

# The Exchange

Winter 2002

A Publication of the Chester County Department of Drug and Alcohol Services

## Message From the Director



How to address the issue of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse as a parent or other caregiver is often a difficult one. What to say, when to say it, when to tighten the reins and when to let go are questions we all struggle with. While there are no magic bullets for, or absolute answers to the issue of youth substance abuse there are many resources that can help find the right answers for you and your family.

We recently received a new pamphlet “*Keeping Your Kids Drug – Free, A How-To Guide for Parents and Caregivers*” published by the National Youth Anti-Drug Media Campaign. This guide reinforces that parents are the strongest weapons in the prevention battle. As the preface states “Now here is the most important fact you should know: Kids who learn from their parents about the dangers of underage drinking, drugs, and other harmful substances are less likely to use those substances. In other words, you have the power to keep the child you love safe, healthy, and drug-free. But finding the right words and the right approach can be hard. That’s where this booklet comes in. It can help you put your good intentions into action.” This booklet provides ideas and skills to help parent’s address their concerns with their children about alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse. Chapters include; You Matter, It’s Not Pestering, It’s Parenting, Opening the Lines of Communication, and Teachable Moments. While it won’t give you all of the answers it does provide helpful information. The booklet is endorsed by the American Academy of Pediatrics and the National PTA.

The Anti-Drug Campaign from the Office of National Drug Control Policy has a great deal of information and help available, their website at [www.theantidrug.com](http://www.theantidrug.com) has specific drug information, advice, news and articles about current research and trends, and stories shared by kids and parents touched by substance abuse. You can also sign up for the Anti-Drug Parenting Tips E-mail. If you don’t have a computer but would like to order the “Keeping Your Kids Drug – Free” booklet, you can do so by calling 1-800-788-2800 and requesting document #PHD884.

Another excellent resource is the National Clearinghouse for Alcohol and Drug Information (NCADI); the website is [www.health.org](http://www.health.org). Through this website you can find drug facts, information on prevention, intervention, and treatment. You can search for publications based on a specific drug, the audience (such as parents or teens) or the issue (such as drug abuse or treatment).

Examples of publications available from NCADI are “*A Guide for Teens: Does your friend have an alcohol or other drug problem? What can you do to help?*” a brochure developed to assist teens in helping a friend who has a problem with alcohol or other drugs and; “*Moyers on Addiction: Family Guide*”, a guide written for families to help them deal with getting help for family members who have an addiction problem. The website also provides an extensive set of links for prevention, treatment, self-help and other related issues.

Sometimes you also just need someone available that can answer questions. Chester County currently funds drug and alcohol information and referral via The COAD Group during business hours at (800) 917-1117. There are plans to expand this service to 24 hours per day, 7 days per week in early 2002.

The issues of alcohol, tobacco, and other drug abuse will never be easy when it concerns people we love. But there is help available - please take advantage of it.

Kim P. Bowman

Director, Chester County Department of Drug and Alcohol Services

Have a Safe  
and Healthy New Year!

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## PA House Holds Hearings on Managed Care Handling of Drug & Alcohol Treatment

On October 25, 2001 the Subcommittee on Drugs and Alcohol of the PA House of Representatives Health and Welfare Committee held a hearing on access to addiction treatment through managed care. Witnesses and the audience came from throughout Pennsylvania as well as out of state and represented a variety of perspectives on the issue. The hearings were covered by a number of publications including the national *Alcoholism and Substance Abuse Weekly*. Included in the audience were parents who have lost children to addiction, people in recovery, auditors, counselors, employee assistance programs, law enforcement, the author of Pennsylvania's current insurance law, as well as representatives from the insurance and managed care industry. Representative Beverly Mackereth from York County, Majority Chair for the Subcommittee, convened the hearing. Also actively participating in the hearing was Rep. Robert Flick of Chester County.

Attorney General Mike Fisher testified about problems encountered by his Health Care Unit including: violation of state confidentiality laws, insufficient provider networks, potentially life-threatening delays in authorization of treatment and delays in payment for services. A consumer who is also a parent, Villanova Law School graduate, and partner in a Philadelphia law firm spoke about her difficulty accessing treatment for more than a few days at a time. Former Representative Pete Wambach testified about Pennsylvania's Act 106 of 1989, the law that mandates minimum benefits for alcohol and drug addiction treatment. And the testimony continued; parents, researchers, auditors, counselors, people in recovery, and treatment programs all spoke of the difficulties encountered and resulting devastation.

Pennsylvania has one of the best laws in the nation regarding insurance coverage for alcoholism and addiction. It recognizes the scientifically established facts that untreated alcoholism and addiction have devastating financial and societal impact on individuals, families and communities and that the cost benefits of treatment is consistently demonstrated. Yet, all too often, services clearly covered under the law are denied. This results in short-term profit to the managed care company but tremendous costs to employers and taxpayers due to increased costs for businesses, law enforcement, corrections, physical health coverage, child welfare, and public health benefits.

Alcoholism and addiction are characterized by denial. The nature of the disease creates a somewhat natural governor on "over" utilization of treatment. One of the most difficult steps to intervening with an addicted/alcoholic individual is getting them willing to enter treatment. The next challenge is getting them to remain in treatment. Although easy access and long-term engagement are scientifically sound principles of addiction treatment, people consistently experience difficulty in gaining fast access to services of appropriate duration when trying to get coverage for treatment through commercial managed care companies. This is in direct conflict with what appears to be the intent of the law in Pennsylvania.

Because of a number of requests for public funding resulting from people's inability to access treatment through their managed care company, we recently established an advocacy service specifically to help Chester County individuals and families pursue their benefits. Unfortunately, while we can help facilitate the process, it is still long and cumbersome. Many families and individuals struggling with addiction do not have the capacity to follow through with the process. Additionally, providers are often put in a position of conflict where they have to fear client advocacy affecting their financial survival.

If you would like more information on Pennsylvania's insurance law or the Chester County advocacy service, please contact the Chester County Department of Drug and Alcohol Services at (800) 692-1100 extension 6620.

### Mark Your Calendar...

- **February 4th is National Girls and Women in Sports Day**
- **February 11-17, 2002 is National Children of Alcoholics Week.**
- **March 18-24, 2002 is National Inhalants and Poison Awareness week.**
- **Kick Butts Day is April 2nd. For more information, contact the Campaign for Tobacco Free Kids at 1-800-284-KIDS or check out [www.tobaccofreekids.org](http://www.tobaccofreekids.org).**
- **SAVE THE DATE: The 2002 Chester County SADD Conference entitled "Recharge Your Batteries with Positive Alternatives" is scheduled to take place on April 11, 2002 at West Chester University.**



The next issue of The Exchange will be prepared March 2002 for distribution in April. Suggestions for articles are due by March 15th. Email your suggestions or articles to: [smith@ccis.net](mailto:smith@ccis.net), or to [mpolvino@chesco.org](mailto:mpolvino@chesco.org).

## Tobacco Use... always an important issue

The Chester County Health Department and the Chester County Tobacco Free Youth Coalition (CCTFYC) continue to battle tobacco use in many ways. The coalition got a grant from the Pennsylvania Tobacco Prevention Network, with support from the PA Department of Health to promote "Clean Indoor Air". Students from the Great Valley School District have been instrumental in implementing strategies designed to educate restaurant owners and patrons about the dangers of second hand smoke.

- 1400 "licensed dining establishments" in Chester County were sent surveys to determine what their smoking policies and procedures are.
- Placemats were developed and put in a number of Chester County restaurants in time for the observance of the "Great American Smokeout" on Thursday, November 15, 2001.
- Members of the coalition expect to publish a "100% Smoke Free Dining Guide" in late December.
- Youth Coalition members designed an informational pamphlet on the dangers of second-hand smoke to be used as part of the campaign.

For more information, contact Michele Kratchman, Public Health Educator at 610-344-5209 or visit the Coalition's website at [www.chescotobaccofreeyouth.org](http://www.chescotobaccofreeyouth.org).

Not all teens think that smoking is cool—see what this opinion poll shows!

Data Source: CDC < [http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/tips\\_4\\_youth/facts.htm](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco/tips_4_youth/facts.htm) >  
Chart adapted from one appearing in the National Women's Health Report, August 2001

| TEEN OPINIONS ON SMOKING                   |       |          |           |
|--|-------|----------|-----------|
| ALL NUMBERS ARE IN PERCENTAGES             | AGREE | DISAGREE | NO ANSWER |
| Seeing someone smoke turns me off.         | 67    | 22       | 10        |
| I'd rather date people who don't smoke.    | 86    | 8        | 6         |
| It's safe to smoke for only a year or two. | 7     | 92       | 1         |
| Smoking can help you when you're bored.    | 7     | 92       | 1         |
| Smoking reduces stress.                    | 21    | 78       | 3         |
| Smoking helps keep your weight down.       | 18    | 80       | 2         |
| Chewing tobacco and snuff cause cancer.    | 95    | 2        | 3         |
| I strongly dislike being around smokers.   | 65    | 22       | 13        |

## In View



In View is a regular column in this newsletter. Each issue features a program or an issue that is covered in depth. Ideas are welcome!

**As mentioned in our last issue, we are sharing information on various types of Drug & Alcohol services that are available through the Chester County Department of Drug & Alcohol Services.**

### TREATMENT SERVICES

Treatment Services provide assistance to people whose lives have been negatively affected by their own or another's use of alcohol and/or drugs. There are a variety of "levels of care", depending on the degree of problems an individual is experiencing. Below are descriptions of two types of service that are part of the "continuum of care". If a person has health insurance, PA law (Act 106) requires most plans to include coverage for outpatient, detoxification, and inpatient rehabilitation. For those who are uninsured, County funding assistance, based on a sliding fee scale, is available for these services.

#### OUTPATIENT

Outpatient treatment is designed as primary treatment for people who need aftercare or supportive intervention in order to encourage the individual to enter treatment. Treatment is done on a group or individual basis in conjunction with AA/NA involvement. Treatment for family members is also available. The County's contracted Outpatient treatment providers act as "points of entry" for the County funded system. They will perform clinical assessments to determine the appropriate "level of care" and help arrange funding and admission to other levels of care.

#### PARTIAL HOSPITALIZATION

Partial Hospitalization is intensive treatment, provided on an outpatient basis, to clientele who have supports in the community (such as employment, or family). Participants generally get 10 or more hours of treatment per week, attending 3, 4 or 5 times a week. Most programs operate in the evening, though a few have daytime hours as well.

**Contact The COAD Group at 610-363-6164 or 800-917-1117 for more information or the names of agencies that provide outpatient and/or partial hospitalization treatment.**

# Bits and Pieces

## Drug Prevention March and Expo — October 21, 2001

This year's March and Expo took place on a beauty of a day. More than six hundred (600) people went the distance in the march and over \$20,000 was raised through pledges and corporate sponsorships. Local dignitaries included: Senator Gerlach, Representatives Art Hershey, and Curt Schroeder, Sheriff Bunny Welch, and Chester County District Attorney Anthony Sarcione. According to Ed D'Azio, co-chair and tireless volunteers, "the highlight of the day was having so many kids from the Downingtown High School there, they were very helpful, the cheerleaders helped with the Jaws for Life and did face painting". Under the leadership Lt. Steve Meacham, West Whiteland police did a nice job with demonstrations on drug sniffing dogs and police arrest by dogs. Marchers and guests did not go hungry—volunteers served over 850 hot dogs! The organizers thank Chester County Drug & Alcohol Services staff and the representatives from COAD who helped make the day lots of fun and very informative.

### POST-PROM MINI Grants Available for FY 2002-2003

The Chester County Department of Drug & Alcohol Services has issued its annual Announcement and Application for Post prom Mini-Grants early in 2002. **For more information, contact Ms. Meg Polvino c/o the Chester County Department of Drug & Alcohol Services at 610-344-6620 or Mr. Howard Atwell c/o COAD at 1-800-917-1117.**

If you are looking for information about Alcoholics Anonymous, visit [achesco.org](http://achesco.org) where you can find lists of local meetings in Chester County, and around the Southeastern PA area, clubhouses, inter-group meetings AA publications, and other items that may be of interest.

### Video Review

#### The Addicted Brain 26 minutes Films for the Humanities & Sciences

This documentary takes viewers on a tour of the world's most prolific manufacturer and user of drugs - the human brain. The biochemistry of the brain is responsible for jogger's highs, for the compulsion of some people to seek thrills, for certain kinds of obsessive-compulsive behavior, even for the drive to achieve power and dominance. The program explores developments in the biochemistry of addiction and addictive behavior. The subject material of this video lends itself to professional staff development. Higher level instructional courses may benefit as well. This and other videos are available to borrow through The Coad Group (930 East Lancaster Avenue, Exton PA, phone: 610-363-6164 or 1-800-917-1117).

### PRO-ACT is gaining momentum!



PRO-ACT stands for the PA Recovery Organization Achieving Community Together. It is a grass roots advocacy initiative founded to promote the rights of and ensure opportunities for those still suffering from the disease of addiction, members of the recovery community and their family members who wish to advocate in southeastern PA. Key elements of the mission are reducing stigma, ensuring the availability of treatment, and influencing public opinion and policy regarding the value of recovery. The Southeastern PA Regional Coordinating Office is located in Doylestown, PA. call 215-345-6644 if you would like to become an "Ambassador for Recovery" or would like more information about the organization.

There is a website to help people find D&A treatment services throughout the country. Go to [www.findtreatment.samsha.gov](http://www.findtreatment.samsha.gov). You may search by county, zip code, or type of service. Once you locate a treatment provider that you would like to use, contact them directly and ask questions about insurance coverage, their credentials and areas of expertise are, and what you do next.

The Chester County Department of Drug & Alcohol Services can not verify the accuracy of what is listed, so don't be shy about asking whatever questions you have— find the right match for your situation.



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## *The Exchange*



This newsletter is sponsored by: The Chester County Department of Drug and Alcohol Services, P.O. Box 2747, 601 Westtown Road Suite 325, West Chester, PA 19380-0990.

For more information or to be on the mailing list for this newsletter, contact the Community Prevention staff at:

The Coad Group, 930 East Lancaster Avenue  
Exton, PA 19341.

610.363.6164 or  
1.800.917.1117

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*For More Information, Check Out These Resources*

**Join Together** (617) 437-1500  
[www.jointogether.org](http://www.jointogether.org)

**National Institute on Drug Abuse**  
[www.nida.nih.gov](http://www.nida.nih.gov) or  
[clubdrugs.org](http://clubdrugs.org)

**National Center for Chronic Disease  
Prevention and Health**  
[www.cdc.gov/tobacco](http://www.cdc.gov/tobacco)

**National Clearinghouse for Alcohol & Drug  
Information**  
1-800-729-6686  
[www.health.org](http://www.health.org)

**Partnership for a Drug-Free America**  
(212) 922-1560  
[www.drugfreeamerica.org](http://www.drugfreeamerica.org)

**PA Dept. of Health, Research & Info.  
Clearinghouse**  
[www.padohric.org](http://www.padohric.org)

**Al-Anon Family Group Headquarters.**  
(800) 344-2666 or (800) 356-9996.  
[www.al-anon.alateen.org](http://www.al-anon.alateen.org)