

# The Exchange

Autumn  
2007

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

## Message from the Director

**September Is...** *National Alcohol & Drug Addiction Recovery Month  
National Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Awareness Day (Sept. 9<sup>th</sup>)*

**October Is ...** *Red Ribbon Week (October 23<sup>rd</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup>)*

All sorts of worthy causes are fighting for our attention during the fall and every one deserves our consideration. Each of these national observances strives to provide the public with education and awareness of topics that impact everyone's lives - namely: drug and alcohol addiction.

In September we have two (2) important initiatives: National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month and National Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Awareness Day. While the 18<sup>th</sup> annual Recovery Month focuses its campaign on raising awareness about the cost of alcohol and drug dependence to society,

### FAST FACT

#### *Did you know?*

Addiction treatment is cost effective, with some measurements showing a benefit-to-cost ratio of up to 7:1. With treatment costing \$1,583 per person on average, there is a monetary benefit to society of nearly \$11,487 for each person treated.  
[www.recoverymonth.gov](http://www.recoverymonth.gov)

National Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder Awareness (FASD) Day uses September 9<sup>th</sup> to send the message that FASD is 100% preventable. The

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only cause of FASD is prenatal exposure to alcohol.

### FAST FACT

#### *Did you know?*

When a pregnant woman uses alcohol, her baby does too. If women do not drink alcohol during pregnancy, Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders (FASD) is 100% preventable.  
[www.fasdcenter.samhsa.gov](http://www.fasdcenter.samhsa.gov)

The month of October brings us Red Ribbon Week (October 23<sup>rd</sup> - 31<sup>st</sup>). Red Ribbon Week is the oldest and largest drug prevention campaign in the nation. The Red Ribbon campaign, sponsored by the National Family Partnership, is a way for communities and schools to take a visible stand against drugs by displaying the red ribbon as a symbol of intolerance towards the use of drugs  
[www.nfp.org](http://www.nfp.org).

#### *Did you know?*

The Red Ribbon Campaign was started when drug traffickers in Mexico City murdered Kiki Camarena, a Drug Enforcement Agency (DEA) agent, in 1985. This began the tradition of displaying Red Ribbons as a symbol of intolerance towards the use of drugs ([www.nfp.org](http://www.nfp.org)).

Whether or not you choose to take part in one of the national observances by attending or sponsoring local events, I encourage you to take the time to learn more about the topics represented in the national campaigns and share your knowledge with family, friends, neighbors and co-workers.

**Kim P. Bowman**  
Director, Chester County  
Department of Drug and Alcohol Services



# ***IN VIEW***

## **PREVENTING Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorder (FASD): HEALTHY WOMEN, HEALTHY BABIES**

Alcohol abuse is a serious public health concern. Did you know that alcohol can harm a fetus at any point in its development, often before a woman knows she's pregnant?

"Fetal Alcohol Spectrum Disorders" (FASD) is an umbrella term describing the range of effects that can occur in an individual whose mother drank alcohol during pregnancy. These effects may include physical, mental, behavioral, and/or learning disabilities with lifelong implications. The term FASD is not intended for use as a clinical diagnosis. It refers to conditions such as fetal alcohol syndrome (FAS), alcohol-related neurodevelopmental disorder (ARND), and alcohol-related birth defects (ARBD).

**If women do not drink alcohol during pregnancy, FASD is 100 percent preventable.** The Surgeon General issued an advisory in February 2005 to help share this important message and to urge health professionals to identify and assist women who are drinking or at risk of drinking during pregnancy.

### **WHO IS AT RISK?**

Any pregnant woman who drinks alcohol is at risk of having a child with a FASD, regardless of her education, income, or ethnicity. Women who are at particularly high risk of drinking during pregnancy and having a child with a FASD include:

- Women with substance abuse or mental health problems
- Women who have already had a child with a FASD
- Recent drug users
- Smokers
- Women who have multiple sex partners
- Recent victims of abuse and violence

Alcohol is a potent teratogen, a substance that can damage a developing fetus. There is no known safe level of alcohol use during pregnancy, so pregnant women or women who may become pregnant should not drink any alcohol from conception to birth.

### **WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW: Surgeon General's Advisory on Alcohol Use in Pregnancy**

- A pregnant woman should not drink alcohol during pregnancy.
- A pregnant woman who has already consumed alcohol during her pregnancy should stop in order to minimize further risk.
- A woman who is considering becoming pregnant should abstain from alcohol.
- Recognizing that nearly half of all births in the United States are unplanned, women of childbearing age should consult their physician and take steps to reduce the possibility of prenatal alcohol exposure.
- Health professionals should inquire routinely about alcohol consumption by women of childbearing age, inform them of the risks of alcohol consumption during pregnancy, and advise them not to drink alcoholic beverages during pregnancy.

- Surgeon General Richard Carmona, February 2005

### **CONCLUSION**

Drinking during pregnancy can cause permanent damage to a fetus. However, FASD is 100 percent preventable. The only cause of FASD is prenatal exposure to alcohol. If a woman does not drink alcohol while she is pregnant, her baby will not have a FASD. Health care providers, families, friends, and other community members all have a role in addressing FASD. ***STOP and think. If you're pregnant, don't drink.***

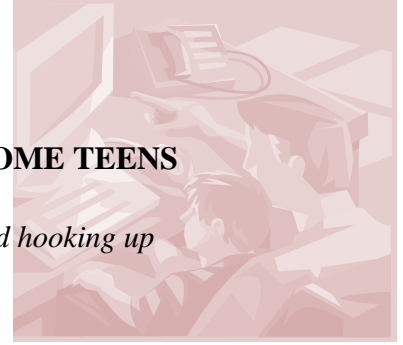
For more information, visit [www.fasdcenter.samhsa.gov](http://www.fasdcenter.samhsa.gov) or call 866-STOPFAS. [www.stopalcoholabuse.gov](http://www.stopalcoholabuse.gov).

## FAMILY CORNER

### SEX, DRUGS AND ALCOHOL POPULAR WITH SOME TEENS ON ONLINE MESSAGE BOARDS

*Study uncovers teens posting tips on using illicit drugs and hooking up  
while drunk*

*(a copy of the full study can be found on [www.caron.org](http://www.caron.org))*



**Wernersville, PA. June 19, 2007** – Parents who think their teens’ online conversations with their peers are innocent may want to reconsider. A new Caron Treatment Center’s qualitative study conducted by Nielsen BuzzMetrics found that 1 in 10 messages analyzed involved teens seeking advice from their peers on how to take illicit drugs “safely” and without getting caught. The messages were posted on common online message boards, forums and social networks, such as MySpace.com, ym.com and teenspot.com, among others.

The study also found that in messages about alcohol, hooking up and having sex when drinking were the top behaviors discussed by teens. While a few teens expressed regret over things they did while drunk, many chalked it up to “fun,” “being wasted” and “having a good time.” While both genders discussed hooking up and sex, more girls than boys talked about it, where gender was identifiable.

More than 160,000 of the 10.3 million messages posted by teens were about drugs or alcohol. Despite increased focus on drug trends, such as abuse of prescription medications like oxycontin and club favorites like ecstasy, less “trendy” substances were more commonly discussed. Almost 80 percent of the drug related messages posted by teens mentioned alcohol, marijuana, cocaine and acid/LSD.

Caron’s review of online teen talk around alcohol and drugs was prompted by concerns from adolescent counselors at the Pennsylvania-based rehab facility. Teens mentioned how easily and freely they could chat with peers online about drugs and alcohol – and how falling in with the wrong “virtual crowd” often proved as destructive as a “real life” group.

“It used to be enough for parents to know their teens’ friends,” said Doug Tieman, President and CEO of Caron. “However, the online revolution requires parents to be much more sophisticated in terms of understanding not only how their teens are spending time online, but also what they are talking about.”

*In response to the findings from the study, Caron has created the following:*

#### TIPS FOR MANAGING YOUR TEEN’S ONLINE BEHAVIOR

**Keep the Computer Where You Can See It:** It’s easier to casually keep an eye on your teen’s online use when the computer is in a common area rather than a private bedroom.

**Get Educated About the Internet:** The more you understand what’s going on in cyberspace, the better equipped you’ll be to talk with your teen about their online conversations. Learn what’s available to your teens online, such as social networking sites (including FaceBook and MySpace), message boards (including teenspot.com and studentcenter.org) and helpful services (including drugfree.org). Visit Caron’s “teen speak” glossary, which can help you stay updated on the lingo around alcohol and drug use.

**Web-Surfing is a Privilege:** Define the rules, concerns and expectations for online activities with your teen. Set limits on internet usage and alert them that you’ll regularly ask them to walk you through their recent online activity.

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# Mark Your Calendar



## NATIONAL OBSERVANCES:

**September, 2007:** National Alcohol & Drug Addiction Recovery Month - [www.recoverymonth.gov](http://www.recoverymonth.gov)

**October 14 - 20, 2007:** National Collegiate Alcohol Awareness Week - [www.bacchusgamma.org](http://www.bacchusgamma.org)

**October 23 - 31, 2007:** Red Ribbon Week - [www.nfp.org](http://www.nfp.org)

**November 15, 2007:** Great American Smokeout - [www.cancer.org](http://www.cancer.org)

## LOCAL EVENTS and TRAINING OPPORTUNITIES:

**September 29, 2007:** 5<sup>th</sup> Annual Recovery Expo 9:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m. United Way Methodist Church of the Resurrection (UMCR) Exton, PA. Contact Wendy Beck for more information at [wbeck101@comcast.net](mailto:wbeck101@comcast.net)

**September 29, 2007:** Phoenixville's Evening in Black & White "Males Cooking For You" 5:00 p.m. - 11:00 p.m. CAT Pickering Campus, 1580 Charlestown Road, Phoenixville, PA. Come join this exciting evening as one hundred men display their cooking talents. Event also includes live music, silent auction and dancing. Proceeds benefit Phoenixville Area Positive Alternatives (PAPA) and the Phoenixville Communities That Care. For registration and tickets contact Dolores Winston at (610) 917-9675 or [Phxctc@yahoo.com](mailto:Phxctc@yahoo.com)



**October 15, 2007:** PRO-ACT Information Hour 6:00 p.m. - 7:00 p.m. Learn about the Pennsylvania Recovery Organization - Achieving Community Together (PRO-ACT). Light dinner will be provided. For more information contact Babette Benham at (215) 345-6644 or [bbenham@bccadd.org](mailto:bbenham@bccadd.org)

**PA Department of Health, Bureau of Drug and Alcohol Programs Trainings:** For a complete list of courses offered visit <http://bdap.health.state.pa.us/btms>

**Gaudenzia Training Institute:** For a complete list of courses offered visit [www.gaudenzia.org](http://www.gaudenzia.org)

### Drug and Alcohol Treatment

The Chester County Department of Drug and Alcohol Services provides funding for drug and alcohol treatment to eligible county residents. Preference and priority for treatment is as follows:

- Pregnant injecting drug users
- Pregnant substance abusers
- Injecting drug users
- Adolescents

For more information on the county funded treatment system and eligibility requirement, contact our 24/7 Information and Referral Line at 1-866-286-3767.

**FAST  
FACT**

### Did you know?

Sixty-four percent of teens say they go to sites their parents wouldn't approve of, or chat with friends / strangers about inappropriate topics. One-third of 13 - 17 year olds and nearly half of 16 - 17 year olds report that their parents or guardians know "very little" or "nothing" about what they do online.

### What can you do?

Limit teens time online, and put computers in an open area to better monitor your teen. [www.theantidrug.com](http://www.theantidrug.com)



### Internet Acronyms Parents Should Know:

POS - Parent Over Shoulder    PAW - Parents Are Watching  
PIR - Parent In Room            PAL - Parents Are Listening  
P911 - Parent Alert                KPC - Keeping Parents Clueless

[www.theantidrug.com](http://www.theantidrug.com)

## FAMILY CORNER

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**Keep Checking In:** Have regular conversations with your teen about what they do when they're online. Discuss their screen name(s) and any sites where they regularly visit or post. Let them know you're always available to talk.

**Explain That the Virtual World Lives On:** It is becoming common for employers and colleges/universities to research online behavior of prospects, so let your teen know that whatever they say or do online will likely have a long virtual shelf life.

**Teach Them How to Deal with Peer Pressure:** Explain that just like in real life, "virtual" conversations can become uncomfortable or inappropriate. Discuss examples of how they might respond to a conversation or posting that turns to drugs or alcohol.

**Be Aware of Signs:** Signs that your child could be engaging in inappropriate or dangerous behavior online include closing a screen quickly when you walk by, becoming distressed if you remove computer privileges and difficulty waking up for school because of late night online activity.

**Consider Monitoring or Filtering:** Excellent software exists today that can monitor every key stroke and give you regular reports about their virtual behavior. Filtering programs also allow you to block teens from visiting sites that wouldn't be appropriate under any circumstances. Caron's Student Assistance Professionals suggest Specter Pro 5.0 for monitoring software and Net Nanny 5.1 or [Kidsnet.com](http://Kidsnet.com) for filtering software.

## National Alcohol & Drug Addiction Recovery Month SEPTEMBER 2007

*"JOIN THE VOICES FOR RECOVERY: SAVING LIVES, SAVING DOLLARS"*

The 18<sup>th</sup> annual *National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month* asks people to take notice of the financial and human costs of substance use disorders, and to understand the benefits that investing in treatment can have on those who enter recovery, their family and the larger community.

Untreated substance use disorders have an impact on families, communities, and the overall health of the country. In 2005, more than 22 million people, aged 12 or older, were classified with a substance use disorder.

Research shows that substance use disorders are medical conditions that can be effectively treated, just as many illnesses are treatable. Treatment for substance use disorders positively impacts individuals who are dependent on alcohol and/or drugs, their families, and the entire community. In addition to reducing alcohol and/or drug use, treatment improves mental and physical health and contributes to fewer family problems.

All of us can help ensure that treatment and recovery from substance use disorders is attainable, affordable, and effective. The Department of Drug and Alcohol Services encourages all of you who play an integral role in our families and communities to continue to expand your knowledge about how deeply substance use disorders can resonate and learn how to access available treatment resources. For more information on Recovery Month go to [www.recoverymonth.gov](http://www.recoverymonth.gov).



The Exchange 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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*The Department of Health and Chester County Commissioners specifically disclaim responsibility for any analyses, interpretations, or conclusions herein.*

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

*The Exchange Autumn 2007*



**Resources**

*Looking for Help in Chester County?*

AA Web Site

[www.aachesco.org](http://www.aachesco.org)

Al-Anon/Ala-Teen

1-888-4AL-ANON

Al-Anon/Ala-Teen Web Site

[www.al-anon-alateen.org](http://www.al-anon-alateen.org)

Alcohol and Drug Information

– Personal & Confidential 1-866-286-3767

Alcoholics Anonymous (AA)

215-923-7900

Crisis Intervention

1-877-918-2100

Domestic Violence

1-888-711-6270

Health and Human Service Agencies

[www.referweb.net/chesco](http://www.referweb.net/chesco)

Narcotics Anonymous (NA)

215-629-6757

NA Web Site

[www.na.org](http://www.na.org)

Welfare Office

610-466-1000

You can view or print this newsletter by visiting Chester County's Website: [www.chesco.org](http://www.chesco.org) and following the links for Human Services to Drug & Alcohol Services.