit. Post the warning signs in public places like grocery

stores, libraries, health centers and businesses in your community. Talk to family doctors, hospital emergency rooms, police, school nurses, parents and youth to find out the number of youth who are experiencing problems as a result of inhalant abuse. Convene a focus group of local youth to ask them if they and/or their friends use inhalants. Share the facts so they know the dangers involved in this behavior. Invite a reporter to attend and listen to the discussion. Suggest that your local newspaper do a special section on inhalant abuse that will alert parents and children to this serious problem.

Youth Art Month

Sponsor: The Council for Art Education, Inc.

Contact: Debbie Gustafson at 617-426-6400

Website: www.creative-industries.com/acmi/yam.html

Date: March 1999

"Art Can Make a World of Difference!" That's the theme of this year's Youth Art Month. This campaign emphasizes the value of art education for all children and encourages support for quality school art programs. Art education can help children articulate their perceptions and shape coherent responses to their experiences. The arts also serve as a valuable learning tool that reinforces other disciplines, like reading, writing, social studies, science and math. As part of the Youth Art Month campaign, youth are encouraged to design flags and enter them in a national contest. The entries are displayed in Washington, D.C. throughout the month. Other components of the campaign include a national awards program to honor outstanding state efforts to celebrate Youth Art Month. The Council also publishes a booklet of ideas on ways communities can celebrate this special month. To request a copy, call the number above.

What You Can Do Locally: Art programs can be an important part of your prevention efforts. By encouraging local youth to engage in creative activities, you build their confidence and discourage them from experimenting with alcohol and drugs. Find out what types of art programs for youth exist locally, both through the schools and outside of them. Are they accessible to all youth? If not, think about ways to get more kids to participate. Perhaps local businesses or corporations can donate supplies and space for activities. Think broadly. An art program doesn't have to exist in a classroom; it could be as simple as bringing local youth together to paint a mural on a wall in your community. You can also hold a poster contest and challenge local students to design their vision of a healthy drug-free community. The key is to encourage kids to let their creative abilities flow.

❖ **April** ❖

Alcohol Awareness Month and Alcohol-Free Weekend

Sponsor: National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc.

Contact: Public Info Dept. at 212-206-6770

Website: www.ncadd.org

Date: April 1999 (Alcohol-Free Weekend April 2-4)

Alcohol abuse takes a serious toll on cities and towns across the nation. That's why many communities are fighting back, by raising awareness about this serious problem and calling on residents to help prevent it. Alcohol Awareness Month provides an opportune time to do just that. This campaign helps local organizations call attention to the myriad of problems related to alcohol abuse in their neighborhood and garners support for local prevention efforts. NCADD also reaches out to local youth by sponsoring an Alcohol-Free Weekend. This youth campaign is designed to remind young people that they can have fun without drinking alcohol. To reinforce this fact, a host of alcohol free activities are held in communities and youth are encouraged to participate. For more information and to purchase materials to help publicize these events, call the number listed above.

What You Can Do Locally: Since so many social problems have their roots in alcohol abuse, Alcohol Awareness Month provides a good opportunity for you to contact other groups working on other issues and suggest partnering together. Think about involving youth organizations, domestic violence shelters, homeless shelters, treatment providers, the

media, businesses, health care centers, parent groups and many others to create a widespread event that celebrates the health of your community. Put your heads together to identify the biggest problems that stem from alcohol abuse in your community. Hospital and police records, social service agency reports and highway safety information can help you hone in on the areas of concern. Publicize your findings broadly and encourage residents to help you to safeguard your community to prevent future problems. Partner with other organizations throughout the community and your state to educate legislators about alcohol problems and the need for treatment options. Start a letter writing campaign and ask constituents to call on their elected officials to support effective policies. If your state's legal Blood Alcohol Content Limits are too high, help get the message out during March that drunk driving crashes can kill people. Involve local youth in your activities. Their voices can lend valuable support to your efforts. Also reach out to people who are in recovery and ask them to share their stories with the media and others. They can help personalize this issue and also make a compelling case about why treatment is essential.

National Alcohol Screening Day

**Sponsor: National Mental Illness Screening Project and
The National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism**

Contact: Anne Keliher at 781-239-0071

Website: None available

Date: April 8, 1999

Alcohol screenings and education are an important tool to help people recognize the signs of problem drinking and alcoholism. That's why the National Mental Illness Screening Project has teamed up with the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism to launch the very first National Alcohol Screening Day. Held on April 8th, NASD will raise widespread public awareness about the prevalence of alcohol problems, the signs and symptoms associated with them and the wide range of effective treatments available. Community groups and organizations are encouraged to partner with area health care providers and health centers to host local screenings. A key component of this day is a national media campaign, which will encourage Americans of all ages and backgrounds to participate in NASD education, screening and referral activities either to help themselves or to find out how to help a loved one. The campaign is expected to reach approximately 50,000 individuals at 2,000 community sites (including hospitals and mental health centers) and 600 colleges with student enrollments estimated at 3 million. Screenings will be held on the actual day of the event, as well as during freshman orientation on college campuses.

What You Can Do Locally: Contact local hospitals, health care and mental health centers, colleges and universities to find out how you can help them to organize alcohol screenings at their sites. Offer to recruit and organize volunteers who can donate their time to help. Help get the message out broadly about this new campaign. Run announcements in your organization's publication, on your website and also let your colleagues know by word of mouth about local activities that will be taking place. Distribute NASD registration materials at conferences and meetings attended by treatment providers. Use the campaign as a way to raise the level of knowledge among residents in your community about the signs and symptoms of alcoholism and the range of available and effective treatments. Contact local media outlets and ask them to run articles and segments on alcohol use by NASD. Help them by identifying detox and treatment programs and providers in your area, so viewers who want help for alcohol problems know where to turn. Suggest your local newspaper devote some space to covering this serious issue. You can help connect reporters with people in recovery who are willing to share their experiences in an effort to help others. Ask radio stations to do drive time shows interviewing experts on the signs of a person in trouble and advising listeners where to turn for if they need some help.

National Child Abuse Prevention Month
Sponsor: National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse
Contact: Joy Byers at 312-663-3520
Website: www.childabuse.org
Date: April 1999

Every child should be free from abuse and neglect, safely nurtured by a loving family, and supported by a caring community. This is the vision of the National Committee to Prevent Child Abuse. In an effort to help turn this vision into a reality, it designates April as Child Abuse Prevention Month. This national campaign brings together public and private health and human service agencies and organizations, businesses, hospitals, schools and religious groups to emphasize the importance of preventing all forms of child abuse. It also encourages these groups to work together on an issue that concerns them all: keeping children safe and healthy. Call the number listed above for material to help raise awareness about child abuse problems in your community and to form support networks of parents and children.

What You Can Do Locally: There is a strong link between the use of alcohol and drugs and child abuse. Therefore, it is important to take the time to educate people in your community about this fact and to support policies that will protect children. It is essential that parents who suffer from addictions have access to the treatment they need. Some of the ways you can help assure this is by making sure that women's treatment programs offer day care options for children, make sure workers at homeless shelters and soup kitchens are trained to recognize the signs of children who are abused; and educate teachers and other adults who work with kids about how to identify those that are at risk for maltreatment. You may also want to reach out to health centers, religious groups, prenatal programs, parenting groups and others and ask them to be sure adults understand the parenting skills they need. Offer to help convene some workshops to provide training on good parenting techniques and to teach participants how to deal constructively with stress and other problems.

National Public Health Week
Sponsor: National Public Health Week Steering Committee
Contact: Carole Zimmerman at APHA at 202-789-5600
Website: www.apha.org
Date: April 5-11, 1999

All across the country, people are making great strides in tackling public health problems. National Public Health Week is a great time to recognize these accomplishments and to encourage people to share ideas and learn from each other. This year's theme is "Healthy People in Healthy Communities." This is the fifth year of the national campaign, which targets a broad range of groups, including health officials at the federal, state and local levels; representatives of public health professional and voluntary organizations; schools of public health; foundations and other institutions that support public health goals and programs; and local health institutions, employers and community organizations.

What You Can Do Locally: Substance abuse is the nation's number one preventable public health problem. Use this week to raise public awareness about the accomplishments being made on this issue in your community. Hold an awards ceremony to spotlight individuals and programs that are making a difference. Remember to recognize reporters who have done an exceptional job in covering the link between substance abuse and the other issues they cover. Thank volunteers for the time they have given to mentor youth, clean up neighborhoods and help change public policies. Ask the local newspaper to devote a special issue to looking at the wide range of public health problems and the corresponding programs that are working to create a healthier community.

National Volunteer Week**Sponsor: Points of Light Foundation****Contact: LaShaun Hargrove at 202-729-8199****Website: www.pointsoflight.org****Date: April 1999 (Call for dates.)**

Many people volunteer their time to help others throughout their communities. As a way to thank these volunteers for their generous efforts, the Points of Light Foundation sponsors National Volunteer Week each April. This campaign also strives to encourage new people to volunteer for local initiatives.

What You Can Do Locally: Many volunteers need encouragement to sustain their efforts over the long haul. You can work with other organizations throughout your community to thank these dedicated people. (Many communities have Voluntary Action Centers.) Hold a special event for volunteers and ask businesses to donate door prizes and food. Ask your local movie theatre to sponsor a special movie screening for volunteers. See if the editor of your local paper will run a big thank you announcement for all of the volunteers in your community. Suggest that he spotlight a few outstanding volunteers to illustrate what their efforts mean to the community. Help to organize a network of organizations that need volunteers and match people to the places that most need their skills. Run the names and contact information of local organizations that are in need of volunteers in your organization's newsletters, website and other printed materials.

National Youth Service Day**Sponsor: Youth Service America****Contact: Omar Velarde-Wong at 202-296-2992 ext. 34****Website: www.serve.net****Date: April 16-17, 1999**

All across the nation, youth are engaging in community service work and are having fun in the process. National Youth Service Day provides an opportunity to thank these young people for their time, and to encourage others to follow in their footsteps. This year the campaign will try a new format, running for two days – Friday and Saturday – instead of the customary one, in order to give people the chance to host both weekday and weekend events. This should make it possible for even more people to participate. Over the past few years, this campaign has generated nearly 90 million hours of community service and has inspired countless young people to make a long-term commitment to helping their community. The campaign has 36 national partners. These include Red Cross, the Girl Scouts, the YMCA, Blue Cross/Blue Shield and many others. Over two million youth are expected to participate in this year's campaign, which marks the 11th year of its existence.

What You Can Do Locally: Young people who give their time to perform community service learn new skills that will help them be successful in the future. Such positive activities also help youth to be productive and to avoid the temptation to experiment with alcohol and drugs. You might ask local merchants to help you offer incentives to young people who participate in community service activities. Some may be willing to offer discounts or other special rewards for kids. Ask teachers to call on students who engage in community service to share their experiences with the rest of their classmates. Suggest that schools assign students a community service project as part of their coursework. Work with youth organizations to help them link up with community service projects. Ask your local cable station to run a special show focusing on youth who are really dedicated to performing community service. Offer a list of places where youth can call to volunteer. See if the station will run this across the bottom of the screen. Ask school and local newspapers to print the information to reach a wider audience.

Take Our Daughters To Work Day
Sponsor: Ms. Foundation for Women
Contact: Gail Maynor at 1-800-676-7780
Website: www.ms.foundation.org
Date: April 22, 1999

Today, the range of career opportunities available for females is endless. To help young girls understand the wealth of options that exist, on a designated day, parents and other adults across the country will take their daughters or other young girls to work for the day so they can see first hand what the workplace looks like. The goal of this annual public awareness campaign is to help girls remain resilient and self-confident throughout their teen years. Take Our Daughters To Work Day is held on the fourth Thursday in April and celebrates girls' worth by educating them about their wide range of life options.

What You Can Do Locally: Suggest teachers ask female students to write an essay about their experiences visiting the workplace. Ask the local newspaper to run a few of the best ones. Encourage your local television station to send a camera crew to follow a few local girls around on their day with their parent or other adult. This would make a nice feature story that will encourage other females to explore different career options. This media coverage may also end up sparking local businesses to create internships or mentoring opportunities for young females in your community. Outcomes such as this help to encourage youth to work hard and plan for the future. At the same time, it keeps them away from experimenting with alcohol and drugs. Ask schools to host an assembly where girls can volunteer to talk about what they learned on their trip to the workplace. This way everyone can benefit from the experiences and understand the breadth of choices that exist. Help to organize a "speakers bureau" of women representing a wide range of careers and have them speak to young female groups and clubs. See if the participants will be willing to serve as mentors for the youth.

❖
May
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Alcohol & Other Drug-Related Birth Defects Awareness Week
Sponsor: National Council on Alcoholism and Drug Dependence, Inc.
Contact: Public Information Department at 212-206-6770
Website: www.ncadd.org
Date: May 9-16, 1999

Having a baby is a wonderful experience, but along with the joy comes lots of responsibility. A woman must safeguard her infant's health from the time he or she is conceived. This means that pregnant women must not use alcohol, drugs or tobacco, because these substances put the unborn child at risk for a host of serious health problems. This annual campaign promotes the idea of healthy families by informing the public about the dangers that smoking, drinking and/or using other drugs can have on children.

What You Can Do Locally: Some women don't know about the connection between smoking, drinking and using drugs and birth defects. You can help get this message out widely in your community. Visit health centers and clinics and make sure pregnant females are getting the facts they need to make healthy decisions. Ask health and gym teachers at the local high school to do a workshop for female students about the dangers of substance use during pregnancy. Suggest that your local newspaper run a feature series about birth defects during this week and spotlight some personal stories. Reporters can visit the prenatal ward and see some babies born with birth defects because of mothers' alcohol or drug use. Write a letter to the editor comparing the cost to provide prenatal care for babies born addicted to drugs versus the cost to educate women about the consequences of drinking, smoking and using drugs while pregnant.

Law Day

Sponsor: The American Bar Association

Contact: Tracye Graves at 312-988-5721

Website: www.abanet.org/lawday

Date: May 1, 1999

Each year, the American Bar Association sponsors Law Day as a way to recognize the freedoms guaranteed for all Americans by the nation's system of laws. Law Day reminds people that the laws in the United States are designed to protect our freedom to express our opinions, select our leaders, worship where we chose and pursue our livelihood. To help get this message out, the theme of this year's Law Day is "Celebrate Your Freedom." On this day, all Americans are invited to dedicate themselves to fulfilling their role as citizens in the democratic adventure.

What You Can Do Locally: You can use this opportunity to take a look at how your community and state protect residents and provide them with the safety they deserve. Is there treatment available for people in the criminal justice system who suffer from addictions? If not, then these offenders will eventually be released back into the community without getting the help they need for their addiction. Partner with your local prosecutor, the court system, local prisons and your state or local bar association to see how you can help make sure that incarcerated people get treatment. Is there a drug court in your community to divert people who commit nonviolent crimes and are addicted to alcohol and drugs to get the treatment they need instead of serving jail time? You may want to consider this option as well. Work with local legislators and police to be sure that effective policies and programs are in place to protect neighborhoods from drug dealing and violence and to keep drunk drivers off of the roads.

National SAFE KIDS Week

Sponsor: National SAFE KIDS Campaign

Contact: Susan Kirinich at 202-662-0600

Website: www.safekids.org

Date: May 1-8, 1999

Keeping kids safe. That's the goal of SAFE KIDS Week, a national campaign that raises public awareness about the importance of preventing childhood accidents. Now in its 10th year, the campaign gets the message out that preventable injuries are the leading killer of children ages 14 and under. Each year more than 6,600 children die, and another 120,000 are permanently disabled, in motor vehicle crashes, drownings, fires and burns, suffocation, poisonings, chokings, falls and unintentional shootings. Yet most of these accidents could have been prevented. To help people understand these facts, more than 250 state and local coalitions help sponsor National SAFE KIDS activities in their communities.

What You Can Do Locally: Youth safety is an important issue to promote in your community. Work with other groups to hold safety trainings for parents, teachers, coaches and others who work with local kids. Be sure that athletic clubs and teams take proper safety measures to protect young athletes. Suggest that local businesses and corporations invite safety experts in to talk to parents about how to safeguard their homes and keep their kids healthy and safe. See if your local health centers, doctor's offices and hospitals will help you get the facts out by posting some safety messages for parents in their waiting and exam rooms. Provide safety tips for parents in your organization's newsletter, on your website and in any other material you distribute throughout the community. Ask your community newspaper to do a feature on possible safety hazards for youth. See if your local radio station will interview experts who can provide advice on how to avoid youth accidents. Do a safety check of your local schools. Recognize those that take outstanding measures to safeguard students. Advise others to follow these good examples.

National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month

Sponsor: Advocates for Youth

Contact: Susan Pagliaro at 202-347-5700

Website: www.advocatesforyouth.org

Date: May 1999

Every May, Advocates for Youth serves as the national coordinator of National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month. This campaign is designed to help raise public awareness about the problems associated with unintended teenage pregnancies. As part of National Teen Pregnancy Prevention Month, communities educate teens, parents, teachers, policy makers, health professionals, business people and others about the importance of acting responsibly to avoid parenting too soon. The fact is that rates of pregnancy and sexually transmitted diseases among younger teens in the United States have been on the rise, although the overall rate of teen pregnancy is on the decline. Nonetheless, our country continues to have higher teen pregnancy and birth rates than any other industrialized nation. These facts indicate an urgent need to mobilize people all across the nation to promote responsibility in teen sexual decision-making and behavior. To help communities get the message out, Advocates for Youth provides a guidebook with sample proclamations, editorials, PSAs, fliers and announcements about preventing teen pregnancy. To request a copy of this publication, call the number listed above.

What You Can Do Locally: Youth who use alcohol and drugs may be at risk of engaging in unprotected sex, resulting in unintended pregnancies and sexually transmitted diseases. Help to get this message out to youth, parents, teachers and other adults who work with young people. Partner with your local schools and recreation centers to be sure that they offer supervised activities that appeal to youth with a wide range of interests to keep them busy and productive after school. Check with health teachers and youth clubs in your schools to ensure that young people are getting the facts they need about the risks and responsibilities that go along with sex, so that they can make informed decisions. Start a dialogue between local parents and youth about serious issues such as drinking and sex. Invite teenage mothers to come in and talk to other teens about the responsibilities of having a child. Encourage the young women to ask questions and think about some of the consequences involved.

❖ **Summer** ❖

America Goes Back to School

Sponsor: Partnership for Family Involvement and Education

Contact: 1-800-USA-LEARN

Website: www.ed.gov/Family/agbts

Date: August to October 1999

As summer comes to a close, students all across the country head back to school. To celebrate this new beginning each year and to reaffirm communities' commitment to education, the nation celebrates America Goes Back to School during the months of August through October. This national initiative is sponsored by the Partnership for Family Involvement and Education, which is a coalition of more than 3,000 businesses, communities, religious and educational organizations. Now in its fifth year, the campaign focuses on improving education across America. Communities can request a free activity kit that gives concrete ideas, resources and examples of how parents, families, community groups, employers and educators are working to help children learn. For more information, call the number listed above or visit the U.S. Department of Education's web page.

What You Can Do Locally: The start of the new school year is a good time to look at policies and practices regarding substance abuse and safety in your schools and in your community. What measures are in place to keep kids from using alcohol and drugs on school grounds? Are students getting the substance abuse prevention messages they need both in the classroom and at home? Work with your local schools to help them better reach parents and get them involved in school-based activities. How does your community handle truancy problems? Are there initiatives in place that encourage students to attend

school regularly? Suggest that your local newspaper take an in-depth look at this issue. If attendance is a problem in your community, help convene a task force to make some recommendations on ways to make things better. Ask local businesses and corporations to donate supplies, books and computers to schools during America Goes Back to School months. See if your newspaper will run a public thank you to donors.

National Parents' Day

Sponsor: National Parents' Day Coalition

Contact: Belinda Rollins at 202-530-0849

Website: www.parentsday.org

Date: July 25, 1999

In honor of all of the hard work and sacrifices that parents typically make for their children, each year the nation celebrates National Parents' Day. This day was signed into law by President Clinton in October of 1994. To help celebrate this day, a number of local and national events are held throughout the country. Individuals, organizations, schools and businesses are encouraged to host special activities. Kicking off this year's campaign will be a national ceremony held in Washington, D.C., on July 25th.

What You Can Do Locally: Parents serve as important role models for their children. Therefore, it is important that they know how to set good examples and be patient and loving caregivers. You can work with other local organizations and groups to help recognize parents for the great work they are doing and to give them information on how to be even better parents. Use National Parents Day as an opportunity to convene a special ceremony in honor of local parents and give awards to a few adults who serve as outstanding role models for local children. Create a taskforce to help identify new opportunities that will enable other adults to follow their lead. Ask the community newspaper to donate space and send a broad thank you to all parents in the community. Work with local businesses and schools to host a parents' breakfast and use this as a forum to provide information on how parents can send no-use messages to their kids.

National Night Out

Sponsor: National Association of Town Watch

Contact: Matt Peskin at 610-649-7055

Website: www.natw.org

Date: August 3, 1999

On August 3rd, residents and police officers in communities throughout the nation will come together during National Night Out. This annual campaign builds new relationships between neighbors and police and promotes solidarity. As part of the campaign, people are asked to turn on the lights in their homes and then stand out on the street with police officers to send the message to criminals that their neighborhood won't tolerate crime. Following this event, neighborhood groups sponsor activities for participants to get to know each other better and work together to keep the streets clean and safe. Some of the types of neighborhood events include parades, block parties and barbecues, among other things. Since the campaign began in 1984, it has grown to involve over 30 million people in more than 9,200 communities from all 50 states. Call 1-800-NITE-OUT for free registration information.

What You Can Do Locally: There is a strong link between substance abuse and crime. Find out the extent of the connection in your community. Look at local indicators such as police reports, emergency room admission records, and news stories in your local newspaper. Also check with local residents for their perception of local substance abuse and crime problems. This information will help you get a picture of what is happening locally. Then use National Night Out as a way to devise some ways to safeguard neighborhoods and discourage crime and drug dealing. Partner with local neighborhood groups and police to help to organize block meetings in your area. Celebrate neighborhoods by inviting residents to come together to clean up parks and plant flowers in common areas. Suggest ways that residents can band together to form safety watches. Ask your local media to help get the word out about such initiatives so criminals know that residents mean business.

National Sobriety Checkpoint Week

Sponsors: Mothers Against Drunk Driving and Nationwide Insurance

Contact: Brandy Anderson at 202-638-3735

Website: www.madd.org

Date: Full Week of Labor Day 1999 (Call for details.)

Drunk driving is a major problem in communities all across the nation. Each year, many people are killed in drunk driving crashes that could have been avoided. National Sobriety Checkpoint Week educates people about the dangers of drinking and driving and works to raise public awareness about the importance of establishing sobriety checkpoints. These checkpoints can save lives. The campaign encourages police across the nation to increase their use of these checkpoints and to crack down on drunk drivers.

What You Can Do Locally: Provide public service announcements to your local radio stations reminding residents not to drink and drive. Schedule an editorial board meeting with your community newspaper to provide the facts about the costs and risks involved with drunk driving. Suggest reporters take an in-depth look at the lives in your city or town that have been irrevocably altered as a result of drinking and driving. Encourage reporters to speak with people who have been injured or lost family members in a drunk driving crash, as well as the drunk drivers and their family members, who have to live with the knowledge of their actions. Work with police to help publicize sobriety checkpoints and to help people understand why measures such as this are so important. Work with local legislators, bar and restaurant owners, area businesses and police to institute free rides home for people who have been drinking to discourage them from driving.

Safe Night USA

Sponsor: PBS, Wisconsin Public Television and Black Entertainment Television

Contact: 1-800-253-1158

Website: www.pbs.org/safenight

Date: June 5, 1999

Safe Night USA is a youth violence and drug prevention program that includes a national celebration on June 5, 1999, aired live on PBS and Black Entertainment Television (BET). The live show will feature thousands of communities across the country holding Safe Night events for young people (12 to 17). A Safe Night is a party planned by youth and adults, with time to learn how to resolve conflict peacefully and to avoid the most common factors that lead to violence – drugs, alcohol and weapons. Teens, parents and local groups in each community will plan their own specific events – all working together to identify key issues affecting teens and creating local partnerships that include youth and continue beyond the project. Safe Night USA will hold a national Basic Training Videoconference on March 3, 1999, to teach communities how to plan successful Safe Nights. On June 5, 1999, during the live show, Safe Night USA cameras will drop-in on several sites all across America, showcasing local grassroots efforts.

What You Can Do Locally: You can plan a Safe Night event in your community. Start by contacting Safe Night USA. Ask to get on the mailing list to receive The Safe Night USA Scene – a bimonthly newsletter and local planning guides. Call 1-800-253-1158 or visit the website at www.pbs.org/safenight. Then talk it up in your community. Tell your federal, state and local representatives about your plans and ask them to show their support. Involve local youth and other organizations in the planning and publicity. Ask local media outlets to send reporters to cover your event. Suggest businesses, organizations and youth clubs sponsor activities leading up to the party. Ask a task force of youth to followup after the events and come up with some on-going projects that can continue the momentum started by this campaign. Use the party as a way to kick-off fundraising to build a youth center or other needed youth facility.

September

National Alcohol & Drug Abuse Recovery Month

Sponsor: Center For Substance Abuse Treatment

Contact: Carol Deforce at 301-443-5052

Website: www.samhsa.gov/csat/csat.htm

Date: September 1999

Recovery from substance abuse addictions can be a reality for millions of people across the country. To recognize this important fact, and to help ensure that all Americans who want to receive treatment have access to it, the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment designates September as National Alcohol & Drug Abuse Recovery Month. This campaign is designed to help communities raise public awareness about this critical issue. CSAT provides campaign materials that can be tailored locally to help get the message out that treatment and recovery can help save lives, reduce health care costs, lower crime rates and increase workplace productivity.

What You Can Do Locally: National Alcohol & Drug Abuse Recovery Month provides a good opportunity for you to educate legislators and candidates running for local offices about the need to provide treatment for all who need it. Host a community or statewide event celebrating people who are in recovery. Ask a few people to get up and share their stories. These personal testimonies can be inspirational for others who are still grappling with addictions. Invite your local newspaper and legislators to attend and gain a new understanding of addictions. Schedule an editorial board meeting at your local newspaper and ask them to write an op-ed supporting the idea of expanding treatment in your community. Cite the benefits of treatment versus the cost of addiction to society. Look at barriers to treatment that currently exist in your community. Work with local treatment providers, local officials, social service agencies and the criminal justice system to address some of the problems and help more people access the services they need.

October

America's Safe Schools Week

Sponsor: National School Safety Center

Contact: Karen Whitney at 805-373-9977

Website: www.jetlink.net/~nssc

Date: Oct. 18-24, 1999

School safety is more of a concern today than ever before. America's Safe Schools Week calls attention to the importance of keeping kids safe, both in the classroom and on school grounds. This week-long campaign brings together school personnel, superintendents, administrators, students and parents to work together on a common goal. The campaign also encourages communities to evaluate existing safety procedures and programs to be sure they are effective, and to consider starting new ones where they are needed. In some states, the governor will launch this campaign with a formal proclamation. To find out more information about America's Safe Schools Week or to request campaign materials, call the number listed above.

What You Can Do Locally: With so much attention focused on violence in schools these days, America's Safe Schools Week offers a great time to bring diverse groups in your community together to look at ways schools can be made safer. Some of the recent tragic shootings in schools around the country have alerted communities to the fact that there needs to be better gun control laws and better methods in place to identify – and help – children in trouble. Start a taskforce in your community to look at how safe local students are and to make suggestions on how to head off any future problems. Help organize a letter writing campaign to gun manufacturers calling on them to encourage gun owners to use safety locks and other prevention measures to make them more childproof. Encourage local

legislators to pass tougher laws restricting the sale of firearms to youth. Work with schools to evaluate existing policies and determine if they are effective in the climate that exists in your community today or if they need to be rewritten.

Child Health Month

Sponsor: American Academy of Pediatrics

Contact: Pete Petersen at 847-981-7667

Website: www.aap.org

Date: October 1999

"Solutions Before Problems" is the ongoing slogan of Child Health Month. The 1999 observance will complete the Academy's 3-year substance abuse prevention theme by focusing on the impact of drugs on children, adolescents and young adults. The campaign encourages coalition building in addition to individual efforts as a means of raising local and national awareness about the importance of *prevention* as a means of ensuring children's health and wellbeing. Pediatricians, educators, media and other child health, welfare and advocacy professionals are urged to target October as a time to educate parents and children about the dangers of substance abuse and to promote healthy choices. Resource packets are available from the Academy beginning in the spring. Contents include: ideas for celebrating Child Health Month; facts sheets; information for parents; camera-ready materials; sample brochures; posters; and how-to advice on planning/conducting special events or media activities. To request campaign materials, call the number listed above or leave a message, including your name, address and telephone number at (847) 981-7134.

What You Can Do Locally: Assess the substance abuse problem – especially drug use — among youth in your community. Local youth surveys measuring tobacco, alcohol and drug use may be available. If not, you may want to start distributing such a survey. Talk to schools, police, health organizations and hospitals to find out what they are seeing. Convene a focus group of youth to ask them their perception of the problem. Ask your local newspaper to send a reporter to the session. He or she can listen to what youth say and write an article expressing their views. Form a coalition with other local groups to plan strategies for preventing youth drug use. Work with schools and other agencies to provide mentoring programs, host alternative activities after school and call on parents not only to talk to their kids about drugs, but to serve as positive role models. Contact pediatricians, HMOs and other youth-serving organizations focusing on health to discover how you can partner during Child Health Month to raise awareness about the dangers of drug use. Are medical professionals in your area trained to recognize/diagnose drug use in children and teens? If not, see if you can link up experts with physicians for a course on this topic. Offer to publicize the Child Health Month theme and related events being held in your area through your organization's newsletter, other publications and on your website. Does your school district provide substance abuse services for youth? If not, work with local officials and school personnel to initiate such a program; for help, look to other communities who have implemented similar programs.

Crime Prevention Month

Sponsor: National Crime Prevention Council

Contact: 1-800-WE PREVENT

Website: www.ncpc.org

Date: October 1999

"Take a Bite Out of Crime." This is the goal of Crime Prevention Month, an annual campaign that strives to make communities across the nation safer by raising awareness about ways that residents can protect themselves and their neighborhoods. To this end, kits are available containing materials such as timely crime statistics, sample media pieces and examples of community collaborations that have gotten good results. The kit also includes more than 20 camera-ready brochures, posters and activity sheets to address a wide range of crime-related topics. To order, call 800-WE PREVENT.

What You Can Do Locally: Substance abuse and crime are often closely related. Therefore, you can use this month to help educate people about this fact. Use the material provided by the National Crime Prevention Council to reach out to other groups and partner with them to make neighborhoods safer. Work with residents to organize local crime

watches in high-risk neighborhoods. Suggest local businesses work together to present a unified front against crime in retail areas. If youth crime is a problem in your community, work with schools, police and area corporations to sponsor activities -- such as cleaning a neighborhood park or painting a mural on a public wall -- that will engage youth and give them pride in their community. Run tips in your organization's newsletter on ways people can safeguard themselves to avoid become crime victims. Share this information broadly. Be sure to also distribute it to older residents and senior citizens, to help them stay safe.

Domestic Violence Awareness Month

Sponsor: National Resource Center on Domestic Violence

Contact: Cindy Newcomer at 1-800-537-2238

Website: None available

Date: October 1999

Domestic violence is a serious problem in the United States today. In fact, every fifteen seconds, someone becomes a victim. This adds up to more than 2.5 million people each year. And the victims themselves usually don't suffer alone. This abuse affects their children as well. Yet many people are embarrassed or afraid to speak out about their experiences. During Domestic Violence Awareness Month, communities are encouraged to host events that help to highlight the extent of the problem and to encourage residents to come together to develop ways to prevent further incidents.

What You Can Do Locally: This month offers an opportune time to raise awareness in your community about the link between substance abuse and domestic violence. Although many cases of domestic violence occur after a batterer has been drinking or using drugs, there is little hard data that exists to back up this fact. You can help to make this connection more commonly known. Encourage victims of domestic violence to speak up and share their experiences with others. Ask your local newspaper to do a series on domestic violence and to run along with it a list of crisis centers and hotlines where victims can turn for help. Work with local businesses and corporations to encourage workers who are victims -- or perpetrators -- of domestic violence to feel safe talking about their problems and seeking help. Check with local hospitals and medical centers to be sure that when victims of domestic violence come in for treatment, there are counselors or other trained staff who can work with them and refer them to needed services. Is there a network in place in your community where women in crisis can turn for help? If not, work with other organizations to help form a safe haven. Encourage survivors of domestic violence to speak out for funding for services and shelters. Hold an award ceremony to recognize survivors who have put their lives back together and helped to make conditions safer for other women.

Family Health Month

Sponsor: American Academy of Family Physicians

Contact: Dawn Zimmer at 816-333-9700 ext. 4222

Website: www.aafp.org

Date: October 1999

Everyone wants to have good health. That's why it is important that people take care of themselves and get regular checkups. To remind people of this, the American Academy of Family Physicians names October as Family Health Month. This national campaign strives to educate Americans about the need to live healthy and safe lives. Family physicians in communities all across the country will make a special effort this month to reach out to patients and help them take control of their health and the health of their families.

Throughout October, many communities will work with health centers and doctors offices to host special events that focus on health.

What You Can Do Locally: You can take the time to remind people that alcohol, drug and tobacco use can lead to a host of serious health problems. Suggest that local doctors' offices put up posters and provide written materials for patients that will alert them to this fact. Use your organization's own materials to help get this message out. Run a checklist of some of the warning signs of alcohol and drug abuse. Provide a list of local places where people who think they have a problem can turn for help. Encourage physicians to ask their patients about drug and alcohol use. Work with local family physicians to be sure that they take steps to recognize patients at risk for substance abuse and refer them to the help they need. Suggest that nursing homes and senior centers remind older people of the risks of

drinking and using prescription drugs. Ask health teachers at the local schools to talk to students about the problems involved with drinking, smoking, drugs and inhalant use. Work with the PTA in your community to be sure that parents know the facts, too, and can be on the lookout for children who may be in trouble. Ask your local radio station to run public service announcements reminding people to live healthy lives and avoid drinking and driving, using drugs and smoking.

Let's Talk Month

Sponsor: Advocates for Youth

Contact: Barbara Huberman at 202-347-5700

Website: www.advocatesforyouth.org

Date: October 1999

Parents serve as important role models for their children. Therefore, it is important that they take the time to talk to their kids and advise them about sexuality. Research shows that when parents and children discuss and explore sexuality together, the young people are more likely to wait before they engage in sexual intercourse for the first time. And those that do decide to experiment are more likely to use protection to guard themselves against sexually-transmitted diseases and unwanted pregnancies. To encourage more parents and children to talk about this and other important issues, October is designated as Let's Talk Month. This national campaign strives to help young people develop responsible, positive attitudes and behaviors about sexuality. Throughout the month, local religious organizations, the media, businesses, schools and community organizations are encouraged to take leadership roles by providing activities, information, resources and educational programs for youth and parents in their communities.

What You Can Do Locally: With so much media attention focused on sexuality these days, parents have more opportunities than ever before to talk to their children about this sensitive topic. You can work with parent groups, churches and other local organizations to provide tips for parents who are uncomfortable talking about this issue and are unsure where to begin. Help to sponsor a workshop for adults who want some guidance. Invite experts in to talk about how adults can use examples of sex that are in the news to share their own morals and ideas with their children. Suggest that parents don't limit discussions to sex but also include their viewpoints on drug use, drinking and other dangerous activities. When parents communicate openly with their children, it helps to provide a groundwork from which children can make safe and healthy decisions. Host activities that parents and teens can attend together to help them foster stronger relationships. Something as simple as a movie night or an ice cream social can help to open the lines of communication for serious discussions.

Make A Difference Day

Sponsor: The Points of Light Foundation/USA Weekend

Contact: LaShaun Hargrove at 202-729-8199

Website: www.pointsoflight.org or www.usaweekend.com/diffday

Date: October 23, 1999

Everyone can make a difference in the world. Even the simplest acts of kindness or caring can help transform someone's life and offer new hope for the future. That's why during Make A Difference Day, people throughout the nation are encouraged to go out and do something that will help improve conditions for others. On this special day, participants lend a hand to a cause, an individual, a family or a neighborhood that they want to help. There is no limit to the difference the activities on this day can make. Individuals, groups or entire communities can write up their project description and send it to the Points of Light Foundation. A panel of celebrity judges will select six outstanding projects and will award a \$2,000 donation for each one's charitable cause.

What You Can Do Locally: Make A Difference Day provides a great opportunity to teach local youth about the importance of helping others. When young people engage in social service work, they stay busy and productive and are less likely to have free time to experiment with alcohol and drugs and get into trouble. Work with local churches and synagogues, youth groups and social service agencies to come up with a list of projects in your community. Ask your local newspaper to publicize this information. Suggest teachers help organize students to participate in community service work as part of their classwork.

Helping at a soup kitchen or homeless shelter may provide youth with a new perspective on how other people live. Ask youth to work with neighborhood centers or other local groups to come up with some suggestions for how to make streets safer and cleaner. Call on them to come up with ways to solve local alcohol and drug problems.

National Red Ribbon Week

Sponsor: National Family Partnership

Contact: Peggy Sapp at 1-800-705-8997

Website: www.nfp.org

Date: October 23-31, 1999

With the brutal death in 1985 of Enrique "Kiki" Camarena, a Drug Enforcement Administration Agent who was kidnapped and murdered in Mexico because of his pursuit of the Mexican drug cartel, youth in his hometown of Calexico, California, began wearing Red Ribbons in honor of their fallen hero. Soon parent groups across the country began wearing the red ribbon in support of healthy drug free youth and communities. In 1988, the Red Ribbon Celebration became an annual event led by National Family Partnership. A national effort to raise awareness for drug prevention was begun. Each year during the week of October 23rd – 31st, more than 80 million young people and adults celebrate a healthy, drug-free life by wearing or displaying a red ribbon through participation in prevention activities during the Red Ribbon Celebration Week.

What You Can Do Locally: Use Red Ribbon Week as a way to share the Camarena story. Write an article for your local paper on the meaning of Red Ribbon and highlight events and activities that will be taking place in your community. Organize a community health and prevention fair and involve medical, social service and law enforcement professionals. Convene a forum for residents to come up with some solutions for local drug problems – include youth. Ask local businesses or service organizations to sponsor a poster contest for young people. Post the artwork in the library or community center. Invite the media to judge the winners. Recognize those in your community who have put themselves in danger to keep your community safe from drug dealers. Also ask them to serve as mentors to youth. Host a drug and alcohol-free dance or pizza party for youth – they can help plan it. Organize a memorial service for those who have died as a result of alcohol or other drug abuse. Organize youth to plant red tulips around a community building, library, school or boulevard. Invite the media to interview the youth about this activity. Then in the spring, when the tulips bloom, organize another media event featuring youth and their attitudes about alcohol and other drugs. Form a youth advisory committee and have them develop ideas for activities.

"Talk About Prescriptions" Month

Sponsor: National Council on Patient Information & Education

Contact: 202-347-6711 ext. 15

Website: None available.

Date: October 1999

Many people do not take their prescription medication properly. As a result, the medication may not work. It may cause serious health problems, or possible death. That's why the National Council on Patient Information & Education works to educate people about the importance of the appropriate use of medicine. "Talk About Prescriptions" Month, which is the only national observance to focus on this serious issue, encourages consumers and health professionals to improve their communication about prescription medicines. The federal government confirmed the importance of communication by establishing a Year 2000 public health target: that 75 percent of patients should receive "useful" medical information with their prescriptions, via printed materials and counseling. To this end, the council offers many educational resources to support medicine counseling, community outreach and basic understanding of personal responsibility when taking medicine. To request materials, call the number listed.

What You Can Do Locally: You can help to get the message out that people must take their medications properly. Even non-prescription drugs can cause serious – and even life-threatening – consequences when taken with alcohol and/or other drugs. Ask your local newspaper to work with you to educate residents about the risks and responsibilities that come along with taking any type of medicine. Suggest they run a checklist of do's and

don'ts that people can follow when using medication. Talk to doctors, hospitals and medical groups in your area and suggest they use this campaign as an opportunity to bolster their communications with patients. Ask the hospital or area health center to host a communitywide forum and have experts available to address residents' questions. The elderly could have special concerns when it comes to using medication. Work with other groups to help educate older members about the risks of misusing prescriptions and the signs of abuse. Ask a pharmacist to schedule a "medicine review check-up" for area seniors. The kits to conduct such reviews are available from the National Council.

Trick or Treat for UNICEF Month

Sponsor: U.S. Committee for UNICEF

Contact: 1-800-FOR-KIDS

Website: www.unicefusa.org

Date: October 1999

Halloween is a time of enjoyment for most youth. It is also a time of learning, thanks to "Trick or Treat for UNICEF" Month. This annual education and fundraising campaign runs throughout October to teach children about global issues that surround them. "Trick or Treat for UNICEF" Month provides educators and families with a myriad of opportunities to help celebrate the cultural diversity that surrounds them in their classrooms, communities and the world. Students have the opportunity to support UNICEF-assisted projects through a variety of fundraising initiatives, including collecting money from neighbors when they go door to door on Halloween night. The funds generated have helped support UNICEF's efforts to provide medication, vaccines, clean water and sanitation, nutrition and basic education to millions of children in over 160 countries. Free educational campaign materials are available for teachers and parents by contacting the number listed above. UNICEF's trademark orange "Trick or Treat for UNICEF" cartons may also be ordered, free-of-charge.

What You Can Do Locally: When kids collect money for UNICEF, they are helping to make the world a better place. Work with other organizations and schools to make this fact known and to encourage students to participate. Engaging in community service activities such as this one can help give young people some of the confidence they need to resist using alcohol and drugs. Suggest your local newspaper run a public thank you to local youth who collect money for UNICEF. Include a note in your organization's written and online materials, including your fax cover sheets, to call on people to participate in this campaign. Work with other groups, businesses and schools to hold a Halloween party to thank youth who participate in the "Trick or Treat for UNICEF" campaign.

Week Without Violence

Sponsor: YWCA of the U.S.A.

Contact: 1-888-992-2463

Website: www.ywca.org

Date: October 1999 (Call for dates.)

Violence is a serious problem around the world today. Every day, people are tragically injured or killed by guns, gangs and family violence. In an effort to change this fact, the YWCA hosts Week Without Violence. This international campaign strives to raise awareness about ways to prevent violence in homes, schools, workplaces and neighborhoods. Led by YWCAs in thousands of communities in the United States and more than twenty countries on six continents, the campaign emphasizes sustainable alternatives to violence that could save lives and make our communities safer. For campaign materials you can use to participate, call your local YWCA for campaign materials, call the number listed above or visit the YWCA homepage.

What You Can Do Locally: School violence has been on the minds of many Americans lately. Use the momentum created by this campaign to bring your community together to look at ways to make schools, homes and neighborhoods safer for youth and adults. Look at the local, statewide and national policies regarding guns and help support measures that would safeguard everyone. Talk to police, hospitals, homeless shelters, treatment facilities and residents to learn how much of the violence in your community relates to alcohol and drugs. Brainstorm ways to reduce substance abuse locally and at the same time, keep people safer. Invite other social service agencies and groups that deal with

issues of violence to meet with you and come up with ways you can work on this issue together. Suggest your local newspaper interview victims of violent crimes and their families to help personalize this serious problem.

❖
November
❖

Great American Smokeout

Sponsor: American Cancer Society

Contact: 1-800-ACS-2345

Website: www.cancer.org

Date: November 18, 1999

Smoking cigarettes is the leading cause of preventable deaths in the United States and also contributes to a host of health problems. In addition, second-hand smoke causes serious consequences. The Great American Smokeout is held each year to raise awareness about these facts and to encourage people who smoke to quit. This national campaign calls on smokers to stop smoking for a designated day. The hope is that once people see they can go without a cigarette for one day, they will realize that they can quit for life. This year marks the 23rd year of this event. In addition to targeting people who smoke, the campaign also reaches out to American youth and asks them to take a pledge not to start smoking.

What You Can Do Locally: Use the Great American Smokeout as a way to call attention to the hazards of smoking and second-hand smoke. Ask your local newspaper, radio and television stations to devote some coverage to the dangers of smoking in the days leading up to the Smokeout. Suggest that reporters follow some people who plan to quit during the campaign and see how successful they are. Being in the spotlight could inspire them to break the habit for good. It may also give other smokers the motivation they need to follow in their footsteps. Tell reporters about Join Together's The Quitnet at www.quitnet.org, which is an innovative interactive web site that actually helps smokers quit online. Run information about the site in your organization's materials to give smokers who want to quit extra help and support for their efforts. Some communities have banned smoking in restaurants and bars. If yours hasn't yet, look to others who have and find out what the results are. Work with youth groups and clubs to encourage young members to sign a pledge promising not to smoke. Suggest area businesses offer discounts or free merchandise to youth who do so. Ask teachers to talk to students about the dangers of smoking during the Smokeout.

Parent Involvement Day and American Education Week

Sponsor: National Parents' Day Coalition and The Partnership for Family Involvement in Education

Contact: Belinda Rollins at 202-530-0849

Website: www.parentsdays.org

Date: November 15 (day), November 15-20 (week), 1999

Schools teach children to think and to dream. Therefore, it is important that the nation's schools receive the support and involvement they need from parents in communities across the country. That's why November 15th is National Parent Involvement Day. This designated day is designed to empower parents to take an active role in their children's education. This day also serves as the kick-off for American Education Week, which is held November 15th to 20th. The goal of the week is to raise public awareness about the value of education and to call attention to the accomplishments of public schools and their needs. As part of the campaign, the U.S. Department of Education releases a special report called "Quality Counts," which calls attention to the successes and failures of American education. This report should be read by every mayor, school superintendent, governor and citizen. To order a copy, call toll-free at 1-877-433-7827. To receive campaign materials to help publicize Parent Involvement Day and American Education Week, call the number listed above.

What You Can Do Locally: Use these campaigns as a way to help call attention to the achievements – and needs – of your local schools. Help parents to take an active role in

their children's education. Work with schools to provide activities and events at times that will meet parents' busy schedules. Obtain copies of "Quality Counts" and help publicize the findings locally. Provide a copy to your local newspaper and ask them to report on the highlights. Suggest the editorial board call on parents to make a commitment to help their children with their homework. Ask the local schools to invite parents to come to class with their children and see first-hand what they are learning. Ask your PTA/PTO, school council, committees and other parent organizations to make an effort to involve parents in school decisions, governance and advocacy.

◆ December ◆

National Candlelight Vigil of Remembrance & Hope

Sponsor: Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD)

Contact: 214-744-6233

Website: www.madd.org

Date: December 1999

Each year, thousands of people are killed or injured in drunk driving crashes. Yet all of these tragedies could have been avoided. To remind people of this fact, each December Mothers Against Drunk Driving (MADD) holds a Candlelight Vigil of Remembrance & Hope. This special event is a way to remember the victims of drunk driving crashes, and to support their families. At the same time, the campaign also reminds the public not to drink and drive. With so many holiday parties during this month, it is important to reinforce this message now more than ever.

What You Can Do Locally: You can help to get the message out that drinking and driving can be deadly. Work with other groups to broadcast this warning throughout your community – via billboards, newspaper articles and radio and television public service announcements. Host a candlelight vigil in your community to remember those who have been killed in drunk driving crashes. Invite public officials and police to attend. Use this opportunity to push for lower Blood Alcohol Content Laws and for stronger enforcement of them. Suggest that police set up roadblocks throughout the month to discourage drunk driving. Work with area restaurants and bars and your local taxicab companies to set up a service providing free rides for patrons who have been drinking.

National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month

Sponsor: National 3D Prevention Month Coalition

Contact: Terrance Schiavone at 202-452-6004

Website: www.3dmonth.org/

Date: December 1999

December is National Drunk and Drugged Driving Prevention Month. The goal of this national campaign is to educate youth and young adults about the dangers involved with driving after drinking or using drugs. The Coalition also encourages communities to support prevention efforts to make our roads safer. To request a program planner filled with material to guide local efforts, contact the number listed above.

What You Can Do Locally: Take this opportunity to call attention to the dangers of drunk and drugged driving. Ask your television and radio stations to air public service announcements reminding people not to drive after drinking during the holiday season and throughout the rest of the year. Approach local corporations and businesses and ask them to provide transportation for employees who drink during holiday parties. Ask your local newspaper, church bulletins and organizational newsletters to run non-alcoholic drink recipes for hosts to serve and encourage residents to use designated drivers when they go out. Suggest your high school or community recreation center provide a chaperoned alcohol-free New Year's party for local youth. See if corporations will donate food and decorations. Ask a local band or other celebrities who will appeal to youth to provide entertainment. Ask local youth to sign a contract promising not to drink and drive. Work with local cab companies and restaurants to set up free rides home for people who drink too much during the holiday season.

❖ Year-Long Campaigns ❖

Girl Power!

Sponsor: The Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, SAMHSA, HHS

Contact: 1-800-729-6686

Website: www.health.org/gpower

Girl Power! is a multi-issue, multi-phase national public awareness campaign sponsored by the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) to help encourage and equip 9 to 14-year-old girls to make the most of their lives. Girl Power! combines strong no-use messages about tobacco, alcohol and illicit drugs with an emphasis on providing opportunities for girls to build skills and self-confidence in academics, arts, sports and other endeavors. It also addresses related issues such as teen pregnancy prevention, physical activity, nutrition and mental health. Call the number listed above for materials.

What You Can Do Locally: Get involved! Help raise awareness in all sectors of your community about the needs and concerns of young girls. Volunteer your time to mentor a young girl and encourage others you work with to do the same. Join in with other organizations working on Girl Power! activities. Help girls understand that drugs are unhealthy and unsafe. Work with schools, churches and youth groups to help girls get the necessary tools to make good healthy decisions and resist peer pressure to use alcohol, tobacco and drugs or participate in other risky behaviors. Bring experts into the schools to talk to girls and answer their questions about drugs, alcohol, sex and other things that concern them. Create opportunities for young girls to work with your organization so they can gain valuable skills for their futures. Support local girls' sports teams by helping with fundraising drives, events and other activities.

The Reality Check Campaign

Sponsor: The Center for Substance Abuse Prevention, SAMHSA, HHS

Contact: 1-800-729-6686

Website: www.health.org/reality/index.htm

"Marijuana Is a Drug: Help Our Kids Understand" is the theme of SAMHSA/CSAP's Reality Check Campaign. This is a nationwide effort to prevent and reduce the growing problems associated with marijuana use among youth. The campaign, which is geared to community efforts, reaches out to parents, caregivers and other people who work with youth and provides them with information and ideas on how to talk to kids about the dangers of this drug. Call for Reality Check materials, and *Keeping Youth Drug Free: A Guide for Parents, Grandparents, Elders, Mentors and Other Caregivers*.

What You Can Do Locally: Join together with other organizations in your community to send out a unified message about marijuana use prevention. By working together, you can help magnify your efforts and make a bigger impact. Volunteer your own time, skills and materials to other groups. Encourage your local media to report on local initiatives that work to prevent kids from using marijuana and other drugs. Convene a focus group of youth to learn why they do -- or don't -- use marijuana. Invite a reporter in to listen to the discussion. Also talk to parents about their concerns and provide them with suggestions on how to approach their kids about this subject.

FOR COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES

BACCHUS & GAMMA have several national public awareness campaigns geared specifically for students on campuses throughout the nation. Some of the topics include sexual responsibility week, alcohol awareness week and safe spring break. For more information and to order materials, call Janet Cox at 303-871-0901.

FAXBACK: TELL US HOW YOU ARE USING THIS KIT!

How are you using the information included in this Monthly Action Kit and calendar to further your communitywide strategy to fight substance abuse? Your answers are important to help us continue producing publications that meet your needs. Please take a few minutes to answer the following questions and fax this form back to:

Lisa Falk

Fax: (617) 437-9394

Name: _____

Title: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ Fax: _____ E-mail: _____

Does your community currently have a recognized strategy to fight substance abuse?

_____ Yes _____ No

Does this strategy include a communications component?

_____ Yes _____ No

Did you find the information included in this kit to be helpful to your efforts?

_____ Yes _____ No

How will you use the material we provided to further your work? (check all that apply)

- _____ Share it with others
- _____ Use it to build alliances with other groups
- _____ Educate the public through the local media
- _____ Other (please explain) _____

Do you plan to start any new projects or activities as a result of the information we provided?

_____ Yes _____ No

If yes, please explain:

If you copy (or in some other way disseminate) material from this kit to share with others, who? (check all that apply)

- _____ board members _____ local media _____ colleagues
- _____ elected officials _____ coalition members _____ clergy/faith community
- _____ youth groups _____ health care providers _____ others (explain)



U.S. Department of Education
Office of Educational Research and Improvement (OERI)
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